

GOD'S STRENGTH

"My Strength and My Shield"

Key Passages

Psalm 28:7 — "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him."

Psalm 18:32-33 — "It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he causes me to stand on the heights."

Study Focus

By April, James was running on fumes. The school year had been relentless—three IEP meetings, a medication change that required weeks of careful monitoring, a hospitalization in February, and a spouse who was also stretched thin. Spring break was supposed to be a relief, but without the school routine, their daughter's behaviors had escalated. James sat on the back porch one evening, after the kids were finally in bed, and thought: I genuinely have nothing left.

There is a particular kind of depletion that comes in the second half of the school year. The initial adrenaline of fall systems and fresh starts has long since burned off. Winter illnesses have drained reserves. The finish line of summer is visible but still weeks away. Special needs parents know this season intimately—the point where perseverance is no longer about motivation or determination, but about something that has to come from outside themselves.

Psalm 28:7 describes a strength that is not generated but received: "The LORD is my strength." God doesn't just give strength the way someone might hand you a glass of water—He becomes the source from which strength flows. "My shield" adds protection: not just power to push forward, but cover against what comes at us while we're already depleted.

Psalm 18:32-33 adds something remarkable: "He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he causes me to stand on the heights." God does not merely enable survival—He enables agility, surefootedness, even elevation. This is the promise not just for the flat, easy seasons, but specifically for the rugged ones—exactly the terrain special needs parents know best.

Discussion Qs

Couples

1. When you look at the second half of this year, where do you each feel most depleted—and have you told each other honestly?
2. How do you replenish each other when you are both running on empty at the same time?
3. What does it mean practically to rely on God's strength rather than your own when you've hit a wall?
4. How do you as a couple make space for rest, even in seasons that don't feel like they have room for it?
5. Where have you seen God's strength show up in your family's story—places where you know it wasn't your own reserves?

Dads

1. What does it feel like to reach the end of your own strength—and what do you typically do when you get there?
2. How do you ask for help from God, your spouse, or others when your instinct is to push through alone?
3. What would it look like to be "armed with strength" by God rather than mustering your own willpower through this season?
4. How has God made your feet "like the feet of a deer"—given you unexpected stability in a difficult stretch?
5. What spiritual practices actually refuel you, and how consistently are you doing them?

Moms

1. When you've hit your limit, what does that look like for you—and how do you respond when you get there?
2. How do you balance the genuine need for rest with the reality that your child's needs don't pause for your depletion?
3. What would it mean to you for God to be both your strength and your shield—powerful enough to carry you and protective enough to cover you?
4. When have you experienced God's strength coming in specifically when yours ran out?
5. What is one concrete thing you can do this week to receive strength rather than just try to generate it?

Application: Identify one area where you are completely depleted. Ask one specific person for help with it this week—and before you do, pray Psalm 28:7 over yourself.