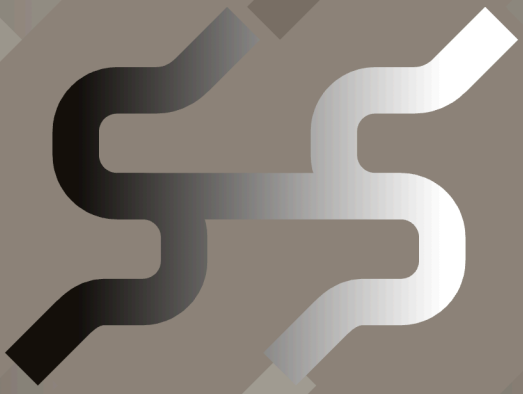
EXCERPT EDITION

EXPERIENCING TRANSFORMATION
THROUGH GOD'S SUPERNATURAL STRENGTH

STRENGTH TO STRENGTH



LAWRENCE E. ADJAH

MBA, MED, MDIV

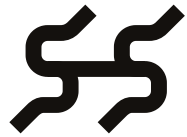
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This is an abbreviated edition of Strength to Strength. It contains the Introduction only, which also opens the Strength to Strength Challenge. The full book is forthcoming from Watch God Work Publishers.

STRENGTH

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WATCH GOD WORK PUBLISHERS

DALLAS, TEXAS

Strength to Strength: Experiencing Transformation Through God's Supernatural Strength
Excerpt Edition

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To the glory of God.

They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

PSALM 84:7



Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

ZECHARIAH 4:6

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Introduction 1

The full edition contains the complete text. This excerpt includes the Introduction only.

INTRODUCTION

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

I USED TO THINK I knew strength.

As a young man, strength was the thing I became known for: mental strength, discipline, focus, dedication, devotion, and physical strength. And who doesn't want to be known for that? What young boy, what young man, does not want to be strong? We all have.

One of my favorite movies of all time is *Rocky IV*: Sylvester Stallone as Rocky Balboa, Dolph Lundgren as Ivan Drago, and Carl Weathers as Apollo Creed. That was the picture of strength. So was my father, whose biceps used to come through his polo shirts. Strength: to bear, to carry. As a former All-American track and field athlete, one of the things I prided myself on was my strength: my speed, my explosiveness, my ability to lift. Strength was not something I talked about. It was something I measured. I set a standard for myself and defended it for years: in a single session, from two plates, to three, and eventually to four plates on the bench press, four plates on my back, four plates on the rack. I wanted to be the man who could still do that, long after my last race. There is nothing wrong with that kind of strength. Still, I

have learned that the strongest body in the room is no match for the weight that life eventually puts on a man.

Then came these past two years.

Twice, I have come within mere hours of death from an unexpected medical emergency. I have seen my childhood hero, my older sister, tragically killed in a car accident, leaving my ten-year-old niece without her mother. I have buried friends and eulogized loved ones. I have stood nose to nose with mortality and watched my life turn upside down. I have had evenings where the cry, "This is my prayer," and the words to God that followed were loud enough to wake a neighborhood. I have known the physical pain of bearing up under circumstances you seemingly cannot change.

I am pretty sure that if you are reading this, you can relate. I have seen the strongest of men brought to their knees, watching the loved one they never imagined life without being lowered into the ground. I have seen the strongest of men crumble under divorce, inhumanly and wickedly separated from their children, with seemingly no power to change something so dark and so public. I have seen men of impeccable strength and character knocked down to the studs by a false accusation, by betrayal. I have seen strong men hardened by the heavy load of carrying a family, with all of the expectations and little of the gratitude. I have seen the spirit crushed by the cut of betrayal. I have seen brothers lose their health, their hair, and whole unrecoverable seasons of their family's life to the stress of running a business, leading a ministry, and being responsible for so many people's livelihoods.

Can you relate?

Can you relate to parting ways with the strength you thought you knew? The strength that could not bear up, at least not in a healthy way, under the reality of being in the middle of suffering while still being asked to operate and function, to give and live and thrive, in the midst of such a burden. The strength that accepts that no one lowers the bar for you, yet keeps its entitlement and its high expectations of you. You still need to make a living.

The family still needs to be carried. The business still needs to be run. The people still need to be led. You are expected to be strong at the exact moment the strength you thought you had confesses it was not made for this.

You think you know strength, until you realize what it really takes to be strong.

