

The Eye as Metaphorical Agent in Deuteronomic Law

By A. Rahel Wells
rschafer@andrews.edu

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Abstract:

Laws found in Exodus and Leviticus reference the eye as a specific body part, such as Exod 21:26, where damage to the eye of a slave results in freedom for the slave. However, Deuteronomic law shifts from this literal reference to a more metaphorical usage of the eye. In multiple passages and various laws, the eye is used in a metaphorical sense. For instance, bribes are said to blind the eyes of the wise in Deut 16:19, but receiving money in order to insure a certain action or decision does not lead to actual physical blindness. Here, the text indicates a metaphorical use of the eye to represent a part of the brain that judges correctly and fairly. Most of the remaining examples involve just retribution or punishment where the law specifies that the eye should not pity the one being punished (cf. Deut 13:8; 19:13, 21; 25:12). These passages indicate a metaphorical use of the eye to represent the emotions (or the heart), a part of the brain that is affected and moved by those who are suffering or punished. None of these laws in Deuteronomy discuss actual physical eyes or eyesight, but use the body part which normally is associated with physical eyesight to refer to mental and emotional thought-processes. Physical eyesight may certainly be involved in provoking these thought-processes, but the metaphor carries the meaning of the law into categories that would not require physical eyesight. For example, a blind person could still be bribed, described as the blinding of the eyes of their mind. A blind person could also still pity the one being punished for sin, described as the eyes of their emotions pitying the guilty. This paper will further explore the reasons for this metaphorical usage of the eye in Deuteronomy, as well as ramifications for metaphors found in legal material. Additional intertextual linkages with other metaphorical usages of the eye in the Hebrew Bible will also be noted.

Introduction

Most examinations of biblical law concern comparisons between various laws, how to interpret various laws, or the origin of the laws. Few consider the metaphorical aspects of the law, except in a tangential comment or footnote.¹ In order to further examine and reflect on the use of metaphor in biblical law, I will here examine the eye as a metaphorical agent in Deuteronomic law.

¹ An exception includes a book-length analysis on law and metaphor, where Milner S. Ball examines law in a metaphorical sense, but not how or why metaphor is used in law (*Lying Down Together: Law, Metaphor, and Theology*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). Ball describes law as a means of communication, centered around relationship, where it ideally functions to bring estranged parties together, rather than separating.

On the other side of the spectrum, some consider seemingly straightforward laws to be hiding metaphors not visible to modern cultures (J. Webb Mealy, "You Shall Not Boil a Kid in its Mother's Milk

Laws in Exodus and Leviticus: Eye Used Mostly as a Body Part

Laws found in Exodus and Leviticus usually reference the eye as a specific body part. One example is Exod 21:26, where damage to the eye of a slave results in freedom for the slave (cf. Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21):

<p>וְאִם־אֶסּוּן יִדְגֶה וְנִתְּתָה נַפְשׁ תַּחַת נַפְשׁ: עֵין תַּחַת עֵין שֵׁן תַּחַת שֵׁן יָד תַּחַת יָד רֶגֶל תַּחַת רֶגֶל: כְּוִיָּה תַחַת כְּוִיָּה פֶצַע תַּחַת פֶּצַע חַבּוּרָה תַחַת חַבּוּרָה: וְכִי־יִכֶּה אִישׁ אֶת־עֵין עַבְדּוֹ אוֹ־אֶת־עֵין אִמָּתוֹ וְשִׁחַתָּהּ לְחַפְּזִי יִשְׁלַחֲנֻהוּ תַחַת עֵינוֹ:</p>	<p>But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. When a man strikes the eye of his male or female slave, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye.²</p>
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Many scholars have examined these passages about the *lex talionis*, and many theories have been proposed about what it means. Although not the focus of this paper, it is worth noting that almost every interpretation considers some form of literal meaning associated with the “eye for eye” phraseology. Some consider it to be very literal, and an example of the harsh laws of the Old Testament (OT), albeit often warranted.³ Others consider it to be literal, but as an example of the fairness of OT law in comparison to the brutal laws of the ANE, where one might lose their life for an eye, etc.⁴ A third group finds the *lex talionis* to represent what is deserved, but only the greatest possible consequence, often pointing out that there are very few if any examples in the rest of the Bible where it was actually enforced

[Exod 23:19b; Exod 34:26b; Deut 14:21b]: A Figure of Speech?” *Biblical Interpretation* 20 [2012]: 35-72), but do not reflect on the more obvious metaphors, or why a clear metaphor might be used in law. Another example of the overlap between law and metaphor, includes the examination of legal metaphors for God’s relationship with Israel (e.g., Meir Malul, “Adoption of Foundlings in the Bible and Mesopotamian Documents: A Study of Some Legal Metaphors in Ezekiel 16:1-7,” *JSOT* 46 [1990]: 97-126). However, this focus on legal metaphors concentrates on metaphors that relate to acts with a legal connotation, not on the presence of a metaphor within the law itself.

² All translations from the Hebrew are my own, unless otherwise noted.

³ For example, see the conclusions of Marc Cortez, “The Law on Violent Intervention: Deuteronomy 25:11-12 Revisited,” *JSOT* 30 (2006): 431-447.

⁴ See Sharon Kleinbaum, “An Eye for an Eye, A Tooth for a Tooth,” *The Reconstructionist* 58 (1992): 22-23. In an overall sense, James Daniel Beaton finds Israelite law to showcase restraint and not vengeance, and that the positive sense of *talion* was the norm (“Finding Justice in Ancient Israelite Law: A Survey of the Legal System of the Israelites during the Post-Exodus, Pre-Exilic Period,” *JSOT* 41 [2016]: 139-158).

or followed literally.⁵ Still other scholars make the case that it was never intended to be a compensatory mutilation, but that monetary remuneration (however much necessary for compensating for the loss of the eye) was always intended (cf. Exod 21:18-19; Deut 19:18).⁶ This last theory sometimes leads its proponents to consider this law to be a metaphorical usage of the body part. However, the explanation given would still classify this theory as a literal usage, as each body part stood for a certain amount of money to be remunerated, and only taking a life would be physically paid for by the life of the murderer.

Other examples of where the eye is used literally as a specific body part include the following. Sins hidden from the eyes (cf. Lev 4:13; Num 5:13) indicates physical sight involved. When a person had a skin disease, only when it was gone in the eyes of the priest, did the person become ritually clean (Lev 13:5, 37). Fever is said to exhaust the eyes in Lev 26:16, reflecting the consumption and destruction that comes with such a massive illness. Eyes can also literally be cut out or destroyed physically (e.g., Num 16:14).

