



Philippians 4:4 (NLT)

*Always **be full of joy** in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! 5 Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. **Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.** Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 **Then you will experience God's peace**, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus*

What is Joy?

Joy is the **knowledge** and **satisfaction** of God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Joy is the knowledge or satisfaction of knowing you are in the will of God.

Joy is a feeling, but **more than a feeling.**

Joy is Delight or Being "Bent"

Psalms 37:3

*Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. 4 **Delight yourself also in the Lord**, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.*

"Great Joy for All People"

This is what the coming of Jesus does for people.

He brings joy at the prospect of living on purpose and living at a level greater than ourselves.

We can learn something about **Joy, Delight, and Being Bent** from Nehemiah.

He had a passion for God's people and Jerusalem, though he did not grow up there, because of being in captivity in Babylon.

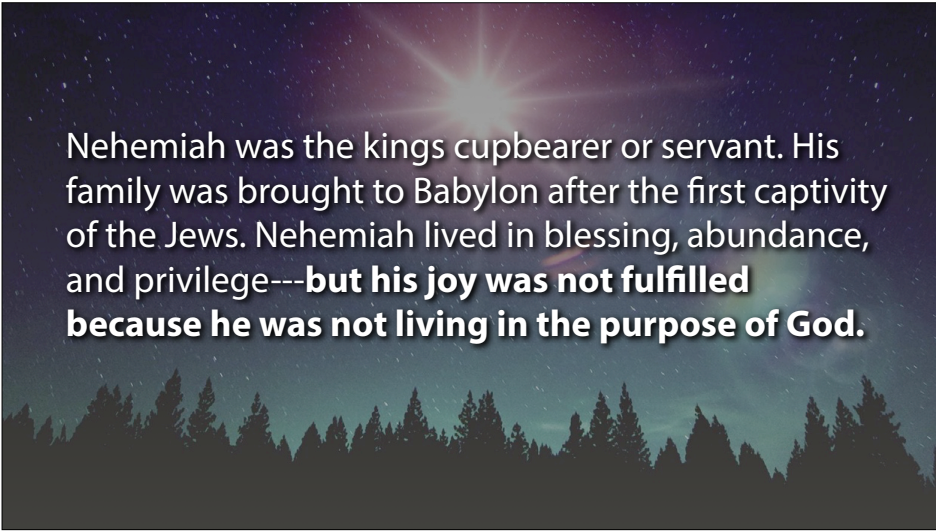
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Saying the words, "***The joy of the Lord is your strength***" sounds good.

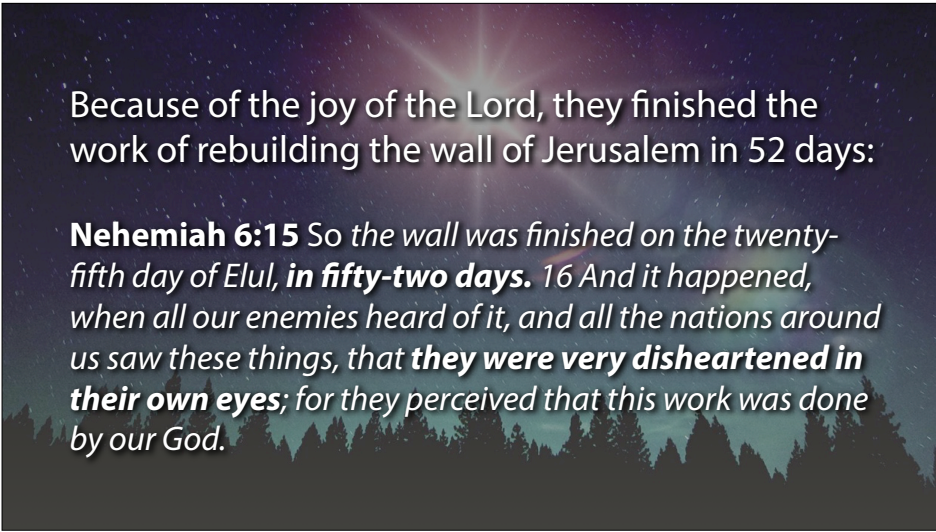
However, it is more meaningful when we understand the circumstance surrounding it.



Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer or servant. His family was brought to Babylon after the first captivity of the Jews. Nehemiah lived in blessing, abundance, and privilege---**but his joy was not fulfilled because he was not living in the purpose of God.**

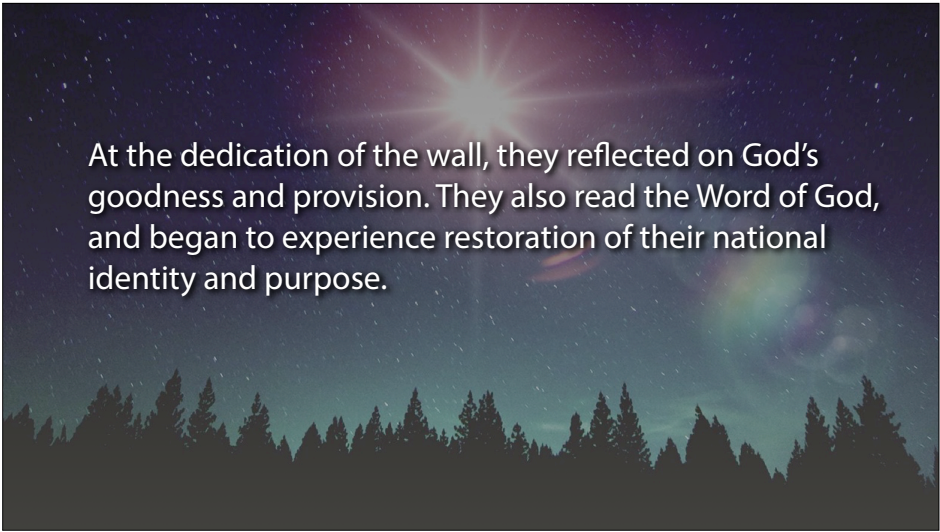


This is the danger of a “comfortable captivity”....complacency and forgetting our foundations and higher purpose.

