



Will The Real Paul Please Stand Up?

**The Gospel of Rav Shaul
Part 1**

Paul, Saul, Shmaul



Wikipedia

“Paul (born Saul of Tarsus; ca. 5 – ca. 64/65 AD), commonly known as Paul the Apostle or Saint Paul, **was a Christian apostle** who spread the teachings of Jesus in the first-century AD.”

“Today, Paul's epistles continue to be vital roots of the theology, worship, and pastoral life in the Latin and Protestant traditions of the West, as well as the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox traditions of the East. Paul's influence on Christian thought and practice is pervasive in scope and profound in impact. Christians, particularly in the Lutheran tradition, have read Paul as saying that people are saved through faith rather than by following Jewish law.”

Paul, Saul, Shmaul



Wikipedia

“He has been accused [by others] of corrupting or hijacking Christianity, often by introducing pagan or Hellenistic themes to the early church.”

“There has recently been increasing acceptance of Paul as a fundamentally Jewish figure in line with the original disciples in Jerusalem over past interpretations...”

Paul In His Own Words



Romans 1

1 From: Sha'ul, a slave of the Messiah Yeshua, an emissary because I was called and set apart for the Good News of God.

1 Corinthians 1

1 From: Sha'ul, called by God's will to be an emissary of the Messiah Yeshua

2 Corinthians 1

1 From: Sha'ul, by God's will an emissary of the Messiah Yeshua

Galatians 1

1 From: Sha'ul, an emissary — I received my commission not from human beings or through human mediation but through Yeshua the Messiah and God the Father, who raised him from the dead

Paul In His Own Words



Ephesians 1

1 From: Sha'ul, by God's will an emissary of the Messiah Yeshua

Philippians 1

1 From: Sha'ul and Timothy, slaves of the Messiah Yeshua

1 Timothy 1

1 From: Sha'ul, an emissary of the Messiah Yeshua by command of God our deliverer and the Messiah Yeshua our hope

2 Timothy 1

1 From: Sha'ul, an emissary of the Messiah Yeshua by God's will, which holds forth a promise of life through being united with Messiah Yeshua

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Emissary

ἀπόστολος – apostolos

(root: ἀποστέλλω – apostellō)

- Set apart one
- One who is sent out
- An ambassador or delegate
- One commissioned

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Slave

δουλος – doulos
(root: δέω – deō)

- A slave, involuntarily or voluntarily
- One who is in subjection or subserviency to another
 - Be bound to, to be knit or tied to

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



14 of the 27 books of the “New Testament” have been attributed to Paul

Over ½ of the book of Acts describes the historical and spiritual contribution of Paul's ministry to the spread of “The Gospel”

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Paul's Jewish name was “Saul”
(Hebrew: שאול - Modern: Sha'ûl)

The Latin name Paulus, meaning small, was not a result of his conversion as is often believed but a second name for use in communicating with a Greco-Roman audience

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Acts 9

1 Meanwhile, Sha'ul, still breathing murderous threats against the Lord's talmidim, went to the Cohen Hagadol 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Dammesek [Damascus], authorizing him to arrest any people he might find, whether men or women, who belonged to "the Way," and bring them back to Yerushalayim. 3 He was on the road and nearing Dammesek, when suddenly a light from heaven flashed all around him. 4 Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Sha'ul! Sha'ul! Why do you keep persecuting me?" 5 "Sir, who are you?" he asked. "I am Yeshua, and you are persecuting me. 6 But get up, and go into the city, and you will be told what you have to do."

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Acts 9

7 The men traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 8 They helped Sha'ul get up off the ground; but when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing.

So, leading him by the hand, they brought him into Dammesek. 9 For three days he remained unable to see, and he neither ate nor drank. 10 There was a talmid in Dammesek, Hananyah by name; and in a vision the Lord said to him, "Hananyah!" He said, "Here I am, Lord." 11 The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to Straight Street, to Y'hudah's house; and ask for a man from Tarsus named Sha'ul; for he is praying, 12 and in a vision he has seen a man named Hananyah coming in and placing his hands on him to restore his sight."

