



## "Strength" in the Bible

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

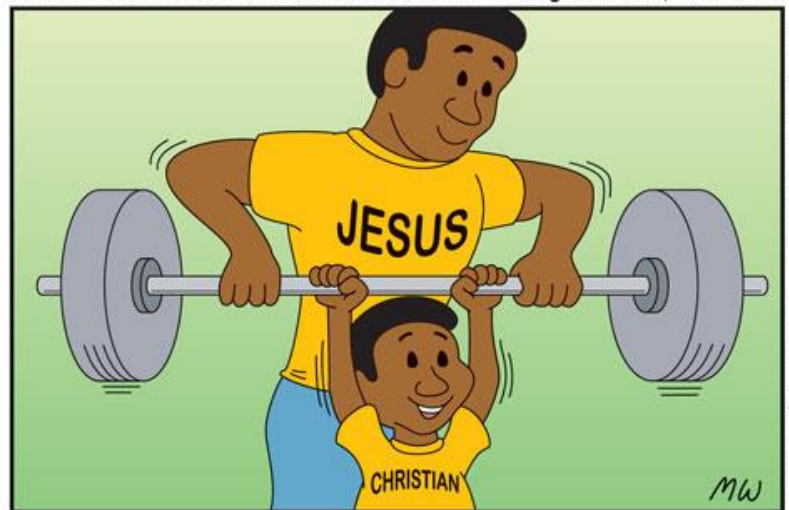
Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

Please read these scriptures and answer the related questions:

- (A) 1 Corinthians 1:25 How strong is God? \_\_\_\_\_
- (B) 2 Timothy 4:17 How was Paul strengthened to proclaim the Gospel to the gentiles? \_\_\_\_\_
- (C) Judges 16:5-19 How did Samson lose his strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- (D) Job 36:5 How is God mighty? \_\_\_\_\_
- (E) Ecclesiastes 10:10 What enhances strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- (F) Isaiah 28:5-6 Where do those who repel the onslaught get their strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- (G) Isaiah 41:10 Who will strengthen us? \_\_\_\_\_
- (H) Mark 3:27 Who is the strong man in this example? \_\_\_\_\_
- (I) Acts 16:5 What were the churches being strengthened in? \_\_\_\_\_
- (J) Acts 9:22 Who was increasing in strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- (K) Romans 4:20 Who grew strong in faith? \_\_\_\_\_
- (L) Hebrews 13:9 It is good for the heart to be strengthened by what? \_\_\_\_\_
- (M) In Isaiah 41 the concept of strength is mentioned four times. Does it always mean the same thing? Why? (Isaiah 41:1, Isaiah 41:6, Isaiah 41:10 and Isaiah 41:21) So what?

Think & Pray \_\_\_\_\_  
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**THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH** A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

- PHILIPPIANS 4:13 NIV

----- POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

**Strength**

- (A) 1 Corinthians 1:25 How strong is God? He has strength without limit.  
(B) 2 Timothy 4:17 How as Paul strengthened to proclaim the Gospel to the gentiles? By God  
(C) Judges 16:5-19 How did Samson lose his strength? He had a hair cut  
(D) Job 36:5 How is God mighty? In understanding (and other ways, but here in understanding)  
(E) Ecclesiastes 10:10 What enhances strength? Wisdom  
(F) Isaiah 28:5-6 Where do those who repel the onslaught get their strength? The Lord of hosts  
(G) Isaiah 41:10 Who will strengthen us? God  
(H) Mark 3:27 Who is the strong man in this example? Satan  
(I) Acts 16:5 What were the churches being strengthened in? Faith  
(J) Acts 9:22 Who was increasing in strength? Saul (Paul)  
(K) Romans 4:20 Who grew strong in faith? Abraham Rom 4:16  
(L) Hebrews 13:9 It is good for the heart to be strengthened by what? Grace

(M) In my opinion each time the term is used it has a slightly different meaning based on the context. In verse 1 it is talking about the courage to speak. In verse 6 it is talking about the physical strength to work with a hammer and metal. In verse 10 it is talking about the virtue necessary to overcome our fears. In verse 21 it is talking about how convincing an argument can be. What is common is that in each case it is the *ability to do* something. It is also clear that such ability is a gift from God and not anything inherent in us.

It turns out there are a number of different Hebrew words translated as strength. Here they are with how the King James translates them:

- Isaiah 41:1 – *Koach*: strength (8x), power (7x), might (x), force (x), ability (x), misc (x)  
Isaiah 41:6 – *Chazaq*: strong (8x), repair (7x), hold (7x), strengthened (8x), strengthen (4x), misc (16x)  
Isaiah 41:10 – *Amats*: strengthen (2x), courage (x), strong (x), courageous (x), harden (x), misc (1x)  
Isaiah 41:21 – *Atstsumah*: strong (4x), mighty (x), mightier (x), feeble (x), great (x), much (x)  
Isaiah 11:2 – *Gebuwrah*: might (7x), strength (7x), power (x), mighty acts (x), misc (x)

The Greek word is *dynamis* where we get the words "dynamic" and "dynamo." Like Hebrew, there are a number of synonyms which I'll not go into detail about here. My definition of *strength* is "the ability to get things done, which might mean physical muscle, but more often means determination, resolve and courage."

**For further thought:**

[n] What does Romans 15:1-2 mean? Which of the people described here is more like you?

[o] Analyze the use of the terms "strong," "strength," "might," "able to stand firm," "powers," "forces," "able to resist," "stand firm," and "able to extinguish" in Ephesians 6:10-17.

[p] Has God ever enabled you to do something you could not ordinarily do? What? How?

[q] Analyze the use of the terms "power of God," "stronger," "mighty" and "strong" in 1 Cor 1:18-31. Notice how much this passage also talks about wisdom.

[r] The word "strength" and words related to it like "strong, power, ability and might" appear almost a 1,500 times in the Bible. Use a concordance to find some of these appearances to read and discuss. You need to be aware that about a third of these are the word "might" which sometimes means "strong" but sometimes means "maybe." Obviously, you need to skip the places where it means "maybe."