

# GAMMA 26

**GAMMA** SERIES

# PRAYING THE PSALMS

**Bridging Intimacy With God** 

Praying our Doubts Part 1

Psalm 73

# IN THE DARK

The Assurance of Faith Beyond a Shadow of Doubt

OS GUINNESS

## PRAYING OUR DOUBTS PART 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR DOUBTS

- 1. Admission of doubt
- 2. Reasons for doubt
- 3. Wrestling with our doubt



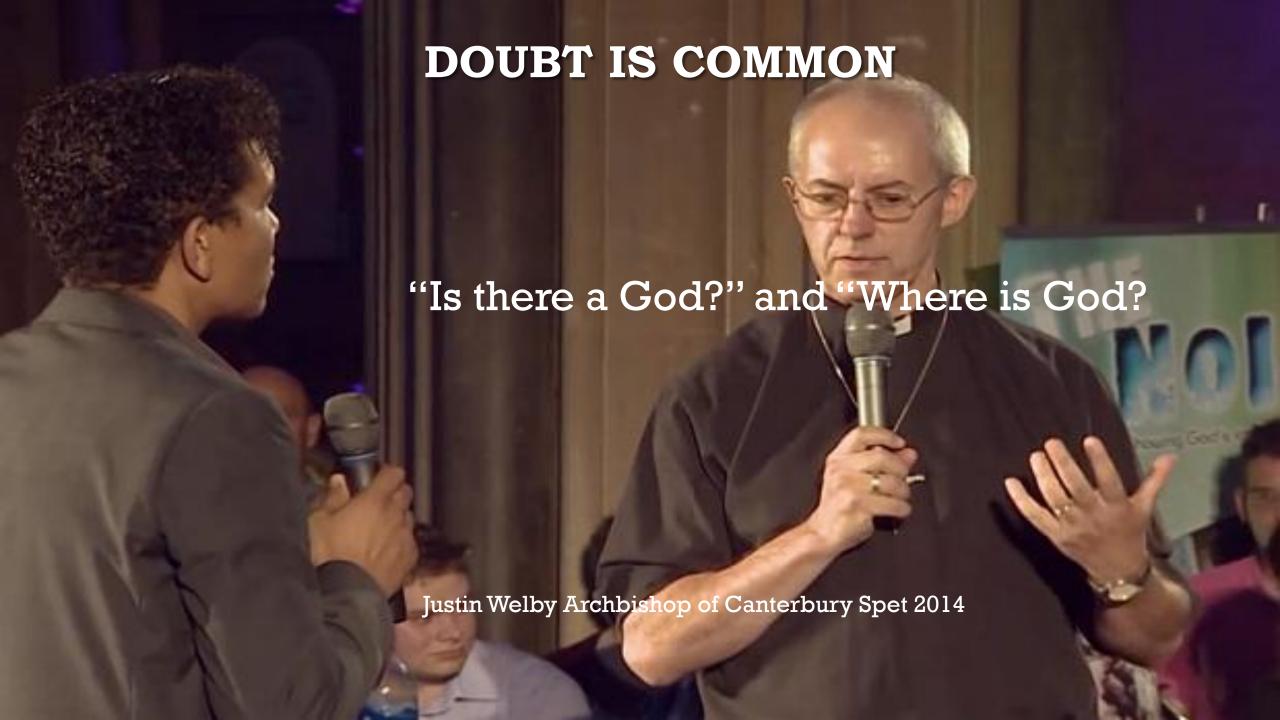
#### THE DOUBT

Reveal gaps in our faith

Psalms 73:1-2 (ESV) 1 Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,

my steps had nearly slipped.





#### CS LEWIS

Now that I am a Christian I do have moods in which the whole thing looks very improbable; but when I was an atheist I had moods in which Christianity looked terribly probable.



#### **CLASH OF MINDSETS**

1 Corinthians 1:21-23 (ESV) . 22 For Jews demand signs and <u>Greeks seek wisdom</u>, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a <u>stumbling block to Jews</u> and folly to <u>Gentiles</u>,

THE SCIENCES MIND HEALTH TECH SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION VIDEO PODCASTS BLOGS STORE

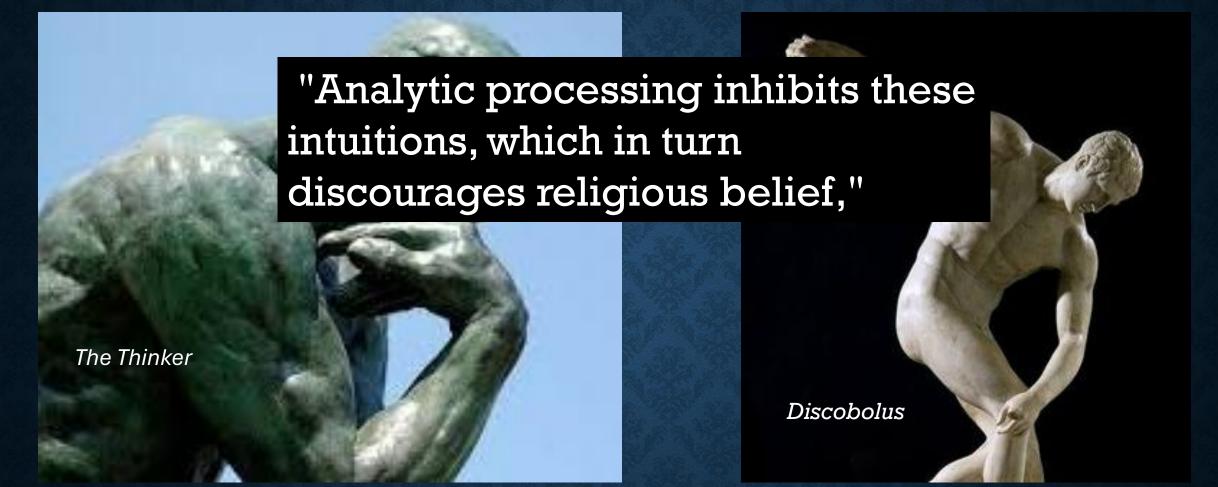
Q

MIND

### Losing Your Religion: Analytic Thinking Can Undermine Belief

A series of new experiments shows that analytic thinking can override intuitive assumptions, including those that underlie religious belief

By Marina Krakovsky on April 26, 2012



Score for belief in God was 41.42

Score for belief in God was 61.55

University of British Columbia psychologists Will Gervais and Ara Norenzayan



"It is not primarily a Christian problem, but a human problem . . . . The root of doubt is not in our faith but in our humanness

Os Guiness



# HE CALLED HIS DOUBT UNBELIEF JESUS DID NOT

Mark 9:23-25 (ESV) All things are possible for one who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" 25 And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.



Destructive

#### THE PROBLEM WITH SUPPRESSING DOUBT





"God was the center of everything," Doubt was the opposition of sheafty. And so quite of old out to the sheafty of out to the center of everything," sheafty of out to the center of everything," but the center of everything, is a supplied to the center of everything, and the center of everything, is a supplied to the center of everything, is a supplied to the center of everything. mayorisces Eerda's the are assens ove got maspiete Weisaher wors to each other in a little practice room, made that's how we fell for each othwe escreps about Gook It was all Christianthen Chucech' for some of the beliefs that we had."





#### THE NATURE OF DOUBT

But doubt is not the opposite of faith .... doubt suggests that there is a lack of faith somewhere, but a person can doubt and still have a perfectly sound trust in God. Doubt is rather a state of uncertainty, a spiritual fork in our road

Littleton

#### DOUBT IS NOT UNBELIEF

Rejecting the proposition

Unbelief



Accepting the proposition



Two minds Foot in each boat



#### MARTIN LUTHER

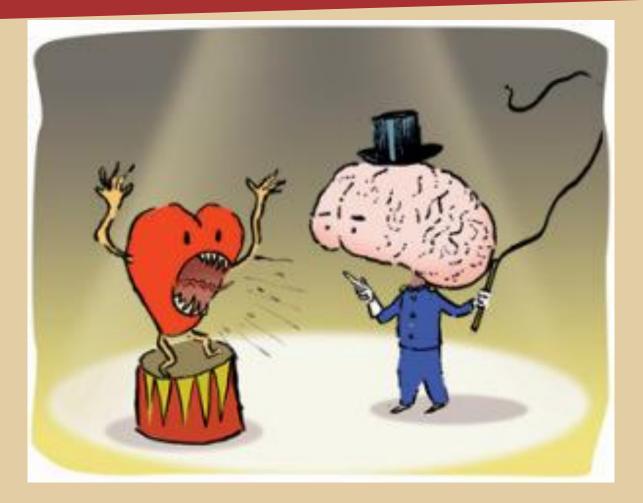
Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason, my conscience is captive to the Word of God

## PRAYING OUR DOUBTS PART 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR DOUBTS

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- 2. Reasons for doubt
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#### TRIGGERING FACTOR: NEW EXPERIENCES

Psalms 73:3-5 (ESV) 3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the **prosperity of the wicked**.