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Acts 9

13 But Hananyah answered, “Lord, many have told me about this man, how much harm he has done to your people in Yerushalayim; 14 and here he has a warrant from the head cohanim to arrest everyone who calls on your name.” 15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name to the Goyim, even to their kings, and to the sons of Isra’el as well. 16 For I myself will show him how much he will have to suffer on account of my name.” 17 So Hananyah left and went into the house. Placing his hands on him, he said, “Brother Sha’ul, the Lord — Yeshua, the one who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Ruach HaKodesh.” 18 In that moment, something like scales fell away from Sha’ul’s eyes; and he could see again. He got up and was immersed;

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Acts 9

19 then he ate some food and regained his strength. Sha'ul spent some days with the talmidim in Dammesek, 20 and immediately he began proclaiming in the synagogues that Yeshua is the Son of God. 21 All who heard him were amazed. They asked, "Isn't he the man who in Yerushalayim was trying to destroy the people who call on this name? In fact, isn't that why he came here, to arrest them and bring them back to the head cohanim?" 22 But Sha'ul was being filled with more and more power and was creating an uproar among the Jews living in Dammesek with his proofs that Yeshua is the Messiah. 23 Quite some time later, the non-believing Jews gathered together and made plans to kill him; 24 but their plot became known to Sha'ul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to do away with him.

God's Emissary – A Slave of Messiah



Acts 9

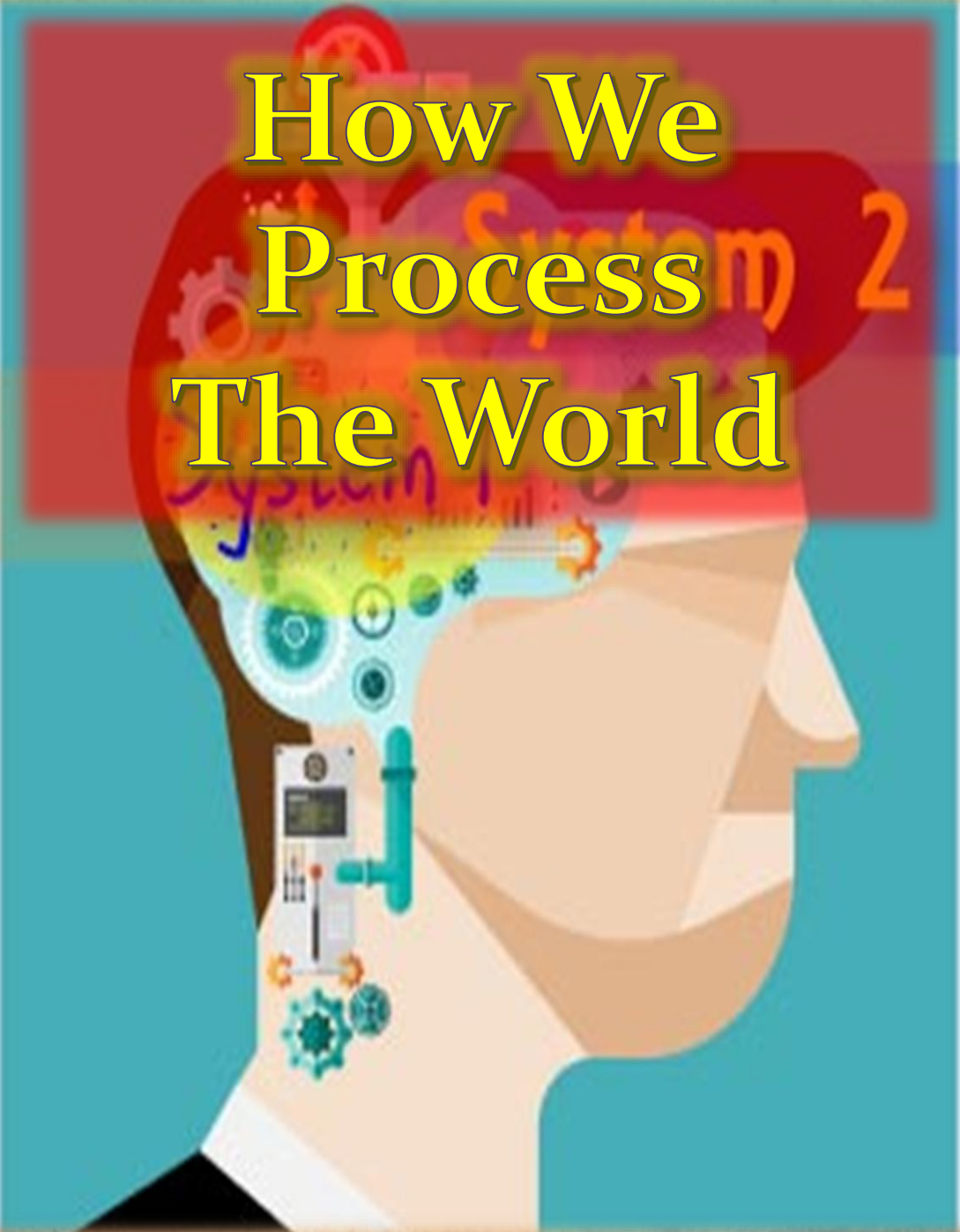
25 but under cover of night, his talmidim took him and let him down over the city wall, lowering him in a large basket. 26 On reaching Yerushalayim, he tried to join the talmidim; but they were all afraid of him — they didn't believe he was a talmid. 27 However, Bar-Nabba got hold of him and took him to the emissaries. He told them how Sha'ul had seen the Lord while traveling, that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Dammesek Sha'ul had spoken out boldly in the name of Yeshua. 28 So he remained with them and went all over Yerushalayim continuing to speak out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He talked and debated with the Greek-speaking Jews, but they began making attempts to kill him. 30 When the brothers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.



