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Roads of destiny, 1944.

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ROADS OF DESTINY

WRHS
By
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

At
The Temple

On
Sunday, April 30, 1944



"The Road" is a favorite figure of speech in the Bible and ⁱⁿ our sacred literature, in fact in all literature, and in our every-day speech. It is a most apt and apposite simile for so many of our human experiences.

The Road, the Way, the Path, the Trail -- the very words strike certain chords, responsive chords, deep down in the heart of man. They seem to stire deep-buried ancient memories of a time when the race of man was wandering over the face of the earth, seldom at rest, and when the story of mankind was a saga of journey, migration.

"My Father was a nomad Aramean", each one of our forefathers declared when he brought his basket of offering to the sanctuary at harvest time. Memories of the endless journeying to and fro, the hard roads, the ways of darkness and in the ways of danger. And what befalls men in passage and on marches -- all that has become the invisible background for the more recent experiences of men in the fixed and settled life in town and cities -- a life to which he is not entirely reconciled.

Our basic speech is rich with words reminiscent of the Road. The vocabulary of our spiritual and mental life as well has borrowed freely from it. The Bible speaks of the "Way of Life". The moral life is the "good and righteous way." The "ways of wisdom" are ways of pleasantries. There are also ways of darkness, crooked ways, the evil ways. The lost and baffled soul is the man whose way is hidden. There are uncertain and unpredictable ways: the way of the eagle in the air, the way of the serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a lad with a lass. There are the old ways and the everlasting ways. To die is "to go the way of all the earth." And the grave is the "way wherein one does not return."

In fact we are encouraged, nay admonished, to regard the whole of our life as a journey from the cradle to the ~~grave~~ grave, and ourselves as travelers and sojourners, as passing guests. Our days are like a shadow on the land. Human life is a journey, an irresistible journey.

You might think that you are standing still at the moment, settled in a standing position, in a certain place, in a certain circle. But we are not standing still. We are moving on. We may not be observant of the fact, or aware, but the silent procession of our life goes on. Even if we stand still on an escalator, the escalator moves upward and we are carried along with it. We move constantly into new scenes - even when our eyes fail to observe them, new regions, new climates; things change all about us. Faces change. We change. Our pace changes. Our outlook and reactions change. And suddenly we find ourselves approaching the End of the Road. We realize that we had traveled further and faster than we thought. We would like to retrace some of the Road, see once again what was glimpsed all too quickly -- walk once again with some vanished loved one with whom we walked so happily for a time on the Road. But there is no retracing our steps. We can only move forward -- to the end of the Road, and no one knows what lies beyond.

The Road! It is good to keep this picture in mind. It is not depressing. and It is sobering/to the wise man - quieting and steadying. The whole picture of life as a road, leading on to an inescapable end is to take the rage, the impatience, the vehemence out of his soul, the insatiable ambition, the frenzied acquisitiveness, the senseless grubbing and hoarding to which men are so often addicted.

What profit is it to you to come to the end of the road all out of breath, post-haste and ahead of time? It is the end of the Road and what profit is it if you come to the end of the road with a few ~~advances~~ additional loads of worldly possessions or some additional raiment and trappings of power and prestige which you must shed when you lie down alone and empty-handed in the silent grave at the end of the Road?

And the wise man takes his journey less turbulently and less covetously. He plans it more deliberately. He tries to make ~~make~~ each lap, mile of it yield him a measure of satisfaction. He likes to make friends on the road. He is not

always pushing and shoving, trying to get ahead of everybody. He looks about him. There are glorious sights to be seen, the unfolding beauty and majesty of God's great world all about one. There is music to ravish the soul and the fascinating stories of men and of nations who have walked on this Road before; and there is so much wisdom to be gained and such rich companionship to be enjoyed.

The wise man takes his time on the Road. He will not turn it into a race. Some foolish men are on the wrong road all their life, but they keep on running. Some foolish men are on the wrong road all the time, for they are always running.

