

# SPIRITUAL DIGEST

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**N O B O D Y C A N D O A S  
M U C H D A M A G E T O  
T H E C H U R C H O F G O D  
A S T H E M A N W H O I S  
W I T H I N I T S W A L L S ,  
B U T N O T W I T H I N I T S  
L I F E .**

**- C H A R L E S S P U R G E O N**



# THE JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH



**Neh 8:10 ...for the joy of the LORD is your strength. Phil 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.**

"For the joy of the Lord is your strength." The life that God has given us is expressed in joy. Our Lord Jesus lives in an atmosphere of joy, rejoicing, praise, and thanksgiving. This is the lesson I have learned during the past few years. In the past, I knew that I was forgiven and that I had endured, consecrated, and obeyed the Lord. But I felt somewhat bitter, and there were some small complaints. I could not thank and praise the Lord. Whenever we cannot thank and praise Him, we are defeated. Brothers and sisters, our victory is found in our joy. Whenever we throw away our joy and rejoicing, we throw away our victory as well. Whenever we throw away our joy and rejoicing, we become bound. A brother testified that he

had never realized as much as in these past few days that joy affords strength. Whenever we are not joyful and rejoicing, we are depressed. We have to maintain our victory in joy and rejoicing. Victory is like a fish which must be kept in water. Victory has to be kept in joy and rejoicing. We should maintain our victory in joy and rejoicing.



## GREAT JOY IN THE MIDST OF AFFLICTIONS

**2 Cor 8:2 That in much proving of affliction the abundance of their joy...**

**1 Pet 1:8 Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory,**

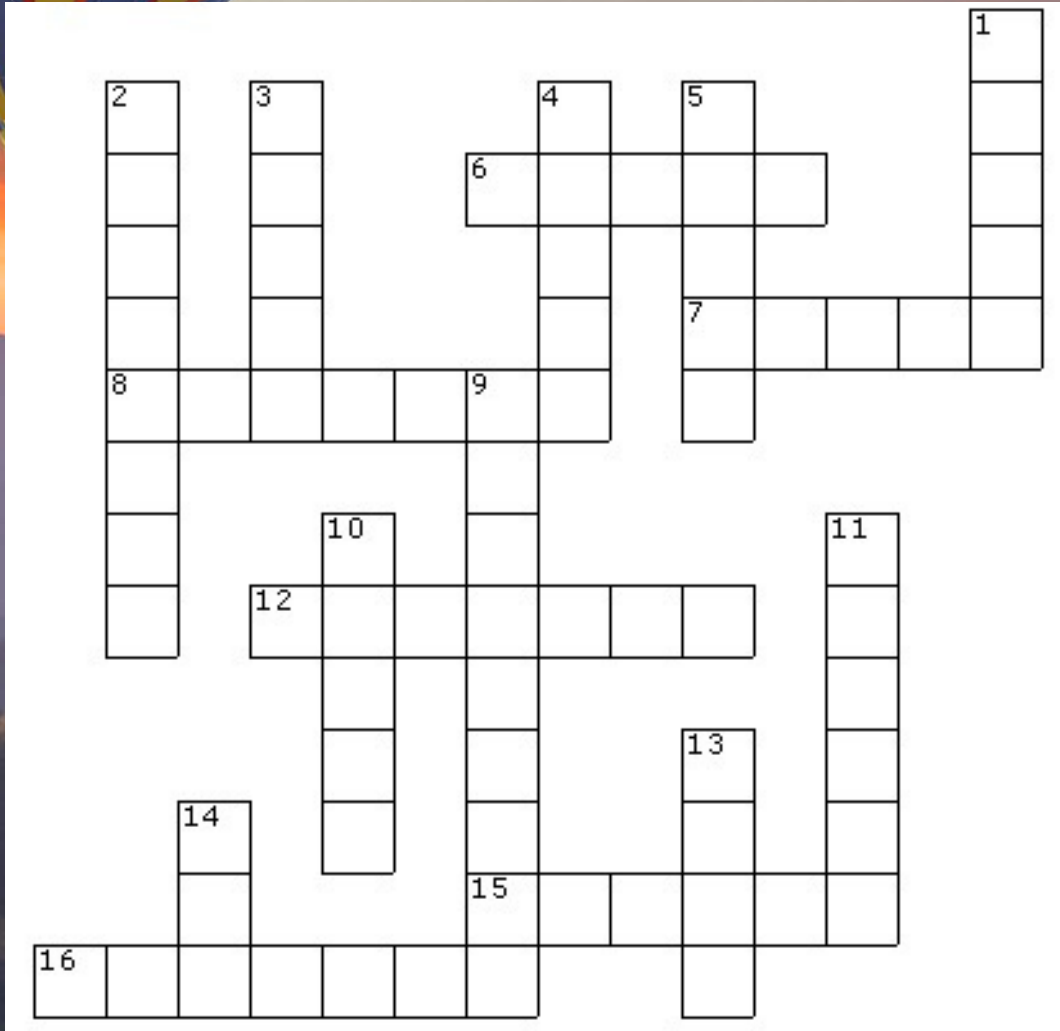
This verse tells us that the Macedonians had the abundance of joy in the midst of much testing and affliction. They did not have one or two drops of joy but the abundance of joy.