When initially considering all usages of the eye in the Torah, it may seem that the eye is used metaphorically in many places outside of Deuteronomy. However, upon closer examination of each of the following cases, most of these are actually literal usages, or at least are not representing full metaphorical agency of the eye. Exodus 8:26 discusses sacrifices that were “abominable in the eyes” of the Egyptians, but this is on some level a literal use of eyes, as they are at least physically seeing here. In addition, “do what is right/holy in his eyes” (Exod 15:26; Num 20:12; Deut 12:8) could be argued to be metaphorical, as it is relating to morality. However, even if there is a metaphorical element, it is only partial, as the eyes are literally seeing, and the brain is interpreting the sights as holy or right. The memorial between the eyes (Exod 13:9) seems to be clearly literal, especially since the eyes are seeing the memorial, and this helps

⁵ For examples, see J. K. Miklitzanski, “The Law of Retaliation and the Pentateuch,” *JBL* 66 (1947): 295-303; Eugene J. Fisher, “Explorations and Responses: *Lex Talionis* in the Bible and Rabbinic Tradition,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19 (1982): 582-587.

⁶ Stuart A. West, “The Lex Talionis in the Torah,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 21 (1993): 183-188; Bernon Lee, “Unity in Diversity: The Literary Function of the Formula of Retaliation in Leviticus 24:15-22,” *JSOT* 38 (2014): 297-313. The exception would be the punishment for homicide (R. Westbrook, “Lex Talionis and Exodus 21, 22-25,” *Revue Biblique* 93 [1986]: 52-69).

the person to remember and commemorate. Lev 20:4 might initially seem to be describing a metaphorical covering of the eyes, but on closer examination, it seems to be more literal, in that they are literally choosing not to look. The eyes are seeing a person offer their child to Molech, but not doing anything about it, basically acting as if they did not see it.

In Num 15:39, the people are accused of following their own hearts rather than God's, as well as following their own eyes, which they "whore after them." The eyes in this verse seems to be referenced in a literal manner, since the people are whoring after what their eyes see. The main metaphorical aspect is the connection to the heart, not the eyes. The people are still the agents in this verse, but just following their eyes, rather than their eye doing an action.⁷ When Balaam falls down, with his "eyes uncovered (Num 24:4, 16), this might initially seem to be metaphorical agency of the eye, in that Balaam is not blind. The text describes his eyes being opened to see more than what normal humans can see, in some sort of visionary experience. However, he is still literally seeing, just a vision of the future blessings to Israel, so these verses are only partially metaphorical (if metaphorical at all).

Of all the references to the eye in Exodus and Leviticus, it seems that the only definite metaphor ascribed to the eye is in Num 33:55, where the Canaanites who remain will be "barbs in your eyes." The Canaanites are people, so not literal barbs, but their presence will feel like a barb, since they were supposed to be gone. However, this is still not metaphorical agency of the eye, since the Canaanites are the agents. In contrast to Exodus and Leviticus, Deuteronomic law includes multiple passages where the eye is a metaphorical agent.

⁷ Deuteronomy 22:12 reads, "tassels you shall make for yourselves upon the four wings/edges of your covering, which you cover in it." But this is the only time the Hebrew word for "tassel" (גִּדְלָה) is used in this way, and in other languages it is used for a cord on which onions were strung. However, Num 15:38-39 uses a different word (צִיצִית) for the same commandment. In this way, it appears that Deuteronomy is connected to Numbers, indicating that the tassels are for the people to remember God's commandments, so as to not follow after their own hearts and eyes.

Laws in Deuteronomy: Eye Used More Metaphorically

In Deuteronomy, the eye continues to be used in a literal sense as an actual body part, but also includes many references to the eye as a metaphorical agent.

Literal usages of the eye include more examples of the *lex talionis* (e.g., Deut 19:21). In other passages, God reminds the people that their “eyes have seen” all that God has done for them in the salvation process (Deut 3:21; 4:3, 9; 7:19; 10:21; 11:7; 21:7; 28:34, 67; 29:3). The frontlets they are to wear between their eyes (Exod 13:16; Deut 6:8; 11:18) parallel the situation of the memorial between the eyes discussed above. Sometimes, Deuteronomy makes contrasts, noting that their “eyes did not see” (Deut 21:17), while in other places the people are to “see with [their] eyes” (Deut 34:4). Some passages border on metaphor, like Deut 28:32, when the “eyes will look on and fail with longing,” and yet the eyes are still doing the looking initially, even though they then become a semi-agent (in the Hebrew, this is not a verb, just the adjective “failing”). Deuteronomy 11:12 states that the “eyes of the Lord your God are always upon” the land, which would definitely be a metaphorical usage, as God does not have eyes like humans. However, because this is an ambiguous phrase when referring to humans, it could be parallel to “do what is right in your eyes,” which would indicate ambiguity in relation to God’s eyes as well.

Deuteronomy also contains many references to the eye as a metaphorical agent. These will be examined in three different categories: eye representing brain and judgment, eye representing heart and emotions, and eye as both literal body part and metaphorical agent.

Eye Represents Brain and Judgment

In Deut 16:19, the law focuses on eliminating partiality, and the injustice and oppression that often comes along with it:

לֹא-תִטֵּה מִשְׁפָּט לֹא תִכִּיר פָּנִים וְלֹא-תִקַּח שֹׁחַד כִּי הַשֹּׁחַד יְעוּרֶה עֵינֵי חֲכָמִים וַיְסַלֵּף דְּבָרֵי צַדִּיקִים׃	You shall not thrust aside justice. You shall not treat faces as foreign, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the words of the righteous.
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The context of this verse makes clear that the eye is used in a metaphorical sense. Taking a bribe means that one becomes partial, and this action “blinds the eyes of the wise.” This would still be true even if the wise person was actually physically blind. By taking a bribe, their eyes would be blinded. The implication is that they would be likely to judge in favor of the one giving the bribe, rather than looking to execute justice. Bribes influence people to choose to not do anything about wrong and immoral actions of others because they would rather have the money. An additional result is that the words (or causes?) of the righteous are subverted, or that the words of righteousness are overturned. No matter the righteousness of the words spoken, or the righteousness of the person speaking, money speaks louder to the one who has taken a bribe, whether they are literally blind or not. The ESV has “cause of the righteous” which seems very different, but both actually could be applicable here. A bribe tempts someone to not listen to truthful words, because they would rather have money. A bribe also tempts someone to care about the cause of the wicked, and not care about the righteous people, because they would rather have the money than morality.

