

"ESTABLISH YOUR HEART" BY GIVING GOD THE "REINS" OF OUR
MIND
"FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD IS NEAR" JAMES 5:8

- Say - Welcome to Sabbath School class. Let's bow our head as we ask God for understanding in our study today. This is the 3rd lesson in a 6-part series from James 5:8 which says, "Be ye also patient; establish your hearts (place firmly your face toward God and His way of life, not our way or the world's way of life)".
- Say - In lesson one we have discussed God's purpose for us, our goal and reward. In lesson two we discussed the importance of developing the character of a Righteous King by learning to love the instructions and laws of God which lead us to Christ. We discussed the patience one must have as God's people live each day with the expectation that His coming is very near.
- Say - In our lesson today, God reveals to us another way to "establish our heart" for His coming by giving Him the "reins" of our hearts. What are the "reins" of our heart?
- Say - God tells us "He searches the reins and hearts" Rev. 2:23. The "reins" of our heart are the inner most emotions, affections and intentions of our mind. God searches our minds to see what it is we long for? God wants us to long for Him and His companionship and His guidance above all else. God wants us to desire His way of life, His teachings, and His perfect righteous laws. God wants an intimate relationship with His People.
- Say - David, a righteous king, asked God for careful scrutiny of his affections and thoughts and motives in his life. We can follow his example as one who had a close, intimate relationship with God. David prayed to God and said,
- "Judge me (rule me), O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity (innocence to live uprightly): I have trusted (feared nothing, felt secure) also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide (waver or be tempted by false prophets and false doctrines)".
- "Examine me (test me, try me), O LORD (the supreme God), and prove me; try my reins (my inner most mind, my intent) and my heart (the determination of my will)".
- "For thy lovingkindness (goodness) is before mine eyes (first in my mind always): and I have walked in thy truth (God's divine instruction)".

"I have not sat with vain persons (wicked or useless), neither will I go in (gather) with dissemblers (those whom have something to hide)".

"I have hated the congregation of evil doers (counsel of evil doers); and will not sit with the wicked (does not hang out with them)", Psalms 26.

"I will wash mine hands in innocency (expressing freedom from any sinful acts or blemish): so will I compass (surround) thine altar, O LORD (the alter or holy place of the true God not idols or false gods)":

Why? "That I may publish (express and sing) with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works (the miracles of God and sustaining the world and the Creator of all life)".

"Gather not my soul with sinners (bring me not to death), nor my life with bloody men (murderers)":

"In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes (their entire conduct is that of violence and fraud, deceit)".

"(In contrast to those of mischief, violence, fraud and deceit, David said) But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me (rescue me), and be merciful (show favor and understanding) unto me".

My foot standeth in an even place (free from stumbling because he walks with God not contrary to Him): in the congregations will I bless the LORD (will praise Him publicly)" Psalms 26:1-11.

Say -In another place David said, " I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel (cared for me and given me advice, purpose and a plan): my reins (emotions) also instruct me (instruct me to acts of praise) in the night seasons (when I think at night or in a time of calamity, God's instruction sustained him)".

"I have set the LORD always before me (to be like Him, to resemble Him in thought, to imitate His example): because he is at my right hand (He is my aid, my guide, my shelter), I shall not be moved (nothing can make me turn away from His way of life, His teachings and His laws)".

"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory (heart, my inner self is happy and content) rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope (my entire body can be tranquil, peaceful)" Psalms 16:7-9.

Say - David confessed how foolish he was in his course of thought and life before He chose to follow God. He said,

"Thus my heart was grieved (affected with anger and pain), and I was pricked in my reins (as if pierced with grief in my mind and conscience)".

"So foolish was I, and ignorant (not discerning his course of thought with God in the conduct of his life): I was as a beast before thee (unable to think)".

"Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden (cared and led me) me by thy right hand".

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel (advice, plan, purpose), and afterward receive me to (for) glory (our reward)".