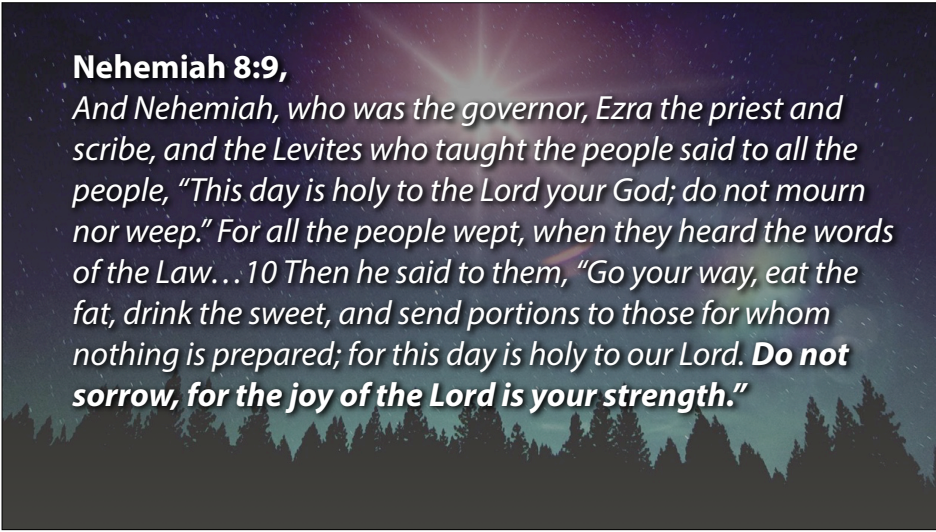


Because of the joy of the Lord, they finished the work of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem in 52 days:

Nehemiah 6:15 *So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, **in fifty-two days.** 16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that **they were very disheartened in their own eyes;** for they perceived that this work was done by our God.*

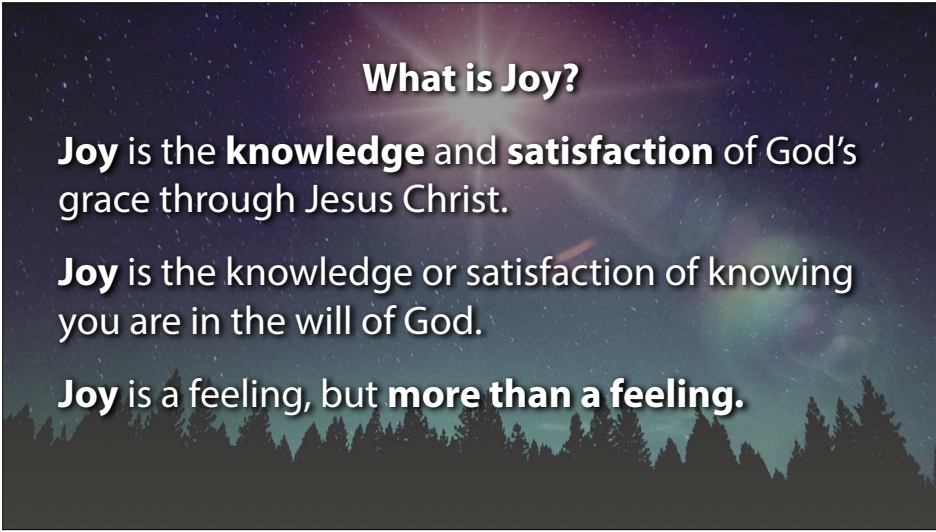


At the dedication of the wall, they reflected on God's goodness and provision. They also read the Word of God, and began to experience restoration of their national identity and purpose.

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Nehemiah 8:9,

*And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law... 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. **Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.**"*

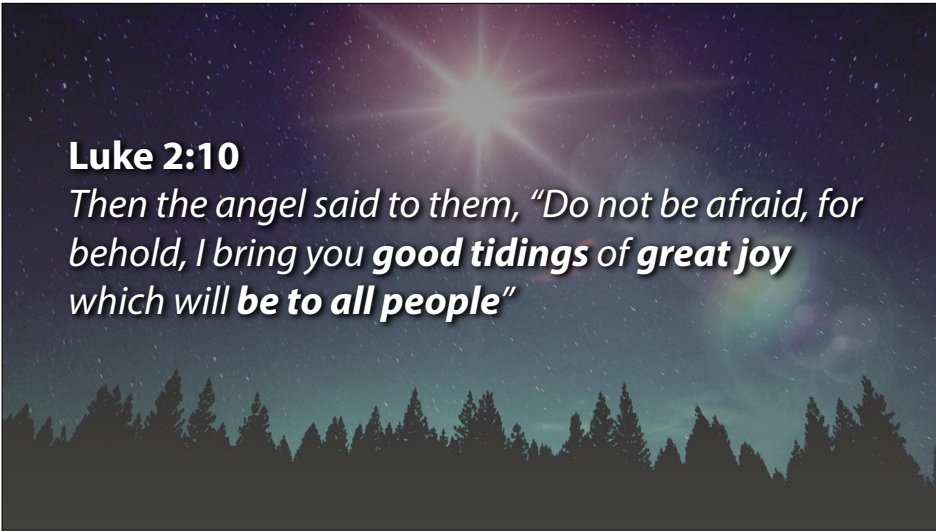
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Luke 2:10

*Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you **good tidings of great joy** which will **be to all people**"*