There are all sorts of people and all sorts of folk on the road of life. And they all think of the road differently. There are travelers pilgrims, pioneers, wanderers, nomads, gypsies. For each the road is something else. There are some nomads and gypsies to which the road is an end in itself. It is in their blood. They are wanderers. Any road, God knows where, just so it is a road and it takes them over the hills and far away. There is a fever of restlessness in them. Nothing can hold them. No home, no job, no career, no loyalty. They are under the curse of Cain, wanderers, and fugitives on the face of the earth. They are the unstable, the undisciplined, the spiritually untutored who think that happiness is to be found just in roaming, in endless rambling, "in going places and seeing things." Such people are fated to be disillusioned long before they reach the end of the Road, because men get travel-weary, sooner or later, road-worn. New trails which at first fill one with eagerness and happy expectancy, after a while, lose their beckoning appeal. And having been nomads all their lives they end up in loneliness. They have nothing to show for a life-time of way-faring. They sought many worlds and found not a one. They live in many houses. They never have a home. They never made friends. They trill to many passions. They never knew love.

"When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day."

"When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down:
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among;
God grant you find one face there
You loved when all was young."

One need not be knocking about a hundred highways and byways to find adventure. One can see the angel of God in a narrow lane. Milton, the great poet, became blinded at middle age. He thought that his life had ended. He could not see any more, could not experience any more. He was chained to a terrible calamity which had overtaken him. But after profound reflection he came to the conclusion that blind though he was and unable to roam over the world he was still able to serve and by serving, finding life going on in boundless usefulness. "Thousands at his bidding speed, and post o'er land and ocean without rest; They also serve who only stand and wait."

You and I know of many people, the sphere of whose life seems to be so circumscribed, who are hemmed in by one great task, by one overwhelming ~~desire~~ duty. of their lives, who seem to be so narrow, confined. There was a great world to which they had no access, to which they shut themselves off. And yet when you get to know those people, get to understand what depths of spiritual satisfaction they are deriving from that all exhausting duty and service you get to understand you come to understand that men can find supreme spiritual contentment even though they only stand and wait.

As there are many nomads and gypsies on the road, there are also other restless people on the road. They are the seekers, the people who are possessed of a dream, the men who follow the gleam of their life, the gleam of some great

mastering ideal; who follow the way of their vision, heedless of winds, and storms, darkness or heat or cold or the changing seasons.

In a way they are our pathfinders and pioneers. It is they who carve new highways for mind and spirit of men, who make a better and nobler society. These people, these seekers, idealists, they ~~xxx~~ will fall unvanquished. They will fight evil. They will fight evil oppression, fear, ignorance. They will sometimes fall. They will be sometimes be vanquished, but as Heine said, "They will fall unvanquished, swords unbroken. The only thing that's broken is their heart."

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us - for such as we -
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the rain,
And the watch fire under stars, and sleep, and the road again.

We seek the City of God, and the haunt where beauty dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where the radiant people meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are going about the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's rim.

We travel from dawn to dusk, till the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

There are other people who are natural Road-builders. They build a way where they find none, where they find men and groups and creeds and classes segregated, isolated, separated by impassable terrains, with no ways of communication open to them. They want men and peoples and nations and races to find their way one to the other, people of tolerance, people of good will who build roads where

ignorance, intolerance, suspicion had erected barriers and stumbling blocks.

They say of the great Empire of Rome that it had two things -- roads and walls -- walls which were fortresses for the cities. These walls have long been destroyed, but the roads which Rome built connecting city with city, country with country, continent with continent -- these roads still remain solid as ever. So, blessed are the roads and the road-builders one finds on the way of life.

On the other hand, there are people on the Road who hate everybody but themselves. The Road belongs to them. Every one else is a trespasser. Everyone is pushed off the Road. They are the brigands and the gansters of the Road. Today we call them Nazis, Fascists, people who turn the road of life into a bloody shambles. They are people who like to destroy the highways which man so painfully build. They do not want people, groups, classes to get together ^{but} to fight one another. And until such people are destroyed, the road is a way of horror and desperation.

There are also people who move upon this road in a sort of aura all of their own, in a rarified social exclusiveness. They see themselves and their own limited circle or social set and no-one else. They know, in a general way that there are others many others, but they are not interested in noticing them. They are in the same road but not in the same world. They don't see the less fortunate, the afflicted, the scorned, the rejected, the poor. They have not learned the law of the road, the law of companionship, comradeship of the Road. Before their journey is ended they might find themselves among those whom they chose not to notice and whose lot they refused to improve. Rich man, poor man, prince and pauper should remember that there are many changes which occur on the Road, unforeseen, unpredictable. There must be chivalry on the road or else it becomes unspeakable hard. You cannot always choose one's Road or choose it one is deflected and detoured.

