

# Walking in His Ways

## CONCEPTS OF DISCIPLINE

BY VICTORIA SARVADI, TH.D.

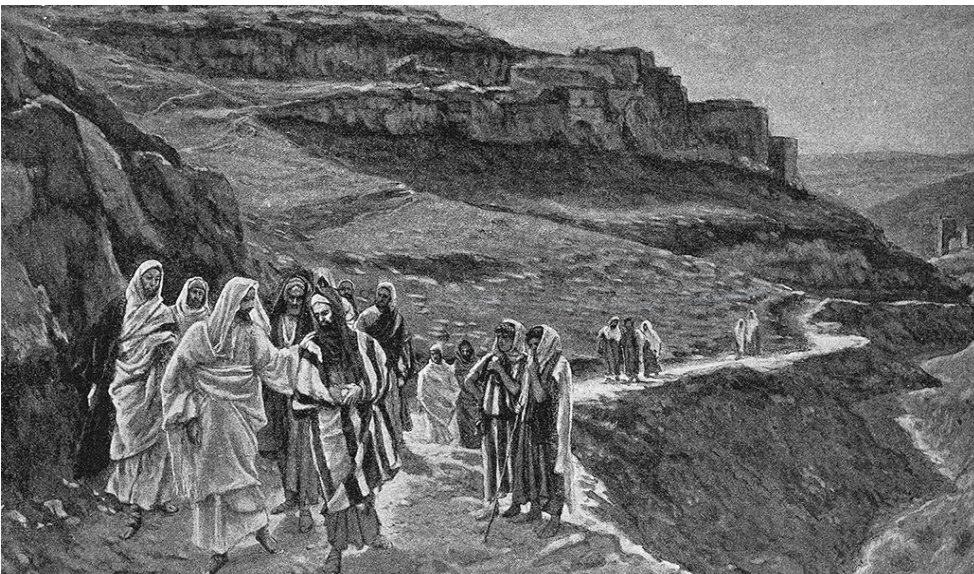
The Hebrew Bible is often mysterious and hard to understand. Most people realize the language is archaic and the traditions are foreign. But unless you know the multi-dimensional aspects of the Hebrew and the idiomatic expressions that involve complex con-

cepts of ancient culture and thought, the deeper meanings may be lost to you.

For example, with the terms *Narrow Way*, *Paths of Righteousness*, and *Walking Upright*, there seems to be a spiritualized pattern of thought that is related to the physical act of *walking*.

We live in the twenty-first century, and many of us are steeped in a Western society with a mindset not attuned to the “ways” of biblical Middle Eastern times. In contrast to these times, we consider ourselves more highly educated; we travel by sophisticated means; women own businesses and properties and hold political offices; we rely greatly on electronics and information technology; and we have the convenience of food at our fingertips. Most of us don’t grow our own grains and daily bake our own bread, nor do we pack up a donkey and travel on foot.

To comprehend the Scriptures more effectively, we must submerge ourselves into the time and



perspectives of antiquated biblical life.

Numerous Scriptures paint a picture of “walking.” As this was the most common way people moved from place to place, major considerations were involved: Do I know the way where I’m going, or could I get lost? Is there a safe passage, or is it treacherous? How much time will it take to arrive at my destination? How much provision should I bring?

The physical aspect of walking was principal, and because it was a major occupier of thought, many “walking” idioms were used to express deeper elements of life in those ancient times.

### THE MODEL OF WALKING

The Hebrew word for “~~he~~ walks” is *bolekh*. The idea of walking became synonymous with behavior and morality. Not only a description of traveling from one place to another on foot, i.e., “walking,” in biblical lexicon, the term “walking” also translates to a deeper meaning of conduct. How does one walk about in public places among men? Is his or her walk upright and admirable? In their walk, do they display character in business dealings where they travel? Are they courteous or helpful?

The parable of the Good Samaritan comes to mind in which Yeshua said, “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was attacked by robbers, who stripped him and beat him. Then they left, abandoning him as half dead. And by chance, a kohen was going down that **road**; but when he saw the man, he **passed by** on the **opposite side**. Likewise, a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, **passed by** on **the opposite side**. But a Samaritan who was **traveling** came upon him; and when he noticed the man, he felt compassion. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then setting him on his own animal, he brought him to a lodge for travelers and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, “Take care of him. And whatever else you spend, upon my return I will repay you myself.” Which of these three seems to you a neighbor to the one attacked by robbers?” And he said, “The one who showed mercy to him.” Then Yeshua said to him, “**Go**, and you do the same” (Luke 10:30–37, TLT).