4 For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are **fat and sleek**.

5 They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.



Psalms 73:12-13 (ESV) Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.

13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.







#### COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

Psalms 42:8 By day the LORD commands **his steadfast** love,

and at night his song is with me,

a prayer to the God of my life.

11By this I know that you delight in me:

my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.



Psalms 44:9-12 (ESV) But you have rejected us and disgraced us and have not gone out with our armies. 10 You have made us turn back from the foe, and those who hate us have gotten spoil. ll You have made us like sheep for slaughter and have scattered us among the nations. 12 You have sold your people for a trifle, demanding no high price for them.



Psalms 44:17 (ESV) All this has come upon us, though we have not forgotten you, and we have not been false to your covenant.

Psalms 44:22 (ESV) Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long;

we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.





#### WE FORGET TO REMEMBER

Psalms 73:16-17 (ESV) But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, 17 **until** I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.

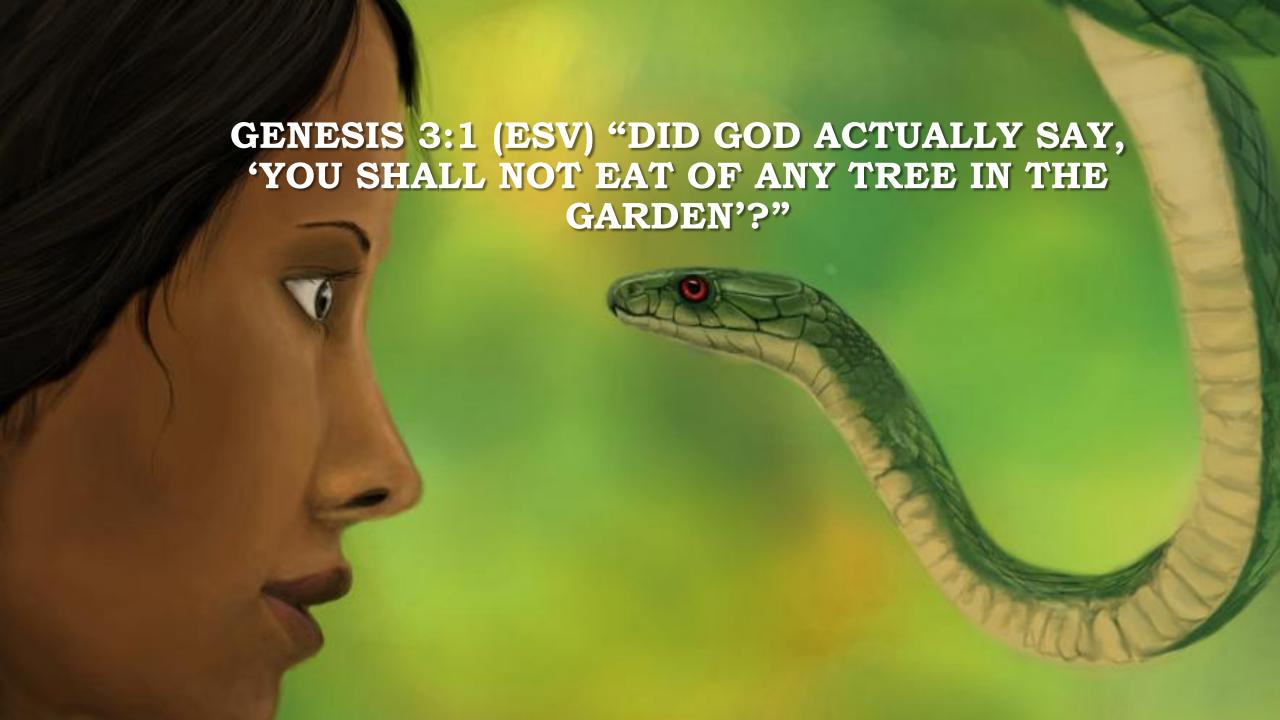
From the [example of] the past the man of the present acts prudently so as not to imperil the future

