

# Strong in the Lord

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[ 0 : 00 ] Jeremiah now is responding, of course, to what God had said to him when he called Jeremiah into ministry.

! Remember, his excuse was that he is young, doesn't have experience, nothing that really qualifies him for the task.

That God's got for him to do or calling him to do. So as a result of that, he responds that way and then God responds back to Jeremiah.

And in a unique principle right there that we can see, God speaks to us, we respond, and then God speaks back to us in accordance to how we respond, positively or negatively.

Here, notice again what God said in chapter 1 and verses 7 and 8. He said, But the Lord said to me, Say not, I am only a youth, for ye shall go to all whom I shall send you, and whatever I command you, ye shall speak.

[ 1 : 15 ] Be not afraid of them, that's their faces, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord. So, God says, you're going to do it, but you're going to do it because I'm going to give you the ability to do that.

We looked at Zechariah chapter 4, verse 6. Remember, when God says to Zerubbabel, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

And there God is saying to Zerubbabel, showing him what the calling of God to Israel was, and telling him that if Israel is going to reach that place of fulfilling the will of God and the design of God for them, their calling, then they're not going to be able to do it with the force of a mighty army, nor by exalting their own power and strength.

But it's only going to be by them being yielded to and directed by the Spirit of God. And so, that's the same principle, remember, that we looked at for us last week.

If we're going to serve God, if we're going to accomplish the things he's designed to accomplish through us, then we've got to do it in the power of the Spirit of God.

[ 2 : 29 ] Now, and not in human flesh. Now, in Jeremiah, or through Jeremiah, God gives us a principle here of how he works through his people.

Take note again. We see then the provision of God and the picture then of the overwhelming work that God's got Zerubbabel to do. In verses 9 through 10, the Bible says, Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth.

And the Lord said to me, Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have this day appointed you to the oversight of the nations and of the kingdoms to root out and pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

I think that interesting. What a picture we have here. Jeremiah's complaining. God said, No, I'm going to give you the things to speak. And you'll say those words I command you to speak.

Now, he comes and touches the mouth of Jeremiah and fills his mouth with his words. What a picture of God by his Spirit, controlling the heart and mind and speech of his people.

[ 3 : 48 ] That's what he did in the New Testament. Amen. Look at Peter on the day of Pentecost. Amen. That old redheaded, rebellious fisherman.

Amen. That denied his Lord three times at the warming pot of a Jewish woman.

And now the Spirit of God has filled him. And on the day of Pentecost, stands up and preaches the most eloquent message on the person of Jesus Christ that's ever been preached.

Under the control of the Spirit of God. Peter didn't do that. God did through his Spirit. So what a picture for us to recognize and realize that he gives us everything we need.

And that's the principle he shows us through Jeremiah. God provides everything that's needed for his people to accomplish whatever it is the call of God is on their life.

[ 4 : 48 ] Who is it years ago that made the statement? He said, whatever God orders, he pays for. Amen. Yeah, he provides for and he gives us the ability to do the things that he wants to do to carry out the assignment that he's given to us.

Jesus applied that same principle now to his apostles. Look in Luke chapter 12 and verses 11 and 12. And when they bring you into the synagogues or unto the synagogues and unto magistrates and powers, take you no thought how or what thing you shall answer or what you shall say. Now notice this. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you ought to say. That's tremendous, isn't it? Aren't you glad we don't have to do it ourselves?

We just don't have to. I've experienced on a number of occasions while preaching or teaching the Spirit of God just given my mind and my heart thoughts that I have not thought before while I'm preaching.

And nobody yet has contradicted that afterwards. So it must have been right. Amen. Must have been the Spirit of God at work there. And you've experienced the same thing in your dealings with people about the Lord, no doubt.

[ 6 : 08 ] So Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you ought to say. And that now, of course, is the operating grace of the Spirit of God within the believer.

The Spirit of God operates, provides grace for us, that divine ability, if you will, to do what God wants at the moment. Ephesians 4, 7 is an interesting passage.

