



Monday, June 17, 2024

LESSON 3: JOY DEFEATS HAPPINESS

Read For This Week's Book Study

Psalm 4: 7, Psalm 16: 19, Romans 12: 12, Romans 14: 17, Romans 15: 13

Memory Scripture: “And ye know therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you.” –John 16: 22

Key Scripture: “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” –Psalm 16: 11 (KJV)

Word Study: The Hebrew word *שמחה* *simcha*, means “delight, pleasure, mirth, gladness”. It’s a word, at least from the origin root of it, that we don’t just say it, we act on it. Joy is not about what we say, but what we do or express. Joy is celebration. Joy is also a fruit of Ruwah, which lets me know as a servant of Hashem that this expression of my faith is not a suggestion or something to be seen as obligation. This is my blood, my lifestyle and simply part of my composition as worship is part of me and both joy and worship. Both require me to choose to be positive and to give thanks to Hashem.

Key Points

- Action
- Safe Guarding
- Celebration

Joy is often classified as a contradicting and problematic when you throw happiness into the middle of the definition. meaning it can be misunderstood or confused with unrelated terms. Joy is a distinguishing factor for Christians compared to others, so it's crucial to grasp its definition in order to embody it as instructed by Yeshua. Let's break joy down into three affirmations that will help you separate Elohim's usage of divine joy from our human emotion that mistakes happiness for joy.

Affirmation #1: Joy Is From Elohim, Not People

The differentiation between joy and happiness is crucial. While happiness is transient and dependent on external circumstances, joy transcends fleeting emotions, representing a deeper state of contentment rooted in our faith. While happiness is tied to worldly experiences, joy stems from a spiritual connection to Elohim and doesn't depend on happiness to work. The emotional response to joy can create the sensation of happiness and it would definitely be a benefit to you when you're enduring hard seasons and unfairness. Elohim's joy by default, is a positive and many people of the Torah and New Testament have events where they are joyful because they love Elohim so much. That's great to do, but if you study loosely, Elohim's joy typically appears when people are tormented and going through terrible seasons of hardship and sorrow and is designed to bring comfort and reassurance of Elohim's character and faithfulness to us rather than make us "feel" good all over.

Affirmation #2: Joy Is A Choice

Contrary to popular belief, cultivating joy is not effortless but rather straightforward. While some individuals possess a natural inclination towards positivity and gratitude, for many, maintaining joy can be challenging. It is easy to succumb to negativity, fear and discouragement, hindering the experience of true joy. Developing and nurturing a joy filled disposition requires dedication and practice. Consistency is key in fostering joy. It is essential to proactively safeguard your joy against external influences that seek to diminish it. Engage in activities like prayer, singing, dancing, laughter, fellowshiping with like-minded Christian people and reciting scripture to uplift your spirit. Seek divine assistance through prayer, expressing your earnest desire for enduring joy or get up with a minister, pastor or anyone who you know and trust to help you. While the journey to cultivating joy may require time and effort, the rewards it brings are invaluable.

Whatever you decide to do, do so from your heart and know that your action to do those things, feeds the spiritual spring in you, brings it out and to life. When you focus on positivity and work to put away your negative mindset, discard negative feelings and choose to be uplifted in spirit and truth, the Lord sees that and will release his joy. This can create the emotion of happiness, but that happiness is simply letting you know the goodness of your choice to be joyful in the Lord. In time, that happy feeling will go away, but your joy in Elohim will not and that joy is never defined by a feeling. It is defined by the truth of who Elohim is and remember, joy is celebration and a action on your part to embrace the positivity of Elohim.

Affirmation #3: Joy Affects Others

The infectious nature of joy is undeniable. The presence of a joyful individual tends to evoke a sense of joy in others. Surrounding oneself with joyful Christians is not only uplifting but also captivating. Even those who may be unaware of their search for joy are profoundly impacted when they encounter it, as joy stands out as a unique and compelling quality. Joy holds immense value and is a virtue to be spread. It is both a directive and a manifestation of spiritual growth. Sharing one's joy with others is not only encouraged, but essential and a sentiment that resonates universally with our siblings in the faith. In times when joy seems elusive, seeking out individuals naturally inclined toward joy can be beneficial, as they are often keen to spread it and share their joy with you. Just as Yeshua exemplified unwavering joy, even amidst great trials such as the cross, joy remains a constant presence waiting to be embraced.

