

PREVIEW

Will we remain faithful to Jehovah, or will we allow Satan to lure us away from our God? The answer depends, not on how severely we are tested, but on how well we safeguard our heart. What is meant by the word “heart”? How does Satan try to corrupt our heart? And how can we safeguard it? This article will answer those important questions.

(Proverbs 4:23) Above all the things that you guard, safeguard your heart, For out of it are the sources of life.

Paragraph 1

(1 Kings 3:5-10) In Gib'e-on Jehovah appeared to Sol'o-mon in a dream by night, and God said: “Ask what you would like me to give you.” 6 At this Sol'o-mon said: “You have shown great loyal love toward your servant David my father as he walked before you in faithfulness and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart. You have continued to show him this great loyal love down to this day by giving him a son to sit on his throne. 7 And now, Jehovah my God, you have made your servant king in the place of David my father, though I am just a youth and I am inexperienced. 8 Your servant is among your people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 So grant your servant an obedient heart to judge your people, to discern between good and bad, for who is able to judge this numerous people of yours?” 10 It was pleasing to Jehovah that Sol'o-mon had requested this.

(2 Samuel 12:24) Then David comforted his wife Bath-she'ba. He went in to her and lay down with her. In time she bore a son, and he was named Sol'o-mon. And Jehovah loved him,

(1 Kings 3:12) I will do what you asked. I will give you a wise and understanding heart, so that just as there has never been anyone like you

before, there will never be anyone like you again.

Paragraph 2

(1 Kings 8:20) Jehovah has carried out the promise that he made, for I have succeeded my father David and I sit on the throne of Israel, just as Jehovah promised. I have also built the house for the name of Jehovah the God of Israel

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(Psalm 51:6) Look! You find pleasure in truth in the inner person; Teach my innermost self* true wisdom.

Footnote: Or “my secret self.”

Paragraph 5

(Romans 10:8-10) But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your own mouth and in your own heart”; that is, “the word” of faith, which we are preaching. 9 For if you publicly declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation.

(James 2:26) Indeed, just as the body without spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

(1 Corinthians 10:12) So let the one who thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall.

(James 1:14, 15) But each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn sin, when it has been carried out, brings forth death.

Paragraph 6

(1 John 5:19) We know that we originate with God, but the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one.

(1 Corinthians 15:33) Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits.*

Ftn: Or “corrupt good morals.”

(1 Kings 11:3) And he had 700 wives who were princesses and 300 concubines, and his wives gradually inclined his heart.*

Ftn: Or “his wives had a powerful influence over him.”

Paragraph 7

(Matthew 13:34) All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds by illustrations. Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them,

(Luke 10:29-37) But wanting to prove himself righteous, the man said to Jesus: “Who really is my neighbor?” 30 In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jer'i-cho and fell victim to robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went off, leaving him half-dead. 31 Now by coincidence a priest was going down on that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. 32 Likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side. 33 But a certain Sa-mar'i-tan traveling the road came upon him, and at seeing him, he was moved with pity. 34 So he approached him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he mounted him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took

out two de-nar'i-i, gave them to the innkeeper, and said: ‘Take care of him, and whatever you spend besides this, I will repay you when I return.’ 36 Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor to the man who fell victim to the robbers?” 37 He said: “The one who acted mercifully toward him.” Jesus then said to him: “Go and do the same yourself.”

(Luke 15:11-32) Then he said: “A man had two sons. 12 And the younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that should come to me.’ So he divided his belongings between them. 13 A few days later, the younger son gathered all his things together and traveled to a distant country and there squandered his property by living a debauched life. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he fell into need. 15 He even went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to herd swine. 16 And he longed to be filled with the carob pods that the swine were eating, but no one would give him anything. 17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, while I am dying here from hunger! 18 I will get up and travel to my father and say to him: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Make me as one of your hired men.”’ 20 So he got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was moved with pity, and he ran and embraced him and tenderly kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’ 22 But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quick! bring out a robe, the best one, and clothe him with it, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 Also bring the fattened calf, slaughter it, and let us eat and celebrate, 24 for this son of mine was dead but has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they started to enjoy themselves.

25 “Now his older son was in the field, and as he returned and got near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants to him and asked what was happening. 27 He said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father slaughtered the fattened calf because he got him back in good health.’ 28 But he became angry and refused to go in. Then his father came out and began to plead with him. 29 In reply he said to his father, ‘Look! These many years I have slaved for you and never once did I disobey your orders, and yet you never once gave me a young goat to enjoy with my friends. 30 But as soon as this son of yours arrived who squandered your belongings with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ 31 Then he said to him, ‘My son, you have always been with me, and all the things that are mine are yours. 32 But we just had to celebrate and rejoice, for your brother was dead but has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

(Galatians 5:19-21) Now the works of the flesh are plainly seen, and they are sexual immorality, uncleanness, brazen conduct, 20 idolatry, spiritism, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, dissensions, divisions, sects, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and things like these. I am forewarning you about these things, the same way I already warned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit God’s Kingdom.

(Ephesians 2:1-3) Furthermore, God made you alive, though you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you at one time walked according to the system of things of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. 3 Yes, among them we all at one time conducted ourselves in harmony with the desires of our flesh, carrying out the will of the flesh and of our thoughts, and we were naturally children of wrath just as the rest.

Paragraph 8

(Proverbs 1:8) Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, And do not forsake the instruction of your mother.