It says, But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. In the Amplified, yet grace, God's unmerited favor, was given to each of us individually, not indiscriminately, but in different ways, in proportion to the measure of Christ's rich and bounteous gift.

Recognize that none of us are the same. Amen. Aren't you glad of that? Amen. How many times have I said to myself, if not to Calvita, well, it's just too bad that not everybody can be the same as we are.

Amen. How many of you all have said that, at least under your breath at times? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But we're all different. God has given each of us different gifts and divine abilities, if you will, to carry on whatever his will is for our lives specifically.

[ 7 : 36 ] Now, in accordance to that gift, there's the need of grace, of working grace, day by day, to perform that gift that he's given to us.

And recognize that gift as a gift to be used in the body, in the church. Now, to whatever degree grace is needed for each gift, that's the degree to which we've received the grace.

All right? That's why it's really a foolish thing and a big mistake to try to compare ourselves with anybody else spiritually.

Yeah. Yeah. A lot of times we feel, well, I don't meet up to how spiritual so-and-so is, so, you know, why even try? No. No. No.

You're not him. He's not you. Whatever the degree of gift God gives you, and he gives that gift, really, in accordance to who you are and what you are and what his desire is in using that gift in you.

[ 8 : 50 ] So, whatever the degree of that is, that's the amount of grace he gives you. Be glad for that grace. Whatever the degree of that grace is, be glad for that.

And let God take that and use that through you to accomplish whatever it is he wants to accomplish through you in that grace.

Now, in verse 8, God promised his presence and empowerment to Jeremiah, and he does the same for us. In Acts 1.8, you can quote that by memory.

But you shall receive power or ability. After that, the Holy Ghost has come upon you, tells the people up in the upper room. And then you shall spontaneously be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, to the outermost parts of the earth.

All right? So, God gives by his spirit that power, that dunamis is the word. And that's the energy communicated by God to his disciples through which they were enabled to accomplish what God wanted to accomplish through them.

[ 9 : 56 ] So, it's the energy of the spirit of God in reality upon them. Such power and such presence, you realize, it's going to be needed. Both Jeremiah and the apostles.

Why not us as well? Amen? That's a necessity in Jeremiah's case because of the drastic work that God's got for him to accomplish.

So, again, see, I have appointed you this day to the oversight of the nations and of the kingdoms to root out, to pull down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.

Now, that's quite a statement that he gives to Jeremiah there. He said, I've appointed. I have set you over. Literally, the idea is, I have made thee parquid, is the word in the Hebrew.

A parquid, or a deputy. It's a title given to somebody that has high authority and only somebody that has high authority. So, as far as Jeremiah is concerned, from God's perspective, the prophet is a simple messenger, all right?

[ 11 : 09 ] Or a mere messenger. But from man's perspective, he is a vice regent, all right? He speaks what God is told, doing what he has commanded, because he's a messenger of God, from God's perspective.

But he is a vice regent, God's vice regent, as far as man's perspective is concerned. And as that, it says he has power to root out and to pull down.

To root out means literally pull something up. It's got the idea of destruction of anything that is planted. Today, we've had a gentleman at our house for some business, and he saw the ferns coming up on the north side of our house.

And, boy, he said, I would really like to have some ferns. And so I gave him a shovel. Yeah, amen. And he dug up some ferns.

Calvita gave him a plastic bag, garbage bag. He dug up some ferns to take home, but he's not going to destroy them. He's going to plant them. Say, he's going to replant. So the good picture here.

[ 12 : 20 ] Jeremiah is given this assignment to root up what is planted and to destroy it. All right. But then again, in a minute, we see he's going to replant, too.

But to root out, destroy anything that's planted, and to pull down refers to the idea of physical structures like buildings. All right. And to plant.

Put those plants back in there. Not the same ferns, but something different. All right. So it's a picture here of restoration. Isn't it good that as strong as God's judgment is?

And here's the message. Jeremiah. Jeremiah. It's a critical thing here. It's a crucial thing. A strong, hard judgment to come.