In biblical lexicon, “walking” is “being among the living.” As one walks this earth and experiences life, you find that some people operate with a mindset that is governed by convictions, conscience, and personally kept morals. They often help people in distress, open

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doors for the physically challenged, give up their seat on the subway to the elderly. Maybe some go the extra mile and talk to strangers to encourage or compliment. This approach to interaction with others is known in the Bible as “doing unto others.”

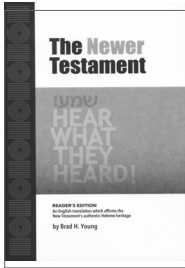
It may be said of this caliber of people that, “they walk the high road” instead of merely passing by on the opposite side. Conversely, some people ignore, cheat, or lie to others. Yeshua’s advice to “*Go and do the same*” is a mandate to *walk in the way of* mercy and compassion for one another.

In ancient times, people listened to the rabbis and Torah teachers “to learn how to walk.” Obviously, this wasn’t a lesson in physical walking, as in how to put one foot in front of another and propel yourself forward. This “walking” was much deeper—that

***In ancient times, people listened to the rabbis and Torah teachers “to learn how to walk.” This was not instruction in how to propel oneself forward. It was how to govern oneself among men as well as how to approach their God.***

# The Newer Testament

## A Hebraic Heritage Translation



**The Hebraic Heritage Bible Newer Testament** (TNT) is a fresh translation of the New Testament by Dr. Brad H. Young, a Hebrew University-trained scholar. Rather than employing the standard translation technique, Young sought to ascertain the Hebrew thought and wording that underpinned the text. By doing so, he reconstructed the Hebrew sources, language, and mindset of the early church and its foundational documents, making it possible for readers to hear what first-century listeners in ancient Israel would have heard: the Jewish cultural, linguistic, and spiritual setting of Jesus the Jew.

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is, how to govern themselves among men as well as how to *approach* their God. It was often asked by people of that time, “Whose dust is on your sandals?” implying, “Who is the Rabbi whom you follow?”

The roads in those days were dusty, and most people wore sandals. It was necessary for travelers to wash their feet after a journey even if it were only a short distance.

When Yeshua knelt to wash the feet of his disciples, Peter quickly objected and said, “You shall never wash my feet!” To which Yeshua replied, “If I don’t wash you, you have no part with me” (John 13:8, TLV).

The curious response by Yeshua is very Hebraic and is not often understood by those who possess a strictly Western understanding. He was showing them (by the act of washing feet) that if one does not allow the cleansing act of Messiah to wash *his walk* (that is the nature of the old man), then one cannot enter into the covenantal promises of salvation.

### A WAY TO ~~IN~~ WHICH TO WALK

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your **ways** My **ways**,” declares the

LORD (Isaiah 55:8).

God’s ways are holy, upright, and perfect. But man, by nature, is selfish and limited on knowledge and good judgment. When we submit to God and become *born again*, he begins to change our nature and transform our minds. We learn about his goodness and character, and he begins to operate through us. We become students of the Lord learning to **walk in his ways**.

As God takes away our selfish nature, he renews and regenerates us! The Bible says, “He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of his name” (Psalm 23:3).

In Judaism, there is a word that is used that defines our effort to walk in God’s ways. It comes from the Hebrew verb *halak* (“to walk”), and it is called *halakhah*. The rabbis would determine *halakhah* by interpreting Scriptures or laws, thereby teaching their followers how to live out or walk out these laws.

We see a great example of implementing God’s ways through a Hebrew idiom spoken by Yeshua when he decided to go to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead.

“Rabbi,” the disciples say to him, “just now the Judean leaders were trying to stone you! And you’re going back there again?” Yeshua answered, “Aren’t there twelve hours in the day? If a man walks in the day, he doesn’t stumble, because he sees the light of the world. But if a man should walk around at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him” (John 11:9-10, CJB).

“Aren’t there twelve hours in a day?” is an idiomatic phrase that continues the concept of walking in goodness or in the light. Making a clear phrase in English would be “If the daylight has twelve hours to shine light in order to illuminate a good path to keep one from stumbling, shouldn’t we who are full of light, walk in the ways of goodness <sup>at all</sup> ~~too?~~ *times*”

Yeshua was saying he was going to “walk out” a good thing and that was to raise Lazarus from the dead.

As Gentiles learn to walk in the ways or *halakhah* of Yeshua, it is, at times, challenging. Many *ways* of Yeshua are steeped in Jewish customs and traditions. Though unfamiliar to non-Jews, these traditions or *ways* were close to our Lord’s heart. Should we also learn how to enter into these blessed ways? Understand them better, perhaps?

