

AIMING THE MIND: A KEY TO GODLY LIVING

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The Bible is a persistent witness to the fact that behavior flows from a noetic wellspring. Noetic depravity, expressed by various terms and idiomatic combinations in both testaments, necessitates a redirection of man's faculties. Repentance establishes an initial re-orientation; however, the Scriptures stress that the key to a godly life-style is a sustained spiritual mindset. This is the focal point of Biblical ethics.

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THE NOETIC MALADY

THE noetic effects¹ of the Fall are attested on nearly every page of the Holy Scriptures. If one fails to take seriously God's infallible diagnosis of this malady, attempts at treatment will be at best directed only to symptoms and the result will be fatal.

A Survey of Noetic Terminology

OT Terminology

The concept of "mind" in the OT is conveyed in certain contexts by רֹחַ, נַפֶּשׁ, and לֵב/לִבָּב.² All but the last should be considered secondary terms because of the infrequency with which they are used in contexts in the Hebrew Bible where this English translation value is appropriate.

¹Although English dictionaries define "noetic" only in terms of intellect, no reference to mere logic in nonmoral contexts is intended here. Coming from νοῦς, "mind," the term is used here as it is in the NT to describe fallen man's thinking and reasoning processes, which are consistently perverted in the spiritually vital issues of life.

²Aaron Pick, *Dictionary of Old Testament Words for English Readers* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977) 274. Pick also lists זָכָה (cf. Job 17:11; Prov 21:27; 24:9; Isa 32:7); however, it will not be discussed here since its occurrences are few and its anthropological and hamartiological impact is transparent.

רוח

“Rarely . . . רוח is used of the seat of mentality.”³ A survey of usage based on a Hebrew concordance along with LXX renderings (where πνεῦμα is *not* used to translate רוח)⁴ justifies special usage categories for רוח as the seat or organ “of mental acts” and “of the will.”⁵ Renderings of “mind, disposition, temper, mood, disposition of mind,”⁶ etc., are found in contexts associating רוח with attitude of mind and/or volition.⁷ For example, the Lord says in Ezek 11:5, “I know your thoughts”⁸ [וּמַעַלּוֹת רוּחְכֶם אֲנִי יֹדְעִיתִי]. Later in Ezekiel, God says, “And what comes into your mind [וְהָעֵלָה עַל-רוּחְכֶם] will not come about, when you say: ‘We will be like the nations, like the tribes of the lands, serving wood and stone’” (20:32). Similarly, 1 Chr 28:12 speaks of the plan for the temple and environs that David “had in mind” (וְחַבְנִיתָ כָּל אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְרוּחַ עִמּוֹ).

Other similar usages of רוח relate theologically to the subsequent discussion. Of particular significance are those usages where רוח is parallel to לב in contexts of cognition, attitude, or volition.⁹ The Lord spiritually X-rays the motives of the רוח (e.g., Prov 16:2, 18, 19, 32) and exposes mankind’s fatal condition. The cure for the fallen condition of his רוח requires nothing less than the administration of sovereign grace by the Great Physician: “I will give you a new heart [לֵב חָדָשׁ] and put a new spirit [רוּחַ חָדָשׁ] within you” (Ezek 36:26; cf. 11:19).¹⁰ Divine efficacy and the responsibility of man’s proper self-estimation in comparison with God’s perfection seem to converge in passages such as Isa 57:15: “For thus says the high and exalted [He alone is רַם וְנִשְׂא] One, who lives forever, whose name is Holy, ‘I dwell

³Ernest De Wit Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh: The Usage of Πνεῦμα, Ψυχή, and Σάρξ in Greek Writings and Translated Works from the Earliest Period to 180 A.D.; and of their Equivalents רוח, נַפֶּשׁ, and בָּשָׂר in the Hebrew Old Testament* (Historical and Linguistic Studies, second series; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1918) 59–60.

⁴Cf. Elmar Camilo Dos Santos, *An Expanded Index for the Hatch-Redpath Concordance to the Septuagint* (Jerusalem: Dugith, n.d.) 190–91.

⁵See usage categories 6 and 7 in BDB, p. 925.

⁶KB, 2.878.

⁷See the discussion in Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1974) 37–39.

⁸NASB. Unless otherwise indicated all English translations are taken from this version. However, note the significant impact of the NIV rendering: “what is going through your mind.”

⁹See, for example, Job 15:12–13 (apostasy of heart/apostasy in spirit); Pss 34:19 (broken in heart/crushed in spirit); 51:12 (a cleansed heart/a rightly fixed [נְכוּן] spirit); 51:19 (a broken spirit/a broken heart); 77:7 (meditation with heart/רוח; חַפְּשׁ + רוח; חַפְּשׁ + רוח; חַפְּשׁ + רוח); Dan 5:20 (arrogance [רום] of heart/arrogance [חַקְּרָה + זִרָה] of spirit); etc. All references here and subsequently follow the Hebrew versification.

¹⁰Wolff stresses the fact that “in Ezek 11:19; 36:26 the gift of the new heart and the new will are linked together” (*Anthropology of the OT*, 38).

on a high [מָרוֹם] and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit [רִוּחַ + שָׁפָל + נָדָבָא] in order to revive the spirit of the lowly [רִוּחַ שְׁפָלִים] and to revive the heart of the contrite [לֵב נִדְבָאִים].¹¹

It should be noted that although the NT authors employ a wide range of more explicit terms for “mind,” there is still some carry-over corresponding to the above usages of רִוּחַ. At times πνεῦμα also is viewed “as the seat of consciousness and intelligence”¹² and “as the seat of emotion and will; especially of the moral and religious life, including thought as concerned with religion.”¹³

נַפֶּשׁ

What has been said about רִוּחַ also holds true for נַפֶּשׁ but to a lesser degree. Although נַפֶּשׁ is employed “rarely of the seat of mentality,”¹⁴ there are several contexts in which it connotes “the seat of will and moral action, especially when joined with לֵבָב, but occasionally alone.”¹⁵ נַפֶּשׁ is associated with knowing (יָדַע) in Josh 23:14 (cf. Ps 139:14), with reckoning (שָׁעַר) in Prov 23:7, with wishing or desiring in Gen 23:8,¹⁶ with imagining or devising (דָּמָה) in Esth 4:13, and with choosing (בָּחַר) in Job 7:15. Consequently, נַפֶּשׁ in Scripture is the seat of man’s pride and humility, and thus another term which conveys his accountability and responsibility.¹⁷ Of particular significance for the study at hand is David’s challenge to Israel’s leaders in 1 Chr 22:19: “Now set your heart and your soul to seek (עָתָה תָּנוּ לִבְכֶם וְנַפְשְׁכֶם) ¹⁸(לְדָרוֹשׁ) the Lord your God; arise, therefore, and build the sanctuary

¹¹The anthropological and hamartiological inferences from the antithetical plays on words are quite obvious.

¹²Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 179; e.g., 1 Cor 2:11.

¹³Ibid.; cf. Matt 26:41; Acts 17:16; 19:21; 20:22; 2 Cor 2:13; Eph 4:23; etc.

¹⁴Ibid., 65; cf. BDB, 661.

¹⁵Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 65. It is interesting that in BDB this category of usage is regarded as dubious, although they cite Gen 23:8; 2 Kgs 9:15; etc., as possible examples (p. 661). Apart from the invalid critical assumptions expressed in categories 7–10, their reservations are properly grounded in light of the wholistic anthropology of the OT (esp. in reference to נַפֶּשׁ, “life, self, person,” etc.) and the fact that the majority of these occurrences of נַפֶּשׁ are in parallel with לֵבָב. Even though all of the references may be affected metonymically, it is nevertheless advantageous to recognize a category of “נַפֶּשׁ as Expression of the Will” (see “The Anthropology of the Old Testament,” by Edmond Jacob in *TDNT*, s.v., ψυχή, κτλ.,” by G. Bertram *et al.*, 9.621–22).

¹⁶KB prefer to categorize Gen 23:8 and 2 Kgs 9:15 under *purpose* (2.628); cf. נַפֶּשׁ plus verbals and substantives from the root אָוָה in Deut 12:15, 20, 21; 14:26; 18:6; etc.