In this case, the eye is not referring to a literal body part, but represents the brain, which makes judgments. A bribe impacts the part of the brain affected and moved by greed, and the resulting temptation is to punish the innocent. Instead of accepting bribes, which subvert righteousness, the Israelites are instructed to “pursue righteousness” in v. 20, implying purpose and intentionality, rather than just going with the natural tendencies of selfish ambition.

Deuteronomy 16:19 is almost identical to Exod 23:8, initially seeming to imply that Exod 23:8 must also be metaphorical, though outside of Deuteronomy:

Exod 23:8	<p>וְשָׁחַד לֹא תִקַּח כִּי הַשְׁחָד יְעוֹרֵר פְּקוּחִים וַיְסַלֵּף דְּבַר צְדִיקִים:</p>	<p>And you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the words of the righteous.</p>
Deut 16:19	<p>לֹא־תִטֶּה מִשְׁפָּט לֹא תִכְרֵר פְּנִים וְלֹא־תִקַּח שָׁחַד כִּי הַשְׁחָד יְעוֹרֵר עֵינֵי חֲקֵמִים וַיְסַלֵּף דְּבַר צְדִיקִים:</p>	<p>You shall not thrust aside justice. You shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the words of the righteous.</p>

However, upon closer examination of Exod 23:8, the bribe is said to blind the whole person, not part of a person as in Deut 16:19.⁸ The author of Deuteronomy has taken the subject of bribery and the need for impartiality and justice, and moved it from a literal effect on a person who is normally clear-sighted, into a metaphorical effect where the eyes take the place of the person as agent.⁹

Another example of the eye representing the brain for judgment involves the opposite scenario (Deut 19:13):

לֹא־תִחַס עֵינֶךָ עָלָיו וּבִעַרְתָּ גְּמֹה־הַנֶּקֶט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְטוֹב לָךְ׃	Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall purge the shedding of innocent blood from Israel, so that it may be well with you.
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There is no mention of guilt here, so “remove the innocent blood” sounds strange, but it seems clear that guilt is involved. A better translation might be “avenge the innocent blood,” but most other occurrences have “remove the evil” as the Hebrew verb refers to consume, kindle, devour, etc. Either way, the context again makes clear that this is a metaphorical use of “eye,” or at least more than a literal attribution alone. The eye does not do any pitying or sparing, only seeing. But as a result of that seeing, the temptation would be to acquit the guilty, since it seems like such a harsh punishment, especially if the one being punished was a friend or relative (cf. Num 35:31). This situation is the opposite of the one described above, but comes from a similar motive. The author of Deuteronomy has taken the expected attribution of the pity to the person (or mind of the person), and ascribed it to the metaphorical agent of the eye.

The attribution of pity to the eye as a metaphorical agent happens several other times in Deuteronomy:

⁸ Others who note this include J. G. McConville (*Deuteronomy* [AOTC; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002], 287), who connects it to the requirement for wisdom in officials in Deut 1:13, 15. See also C. M. Carmichael *The Laws of Deuteronomy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1974), 97.

⁹ A similar situation that is potentially metaphorical involves the offering of the heifer after finding a murdered person, when it is not clear who the murderer was. In Deut 21:7, the elders are to wash their hands and state that, “our hands did not shed this blood, and our eyes did not see.” These words reiterate their innocence, indicating that their eyes are seeing the murdered person, which is what they naturally do, but that their eyes did not see the murder or participate in it, implying more than physical sight here. Some form of metaphorical agency of the eye may be implied, equating the eye with the mind.

Deut 7:16	וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ לֹא־תַחֲסֹם עֵינֶיךָ עֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא תַעֲבֹד אֶת־ אֱלֹהֵיהֶם כִּי־מִוְקֵשׁ הוּא לְךָ:	And you shall consume all the peoples that the LORD your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.
Deut 13:9 (8 Eng)	לֹא־תֹאבֶדָה לּוֹ וְלֹא תִשְׁמַע אֲלָיו וְלֹא־תַחֲסֹם עֵינֶיךָ עָלָיו וְלֹא־ תַחְמַל וְלֹא־תִכְסֶה עָלָיו:	You shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him.
Deut 19:13	לֹא־תַחֲסֹם עֵינֶיךָ עָלָיו וּבַעֲרַתְּ דָם־הַנָּקִי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְטוֹב לְךָ:	Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall purge the shedding of innocent blood from Israel, so that it may be well with you.
Deut 19:21	וְלֹא תַחֲסֹם עֵינֶיךָ גֹּפֶשׁ בְּגֹפֶשׁ עַיִן בְּעַיִן יָשׁוּן בְּשׁוֹן יָד בְּיָד רֶגֶל בְּרֶגֶל:	Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.
Deut 25:12	וְקָצַתָּהּ אֶת־כַּפְּיָהּ לֹא תַחֲסֹם עֵינֶיךָ:	Then you shall cut off her hand. Your eye shall have no pity.

In the first case (Deut 7:16), the Israelites would be tempted to pity the other nations around them, who were desperately wicked. The reason not to pity is because they would be a snare to the Israelites with the worship of their fertility gods. In the second passage (Deut 13:9), the context has to do with the possibility of friends or family leading one astray to worship other gods, and the temptation would be to have grace because they are family, rather than exacting the punishment deserved. In Deut 19:21, the context is that of a malicious witness, who attempts to falsely accuse an innocent person. In order to purge the evil from their midst, and make sure it never happens again, the punishment is to be meted to the false witness instead of the accused. Again, the temptation would be to pity the false witness, especially if the person was closely connected to those enacting punishment. In Deut 25:12, the context is that of a woman injuring the genitals of her husband's assailant. In both of the last two passages, *lex talionis* is also in effect.¹⁰ These verses make clear that the retribution must be fair, and should not go beyond what the false

¹⁰ Cortez, "The Law on Violent Intervention," 431-447. See also the discussion on this passage in Yael Shemesh, "Punishment of the Offending Organ in Biblical Literature," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2003): 343-365.

witness wanted to do to, or require from, the innocent party. Just retribution represented the furthest extent of the law, but was hardly ever enforced to this level, even when God was punishing directly.¹¹

In all these passages, the temptation is to prioritize the life of the guilty over the life of the innocent person who was murdered, or at least injured without pity. The eye again represents the part of the brain that judges, and can be affected and moved by those who are punished.¹² Retribution must be fair, but when an incorrect compassion comes into play, impartiality is much more challenging if not impossible. In a way, the eye is here associated with feelings and motives, not just intellectual connection. The eye also represents the heart on some level, or perhaps is the gateway to the heart.