Heredity and environment affect the choice as do also sheer chance and accident.

Here is a young man who sets out bravely, courageously, ^{who}/suddenly is swept away from it into war, into a totally different road, a totally different destiny. All roads have an element of danger and chance in them.

But basically, and in a profound sense the Rabbis declared:

A man may wish to be a doctor. It will turn out that he will be a merchant, a day labor. But basically that which he wanted to be in terms of profession, the basic interest of his life will have play in whatever profession he finds himself. If his chief ambition is to make money, to exploit others, that will be his way whether he is a doctor or not. The profession will be different. The man will be the same.

Two of the great Rabbis whose wise sayings we have been reading these weeks between Passover and Shabuoth asked this question: "What is the way that a man should choose for himself?" What is the best way that a man should choose for himself. This question was asked of many men of a hundred different men. And surprisingly enough not one of them answered in terms of a profession or a career. No one said that the best thing that a man should do is to become powerful or rich. They were thinking of these fundamental ways in human life; One said the best way is the gift of foresight, the good heart, the way which will bring honor to himself.

There is the Road. There are different kinds of people on the road who take the road differently. How shall we take the Road? Here again our sages come to our help with their wise counsel. They said there two paths, one of fire and one of snow, ice. If you step aside on the one, you will die; if you setep aside onto the other, you will also die. What shall a man do? The answer is: Let him walk in the middle of the road.

Walk through life. Don't run. Take the middle course. Travel about. Widen your horizon. Doh't permit yourself to become an aimless drifter. Have roots, deep roots somewhere, in some place, in some task, in some loyalty, in some love.

Remember that opportunities for great and exciting living may be near at hand, also that new lands and borders seldom give one new life. Do not be too content, neither be too restless and do not confuse the itch of personal ambition with the call to serve a great cause.

Learn to share this road and the common trials which men experience upon it. Walk with men not by them, unheeding. Join in their song and in their sorrow.

And so these are the roads of our destiny, all of them ending at the grave.... Righteous people, wise men, good men -- they walk upon this road. But the wicked, the selfish, the hard-hearted, the ~~xx~~ intemperate, the hasty, they stumble. The Roads of Destiny....



1/ "The Road" is a favourite figure of speech in the Bible and our sacred literature - in fact in all literature, and in our every-day speech.
- It is a most apt and appropriate simile for so many human experiences.

= The Road, The Way, The Path, The Trail - the very words strike chords, responsive chords, deep down in the heart of man. They seem to stir deep-buried ancient memories of a time when the roving man was wandering over the face of the earth, seldom at rest, and when its story was the saga of journeys and migrations.

= 2/1 3, 2/1 1 p 2/1 "My Father was a nomad Aramean" - each one of our fathers declared when he led his basket of grain to the sameness at harvest time. Memories of the endless journeying to and fro - the long roads - the hated roads - the ways of darkness and the ways of danger - and what befalls men in passage and on the march - all that has become the invisible background for the new recent experiences of men in fixed and settled life in town and cities - a life to which he is not entirely reverted.

= Our basic speech is rich with words reminiscent of the Road. The vocabulary of our spiritual and mental life as well has borrowed freely from it.

- The Bible speaks of the way of life;
- The moral life is the good and upright way.
- The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasures
- There are also ways of darkness, crooked ways, the Evil way
- The lost and baffled soul is the man whose way is hidden
- There are the uncertain and unpredictable ways: the way of the eagle in the air - the way of the serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea and

- the way of a ^{low} ~~man~~ ^{man} with a ^{van} ~~van~~.
- There are the old paths and the everlasting ways.
 - To die is to go the way of all the earth
 - And the Grave is the way where one does not return.

2/ In fact we are evermoving - way adventured - to regard the whole of our life as a journey from the cradle to the grave, and ourselves as travelers and sojourners.