¹⁷For example, Hab 2:4 (נַפֶּשׁ + יִשְׂרָאֵל + negative); cf. Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 29, 32; Num 29:7; Ps 24:4; etc.

¹⁸Such collocations of verbs of orientation or direction with anthropological terms which suggest rational or volitional nuances plus subsequent infinitives show the priority of aiming the mind in the OT. This should become increasingly obvious as more biblical data are surveyed and summarized.

of the Lord, so that you may bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the Lord.”

Based upon the use of נִפְּץ in the OT as a metonymy, NT ψυχή may denote “the powers, possibilities, and interests of the self, the human person.”¹⁹ Usages of ψυχή can also point to “the seat of vitality, thought, emotion, will; the human mind in the larger sense of the word; most frequently with special reference to its religious capacities and experiences.”²⁰ The compound word for double mindedness (cf. δίψυχος in James 1:8; 4:8) is especially illustrative.²¹

יָצַר

Although it occurs infrequently in the OT, יָצַר is extremely significant. The semitic root יצר, to form, shape, create, fashion, etc., is most frequently associated with the activity of the potter.²² יָצַר is also used to denote divine purpose (i.e., pre-ordaining, planning).²³ A verbal form is used with a negative connotation of human devising in Ps 94:20.

The usage of the substantive for “what is framed in the mind”²⁴ is worthy of special attention. The references are to man’s imaginations, devices, or purposes.²⁵ The hamartiological consequences associated with man’s יָצַר stand out in sharp relief (cf. Gen 6:5; 8:21; Deut 31:21);²⁶ therefore, God’s grace is desperately needed for noetic direction: “O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Thy people [לְעוֹלָם שְׁמֶרָה־זֹאת לְעוֹלָם לְיָצַר מַחְשְׁבוֹת לְבָב עַמְךָ שְׁמֶרָה־זֹאת לְעוֹלָם לְעוֹלָם], and direct their heart to Thee” (1 Chr 29:18).²⁷ Accountability is seen in the light of God judging volitional intent: “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart [בְּלֵב שְׁלֵם] and a willing mind [וּבְנִפְּשׁ הַפֶּצִיָּה]; for the Lord searches all hearts [לְכָב + דְּרֹשׁ], and

¹⁹Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 184.

²⁰Ibid., 183; cf. Acts 14:2; Eph 6:6; Phil 1:27; 2 Pet 2:14; Rev 18:14; etc.

²¹Cf. δίψυχέω, διψυχία, and δίψυχος in the early Christian literature; BAGD, 200–201.

²²Cf. יָצַר and its cognates in KB, 1.396 and BDB, 427.

²³BDB, 427–28; cf. Ps 139:16; Isa 22:11; 37:26 (2 Kgs 19:25); 46:11; Jer 18:11.

²⁴Ibid., 428; it is suggested the the word “formulation” could stand at the head of this important category of usage.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Contrast the biblical data with the Rabbinical teachings on יָצַר הַטוֹב and יָצַר הַרָע (i.e., the good and bad impulses or tendencies in man); for brief surveys see: Gustav Friedrich Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. and ed. by George E. Day; New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883) 161–63, and Theodorus C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958) 311.

²⁷The יָצַר לְכָבֵם אֱלֹהֵיךָ greatly intensifies this request for volitional enablement.

understands every intent of the thoughts [יְקַל-יִצֵר מִתְשִׁבוֹת מִבֵּין]. If you seek Him,²⁸ He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever" (1 Chr 28:9). A *sustained* יִצֵר (i.e., frame of mind or purpose)²⁹ is a prerequisite for godly living: "Thou wilt keep the nation of steadfast purpose [יִצֵר סְמוּךְ] in perfect peace, because it trusts in Thee" (Isa 26:3).

לֵב/לֵבָב

It should not be surprising that לֵב/לֵבָב is the primary term in the OT for man's rational and volitional capacities, since "the Bible primarily views the heart as the centre of the consciously living man."³⁰ It is the "symbol for the focus of life."³¹ "The heart is the organ which wills or decides, thinks, knows, and judges between right and wrong."³² An extensive examination of these nuances is not possible here, so the following survey is selective.

In the semantic sphere of "the heart as the seat of rational functions,"³³ BDB and KB lexicons³⁴ provide a useful organization of the term's many occurrences.³⁵ Meanings of "mind, sense, understanding, intelligence," etc. for לֵב are common (cf. Isa 65:17; Prov 6:32; 7:7; 9:4, 16; 10:13, 21; 11:12; 12:11; Job 34:10, 34; etc.). Its usage as the subject of the verb יָדַע amplifies its cognitive significance.³⁶ However, the thinking לֵב is especially highlighted in collocations with הִשָּׁב (i.e.,

²⁸Note the play on words with this occurrence of יָדַע.

²⁹Cf. the force of the root סָמַך ("to lean, rest upon") in BDB, 701-2. The logical parallel of יִצֵר סְמוּךְ with יָדַע בְּטוֹחַ is certainly not coincidental. Both סָמַך and בָּטַח magnify a dependence on divine resources.

³⁰Wolff, *Anthropology of the OT*, 55; his whole chapter entitled "leb(āb)—Reasonable Man" is noteworthy (pp. 40-58).

³¹J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962) 225; see Payne's brief discussion of לֵב on pp. 225-26.

³²Paul Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. by William Heidt; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1950) 160.

³³TDNT, s.v. "καρδία, καρδιογενώστης, σακληροκαρδία," by Friedrich Baumgartel and Johannes Behm, 3.606; Baumgartel's brief treatment of "לֵב, לֵבָב in the OT" is excellent (pp. 606-7). The various renderings of noetic terms in the LXX are especially informative (note Dos Santos, *Expanded Index*, 97; and for discussion, see NIDNTT, "νοῦς, by G. Harder, 3.124).

³⁴Cf. BDB's usage categories 3 (p. 523 for לֵבָב and pp. 524-25 for לֵב), and KB's categories 7 and 8 (respectively "heart = mind, attention, consideration, understanding, intelligence" and "heart = the whole of the mind"; 1.470).

³⁵Wolff observes that "in by far the greatest number of cases it is intellectual, rational functions that are ascribed to the heart" (*Anthropology of the OT*, 46).

³⁶Note "you are to know in your heart that . . ." (יָדַע + עַם + לֵבָב; Deut 8:5); and "you know in all your hearts . . ." (יָדַע + כָּל + לֵבָב; Josh 23:14). Other occurrences with verbs such as בִּין (to perceive, discern) corroborate this (e.g., Isa 6:10 speaks of understanding with their hearts [בִּין + לֵבָב]).

“to think, account, reckon”) and its derivatives.³⁷ Similarly, הִגָּה and its derivatives³⁸ are special activities of the לָב. ³⁹ It should be noted that the לָב is also viewed as the source of conversation, both internal⁴⁰ and articulated.⁴¹

Occurrences where the לָב functions volitionally are inextricably related to the cognitive usages sampled above.⁴² לָב as the source of volition is widely attested through a variety of associations and idioms: the root נָרַב plus לָב connotes a willing heart (e.g., Exod 35:5, 22, 29), the preposition מִן plus לָב emphasizes the origination of purpose (e.g., Num 16:28; 24:13), the preposition עִם with לָב plus the infinitive conveys determination (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:18; 2 Chr 24:4; 29:10); the verb עָלָה, the preposition עַל, לָב, and the infinitive speak of motivation (e.g., 2 Kgs 12:5); the root חָקַק plus לָב suggests resolution (e.g., Judg 5:15); the root אָוָה with לָב stresses desire (e.g., Ps 21:3); the root עָרַךְ plus לָב signifies planning (e.g., Prov 16:1); etc.⁴³ All such usages imply man’s accountability before God.

NT Terminology

Before the specific noetic terms of the NT are surveyed, it is necessary to point out that many occurrences of καρδία are based on the precedent of לָב in the OT.⁴⁴ Καρδία “is the seat of understanding, the source of thought and reflection.”⁴⁵ “A striking feature of the NT

³⁷For discussion and examples, see *TWOT*, s.v. “חָשַׁב,” by Leon J. Wood, 1.329–30.

³⁸On these words for meditating and meditation, see BDB, 211–12.

