The Joy of the Lord is Our Strength

One of the great blessings that we get as born again Christians is joy. C. S. Lewis wrote a book one time entitled Surprised by Joy. My favorite verse about joy is found in Nehemiah 8:10. The context of this verse is during a day of worship and thanksgiving to the Lord after God helped the returning Jews to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem which they needed for protection. During the building, there were no great miracles like in the book of Exodus (as man would see it). But, through hard work and determination even while they were being threatened they rebuilt the wall.

In Nehemiah 8 they heard the word of God all morning long from Ezra and the priests. They then came under deep conviction of their sins and began to weep. But, the religious leaders said Nehemiah 8:10 to them, *"Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet and send portions to those to whom nothing is prepared for this day is holy to the Lord, do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.'"*

In saying this to the people, God was telling them to rejoice in the Lord, to eat and drink and to allow God to be their strength. In fact, God was joyful in this verse and as He was joyful He promised to give strength to His people. It is His joy that gives us joy. It is His joy that gives us strength.

Psalm 16:11, *"Thou will show me the path of life. In thy presence is fullness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."* This verse tells us that when we are right with God and in His presence there is fullness of joy. Truly the joy of the Lord is our strength!