

- We surrender to God because He made us, He knows us, He loves us, and He's pursuing us relentlessly in love.
- **QUOTE:** *When we willingly surrender to God, we step into a life of unconditional joy, peace, & fulfillment.*
- We learned last week that to surrender to God, we must first choose a side (or quit playing the field as James chapter 4 put it) and prioritize getting to know God because the more you know Him, the more you'll trust Him. And lastly, we learned that surrendering to God involves *Praying First* before every decision.

WEEK #3 – TAILWIND

- **Jeremiah 17:23 NIV** - *Yet they did not listen or pay attention; they were stiff-necked and would not listen or respond to discipline.*
- **stif-nekt (qesheh `oreph, literally, "hard of neck")**
- **READ:** The word means "stubborn," "not to be led." The idea was entirely familiar to the Jews, with whom the ox was the most useful and common domestic animal. The plow was usually drawn by two oxen. As the plowman guided the plow with one hand, he carried in the other an "ox-goad." This was a light pole with an iron spike on the end. With this he would prick the oxen on the hind legs to increase their speed, and on the neck to turn, or to keep a straight course when deviating. If an ox was hard to control or stubborn, it was "hard of neck," or stiff-necked. Hence, the figure was used in the Scriptures to express the stubborn spirit of a people not responsive to the guiding of their God. (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)
- **Examples:**
 - A car with no power steering fluid...
 - **ILLUSTRATE:** Barber demonstrates trying to guide a person's head, but the client is "stiff-necked"
- This is the description of God's chosen nation, Israel, leading up to their defeat and captivity by the Babylonian empire.
- Despite their past failures, God never gave up on them! While they were experiencing this major self-inflicted *setback*, God was already planning their *comeback!*
- **Jeremiah 29:10-13 NIV** - *This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you (SHALOM) and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*
- **QUOTE:** *"If you have a setback, don't take a step back – Get ready for a comeback!" Tim Storey*

- READ: ‘Shalom’ is the Hebrew word translated to ‘prosper you’ in the passage. Shalom is a beautifully layered word. On the surface it means ‘peace’. But it’s not peace in the way we know it. Shalom speaks to something much deeper—it speaks of wholeness, restoration, a setting right of things, fullness of life. Think of it as a tailwind.
- *Tailwind: 1): a wind having the same general direction as a course of movement; 2) a force or influence that advances progress toward an improved condition*
- (CONTINUE READING): Exactly as prophesied, the Jews return to their homeland 70 years after the exile began. Upon their homecoming to Jerusalem, they repaired the altar and laid the foundation to rebuild the temple. But the excitement wore off quickly and they soon stopped working on the temple. Instead, they built additions & improvements to their own homes. The book of Haggai chronicles the message from God to this group of Jews that had returned from Babylonian exile 18 years prior. It’s been 14 years since any progress has been made to the temple.
- **Haggai 1:2-7 NLT** - *This is what the Lord of All says: ‘These people say, “The time has not yet come to build again the house of the Lord.”’ 3 Then the Word of the Lord came by Haggai the man of God, saying, 4 “Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your houses with walls covered with wood, while this house lies waste?” 5 Now the Lord of All says, “Think about your ways! 6 You have planted much, but gather little. You eat, but there is not enough to fill you. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothing, but no one is warm enough. You earn money, but put it into a bag with holes.” 7 The Lord of All says, “Think about your ways!”*
 - Verse 7 – “Think about your ways!”
 - NLT - “Look at what’s happening to you!”
 - GNT – “Can't you see why this has happened?”
- God promised in Jeremiah 29 that He would ‘prosper them’ (shalom). Where’s the SHALOM? They’re planting much and harvesting little & the little they gain seems to be put in a bag with holes! SHALOM is like a tailwind, pushing you forward. Instead, they’re in a tailspin!
- You only get a tailwind if you move your “tail” in the direction the wind is blowing!
- **Psalm 127:1 NLT** - *Unless the LORD builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the LORD protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good.*
- **QUOTE:** *Shalom is found in surrender to God*
- They forfeited the tailwind when they stopped surrendering to God’s timing and instead began prioritizing their own personal projects over God’s plans.

- But, again, God didn't give up on them. His wind never stopped blowing. He sent a word to bring their attention to the fact that they were going against the wind and making things so much harder on themselves than it had to be.
- **Haggai 1:12-14 NET Bible** - *Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, along with the whole remnant of the people, obeyed the Lord their God. They responded favorably to the message of the prophet Haggai, who spoke just as the Lord their God had instructed him, and the people began to respect the Lord. 13 Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, spoke the Lord's word to the people: "I am with you!" says the Lord. 14 So the Lord energized and encouraged Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the whole remnant of the people. They came and worked on the temple of their God, the Lord who rules over all.*
 - **Verse 14** – *"the Lord energized and encouraged"*
 - **KJV** – *"the Lord stirred up the spirit..."*
 - **GNT** – *"the Lord inspired..."*
 - **ISV** – *"the Lord revitalized..."*
 - **NLT** – *"the Lord sparked enthusiasm"*
- When they surrendered to God, they got their wind back!
- The next time you're feeling exhausted, discouraged, depressed & uninspired, do what the prophet said in verse 7: "think about your ways".
- **QUOTE:** *The cure to spiritual fatigue, discouragement and feeling uninspired is surrender to God!*
- **Acts 9:1-5 NKJV** - *Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."*
- "It is hard for you to kick against the goads" is a reference to the term, "stiff-necked". The "ox-goad" was a light pole with an iron spike on the end. Normally, the goad is just a gentle nudge to help the beast move in the right direction. But if the ox stubbornly kicked his leg against the goads, the sharp iron spike packed a painful punch.
- Saul was passionate and principled. According to his own understanding, he sincerely thought he was right. But the wind was against him.
- He was "breathing threats & murder". That's not the disposition of person being led by the Spirit (*ruwach* - *spirit or wind*) of God.

- **Colossians 3:15 Complete Jewish Bible** - *And let the shalom which comes from the Messiah be your heart's decision-maker..*
- Let's "consider our ways" right now. From our hearts, let's say a **prayer of surrender** together:
*"LORD, am I fighting to hold onto something that You need me to let go of?
If so, I make the choice right now - I surrender to You.
LORD, am I pushing something away that You actually need me to embrace?
If so, I make the choice right now - I surrender to You.
Forgive me for being stiff-necked.
I'm done kicking against the goads.
All to thee, my blessed Savior...
I surrender ALL!"*