³⁹Cf. Pss 19:15; 39:4 (by parallelism); 49:4; Isa 33:18; 59:13.

⁴⁰Cf. לָב + קָ + אָמַר; e.g., Esth 6:6; Pss 4:5; 10:6, 11, 13; 14:1; 53:2. For some fitting commentary see Wolff, *Anthropology of the OT*, 50. An attendant phenomenon would be the utilization of לָב to connote the conscience (e.g., 1 Sam 24:6; 2 Sam 24:10).

⁴¹E.g., Job 8:10.

⁴²Harder astutely points out that “in the OT the understanding belongs together with the will, and aims less at theoretical contemplation than at right conduct” (*NIDNTT*, s.v. “νοῦς,” by G. Harder, 3.124).

⁴³The most significant rational and volitional occurrences of לָב which depict the concept of *mind-set* will be treated first negatively and then positively in the ensuing discussions. For an introductory survey, note BDB’s fourth category (special reference to inclinations, resolutions and determinations of the will) on pp. 523, 525; and KB’s categories 4 (heart = mood, inclination, disposition) and 6 (heart = will, intention) on 2.469.

⁴⁴Sorg is correct when he asserts that “the NT use of *kardia* coincides with the OT understanding of the term” (*NIDNTT*, s.v. “καρδία,” by T. Sorg, 2.182).

⁴⁵*TDNT*, s.v. “καρδία, κτλ.,” by J. Behm, 3.612. Cf. the καρδία and thinking, thoughts (Matt 9:4; Luke 9:47; Heb 4:12; etc.); perceiving (Matt 13:15; etc.); source of speech, both internal and articulated (Matt 12:34–35; 24:48); reason, ponder, imagine (Mark 2:6–8; Luke 1:51; 2:19; 5:22; etc.); *et al.*

is the essential closeness of *kardia* to the concept *nous*, mind."⁴⁶ Furthermore, καρδιά "is the seat of the will, the source of resolves."⁴⁷ These special usages of καρδιά complement the following explicit terms.

*The vo- word complex*⁴⁸

Harder stresses the "whole group of words is associated more firmly with the will."⁴⁹ As previously observed, rational and volitional nuances interrelate ethically in the biblical corpus.

The verb νοέω ("to perceive, apprehend, understand, gain insight into, think,"⁵⁰ etc.) is explicit (cf., e.g., Mark 7:18; 13:14; John 12:40). One of the most significant anthropological terms in the NT is νοῦς (i.e., the mind as the faculty of thinking, way of thinking; the intellect, understanding; etc.).⁵¹ It occurs in various contexts as depraved (i.e., ἀδόκιμος, Rom 1:28), futile (i.e., ματαιότης, Eph 4:17⁵²), self-centered (cf. Col 2:18), and corrupted or defiled (cf. 1 Tim 6:5; 2 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:15). Therefore, it stands in desperate need of divine intervention (cf. διανοίγω + νοῦς in Luke 24:45)⁵³ and renewal (cf.

⁴⁶*NIDNTT*, s.v. "καρδιά," by Sorg, 2.182. Note the functions of the mind in association with καρδιά (e.g., Mark 2:6; Luke 2:51; 3:15; 9:47; etc.).

⁴⁷*TDNT*, s.v. "καρδιά, κτλ.," by Behm, 3.612. Cf. usage categories γ, δ, ε, and η in BAGD, pp. 403-4. Note καρδιά and planning, purposes, counsels (e.g., Acts 5:4; 11:33; 1 Cor 4:5; Heb 4:12; etc.); also note τίθημι + ἐν + καρδιά in Luke 21:14, and προαιρέω + the dative of καρδιά in 2 Cor 9:7.

⁴⁸Cf. the root vo- ("know") in Bruce M. Metzger, *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek* (Princeton: Bruce M. Metzger, 1971) 63. For a handy classification of the derivatives in the NT, see John Stegenga, *The Greek-English Analytical Concordance of the Greek-English New Testament* (Jackson, Mississippi: Hellenes-English Biblical Foundation, 1963) 522-25.

⁴⁹*NIDNTT*, s.v. "νοῦς," by Harder, 3.127.

⁵⁰BAGD, 540; note some of their illustrative citations from early Christian literature.

⁵¹BAGD, 544-45; cf. Behm's usage categories a, c, and d in *TDNT*, "νοέω, κτλ.," by J. Behm and E. Würthwein, 4.952-53. For some excellent theological commentary, see: W. David Stacey, *The Pauline View of Man in Relation to its Judaic and Hellenistic Background* (London: MacMillan, 1956), 198-205; and Theo J. W. Kunst, "The Implications of Pauline Theology of the Mind for the Work of the Theologian," unpublished Th.D. dissertation (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979).

⁵²Eggleston comments, "The reason of man's mind still functions, but no matter where it functions the result is vanity and evil, always in opposition to God. Man still has some desire to investigate truth, but the corruption of the mind renders him incapable of the right way of investigating truth. Unless seen in relation to God and His Word, this reasoning only leads to further perversion" (Donald Eggleston, "The Biblical Concept of νοῦς: The Noetic Effects of the Fall and Regeneration," unpublished M.Div. thesis [Winona Lake, IN: Grace Theological Seminary, 1979] 53-54).

⁵³Note the important parallel of διανοίγω + καρδιά in Acts 16:14.

Rom 12:2;⁵⁴ Eph 4:23⁵⁵). The only cure for mankind's inflated and perverted νοῦς is the νοῦν Χριστοῦ (1 Cor 2:16; note the polemic against self-aggrandizement in chaps. 1-3).

The NT data of νόημα ("what is thought" or "what is willed"⁵⁶) are semantically similar. An important addition is the attestation of actual or potential Satanic involvement (cf. 2 Cor 4:4; 11:3); consequently, the prerequisite for godly living is to "take captive every thought [πᾶν νόημα] to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor 10:5, *NIV*).

Διάνοια is the most frequent and significant of compounds formed on this word.⁵⁷ It "comes very near in meaning to *nous*, and means, ability to think, faculty of knowledge, understanding, the organ of *noein*; then, mind, and particularly disposition."⁵⁸ The NT emphasizes hamartiological complications of man's διάνοια. It is associated with a proud heart (Luke 1:51), inordinate desire (Eph 2:3), spiritual darkness (Eph 4:18⁵⁹), and active hostility (Col 1:21).⁶⁰ This also requires a special administration of sovereign grace centering in the benefits of the New Covenant (cf. διάνοια in Heb 8:10; 10:16; and 1 John 5:20).

Two compounds of low frequency, ἔννοια⁶¹ (Heb 4:12 and 1 Pet 4:1) and ἐπίνοια (Acts 8:22), seem to complement the impact of this word family in the NT. The efficacy of the Word of God as "critic" of the ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας (Heb 4:12, note the parallelism of v 13), although terrifying,⁶² can open a channel of encouragement through dependence on God and his resources.

⁵⁴For some good commentary and admonitions, see Horace E. Stoessel, "Notes on Romans 12:1-2: The Renewal of the Mind and Internalizing the Truth," *Int* 17 (1963) 161-75.

⁵⁵Notice the force of the present passive infinitive ἀνανοεῦσθαι (i.e., "keep on undergoing renewal" in the πνεύματι τοῦ νοός ὁμῶν).

⁵⁶Cf. *TDNT*, s.v. "νοέω, κτλ.," by Behm, 4.960; for illustrative apocryphal occurrences, note Bar 2:8 and 3 Macc 5:30.

⁵⁷Profitable background studies involve usages of the verb διανοέομαι in Greek literature and the LXX along with the previously mentioned frequent rendering of נָחַד with διάνοια; for a survey, see: *TDNT*, s.v. "νοέω, κτλ.," by Behm and Würthwein, 4.963-67. A survey of its development in the early Christian writings is also noteworthy (1 Clem 35:5; 36:2; 2 Clem 1:6; 19:2); cf. BAGD, 187.

⁵⁸*NIDNTT*, s.v. "νοῦς," by Harder, 3.127.