Eye Represents Heart and Emotions

In Deut 15:9, the eye and the heart are more directly connected:

הַשְּׁמֵר לְךָ פִּי-יְהוָה דְּבַר עִם-לִבְּךָ בְּלִיעַל לֵאמֹר קִרְבָּה שְׁנַת-הַשְּׁבַע שְׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה וְרָעָה עֵינֶיךָ בְּאָחִיךָ הָאֲבִיוֹן וְלֹא תִתֵּן לוֹ וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ אֶל-יְהוָה וְהָיָה כִּי חָטָא:	Keep watch lest there be a wicked thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye does evil against your poor brother, and you do not give to him, and he cries against you to the LORD, and it will be sin to you.
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The context of this verse is the poverty of a neighbor. The injunction is to not harden (אמץ) the heart or shut (קפץ) the hand against the poor brother (15:7), but rather to lend freely whatever he needs (15:8).¹³ The complication discussed in 15:9 is that when the year of release is close at hand, it will be a temptation to not give to the poor, because they might not be able to pay back the debt before it will become obsolete. This verse moves from outward actions to inward thoughts and motives, and it is about looking

¹¹ I believe this likely indicates God’s immense levels of grace and mercy, but could also be attributed to the people not following the law as they went further into rebellion against God.

¹² J. Gordon McConville notes that the mind is automatically in opposition to God, if left to itself (“‘Keep These Words in Your Heart’ (Deut 6:6): A Spirituality of Torah in the Context of the Shema,” in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block* [Ed. J. DeRouchie, J. Gile, and K. Turner; Warsaw, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013], 133).

¹³ This is not the same word used for the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart, but the basic concept might still add insight to the situation described in Deut 15. For further discussion, see Shemesh, “Punishment of the Offending Organ,” 346-347.

into one's own heart. It seems as if the only other person who can see what you have done or not done is the poor person, who cries to YHWH “against you,” implying that he realizes that you could have given, but you did not.¹⁴

The Hebrew makes the metaphorical agency of the eye even more pronounced in this verse. Rather than “your eye look grudgingly,” a better translation is “your eye does evil,” implying that in the seeing and choosing not to give, the eye represents the emotions and heart that are full of greed and pride, thinking about the nearness of the Sabbatical year, rather than the need of the poor. In addition, the last part of the verse indicates that this holding back from the needy would be sinful, giving further metaphorical agency to the eye that is doing evil.¹⁵

In v. 10, the infinitive absolute is used to emphasize the necessity of giving freely, not doing evil and withholding:

נָתַתָּוּן תַּתֵּן לוֹ וְלֹא־גֵרַע לְבָבְךָ בְּתַתֵּתָהּ לּוֹ כִּי בְגִלְלָהּ אֶת־דְּבַר הַיָּהוָה יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבְכָל־מִשְׁלַח יָדֶיךָ׃	You shall surely give to him, and your heart shall not do evil when you give to him; because of this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all the undertaking of your hands.
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Even more strikingly, Deut 15:10 uses the same phrase for the heart as was used in Deut 15:9 for the eye, except in the negative: “your heart shall not do evil.” The eye has metaphorical agency on a similar level as the heart in this passage. Associated thoughts and sights lead to greedy motives and actions, and vice versa. Eyes can act, representing more than physical eyesight, and are connected to the heart and emotions. More work needs to be done on this, but perhaps the eye is even interchangeable with the heart at times.¹⁶

¹⁴ Others have also noted that the attitude is in focus here, not necessarily the actual act of giving. For instance, see Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 237.

¹⁵ Seeming to assume that this phrase is metaphorical, without addressing the metaphorical nuances or roles it plays in the law, Duane L. Christensen simply states that it means the person is being hostile against his brother and giving nothing (*Deuteronomy 1-21:9* [WBC6a; 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014], 313).

¹⁶ Others have noticed the connection between eye and heart elsewhere in the Bible, stressing that the eye is the gateway, while the heart is the seat, specifically relating to lust and adultery of the heart in

Within the curses, Deut 28 uses very similar language as Deut 15:9-10, where the eye is the

metaphorical agent that does evil against various family members (Deut 28:54, 56):

<p>הָאִישׁ הַרֵךְ בְּךָ וְהָעֲנָב מְאֹד תֵּרַע עֵינָיו בְּאָחִיו וּבְאִשְׁתׁ חֵיקוֹ וּבְיָתֵר בְּנָיו אֲשֶׁר יוֹתִיר:</p>	<p>The man who is tender among you, and the most delicate, his eye will do evil against his brother, and against the wife of his bosom, and against the remainder of his sons who are left.</p>
<p>הַרְפָּה בְּךָ וְהָעֲנָבָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא- נִפְתָּה כַּרְר־גְּלוֹה הַיָּצַג עַל-הָאָרֶץ מֵהִתְעַנֵּב וּמֵרָע עֵינֶיהָ בְּאִישׁ חֵיקָהּ וּבְבָנֶיהָ וּבְבָתֶּיהָ:</p>	<p>The tender woman among you, and the most delicate, who would not try to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her softness and tenderness, her eye will do evil against the man in her bosom, and against her son and against her daughter.</p>

The implication is that the one least likely to withhold food, is the one who will be withholding food in the days of siege, that are the result of unfaithfulness to the covenant. The context of these verses indicates that the food they withhold is the dish made from cooking and eating their own children (v. 53, 55), and the afterbirth along with the baby (v. 57). Desperate times mean that they do not share with their family members who are left, because they feel they have no other option. Perhaps the use of the eye as a metaphorical agent here is to lessen the horrific nature of their deeds, applying it to the eye rather than to the person to whom the eye belongs as a body part.

