

JESUS BRINGS ME STRENGTH

Isaiah 35:3-4

The book of Isaiah tells the story of how God's people forfeited His protection and blessings when they spurned His direction and went their own way. As Israel struggled in the midst of His discipline, God's desire and ultimate plan to restore His people back to Himself never diminished. Seven-hundred years before Christ was born, Isaiah prophesied the arrival of a Messiah who would make a way in the wilderness and bring a dry, barren, and desolate land back to life again. Jesus, of course, is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies about the coming Messiah; and, because we have placed our hope and trust in Jesus, He transforms our wilderness into a lush garden overflowing with abundance. There are four benefits that the Messiah brings with Him in order to provide us this way in the wilderness: strength, signs, streams, and streets. This message focuses on the first of these four benefits' attributes, which we will simply label as strength. In your wilderness, God is going to strengthen your weak hands, feeble knees, and fearful heart (vs 3-4).

- **Hands** can represent **what you do**.
- **Knees** can represent **where you walk**.
- **Heart** can represent **how you think**.

THREE PRACTICAL WAYS THE MESSIAH BRINGS STRENGTH IN OUR WILDERNESS

1. He strengthens my weak hands.

Isaiah 35:3

The Messiah is going to strengthen what we do! So, what do we need to do with our hands that will help strengthen what we do? Hands very often refer to worship. If you are going to strengthen what you do, it is essential that you become a worshipper.

Four Excuses Why People Don't Lift Their Hands in Church

Excuse 1: I will lift my hands when I get to Heaven.

Psalm 63:3-4

Excuse 2: I may not lift my hands, but I sure lift my heart.

Lamentations 3:41

Excuse 3: The Bible doesn't specifically tell us to lift our hands in Church.

Psalm 134: 2

Excuse 4: Those are Old Testament Scriptures.

1 Timothy 2: 8

2. He makes my feeble knees strong.

Isaiah 35:3; I Kings 8:54; Philippians 4:6; Proverbs 16:13

Knees refer to prayer. If you are not physically able to get on your knees and pray, I don't think God would consider it disrespect or insulting. I'm just saying that, in the Bible, KNEES are often mentioned in connection with prayer. Prayer is a real strength for what we do in life! Prayer is "rolling off the burden!" Sheep were never designed to carry burdens. You are designed to carry burdens only as far as the feet of Jesus. You're not even designed to walk with them. You're designed to simply turn around and place them at Jesus' feet. That's what prayer does. That's how your feeble knees are strengthened.

3. He makes my fearful heart courageous.

Isaiah 35:4; Deuteronomy 31:6-7, 23; Joshua 1:6-7, 9, 17-18; I Kings 2:1-2
II Timothy 2:1; Deuteronomy 6:6; 11:18; Psalms 1:1-3; James 1:21

When your heart is not given over to God, fear comes in and takes over. The command, "Do not fear; be strong," is in the Bible more than you may think. You see it most often in relationship to spiritual fathers and spiritual sons. Joshua, the great leader of Israel after the death of Moses, heard this phrase seven times. Moses said it to him on three separate occasions. God also spoke it to him three times; and then the people he was leading, the nation of Israel, said it to him once. The Word of God, grafted into your heart, makes you strong!