



Job's Self-Imprecations, Job 31:7-8; the Lord's Collective Inventory of Believers Determines the Up- & Downtrends of History, Rev 2:23b; Jer 17:10

9. In the next conditional sentence Job offers his idea of a just punishment that the Lord could impose upon him if such guilt were found:

Job 31:7 - "If my step has turned from the way [דֶּרֶךְ **derek: wheel-tracks of righteousness**], or my heart [לֵב **lev: stream of consciousness**] followed my eyes [**the sin of greed**], or if any spot has stuck to my hands [**an idiom for theft**],

v. 8 - let me sow and another eat, and let my crops be uprooted."

1. Job offers the self-imprecation of greed and theft as a reality and then contends that if true that God should allow others to eat the produce of his crops and that he should receive no income from them.
2. Again we see the principle that the malfeasance of man is judged by God. Job did not believe himself guilty and in order to prove it to his interrogators he took these oaths followed by the punishment he was willing to endure should they be found true.
3. Notice that in this passage Job issues his oaths with the understanding that God as the ultimate Judge is capable through omniscience of knowing exactly those things that exist in his heart.
4. Not only is this true for individuals but also for all who live in a client nation. This principle is found in the Lord's evaluation of the church at Thyatira in:

Revelation 2:23b - "... I am He who searches [ἐρευνᾶω, **ereunaō: to search out; investigate; inventory**] the minds [νεφρός, **nephros: kidneys, i.e., the emotions**] and hearts [καρδία, **kardia: stream of consciousness**]; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds" [ἔργον, **ergon: production: wood, hay, stubble or gold, silver, precious stones**].

5. The Lord has always taken an ongoing inventory of the souls of believers and administers discipline to them if their production is from the source of human energy and imputes blessings if their production is from the source of divine power. This verse is a New Testament acknowledgement of Jeremiah 17:10.

Jeremiah 17:10 - [NASB] "I, the Lord, search [חָקַר **chaqar: to explore, to inventory**] the heart [לֵב **lev: stream of consciousness of the καρδία, kardia**], I test [בָּחַן **bachan: for the purpose of evaluation**] the mind [כִּלְיָה **kilyah: literally the kidneys: the emotions**], even to give to each man according to his ways [דֶּרֶךְ **derek: wheel-tracks both of righteousness and wickedness**], according to the results [פְּרִי **p^oriy: the production**] of his deeds" [מַעֲלָל **ma^alal: that which is done whether good or bad**].

1. The action the Lord performs in Revelation 2:23 is the retroactive progressive present active participle of the verb:

ἐρευνᾶω, ereunaō – to investigate into; to inquire about; to search for; to explore into; to examine.



2. The things investigated for their content are the believer's emotions and stream of consciousness. This investigation by the Lord identifies the content as being either good or bad with appropriate response of discipline or blessing.
3. Thus what we find the Lord doing is conducting an ongoing inventory of the content and motivations of the believer's soul. This is established by tense of the verb *ereunaō*:

present: Retroactive progressive, denoting that which has begun in the past and continues into the present. Jesus Christ is constantly taking an inventory of the souls of every human being for the purpose of discipline or blessing.

active: The Lord by His omniscience and omnipotence produces the action of conducting this ongoing soul inventory.

participle: Circumstantial for reference to the type of production that is produced by each.

4. There are two things which are said to be constantly inventoried by our Lord and both are mentioned in the Old Testament passages we have noted and confirmed in this verse by the Lord Himself.
5. The first that He mentions is the accusative plural of the direct object:

νεφρός, nephros -

"Kidneys." The Hebrew word is **כִּלְיָהּ kilyah** and we translate both into the English with "emotions."

6. This translation requires some explanation and we begin with:

Kittel, Gerhard (ed.). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 4:911:

νεφρός, (nephros). Very common in the LXX [Septuagint] in the laws of sacrifice, where the kidneys as well as the liver and fat are to be sacrificed and to go up in smoke on the altar. Philo considers the question why the liver, fat and kidneys are offered, not the heart and brain. His explanation is as follows. The heart and brain are the seat of the hegemonikon [ἡγεμονικόν, *hēgemonikon*: "the authoritative part of the soul, especially in Stoic philosophy" (Liddell & Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 763), i.e., the command centers for thought, decision, and action], which often grants access to all kinds of irrationality and unrighteousness. Since, then, the heart and brain are often an occasion for sin, they cannot be sacrificed on the altar, the place of forgiveness. The kidneys, on the other hand, help to sift out waste material.

In the New Testament **νεφρός (nephros)** occurs only in Revelation 2:23 in quotation of Jeremiah 17:10. In the suffering which God sends on false prophets and their adherents the community may see that God demands ultimate truth and purity and does not overlook the danger which threatens the faith of the community from a small circle. The total claim which God makes on the community finds expression in the Old Testament saying that He tries the reins (kidneys) and the heart.