It is not uncommon to find that when two people from different cultures marry, they often desire to learn each other’s customs and pass these familial traditions on to their children.

### YESHUA’S WAYS—PASSOVER

What are some of the beloved ways of our

**Abraham was from Ur of Chaldees. He was a Gentile who “crossed over” to learn God’s ways. The word Hebrew literally translates as “crossing over.” Shouldn’t we, who are Gentiles like Abraham, cross over our national or ethnic barriers and allow God to graft us in into his cultivated tree?**

Jewish Lord that we as his sons and daughters should learn to walk in?

Passover and *his* feasts of Leviticus 23: “. . . and he said to them, ‘I have really wanted so much to celebrate this Seder with you before I die! For I tell you, it is certain that I will not celebrate it again until it is given its full meaning in the kingdom of God’” (Luke 22:15–16).

When Yeshua celebrates Passover again in its full meaning, will you be just as excited to participate? Should we learn about this desired event that he celebrated?

### YESHUA’S WAYS—CHANUKAH.

“At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon (John 10:22).

During Chanukah or the Feast of Dedication, Yeshua went to the blessed place of worship, which was at that time, the Temple. If Yeshua thought it right to honor God during this great day of celebration, should we be in awe of it too?

### THE WAY—WALKING OUT TORAH

“The Way” was not the name of a church like “First Baptist.” In biblical, as well as modern times, when a Rabbi of a sect would determine the means of interpreting Torah instructions, the followers would be expected to obey the manners of that system. That system of approach would be called “The Way”—in essence *the way to walk or live out* your life according to Torah.

“But this I confess to you, that according to the Way (which they call a sect), I worship the God of our fathers,<sup>1</sup> believing everything written in the *Torah* and the Prophets. In God I have a hope—which these men also wait for—that there will surely be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous” (Acts 24:14–15).

“I am a Jewish man, born in Tarsus of Cilicia but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, trained strictly according to the *Torah* of our fathers, being zealous for God just as all of you are today. I persecuted this Way to the death, arresting both men and women and throwing them in prisons” (Acts 22:3–4).

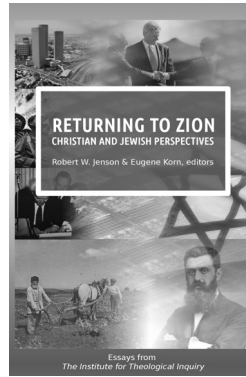
Paul confesses to persecuting those who walked in *the way* or interpretation of Torah as per the Rabbi Yeshua.

### CROSSING OVER

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**Walking with God Issue**

## Returning to Zion




No political ideology in the world today is more controversial than contemporary Zionism. The story of the Jewish people’s rights to Zion, their first entry and their promised return to ancient Zion is rooted in the Bible. And both the history of the Jewish people and their religion testify to the Jewish people’s presence on and continual longing for Zion. Yet the modern return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland and the establishment of the Jewish State of Israel has produced a host of Zionist and anti-Zionist theories. There are two dominant pro-Zionist theories: Zionism as the exclusively secular Jewish variety of modern nationalism, and Zionism as the expression of the necessary historical movement toward the messianic era.

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ways. The word *Hebrew* literally translates as “crossing over.” Shouldn’t we, Gentiles like Abraham, cross over our national or ethnic barriers and allow him to graft us in into his cultivated tree? Shouldn’t we learn how to grow from a deeper root system—to be a Hebrew at heart?

Christianity is rooted in the mother faith of Biblical Judaism, the ancient faith of Yeshua, which he so richly **walked** out. He interpreted his faith rightfully and lived it. Shouldn’t we throw off our Greco-Roman interpretations and allow our Jewish Lord to show us how to **walk out his Spirit-led “ways”**?

Open your heart and allow Yeshua to wash you in your ways. After all, according to Romans 2:29, aren’t we all his covenant children and Jews inwardly?

Teach me your *way, Adonai*, that I may **walk** in your truth. Give me an undivided heart to fear your name (Psalm 86:11). 

Dr. Victoria Sarvadi is co-founder and president of The Nathaniel Foundation in Kingwood, TX. She received her doctoral degree from Hebraic Christian College. She has faithfully served the Messianic community as both teacher and administrator, and, as an ordained minister in Hebraic Christian Global Community, she also serves as director of a vibrant Hebraic community in McKinney, Texas, where she lives with her husband Paul.



**Christianity is rooted in the mother faith of Biblical Judaism, the ancient faith of Yeshua.**

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