Deuteronomy 15:18 is another example of the connection between the eyes and emotions:

<p>לֹא-יִקְשָׁה בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּשַׁלְחֶךָ אֹתוֹ חֲפָזִי מֵעַמְּךָ כִּי מִשְׁנֵה שֹׁכֵר שָׂכִיר עֲבָדְךָ יֵשֶׁשׁ שָׁנִים וּבְרַכָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה:</p>	<p>It shall not be hard in your eyes when you send him free from you, for at half the cost of a hired worker he has served you six years. So the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.</p>
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Just as in Deut 15:9-10, God blesses the one who does not let the evil thoughts and propensities of the eyes and heart change the course of decisions. Deuteronomy 15:18 is not as clearly indicating metaphorical agency of the eye, but the concept is similar. After the 6 years of servitude, on the year of release, the Israelites are to remember that they also were slaves, and that God redeemed them (15:15). Therefore, letting the slaves go free on the seventh year also involved providing liberally to furnish their

the New Testament (Kent E. Brower, “Jesus and the Lustful Eye: Glancing at Matthew 5:28,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 76 (2004): 291-309.) Brower also mentions Ecc 11:9, Ben Sirach 23:4, 5 and Job 31:1, which combine the eyes and the heart, noting that the responsibility for covetousness and idolatry rests solely on the person, not the object of desire (Brower, “Jesus and the Lustful Eye,” 306-307).

new life of liberty. Rather than regretting the loss of free labor, the focus should be on gratefulness for the labor given, and care for those who are poor. The freed slaves are to receive from their owners a free gift in proportion to how much God has blessed them, which could be a large amount. There is no mention about whether or not the slave has worked off their debt. So, rather than requiring of the slaves to repay the debt, instead the owners are to give liberally to them, which would radically change any view of slavery, and would make sense of why a slave would want to stay in the family even after they were freed (vv. 16-17).

These passages indicate that eyes and perception can be skewed, and that it may often be a feeling of injustice, pride, or greed in the heart that leads to wrong actions and decisions. However, God also has emotions connected with his eyes. The Israelites are considered the “pupil” (אישון) of God’s eye (Deut 32:10), implying special protection and connection, as well as the lens through which God views the world. In addition, Deut 11:12 notes that the “eyes of the Lord” are always upon the land, indicating that God is looking out for the land for which he cares, as well as the people on it.

Eye Represents Heart/Brain and a Literal Body Part

A few passages in Deuteronomy combine the literal use of eyes as body parts, with the use of eye as a metaphorical agent. Although Deut 29:1-3 [2-4 Eng]) is not technically in the section Deuteronomy usually considered law, the connection of these two concepts is useful to explore briefly:

<p>וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֲתֶם רְאִיתֶם אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְעֵינֵיכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לַפְרָעֹה וּלְכָל- עַבְדָּיו וּלְכָל-אֶרֶצוֹ:</p>	<p>And Moses called all Israel and said to them: “You saw all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land,</p>
<p>הַמְּסֹת הַגְּדֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֵיךָ הַאֲתֹת וְהַמִּפְתִּים הַגְּדֹלִים הָהֵם:</p>	<p>the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders.</p>
<p>וְלֹא-נָתַן יְהוָה לְכֶם לֵב לְדַעַת וְעֵינַיִם לְרֹאוֹת וְאָזְנִים לִשְׁמָעַ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:</p>	<p>But the LORD has not given you a heart to understand nor eyes to see nor ears to hear, until this day.”</p>

In the first two verses, the eyes are used literally as body parts. The people saw all that YHWH did before their eyes, literally referring to the people as eyewitnesses to the signs and wonders (vv. 2,3 [3, 4 Eng]). However, even in these verses, there is a hint of metaphorical attribution as well. This is not the generation that actually did see most of the signs and wonders, as they were all born in the wilderness, and only witnessed the miracles done there.¹⁷ In a way, Moses is addressing their mind's eye here, or the collective memory of the people.

In v. 3 [4 Eng], the eye is used in a metaphorical sense, although not as an agent. They have eyes, but they are not able to see spiritually (cf. 29:18-29). Their eyes represent their brain and heart/emotions, as they exhibit a lack of willingness to let God change their hearts (cf. Deut 30:1-6). Agency is connected with God in this passage, as God has not given them hearts to understand.¹⁸ And yet he wants to, and promises to, in Deut 30:6. So perhaps the dual agency here is that the people are not choosing to allow God to work (cf. Deut 8:2-5; 9:4-6).¹⁹ As a result, their eyes are not working, so it is a passive metaphorical agency of the eye, just as the heart does not understand, and ears do not hear. The body parts here represent thought process, and internal motives and choices, rather than physical sight/hearing.²⁰

Within the curses in Deut 28, the eye is also used both as a body part and as a metaphorical agent. In Deut 28:32, the eyes of the people will see (ראה) their children given to others, but also will fail (כלה) with longing for them. This juxtaposition indicates that the physical act of seeing is very closely connected to the metaphorical act of longing or pining after, which would be an emotion or thought. Later

¹⁷ Raymond Brown also notes this lack of spiritual sight or perception in the first generation, and the lack of literal sight of the wonders in the second generation (*The Message of Deuteronomy* [The Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993], 273).

¹⁸ Some have indeed questioned how this is fair, since the reception necessary to understand is only from God, and yet he holds the people responsible for their blindness. However, this interpretation does not take into consideration all of the passages about the heart and eyes in relationship to God in Deuteronomy. For further discussion, see Duane Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12* (WBC 6B; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 707.

¹⁹ J. G. McConville notes that they are not seeing with true knowledge, because they have the same tendency to rebellion and unfaithfulness that was highlighted in Deut 8-9 (*Deuteronomy*, 414).

²⁰ And yet, there are hints that the actual blindness of Zedekiah “pays for the theological and metaphorical blindness of the people” (Shemesh, “Punishment of the Offending Organ,” 354).

in the chapter, the curses describe the situation of the people when in exile, where God gives them “a trembling heart and failing (כליון) eyes and a languishing soul” (Deut 28:65). Here the eyes seem to be used only metaphorically, but the description of the situation continues until v. 67, where it is made clear that the failing or pining of the eyes is due to the dread of their hearts, and the sights that their eyes see (ראה).

Eye as a Metaphorical Agent Outside Deuteronomy

Time and space do not allow me to explore every place that eye is used outside of the Torah, and how many other examples of metaphorical eye agency can be found outside the law. However, a sampling of examples indicate that the rest of the Hebrew Bible mirrors Deuteronomy’s metaphorical use of the eye, in ways that Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers do not.²¹

In the wisdom literature, Job makes a covenant with his eyes, giving them metaphorical agency to act on their own and bring lustful thoughts (31:1). In Prov 17:8, a bribe is described like a magic stone in the eyes of one who gives it. While this is not a direct metaphorical agency, it implies that the eyes have a will of their own apart from the rest of the body, and can be enchanted by a magic stone.