You're going to pull up some things that have been planted, and you're going to destroy them. But in the midst of that is a picture of grace that comes in restoration.

[ 13 : 24 ] All right. So there's that hope of restoration. You're going to build, and you're going to plant. Again, you have the power to do that. So there's that dual message. So no matter what generation, sin always has destructive consequences.

Always does. But through the grace of God, there's what? There's restoration as well. And that's the hope of any generation that comes in Christ Jesus.

So freedom from the destruction of sin comes through repentance and faith in the person of Christ Jesus. Now, it's necessary that Jeremiah understands the mission that God's given to him.

In chapter 1, again, verses 11 through 12. Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Jeremiah, what do you see?

And I said, I see a branch or a shoot of an almond tree. And then said the Lord to me, you have well or seen well, for I am alert and active, watching over my word to perform it.

[ 14 : 30 ] God gives the interpretation of the meaning of that word, olive tree. All right? It's a symbol of the swift fulfillment by God of his word.

What he's going to say, as far as through the prophet Jeremiah to the nation of the kingdom of Judah, is going to come to pass. And it's going to come to pass swiftly.

All right? Now, the symbol that's given there, the symbolism, is in the Hebrew word that we have for the almond tree.

It's the shagid. The wakeful means the wakeful and the vigilant. And the reason being, it blossoms and blooms, begins to expand its leaves in January, while all of the trees are still dormant.

So it necessarily then is the first to bear its fruit. Now, brings new life earlier than any other tree that's there.

[ 15 : 39 ] So, the figure of that rod, or that almond rod, is to give to Jeremiah some assurance here. Or if there's anything he's going to need, it's assurance.

Because of the strictness of the message he's going to preach. And the assurance that he gets here is the speedy, certain fulfillment of what God has said and what he will proclaim.

Look in Isaiah chapter 55 with me just a moment. Isaiah chapter 55. Remember the words of God through the prophet Isaiah.

Have we ever, in our heart and mind, come to a place at certain times when we've really asked ourselves, as far as what God has said in his word, is it really going to happen?

Is it really going to come true? You know, that's what Peter addressed at one point. Now, look at verse 10 of Isaiah 55.

[16:45] Verse 10 of Isaiah 55.

I sent it. Now, think, how many saw the snow? When was it, today or yesterday? Yesterday, yeah. You know, that was cool, wasn't it? You know, I knew it wasn't going to stick, but it was just fun to watch it come down. Because it was big flakes and heavy at times. And that was so much fun.

Have you ever stopped and thought, when you see the snow come down like that, or even the rain when it rains? Equating that with the faithfulness of God to his word?

That's what he's doing with Isaiah here. He's saying, just as that rain or that snow comes down and waters the ground, so, and goes down to the roots of those plants, so that those plants can get the nourishment that it needs to grow like it should, and produce what it should.

[18:13] Just along that same principle, I'm going to do with my word. Everything I say is going to reach down and water whatever needs to be watered, if you will, so it can experience whatever it is I say I'm going to do in what I say.

Yeah. So next time it rains, you think about that and rejoice. Go out dancing in the rain a little bit. Amen? Your neighbors will think you're crazy, but who cares? Yeah? Because we realize God, showing in this, his word is going to become true.

It's going to be faithful. All right? Like David said, thy word of the Lord is settled forever in heaven. It's engraved in stone, if you will. So, that's the picture God gives to Jeremiah after he tells him somewhat of the message he's going to give, or the characteristic of the message he's going to be preaching to Baxlid and Judah.

Jeremiah, don't worry about it. They're going to reject you. I think he's already told them that at some point. They're going to reject you. They're not going to listen to you. But, whatever I say through you, as you give my word, it's going to come to pass, and they're going to see it, and they're going to experience that.

So, just take heart in that. Now, second vision that he sees. All right? To get an understanding of the mission God's got for him in verses 13 through 16.

[19:50] And the word of the Lord came to me the second time, saying, what do you see? Or saying, what do you see? And I said, I see a boiling pot.