To be strong in that way transcends physical strength. It transcends the circumstances you can control. It is a strength that goes beyond you, because if it were all on you, it would crush you.

That is where I discovered that there is a strength that is different from physical strength. It is a spiritual strength that transcends. It is not limited by your flesh, and it is not limited by your circumstances. It transcends the world, so that in the middle of what should be breaking you, it shows up looking like peace, an unexplainable steadiness you did not produce and cannot account for. And the reason you cannot account for it is that it is not originating from you. It is coming from God.

Isaiah saw this long before I did. He wrote that God "giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:29–31). Read that as a former athlete and it lands differently. The young men, the strong ones, the ones in their prime, shall utterly fall. That is not a warning for the weak. It is a warning for the strong. The only ones still standing at the end are the ones whose strength was never their own.

The Word says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). And when Paul pleaded with God three times to remove the thorn in his flesh, God did not remove it. He answered him instead: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians

12:9). His strength is made perfect in our weakness, at the moment we finally recognize that we cannot carry it.

I thought I knew strength. What I knew was my strength. There is a new power, and a new strength, on the other side of that admission. This book is about that strength. And this Challenge is where we begin to walk in it.



FROM OUR STRENGTH TO HIS

SCRIPTURE, IN PSALM 84, talks about going from strength to strength. I want to slow down here, because this one verse is the foundation for everything that follows.

Psalm 84 is a pilgrim's psalm. It was sung by Israelites traveling toward Jerusalem, toward the temple, toward the place where God had chosen to dwell among His people. The psalmist describes them this way: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God" (Psalm 84:5–7).

Notice three things.

First, the blessed man is not the man who is strong. He is the man "whose strength is in thee." The location of his strength is the whole point. It is not in his body, his résumé, his bank account, or his willpower. It is in God.

Second, the road runs through the valley of Baca. The name means weeping. These pilgrims did not get a route around the valley. They went through it. And the text says they "make it a well." The place of weeping became a place of water. The suffering did not stop the journey; it became the source of supply along the way.

Third, and this is the part that should stop you: they go from strength to strength. In the natural, the expectation for anyone on

a long journey is that they would get weaker the farther they went. Tired legs. Depleted supplies. Worn resolve. That is how the flesh works. In fact, these pilgrims got stronger the closer they got to the holy place. The nearer they drew to God, the more strength they had, because the strength they were walking in was no longer their own.

That is what "from strength to strength" means. It does not mean from a little of your strength to a lot of your strength. It means from your strength to His. It is a transfer of reliance. It is the movement from you trying your best to bear it up on your own to a supernatural reliance upon God that transforms your life tangibly and visibly.

What we are doing over the course of the next seven weeks, seven complete weeks, is walking that road together. And it will lead to a life, a year, and perhaps a lifetime of life-changing relationships: starting with your relationship with God, your relationship with another brother, and your relationship with yourself, in mind, body, and spirit.

My vision, my hope, my plan, and my prayer is that as you continue through this process, you will go from strength to strength: from your strength, and you trying your best to bear it up, to His strength, building a supernatural reliance upon God that transforms your life tangibly and visibly. I am praying that you will never be the same.



THE COMMITMENT

I DO NOT WANT to overwhelm you at this stage. I just want to set the stage. So before the outcomes and before the expectations, there is one decision, and it is yours.

For the next seven weeks, seven complete weeks, you will be in a group of five men. You will complete a short intake, which takes

less than five minutes and allows us to understand where everybody is starting from. And you will commit to the seven weeks. Not a trial. A commitment.

It is up to you. But you have to commit to this, because what you put in is what you get out.



THE OUTCOMES WE PRAY FOR

BECAUSE OF MOVING FROM your strength to His, here is what we are praying will be true of you on the other side of these seven weeks.

Stronger spiritually. You will have a more honest and consistent prayer life. You will have a more consistent and transformative fasting life, where your spirit man is stronger and your flesh is weakened, as measured by more consistent experiences of the fruit of the Spirit in your life and in your relationships. You will walk more tenderly in victory over issues of the flesh: anger, addiction, food, substances, and vices. You will get measurably stronger than where you are today.

Stronger in the Word. You will have a stronger understanding of God's Word, as measured by at least one new promise of God from Scripture hidden in your heart. As David wrote, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11).

