

Psalm 119:59

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

Analysis

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. The verb **thought** (חִשְׁבַּתִּי, chishavti) implies careful calculation and honest self-examination, not casual reflection. **My ways** (דְּרָכַי, derakhai) represents the actual trajectory of life, not merely intentions. This is the first step of genuine repentance: honest assessment without self-justification.

Turned my feet (וְאָשִׁיבָה רָגְלָי, va'ashivah raglai)—the verb **turned** (שׁוּב, shuv) is the primary Hebrew word for repentance, meaning 'return' or 'turn back.' This isn't mere mental assent but concrete behavioral change. Repentance moves feet, not just feelings. The destination is **thy testimonies** (עֲדֹתֶךָ, edvotekha)—God's reliable witness and instruction. True repentance turns from sin and to God's Word.

Historical Context

The prophets constantly called Israel to shuv—return to covenant faithfulness. This wasn't self-improvement but covenant renewal, turning from idols back to Yahweh. The parable of the Prodigal Son perfectly illustrates this verse: 'When he came to himself... he arose and came to his father' (Luke 15:17-20)—thought led to action, repentance produced return.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. When did you last engage in honest, unflinching evaluation of your life's actual direction versus stated intentions?
2. What specific behavioral changes ('turning feet') has recent self-examination prompted in your walk with God?
3. How can you cultivate the habit of regular self-examination without falling into morbid introspection or legalism?

Interlinear Text

עָדָתִיךְ: אֶל בְּגָלִים וְאֶשְׁר יָבָה דַּרְכֵי חַשְׁבָּתִי
I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies
H2803 H1870 H7725 H7272 H413 H5713

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 13:5 (Parallel theme): Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Ezekiel 18:28 (Parallel theme): Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Lamentations 3:40 (Parallel theme): Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.

2 Corinthians 12:21 (Parallel theme): And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

Haggai 1:7 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

Ezekiel 18:30 (Parallel theme): Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Haggai 1:5 (Parallel theme): Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

Joel 2:13 (Parallel theme): And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

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