

## “Reviving Joy”

By Mrs. Sojourner

Have you ever noticed that some people feel compelled to act somber when going to church or discussing a “religious topic”? Please do not misunderstand me, revering God and his ways is very important, but when faces get almost dour every time a spiritual topic is even mentioned, one could wonder, “What happened to the joy?” Consider with me the following passage:

9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. 10 Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." 11 The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a sacred day. Do not grieve." 12 Then all the people went away...to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them. Nehemiah 8:9-12 (NIV)

The Word of the Lord so convicted the people that



Notes:

they wept, but Nehemiah and the priests insisted the people celebrate with joy instead of mourning.

Why should they not mourn? The Word of the Lord has convicted them, and the initial response of grieving over their sin is appropriate, but staying in that grief is not. Dwelling on how terrible we are, or were, means we are dwelling on us, not on the wonderful Savior who delivered us.

Nehemiah and the priests told the people to (and the people made the decision to) be joyful and reminded them “the joy of the Lord is your strength” (vs. 10). They then had a period of celebration and joy, which thereby strengthened their spirits so they could continue the Lord’s work and faint not. Let us do the same.

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# Sojourning

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...with The Sojourner

## “Destiny, Resurrected!” (Teaching Sketch)

Genesis 41:39-46 (NIV)



What has been determined for you in destiny<sup>[1]</sup>? What was determined by God when he created you for your function to be? Will you fulfill God’s destiny for you, or will you fulfill your destiny for you. Is your destiny for you the same as the destiny God created you to fulfill?

Bearing in mind that sin is defined as “missing the mark or the target” set by God.

### God’s Target

God’s target is a target which God places as a relationship to him. God sets the requirements for this target. A person’s relationship to God is determined by the decision to focus on the target set by God and only God.

God’s target is the fulfilling of one’s purpose, which is in fact reaching one’s destiny.

### Man’s Target

Many times God’s target is viewed as attempting to live a life containing as little sin or “mark missing” in it as can be achieved by the individual

seeking to be a godly person and thus go to heaven to be with God for eternity.

Notes:

[1] Destiny = a predetermined course of events often held to be an irresistible power or agency

This view is, unfortunately, salvation by works. God expects and desires salvation by grace, His grace. When a person decides they will simply be a moral person as God determines right from wrong they have, in fact said, usually without realizing it, that they do not need the sacrifice of Christ on the cross (God’s plan). If asked they will often repeat that they know salvation is a gift from God, it is not due to their behavior as a moral person (salvation by works).

The sad thing about this view that moral living alone is serving God, is that the person is deceived into believing moral living is service.

First of all, living by God’s standards cannot be even coming close to the mark God has for anyone. Coming to God’s target can only be achieved by allowing the Spirit of God to be in a person to guide and correct one toward the target as set forth by God, himself.

## Scripture:

### Genesis 41:39-46 (NIV)

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you."

### Joseph in Charge of Egypt

41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command,

#### Notes:

[a]  
1 Bow  
down

[b]  
Watch-  
tower

[c]  
Devo-  
tee of  
Neith,  
the  
Egyp-  
tian  
Mi-  
nerva

[d]  
Be-  
longing  
to the  
sun

[e]  
Strength

and men shouted before him, "Make way <sup>[a]</sup>!"

Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

44 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt." 45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah <sup>[b]</sup> and gave him Asenath <sup>[c]</sup> daughter of Potiphara, <sup>[d]</sup> priest of On, <sup>[e]</sup> to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt.

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Genesis 41:39-46 (NIV)

This then, is a God-centered life where the course is divinely directed, not human opinion directed, toward and in holiness.

The allowing and doing of this Holy Spirit guidance then will lead to true holiness which is both moral living and moral service through the development of the gifts which God has given severally as He wills.

### Resurrecting Destiny!

God's blessings overtake the Believer as the Believer operates, not vegetates! The believer can miss the mark completely by pride of and in their own works unless they live a Spirit-filled and driven life. The Spirit-filled and driven life is one that is characterized by appropriate action out of guidance by the Holy Spirit and the Word to show and operate in the new life in Christ. It is only through God-targeted service that the person may experience the resurrecting of their life's destiny which comes in two parts. The first is the set destiny in this life being fulfilled, which enables part two, being their destiny for eternity in their eternal purpose set by Almighty God.

### Just so you'll know:

**Our service is informal.** We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
  - Testimonies are often a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise & Worship**
- **Words of Prophecy or Knowledge** if they have been given during "Praise & Worship" (other times as the Spirit moves).
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Comments & Questions**
- **Prayer Requests**
  - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