And the face of it is tipped away from the north. Its mouth about to pour forth on the south, on the south, on Judah. Then the Lord said to me, Out of the north, the evil which the prophets had foretold as the result of national sin shall disclose itself and break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

For behold, I will call all the tribes of the kingdoms of the north, says the Lord, and they shall come and set every one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem.

Against all its walls round about, against all the cities of Judah, as God's judicial act, a consequence of Judah's wickedness. And I will utter my judgments against them for all the wickedness of those who have forsaken me, burned incense to other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

That's idolatry, of course. Now, strong, strong consequence here. Idolatry is the most disastrous sin against God there can be.

[21:19] I mean, realize. Exodus chapter 20, verse 30 says, Thou shalt have no other gods before me. All right? God spoke that to the covenant people.

Verse 5 of that same chapter, Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God. Then in Isaiah, chapter 42, verse 8, Prophet says, I am the Lord. I am Jehovah. That is my name. And my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven image.

God said, That's who I am. I am Jehovah. Eternal, strong, God that reveals himself to man.

That's who I am, always will be. And I'll not share anything of that with anyone or anything. Now, verses 17 through 19.

[ 22 : 24 ] God gives his orders to the prophet. But you, Jeremiah, gird up your loins, arise, and tell them all that I command you.

Do not be dismayed, and break down at the sight of their faces, lest I confound you before them, and permit you to be overcome. Now, remember, Jeremiah, relatively speaking, is a young guy here.

All right? But look at the tremendous calling he's got, tremendous work that God's got in store for him here. And the message that he's going to preach, it would be a very common thing for a man his age, a young man his age, to cower down a little bit and feel intimidated about having to preach such a strong message with authority to such a people.

So God says, don't you be dismayed and break down at the sight of their faces. If you do, I'll confound you before them and permit you to be overcome.

For I behold, I have made... Now, think about that just a minute. If you cower down, get scared before them, I'm going to turn this thing around, I'm going to confound you before them.

[ 23 : 59 ] And why? Why would God say that? Because of who God is and what he's promised him. I'm going to be with you.

I'm going to give you everything you need. So why would you cower down? Trust me. Amen. That's what he's saying.

Trust me. Now, that principle holds true, believe it or not, for us as well. Amen. Yeah.

There's no need to cower down. We know God is telling us to do something and inclining our heart to do so. He's going to give us what we need.

We're under his authority, under his direction. Don't cower down. Just do it. Trust him. They'll give you everything you need at that moment and then see what he does.

[ 24 : 56 ] For I, behold, I have made you this day. Here's what I'm making you, Jeremiah, right now, this day. This is what I've made you. A fortified city and an iron pillar and bronze walls against the whole land.

That's pretty strong stuff. Amen. That's got strong foundation. It's got strong structure here. Yeah. A fortified city that has iron pillars and bronze walls against the whole land.

Picture of judgment here. Against the successive. Now, notice that. Not just against the kings of, king of Judah, but against the successive kings of Judah.

Jeremiah, you're going to have to do this before more than one king. Yeah, is the idea here. Now, against its princesses, against its priests, against the people of the land.

Wow. Who do you leave out? Nobody. Everybody's going to be against you, Jeremiah. But I've made you a fortified city in the midst of them.

[ 26 : 15 ] Giving you divine strength, which no hostile power can overcome. That's the idea there. Yeah. And with that thought in mind, it's going to be exciting to go through the book to see what God actually does with him in that light.

All right. Now, they shall fight against you, but they shall not finally prevail against you. For I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you.

Amen. Now, that gives him a sense of realizing if he's going to deliver me, then I'm going to get in trouble. Amen. Yeah. They're going to put me in straights here through all of this.

And God wants him to know that. He's not hiding anything from him, but he's showing him what he's going to do for him and with him and through him and teaching him to trust him.

Now, what about our summons from the Lord? Hmm? What about it? The famous passage that we know as the Great Commission, Matthew 28, verses 19 through 20, he said, Go then and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you.

