

“I Have Made a Covenant...”

Job uttered the oft-quoted words *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; How could I then gaze at a virgin?”* (Job 31:1), and then further expressed concern that his *“heart (would) follow his eyes,”* v.7b. He’s right to be concerned. Ground target pilots have to be trained not to become so fixated on the targets they’re bombing that they fly into the target themselves. And which one of us has not noticed that when we stare at something off the road for too long we tend to steer in that direction. There is a definite connection between that which we “see” or “look at” and the course, direction, and eventually, the “desire” of our hearts. Indeed, *“The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear (or “single” as the KJV renders it), your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”* Matt.6:22-23. Job was right to be wary of what he allowed his eyes to “gaze” (which here means to “look closely at” or “discern”)!

Let’s also think about the word “covenant” as used in Job 31:1. It is translated from the Hebrew word “baryth” and generally refers to an *agreement, pledge, or treaty*, and can also confer *alliance or allegiance*. It seems to be derived from an Aramaic word from which our English word “constitution” comes. Job seems to be using the word to imply that he has made a **binding agreement** or **pledge** in his mind that forbade his eyes from looking at things they ought not. It is worthy of note that if King David had done likewise, his later life would surely have followed a very different course than it did, cf. 2Sam.11:2ff. But think further with me about the kind of “covenant” Job made...

As important as our “eyes” are to our course, direction, and actions, what if we made a similar “agreement” with our “**minds**”? That is, what if we made a conscious “covenant” with our minds not to think about or on improper matters? To not dwell, as compared to the eyes that would continue to “gaze” upon something improper, on things that are contrary to God’s will and desires for us? To instead, as Paul wrote, *“let your mind dwell”* on *“whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute”* and those things that are “*excellent*” and “*worthy of praise,*” Phil.4:8? Don’t you think that, too, would be a good “covenant” to make?

But let’s not stop there in our “covenant” making; let’s also include our “**hearts**”! Couldn’t we make a binding agreement with our hearts not to *lust* or desire things that may please us (at least temporarily), but which *displease* the Lord? After all, such “heart-failures” typically lead to additional *worldly actions* and wind up making us “*as enemy of God,*” cf. Jas.4:1-4! Furthermore, we could *pledge* our hearts to “feel” the way God does: to “*love*” who and what He does, such as those we might otherwise call “enemies” (Matt.5:43-48), or “undesirables/sinners” (Matt.9:10-13), or just those “not like us” (Luke 18:9-14); and also commit our hearts to “*despise*” and “*hate*” the things God does such as *“haughty eyes, a lying tongue... hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil... a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers,”* Prov.6:16-19. Wouldn’t that be a good “covenant” to make with our hearts?

And of course we could also make a *treaty of allegiance/alliance* with our “**bodies**” to do the things that *please God* rather than ourselves, Eph.5:10; and to abstain from

doing those things that *displease Him*- regardless of whether they please “me” or not, such as “*fleshly lusts*” (1Pet.2:11) and “*every form of evil*” (1Thess.5:22).

Truth be told, however, I think we’ll find that if we would make and keep a “covenant” with our “**hearts**” and “**minds**”- and thus limit ourselves to *feeling* and *thinking* like God does, our “**bodies**” will usually follow suit. Still yet, we humans do possess the unique ability to allow our “actions” to sway our emotions and thoughts rather than the other way around. So perhaps we had go ahead and make that “covenant” too!

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