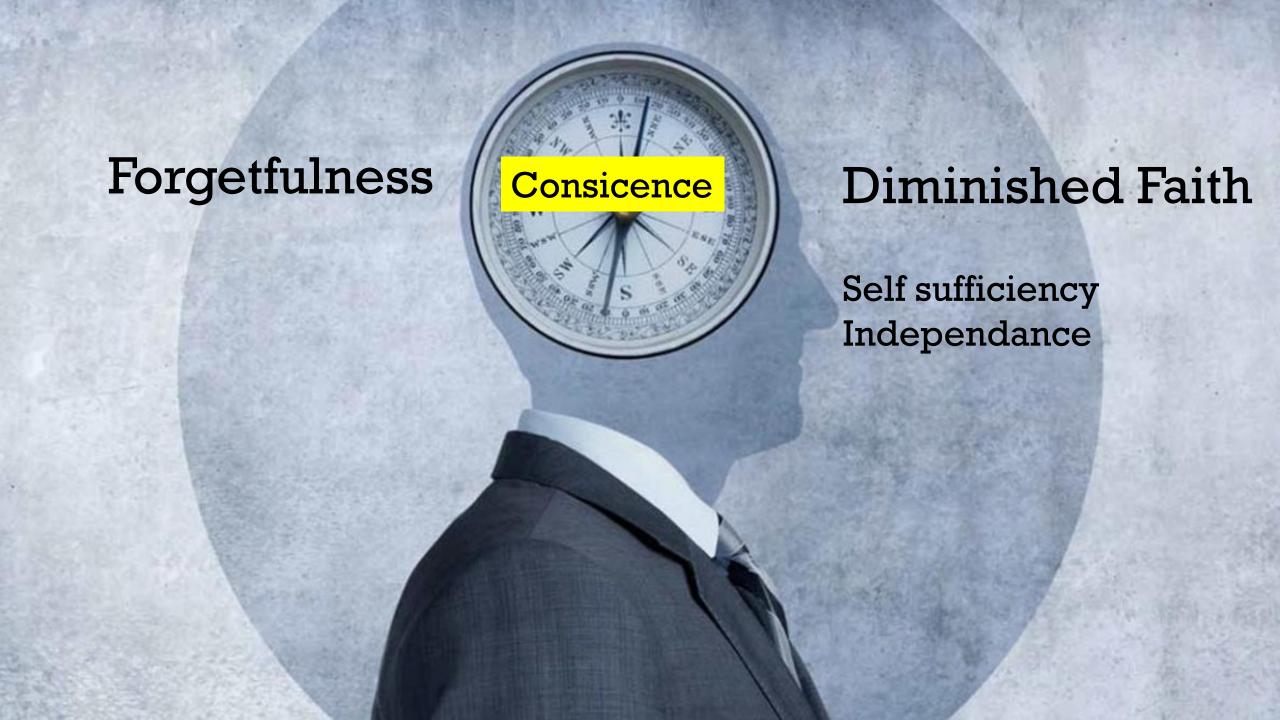
Past

**Future** 

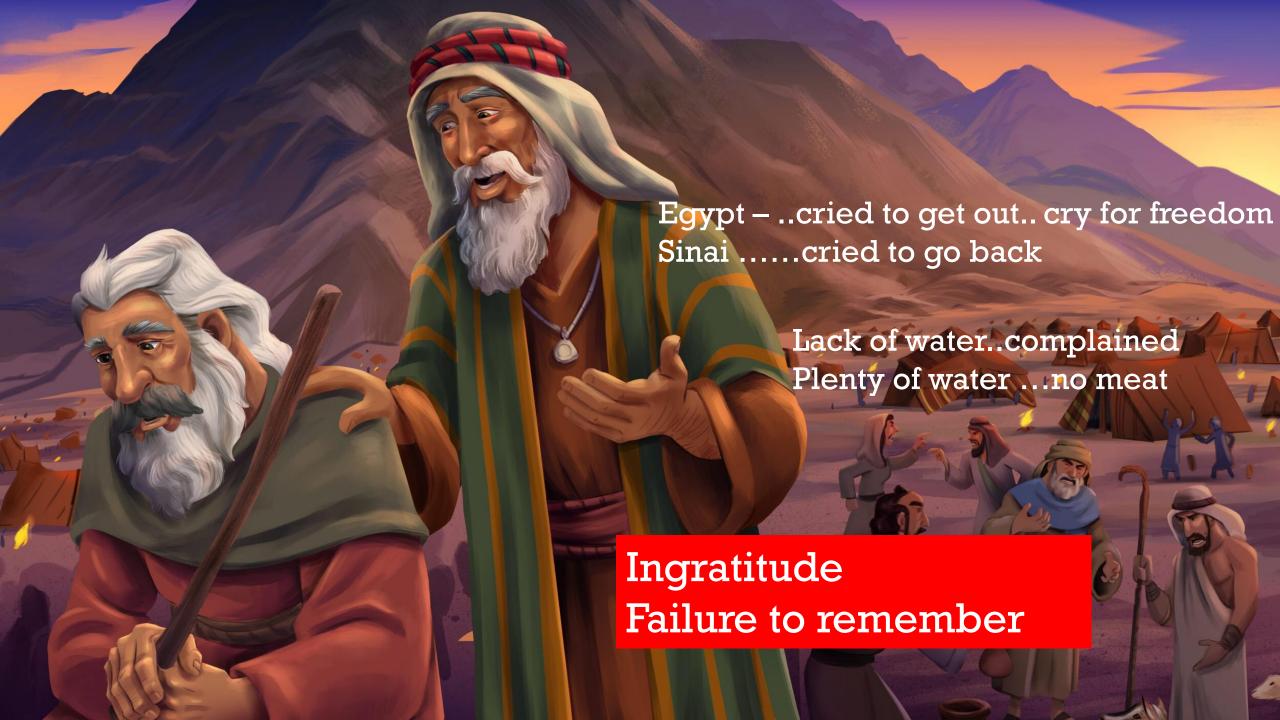
Present

Titian's An Allegory of Prudence.









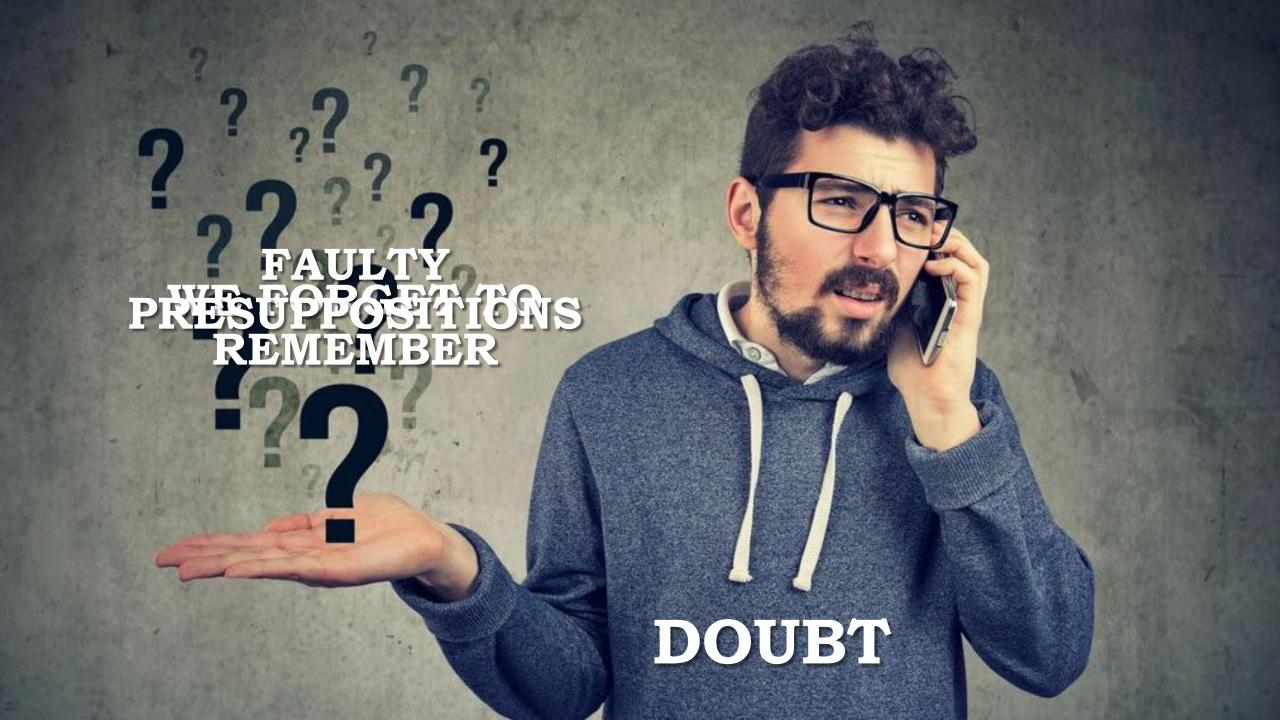
- Exodus 13:3 (ESV) 3 Then Moses said to the people, "**Remember** this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place.
- Deuteronomy 6:12 (ESV) 12 then take care lest you **forget the LORD**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- Deuteronomy 8:2 (ESV) 2 And you shall <u>remember</u> the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you







Doubt full grown is not a lapse of memory but willful refusal to remember





### FAULTY PRESUPPOSITIONS

Psalms 73:13-14 (ESV) All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.

### WHAT IS GOD TO YOU

Useful
God is giver
of Gifts

Beautiful
God Himself
is the Gift



## PHILIP YANCEY

DISAPPOINTMENT WITH GOD

Three Questions No One Asks Aloud

"We tend to think, 'Life should be fair because God is fair.' But God is not life. And if I confuse God with the physical reality of life-by expecting constant good health for example- then I set myself up for crashing disappointment."

### Sacked airman says dismissal proves honesty doesn't pay in Malaysia

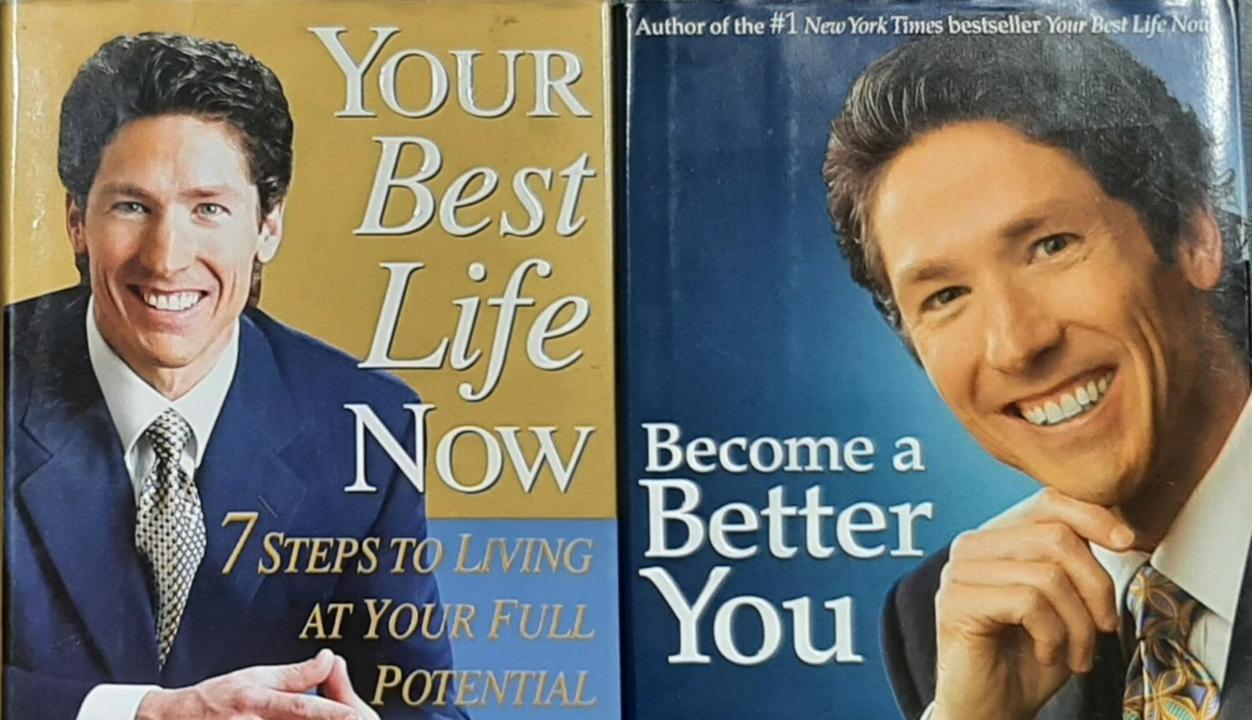
### MAJOR ZAIDI AHMAD

www.themalaymailonline.com



"The honest ones are often the 'criminals', while liars who betray are the ones who are adulated and given various recognitions"