In the prophets, Jer 22:17 notes that the people have eyes and hearts only for dishonest gain, shedding blood, and oppressing others. Even though not a direct agency, the eyes are working together with the heart to do actions contrary to God’s will. In Ezek 6:9, God notes that the remnant of the people will remember him, and how they broke his heart by their hearts and eyes that whore after idols. Once again, the heart and eyes work in tandem as metaphorical agents, making it seem as though they are at fault for the sins of the people to whom they belong to as body parts.

The Deuteronomic concept of “your eye shall not pity” is reflected in Ezekiel in reference to God’s eye not pitying or sparing:

²¹ In this paper, I am operating within the canonical shape of the Hebrew Bible, considering synchronic rather than diachronic concerns.

Ezek 5:11	לְכֹן חַי־אֲנִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה יְהוָה אִם־לֹא יֵעַן אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי טָמְאָתָה בְּכָל־שִׁקּוּצֵיךָ וּבְכָל־תּוֹעֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְגַם־אֲנִי אֶגְרַע וְלֹא־תִחַס עֵינִי וְגַם־אֲנִי לֹא אֶחְמֹל:	Therefore, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will withdraw. My eye will not pity, and also I will not spare.
Ezek 7:4	וְלֹא־תִחַס עֵינִי עָלֶיךָ וְלֹא אֶחְמֹל כִּי דָרְכֶיךָ עָלֶיךָ אֶתֶן וְתוֹעֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּתוֹכְךָ תִּהְיֶינָה וַיֵּדְעֶתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:	And my eye will not pity you, and I will not spare; because of your ways I will be set against you, while your abominations are in your midst. And you will know that I am the LORD.
Ezek 7:9	וְלֹא־תִחַס עֵינִי וְלֹא אֶחְמֹל כַּדְרָכֶיךָ עָלֶיךָ אֶתֶן וְתוֹעֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּתוֹכְךָ תִּהְיֶינָה וַיֵּדְעֶתֶם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מִכָּה:	And my eye will not pity, and I will not spare. According to your ways, I will be set against you, while your abominations are in your midst. And you will know that I am the LORD, who strikes.
Ezek 8:18	וְגַם־אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה בְּחַמָּה לֹא־תִחַס עֵינִי וְלֹא אֶחְמֹל וְקָרְאוּ בְּאָזְנֵי קוֹל גָּדוֹל וְלֹא אֶשְׁמַע אוֹתָם:	Therefore I will act in wrath. My eye will not pity, and I will not spare. And they will cry in my ears with a loud voice, But I will not hear them.
Ezek 9:5	וּלְאַלֶּה אָמַר בְּאָזְנֵי עֲבָרֵי בְּעִיר אֶתְרִיו וְהָכּוּ עַל־[אֵל]־תַּחַס עֵינֵיכֶם [עֵינֵיכֶם] וְאַל־תִּחְמְלוּ:	And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass over in the city after him, and strike. To them, your eye will not pity, and you will not spare.”
Ezek 9:10	וְגַם־אֲנִי לֹא־תִחַס עֵינִי וְלֹא אֶחְמֹל דְרָכְכֶם בְּרֹאשְׁכֶם בְּתִתִּי:	As for me, my eye will not pity, and I will not spare; their ways upon their heads, I will set.

Many of these verses blur the line between the metaphorical agency of YHWH’s eye that will not pity (חוס), and YHWH himself who will not pity (חמל). The two verbs have different nuances, with the first referring to compassion, and the second connected to not turning back from punishment. The verb חמל is only used in Deuteronomy in 13:9 (8 Eng) without metaphorical agency, so indicating here as well that God is taking full responsibility for the executive judgment in Ezekiel.

In each of these cases, God’s eye does not pity, and he does not spare them, because the people are totally given over to iniquity. The people say that God has not seen (Ezek 9:9), so God responds that his eye will not pity, implying that he has indeed seen and will hold them accountable. Ezekiel 16:5 uses the same basic concept (“no eye pitied you”), but in the context of saving and redeeming Israel, not punishment. God also has no problem sparing people, in fact he delights in it when there is any possibility

of repentance, and the people have not totally shut themselves off from God (cf. Ezek 20:17, where God's eye spared them in the wilderness).

Blindness can also be portrayed as metaphorical, similar to how bribes blind the eyes in Deut 16:19. In 1 Sam 12:3, Samuel exclaims: "Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed... Who have I crushed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to hide my eyes with it?" In Isa 56:10, God's watchmen are blind, which is equated with having no knowledge.

Many passages in the prophets reference or allude to Deut 29:2-4, even quoting it and applying it to their current situations:

Isa 6:10	הַשְׁמִן לִב־הָעָם הַזֶּה וְאָזְנוֹ הַכֶּבֶד וְעֵינָיו הַשֵּׁעַ פֶּן־יִרְאֶה בְּעֵינָיו וּבְאָזְנוֹ יִשְׁמַע וּלְקַבּוֹ יָבִין וְיָשָׁב וְרִפָּא לוֹ:	Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.
Isa 43:8	הוֹצֵא עַם־עֵוֶר וְעֵינַיִם יֵשׁ וְחֹרְשִׁים וְאָזְנִים לָמוֹ:	Bring out the blind people, and yet they have eyes, And the deaf, yet they have ears.
Isa 44:18	לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יִבְיִנוּ כִּי טַח מִרְאוֹת עֵינֵיהֶם מִהַשְׁכִּיל לַבְּתָם:	They do not know, and they do not understand, because he has smeared their eyes from seeing, and their hearts from understanding.
Jer 5:21	שִׁמְעוּ־נָא זֹאת עַם סָבָל וְאִין לֵב עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ אָזְנִים לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ:	Hear this please, foolish people, who have no heart; they have eyes, but they do not see, they have ears, but they do not hear.
Ezek 12:2	בְּנֵאֻמִּים בְּתוֹךְ בַּיִת־הַמְּרִי אַתָּה יֹשֵׁב אֲשֶׁר עֵינַיִם לָהֶם לְרִאוֹת וְלֹא רְאוּ אָזְנִים לָהֶם לְשִׁמְעַ וְלֹא שִׁמְעוּ כִּי בַּיִת מְרִי הֵם:	Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a house of rebellion, where they have eyes to see, but they do not see, they have ears to hear, but they do not hear, for they are a house of rebellion.