Stronger relationally. You will be stronger relationally, as measured by at least one new person who now knows you and invests in your life. This is an opportunity to do life for life, something you will not leave here without.

Stronger physically. The fall did not only affect our spirits and the world. It affected our bodies. And God is redeeming our bodies as well. Why did He come? Why did He heal diseases? Because He wanted to show that the reign of the kingdom of God, the coming

kingdom, is greater and more powerful than any other force of darkness over our bodies, over our minds, over our relationships, and over our destinies. Scripture talks about this in John's letter to Gaius: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 1:2). God is not just calling for our soul, our mind, will, and emotions, to be sanctified, but for our bodies as well. They are temples of the Holy Spirit.

If you knew God was coming to visit you, Jesus Christ in the flesh, and He was coming to your home, how would you prepare that home for the King of Kings coming into it? Now, the truth is, in the Holy Spirit, if you have given your life to Christ, He is making a home there. He is visiting. And not only is He visiting, He is staying in your body, dwelling there, living there. How much more should we strengthen and treat our bodies?

Here is the thing. The enemy is going to use any means to disrupt God's will for your life. Whether he can get to you through a relationship, or through your relationship with your body, the goal is eliminating you and undermining God's plan for your life. Whether he detours you through a vice, detours you through an addiction to alcohol, or detours you through an addiction to food, the point is: what can I do to destroy and divert God's will and destiny for this person's life? That is the goal. And there is a larger goal. Ultimately, you have more on your head. He knows that in order to undermine God's kingdom, he attacks the head. He attacks the men. He started in the garden, and he started with Jesus: if I can destroy Him, I can destabilize everything, because Jesus was the cornerstone, and everything was built around Him. Similarly, you are a shadow of that. If you are strong, it makes it more likely that everyone else can lean upon that strength. But the strength, ultimately, is not you. It is Him. From strength to strength. That is what we are doing, brothers.

So in terms of being stronger physically, you will be healthier by all tangible measures: healthier and stronger.



THE EXPECTATIONS

THIS IS ABOUT THE inputs we know will lead to better outputs, and we are going to keep it simple. Three areas of strength. A few clear inputs in each. Where we say we will send you a guide, you will see this mark: ▶ GUIDE

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

Pray. Every day. This is the foundation everything else sits on. And pray for one another.

> *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*
>
> JAMES 5:16, ESV

- **We gather live once a week.** Your group decides the time. To make it easier to agree, the standard options are Mondays at 7:30 a.m., 8:30 a.m., or 9:00 p.m. Eastern. Each man shares a highlight and a struggle. It is a space to vent and get it out, and to be prayed for in real time. We keep it natural but structured, to honor everyone's time and to make sure we actually pray together as we are called to.
- **One prayer request a week, minimum.** By Monday, every brother shares at least one request with the group. Every brother prays for that first request within 24 hours, and responds to say so. As needs come up during the week, do not be limited to one. Share them, and brothers respond within 48 hours. The larger goal is simple: every brother hears back from every brother, every week. Everyone responds to every prayer. It is rolling, it is ongoing, and it is the foundation.

Fast. Every Monday, and the first Friday of every month. ▸ GUIDE | Fasting Guide and Prayer Points

> *However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*
> MATTHEW 17:21, NKJV

- **The hours.** Sunup to 3:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. You decide. On our last Monday, we fast for 24 hours, from the preceding 6:00 p.m. or 8:00 p.m. (you decide) through the following day. Water only. If it is relevant for you, consult your medical professional first.
- **The Monday prayer points.** While you fast, pray through a standard set of points by area of life: yourself; your spouse, if applicable; your children, if applicable; your extended family; your friends, generally, by name; and your friends, specifically, by name, who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior, praying that they would come to a knowledge of and a relationship with Jesus Christ in faith. Then, as the Spirit leads, pray into the more recent needs.

Study. Two inputs, every day.

- **One meditative Scripture.** One verse you return to daily, so that by the end of the seven weeks it is committed to your heart. You know it deeply.
- **One chapter of the Bible.** Any book, one chapter, every day. If you do not know where to start, take Proverbs.

PHYSICAL STRENGTH

Walk. Every day, like walking with God. At least fifteen minutes in the morning, five days a week. The minimum is three days, and if you do three days, do thirty minutes.