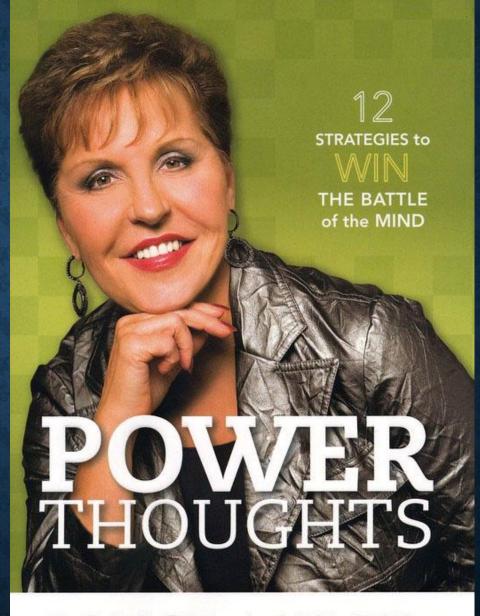
AUTHOR OF THE NO. 1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

### JOEL STEEN



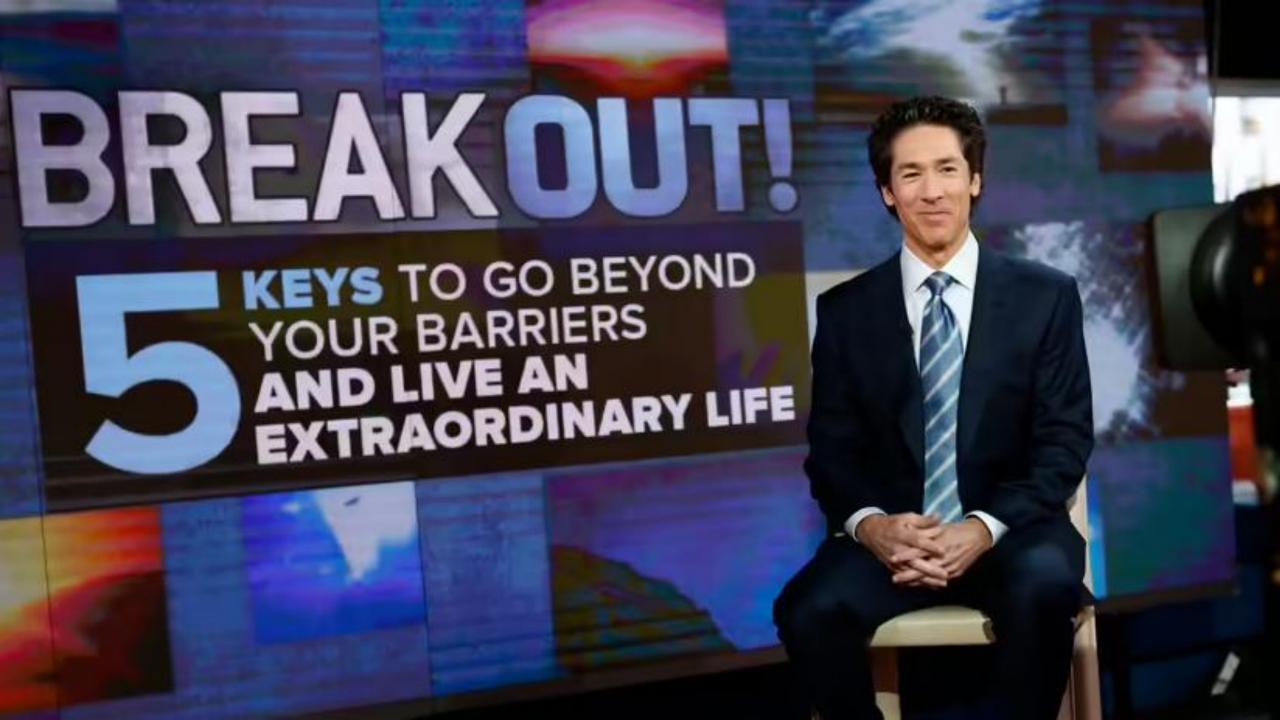
7 Keys to Improving Your Life Every Day

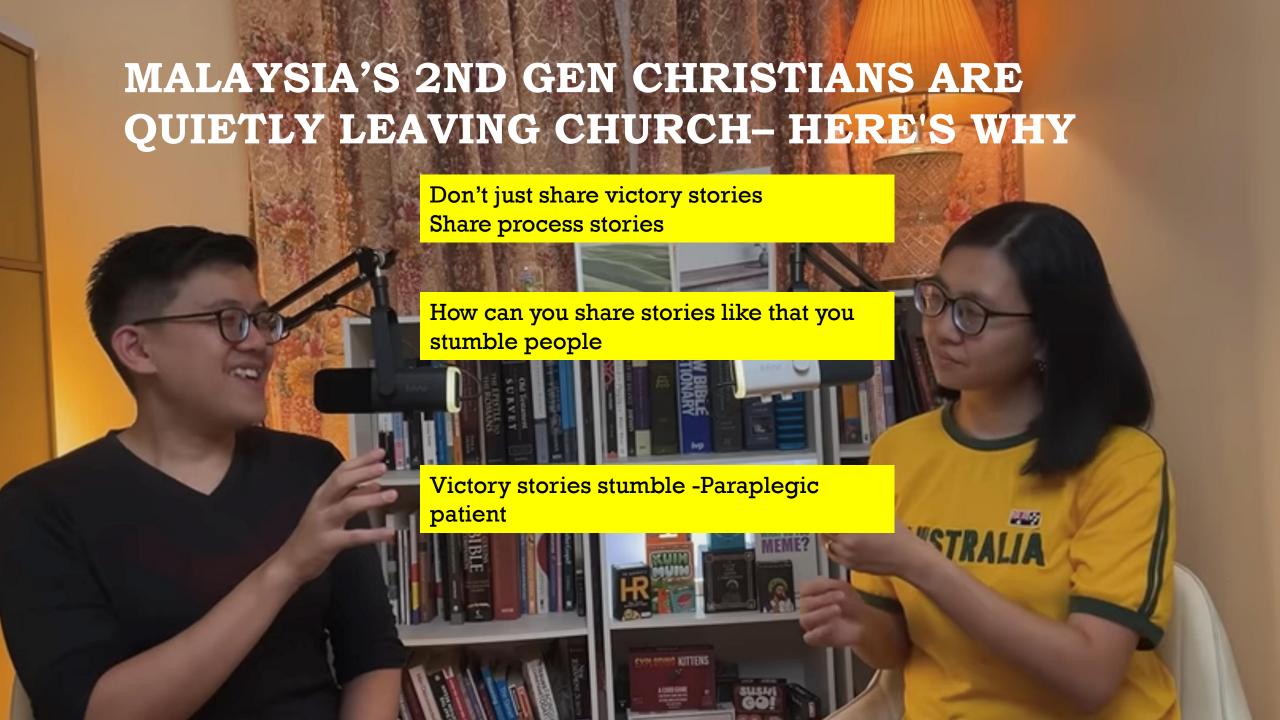
BECOME A
BETTER YOU



### JOYCE MEYER

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR





#### **DOUBT**

### His compassion

Mark 1:40 (ESV) And a
leper came to him,
imploring him, and
kneeling said to him, "If
you will, you can make me
clean.

#### His Ability

• Mark 9:21-23 (ESV) And he said, "From childhood, 22 And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." 23 And Jesus said to him, "'If you can'! All things are possible for one who believes."



### OUR GOD IS TOO SMALL

Genesis 18:11-14 (ESV) Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?" 13 The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the LORD?

### THE BEHAVIOUR OF EVIL PEOPLE

Psalms 73:8-9 (ESV) They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression.