In Isa 6, the prophet is asked to be the agent to bring the blindness to the people, implying that his words from God will lead to the people making their final decision against God. God is the agent to bring about the blindness in Isa 44, leading the people to a lack of understanding, similar to Deut 29. In Isa 43, the people are more in an active agent role to cause their own blindness, which God is trying to break by bringing witnesses to help them understand. Hearts and eyes come together again in Jer 5 (and Isa 6), where it seems that the hearts of the people are the ultimate source of the blindness of their eyes. The

heart is associated with understanding, which gives it a double metaphorical sense here, especially in Isa 6. Eyes are always blinded, ears are always deafened, but hearts are either dulled or kept from understanding, which sets the heart on a different metaphorical level. If the heart was an actual body part that was simply being used in a metaphorical way, the heart would be stopped from beating, or become like a stone, as in Ezekiel 36.

Isaiah 29:9-10 combines the idea of metaphorical blindness with literal physical sight, as well as makes an equation between the eyes of the people and the prophets who tell them the truth about their sin:

הַתְּמַהֲמָהוּ וְהַתְּמָהוּ הַשְׁתַּעֲשְׂעוּ וְשָׁעוּ שְׁכָרוּ וְלֹא-יַיִן נָעוּ וְלֹא שִׁכָּר: כִּי-נָסַף עֲלֵיכֶם יְהוָה רוּחַ תְּרִדָּמָה וַיַּעֲצֵם אֶת-עֵינֵיכֶם אֶת-הַגְּבִיאוֹת וְאֶת-רִאשֵׁיכֶם הִחְזִים כֶּסֶה:	Linger and be astonished; blind yourselves and be blind! Be drunk, but not with wine; wander, but not with strong drink! For YHWH has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes, the prophets and your heads, the seers, he has covered.
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Both the people and YHWH are responsible for the metaphorical blindness, in that they have chosen to turn away from God. As a consequence, the prophets, who would help them see, are not accepted by the people. The more that God sends prophets, the more it cements the people in their sinful choices. Isaiah 29:13 notes that the people honor God with their words, but their hearts are far away from him. The result is that the people think that no one sees their deeds, and that no one knows what they do (v. 15). The people are also described as blind in Isa 42:16-19, where God promises to lead them in paths they do not know, reiterating that they “see” (ראה) many things but do not “observe” (שמר) them (v. 20).

In conclusion, it appears that the metaphorical agency of the eye is unique to Deuteronomic law, but is reflected in every other section of the Hebrew Bible. This might indicate the priority of Deuteronomic law in the prophets and the writings, but needs further exploration. The next section will consider why Deuteronomic law includes the eye as a metaphorical agent, while it is not used in other law codes.

Reasons and Ramifications for Metaphorical Usage in Deuteronomic Law

Multiple reasons could be given for the metaphorical agency of the eye in Deuteronomic law. I hypothesize several general reasons about metaphor in the law of Deuteronomy, and then several specific reasons related to the eye.

First, Deuteronomy portrays itself as more than legality. The book describes itself as the final sermons of Moses before he dies, as well as being structured in a covenant framework.²² Even the rhetoric of Deuteronomy indicates that it was meant for generations to come, not just for the present moment.²³ In light of this, the laws are often portrayed as reflecting more comprehensive moral motivations, such as reflecting God's character. For instance, the Israelites were not to show partiality, because God does not show partiality or take a bribe (e.g., Deut 10:17). These connections would naturally lead to more metaphorical descriptions, bringing a sense of relevance for all generations to come.

Deuteronomy also focuses on matters of the heart, not just legal or criminal cases. Internal motives are highlighted in many aspects of Deuteronomy, at least within the outer framework surrounding the material that appears more legal (cf. Deut 5:28-29; 6:5; 10:12, 16; 11:13, 18; 30:6, 14, 17), as well as within the laws.²⁴ This focus invites metaphor, as it tends to be more abstract and can be used more effectively for concepts that are harder to describe in a concrete way.

In addition, Deuteronomy is focused on life and love (e.g., Deut 30:11-20), especially as revealed through redemption, and connection with others who are vulnerable (e.g., Deut 5:12-15). So, when the

²² On the flexibility and covenant aspects of the law, see Roy E. Gane, *Old Testament Law for Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017).

²³ Among others, see Brent Strawn, "Slaves and Rebels: Inscription, Identity, and Time in the Rhetoric of Deuteronomy," in *Sepher Torath Mosheh: Studies in the Composition and Interpretation of Deuteronomy* (ed. D. Block and R. Schultz; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2017), 161-191; Daniel I. Block, *The Gospel According to Moses: Theological and Ethical Reflections on the Book of Deuteronomy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 117-119. James W. Watts emphasizes that Deuteronomy focuses on the present moment, and that it is "self-referential" (*Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999], 72).

²⁴ Edward J. Woods notes that laws do not bring about change, but are dependent on "inner attitude, motivation, and obedience of the heart" (*Deuteronomy* [TOTC; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011], 207).

people do evil, it is often described as “in the eyes of the Lord” (cf. Deut 4:25; 9:18; 17:2; 31:29). They are actively doing evil things with their hands, or thinking evil thoughts in their hearts, but the eyes of God are used to show that God can see the evil that people do or think. Perhaps this is another possible reason for the metaphorical agency of the eye and other body parts, in that it makes the future evil the people will do a little less difficult for them to hear about, as it is further removed from their own actions and personhood.

And yet, in contrast to the heart, which even modern people use in a metaphorical sense to refer to their emotions, the eye as a metaphorical agent in Deuteronomy seems unexpected. However, there are several reasons that Deuteronomy might turn the eye into a metaphorical agent.

First of all, the eye is a gateway to the heart, and is often associated with the heart (e.g., Deut 15:9-10, 16:19). In Deuteronomy, God desires the hearts of his people, and so construing the eye as an agent, as well as the heart, would fit within this framework. It is much more difficult to react emotionally or with the heart, to things you have not seen with your eyes.²⁵ Since the heart responds to what the eye sees, it would be natural to portray the eye as doing the action, not just taking in information.

In addition, the eye is one of the most sensitive parts of the body, so it is affected by emotions and matters of the heart. As a result, seeing is often associated with judgment (e.g., Deut 16:19; 19:13; cf. Gen 6:5). Finally, the lack of spiritual sight, even though the people have literal eyes (Deut 29:3 [4 Eng]), implies that the people have become like the idols they worship, who also are not able to see even though they have eyes (cf. Deut 4:23-29).