Work out. Lift at least three days a week. If you cannot get to a gym, there are one hundred contact points you can do at home with no equipment. ▸ GUIDE | At-Home Workout Guide

Consumption. We believe in 80/20: five days clean, two days eat what you want. Whole foods, no fried foods. The goal is one gallon of spring water a day. You simply check in on whether you followed it. ▶ GUIDE | Consumption Guide

RELATIONAL STRENGTH

Everything we do as brothers follows what we call the 5Cs of reliable relationships, and all of it is undergirded with mutual care.

- **Commitment.** Five men. Seven weeks. You show up, every week, for the men in your group.
- **Connection.** We gather to pray together in real time, at least once a week, and we pray for one another.
- **Communication.** We all hear from one another at least once a week through prayer. This is covered.
- **Crisis.** When one of us is carrying something heavy, the group carries it with him. If any brother experiences anything that would be considered a crisis, a lost job, a lost loved one, a difficulty, a stress, anything, you have an obligation to share it with the brothers. Every brother then calls you within 24 hours. You may not be able to talk with everybody immediately, but that is the expectation we hold mutually for these seven weeks. You call within 24 hours. Scripture says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15, NIV). This is our tangible way to honor that Scripture.
- **Celebration.** When God moves, we mark it. Every victory over the flesh, every promise hidden in the heart, every answered prayer gets named and celebrated by the brothers who prayed for it. A new job, remission from cancer, a big win, a big goal: share it. We call within 24 hours. No man in this group suffers alone, and no man in this group celebrates alone.

Then we pray, and we move.
For the next seven weeks, you've got brothers.
Okay. Let's go.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. I thought I knew strength. Where in my life have I been relying on my own strength, and what has it cost me?
2. Which of the sufferings named in this introduction have I carried, and who knew about it?
3. Where do I currently have nowhere to vent? Who could become that space for me, and for whom could I become that space?
4. In what area of my flesh, whether anger, addiction, food, substances, or another vice, am I asking God for measurable victory over these seven weeks?
5. What is one promise of God from Scripture that I will hide in my heart during this Challenge?
6. If Jesus Christ were coming to live in my home this week, what would I change about how I treat the body He already lives in?
7. What am I committing to put in over these seven weeks, knowing that what I put in is what I will get out?



END OF EXCERPT

Continue the journey in the Strength to Strength Challenge.

[Challenge URL / sign-up — to be provided]

The full book is coming soon from Watch God Work Publishers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lawrence E. Adjah, MBA, M.Ed., M.Div., is a community leader, social entrepreneur, and ordained minister whose work sits at the intersection of relational health, social infrastructure, faith, and community innovation. He is the Founder and CEO of the Family Dinner Foundation, where he built one of the world's largest belonging and relational wellness initiatives, connecting more than 50,000 young adults across 40 cities through scalable models of shared meals, small-group formation, and mutual care.

A Presidential Leadership Scholar (2024), former McKinsey consultant, and All-American track and field athlete, Lawrence holds a B.A. from Harvard, an MBA from Stanford's Graduate School of Business, an M.Ed. from The University of Texas at Austin with distinction, and an M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where he received the Preaching Award and the John D. Tate Award. His perspective is shaped by a rare blend of insight: he sees people like a pastor, valuing their humanity before their utility; he sees systems and problems like a strategy consultant, structured, analytical, and solutions-oriented; and he sees opportunities like an entrepreneur and investor, courageous, adaptive, and driven by possibility.

Lawrence brings together theological depth, business strategy, and cross-sector fluency to address loneliness and social fragmentation at scale. His 5C Mutual Care Framework provides a replicable blueprint for relational ecosystems across cities, health systems, universities, corporations, churches, and neighborhoods. He is also a best-selling author, seasoned marriage counselor, Bible narrator (NIV), and global speaker and host whose work through the Just Heal, Bro tour and other platforms has served thousands worldwide.

He is the CEO of Watch God Work Studios and mbio Technologies, Inc., the former of which exists to build and steward Kingdom-honoring technologies that glorify God by helping people better live, delight, and serve according to His highest design.

A trusted leader of leaders across business, ministry, and the nonprofit sector, Lawrence is known for uniting systems-level strategy with theological and relational insight, combining the business acumen of a CEO with the interpersonal wisdom of a pastor.

Lawrence's sub-mission, under God's shared commission for us all, is to help people establish and strengthen their most important relationships: with God, with other people, and with themselves, mind (and soul) and body.