9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth

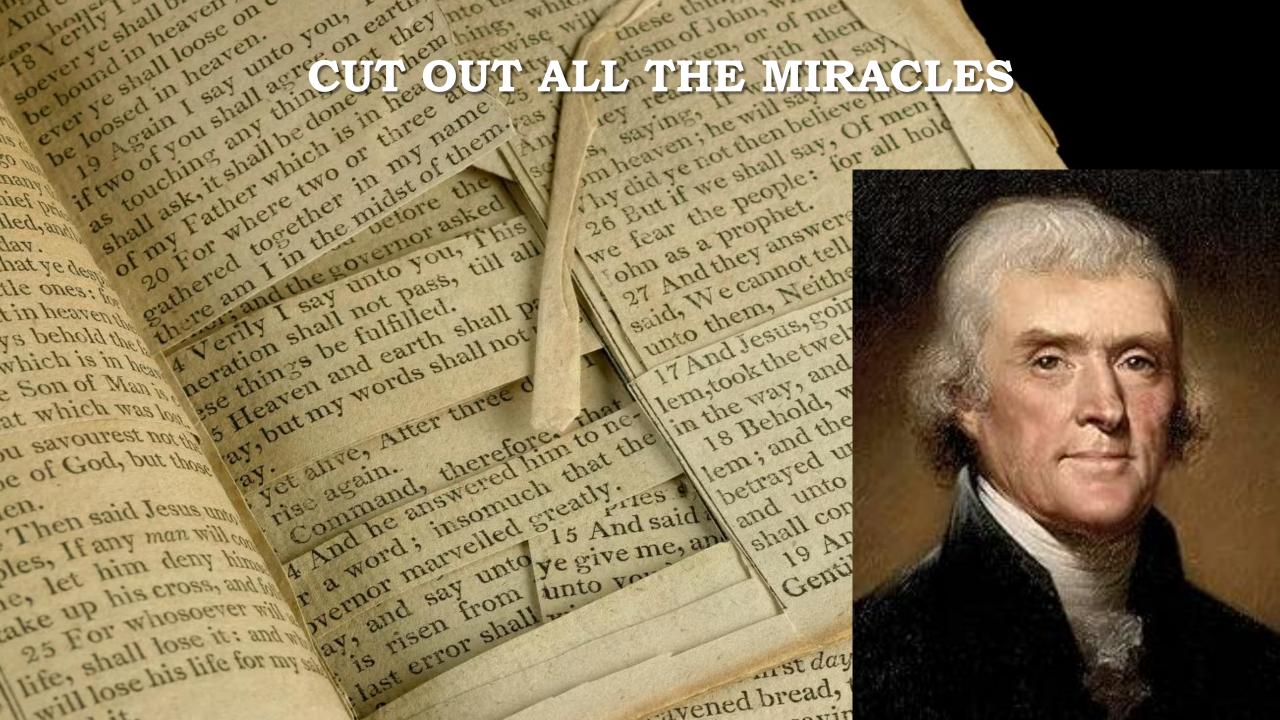
### THE IGNORANT GOD?

Psalms 73:10-11 (ESV) Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them.

11 And they say, "How can God know?

Is there knowledge in the Most High?"







## WE CREATE OUR OWN VERSION OF USER FRIENDLY GOD

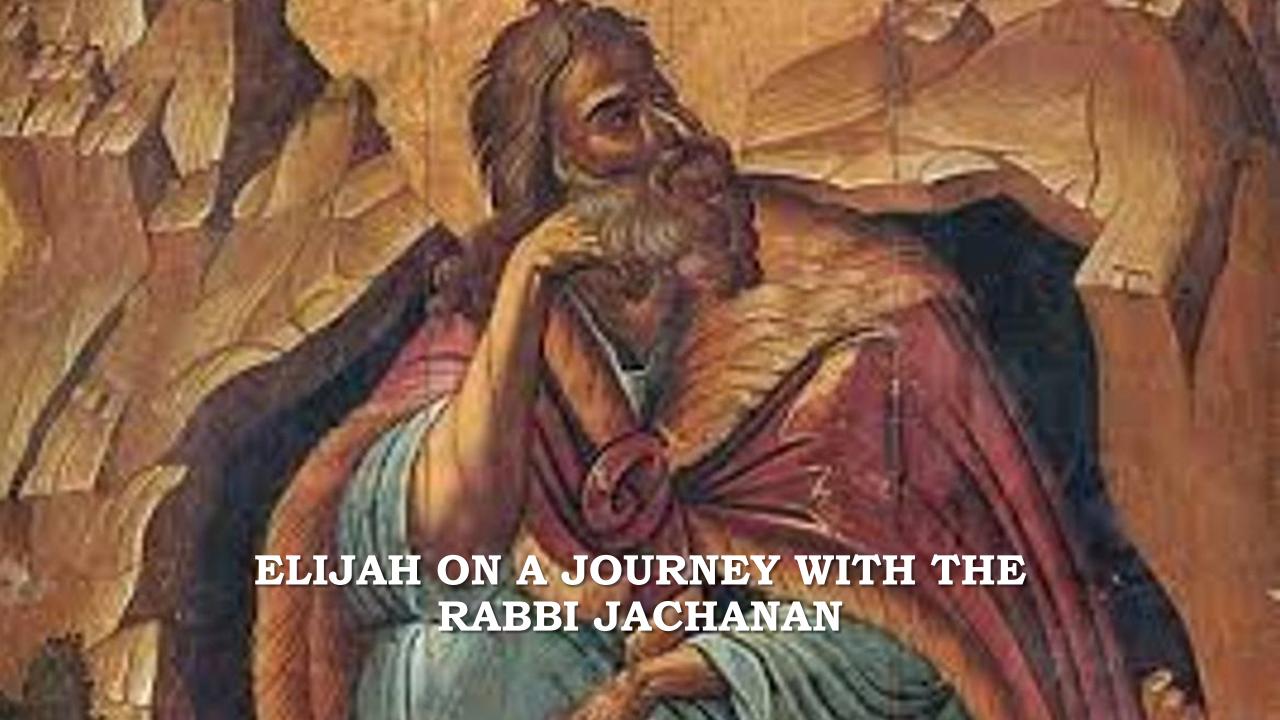
Cannot contradict us
Cannot correct us

Cannot really help us



### YOU EITHER HATE GOD OR HATE YOURSELF

2 Samuel 12:13-14 (ESV) And Nathan 14 Nevertheless, because by this deed said to David "The LORD also has put you have unerly scorned the LORD, the away your sin: you shall not die."