⁵⁹Kent comments, "The mind of the unconverted man may be filled with many things, and may be highly developed in its intellectual attainments, but spiritually it is wholly unable to apprehend the life of God. Those who are apart from God are in a state of darkness in their spiritual understanding" (Homer A. Kent, Jr., *Ephesians: The Glory of the Church* [Chicago: Moody, 1971] 76-77).

⁶⁰The cognate διανόημα which occurs only in the NT at Luke 11:17 also bears negative freight.

⁶¹Its frequent LXX usage in Proverbs should be recalled.

⁶²For helpful commentary, see: Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 166. Lange makes clear the

*The φρεν word complex*⁶³

"The word φρονεῖν is one of those terms which is difficult to render in English because it includes at once *thinking* and *willing*."⁶⁴ This recurrent observation, one that applies to the terms surveyed above, points to the "close interrelationship between life and thought" in the Bible.⁶⁵ Paul's usage of φρονέω in Philippians is paradigmatic:

To think, phronein, is a favourite expression of Paul in this letter. Its range and depth of meaning can be seen by referring to ii.2 (twice), 5; iii.15 (twice), 16 (in the Received Text), 19; iv.2, 10 (twice). It means (in these verses) much more than a mental exercise, and signifies rather 'sympathetic interest and concern, expressing as it does the action of the heart as well as the intellect' (Michael). It is the outworking of thought as it determines motives, and through motives the conduct of the person involved.⁶⁶

"Paul lays special emphasis on the quality of Christian thinking."⁶⁷ Furthermore, his employment of φρονέω clearly reveals that "there can . . . be no such thing as neutral thinking. Man is always aiming at something."⁶⁸

The important compound ταπεινοφροσύνη forms the biblical foundation proper self-estimation (cf. Acts 20:19; Eph 4:2; Phil 2:3; I Pet 5:5):

In class. Gr. ταπεινός usually implies meanness of condition; lowness of rank; abjectness. At best the classical conception is only modesty, absence of assumption, an element of worldly wisdom, and in no sense opposed to self-righteousness. The word ταπεινοφροσύνη is an outgrowth of the gospel. It does not appear before the Christian era. The virtue itself conjoined with a sense of sinfulness. It regards man not only with reference to God, but also with reference to his fellow-men.⁶⁹

semantic connection of the LXX renderings of the key words in Gen 6:5 (John Peter Lange, *Genesis*, trnas. and ed. by Philip Schaff, in *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* [reprint; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.], 287).

⁶³Cf. the root φρεν in Metzger, *Lexical Aids*, 70; cf. *TDNT*, s.v. "φρήν, κτλ.," by Georg Bertram, 9.220. For classification of the family, see Stegenga, *Greek-English Concordance*, 800-803.

⁶⁴F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (vol. 2, trans. by A. Cusin; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892) 70.

⁶⁵*NIDNTT*, s.v. "φρόνησις," by J. Goetzmann, 2.617.

⁶⁶Ralph P. Martin, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians* (TynNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959) 62.

⁶⁷Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1981) 668.

⁶⁸*NIDNTT*, s.v. "φρόνησις," by Goetzmann, 2.617.

⁶⁹Marvin R. Vincent, *The Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903) 56.

Ταπεινοφροσύνη and σωφρονεῖν (Rom 12:3) stand diametrically opposed to ὑπερφρονεῖν (again Rom 12:3) and to “the well-known Greek expressions ὑψηλοφρονεῖν, μεγαφρονεῖν, *to aim high, to have a high self-regard*.”⁷⁰ The self-estimation of the classical Greeks—and of contemporary man—becomes particularly repugnant in the light of Christ’s example (Phil 2:6–8). This great Christological passage buttresses Paul’s major admonition (cf. 1:27–2:5): “They are . . . to mould their ways of thinking according to the pattern of Christ’s mind (Phil 2:5).”⁷¹

The noun φρόνημα, based on one of the primary semantic spheres φρονέω (“to set one’s mind on, be intent on”), denotes a way of thinking or mind-set.⁷² Although it occurs only in Romans 8 (vv 6, 7, 27) in the NT, it is a strategic term since it puts special emphasis on aspiration and aim.⁷³

*The λεγ- word complex*⁷⁴

The verb λογίζομαι (“to reckon”) was used extensively in the LXX to render צָפַח. Consequently, its earlier nuances expanded to include the concepts of devising and volitional planning.⁷⁵ In this biblical framework an ethical trend was established. Λογίζομαι and λογισμός in the LXX generally are used to translate words which imply the devising of evil.⁷⁶ This spilled over into the NT (cf. λογισμός 2 Cor 10:4–5).⁷⁷

Διαλογίζομαι and διαλοισμός are even more significant for NT theology. These two compounds also have important roots in the LXX. The Greek verb is found rendering such Hebrew roots as צָפַח and דָּמַח (“to consider, purpose, devise”), and the noun corresponds

⁷⁰Godet, *Romans*, 2.70; cf. ὑψηλοφρονέω in Rom 11:20 and 1 Tim 6:17.

⁷¹Guthrie, *New Testament Theology*, 667.

⁷²Cf. BAGD, 866.

⁷³Ibid.; 2 Macc 13:9 in its context is illustrative of this significance since it speaks of a king with a “barbarous” φρονήμασιν.

⁷⁴Cf. root λεγ- in Metzger, *Lexical Aids*, 62. The root γνο- (ibid., 52–53) will not be surveyed here; however, it should be pointed out that the word γνώμη in contexts meaning “purpose,” “intention,” or “mind” (cf. Rev. 17:13, 17) became a very important term in the first and second centuries (BAGD, 163). Worthy of special mention are the idioms ἡ εἰς θεὸν γνώμη (the mind directed toward God) and ἡ ἐν θεῷ γνώμη (the mind fixed in God) in Ignatius’ writings.

⁷⁵For discussion, see *TDNT*, s.v. “λογίζομαι, λογισμός,” by H. W. Heidland, 4.284.

⁷⁶Ibid., 285. For a contrasting positive example of λογίζομαι in the NT see Phil 4:8. However, the usage of φρονέω throughout the epistle probably colored λογίζομαι here.

⁷⁷Ibid.; note the discussion on pp. 286–88.

to חֲשַׁבָּהּ (“thought, device; plan, purpose”), צַד (“purpose, aim”), רָצוֹן (“longing, striving”), מְזִמָּה (“purpose, direction, device”), etc.⁷⁸ However, it is the NT which places the capstone on this evidence, since διαλογίζομαι⁷⁹ and διαλογισμός⁸⁰ “are always used with a slightly depreciatory connotation.”⁸¹ Schrenk rightly concludes, “This shows how strong is the conviction that the sinful nature of man extends to his thinking and indeed to his very heart.”⁸²

A Summary of the Noetic Consequences

Noetic Depravity

Sin issues from the human heart.⁸³ Man’s spiritual heart disease has already become obvious through the survey of לֵב/καρδία. Mankind is proud in heart,⁸⁴ stubborn in heart,⁸⁵ hard in heart,⁸⁶ perverse in heart,⁸⁷ and evil in heart.⁸⁸ Two passages adequately summarize man’s noetic depravity.

Genesis 6:5 (cf. 8:21)

Of all the passages in which לֵב is associated with חָשַׁב or חֲשַׁבָּהּ in a negative sense,⁸⁹ Gen 6:5 is especially critical:⁹⁰ “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness [רָעָה] of man was great on the earth,⁹¹ and

⁷⁸ *NIDNTT*, s.v. “διαλογίζομαι,” by D. Fürst, 3.820–21.

⁷⁹ Mark 2:6, 8; Luke 5:22; 12:17; etc.

⁸⁰ Matt 15:19 (Mark 7:21); Luke 5:22; 6:8; 9:47; Rom 1:21; 1 Cor 3:20 (cf. Ps 94:11); etc.

⁸¹ *NIDNTT*, s.v. “διαλογίζομαι,” by Fürst, 3.820.

⁸² *TDNT*, s.v. “διαλέγομαι, διαλογίζομαι, διαλογισμός,” by Gottlob Schrenk, 2.97.

⁸³ Note the implication of the important maxim of Prov 4:23.