Joy helps protect your faith because the action of joy helps us think about the Lord, his ways and how faithful he remains to us no matter what bad things happen in our lives. When I choose joy and to do something joyful, such as worshiping, signing or working on the ministries Yahweh has given us, we shouldn't actually focus on what our body is making us feel. We should focus on celebration. Joy is shielding our faith because it is coming from a place of understanding and truth centered in who Yahweh is. Chaos and joy cannot exist in the same place, so when we exercise this fruit of Ruwah, it instantly brings peace and shoves out chaos. This is the power of our Creator and such a trait of them has been given to us. As a body of believers we are blessed to know that joy simply isn't temporary "feeling", but a word steeped in action and celebration.

Personally, I would experience hardship, negativity or loss of something, friend, family or object and feel terrible about it. In my youth I could not understand the difference between happiness the emotion and spiritual joy that only Yahweh can produce. No one in my churches or leaders in my life understood that either. They combined the two and this just confused me, because

let me tell you something if I hold a person and watch them *die* in my arms, I do not want to smile, laugh or grin and act like that trauma didn't happen.

However, my leaders just told me to smile and be "happy" and to basically get over it because that's joy and that's what being joyful means and that the Lord wants me rejoice in gladness despite my suffering. See how confusing that sounds? Just writing this answer and recalling how joy was introduced to me makes me red in the face and hot under the collar. Had someone properly defined joy and human emotionalism to me, I would not have resented this word so much in my past. However, prior to maturing in the faith and delving deeper into study, I have come to understand the differences between the two words and their uses. Happiness, the emotion is fine and lovely, but you should do not carter to it or depend on it.

Our continual delight in Elohim is totally different. The thought of them, the act of worship to them, doing the very things that will make them pleased, creates spiritual joy, a constant connection with our Creator.

John 16: 22 says, "And ye know therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you."

Yeshua is assuring us of two things. First, we have/will have sorrow, but because he died and rose again, we have a joy no one can take from us. Not Lucifer, his Satans (Generals) who act on his behalf, not people, not seraphim, not death itself will steal us of our joy in the Lord. The only person who is going to hinder that joy from flowing forth, is ourself. If we choose to not embrace the joy of Elohim and let them work through us, that is on us, not the enemy.

Psalms 4: 7 says, "Thou has put gladness in my heart. More than in the time their corn and their wine increased."

This scripture simply proclaims that joy is not something we can put inside of us, but something only Elohim can awaken in our hearts. It's spiritual and something that must be done through spiritual means. You cannot purchase joy or find it in the world or in sin. It is given to you by Elohim and it is by his grace that we can even partake in it.

1 Chronicles 16: 27 says, “Glory and honor in his presence. Strength and gladness in his place.”

In Elohim there is not chaos, pain or sorrow. There is power, strength and gladness and thus should hit you different than happiness. If we put our trust and faith into the Lord’s hands, we will be glad because our Hashem is faithful and has ahavah with us. Therefore, who can rob or destroy you when your security is in the Most High? You may become annoyed with your earthy life on occasion and have much sorrow and reason to be angry, but don’t stop seeking joy because bad things happen. Elohim is going to restore this planet and a new kingdom will come down and Yeshua will reign forever and our joy will be present in that kingdom too.

You need to let that sink in and remind yourself that this toil under the sun is just temporary. Should you find yourself struggling to choose joy, you should call someone who has it so you can get blessed in their presence and have your spirits lifted. The person you called and confided these details to, should then come up with healthy methods to help you develop the discipline to celebrate joy in you life. One thing is for certain, if you stand still and do nothing and hinder yourself from acting, your joy will not activate. Yahweh, Ruwah and Yeshua cannot force anything onto you. You must choose them and express joy unto them to get relief from your frustrations. It is the only way to combat the forces of evil from Hell and in some cases, yourself.

Based on this week's topic, how will expressing your joy help your spirit when you're going through seasonings of suffering and hardship and what kind of impact will that have in your relationship with the Lord?

Answer: Type your response here.