The Gospel According To Paul

Heuristics & The Evil Inclination

How We Process The World



intuitive

95%

hunches
heuristics

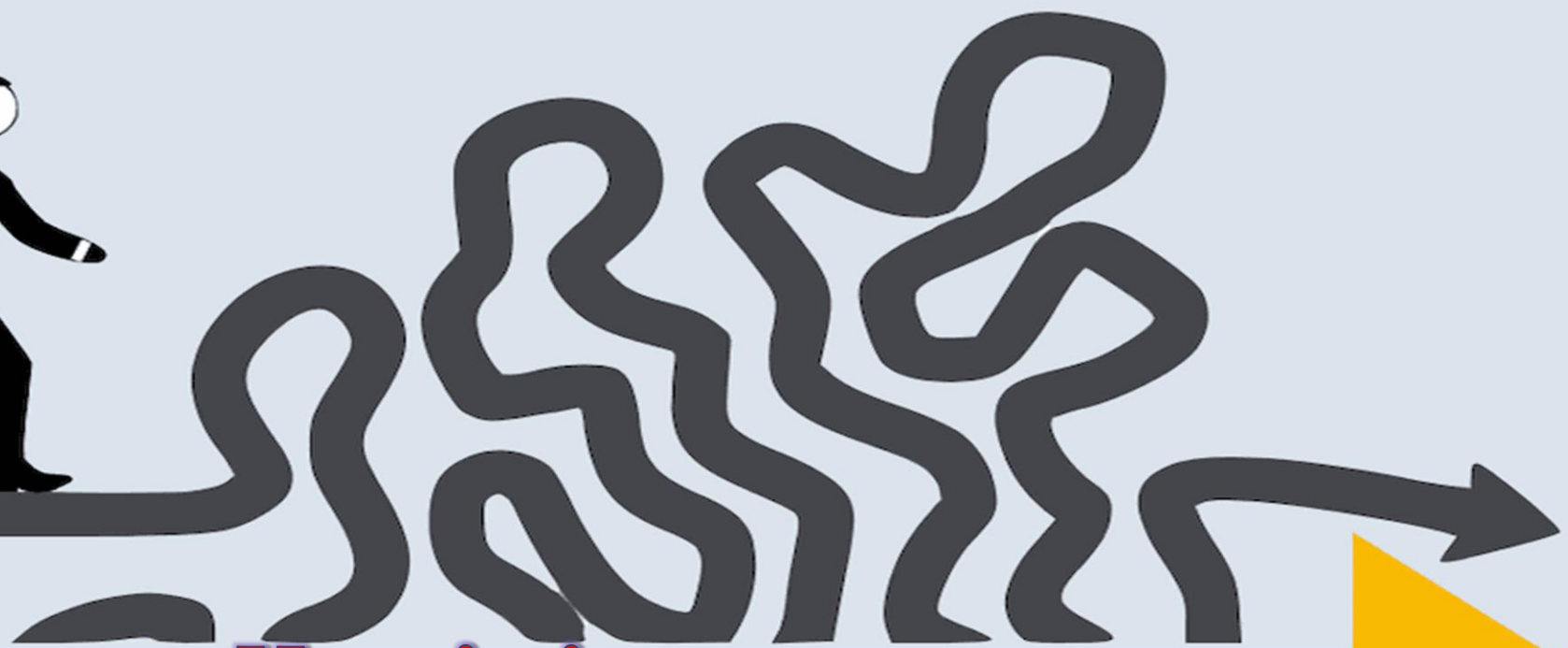
FAST

rational

5%

systematic
thoughtful

slow



Heuristic



Heuristics



- The most common method our mind uses to respond to the world
- A mental shortcut that the brain uses to swiftly form opinions, make rapid decisions or solve immediate problems without taking the time to process all available data.
- Mental rules of thumb that people rely on to simplify their decision-making process.

