

## THE JOY OF THE LORD = STRENGTH

After the sons of Israel had experienced decades in captivity God brought them back to their land. Part of this story is found in the book of Nehemiah.

*Then he said to them, "Go, eat the best, drink the sweet, and share with others who have nothing prepared; for today is holy to our Lord God. Do not be (sucked into worry), for the joy of the LORD is your strength." You could also say this "strengthen yourselves in God's joy." (Nehemiah 8:10)*

*The word picture here:*

We build our own room of joy inside of what we know about God. What does it look like to build a room in your heart where God's strength is filling it? What kinds of joy-things would be found in your joy-room?

What is it that you know for sure about God? About Jesus?

There is a difference between happiness and joy. Personal happiness comes about when we get what we want. Joy occurs when God get what He wants - and we are blessed. How do we tell the difference?

What are the things which cause you to worry?  
(home/school/friends/feelings)

What do you do when this kind of worry is happening to you?  
(talk to God/talk to someone you trust/focus on the things which bring you joy)

**Have you ever sung this Psalm song before?** (Psalm 126)  
(don't forget the place you clap-clap)

When the Lord brought back the captive ones, we were like those who lived in a dream.  
Our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with a joyful shout!  
For the Lord has done great things. For the Lord has done great things.  
For the Lord has done great things and we are glad.

Restore us from our captivity O Lord as the streams that flow in the south.  
Those who weep and sow in tears, will reap with a joyful shout.  
For the Lord has done great things. For the Lord has done great things.  
For the Lord has done great things and we are glad.