

# Yeshua Taught Us How to Have Joy in Tribulation

The other day, I had three meetings with friends. The first meeting was at a coffee shop, the second over lunch and the third at a different coffee shop. The meetings were with three different groups of people, and the reasons for these meetings and the topics of discussion were different at each of the meetings. However, if you were to take the conversations at each and run them consecutively as one single stream, to an outsider, it would have seemed as if one continuous meeting had taken place with one single topic.

The first statement, which set the foundation for the string of conversations, was spoken by a friend who serves in local politics. On a side note: I am so thankful for godly men and women who serve their communities in political roles. Anyway, he said, "Have you ever really thought about joy? After all, joy and happiness are two completely different things. Happiness comes as a result of outside stimulus, while joy comes from the internal. That is why someone can be happy or unhappy. But you can only have joy; there is no way to be 'unjoy.'"

To make his point, he went on to quote from the book of James: "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (James 1:2, TLV).

The writer instructs his readers to consider it all joy when they encounter various trials. In other words, he says our joy should increase when we go through tests of faith.

It was within the same context of encountering difficulties

that Yeshua (Jesus) spoke the words we read in John 15 just before He told his disciples that the world would hate them just as the world first hated Him:

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“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be full” (John 15:11).

As I went from coffee to lunch and back to coffee that day, the conversation about the promise of joy given to the believer in Yeshua remained the central theme. The circumstances being discussed were different, but the promise of joy in those differing circumstances was the same. What a beautiful promise it is also, a promise that no matter what is going on in our lives, because of our faith and trust in Yeshua, our joy can be full.

As the conversations continued at my third coffee meeting, we were digging deeper into the words of John 15, especially the end of the verse where it says, “Your joy may be full.” After all, that seemed key to the promise, and fullness of joy was something we all wanted.

We looked up the Greek word *pléroó* to find out if there was a deeper or unusual meaning there. The definition we found was: “to make full.” So the meaning was basically what we all understood before looking it up. Then, someone suggested maybe the deeper meaning wasn’t in the definition but in the context of the verse, so we read the preceding verses.

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love! If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:9-10).

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Suddenly, lights went on and the discussion became animated. The words Yeshua said in John 15:11, which begin with the words: "These words I have spoken to you," were spoken directly following the words found in John 15:9, given above.

In other words, Yeshua connected our having fullness of joy with our abiding in His love. But He didn't stop there. He continued to say in verse 10, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."

At this point in the conversation, we redirected our attention to the Greek word *pléroó* and were reminded of another place Yeshua used that word, in Matthew 5:17-19:

*"Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets! I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. Amen, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or serif shall ever pass away from the Torah until all things come to pass. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps and teaches them, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*

It wasn't until that conversation that I noticed the connection between these two passages spoken by Yeshua. It is my hope that as you are reading these two statements, you will also connect them so that your joy may also be full.

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