

Walk the Talk

physical and spiritual exercise for people of faith

Produced by Texas Impact

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Welcome to Walk the Talk!

This guide is designed to help you connect your physical health to spiritual practice and social justice. As you travel the routes on the maps and ponder the accompanying scriptural passages, we hope you will consider how your decision to exercise is important to your own health and also the health of the whole community.

Texas Impact has recently updated Walk the Talk with routes of significance in the Buddhist tradition, and more updates are planned. If you have a route from your faith tradition that you'd like to have considered for inclusion, please feel free to suggest the route by emailing justice@texasimpact.com. If you have a particular prayer, meditation, or insight into the significance of the route, please feel free to share it.

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Jewish and Christian

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HOLY LAND DISTANCES

JERUSALEM TO BETHLEHEM	5 MILES
BETHANY TO JERUSALEM	3 MILES
NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM	73 MILES
JERUSALEM TO ANATHOTH	2.5 MILES
SHILOH TO BETHLEHEM	20 MILES
JERUSALEM TO JERICHO	17 MILES
NAZARETH TO CANA	13 MILES



Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. Genesis 2:7

Scripture tells us our bodies are created in God's image, and that God fills our nostrils with God's own breath. Yet too often, we take our bodies for granted. Too often, we fail to maintain them the way we should, and they develop problems.

Poor physical health isn't good for our spiritual health. When we get sick, those we love suffer. And preventable conditions that spring from poor health habits cost the whole community.

Exercise is a cornerstone of lifelong health. On a regular basis, moderate exercise like walking can minimize the risk of a host of painful, debilitating, expensive chronic diseases.

Texas has a legacy of active lives lived outdoors, but in recent years Texas has emerged as one of the least fit states in the country. Compared to the national average, fewer Texans exercise regularly, and more Texans don't get any exercise at all.

Lack of exercise is one reason that Texas also is presenting an increasing public health concern nationally.

- In 2001, 36.7 percent of adult Texans were overweight and 24.6 percent, obese - as compared with 1990, when only 30.6 percent of adult Texans were overweight and 12.3 percent, obese.
- Prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity was greater in Texas in 2001 than was reported for a national sample. Students in Texas were almost 1.5 times as likely to be obese as other American students.
- The best estimate of medical costs of obesity to Texas is approximately \$4 billion--a conservative estimate since obesity is under-diagnosed because most health-insurance providers do not reimburse for diagnosis or treatment of weight-related conditions.
- Direct U.S. medical costs associated with physical inactivity were nearly \$76.6 billion in 2000.

The United States faces a health epidemic of unparalleled proportion. Chronic diseases account for about 70 percent of all U.S. deaths and about 75 percent of health care costs each year. With the percentage of Americans over the age of 65 expected to double over the next 30 years, we cannot afford the escalating cost of health care. If we are serious about improving the health and quality of life of Americans and keeping our health care budget under control, we cannot afford to ignore the power of prevention.--Dr. James S. Marks, MD, MPH, director, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/overview.htm>)

WHAT DOES EXERCISE HAVE TO DO WITH JUSTICE?

Justice means making sure everyone gets a fair share of the available resources, and that means, in part, making sure we don't use more than we need. Failing to care for our own health means that we have less energy to help other people, and it means that we might use resources we wouldn't have needed if we'd taken better care of ourselves all along.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The map shows several routes that are found in stories of the Jewish and Christian traditions.

The table includes mileage information, and the text contains the scriptural passage where the route is found.

The journeys range from a couple of miles to 200 miles. Walking at a moderate pace for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, you could walk from Jerusalem to Jericho in about two weeks. Walking a little faster, you could trace Joseph and Mary's steps from Nazareth to Bethlehem during the forty days of Lent.

As you travel the miles of the routes on this map, you could consider how the stories of our faith traditions inform our actions today. You could meditate on the blessings of health-physical, mental, and spiritual. You could pray for those who are in ill health, or think of ways to help bring health to your community. You could dwell on other blessings that enable you to exercise and stay fit: clean air to breathe, nutritious food to eat, adequate shoes to walk or run in.

Regardless of where your thoughts travel as you walk or run, congratulations in advance for taking the first step...and all the steps after that. In choosing to exercise, you are saying YES to yourself and your community.

How Far and How Long?

