



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

## **“The Misdirection of the Heart”**

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### **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

**Key Passages (TLV):** Luke 12:13-32; Jer. 17:9-10; James 4:2-4; Heb. 4:12; Ps. 139:23-24

Some of the most decisive victories in history did not come from superior weapons but from misdirection. Before the Allied invasion of Europe in 1944, the Allies created one of the most successful deception operations in military history. Fake armies with inflatable tanks, wooden aircraft, and false radio signals convinced the Germans that the invasion would happen at Pas-de-Calais. When the real invasion came at Normandy, many German forces remained waiting in the wrong place because they believed the decoy. During the Cold War, a similar strategy unfolded through “Operation Farewell,” when Soviet spies believed they were stealing valuable Western technology—only to discover later that the plans they had taken contained hidden flaws. They thought they understood the situation, but they had been misdirected.

The human heart works in much the same way. Sometimes the greatest misdirection in our lives is not something done to us but something done by us to ourselves. Jeremiah warns us, *“The heart is deceitful above all things and incurable—who can know it?”* (Jer. 17:9 TLV). Our hearts can produce their own false intelligence, distracting us with one issue so we never deal with the deeper problem beneath the surface. Yet the Lord sees what we cannot see. *“I ADONAI search the heart, I try the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.”* (Jer. 17:10 TLV).

**Challenge:** Ask the Lord today to reveal any places where your heart may be redirecting attention away from deeper issues.

## **2. THE DECOY ON THE SURFACE**

In Luke 12, a man approaches Yeshua with a request that sounds completely reasonable: *“Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”* (Luke 12:13 TLV). On the surface, this request appears legitimate. The Scriptures consistently emphasize justice, and if the man was being defrauded by his brother, it would have been natural for him to ask a respected rabbi to intervene. In fact, rabbis often served as judges in disputes like this, so the man’s appeal to Yeshua seems appropriate.

Yet Yeshua responds in an unexpected way: *“Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?”* (Luke 12:14 TLV). Rather than settling the dispute, Yeshua discerns and exposes something deeper. What appeared to be a request for justice was actually functioning as a decoy. The man believed the issue was external, but Yeshua recognized that the real problem was internal. Often our own requests before God work the same way—we focus on the situation we want Him to fix, while the Lord has a higher priority – the condition of our hearts.

**Challenge:** Before asking God to change your circumstances, ask Him to reveal what He may want to change within you.

## **2. YESHUA SEES THROUGH THE MISDIRECTION**

Yeshua immediately identifies what lies beneath the man’s request: *“Watch out! Be on guard against all kinds of greed, because one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the material goods he possesses.”* (Luke 12:15 TLV). The man thought he was pursuing justice, but Yeshua discerned greed quietly operating beneath the surface. The request sounded righteous, but the underlying motivation was misplaced.

This is often how temptation works in the lives of believers. When we genuinely desire to follow God, temptation rarely appears in obvious forms of evil. Instead, it hides itself within things that appear good and spiritual. Justice, success in ministry, influence, or recognition can all become subtle disguises for pride or ambition. Scripture reminds us of this danger: *“You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives so you may spend it on your passions.”* (James 4:3 TLV). Yeshua hears our prayers, but He also sees our motives.

**Challenge:** Pray honestly: “Lord, search my motives and reveal anything that does not honor You.”

### **3. YESHUA EXPOSES AND ADDRESSES THE REAL HEART ISSUE**

To reveal the deeper problem, Yeshua tells the parable of the rich landowner whose harvest is so abundant that he runs out of storage space. His solution is simple—tear down the old barns and build larger ones. Yet the story reveals something about his heart. His words revolve entirely around himself: *my crops... my barns... my grain... my goods*. There is no recognition that his resources come from God and no concern for the needs of others. Yeshua concludes with a sobering warning: *“You fool! Tonight your soul is being demanded back from you! And what you have prepared, whose will that be?”* (Luke 12:20 TLV). The issue was not that the man possessed wealth, but that wealth possessed his heart. The parable exposes how easily greed can hide beneath seemingly reasonable plans. Yeshua’s call is clear—be vigilant and guard your heart.

**Challenge:** Consider whether your goals and plans are centered on yourself or aligned with God’s kingdom.

### **CONCLUSION**

The most dangerous deception is not when someone lies to us but when our own hearts feed us false intelligence about ourselves. We can speak spiritual words, make noble requests, and even believe our own explanations. Yet the Lord sees past the camouflage of our words and exposes what lies beneath. He does this not to shame us but to transform us into people who reflect His character.

God’s Word is the tool He uses to uncover the truth within us. *“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword... able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* (Heb. 4:12 TLV). When we allow the Lord to examine us through His Word, our prayer becomes the same as the psalmist’s: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart... see if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psa. 139:23–24 TLV).

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think the human heart is capable of deceiving itself?
2. What are some modern “decoys” that can hide deeper spiritual issues?
3. Why did Yeshua respond to the man’s question with a parable instead of a direct answer?
4. How can believers guard themselves against subtle forms of greed or ambition?
5. What spiritual practices help you invite God to examine your heart?
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### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkeinu*, Our Father, Our King, You are the One who searches the heart and tests the mind. Nothing is hidden from Your sight. We confess that our hearts are often capable of misdirection, drawing attention away from the deeper issues within us. Yet in Your mercy You reveal these things so that we may be transformed. Search us, O God, and know our hearts. Reveal anything within us that does not honor You. Guard us from greed, pride, and self-deception, and help us to seek first Your kingdom in all that we do. May Your Word shape our motives and lead us in the way everlasting.

*B'Shem Yeshua*, In Yeshua’s Name, Amen