Whatever the reason that the eye is used as a metaphorical agent in Deuteronomic law, it is an important and oft-neglected aspect of law that needs further examination. Metaphorical agency of other body parts, as well as metaphors in law in general, require much deeper analysis and reflection than are

²⁵ In many cases mentioned above, the heart is actually *not* to be involved, especially where it is necessary to do the right thing. Because of sin, where the heart is awakened, it is tempting to overlook wrong, and not deal with the consequences of wrong-doing. Thus, this possible interpretation does not answer the question fully, but may still provide the rationale in some of the passages.

normally given. Considering metaphors in law may provide a more comprehensive and accurate meaning of each passage, as well as connections with other aspects of law and their applications.

APPENDIX

PRELIMINARY GROUPINGS OF “EYE” PASSAGES

Eye Used in a Non-Metaphorical Sense**Torah**

Eye for an eye—Ex 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21

Strike an eye—Ex 21:26

Eye opened—Gen 21:19; Num 22:31; Num 24:3, 15

Eyes undimmed—Deut 34:7

Eyes dim—Gen 27:1; 48:10

Eyes weak—Gen 29:17

Before the eyes of the flock—Gen 30:41

Before their/our/your eyes—Gen 42:24; 47:15, 19; Exod 8:26; Num 20:8; 24:17; Deut 1:30; 4:34; 6:22; 9:17; 28:31; 29:1 (2 ET)

Our/Your eyes saw/have seen—Deut 3:21; 4:3; 4:9; 7:19; 10:21; 11:7; 21:7; 28:34, 67; 29:2 (3 ET)

Eyes did not see (blood shed)—Deut 21:7

Lift your/his eyes and look/see/behold—Gen 13:10, 14; 18:2; 22:4, 13; 24:63; 31:10, 12; 33:1, 5; 43:29; Exod 14:10; Num 24:2; Deut 3:27; 4:19

Raise your eyes to heaven—Deut 4:19

Frontlets between your eyes—Exod 13:16; Deut 6:8; 11:18; 14:1

*Eyes of God are upon the land—Deut 11:12

See with your eyes—Deut 34:4

Set my eyes on him—Gen 44:21

Eyes see—Gen 45:12; Deut 28:34, 67

Eyes darker than wine—Gen 49:12

Hidden from the eyes—Lev 4:13; Num 5:13

In his eyes (disease check)—Lev 13:5, 37

Fever that consumes the eyes—Lev 26:16

Put out the eyes—Num 16:14

Eyes saw/have seen all that God did—Deut 3:21; 4:3, 9; 7:19; 10:21; 11:7

*Eyes will look on and fail with longing—Deut 28:32

In the eyes of—Deut 4:6; 6:18; 25:3 (degraded), 9; 31:7; 34:12

Prophets/Writings

Lift your/his eyes and look/see/behold—Josh 5:13; Judg 19:17; 1 Sam 6:13

Our/Your eyes saw/have seen—Josh 24:7; 1 Sam 24:10

Gouged out eyes—Judg 16:21; 1 Sam 11:2

Revenge for his two eyes—Judg 16:28

Eyes be on the field they are reaping—Ruth 2:9

Weep his eyes out to grieve his heart—1 Sam 2:33

Before their/our/your eyes—1 Sam 12:16

Eyes became bright (after eating honey)—1 Sam 14:27, 29

Beautiful eyes—1 Sam 16:12

Eye Used in a Metaphorical Sense**Torah**

?Serve as eyes for us—Num 10:31 (they have seen the land)
 *Eyes will be opened (when eat fruit)—Gen 3:5, 7
 ?Delight to the eyes—Gen 3:6
 ?Cast her eyes (Potiphar’s wife)—Gen 39:7
 *Favor in the eyes—Gen 6:8; 34:11; 50:4; Deut 24:1
 *No favor in the eyes—Deut 24:1
 ?Innocence in the eyes of all—Gen 20:16
 cursed in the eyes of—Gen 16:5
 Don’t be evil in your eyes--Gen 21:12
 ?Sleep fled from my eyes—Gen 31:40
 *Abominable before the eyes—Exod 8:26
 Do what is right in your/his/my eyes—Gen 16:6; 19:8; Exod 15:26; Deut 1:23; 12:8, 25, 28; 13:18
 ?Memorial between your eyes—Exod 13:9
 Close their eyes to the man...giving child to Molech—Lev 20:4
 Follow after your own heart and your own eyes (which you are inclined to whore after)—Num 15:39
 Holy in the eyes of the people of Israel—Num 20:12
 Falling down with eyes uncovered—Num 24:4, 16
 Canaanites who remain will be barbs in your eyes—Num 33:55
 Eye shall not pity--Deut 7:16; 13:8; 19:13; 19:21; 25:12
 Eye look grudgingly—Deut 15:9
 Bribe blinds the eyes of the wise—Deut 16:19
 *Eyes will look on and fail with longing—Deut 28:32
 Trembling heart, failing eyes, languishing soul—Deut 28:65
 God has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear—Deut 29:3 (4 ET)
 Apple of God’s eye—Deut 32:10
 Evil in the eyes of the Lord your God— Gen 38:7, 10; Num 32:13; Deut 4:25; 9:18; 17:2; 31:29

Prophets/Writings

Evil in your eyes—Josh 24:15
 Good in their eyes—Josh 22:30, 33
 *Favor in the eyes—Judg 6:17; Ruth 2:10, 13; 1 Sam 1:18; 20:3, 29; 25:8; 27:5
 *Eyes were set so he could not see—1 Sam 4:15 (spiritual sight also?)
 Bribe to blind eyes—1 Sam 12:3
 Right in my eyes—Judg 14:3, 7
 Do what is right in his eyes—Judg 17:6; 21:25
 Nations will be thorns in your eyes—Josh 23:13
 Look with envious eye—1 Sam 2:32
 Little in your own eyes—1 Sam 15:17
 Journey is under God’s eye—Judg 18:6
 *Eye of their God was on the elders—Ezra 5:5
 Eye will never see good/seen him no more—Job 7:7-8; 20:9
 Eye dwells on provocation—Job 17:2
 Eye has grown dim from vexation—Job 17:7
 *Eye of adulterer waits, saying “no eye will see me”—Job 24:15
 When the eye saw, it approved—Job 29:11

*=could have metaphorical and non-metaphorical elements

?=uncertain if metaphorical or not