

7/12/2026

Welcome / Prayer

Thanks to Mark Hover for taking last Sunday

So we left off at Ezra 8's fast by the river,

Ezra 8: ²¹ Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions. ²² For I was ashamed to request from the king troops and horsemen to protect us from the enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, "The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him, but His power and His anger are against all those who forsake Him." ²³ So we fasted and sought our God concerning this *matter*, and He listened to our entreaty.

because they had a huge company of goods, who knows, about \$500M by camel across rough country.

What's the point of their fast?

Isa 58:5 "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed?

Isaiah 58:6 "Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke?

What yoke might have been on Ezra as the leader of a sizeable company of FAMILIES and a ginormous amount of money, prepping to trek across 5 months of strange lands?

Fear. Doubt. Worry.

Are you a bad person because you have fear, because you doubt, when you worry?

Unmitigated, this can lead to

- Fear → Inaction, overcome by courage – you practice what you know
 - (consider Rahab), she was between 2 superpowers AND forced to decide who God really is
- Doubt → double-mindedness, overcome by practice (solid food)
- Worry → anxiety, overcome by what comes out of prayer, and trust

Regarding fear, think about the Jews going into captivity in their doom stage of their tyler cycle, before Ezra of course.

Isa 41:10 ¶ 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Wha'd God tell Joshua just before going into the land of Giants?

Jos 1:6 "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

He could tell him this because He just finished recapping what He was about to do, reminding Joshua of His plans.

What does the bible tell us about being double-minded / second guessing?

James 1: ² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. ⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Luke 9:62 "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Heb 10:38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.

2Pet 3:17 be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,

The double mindedness w/ respect to having faith comes in when we want to save “our lives” (reputation, image, possessions, guarantees, even our physical lives) AND do something in faith.

And about worry?

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

and

1Pe 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

- casting all your *anxieties* things that distract you
- because he *gives a dang about you* –
 - Mark 4 don't you *care* we're going to die in this storm out here??
 - John 10 the hireling flees the wolf because he could *care less* about the sheep, right?

So what do you do when you are in between a rock and a hard place?

- Did God call them to the work?
- Did He supply them with all they needed?
- Was the road open for them to travel?
- What kept them from kicking it into gear? (the fear/doubt/worry).

The fasting was humbling ones self and breaking those yokes off.

How do those yokes get broken?

Jeremiah 28:4 “I will break the yoke”

Jeremiah 28:11 “even so, I will break the yoke”

Jeremiah 30:8 “I will break his yoke”

Ezekial 30:18 “when I break there the yoke”

Nahum 1:13 “I will break his yoke”

and how does God do this?

Isa 10:27 So it will be in that day, that his burden will be removed from your shoulders and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke will be broken because of fatness.

by the conclusion of that fast, they were so full of God that the rubber band of fear, doubt, second-guessing had broken off and they were singlely minded. “I'd rather die than cheat God out of protecting me”.

If appropriate, can share that dreadful day in the brown '79 pickup with the demon possessed woman.