Brothers and sisters, we have to always rejoice, and we have to have the abundance of joy. Even in the midst of tribulations, we should still rejoice. Can there be grief? Yes, there can; in fact, grief is unavoidable. As long as our tear ducts are here, tears will always come. But even though there may be tears, there is also rejoicing. There is no way to describe this joy. Many times, while our tears are still wet, we are already shouting, "Hallelujah!" Many

times, while tears are still rolling, our mouths are thanking and praising God. Many people have tears that are mingled with their thanksgiving and praises... Let me say a word that might not appeal to you: Christians are a pattern to others on earth. God has placed us on earth as a pattern to others. If we weep when others weep and become frustrated when others are frustrated, we will become the same as everyone else. Where then is our victory? We should show the world that in the midst of these matters, we have joy and strength. We may appear crazy to them, but they will hunger after the Christ who makes us so "crazy." May the Lord be gracious to us so that we will express the victory of Christ in the midst of tribulations.

# BIBLICAL CROSSWORD PUZZLE

## ABRAHAM



### ACROSS

- 6 First wife's original name
- 7 Abraham's original name
- 8 A daughter-in-law
- 12 First son
- 15 Land promised to Abraham's descendants
- 16 Last wife

### DOWN

- 1 Wicked city destroyed by God
- 2 Wicked city destroyed by God
- 3 A grandson
- 4 First wife
- 5 Wife's handmaiden
- 9 King of Philistines

# THE ORIGINS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEPTUAGINT

The very first translation of the Hebrew Bible was made into Greek, probably as early as the third century BC. This, the so-called Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, is traditionally dated to the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (285-246 BC).

It is commonly called the 'Septuagint' version (from the Latin for 'seventy') because according to the traditional account of its origin, preserved in the so-called Letter of Aristeas, it had seventy-two translators. This letter tells how King Ptolemy II commissioned the royal librarian, Demetrius of Phaleron, to collect by purchase or by copying all the books in the world. He wrote a letter to Eleazar, the high priest at Jerusalem, requesting six elders of each tribe, in total seventy-two men, of exemplary life and learned in the Torah, to translate it into Greek.

On arrival at Alexandria, the translators were greeted by the king and given a sumptuous banquet. They were then closeted in a secluded house on the island of Pharos close to the seashore, where the celebrated 110 m. high lighthouse, one of the Seven



Wonders of the Ancient World, had just been finished.

According to the Letter of Aristeas, the translation, made under the direction of Demetrius, was completed in seventy-two days. When the Alexandrian Jewish community assembled to hear a reading of the new version, the translators and Demetrius received lavish praise, and a curse was pronounced on anyone who should alter the text by addition, transposition or omission. The work was then read to the king who, according to the Letter of Aristeas, marveled at the mind of the lawgiver. The translators were then sent back to Jerusalem, endowed with gifts for themselves and the high priest Eleazar.

Later generations embellished the story. Philo of Alexandria, writing in the first century AD, says that each of the seventy-two translators were shut in a separate cell, and miraculously all the texts were said to agree exactly with one another, thus proving that their version was directly inspired by God.