[ 27 : 47 ] And behold, I am with you all the days, and that is perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion to the very close and consummation of the age.

And then it closes with Amen. So let it be. Amen. That's so good. So let it be. That's what God has. Now, so how do we do that? We've got the promise. All right? But what has God done and what has God given us to equip us for that?

Ephesians chapter 6. Turn there in your Bibles. Ephesians chapter 6, verses 10 through 13. Let me read this out of the Amplified that we're going to look at in a minute. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power, no, this is King James, in the power of His might, put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

[ 29 : 02 ] Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. when people resist us, when we are doing things the work of God, when people resist us, who's resisting us?

It's the power of Satan, right? In reality, the God of this age, the God of this world, he's at operation in that. So, this is what Paul is saying here.

We're fighting, not against flesh and blood, but it's a spiritual warfare. All right? So, take note. He said, be strong. Be strong. That strength, that word literally means to make strong or to endure with strength or to clothe oneself with strength as one puts on a garment.

Yeah? How many of you, when you got up this morning, first thing you thought about yourself, boy, I feel strong. How many of you took five minutes for your knees to get strong again and your muscles to loosen up from sleeping all night?

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But he said here, like, you put on your clothes, be strong. Put on strength. strength you're endued with.

[ 30 : 34 ] Now, but notice, be strong in what? In the Lord. That gives us the idea of what strength we're to put on. All right?

It's God's strength. Strength that comes, that we can put on, that is effective in us because of our union with Christ Jesus.

All right? our fellow, our relationship with him. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Power is relative or manifested power.

Might is power as an enduedment. The idea is it's the active effect of the might that is inherent in Christ or in God. All right?

God has strength. Amen? That's inherent within him. And the idea here is that same strength that is inherent in him is the same strength the Spirit of God who dwells within us possesses.

[ 31 : 41 ] Same strength. Amen? So it's in the strength of the Spirit of God that we are to operate in our lives every day in every circumstance and every situation.

Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. And then he said there's something else to do here. You know, I see these, you know, you see these guys because I'm going to, for example, military men, soldiers.

If you want to boil it down, Special Forces, I think I've told you before, when Jacob, our grandson, graduated from basic training in the Marine Corps, we went there to see it and afterwards he we had occasion to meet his drill instructors.

All right? I mean, that's the coolest looking guys, you know, in their dress khakis and and it's got a cool belt with a cool buckle Marine Corps emblem on it and these guys are molded and shaped like Atlas with that cool little hat on, you know.

And we, Jacob had them lined up so we could take pictures of them and I asked the guy one time, I said, what do you guys eat? one guy said to the other, he eats ding-dongs.

[ 33 : 22 ] That's his favorite food, ding-dongs, yeah. But I said, I said, that's what, I think I've told you this before, that's what I want, that's the top of my, top of my bucket list is to look like that before I die.

When I got there the first day of the Marine Corps, I thought I was going to die. But the funny thing that happened is I was working out at Planet Fitness one day and I had bought a Marine Corps shirt in honor of Jacob who was in the Marine Corps at the time and I had that on, had the green, the drab green pants on and black shirt with a red and yellow U.S. Marine Corps in the, I look cool.

That's a cool outfit, it really is. I was working out with that thing and there was a couple of gay guys, they really are, and they were, they were working out and, and, and I walked by them and I heard one of them say to the other one, he said, D.I.

Yeah, the guy said, yep. I said, I heard him, I heard him say that, D.I, drill instructor, I heard him say that, I thought, yes, I've arrived, I've arrived, I've made it, yes, all right, notice I just sucked my gut in, all right, but here he says, put on, what are we to put on?

The whole armor of God. Put it on like you put your clothes on, all right? The whole armor, literally all the weapons, the full armor, the complete armor, shield, sword, lance, helmet, greaves, breastplate, so you can withstand the wiles of the devil, amen, those darts that he wants to throw at you.