⁸⁴ אָשָׁא + לֵב in 2 Kgs 14:10 (2 Chr 25:19); וְדָוִן + לֵב in Jer 49:16; גָּבַהּ + לֵב in Prov 16:5 (cf. Ezek 28:2, 17); root רוּם + לֵב in Deut 8:14; 17:20; Ezek 31:10; Dan 5:20, 22; Hos 13:6; etc.

⁸⁵ Ps 81:13 (note the parallel with Rom 1:24, 26, 28); the root שָׁרַר + לֵב in Jer 3:17 (+ רָע); 7:24 (+ רָע); 9:13; 11:8 (+ רָע); 18:12 (+ רָע); 23:17.

⁸⁶ σκληροκαρδία in LXX and in Matt 19:8 (Mark 10:5); Rom 2:5.

⁸⁷ עָקַשׁ + לֵב in Ps 101:4; Prov 11:20; 17:20.

⁸⁸ Deut 15:9; Num 15:39; Pss 83:6; 95:10; Prov 24:2; Eccl 8:11; Isa 32:6; 59:13; Matt 9:4; etc.

⁸⁹ Some important references which have not yet been mentioned are: Ps 140:3 (לֵב + בָּ + רָעָה + חָשַׁב + חָשַׁבָּהּ; cf. LXX: λογίζομαι + ἀδικία + ἐν + καρδία); Prov 6:18 (וְרָעָה + חָשַׁבָּהּ + חָשַׁבָּהּ + חָשַׁבָּהּ) [cf. v. 14]; Isa 10:7 (חָשַׁב + לֵב); Ezek 38:10 (+ חָשַׁב + רָעָה) [dependent upon previous assertion about רָעָה]; Zech 7:10 (+ חָשַׁב + אַל לֵבָב; cf. LXX: μὴ + λογίζομαι + ἐν + καρδία) [cf. 8:17].

⁹⁰ On the immediate context with its emphasis on “the degeneration of man,” see John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1975) 109–15.

⁹¹ For some pertinent observations, see U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (trans. by Israel Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961) 1.301.

that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The subject of the Lord's evaluation in the second part of the כִּי clause is *מְחַשְׁבֵּת לְבוֹ*.⁹² It should be noted that the genitive chain terminates with *לְב*; consequently, it is the *source* of the *מְחַשְׁבֵּת*. Furthermore, it is the formulation [*יִצָּר*] of the thoughts⁹³ which falls under divine scrutiny.

Every word in the predicate is crucial: *רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם*. Man's noetic activity is viewed as *רַע* ("ethically bad, wicked, evil").⁹⁴ Two adverbial modifiers magnify this noetic perversity: the *רַק* speaks of *exclusivity*⁹⁵ and the idiom *כָּל־הַיּוֹם* of *continuity*.⁹⁶ Lange comments emphatically, "Only evil, nothing but evil, *all they day*—every day, and every moment of every day. If this is not *total depravity*, how can language express it?"⁹⁷ Vriezen corroborates this opinion when he says,

A more emphatic statement of the wickedness of the human heart is hardly conceivable. This is emphasized once more because in viii.21 the same judgment is pronounced on humanity after the Flood; indeed, in ix.18ff. and xi.1ff. both Noah and his descendants prove to be wicked.⁹⁸

Mark 7:20–23 (cf. Matthew 15:10–20)

The context of this passage centers in the issue of the "source of true defilement (vv. 14–23)."⁹⁹ Jesus' analysis of the condition of the human heart is incisive: "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within [*ἐξωθεν*]¹⁰⁰, out of the heart of men [*ἐκ τῆς καρδίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων*], proceed the evil thoughts [*οἱ*

⁹²The *καὶ πᾶς τις διανοεῖται ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ* of the LXX is somewhat paraprastic (however, cf. its use of *διάνοια* in Gen 8:21). These usages construct significant bridges to the NT (see discussion above).

⁹³Skinner renders the whole construct chain "*the whole bent of the thoughts of his heart*" (John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* [ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917] 150).

⁹⁴BDB, 948.

⁹⁵Ibid., 956.

⁹⁶Ibid., 400.

⁹⁷Lange, *Genesis*, 287.

⁹⁸Vriezen, *Outline of OT Theology*, 210.

⁹⁹D. Edmond Heibert, *Mark: A Portrait of the Servant* (Chicago: Moody, 1974) 178. Heibert notes that "the controversy concerning the tradition of the elders had raised the deeper question of the nature and source of true defilement. It was a matter of fundamental importance, and Jesus did not leave the question untouched. Verse 15 gives His concise, somewhat enigmatical statement of the basic principle, while verses 17–23 give His full statement to the disciples" (ibid.).

¹⁰⁰Contrast with the *ἐξωθεν* of v 15.

διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ¹⁰¹], and fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."¹⁰² According to Jesus and scriptural precedent the fountainhead of all perverted behavior is the fallen human heart. Guthrie captures the significance of Jesus' analysis when he asserts that "the sanctifying process is concerned primarily with attitudes of mind rather than actions. This is supplemented by the view that right action will follow from right thought."¹⁰³

Noetic Apostasy

Several verbs combine with לָב to convey noetic direction.¹⁰⁴ Here only the occurrences of these idiomatic combinations in negative contexts will be considered; positive occurrences will be dealt with subsequently.

שִׁים/לָב

The combination of לָב plus the verb שִׁים bears the meanings of "set the mind, consider,"¹⁰⁵ and with the prepositions -לְ, אַל, or עַל, it denotes "laying to heart" or "paying heed to."¹⁰⁶ Mind-orientation is prominent, with an emphasis upon diligent attention and deep consideration. For example, it says of the recalcitrant Egyptian that he "paid no regard (לָב + שִׁים + לֹא; cf. LXX: μὴ + προσέχω + dative of διάνοια) to the word of the Lord" (Exod 9:21). A warning against preoccupation with wrong things is found in the words "do not set your mind (לָב + שִׁים + אַל; cf. LXX: μὴ + τίθημι + καρδία) on them" (1 Sam 9:20).¹⁰⁷ There are many prophetic admonitions and judgments pertaining to diligent attention or the lack of it.¹⁰⁸ Noetic apostasy is

¹⁰¹See the previous survey on διαλογίζομαι and διαλογισμός and see also: William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel according to Mark* (NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975) 286.

¹⁰²For some good commentary, see *ibid.*, 269–90.

¹⁰³Guthrie, *NT Theology*, 662.

¹⁰⁴Only the most explicit combinations relating to the concept of mind-set will be surveyed; לָב with general expressions for apostasy (e.g., הִלַּךְ + לָב or אָמַר + הִלַּךְ, cf. Ezek 11:21; 20:16; 33:31; מָן + רָחַק + לָב, cf. Isa 29:13; etc.) will not be treated.

¹⁰⁵BDB, 523; e.g., Isa 41:22; Hag 2:15, 18.

¹⁰⁶KB, 2.920; e.g., Job 1:8 (+ עַל); 2:3 (+ אַל); etc.

¹⁰⁷See לָב + שִׁים + אַל/לֹא in 1 Sam 25:25; 2 Sam 13:33; 18:3; etc. for not giving serious consideration of something.

¹⁰⁸See "he paid no attention" (לָב + עַל + שִׁים + לֹא) in Isa 42:25, "these things you did not consider" (לָב + עַל + שִׁים + לֹא) in 47:7, "consider your ways" (שִׁים + לָב + אַל) in Hag 1:5, 7 (note that the LXX employs τάσσω in v 5 and τίθημι in v 7); Mal 2:2 (לָב + עַל + שִׁים + לֹא); etc.

especially obvious in Jeremiah's lament: "The whole land has been made desolate, because no man lays it to heart" (Jer 12:11). His words are concise but explicit: **אִישׁ שָׁם עַל-לֵב כִּי אֵין**.¹⁰⁹ An apostate mind-set is mankind's point of embarkation on a journey of woe.¹¹⁰

שיח/לב

The combination of **לב** plus **שיח** is semantically related.¹¹¹ It also speaks of paying attention to someone or something.¹¹² Consequently, there are warnings against the ever-present danger of apostasy in mind-set: "Do not trust in oppression, and do not vainly hope in robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart (**לב** + **שיח** + **אעל**; cf. LXX: $\mu\eta + \pi\rho\tau\omicron\theta\eta\mu\iota + \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ upon them" (Ps 62:11).¹¹³

סור/לב

לב in association with the verb **סור**¹¹⁴ constitutes an important category. Jer 17:5¹¹⁵ is hamartologically normative: "Thus says the Lord, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from (**לב** + **סור** + **מן**); cf. LXX: $\kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha + \acute{\alpha}\phi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\eta\mu\iota + \acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{o}$) the Lord.'" Consequently, there are warnings concerning apostasy from the Covenant: "Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from you heart (**לב** + **מן** + **סור**) all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons" (Deut 4:9). Moses relays the following challenge concerning the future king: "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses . . . neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away (**לב** + **סור**); nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself" (Deut 17:16–17).