Benefits of Heuristics



- Heuristics are fast, efficient, common methods for making decisions.
- They provide a "good enough" answer rapidly and allow us to act quickly instead of needing to consciously think about all the options.
- These mental shortcuts are very useful in allowing us to act quickly instead of needing to consciously think about all the options.

Risks of Heuristics



- Because they are utilized so frequently, they can create biases – an incorrect or disproportionate preference, inclination, or prejudice **FOR** or **AGAINST** an idea, a person, or a group.
- Unfortunately, in doing so, these biases will often generate inaccurate conclusions that impact our behavior, sometimes unconsciously.
- Additionally, people can also be manipulated when others recognize and take advantage of their heuristic biases.

Anchoring Bias	You rely heavily on the first piece of information you receive.	Illusory Correlation	You mistakenly believe two unrelated things are connected.
Authority Bias	You trust opinions from perceived authorities more.	Negativity Bias	You focus more on negative events than positive ones.
Availability Heuristic	You judge things based on info readily available or easily recalled.	Outcome Bias	You judge a decision by its outcome, not the decision-making process.
Bandwagon Effect	You tend to follow popular opinions or trends.	Recency Effect	You give more weight to the latest information or experiences.
Confirmation Bias	You favor information that confirms your existing beliefs.	Self-Serving Bias	You credit your successes to yourself and blame your failures on others.
Dunning-Kruger Effect	You overestimate your ability when you know little about something.	Spotlight Effect	You think others notice your mistakes or appearance more than they do.
Endowment Effect	You value things more when you own them.	Sunk Cost Fallacy	You stick with a choice even if it becomes clear it is a bad one.
Halo Effect	You judge a person's character from an overall positive impression.		

Risks of Heuristics

Unlearning vs. Learning



We have to deconstruct our biases

Representativeness Bias



The most common cause of heuristic bias

When we're trying to determine how to best explain or predict something – a text, a behavior, an event – we often make our decision by assessing how similar or familiar it is to an existing mental image or understanding

WHEN IT COMES TO KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING GOD, TO INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE, AND TO WHAT IMPACTS OUR BEHAVIOR, THIS TYPE OF BIAS PLAYS A HUGE ROLE

Representativeness Bias



WHEN IT COMES TO KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING GOD, TO INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE, AND TO OUR BEHAVIOR, THIS TYPE OF BIAS PLAYS A HUGE ROLE.

It is this type of bias that is more important than anything else when it comes to our understanding of Paul's letters, his life, and his mission.

Paul & Heuristics



- Paul – One of the common heuristics about Paul is that his mission was to popularize and spread a new religion, or at least a completely new religious perspective based on the teachings of Jesus
 - This heuristic, based on Jesus’ antagonistic view of the religious leaders of 2nd Temple Judaism – the Pharisees and Sadducees – and Paul’s consistent stance against “legalism” lays the foundation for an anti-Jewish (or at least, a de-Judaized) heuristic of Paul’s theology
 - It also becomes the foundation for the systematic theology taught in almost all theological circles

The Irony of Paul & Heuristics



- Irony
 - Irony is a contrast between expectation and reality.
 - It occurs when there is a striking difference between what is said and what is meant, or between what is expected to happen and what actually occurs.

Paul's entire ministry surrounded his passion for the Gospel and for speaking to and correcting the error-prone heuristics of both Jew and Gentile in relation to God and to Yeshua the Messiah.

Our Pauline Heuristic



1. In common Jewish thinking, on one level, Paul is the real bad guy.
 - Paul is seen as the one who started this new religion called Christianity, which is severed and divorced from Judaism. Paul is the one who is the self-hating Jew who seems to loathe both the Torah and Judaism.

Our Pauline Heuristic



2. The common Christian mindset is that Paul converted from being Jewish and became a Christian

- “Saul the Jew” became “Paul the Christian” and gave up his fundamental Jewish reliance on the law of Moses

Our Pauline Heuristic



3. Even if Paul remained Jewish in some ways, he did so in order to be a good missionary witness to his Jewish brethren.

- When he was living with and preaching to Gentiles, he had no problem letting go of his Jewishness

Our Pauline Heuristic



4. Paul expected both Jews and Gentiles to practice the same “Christianity” after their “salvation”
- That’s what he meant by declaring: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

