

Job 31:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:

Analysis

My heart hath been secretly enticed (וַיַּעֲמֹד בַּסְתָּר לְבִי, vayift baseter libi)—the verb patah (בַּתָּה) means to be deceived, seduced, or enticed. The phrase baseter (בַּסְתָּר, secretly) indicates hidden, inward sin—the heart drawn away from God in ways others couldn't see. **My mouth hath kissed my hand** describes a gesture of worship toward celestial bodies, blowing a kiss as an act of reverence. The Hebrew nashak leyadi (נִשְׁקַׁק לְדַי) was an ancient worship practice.

This verse continues verse 26's denial of astral worship. Job affirms that not only did he avoid overt idolatry, but his heart wasn't secretly drawn to worship the sun or moon. This anticipates Jesus's teaching that sin begins in the heart (Matthew 5:28, 15:19). External conformity means nothing if the heart harbors idolatry. From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates the depth of Job's covenant faithfulness—his worship of Yahweh was exclusive, both publicly and privately. True religion governs the heart, not merely behavior.

Historical Context

Kissing the hand toward celestial bodies was a common ancient Near Eastern worship practice, found in Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Canaanite religions. Israel's law specifically prohibited this (Deuteronomy 4:19, 17:3). The practice survived into Israel's later history (2 Kings 23:5). Job's denial demonstrates exclusive Yahweh worship in a polytheistic context. His righteousness wasn't merely avoiding external acts but guarding his heart from secret enticement.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Job's concern with secret heart-enticement challenge our focus on external religious performance?
2. What modern forms of idolatry secretly entice our hearts away from exclusive devotion to God?
3. How do we cultivate the kind of inward purity that Job demonstrates here?

Interlinear Text

לִפְנֵי	אֵל	יְהֹוָה	וְיִתְשְׁלַח	לְבָנָי	בְּשָׂתָר	וְיִתְעַכְּבֶנּוּ
or my mouth	my hand	my hand	my hand	my heart	secretly	enticed
H6310	H3027	H5401	H3820	H5643		H6601

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