אנו נוסעים בדרך חיים - מן המעיכה אל הקבר - "אורח חיים" - "אורח חיים"

- "passing guests" - "and without life" -

We might think that we are standing still, but we are moving. We may not be observant or aware but the silent procession of our life goes on. Even if ~~we~~ ^{we} stand still on an escaler the escaler moves afward and ~~we~~ ^{we} are carried along with it. We move constantly into new scenes - even when our eyes fail to observe them, new regions, new climates; things change all about us. Faces change.

The change. Our face changes. Our outlook and workings change. And suddenly we find ourselves approaching the End, the Road.

- He had travelled further and faster than we that. He would like to retreat now, the Road. See once again what was glimpsed all too quickly - just once again some varied loved one with whom we walked so happily for a time on the Road. But there is no returning on steps. We can only move forward - to the End, the Road and no one knows what lies beyond!

3/ It is good to keep this picture in mind. It is not depressing. It is sobering and to the wise man - greeting and steadily in.

At takes the rage, the unpatience, the vehemence ~~of~~ out of his soul - ⁽³⁾
the insatiable ambition, the frenzied acquisitiveness, the murderous
grubbing and hoarding. ~~What profit is it~~ ^{at all, but trouble} to you if you come to
the end, the Road just-horribly ahead, there + n if you buy with
you ~~to the death of the game~~ a few accidental loads of
worldly possessions ~~some additional fragments and~~ ^{some additional fragments and}
which you must shed ^{when} you lie down alone and
empty handed in the silent grave at the end, the Road?

The wise man takes his journey less turbulently and
less covetously. He plans it more deliberately. He tries to
make each day ^{yield} him a measure of satisfaction. He
likes to walk friends on the road. He respects the annals
and countenances of the road. He is not always pushing and
showing, trying to get ahead of everybody. He looks about
him. There are glorious sights to be seen, the unfolding
beauty and majesty of God's great world all about one!
There is music to ravish the soul, and the persuading
tones of men and of nations who have walked on this
Road before; and so much wisdom to be gathered and
such rich companionship to be enjoyed.

The wise man takes his time on the Road. He will
not turn it into a race. He ~~will not~~ some ^{other} fools
who are on the wrong road all their life but keep
on running...

4) There are all sorts of people on the Road - and they all
think of the Road differently. There are travellers, homer
Wanderers, nomads, peoples. To each the Road is

something else.

— To the nomad and gypsy it is an End in itself!

— To be as the wreck - is in their blood - the slaves, Wanderers (lust)

— Any road - to God knows where - just so it is a road
and it takes you 'over the hills and far away'.

= There is the fever of restlessness in their feet. Nothing
can hold them! No home-ties, no job, no career, no
loyalties.

= They ~~have~~ are under the curse of Cain - B/I R
a wanderer and a fugitive on the earth.

= They are the unstable, the undisciplined, the sp. untrained,
who think that happiness is to be found just in
rambling, in endless rambling, "in going places
and seeing things".

= They are fated to find disillusionment long before
they reach the End of the Road.

= Men get tired - weary sooner or later - road-worn -

= New trails ^{where} at first fill one with eagerness and
happy expectancy, after a while, lose their beckoning
appeal.

= And having been nomads all their lives they end
up in Roughness. They have nothing to show
for a life-time of way-faring. They sought many
worlds and found not a one.

YOUNG AND OLD
by
Charles Kingsley

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down:
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there
You loved when all was young.



THE SEEKERS

John Masefield

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us - for such as we -
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the rain,
And the watch fire under stars, and sleep, and the road again.

We seek the City of God, and the haunt where beauty dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where the radiant people meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are going about the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's rim.

We travel from dawn to dusk, till the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

"thousands at his bidding speed,
And pass o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

= "who best bear his mild yoke, they serve him best"

= They lived in many houses. They never had a home.
They knew a lot of people. They never made a friend.
They thumbed to many a passion. They never knew love!

(Jewish) Kryslers

One need not be philanthropic about on a 100 highways and by ways
to find adventure one can see the angel stand in a narrow lane.

5/ There are other restless people on the Road - Wobblers

by far -

- seek the margins, the stairs

= In a way - also unhappy people - They are the Seekers

those who are possessed of a dream - the men who
follow the dream of some great, mastering ideal.