How We Process The World

intuitive

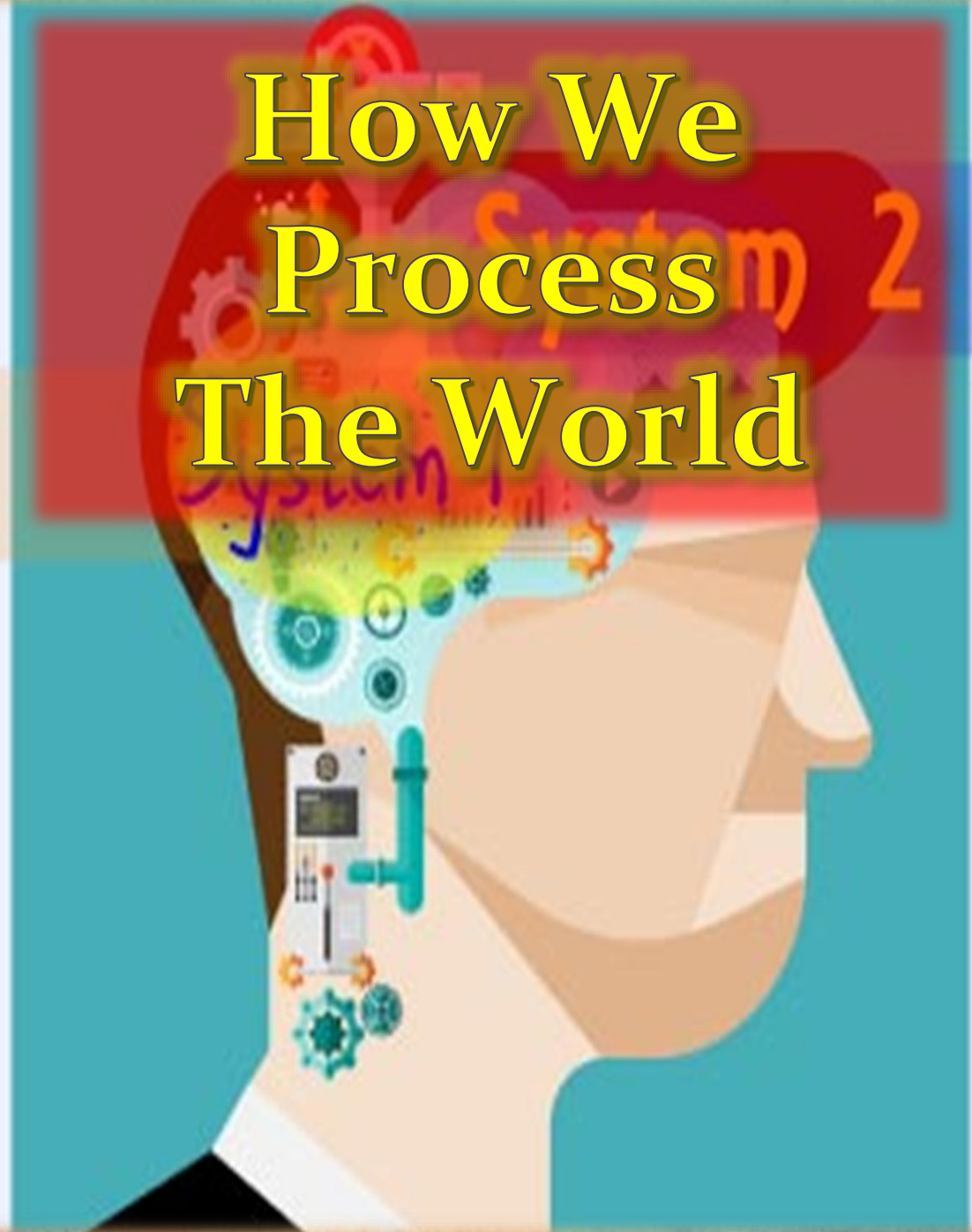
rational

hunches
95%
heuristics

systematic
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slow



The Heart & Our Heuristics



Romans 7

18 For I know that there is nothing good housed inside me — that is, inside my old nature. I can want what is good, but I can't do it! 19 For I don't do the good I want; instead, the evil that I don't want is what I do!

24 What a miserable creature I am! Who will rescue me from this body bound for death?

The Heart & Our Heuristics



Mark 7

20 “It is what comes out of a person,” [Yeshua] went on, “that makes him unclean. 21 For from within, out of a person’s heart, come forth wicked thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 greed, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, arrogance, foolishness.... 23 All these wicked things come from within, and they make a person unclean.”

The Heart & Our Heuristics



Jeremiah 17

9 “The heart is more deceitful than anything else and mortally sick. Who can fathom it?

10 I, Adonai, search the heart; I test inner motivations; in order to give to everyone what his actions and conduct deserve.”