

PLEASE NOTE - The references below are taken from the 86-24 Index. Many verses have additional references that have not been included due to time & space. We are encouraged to do additional personal research.

(Psalm 12:2) 2 They speak lies to one another; They flatter with their lips and speak with deceitful hearts.

*** w86 6/1 pp. 16-17 pars. 8-9 Determined to Serve Jehovah With a Complete Heart ***

8 There is only one literal heart in each person, but, figuratively speaking, one person can have two hearts. David referred to such persons, saying: "With a smooth lip they keep speaking even with a double heart ["with a heart and a heart," Ref. Bi., footnote]." (Psalm 12:2) One heart posed for public display, the other secretly connived for selfish advantage. This two-faced, doublehearted posture is described in the Scriptures: "For as one that has calculated within his soul, so he is. 'Eat and drink,' he says to you, but his heart itself is not with you." "Although he makes his voice gracious, do not believe in him, for there are seven detestable things in his heart."—Proverbs 23:7; 26:25; Psalm 28:3.

9 Such hypocrisy in human relationships is deplorable, but when sown in Jehovah's worship, it reaps calamity. "Do not put your trust in fallacious words, saying, 'The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah they are!' Here you are putting your trust in fallacious words—it will certainly be of no benefit at all. Can there be stealing, murdering and committing adultery and swearing falsely and making sacrificial smoke to Baal and walking after other gods whom you had not known, and must you come and stand before me in this house upon which my name has been called, and must you say, 'We shall certainly be delivered,' in the face of doing all these detestable things?" (Jeremiah 7:4, 8-10) Jesus denounced such doublehearted hypocrisy among the scribes and the Pharisees, saying: "You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied

about you, when he said, 'This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me.'"—Matthew 15:7, 8.

(Psalm 13:1) 13 How long, O Jehovah, will you forget me? Forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

*** w79 3/1 p. 26 How Long Will God Forget Me? ***

Regardless of the period involved, David had trials for such a long time that he found himself in a very low state, wondering whether Jehovah had forgotten him. He was prompted to exclaim: "How long, O Jehovah, will you forget me? Forever? How long will you conceal your face from me?" (Ps. 13:1) It seemed to David as if Jehovah had concealed his face in displeasure, not intervening in his behalf.

(Psalm 15:1) 15 O Jehovah, who may be a guest in your tent? Who may reside in your holy mountain?

*** w14 2/15 p. 23 par. 10 Jehovah—Our Best Friend ***

10 For Jehovah to be our Friend, however, we must meet certain conditions. As recorded in Psalm 15, David sang about what is required for us to be 'a guest in Jehovah's tent,' that is, to be a friend of God. (Ps. 15:1)

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*** w03 8/1 p. 13 par. 17 Jehovah, the God of Truth ***

To the Jews who sang those words, mention of Jehovah's holy mountain doubtless brought to mind Mount Zion, where King David brought the ark of the covenant to the tent he had erected there. (2 Samuel 6:12, 17) The mountain and the tent called to mind the place where Jehovah symbolically dwelt. There people could approach God in order to implore his favor.

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(Psalm 15:3) 3 He does not slander with his tongue, He does nothing bad to his neighbor, And he does not defame his friends.

*** w89 9/15 pp. 27-28 Who Can Be God's Friend? ***

"He has not slandered with his tongue"

To meet this requirement for God's guests, we must never speak maliciously about others. (Psalm 15:3) The Hebrew verb rendered "slandered" is derived from the word for "foot" and means "to foot it" and thus "to go about." The Israelites were commanded: "You must not go around among your people for the sake of slandering. You must not stand up against your fellow's blood. I am Jehovah." (Leviticus 19:16; 1 Timothy 5:13) If we slander someone, robbing him of his good name, we cannot be God's friends.

David declared: "Anyone slandering his companion in secrecy, him I silence." (Psalm 101:5) We too can silence slanderers if we refuse to listen to them. And a good rule is to say nothing about a person behind his back that we would not be willing to say to his face. It is fine if we have our tongue under such control. Yet, how important it is to control our actions too!

"To his companion he has done nothing bad"

Noteworthy here are Jesus' words: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matthew 7:12) To enjoy God's favor, we must refrain from doing what is bad. The psalmist said: "O you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad. He is guarding the souls of his loyal ones; out of the hand of the wicked ones he delivers them." (Psalm 97:10) So if we want God's friendship and help, we must accept his standards.

Shunning what is bad includes not wronging anybody in business dealings or in other ways. In word and deed, we must do nothing to harm our companion, but we should be doing good things for him. This can touch every aspect of life. For

instance, when driving, we may courteously yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. We can help the elderly, encourage the despondent, comfort the grieving. In this regard, Jehovah sets the prime example. As Jesus said, God "makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matthew 5:43-48) Akin to doing good to others is complying with what the psalmist next mentions.

"And no reproach has he taken up against his intimate acquaintance"

All of us make mistakes, and how grateful we are when friends choose to overlook these minor errors! We would be distressed if an intimate friend revealed our minor but embarrassing weaknesses to others. Some people do this to divert attention from their own faults or to make themselves appear superior to others. But such acts do not benefit those desiring to be God's friends.

"The one covering over transgression is seeking love, and he that keeps talking about a matter is separating those familiar with one another," says Proverbs 17:9. Of course, we should not try to conceal serious wrongdoing. (Leviticus 5:1; Proverbs 28:13) But if we want to be God's friends, we will not 'take up,' or receive as true, reproachful stories about upright acquaintances. (1 Timothy 5:19) Jehovah's friends speak well of God's servants instead of spreading tales about them, adding to what they already bear from evil reproaches by ungodly men.