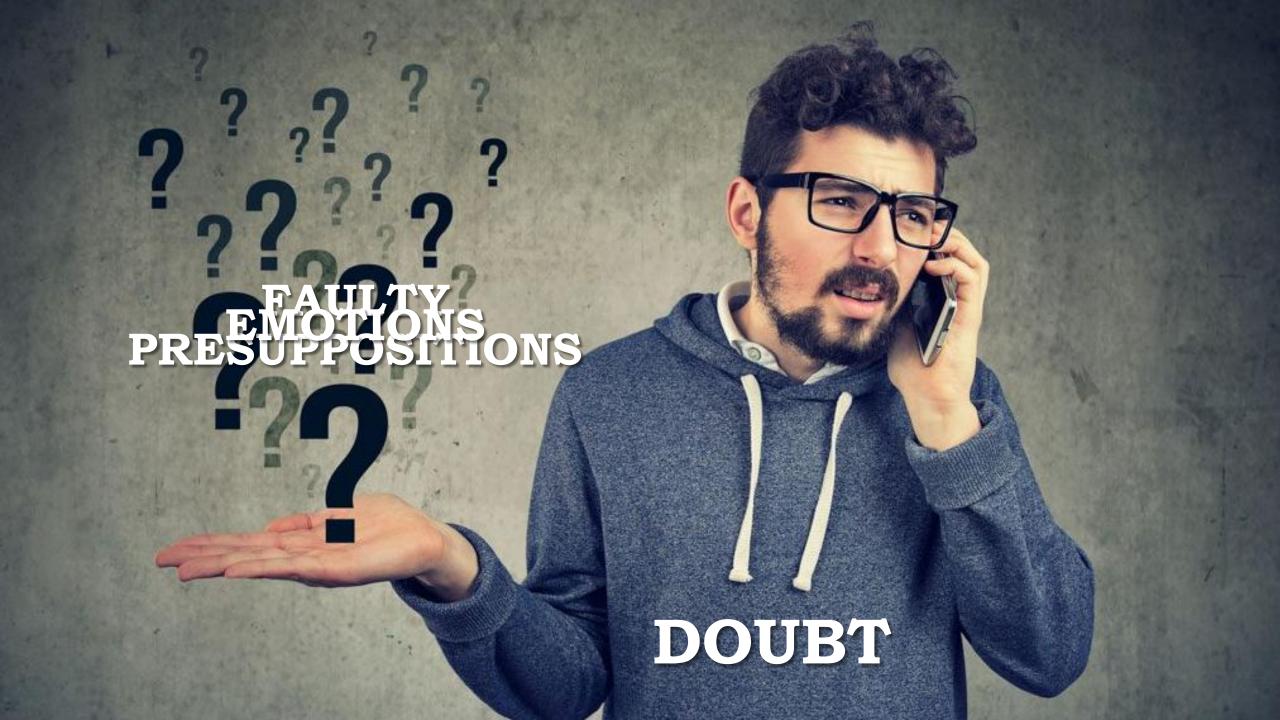


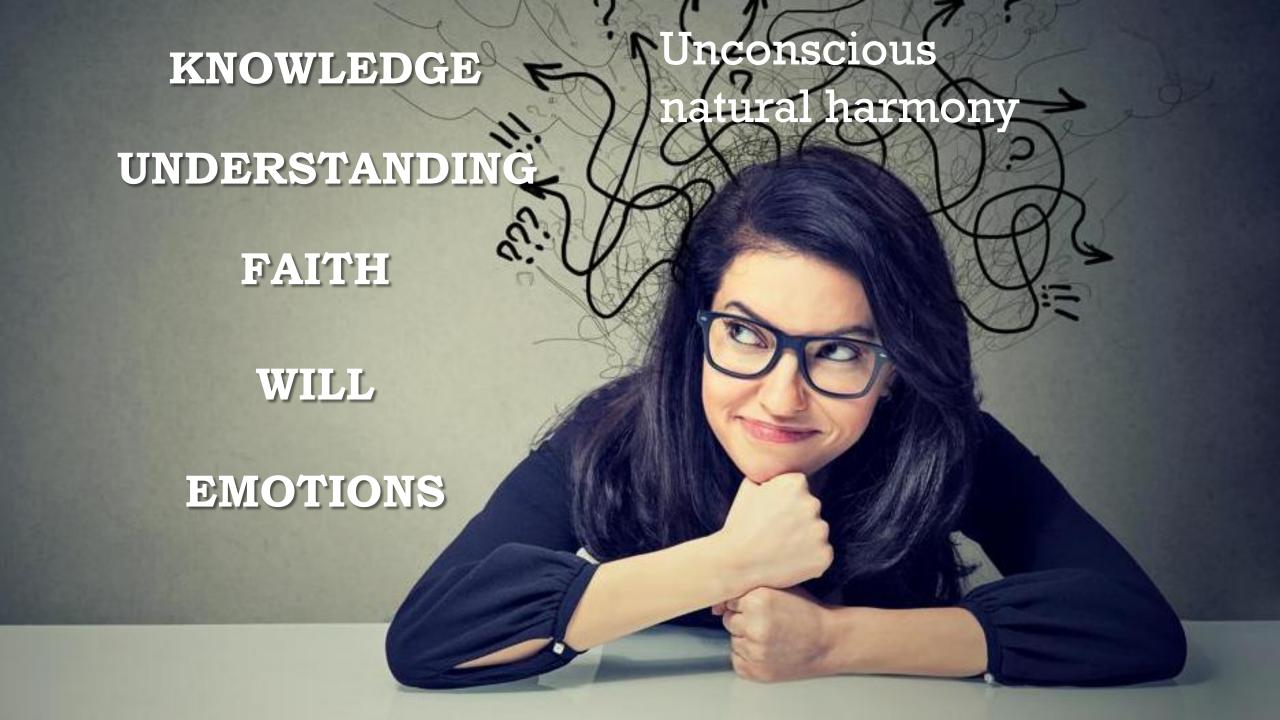
# AS WE GROW IN OUR FAITH MYSTERY IS BEYOND HUMAN REASON, BUT IT IS NOT AGAINST REASON

Mystery

Beyond humanly discernable reason

Absurdity
Beyond reason





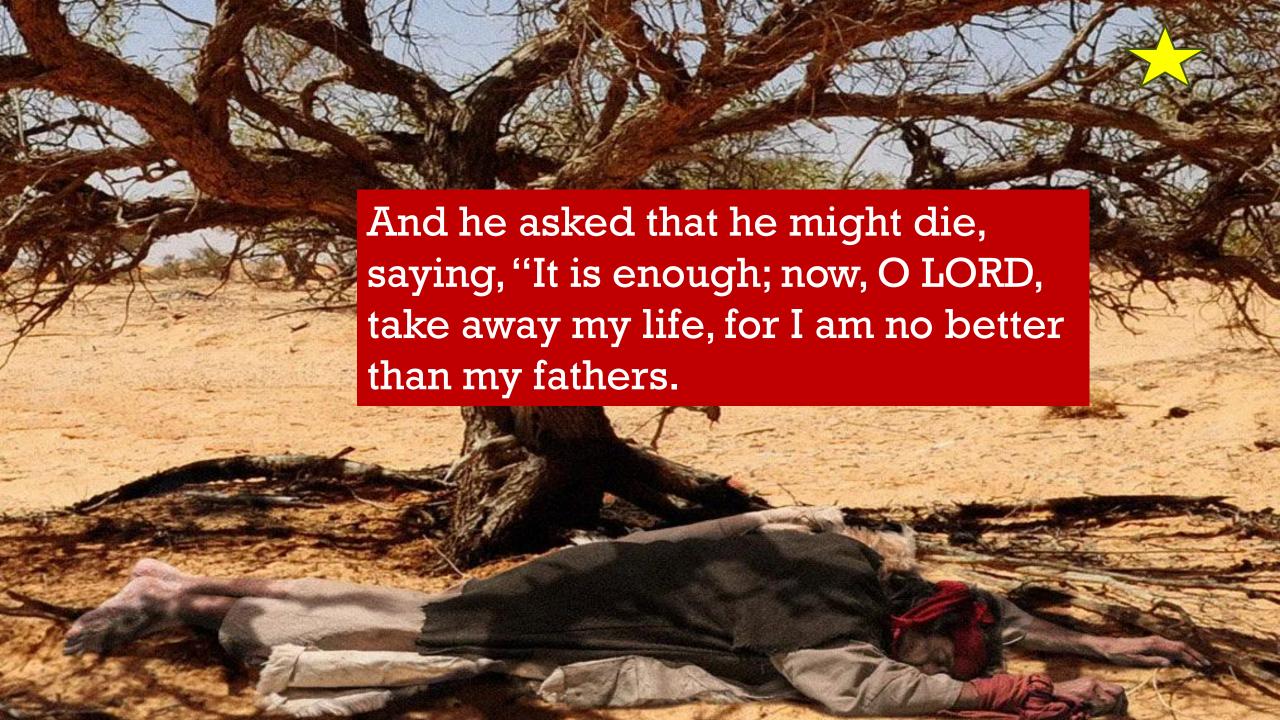






1 Kings 19:3-4 (ESV) 3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree.





### **EMOTIONS**

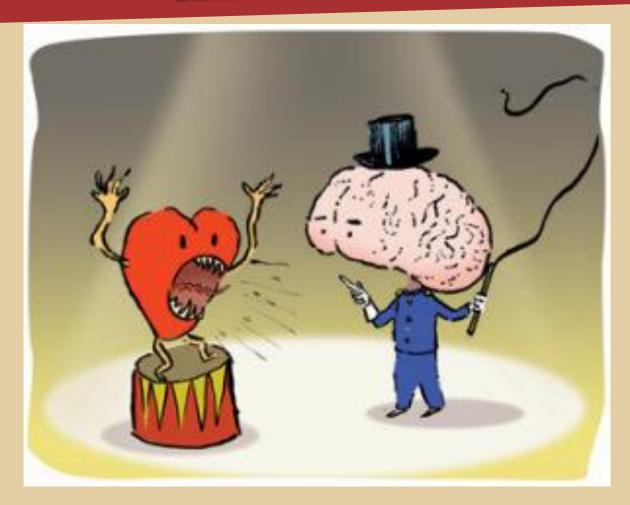
Psalms 73:21-22 (ESV) When my soul was embittered,

when I was pricked in heart,

22 I was brutish and ignorant;

I was like a beast toward you.