	Moab to Bethlehem	Jerusalem to Anathoth	Nazareth to Bethlehem	Nazareth to Cana	Jerusalem to Jericho	Bethany to Jerusalem
Distance in miles	30	2.5	73.0	13	17	2
Hours at 2.5 mph	12.0	1.0	29.2	5.2	6.8	0.8
Hours at 3.0 mph	10.0	0.8	24.3	4.3	5.7	0.7
Days at 2.5 mph, 30 minutes/day	24.0	2.0	58.4	10.4	13.6	1.6
Days at 3.0 mph, 30 minutes/day	20.0	1.7	48.7	8.7	11.3	1.3
Days at 2.5 miles per hour, 45 minutes/day			38.9			

Note: All Biblical references are from the New Revised Standard Version.

Moab to Bethlehem

Naomi and Ruth returned to Naomi's home, Bethlehem, after their husbands had died. Although Naomi told her daughters-in-law to stay in their homeland of Moab, Ruth remained faithful to Naomi.

Ruth 1:6-18

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die-- there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Jerusalem to Anathoth

The prophet Jeremiah bought a field in Anathoth--a community in the path of the Babylonian army as they approached Jerusalem--because God told him to invest in the future.

Jeremiah 32:6-15

Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came to me: Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, "Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours." Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the LORD, and said to me, "Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself." Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy; and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. In their presence I charged Baruch, saying, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.

Jerusalem to Jericho

In Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, a victim of highway robbery lay injured by the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and of all the passersby, only a Samaritan businessman stopped to render aid.

Luke 10:25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.' But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

Nazareth to Bethlehem

Joseph and Mary traveled from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem to participate in the Census while Mary was in the third trimester of her pregnancy with Jesus.

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Nazareth to Cana

Jesus traveled from his home in Nazareth to a wedding in nearby Cana, where he performed the first of his miracles by turning water into wine when the supplies for the wedding feast ran low.

John 2:1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Bethany to Jerusalem

Jesus traveled from Bethany, the home of his friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus, to Jerusalem a week before his execution.

Luke 19:28-40

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this, "The Lord needs it."' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!' Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.'

A Buddhist Pilgrimage

*Routes Designed by Dr. Whitney S. Bodman, Asst. Professor of World Religions
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*



How Far and How Long?

	Lumbini to Kusinagara	Bodhgaya to Kusinagara	Bodhgaya to Sarnath
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Distance in miles	161	246	153
Hours at 2.5 mph	64	98	61.2
Hours at 3.0 mph	53.7	82	51
Days at 2.5 mph, 30 minutes/day	129	197	122.4
Days at 3.0 mph, 30 minutes/day	107	164	102

Lumbini

The Place of Buddha's Birth

*The mind is restless, unsteady, hard to guard,
Hard to control. The wise one makes it straight,
Like a fletcher straightens an arrow.
Dhammapada, trans. By Thomas Cleary*

Bodhgaya

Where the Buddha Attained Enlightenment

*Thereupon he spoke these words of victory:
"Seeking but not finding the house builder,
I hurried through the round of many births:
Painful is birth ever and again.
O house builder, you have been seen;
You shall not build the house again.
Your rafters have been broken up,
Your ridgepole is demolished too.
My mind has now attained the unformed Nibbâna
And reached the end of every sort of craving."
Dhamapada 153 - 154. Trans. by Nanamoli Thera*

Sarnath (Deer Park)

Where the Buddha Gave his First Sermon

"Monks, these two extremes ought not to be cultivated by the recluse. What two? Sensual indulgence which is low, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and conducive to harm; and self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, and conducive to harm. The middle path, monks, understood by the Tathagata, avoiding the extremes, gives vision and knowledge and leads to

calm, realization, enlightenment, and Nibbana. And what, monks, is that middle path? It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration."
From the Buddha's First Sermon, Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

Kusinagara

Where the Buddha Died (attained *paranirvana*)

"They who fulfill the greater and lesser duties, they who are correct in life, walking according to the precepts, it is they who rightly honor, reverence, and venerate the Tathagata, the Perfect One, with the worthiest homage. Therefore, Ananda, be steady in the fulfillment of the greater and the lesser duties, and be correct in life, walking according to the precepts. Thus, Ananda, should you train yourselves."

Final Discourse of the Buddha, Maha Parinibbana Sutta