¹⁰⁹LXX: $\delta\tau\iota \sigma\acute{\upsilon}\kappa \xi\sigma\tau\iota\nu \acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\rho \tau\iota\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\nu \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$.

¹¹⁰Zechariah's testimony corroborates: "And they made their hearts like flint [**לב** + **שיח** + **שמיר**]; LXX: $\kappa\alpha\iota \tau\eta\nu \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\nu \xi\tau\alpha\zeta\alpha\nu \acute{\alpha}\pi\epsilon\iota\theta\eta$] so that they could not hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts" (Zech 7:12).

¹¹¹BDB, 1011.

¹¹²1 Sam 4:20 (**לב** + **שיח** + **אעל**); 2 Sam 13:20 (**לב** + **שיח** + **אעל**); Job 7:17 (+ **שיח** + **לב**); Ps 48:14; etc.

¹¹³This OT background on one's mind-set greatly enlightens Jesus' warnings in Matt 6:19–21; Luke 12:34; etc.

¹¹⁴BDB, 693–94.

¹¹⁵Cf. the parallelism of Jer 5:23: "But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart (**לב** + **סור** + **ומורה**); they have turned aside (**סרו**) and departed."

פְּנָה/לֵב

The combination of לֵב and פְּנָה conceptually parallels לֵב plus סוּר.¹¹⁶ Climaxing the covenant stipulations is a summary challenge (Deut 30:15–16) which is followed by the warning which introduces an ultimate curse: “But if your heart turns away (לֵב + פְּנָה¹¹⁷) and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them . . .” (Deut 30:17). An apostate mind-set would ultimately lead to the gravest consequence of all (Deut 30:18).

נָטָה/לֵב

Another important combination is that of לֵב plus נָטָה.¹¹⁸ For example, spiritual insensitivity culminating in idolatry is related to this type of noetic apostasy in Isa 44:20¹¹⁹ where it asserts that “a deceived heart has turned him aside” (לֵב + תָּלַל + נָטָה). Covenant violation is also conveyed by this idiomatic combination of לֵב and נָטָה in 1 Kgs 11:2, 4, and 9. The importance of this group¹²⁰ as a primary designation for the concept of mind-set will become increasingly obvious.

כִּוֵּן/לֵב

Finally, the collocation of לֵב and כִּוֵּן¹²¹ needs to be viewed in its negative contexts. Ps 78:8 reads, “And be not like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious¹²² generation, a generation that did not prepare its heart (לֵב + הִכִּין + לֵב), and whose spirit was not faithful to God.” The concept of a targeted mind-set intensifies when the combination is complemented by the preposition –לְ, the preposition עִם, or the infinitive. In 2 Chr 20:33 a blight on Jehoshaphat’s reforms is noted by the words: “The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to (–לְ + לֵב + הִכִּין + לֵב) the God of their fathers.” The following condemnation occurs in Ps 78:37: “For their heart was not steadfast toward (+ לֵב + לֵב + נָכוֹן + לֵב) Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant.” 2 Chr 12:14, speaking of King Rehoboam, is quite explicit: “And he did evil because he did not set his heart to seek (לֵב + לֵב + הִכִּין + לֵב) the Lord.” This indeed paints a very vivid picture of noetic apostasy.

¹¹⁶BDB, 815.

¹¹⁷Cf. Deut 29:17.

¹¹⁸BDB, 640; notice that the LXX almost always uses simple and compounded forms of κλίνω for thus usage sphere of נָטָה.

¹¹⁹Cf. the immediate context.

¹²⁰Cf. the related verb שָׁטָה plus לֵב in Prov 7:25.

¹²¹BDB, 465–67.

¹²²It should be noted that this descriptive couplet occasionally occurs with לֵב.

THE NOETIC REMEDY

Sovereign Grace

Ultimately only the Great Physician can remedy the noetic condition of man's heart. Since the Scriptures plainly bear witness to this fact, his efficacy in salvation and sanctification is incontestable.

The Heart-Knower

Although "the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep" (עמק),¹²³ God as *the* heart-knower¹²⁴ opens up the possibility for a remedy: "The heart is more deceitful than all else [עקב הלב מכל]¹²⁵ and is desperately sick [אנוש]¹²⁶; who can understand it? I the Lord search the heart [לב + חקר]¹²⁷, I test [נחן]¹²⁸ the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds" (Jer 17:9–10). The NT testifies to the significance of God as the heart-knower by its use of the term καρδιαγνώστης.¹²⁹ "It describes God as the knower of hearts. . . . God sees, tests and searches the hidden depths of the human heart."¹³⁰ In Acts 1:24 the apostles prefaced their prayer for divine direction concerning the choice of a man to complement their number with the words, "Thou, Lord, knowest the hearts of all men" (καρδιαγνώστα πάντων). The idiom ὁ καρδιαγνώστης θεός (Acts 15:8) exemplifies the theological significance and implications of God in this role. He has unique insight into the mind-set of mankind.

The Heart-Transplanter

The Lord is conspicuously involved both in repentance and the sustained mind-set which is essential for sanctification. In the context

¹²³Ps 64:7; cf. "a plan in the heart of a man is like deep water" in Prov 20:5. On the root עמק (here: "deep, unfathomable, unsearchable") see BDB, 770–71.

¹²⁴See לב plus ידע with God as the subject in 1 Kgs 8:39 ("Thou alone dost know the hearts of all the sons of men"); Pss 44:22; 139:23; etc.; cf. γινώσκω in Luke 16:15; etc.

¹²⁵I.e., more insidious; cf. the root עקב ("to deal treacherously"): BDB, 784; TWOT, s.v. "עקב," by J. Barton Payne, 2.692; etc.

¹²⁶I.e., "weak, puny"; cf. the related substantive אנוש and the obvious irony in comparison with the arrogant נבך of v 5. For a survey of the root, see TDOT, s.v. "אנוש," by Fritz Maass, 1.345–46.

¹²⁷BDB, 350; cf. the concept in Rev 2:23.

¹²⁸BDB, 103; on לב plus נחן, see "Thou triest the heart" in 1 Chr 29:17 (note the important complement of v 18); Ps 26:2; and Jer 12:3.

¹²⁹It is absent from secular Greek and the LXX; however, its use in the NT and the patristic writings is noteworthy. For a brief survey, see TDNT, s.v. "καρδία, καρδιαγνώστης, σκληροκαρδία," by Behm, 3.613.

¹³⁰NIDNTT, s.v. "καρδία," by Sorg, 2.183.

of repentance and conversion, the combination of לָב plus תָּן with God as subject is dramatically explicit:¹³¹ “I will give them a heart to know me” (Jer 24:7); “I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me” (Jer 32:40); “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you” (Ezek 36:26).¹³² Equally explicit is the NT evidence: “Well then, God has granted to the gentiles also the repentance [$\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$] that leads to life” (Acts 11:18).¹³³

God specializes in bending man’s perverted noetic inclinations. A general statement is found in Prov 21:1: “The king’s heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns [הִטָּן] it [suffix = antecedent לָב] wherever He wishes.” Confirmation is found in Ezra 6:22: “The Lord had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart [$\text{לָב} + \text{פָּקַח}$] of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.”¹³⁴

A sustained mind-set for positive direction in life is also attributed to divine intervention. Nehemiah spoke of “what my God was putting into my mind to do [infinitive + $\text{לָב} + \text{אָל} + \text{נָתַן}$] for Jerusalem” (Neh 2:12). The most significant evidence for this phenomenon comes from the grouping of לָב plus הִטָּן with God as subject: “Incline my heart to [$\text{אָל} + \text{לָב} + \text{הִטָּן}$; cf. LXX: $\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\omega + \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha + \epsilon\iota\varsigma$] Thy testimonies” (Ps 119:36);¹³⁵ Do not incline my heart to [$-\text{לָב} + \text{לָב} + \text{טָהַר} + \text{אָל}$; cf. LXX: $\mu\eta + \epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\omega + \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha + \epsilon\iota\varsigma$] any evil thing” (Ps 141:4); etc. 1 Kgs 8:57–58 conveys Solomon’s insight into this important truth: “May the Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers.” The theological significance of the hiphil infinitive of הִטָּן with לָב as its object, plus the directional אָל with God as its personal object, along with the telic infinitives¹³⁶ is clear; God needs to bend the mind-set of his people to himself so that they may live obediently.

