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# He Can Turn *Weakness* to **Strength**

When it seems all hope is lost,  
faith in the Lord can save us.

**O**ver the years, I have known people who felt they were too weak to endure. Some feared they had sinned so often or so seriously that they were beyond forgiveness. Others, suffering from prolonged physical distress or illness, had lost hope that God loved them or was even aware of them. Some were distraught because of loved ones who refused to accept the gospel. And still others had given up after years of trying to rescue a family member who had wandered far from the covenant path.

I am grateful that for those who find themselves in similar circumstances, the Book of Mormon provides hope. Here are just three examples.

## **NEPHI'S HOPE**

In what has been called “Nephi’s Psalm,” the prophet laments:

“O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.

“I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.

“And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sin” (2 Nephi 4:17–19).

But then Nephi shows how to overcome such feelings.

First, he reminds himself: “Nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted. My God hath been my support” (verses 19–20).

Then he counts his blessings, listing all that God has done for him—providing support, relief from afflictions, and preservation; providing love, protection from enemies, answers to prayer, revelation, and mercy (see verses 19–25).

Finally, Nephi reminds himself to once again find strength by calling on the Lord. By doing so, he can overcome his weakness, find help from God, and feel himself encircled in the arms of righteousness. (See verses 30–33.)

“I have trusted in thee,” Nephi says, “and I will trust in thee forever” (verse 34).



*Nephi turned to the Lord, trusting that he would receive help. We can do the same.*

### **ALMA'S REDEMPTION**

The story of Alma the Younger provides another example of growing from weakness to strength. In response to the faithful prayers of the people and his father, Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah are confronted by an angel and warned to stop persecuting the Church. Alma is so overcome that for three days his soul is “racked with eternal torment” and “the pains of hell,” remembering all of his sins and iniquities, wishing that he could become extinct rather than have to face God. (See Alma 36:6–16; see also Mosiah 27:11–30.)

Then, as he later recalls:

“I remembered also to have heard my father prophesy unto the people concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world.

“Now, as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me. . . .

“And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.

“And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!” (verses 17–20).

When Alma the Younger turns to the Savior, his life is changed. He and the sons of Mosiah become valiant missionaries who bring many souls to Christ. And later it is Alma who, counseling his own son Helaman, reminds him to “look to God and live” (Alma 37:47).

## MORONI'S MEEKNESS

The third example is found in the book of Ether. Moroni, after recounting story after story of people who used faith in Christ to overcome challenges, laments his own inability to write well. He says, “When we write we behold our weakness, and stumble because of the placing of our words; and I fear lest the Gentiles shall mock at our words” (Ether 12:25).

The Lord replies:

“Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness;

“And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them. . . .

“And I, Moroni, having heard these words, was comforted” (verses 26–27, 29).



“IF THEY . . .  
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ETHER 12:27

## PRESIDENT NELSON'S COUNSEL

As I ponder these examples from the Book of Mormon, I am reminded of counsel our beloved prophet President Russell M. Nelson gave about drawing the power of Jesus Christ into our lives. He suggests three ways to do this:

- 1 *“Begin by learning about Him. . . . The more we know about the Savior’s ministry and mission—the more we understand His doctrine and what He did for us—the more we know that He can provide the power that we need for our lives.”*
- 2 *“Choose to have faith in Him and follow Him. . . . Faith that motivates us to action gives us more access to His power.”*
- 3 *“Reach up to Him in faith. . . . When the Savior knows you truly want to reach up to Him—when He can feel that the greatest desire of your heart is to draw His power into your life—you will be led by the Holy Ghost to know exactly what you should do.”*

President Nelson added: “The gospel of Jesus Christ is filled with His power, which is available to every earnestly seeking daughter or son of God. It is my testimony that when we draw His power into our lives, both He and we will rejoice.”<sup>1</sup>



# “THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IS FILLED WITH HIS POWER, WHICH IS AVAILABLE TO EVERY EARNESTLY SEEKING DAUGHTER OR SON OF GOD.”

PRESIDENT RUSSELL M. NELSON

## MY FRIENDS' FAITH

I have seen the Savior's power miraculously help and heal some of my dearest friends. With their hearts turned to God, trusting His will and timing, they were gifted with hope and strength that allowed them to faithfully endure, even though they were in extremely difficult circumstances.

### *Positive despite Pain*

When I was 17, a young missionary was transferred into our ward. He became one of my dearest friends. In fact, I decided to serve a mission because of his influence and example. After his mission, he married a remarkable woman and served faithfully in a bishopric and then on a high council.

However, for many years he also suffered the excruciating pain of frequently recurring kidney stones. He could easily have become bitter or questioned why Heavenly Father had afflicted him. Instead, he humbly endured (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:8). Our young families spent a lot of time together. He was positive about life, eager to serve others, and grateful for the blessings he had received, despite almost constant debilitating pain.

He blessed my own eternal family immeasurably before passing away at age 43, leaving behind his incredible wife and four wonderful daughters who continue to be amazing examples to our family.

Despite afflictions and sorrow, he and his family, like Nephi, are still “highly favored of the Lord” (1 Nephi 1:1).

### *A Family Healed*

Another couple I love dearly was facing seemingly insurmountable family problems. They could not see any way that healing could ever occur.

“What more can we do to save our family?” the sister asked one evening during her personal prayer. She received an

immediate, clear answer: “Your family will be blessed if you serve a mission.” This would be their third mission, one they were not planning.

Two years later, near the end of that third mission that blessed numerous lives, their family situation remained unchanged. They decided to fast and pray. “Please rescue our family,” they pleaded. Just minutes after closing their fast, the phone rang. It was a family member they had expected to never hear from again. Miraculous events began to occur, healing their family in ways they never expected. Their remarkable examples of faith, trust, hope, and courage are inspiring! Like the sons of Mosiah, in spite of afflictions, sorrow, and suffering, they too are now experiencing “incomprehensible joy” (Alma 28:8).

## THE SAVIOR'S ATONEMENT

Through faith in their Heavenly Father and His plan and faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement—coupled with individual action as they courageously followed the promptings of the Spirit—each of these friends has overcome challenges. And each of them has come to better understand that the universal and infinite Atonement of Jesus Christ is also personal and intimate.

When we are feeling weak, may we in humility turn to God and realize that He has promised, “Because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong” (Ether 12:37). In our weakness, we can turn to Him. As President Nelson counseled, we can learn about the Savior, choose to have faith in Him and to follow Him, and reach up to Him in faith. As we do so, we will draw His power into our lives, and just as the scriptures say of Joseph Smith, “out of weakness [we] shall be made strong” (2 Nephi 3:13). ■

### NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives,” *Ensign*, May 2017, 39–42; emphasis added.