(Ephesians 6:1) Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous.

(Ephesians 6:4) And fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and admonition of Jehovah.

(Matthew 5:37) Just let your word ‘Yes’ mean yes, your ‘No,’ no, for what goes beyond these is from the wicked one.

(Hebrews 5:14) But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong.

(Deuteronomy 6:6, 7) These words that I am commanding you today must be on your heart, 7 and you must inculcate them in your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up.

(Romans 2:21) do you, however, the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself? You, the one preaching, “Do not steal,” do you steal?

Paragraph 9

(Colossians 2:8) Look out that no one takes you captive by means of the philosophy and empty deception according to human tradition, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ;

(1 Timothy 6:10) For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.

(Ecclesiastes 7:12) For wisdom is a protection just as money is a protection, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves the life of its owner.

(Luke 12:15) Then he said to them: “Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of greed, because even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses.”

Paragraph 10

(Proverbs 4:23) Above all the things that you guard, safeguard your heart, For out of it are the sources of life.

Paragraph 11

(2 Samuel 18:24-26) Now David was sitting between the two city gates, and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall. He looked up and saw a man running by himself. 25 So the watchman called out and told the king. The king said: “If he is by himself, he has news to tell.” As he came steadily nearer, 26 the watchman saw another man running. The watchman then called to the gatekeeper: “Look! Another man running by himself!” The king said: “This one is also bringing news.”

(Nehemiah 7:1-3) As soon as the wall had been rebuilt I set up the doors; then the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites were appointed. 2 I then put my brother Ha-na'ni in charge of Jerusalem, along with Han-a-ni'ah the chief of the Fortress, for he was a most trustworthy man and feared the true God more than many others. 3 So I said to them: “The gates of Jerusalem should not be opened until the heat of the day, and while they are standing guard, they should shut the doors and bolt them. And assign the inhabitants of Jerusalem as guards, each to his assigned guardpost and each in front of his own house.”

- [Footnotes]
- **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** Jehovah gave us the ability to examine our own thoughts, feelings, and actions and then to judge ourselves. The Bible calls that ability the conscience. (Rom. 2:15; 9:1) A Bible-trained conscience is one that uses Jehovah’s standards, as explained in the Bible, to judge if what we think, do, or say is good or bad.

Paragraph 12

(Ephesians 5:3) Let sexual immorality and every sort of uncleanness or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as is proper for holy people;

(Titus 2:12) It trains us to reject ungodliness and worldly desires and to live with soundness of mind and righteousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things,

(Romans 2:15) They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them, and by their own thoughts they are being accused or even excused.

Paragraph 13

(2 Chronicles 16:9) For the eyes of Jehovah are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him. You have acted foolishly in this matter; from now on there will be wars against you.”

(Isaiah 40:29) He gives power to the tired one
And full might to those lacking strength.

(James 1:5) So if any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching, and it will be given him.

Paragraph 15

(Psalm 119:18) Open my eyes so that I may see clearly The wonderful things from your law.

(Proverbs 4:20-22) My son, pay attention to my words; Listen carefully to my sayings. 21 Do not lose sight of them; Keep them deep within your heart, 22 For they are life to those who find them And health to their whole body.

(Psalm 119:97) How I do love your law! I ponder over it all day long.

Paragraph 17

(James 1:2, 3) Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you meet with various trials, 3 knowing as you do that this tested quality of your faith produces endurance.

(Proverbs 27:11) Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, So that I can make a reply to him who taunts me.

(Psalm 119:113) I hate the halfhearted ones, But I love your law.

(1 Kings 8:61) So let your heart be complete with Jehovah our God by walking in his regulations and by keeping his commandments as on this day.”

Paragraph 18

(Isaiah 38:3-6) “I beg you, O Jehovah, remember, please, how I have walked before you faithfully and with a complete heart, and I have done what was good in your eyes.” And Hez·e·ki'ah began to weep profusely. 4 Then the word of Jehovah came to Isaiah, saying: 5 “Go back and say to Hez·e·ki'ah, ‘This is what Jehovah the God of David your forefather says: “I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. Here I am adding 15 years to your life, 6 and I will rescue you and this city out of the

hand of the king of As·syr'i-a, and I will defend this city.

(2 Chronicles 29:1, 2) Hez·e·ki'ah became king at the age of 25, and he reigned for 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was A·bi'jah the daughter of Zech·a·ri'ah. 2 He kept doing what was right in Jehovah's eyes, just as David his forefather had done.

(2 Chronicles 32:25, 26) But Hez·e·ki'ah did not respond appreciatively to the good done to him, for his heart became haughty, bringing indignation against him and against Judah and Jerusalem. 26 However, Hez·e·ki'ah humbled himself for the haughtiness of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Jehovah's indignation did not come upon them in the days of Hez·e·ki'ah.

(1 Kings 3:9) So grant your servant an obedient heart to judge your people, to discern between good and bad, for who is able to judge this numerous people of yours?”

(Psalm 139:23, 24) Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See whether there is in me any harmful way, And lead me in the way of eternity.

[Box on page 19]

How to Meditate

Answer these questions as you read your Bible:

- ▶ What does this tell me about Jehovah God?
- ▶ How does this section of the Scriptures contribute to the Bible's message?
- ▶ How can I apply this in my life?
- ▶ How can I use these verses to help others?