

## Joy Pt 1 The lessons from Israel on joy

This is our first teaching on the word "joy" in the scriptures. Joy occurs in its various forms – 187 times.

First we establish the meaning of the word from the scriptures, then we establish three points– (i) Israel's joy is the Lord, (ii) he was to be their joy in all things– as He was to them that love Him, (iii) For those in Israel that turned to other gods they had no joy.

Meaning from scripture:

Joyfulness is gladness– Deut 28:47– "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things".

To have joy is to rejoice– 2 Chr.20: 27– "Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies".

To rejoice is to have exceeding great joy – Matt.2: 10– "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy".

To be joyful is to have a glad heart – in Israel case – for the goodness of the Lord  
"On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people" (1 Kgs 8: 66).

To be joyful or glad, is to be cheerful– Zech 8:19– "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The fast of the fourth [month], and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace".

Related to joy aid gladness and honour– Esth.8: 16– "The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour".

Singing, dancing and instruments are often accompanied with joy–1 Sam.18: 6–  
"And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick".

Food and drinks are often consumed when there was joy in Israel  
"Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, [and] meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel" (1 Chr.12: 40).

To praise is linked with the voice of joy

"When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday" (Ps.42: 4).

The opposite of joy–

\* is weeping– Ps.30:5– "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy [cometh] in the morning".

\* Sorrow and mourning – it flees away with gladness and joy– Is.51: 11– "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away". See also Esth 9:2

It is from our search of the word “joy” in the scriptures that we establish our points–

### 1. Israel’s joy was to be in the Lord

In the Lord’s presence is fulness of joy– pleasures for evermore

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand [there are] pleasures for evermore” (Ps.16: 11).

### 2. He was to be their joy in all things– as He was to them that love Him

The Lord was David’s joy–

“My soul shall be satisfied as [with] marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips” (Ps.63: 5)– CF– Ps.5:11– ”But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee”.

### 3. For those in Israel that turned to other gods they had no joy

“Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward upon every cornfloor” (Hos.9: 1).

#### Illustration

The soccer world cup, the rugby world cup, the Olympic, and Commonwealth Games all have something in common. They are the joy of their fans. When a soldier for Christ choses to stay outside the grounds and hand out gospel tracts he shows God that his joy is in the things of the Lord, and not in the entertainment events of this world. Just stop a moment and consider the effect of Englands fanaticism with their football (soccer) on the body of Christ. I believe the “sport” would have contributed to the demise of the Christian’s joy in the Lord, having already abandoned the scriptures.

#### Question of the scriptures

How do we know if a person worships a false god, or has fallen away from God?

#### Answers from the scriptures

They will have no joy in the “only true God” (Jn.17: 3), but in their gods.

They who do so are destitute of wisdom, and they joy in their foolishness– Prov 15:21– “Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly”.

Q                      Why?

A                      The people have joy because the Lord made them to rejoice  
“Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies” (2 Chr.20: 27).

We learn from Israel that the source of joy is God. Depending on our obedience– He gives, and He takes away. If a person’s god is NOT the LORD, then they will be forced to find joy elsewhere, in sports or any other form of entertainment. Whether in good times or bad, may our joy always be in the Lord and in no one else, and His His work, and nothing else!!