The significance of the Septuagint translation can hardly be overestimated. Following the conquests of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC), Greek became the official

language of Egypt, Syria and the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. The Septuagint translation made the Hebrew scriptures available both to the Jews who no longer spoke their ancestral language and to the entire Greek-speaking world. The Septuagint was later to become the Bible of the Greek-speaking early Church, and is frequently quoted in the New Testament.

It was the adoption of the Septuagint by the early Church that was the biggest factor in its eventual abandonment by the Jews. The Septuagint's use of *parthenos*, meaning 'virgin' in Isaiah 7:14 to describe the mother of the promised son Immanuel, was used by Matthew 1:23 as evidence for Jesus' virgin birth.

Like any translation the Septuagint has its limitations, but it was the first translation of any part of the Hebrew Bible into another language, so its place in world history is assured. Furthermore, its use as the version of the Old Testament most frequently used by the writers of the New Testament only serves to further enhance its significance.

A H Y M N A D A Y K E E P S  
Y O U H U M M I N G A L L T H E  
W A Y



## He Giveth More Grace

1

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase,  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,  
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men,  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,  
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

2

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half-done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.



# MARK 4

## WEEKLY BIBLE CHAPTER READS

**Mk 4:1** And again He began to teach beside the sea, and a very great crowd was gathered unto Him, so that He stepped into a boat in the sea and sat down, and all the crowd was on the land, facing the sea.

**Mk 4:2** And He taught them many things in parables and said to them in His teaching:

**Mk 4:3** Listen! Behold, the sower went out to sow.

**Mk 4:4** And as he sowed, some seed fell beside the way, and the birds came and devoured it.

**Mk 4:5** And other seed fell on the rocky place, where it did not have much earth, and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth.

**Mk 4:6** And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered.

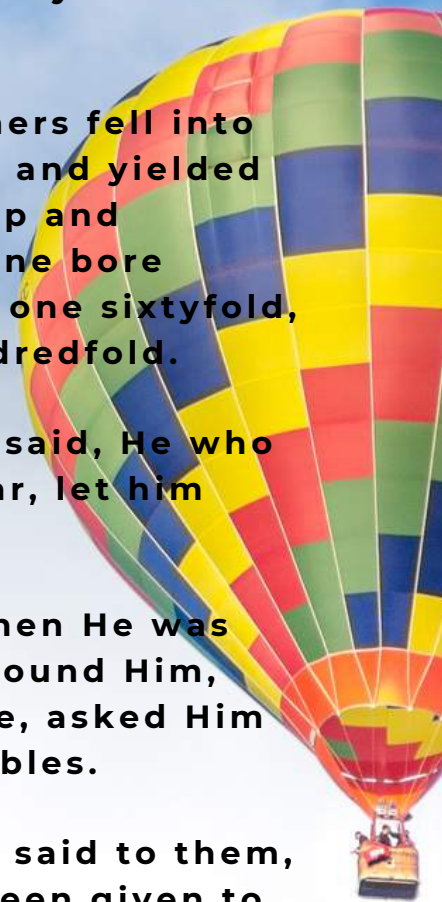
**Mk 4:7** And other seed fell into the thorns, and the thorns came up and utterly choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

**Mk 4:8** And others fell into the good earth and yielded fruit, coming up and growing; and one bore thirtyfold, and one sixtyfold, and one a hundredfold.

**Mk 4:9** And He said, He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

**Mk 4:10** And when He was alone, those around Him, with the twelve, asked Him about the parables.

**Mk 4:11** And He said to them, To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those outside, all things are in parables,



**Mk 4:12** In order that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest they turn and it be forgiven them.

**Mk 4:13** And He said to them, Do you not know this parable? And how will you know all the parables?

**Mk 4:14** The sower sows the word.

**Mk 4:15** And these are the ones beside the way, where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown into them.

**Mk 4:16** And likewise, these are the ones being sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.

**Mk 4:17** Yet they have no root in themselves, but last only for a time; then when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately they are stumbled.

**Mk 4:18** And others are the ones being sown into the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,

**Mk 4:19** And the anxieties of the age and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts for other things enter in and utterly choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

**Mk 4:20** And these are the ones sown on the good earth: those who hear the word and receive it and bear fruit, one thirtyfold, and one sixtyfold, and one a hundredfold.

