

Isaiah 33:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

Analysis

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly (הֵלֵךְ צְדָקוֹת וְדָבַר מִישָׁרִים, holekh tsedaqot vedover meyasharim)—the one walking (הֵלֵךְ, halakh) in צְדָקָה (tsedaqah, righteousness) and speaking (דָּבַר, davar) מִישָׁרִים (meyasharim, uprightness, straightness). **He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes** (מֹאֵס בְּבִצָּע מַעֲשֵׂקוֹת נֹעַר כַּפָּיו מִתְמַךְ בְּשֹׁחַד, mo'es bebeta ma'ashaqqot no'er kappaw mittemokh bashochad)—despising (מֹאֵס, ma'as) gain (בִּצָּע, betsa) from oppression, shaking hands from grasping bribes (שֹׁחַד, shochad). **That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil** (אָטֵם אָזְנוֹ מִשְׁמַע דָּמִים וְעֵצִים עֵינָיו מִרְאוֹת בְּרָע, otem ozno mishmoa damim ve'otsem eynaw mer'ot bera).

The answer to verse 14's question: those characterized by comprehensive righteousness can dwell with the holy God. Six marks:

1. righteous walk
2. upright speech
3. despising oppressive gain
4. refusing bribes
5. closing ears to bloodshed-plots
6. shutting eyes to evil.

This isn't sinless perfection but fundamental orientation toward righteousness, active resistance to evil. Psalm 15:2-5 and Psalm 24:3-5 give similar lists. Ultimately, only Christ perfectly fulfills this; believers dwell with God through His righteousness imputed (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Historical Context

Ancient Israelite society struggled with these sins—bribery perverted justice (Exodus 23:8, Deuteronomy 16:19), oppression enriched leaders (Amos 5:11-12, Micah 2:1-2), violence was plotted (Jeremiah 11:18-19), evil was celebrated (Isaiah 5:20). True covenant-keepers actively resisted cultural corruption. Jesus expanded this in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10)—the pure in heart shall see God (v. 8). First John 3:2-3 promises: 'we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.'

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How do these six marks of righteousness describe not just avoiding evil but actively resisting it?
2. Which of these characteristics (righteous walk, upright speech, despising oppressive gain, etc.) needs strengthening in your life?
3. How does recognizing that only Christ perfectly fulfills this list drive you to depend on His righteousness?

Interlinear Text

הֵלֵךְ	צַדִּיק	וְדִבֵּר	מִישָׁרִים	מֵאֵס	בְּצֶעַד	
He that walketh	righteously	and speaketh	uprightly	he that despiseth	the gain	
H1980	H6666	H1696	H4339	H3988	H1215	
מִמְשָׁק	נֵעַר	כַּפָּיו	מִתְּמָךְ	בִּשְׁחָד	אֵטֵם	
of oppressions	that shaketh	his hands	from holding	of bribes	that stoppeth	
H4642	H5287	H3709	H8551	H7810	H331	
אָזְנוֹ	מִשְׁמַעַ	דָּמִים	וְעֵצָה	עֵינָיו	יִמְרָא	בְּרָעָה
his ears	from hearing	of blood	and shutteth	his eyes	from seeing	evil
H241	H8085	H1818	H6105	H5869	H7200	H7451

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:37 (Parallel theme): Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

1 John 3:7 (Righteousness): Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

Psalms 106:3 (Righteousness): Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.

Romans 2:7 (Parallel theme): To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

Deuteronomy 16:19 (Righteousness): Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Luke 19:8 (Parallel theme): And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

Luke 1:6 (Righteousness): And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

James 5:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Malachi 2:6 (Parallel theme): The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

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