[ 35 : 20 ] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Now, he has the picture here of the Greek games, quite intense, all right, the wrestling match.

Only one guy is going to win. And they wrestle until one guy has another guy on the ground and he's got his head on his neck, I mean his knee on his neck.

But you know what happens next? The winner gouges out the eyes of the loser. Can't see anymore. Just can't fight anymore. That's, that's a picture of the intensity of the warfare, spiritually, the spiritual warfare we're involved in here is what Paul's trying to get us to see.

We wrestle not, we don't have that type of wrestling against flesh and blood. But what? But against principalities, powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world or the age, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

[ 36 : 33 ] What a warfare that we're engaged in. So, wherefore then, take on to you the whole armor of God so you can withstand it.

And then he gives those various things things. Stand therefore having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. No, no, back up.

Have your loins gird about with the truth. All right? The idea of the girdle around the waist. All right?

A lot of times it held up other parts of the armor like the sword, sometimes the breastplate.

But he said, this is the girdle of truth. All right? Candor, sincerity, truthfulness. It's the idea of one that does not practice any deceit at all.

Doesn't attempt to disguise anything about ourselves in our relationship with God. All right? That's truth. that's the first part of the armament that he gives us.

[ 37 : 41 ] Then the breastplate of righteousness. It's not justifying righteousness here, but sanctifying righteousness. It's the idea of living a life of righteousness, and that is given to us by the Spirit of God as we yield to him in our life and enables us to live righteously.

preparation of the gospel of peace. All right? Preparation is the idea of a firm foundation here.

And that firm foundation is a gospel of peace. The good news that speaks peace to the heart of a sinner, then literally mental readiness inspired by the gospel with its message of peace that we now have with God.

and that helps us face the foe with courage and promptness. Then the shield of faith, a present faith in the Lord Jesus for victory over sin and the hosts of the devil.

The helmet of salvation is the idea of an earnest expectation here. Remember hope, the hope of salvation. The earnest expectation of salvation is the helmet of salvation.

[ 38 : 53 ] All right? The hope, well-founded hope of salvation. The Greek, the Grecian helmet had a lot of different ornaments on it.

All of them meant something. And the idea here is that Paul's possibly thinking of the idea here that in that helmet that we have engraved on that helmet as an ornament to remind us of the hope of the salvation that we have.

the earnest expectation of that salvation coming through to fruition in the time that Christ comes for us is the idea, if you will.

Then the sword of the Spirit. Of course, we know the sword is the revelation that God has given us in his word. And then, of course, the Holy Spirit is the one that inspired that and inspires or instructs our heart and mind about the word.

Then the shield of faith, which is the word of God. All right? What is faith?

[ 40 : 08 ] Shield of faith. Trust, belief, but in reality, obedience. We've said it before. Obedience to what God has said or done or who he is.

All right? Now, then he says, praying always with all prayer and supplication. It was the custom of the Greek armies before they engaged in battle to pray to their gods for their success.

All right? Why should we believe we have to do anything less? Amen? In the drastic spiritual warfare we're engaged in, we better be sure we, before we ever go out into that warfare that we pray and seek the captain of our salvation for our protection, for our success in the warfare that we find ourselves in.

Amen? Amen? All right. That's our mandate that God gives to us. And so, let's be sure that we're fully clothed in the armor that God's given us.

Amen? Don't let anything, not one piece of it, come short. Every piece of it. That's a good study in and of itself that maybe one day we can look at.

[ 41 : 31 ] All right, let's pray. Father, again, thank you for the privilege of the evening now and for the time together you've given us in your word. Thank you, Father, for sharing your word with us and giving us a good look at the seriousness of the call that you've given us to spread the gospel of Christ to a lost and dying world and also for the fact of your faithfulness to us in providing everything we need and to keep us strong and faithful to the call you've given us.

So, Father, I thank you for that. Enable us now as we wait until next week enable us to garner more of that instruction to our heart and mind so that we can then experience that as we go through the week and we'll thank you for what you do now in Jesus' name.

Amen.