They follow the way of their vision, headwinds, winds
and storms, of darkness, or heat or cold or the
changing seasons.

In a way they are our path-finders and promises -
They carve the new highways for the mind and spirit
of many. They push the road and the better and nobler
rough, tomorrow.

= They will fight man's foes on the Road - Evils + Evil
men - Hate and Oppression and Guarantee and Fear. They
will fall unvanquished - munds unbroken - The only
thing that's broken is their heart."

of these the poet Manfred Sarg (Jude)

6/ There are people who are natural Road-builders.
They build a way when they find none.

Where they find men and groups and crowds and ⁶
classes segregated, isolated, separated by impassable
terrains - no way of communication open to them -
They naturally set about building roads to connect
them. ^{They want them to find their way to reach other} ~~TO~~ ^{TO} ~~be~~ ^{are} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~road~~ ^{will} ~~build~~ ^{build} roads where
ignorance, intolerance, suspicion had erected barriers
and blocks.

Rome Walls & roads.

Blessed are the Road-builders!

8) There are people on the Road who hate everybody but
themselves. The Road belongs to them! Every one else
is a trespasser. Parked off the Road! They are the
"Son of a Bitch & the gangsters" of the Road. Every age has a
different name for them. An age calls them Nazis. For
they turn the Road into a bloody shambles, ^{They destroy human highways & remove} ~~and~~ ^{even} ~~until~~ ^{they are} ~~destroyed~~ ^{the Road} is a way of horror.

9) There are those who work in their own areas on
the Road, in a careful, social exclusive business. They see
themselves and their own limited circle, these set -
and no one else. They know that in a general way
that there are other - many others - but they are not
interested in noticing them - ^{except} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~less~~ ^{less} ~~fortunate~~ ^{fortunate}, the
afflicted, the scorned, the rejected. They are on the
same Road but not in their world. They have not
learned the ^{law of the} ~~con~~ ^{roadship} ~~the~~ ^{the} Road. Before them

journey is ended, they might find themselves among ⁽¹⁷⁾
those whom they chose not to notice and whose lot
they refused to improve. Rich man, poor man, prince
and pauper, ^{remember} many great changes occur on the Road!
There must be chivalry on the Road - ~~or else~~
it becomes unbearably hard!

10/ One cannot always choose one's Road! or choosing it -
one is often deflected and detoured.

Hereditary environment affect the choice. As do
sheer chance and accident!

A young man ~~he~~ sets out bravely on a career
and he is suddenly reverted away into war!
and then road - and then destrug!

11/ 2100 732 2100 6 - All roads have
an element of danger & chance, in them.

12/ But honestly - & in a profound sense

- talk with - did 32 316 732 -

A man may wish to be a doctor and end up a
lawyer, a an engineer, or a business man or a
day labourer - but the basic interest of his life will
have play ~~with~~ in whatever profession he finds
himself. If his ^{chief} ambition is to make money - to
exploit other, that will be his way, whether he is doctored.

The performance will be different. The man will be the same!

13/ What way shall a man choose?

ה'תש"א חמ"א

P3 h5 / 11 viib \Rightarrow di - Robb asked? No t!
 The Socharan b. Zagar - 11:31 Ths - 3 answers.
 The most difficult question / all! Many answers. Humor

2 Paths - Fru + Fuv - $\rightarrow \text{Bike}$ $\rightarrow \delta_1 \rightarrow \delta_2 \rightarrow \dots$

- ① Walk thru life - don't run!
- ② Travel about and ^{wide} ~~enlarge~~ your horizons, Don't be an aimless drifter and nomad.
- ③ Remember that opportunities for great and lasting living ^{may be} ~~are~~ not at hand - ^{also} ~~that~~ that very ^{these} lands and bodies seldom give me ~~a~~ new life.
- ④ Do not be too content. Neither be too restless. and do not confuse the itch of personal ambition with the call to serve a great cause.
- ⑤ Learn to share the road and the common trials which men experience upon it. Walk with men and help them, unobtrusively. Join in their joy and join in their sorrow!

14/ A common Road & Destroy - a little Span, left
~~פז. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ.~~
~~פז. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ. יח. מ.~~