

Gratitude: Halakh: What God Requires, Micah 6:8, 'Do Justice'

The metaphorical concept of walking brings to mind a person who follows certain established principles catalogued in his soul. These established behavior patterns reflect his character traits and together they come to define his lifestyle.

The Jews are constantly warned by God to avoid the lifestyle of the heathen, such as the Egyptians and the Canaanites.

Leviticus 18:3 - You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk [cultivate the character traits, practice the behavior patterns, or develop the lifestyle] in their statutes.

Leviticus 18:4 - You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God.

The Lord spends 40 years conveying to the Jews a set of standards which they are to adopt as their own. They are to develop a lifestyle based on these statutes. Their character traits are to reflect them. Their behavior patterns are to express them.

If these statutes are the daily source of the Jews' thoughts, decisions, and actions then their life may be characterized as an ongoing journey. The route, the way, the path, the wheel-track upon which they walk while on that journey is determined by these divine statutes.

We have classified them as wheel-tracks of righteousness. With wheel-tracks of righteousness facilitated in their neural networks the second-generation Jews "*walk in the Lord's instruction*" while the first do not.

4. The verb *halakh* also describes the righteousness of God in such phrases as "*walking with God*," and "*walking in the ways of the Lord*."

The key to walking with God is bound up in the mental attitude of gratitude. Micah makes this clear in:

Micah 6:8 - What does the Lord require of you? Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

The word "*justice*" is the noun *mishpat* which has a multiplicity of meanings in the Hebrew but all have to do with either human government or the integrity of God. Justice is the administration of established ordinances which through custom are recognized as right standards.

Under civil and criminal law, a citizen is never rewarded for doing what is right, in fact, the law generally ignores the law-abiding but punishes the criminal. However, the divine attribute of justice is inseparably united with divine righteousness.

Justice is bound to execute and administer whatever righteousness demands. Righteousness demands compliance with divine standards. Justice carries out the function of either blessing and rewarding compliance or cursing and punishing noncompliance.

Development of a lifestyle based on these divine standards enables the believer to develop virtue in his soul. When this virtue is challenged by the events of life, it is one's integrity—his sense of righteousness and justice—which sustains him under pressure.