

## Gratitude: Halakh cp.w Derek, Literal & Metaphorical Meanings

2. In the Hebrew mind, the verb *halakh* had a literal meaning which came to contribute to the metaphorical meaning.

The verb *halakh*, “to go,” “to walk,” “to travel,” or “to journey,” implies that the one who does so has in mind some ultimate objective. This “going” includes the concept of thinking or mentally “walking through” a process and procedure that leads them to that objective.

In the beginning there may be just a desire to travel somewhere, to perform a certain task, or to come to understand some field of knowledge. This recognizes the sequence we have often observed in the past: actions are merely the result of an original thought, followed by a motivation to carry it out, and the decision to exert the energy necessary to bring it to pass. Thus, no journey commences unless there is the prerequisite thought process which motivates it.

To start a journey a person is bound to begin that trip from wherever he is. No matter where you may decide you want to go when you leave here, you must begin your journey from Chesterfield, Missouri. Upon leaving you have a clear idea of where it is you want to go, e.g., home. In all probability you know the “paths” you must follow in order to get there.

When Jo Henra and I left for Glenhaven ten days ago we knew where we were going and we knew we’d start at St. Charles, but we had no idea of what to do in between. We got directions from Gary Yess and then compared what he told us with a map and then proceeded to follow that predetermined path to our ultimate objective. We’d never been to Glenhaven before but we arrived successfully and safely in a fairly efficient and timely manner.

Now the map reveals many ways to get there. For example, we could have headed out towards Montana and eventually worked out way back through Texas. We would have possibly arrived at Glenhaven. But then we could have died on the way in the *jornada* of Death Valley California. But Gary gave us verbal directions, and a map provided a permanent record of his suggested wheel-tracks.

We expressed our faith in both and headed out. If we travel the same paths often enough, we will eventually not need directions or a map, for we will have facilitated the wheel-tracks into our neural networks. Such is the Christian way of life. We receive verbal instruction in Bible class and the Bible records the doctrines in permanent printed form which we may continually consult.

Eventually you will know doctrines well enough that you will have them as facilitated wheel-tracks in your soul and brain. In this case you must remember that when traveling on highways or learning doctrines, facilitation is accomplished through action.

If Jo Henra and I don’t go back to Glenhaven for the next ten years then the landmarks may change, the roads may be rerouted, or new highways opened up. If we travel the route consistently over the next ten years then these changes become subtle adjustments in the wheel-tracks which become associated with the directions already in the memory center.

Such is the case with doctrine. Review keeps the information fresh, adds subtle nuances, and tweaks certain concepts so that the information not only remains fresh but is being constantly updated and facilitated. Thus, we can see that a journey includes more than a starting point or a destination. It also includes the process and procedure for getting from point A to point B. That process and procedure is also included in the verb *halakh* which recognizes there must be a path between the two. That path between the two, as far as the Christian way of life is concerned, is taken up under the metaphorical meaning of the word.

3. The verb *halakh* came to take on a metaphorical meaning which described the various paths a person will take in life dependent upon his belief system.

Throughout the Old Testament the journey called human life is described as a way, a path, or a wheel-track and the Hebrew word often used to convey this idea is the noun *derek*. It is in association with this concept that *halakh* takes on its metaphorical meaning.

No matter what the ultimate objective might be, these words imply that they may be attained by following certain courses or going certain ways. When in Exodus 16:4 the Lord says that He tests the Jews to determine “*whether or not they will walk in My instruction,*” it is evident that His Word establishes the wheel-track upon which the Jews are to walk.

The link between *derek*—*wheel-track*—and *halakh*—*to walk*—is evident throughout the Pentateuch. Their association is expressed by Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, in:

**Exodus 18:20** - ... teach them the statutes and the laws and make known to them the way [*derek*] in which they are to walk [*halakh*]...

Remember that *derek* refers to a path worn by constant walking, or a journey. Metaphorically, it refers to action and behavior which are classified in Scripture as righteous or wicked. For example:

**Psalm 1:6** - The Lord approves the way of the righteous but the way of the wicked will perish. Further, remember that *halakh* refers to how one lives, behaves, or acts.

Again, we see the concept developed by our study of neurology: the Lord approves of those who have facilitated neural pathways based on His righteous standards while He permits those who facilitate neural pathways based on wickedness to perish.