# Doubt is based on new experience not new information



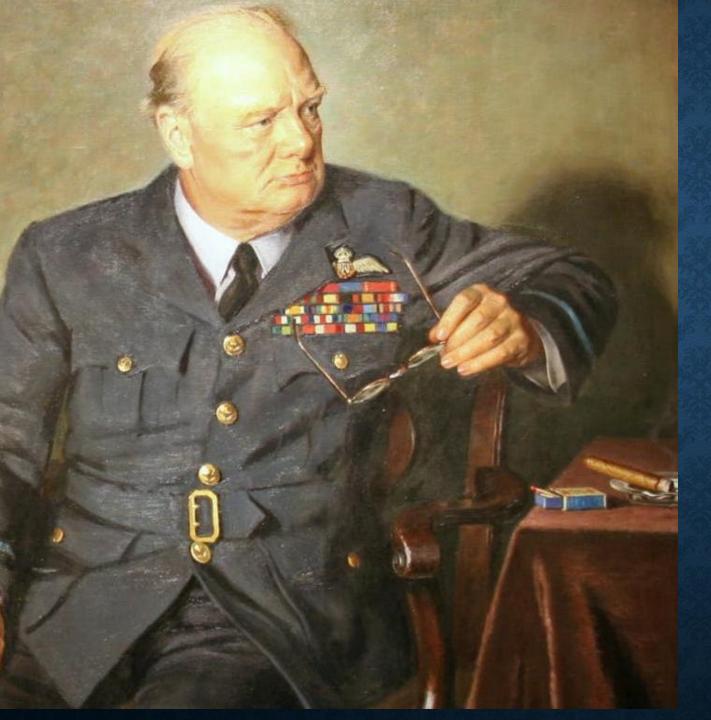


### UNDERSTANDING

Psalms 73:25-26 (ESV) Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail,

but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.





### WINSTON CHURCHILL

His faith came back as a sense of

"special protection" he sought Plato, Aristotle, Macaulay, and experienced under enemy Gibbon, Darwin, and so on. fire.

Lecky's Rise and Influence of 'I therefore acted in accordance Rationalism, yiolent and with my feelings, he said, agamest with the said, the said with the conclusions of thought."

### CONFESSIONS OF AN ATHEIST: WHY I LEFT THE FAITH



MALAYSIAN CHRONICLE FRIDAY, 07 NOVEMBER 2014 15:08

- For a while, I revelled in my newfound faith. The pastors told me that my father's death was in accordance with God's will and that His ways are higher than ours. It didn't make much sense to me, but death never does, even till this day.
- •At that time, I just pushed aside the illogicality of the church's explanations. The close ties, the sense of belonging, the way everyone seemed so together in their worship gave me a sense of purpose at a time when my world had plunged into chaos. Throughout the years, however, cracks began to appear in my tightly constructed faith.





### YOUNG BELIEVER

- Loneliness
- Rejection
- Counter cultural
- Pressures of life



### MOST PEOPLE

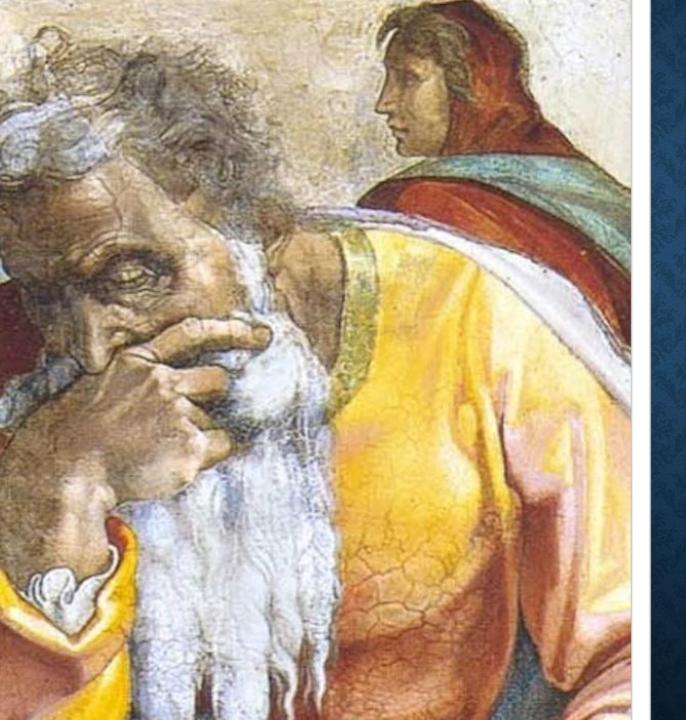
do not really believe but have no idea why they disbelieve;

Outside but on fringe of Church

who do not really disbelieve but have no idea why they believe

In Church

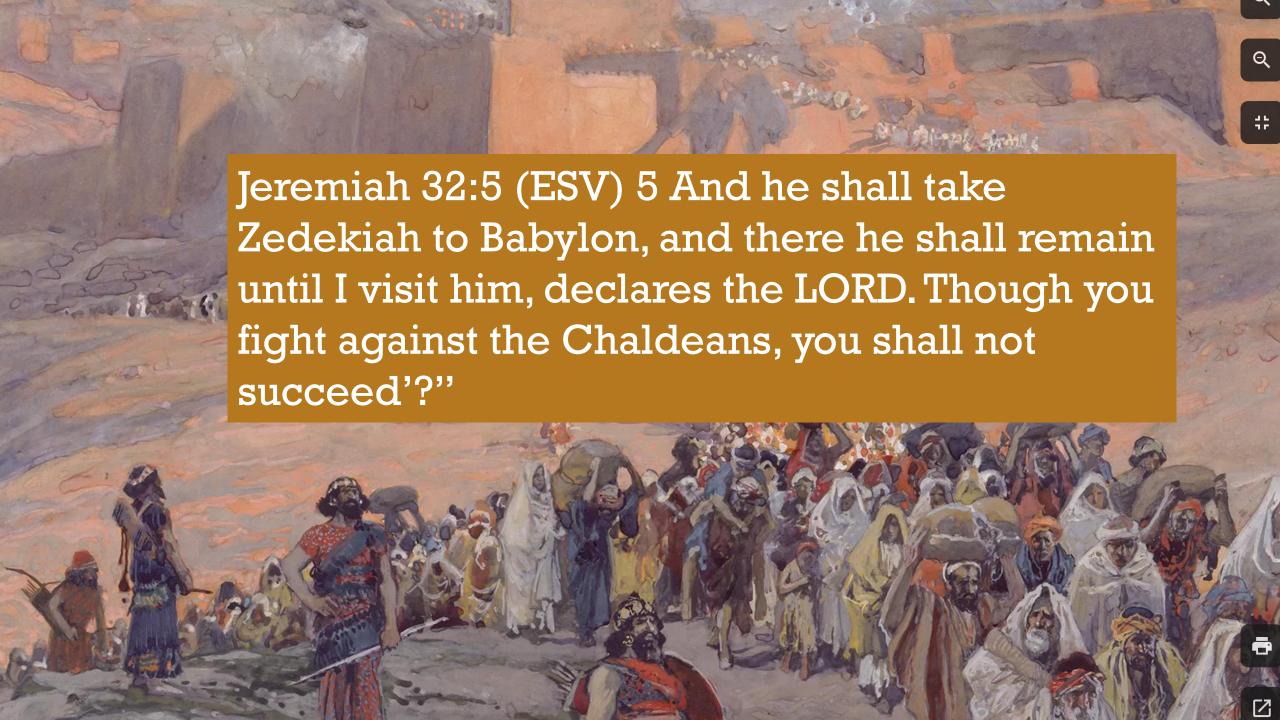
## FAITH IS NOT A THING WHICH ONE "LOSES," WE MERELY CEASE TO SHAPE OUR LIVES BY IT.

