

Date: 2017.07.30

Speaker: Rev. Errol Joseph

Text: [Judges1: 27-36](#)

Topic: **Strength in Weakness**

Introduction:

We live in a world that idolises strength. We admire super heroes who seem to have absolute power.

Persons with exceptional talent and abilities are our role models. Social media such as Facebook promote these images and tend to give a distorted view of reality. Even in church, we idolise strength in a different way. Our testimony relates not so much our struggles/weaknesses but our victory.

Judges 1:27-36 tells the story of Israel going to the Promised Land. God tells them to destroy all the tribes but they failed to do so. Israel's weakness was these tribes.

The following observations are made:

1. **While God has bestowed us with strength, we all have weaknesses. Vs.17-21**

In the Old Testament, the term **Ish Elohim** is a prophet or man of God. He is first of all a human being with all his weaknesses before anything else. **The only perfect being is Jesus Christ.**

Strengths and weaknesses exist together. *Our weaknesses lie in the shadow of our strengths.*

2. **Sometimes we have to live with our weaknesses. Vs.19, 27**

When we cannot eliminate our weaknesses right away or all at once, we must learn to live with them and manage them.

God told Israel to drive out all the tribes but they did not. Sometimes, our problem is that we are experts at other people's weaknesses and not our own.

3. **Our weaknesses can be stubborn and not yield easily to change. Vs. 35a**

It may be difficult to get rid of or control our weaknesses.

4. **Our weaknesses can constrain, limit and destroy us.** Vs.21,31,34

Our weaknesses can neutralize us so we become Christians without impact. If we fail to manage our weaknesses, they can destroy us.

Moses' weakness -*anger*- prevented him from entering the Promised Land. Samson's womanizing ways neutralized him.

***The problem is NOT the weakness because everybody has a weakness. The problem is the weakness unmanaged, then it becomes destructive.***

5. **Our weaknesses can also become our servants.** Vs. 28a, 33, 35

***How can our weaknesses become our servants?***

- a. *When they increase our strength. When they stimulate us to grow and learn new things.* [2 Cor.12:9,10b](#), [2 Cor.3:5-6](#)
- b. *When they stimulate us to remain vigilant.* [1 Cor. 10:12](#)
- c. *When they stimulate us to stretch beyond our own inabilities and to take hold of the power of God.* [2Cor. 12:7-10](#). When we find ourselves incapable, then we have to take a hold of God. [1 Cor. 2:2-5](#), [Ps.61:1](#) – ***God is our shelter, our rock. He gives us perspective.***
- d. *When they cause us to learn how to fight.* [Judges3:1-3](#). Only when pressure takes us or the struggles become so unbearable that we learn how to fight, to 'do warfare'.
- e. *When they make us more compassionate to the weaknesses of others.* [Heb. 4:15-16,5:1-2](#)

When we know nothing about weakness, when we forget what it was like to struggle, where we came from, we can become insensitive to those who are still struggling. We can become critical, harsh, judgmental and unkind. When it teaches us to assist, encourage and support, church becomes a healing place, a kind place.

**Conclusion**

***The key to managing our weaknesses is to become stronger. Vs. 28,35. When we get stronger, our weaknesses become smaller. Let our weakness work for us.***

***Focus not on our weaknesses but on increasing our strengths. Then even if we are unable to totally eliminate our weaknesses, we will be able to manage them and to use them for our benefit.***