Human Responsibility

Notwithstanding the previous evidence, man remains responsible. The Scriptures show that he bears a responsibility in connection with

¹³¹Cf. $\text{לָב} + \text{פָּקַח}$ in 1 Kgs 18:37: “Thou has turned their heart ($\text{לָב} + \text{פָּקַח}$) back again”; and note the sovereign providence concerning the ministry of the forerunner in Mal 3:24 (Luke 1:17): “he will restore the hearts ($\text{לָב} + \text{שׁוּב}$) of the fathers.”

¹³²Also call to mind the theological significance of Jer 31:33: “I will put My law within them [$\text{קָרַב} + \text{בָּ} + \text{נָתַן}$], and on their heart I will write it [$\text{לָב} + \text{עַל} + \text{כָּתַב}$]; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Note the interesting inversion of the noetic referents of $\kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ and $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ in Heb 8:10 and 10:16.

¹³³Cf. $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ and Divine initiative in Rom 2:4 and 2 Tim 2:25.

¹³⁴Cf. $\text{לָב} + \text{בָּ} + \text{נָתַן}$ in Ezra 7:27, and an illustration in Gen 20:3–6.

¹³⁵Cf. the same combination in reference to human responsibility in v 112.

¹³⁶LXX: $\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma \eta\mu\omega\nu \pi\rho\delta\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \tau\omicron\upsilon \pi\omicron\rho\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota . . . \kappa\alpha\iota \phi\lambda\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\iota\nu$.

both repentance and sanctification. For this reason the following considerations are paramount.

Initial Responsibility

An initial change in noetic orientation is a soteriological prerequisite.¹³⁷ This is most commonly conveyed in the OT by the association of לָב with שׁוּב.¹³⁸ For example, the Lord speaks through Joel in the following manner, “‘Return to Me with all your heart [+ שׁוּב + לָב], and with fasting, weeping, and mourning; and rend your heart and not your garments.’ Now return to [שׁוּב + אֵל] the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, and relenting of evil” (Joel 2:12–13). This change of direction is related to remembrance and meaningful contemplation in the context of the covenant promises and responsibilities: “So it shall become when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind [שׁוּב + אֵל + לָב] in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, and you return to [שׁוּב + עַד] the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul . . . then . . .” Deut 30:1–3).¹³⁹

Initial noetic redirection in the NT is usually conveyed by μετά-νοέω and μετάνοια:¹⁴⁰ “Repent [μετανοέω], for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with your repentance [μετάνοια]” (Matt 3:2, 8).¹⁴¹ That this radical reorientation of fallen man’s mental faculties is soteriologically foundational is verified by Christ’s commission (cf. Luke 24:47) and apostolic practice (cf. Acts 2:28; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 26:20).¹⁴²

Subsequent Responsibility

Prior to some specific illustrations of the priority of the believer’s mind-set as a key to godly living it is necessary to reemphasize the

¹³⁷Fallen man is characteristically impenitent (e.g., μετανοήτοσ in Rom 2:5).

¹³⁸Jacob stresses that “the movement towards God שׁוּב, which the prophets continually ask from the human will, also begins in the heart, Jer 3:10; 29:13; etc.” (*TDNT*, s.v. “ψυχή, κτλ.,” by Edmond Jacob, *et al.*, 9.628). See also *TDNT*, s.v. “Repentance and Conversion in the OT,” by Würthwein, 4.980–89.

¹³⁹Cf. לָב + שׁוּב in Deut 4:39; Isa 44:19; 46:8; and the prevalent ἐπιστρέφω/καρδία renderings of the LXX along with the explanatory μετανοήσατε in Isa 46:8.

¹⁴⁰For a survey which also stresses some of the conceptual intertestamental connections, see *NIDNTT*, s.v. “μετάνοια,” by J. Goetzmann, 1.357–59; and on the possible etymological development (“change of mind”), see *TDNT*, s.v. “νοέω, κτλ.,” by Behm, 4.976–77.

¹⁴¹Cf. Jesus’ identical challenge in Matt 4:17.

¹⁴²Also note the priority of rectifying a straying mind-set in Rev 2:5; 3:3, 19; etc.

footing which undergirds all of these—ταπεινοφροσύνη. Without a proper thinking about oneself in the light of what the Scriptures say about man and sin and without a constant dependence upon God and his resources there will be no positive noetic inclination resulting in a life characterized by obedience.

Individual Responsibility

It will be advantageous to follow some of the semantic collocations previously discussed along with one additional group (לֵב + נָתַן).

לֵב/שִׁים. This combination is especially suitable for conveying volition and determination. For example, Elihu says of God, "If He should determine to do so [אִם-יִשִּׁים אֶלְיוֹ לְבוֹ], . . . all flesh would perish together . . ." (Job 34:14–15). Man's positive response must begin with a serious contemplation of his responsibilities before the Lord,¹⁴³ since God demands his undivided attention.¹⁴⁴ Following this should come the mind-set of which Daniel is a prime example: "But Daniel made up his mind [לֵב + עָל + שִׁים; cf. LXX, Theodotion: καὶ ἔθετο Δανιηλ ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ] that he would not defile himself . . ." (Dan 1:8).

נָתַח/לֵב. Total preoccupation with God and his interests lies at the heart of the positive occurrences of this combination. Joshua challenged the people to "put away the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to [לֵב + אֵל + נָתַח] the Lord, the God of Israel" (Josh 24:23). This preoccupation should manifest itself in an ethically productive mind-set: "I have inclined my heart to perform [infinitive + לֵב + נָתַח]¹⁴⁵ Thy statues forever, even to the end" (Ps 119:112).

כִּוֵּן/לֵב. The hiphil of כִּוֵּן with לֵב as object followed by the infinitive is one of the clearest descriptions of a targeted mind-set in the OT.¹⁴⁶ Two contexts should provide positive examples for emulation. The chronicler says of Jehoshaphat, "But there is some good in you, for you have removed the Asheroth from the land and you have set your heart to seek [infinitive + לֵב + כִּוֵּן] God" (2 Chr 19:3). Ezra's

¹⁴³See שִׁים with לֵב in Deut 11:18; 32:46; Job 22:22; etc. Cf. the combination of שִׁים and לֵב in Prov 22:17; 24:32; Jer 31:21; etc.

¹⁴⁴Cf. the illustrative challenge of the divinely sent messenger to Ezekiel: "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to (רְשִׁים לְךָ) all that I am going to show you" (Ezek 40:4).

¹⁴⁵Cf. the expected rendering of ἔκλινα τὴν καρδίαν μου τοῦ ποιῆσαι in the LXX, and remember the psalmist's testimony of Divine enablement in v 36.

¹⁴⁶Cf. Eccl 1:13, 17; 8:9, 16; etc., where this root with לֵב connotes intense investigation.

example is particularly appropriate, since he was a leader *par excellence* among his people. Divine (and human) favor were largely attributed to the fact that “Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10). His mind-set (לִבְּךָ + הִכִּינִי) was zeroed in on the primary intentions of studying (לְדַרְוֹשׁ), obeying (לְעֲשׂוֹת), and expounding (לְלַמֵּד) God’s Word.

