

From the Nugget series (277) by Elder Ralph Harris

"When I am weak, then am I strong" (II Cor. 12:10).

The apostle Paul knew that the weaker he felt himself to be in the flesh, and the more conscious he was of his own innate weakness and insufficiency, the stronger he was in the Lord. God's people are never so weak as when they are relying upon the feeble arm of flesh and trying to deal with life's problems in their own strength. And conversely, they are never so strong as when they are keenly aware of their own weakness and are fully relying upon the Lord for grace and strength to worship and serve Him properly. What a wonderful blessing it is when we are able to fully and completely cast our care upon Him, with the full assurance that He cares for us (See I Peter 5:7)! It is a peaceful feeling that no one can truly appreciate unless they have experienced it.

This is what enabled Daniel to go into the den of lions, and the three Hebrew children to face the flames of a fiery furnace. It is what enabled numerous others of God's people to face the wrath of kings and to endure torture and death at the hands of their persecutors. It is what enabled David to face a man in battle who was physically much larger and stronger than he. These men, along with many others of the saints, were *strong in the Lord* when they did such things. Hebrews 11 gives us a veritable catalog of such feats, all wrought by a God-given faith.

How strong Elijah was when he faced the opposition of over eight hundred of the idolatrous prophets of Baal and the prophets of the groves (I Kings 18:19), and yet how weak he was a little later when he hid himself in a cave and feared for his life (I Kings 19:9-10)! In the first instance he was trusting wholly in the Lord, and in the second instance he was looking too much at his outward circumstances. And again, consider the case of Peter, who momentarily had such a burst of faith that the Lord enabled him to walk on the water, but very quickly his attention was diverted to the boisterous waves around him, and he began to sink. How typical these instances are of our own vacillating conditions. Sometimes we are strong in the Lord and at other times we are spiritually low. The only times we are truly strong is when we are totally relying upon the Lord and are fully conscious of our own weakness. ---Elder Ralph Harris