

"Be Strong in the Lord"

by Wayne Goff

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might," Ephesians 6:10.

Paul wrote the epistle to the church at Ephesus because he had been with them for three years (Acts 20:31) and had developed a very close, loving relationship with them (Acts 20:36-38). Also, he gave much doctrinal instruction in chapters 1-3 concerning God's eternal plan of salvation (3:8-12). Much was said about salvation in Christ, but most of it is written from the Gentile perspective. The final chapters (4-6) are written with practical advice in mind. He not only commands them to *walk worthy of the calling* but he also explains rather *specifically how* that walk affected them (4:25-32, for example).

Having concluded his letter, he writes the verse we are considering briefly. He gives two admonitions: (1) Be strong in the Lord; (2) Be strong in the power of His might.

Have you considered *being strong in the Lord*? The context tells us that this is battle imagery being considered. There is a fight being waged between Christ and Satan, and between their forces. You and I are soldiers in that battle, and we are to be strong!

In giving instruction to Israel, God told them that *being strong* meant *keeping every commandment of God* (Deut. 11:8). When engaging the enemy, God told Israel *not to be afraid, nor fainthearted, nor tremble because of them* (Deut. 20:3-4). The Lord was with them and would go before them. Finally, God told them to *be strong and of good courage* (Deut. 31:6-7). This is what it means to *be strong in the Lord*.

The second admonition is also important. *"Be strong in the power of His might."* This suggests that we should rely on God rather than on ourselves in the battle against the enemy. When Israel did this in the Old Testament, they won their battles. When they relied on their own wisdom, they failed. The same is true for us.

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