נִתְּן/לֵב. The significance of this combination parallels that of פִּנּוּ plus לֵב. This semantic grouping describes diligence. David commanded the leaders of Israel as follows: “Now set your heart and your soul to [infinitive + נָפֵשׁ + לִבְּךָ + נִתְּן] seek the Lord your God; arise, therefore, and build the sanctuary of the Lord God . . .” (1 Chr 22:19).¹⁴⁷ Once again, Daniel exemplifies this precious key to godly living: “‘O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.’ And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart [לֵב + נִתְּן] on understanding this [hiphil infinitive of בִּין] and humbling yourself [hithpael infinitive of נָצַן] before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words’” (Dan 10:11–12). Daniel’s humble and heavenly mind-set explained the consistency of his godly life.

The previous discussion of the φρεν word-complex (see above) introduced its strategic contribution to the biblical teaching on the priority of the believer’s mind-set. Our Lord’s piercing rebuke of Peter highlights the importance of noetic orientation: “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on [φρονέω] God’s interests, but man’s” (Matt 16:23). The target of one’s thinking and preoccupation becomes the primary issue, as illustrated by the sharp antithesis (ἀλλὰ) between τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ and τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. The barometer of anthropocentricity versus theocentricity is the believer’s mind-set.

Colossians 3 deals with the indicative and the imperative of the Christian life.¹⁴⁸ Vv 1–4 are both introductory and foundational:

If this be so [first-class conditional statement]; if ye were raised with Christ, if ye were translated into heaven, what follows? Why you must realise the change. All your aims must centre in heaven [τὰ ἄνω], where reigns the Christ who has thus exalted you, enthroned on God’s right hand. All your thoughts must abide in heaven [τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε], not

¹⁴⁷Cf. לֵב + נִתְּן in 2 Chr 11:16.

¹⁴⁸For a helpful refresher on this, see C. F. D. Moule, “‘The New Life’ in Colossians 3:1–17,” *RevExp* 70 (1973) 481–93.

on the earth [μὴ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς]. For, I say it once again, you have nothing to do with mundane things: you *died*, died once for all to the world: you are living another life. This life indeed is hidden now: it has no outward splendour as men count splendour; for it is a life with Christ, a life in God. But the veil will not always shroud it. Christ, our life, shall be manifested hereafter; then ye also shall be manifested with Him and the world shall see your glory.¹⁴⁹

The parallelism and force of the present imperatives of vv 1 and 2 is especially germane to the subject at hand.¹⁵⁰ "Be constantly seeking" [ζητεῖτε, v 1] . . . implies persevering effort" and "is a seeking *to obtain* (cf. Matt 6:33; 13:45). The emphasis, though, is not on seeking but on the object sought."¹⁵¹ Complementing this is the φρονεῖτε which stresses the believer's "whole bent of . . . life."¹⁵² He is continually to target his mind-set on the things of God.

Probably the most definitive teaching on the obligations pertaining to the believer's mind-set resides in Romans 8. Mickelsen appropriately entitles Rom 8:5–13 "the mind-set of the flesh versus that of the Spirit."¹⁵³

Some salient observations will lead to a proper synthesis of the theological significance of this passage. Käsemann notes concerning φρονέω (v 5) and φρόνημα (vv 6, 7) that "the slogan φρονεῖν denotes the direction not merely of thought but of total existence, which on the Semitic view is always oriented consciously or uncsciously to a goal."¹⁵⁴ Σάρξ in this passage is viewed in its fully developed hamartiological sense: "our fallen, ego-centric human nature and all that belongs to it."¹⁵⁵ Consequently, τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός refers to

¹⁴⁹Lightfoot's interpretive paraphrase (J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [reprint; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971] 208).

¹⁵⁰For some valuable commentary, see S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "IX. Studies in the Epistle to the Colossians: Human Taboos and Divine Redemption," *BSac* 120 (1963) 211–13.

¹⁵¹William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Colossians and Philemon* (NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964) 140.

¹⁵²Johnson, "Human Taboos and Divine Redemption," 212.

¹⁵³A. Berkeley Mickelsen, "Romans," in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, ed. by Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everette F. Harrison (Nashville: Southwestern Company, 1962) 1206. He comments there that "the flesh—the principle of rebellion within man—produces a certain pattern and way of thinking" (*ibid.*).

¹⁵⁴Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 219.

¹⁵⁵C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1975) 1.372; cf. 386–87. Similarly: "Flesh is . . . the whole nature of man, turned away from God, in the supreme interest of self, devoted to the creature" (John Peter Lang, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, trans. by Philip Schaff, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, ed. by J. P. Lange [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.] 236).

“the flesh’s (i.e., fallen human nature’s) mind, that is, its outlook, assumptions, values, desires and purposes.”¹⁵⁶

Contrastingly, πνεῦμα “refers to the Holy Spirit throughout the passage, as is evident in verse 9 (‘the Spirit of God . . . the Spirit of Christ’) and 11 (‘The Spirit of him who raised Jesus . . . his Spirit dwells in you’).”¹⁵⁷ Herein, he is viewed as “operative in the human spirit for the production of ethical results.”¹⁵⁸ This is particularly evident in the phrase τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος.¹⁵⁹ In the light of this, note Cranfield’s summary of the mind-set antithesis of v 5:

We take Paul’s meaning in this verse then to be that those who allow the direction of their lives to be determined by the flesh are actually taking the flesh’s side in the conflict between the Spirit of God and the flesh, while those who allow the Spirit to determine the direction of their lives are taking the Spirit’s side.¹⁶⁰

The whole mind-set argument (cf. the γάρ introducing vv 5–11) provides “an explanation of the reference in v 4 to walking not κατὰ σάρκα but κατὰ πνεῦμα”¹⁶¹ which is the essence of the Christian life.

The law’s requirement will be fulfilled by the determination of the direction, the set, of our lives by the Spirit, by our being enabled again and again to decide for the Spirit and against the flesh, to turn our backs more and more upon our own insatiable egotism and to turn our faces more and more toward the freedom which the Spirit of God has given us.¹⁶²

Goetzmann concludes,

This passage makes it abundantly clear that the way one thinks is intimately related to the way one lives, . . . A man’s thinking and striving cannot be seen in isolation from the overall direction of his life; the latter will be reflected in the aims which he sets for himself.¹⁶³

Indeed, the proper aiming of the mind is a key to godly living.

¹⁵⁶Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.386.

¹⁵⁷Robert H. Gundry, *Sōma in Biblical Theology with Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology* (SNTSMS 29; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1976) 46; cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.390.

¹⁵⁸Barton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 180.

¹⁵⁹Cranfield is correct: “the genitives τῆς σαρκός and τοῦ πνεύματος are subjective” (*Romans*, 1.386).

¹⁶⁰Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.386.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, 385.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*

¹⁶³*NIDNTT*, s.v. “φρόνησις,” by Goetzmann, 2.617.

Corporate Responsibility

A word also needs to be said about the corporate dimension of noetic direction. The verb *νοθετέω* and its corresponding noun *νοθεσία*, “derived from *nous* (mind) and *tithemi* (put) . . . describe the exertion of influence upon the *nous*, implying that there is resistance. By means of admonition, advice, warning, reminding, teaching and spurring on, a person can be redirected from wrong ways and his behavior corrected.”¹⁶⁴ The target is the disposition and will, and the activity “seeks to correct the mind to put right what is wrong, to improve the spiritual attitude.”¹⁶⁵ As Acts 20:31, Rom 15:14, Col 1:28 and 3:16, 1 Thess 5:14, and 2 Thess 3:15 demonstrate, a godly noetic orientation is the nucleus of all spiritually effective ministry.

Our responsibility, whether perceived corporately or individually, must be to turn every thought into a prisoner of war (cf. *αἰχμαλωτίζω*) which is obedient to Christ (2 Cor 10:5).

¹⁶⁴*NIDNTT*, s.v. “*νοθετέω*,” by F. Selzer, 1.568. The OT combination of + *דַּבַּר* *לֵב* + *לֵב/לֵב* (“to speak or appeal to the heart”): “‘To speak to the heart’ in the Old Testament consequently means: to move someone to decision” (Wolff, *Anthropology of the OT*, 52) may be conceptually parallel.

¹⁶⁵*TDNT*, s.v. “*νοέω*, κτλ.,” by Behm, 4.1019.