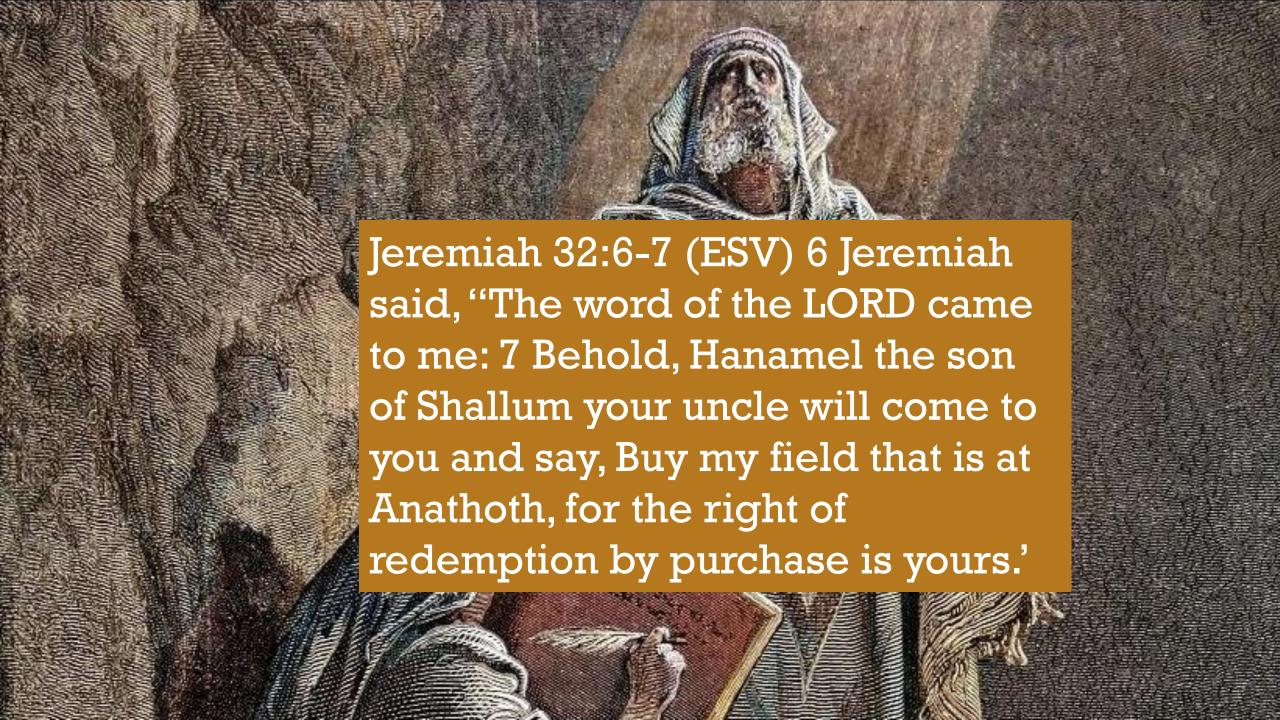


## JEREMIAH WEEPING PROPHET

Lamentations 3:16-18 (ESV) 16
He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes;

17 my soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is; 18 so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the LORD."





## PRAYING OUR DOUBTS PART 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WRESTLING

- 1. Admission of doubt
- 2. Reason for doubt
- 3. Wrestling with our doubt

#### GARY HABERMAS (DEALING WITH DOUBT)

"Use the time of doubts to explore your faith. [Use it] as a time for growing stronger in your faith and knowing what you believe, and why."

#### **OUR JOURNEY OF FAITH**

Triggering factor

Doubt

Praying -Wrestling

Resolution



### God is supposed to be on my side

Psalms 73:1-2 (ESV) 1 Truly God is good to Israel,

to those who are pure in heart.

2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,

my steps had nearly slipped.

#### WRESTLING MEANS BEING HONEST WITH GOD

Psalms 73:3-5 (ESV) For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For they have no pangs until death;

their bodies are fat and sleek.

5 They are not in trouble as others are;

they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.

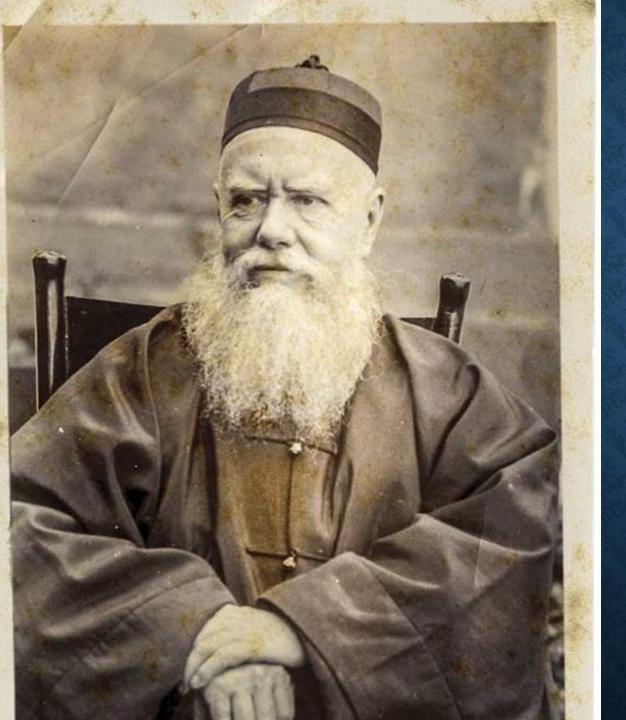
#### THE MENTAL PROCESS

Psalms 73:16-17 (ESV) But wher I thought how to understand this,

it seemed to me a wearisome task,

17 until I went into the sanctuary of God;

then I discerned their end.





#### **HUDSON TAYLOR**

It does not matter how great the pressure is. What really matters is where the pressure lies -- whether it comes between you and God, or whether it presses you nearer His heart.

# PHILIP YANCEY

DISAPPOINTMENT
WITH GOD

• "One bold message in the Book of Job is that you can say anything to God. Throw at him your grief, your anger, your doubt, your bitterness, your betrayal, your disappointment—he can absorb them all. As often as not, spiritual giants of the Bible are shown contending with God. They prefer to go away limping, like Jacob, rather than to shut God out



#### **DOUBTING THOMAS**

John 20:24-25 (ESV) 24 Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."



#### **DOUBTING THOMAS**

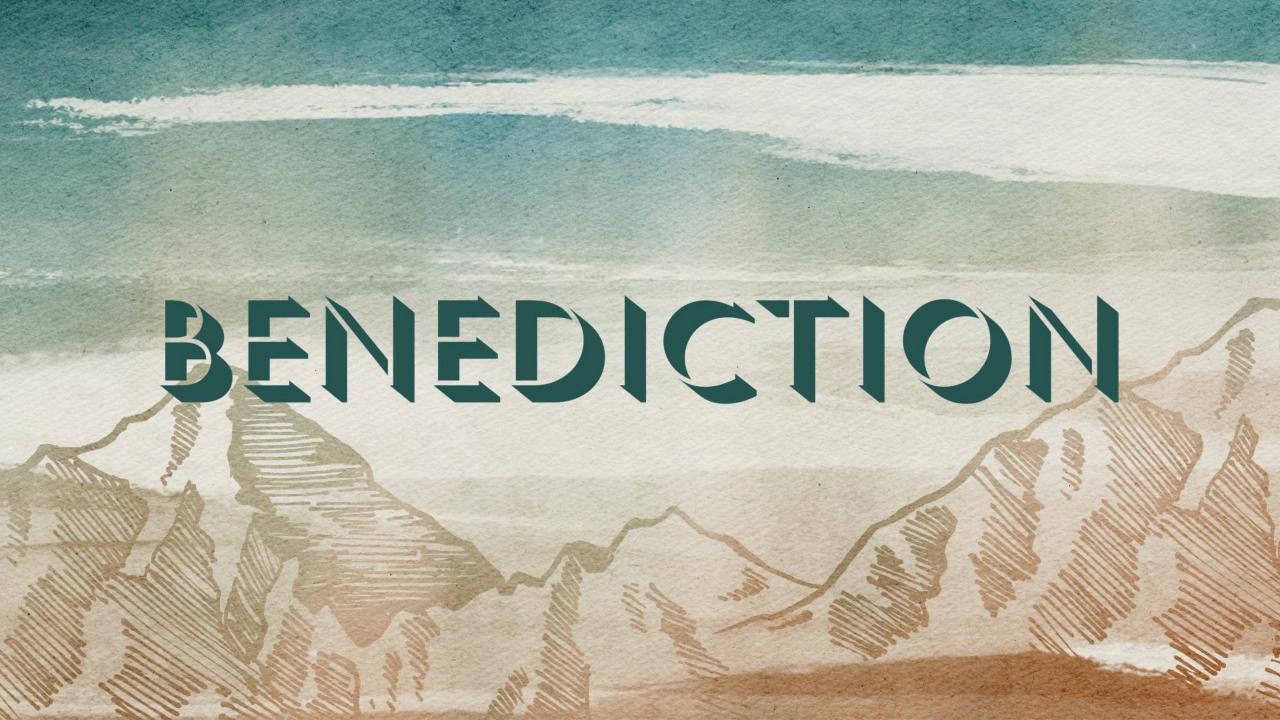
John 20:28-29 (ESV) 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Further evidence at that stage was doubly unnecessary

John 20:30-31 (ESV) 30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## PRAYING OUR DOUBTS PART 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR DOUBTS

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I Corinthians 15:58 (ESV) Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.