

Job 31:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;

Analysis

If my step hath turned out of the way (אם תֵּה אֲשֶׁר מִן דֶּרֶךְ), im titteh ashuri minni haderech)—Natah (turned aside, declined) with ashur (step, walk) from derech (the way, the path) describes moral deviation from God's prescribed course. Deuteronomy repeatedly warns against turning 'to the right hand or to the left' (Deuteronomy 5:32).

Mine heart walked after mine eyes (וְאַחֲר עֵינִי פָּלַג לְבִי), ve'achar einai halach libbi)—This phrase reverses proper order: the lev (heart, will) should govern the eyes, but Job asks if his heart followed his eyes lustfully. Numbers 15:39 warns against 'following your own heart and eyes' into adultery. Job claims his eyes didn't lead his heart into coveting (compare Job 31:1, the covenant with his eyes).

If any blot hath cleaved to mine hands (וְבָכְפִי זְבַק מָם), uvechappai davak mum)—Davak (cleaved, clung) describes persistent attachment. Mum (blot, spot, blemish) is used of physical defects disqualifying priests (Leviticus 21:17-23). Job asks if moral contamination has adhered to his hands, the instruments of action.

Historical Context

The 'way' (derech) was a central biblical metaphor for covenant faithfulness—the Torah was the path to life. Clean hands symbolized moral innocence in temple worship (Psalm 24:4). The progression—step, heart, eyes, hands—traces sin from

inception (wandering) through desire (heart following eyes) to action (blot on hands). This follows wisdom literature's psychology of temptation.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the heart 'walking after the eyes' describe the progression of covetousness and lust?
2. What 'blots' might cling to your hands from compromises you've rationalized as necessary?
3. In what ways has your 'step turned from the way' without dramatic rebellion —just gradual drift?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֹהֵי	תָּבַע	הַ	אָשֶׁר	יָמֵן	מִ	בְּדַבֵּר	רָאֵם	רַבְּרַבְתִּי
H518	hath turned out		If my step	H4480	of the way		after	mine eyes
	H5186		H838		H1870		H310	H5869

מֵאֲוֹתָם:	בְּלֹא	לְבַטְחָה	לְבַטְחָה	מִאֲוֹתָם:
and if any blot				
walked	and mine heart	to mine hands	hath cleaved	
H1980	H3820	H3709	H1692	H3971

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 15:39 (Parallel theme): And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

Ecclesiastes 11:9 (Parallel theme): Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

Matthew 5:29 (Parallel theme): And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org