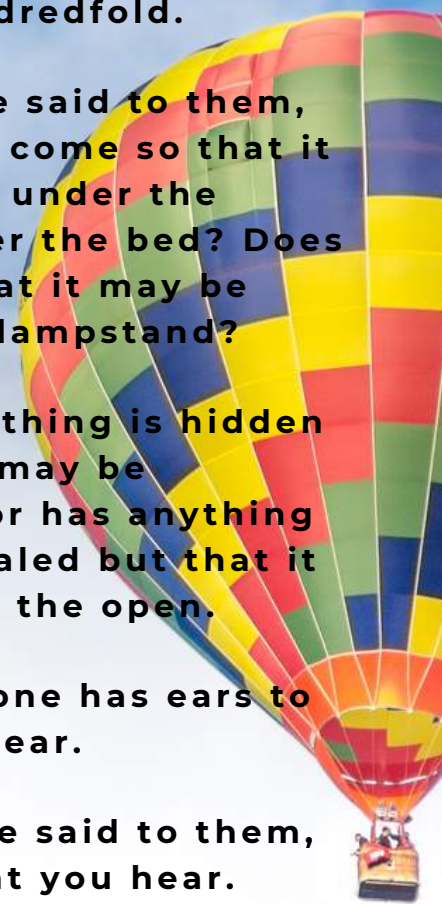
**Mk 4:21** And He said to them, Does the lamp come so that it may be placed under the bushel or under the bed? Does it not come that it may be placed on the lampstand?

**Mk 4:22** For nothing is hidden except that it may be manifested, nor has anything become concealed but that it may come into the open.

**Mk 4:23** If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.

**Mk 4:24** And He said to them, Take heed what you hear. With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you, and it shall be added to you.

**Mk 4:25** For he who has, it shall be given to him; and he who does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.



**Mk 4:26** And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,

**Mk 4:27** And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens — how, he does not know.

**Mk 4:28** The earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.

**Mk 4:29** But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.

**Mk 4:30** And He said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God, or in what parable shall we present it?

**Mk 4:31** It is like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown on the earth, is smaller than all the seeds on the earth.

**Mk 4:32** And when it is sown, it comes up and becomes greater than all the herbs and produces great branches, so that the birds of heaven can roost under its shade.

**Mk 4:33** And in many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear;

**Mk 4:34** And without a parable He did not speak to them; but privately to His own disciples He explained all things.

**Mk 4:35** And He said to them on that day when evening had fallen, Let us go over to the other side.

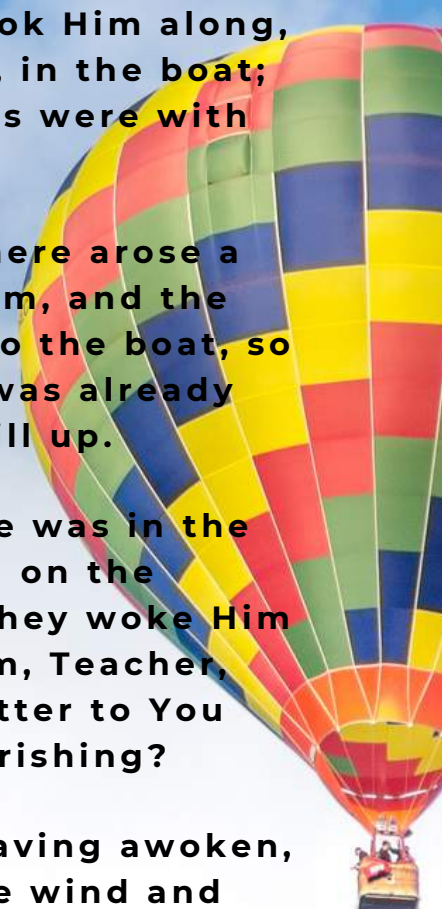
**Mk 4:36** And leaving the crowd, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat; and other boats were with Him.

**Mk 4:37** And there arose a great windstorm, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already beginning to fill up.

**Mk 4:38** And He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they woke Him and said to Him, Teacher, does it not matter to You that we are perishing?

**Mk 4:39** And having awoken, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Be silent! Be still! And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

**Mk 4:40** And He said to them, Why are you cowardly in this way? How is it that you do not have faith?



**Mk 4:41 And they became greatly frightened and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?**

