

Isaiah 40:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

Analysis

This verse describes universal human frailty—even the young and strong eventually fail. 'Youths' (near) speak of those in their prime, and 'young men' (bachurim) refers to elite warriors and choice young men. Yet even these will 'faint and be weary' (yaeph) and 'utterly fall' (kashal kashal—emphatic repetition meaning complete collapse). This sets up the stunning contrast with verse 31: human strength, no matter how impressive, proves inadequate and temporary, but God-given strength never fails. The universal reality of human limitation drives us to seek divine enablement.

Historical Context

Ancient culture prized physical strength and youthful vigor as valuable assets—warriors, laborers, hunters all depended on physical capacity. Yet Isaiah declares even these paragons of human strength eventually collapse. Combat veterans returning from Assyrian campaigns knew this exhaustion intimately. Modern culture's youth obsession faces the same sobering reality: human strength inevitably fails. This truth humbles human pride and directs us toward the only source of unfailing strength—the everlasting God.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Where are you relying on your own natural abilities, youth, intelligence, or resources rather than on God's strength?
2. How does recognizing the temporary nature of human strength help you cultivate dependence on God before crisis forces it upon you?

Interlinear Text

וְפָלֹלָה:	וְפָלֹלָה:	לִלְעֵג	לִלְעֵג	וְבָחֹזֶק	וְבָחֹזֶק	יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה	וְבָחֹזֶק	וְבָחֹזֶק	יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה
shall faint	Even the youths	and be weary	and be weary	and the young men	and the young men	fall	fall	fall	fall	fall	fall
H3286	H5288	H3021	H970	H3782	H3782						

Additional Cross-References

Amos 2:14 (Parallel theme): Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself:

Psalms 34:10 (Parallel theme): The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

Psalms 33:16 (Parallel theme): There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

Isaiah 13:18 (Parallel theme): Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (Parallel theme): I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

