

Job 31:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

Analysis

Job declares: 'I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?' The phrase *karati verit le-eynay* (כָּרַתִּי בְרִית לְעֵינַי, I made a covenant with mine eyes) uses covenantal language for personal discipline. The verb *hitbonen* (הִתְבּוֹנֵן, think upon) means to consider or gaze at with desire. *Betulah* (בְּתוּלָה, maid) refers to a virgin or young woman. Job's covenant with his eyes addresses lustful thoughts, anticipating Jesus's teaching about adultery of the heart (Matthew 5:28). The verse models proactive holiness—Job didn't merely avoid external adultery but guarded his thought life.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern law codes primarily addressed external actions. Job's concern with internal purity (thoughts and desires) reflects the biblical emphasis on heart holiness. This oath begins chapter 31's extended defense where Job invokes curses upon himself if guilty of various sins. The covenant with his eyes demonstrates that genuine righteousness addresses not just behavior but desire.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Job's covenant with his eyes challenge us to guard not just actions but thoughts and desires?
2. What does Job's proactive holiness teach about cultivating purity rather than merely avoiding external sin?

Interlinear Text

בְּרִית	כָּבֵדִי	לְעֵינַי	וְהָ	אָ תְבוֹן	עַל
a covenant	I made	with mine eyes	H4100	why then should I think	H5921
H1285	H3772	H5869		H995	
בְּתוּלָה:					
upon a maid					
H1330					

Additional Cross-References

1 John 2:16 (Parallel theme): For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Psalms 119:37 (Parallel theme): Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

Proverbs 6:25 (Parallel theme): Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

Proverbs 4:25 (Parallel theme): Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

Genesis 6:2 (Parallel theme): That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.