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee (God is his only satisfying good strength, his Rock. No wonder the Bible tells us David will receive the promise at the first resurrection Acts 2:29)" Psalms 73:21-25. Are we willing to make David's prayer our prayer?

Say - We like David are scrutinized by God. He "tries the reins of our hearts" daily. We all stand before God naked, He sees and knows all about us. The Bible says, "... Shall not God search this out? For he knoweth the secrets of the heart" Psalms 44:21, Acts 15:8. God knows when we lose a job to serve Him or take a lower grade to keep His Sabbaths and Holy Days. He knows if we are lovers of material things above Him, He knows when and why we don't keep the Sabbath and attend church etc.

Say - God tells us, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth (makes preparations for Christ's coming as the most important event in our life) and keepeth his garments (holding fast to the truth of God and His laws and living it), lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" Rev. 16:15.

SELF APPLICATION

We can ask ourselves, what does God see when He "searches the reins of our hearts and mind? Do we seek to know God by talking to Him daily

and reading the Bible. Do we make His instructions and laws and His way of thinking our way of thinking? Do we want divine instruction or are we too busy gathering material possessions to fill our time?

Is there room for God to dwell within us? Why do we care what others think of us when we choose to follow God? The Bible says, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect (God is the one who determines what is holy and righteous.)? It is God that justifieth".

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died ... that is risen again, ... who also maketh intercession for us".

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation (the time of trouble), or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword"?

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" Romans 8:33-39.

Who do we keep company with; are they full of loving kindness or are they up to conniving, jealousy, or deceitfulness. Do we ask God to "rule" our way of thinking or do we smart off with clever lines to our family and friends trying to be cool? Only we and God know the answers to these questions. If the answer is yes to these questions then we are "establishing the heart" of a Righteous King and will be in His Kingdom. Then we can thank God as David did for fine tuning him.

MEMORY VERSE

"I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel (advice, instructions, laws): my reins (mind) also instruct me in the night seasons (when I lie awake at night or am troubled, I think of you).

"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved".

"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope" Psalms 16:6-8.

BELOW IS THE SABBATH SCHOOL STORY FOR TOTS

BIBLE STORY
GIVE GOD THE "REINS OF OUR MIND"

David was a righteous king who asked God for careful scrutiny of his thoughts and motives in his life. David wanted to please God in all his ways and he asked God to "examine or prove or test his way". He said, "try my mind, my most inner thoughts,... for "I have walked in thy truth".

David chose his friends by God's guidance. He said, "I have not sat with the wicked or useless, vain persons" that have no time for God. David thanked God for His constant guidance and instructions, His purpose and plan for His life. God was David's example above all else. He said, "I have set the LORD before me" because His is my guide and my caretaker.

At the tender age of twelve, David, the shepherd, against the advice of Saul, the King of Israel, volunteered to face the giant Goliath. Saul was against David encountering the giant because he said, "You are but a youth". David answered, "God saved me from the mouth of the lion and the bear and He will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine".

The day of battle had come and down in the valley of Elah Goliath, covered in fancy armor, drew near to David and cursed David by his false God, Dagon. But David said, "You have come to me with a sword, a spear and a shield but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel whom you have defied".

"David put his hand in his bag and took a stone and smote the Philistine in the forehead and he fell upon his face to the earth". There was no sword in David's hand; God had directed all things and the armies of the Philistines which stood on the edge of the valley fled in haste.

While the story of David and Goliath is well known and that he was a shepherd as well as a poet, the Bible also records his weaknesses for us. Yet, showing the mercy of God, he is called, "a man after God's own heart" because he gave God the "reins of his mind" or the control of his mind to God.

What about us, who or what controls our mind; have we given God the "reins of our mind"?

PLEASE FIND AN APPROPRIATE PICTURE TO COMPLEMENT THE BIBLE STORY AND BELOW ARE THE MEMORY VERSES TO BE CUT OUT AND PLACED WITH THE PICTURE FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL NOTEBOOKS.

MEMORY VERSE

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MEMORY VERSE FOR TOTS

"He searches the reins and hearts" Rev. 2:23