

**John 14:4** “And you know the way where I am going.

**v. 6** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (NASB)

30. The phenomenal assets that have been imputed to us at the moment of salvation are so powerful that few believers ever capture the reality of what they possess. Regardless, they are gifts.
31. Take a look of the academic gifts imputed to every believer which includes you. There is the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Why does He have to get involved?
32. Because of this statement made by Isaiah in:

**Isaiah 55:8** “My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. (NASB)

33. Both man and God have thoughts and ways, but they are decidedly different. The word “thoughts,” assigned by the Lord to men, is the feminine plural noun **מַחְשָׁבָה** (*machashavah*):

**חָשַׁב** [*chashav*] refers to plans that one is acting on or going to act on; thus “work” or “deed” stands parallel to *machashavah*, “thought” or “plan” (Proverbs 16:3). Yahweh himself establishes such plans. The plans that humans make for themselves, however, are feeble in Yahweh’s sight (Psalm 94:11).

In a beautiful passage Isaiah proclaims that Yahweh’s thoughts are ethically superior to human thoughts (Isaiah 55:7–9). The tension between human plans and the outcome is expressed well in the proverb that “in his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps,” i.e., determines the outcome of human planning (Proverbs 16:9 cf. 19:21).<sup>1</sup>

34. The Lord’s analysis continues with a second comparison, “nor are your ways My ways.”

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<sup>1</sup> John E. Hartley, “חָשַׁב,” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, gen. ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2:308.

35. The word chosen by the Lord in this sentence is an old friend, the masculine plural noun דֶּרֶךְ (*derek*): “way, road, distance, journey, manner, custom, behavior, mode of life, condition.
36. From the New Testament Greek the hapax legomenon, τροχιά (*trochiá*): “A wheel-track, rut; way, path. Figuratively (Hebrews 12:13, ways of life and conduct, quoted from Proverbs 4:26).”<sup>2</sup>
37. The predominant use of the noun *derek*, used over 700 times in the Old Testament, is metaphorical. It illustrates the contrast between the machinations of men and the standards of God. In the Psalms, Proverbs and the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, the word is used 95 times.
38. The impact of this word as a teaching aid deserves some attention and for that effort we consult the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*.

דֶּרֶךְ (*derek*), way, road, distance, journey, manner, custom, behavior, mode of life, condition. *Derek* occurs more than 700 times in the Old Testament, in the majority of instances in a figurative sense. As such it is by far the most common substantive used to speak of the experience and course of life.

Fundamental to the metaphorical meaning of *derek* is its covenant overtone. One's path in life, i.e., spiritual journey, finds its source and orientation in reference to one's relationship with Yahweh, the God of the covenant. The Old Testament univocally attests to the fact that all humanity, righteous and wicked alike, are in pilgrimage along a way that leads either to life or death. The difference of outcome lies strictly in how the individual identifies himself with Yahweh, and the success or failure of the journey of the believer is determined by the degree to which the traveler is obedient to the covenant stipulations that govern the pursuit of the spiritual itinerary. The way (*derek*) is, therefore, the whole course of life lived in conformity to covenant obligation.

Faithful continuation of the covenant relationship demands that Yahweh's people follow the way he has commanded them to take. Deuteronomy is particularly rich in the imagery of the journey as metaphor for covenant obedience. (p. 989)

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<sup>2</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., “τροχιά,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMB Publishers, 1993), 1396.

Beyond the technical meaning of “journey” or “way” as covenant relationship is its use as a broader metaphor for life in general and for the righteous and evil life in particular. Jeremiah combines the latter two in Yahweh’s words to the community under impending judgment: “See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death” (Jeremiah 21:8; cf. Proverbs 6:23; 14:12; 16:25). In an eschatological setting Isaiah expresses a similar sentiment couched in terms of an invitation: “This is the way; walk in it” (Isaiah 30:21). “Way” in all these instances is simply a synonym for a course of life. (p. 990)

Jeremiah speaks of the good way as synonymous with old paths, those trodden by godly men and women in the past (Jeremiah 6:16). These good routes are also straight, like those through which Yahweh led Israel in the wilderness (Psalm 107:7), and they are smooth as well, allowing their travelers to pass along without stumbling (Jeremiah 31:9). (pp. 990–91)

The term *derek* as a metaphor for life is descriptive of the way of the wicked as well as that of the righteous. Those who pursue this path are indeed called “wicked” (*rasha'* [רָשָׁע], Jeremiah 12:1; Psalm 146:9; Proverbs 4:19; 15:9), “sinners” (*chatta'* [חַטָּא], Psalm 1:1), “the guilty” (*wazar* [וָזַר], Proverbs 21:8), and those who have “turned aside” (Job 31:7; Malachi 2:8). The last phrase refers to those who have started out on the road of righteousness, but who have become diverted to a pathway of disobedience.<sup>3</sup> (p. 991)

39. This analysis of *derek* amplifies not only this study but has interestingly undergirded many of our past studies. The Christian **way** of life is characterized by wheel-tracks of righteousness, but the volition of the believer often opts for wheel-tracks of wickedness.
40. Regardless of the way one choses to walk, that way is sustained by the continuous provision of gifts the most important and impactful are the availability of the Word of God and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.
41. Each and every encounter, situation, circumstance, difficulty, or accommodation in life is underwritten in the divine decree to sustain, endure, overcome or prosper the believer.
42. Every logistical situation you face from the moment you were saved until the day you die is by divine gratis.

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<sup>3</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, “וָזַר,” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 1:989–91.

43. And so it is gratis from the ultimate source of God that pursues us all the days of our lives: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is gratis from the ultimate source of God.”
44. The principle so far is this: If you deceive yourself by thinking you alone supply all your needs, then you are not grace oriented, doctrinally oriented, or destiny oriented.
45. Every aspect of your life is supplied by grace, every decision you make must be oriented to biblical guidance, and the mission you engage should be focused on your personal sense of destiny.
46. The word “destiny” is defined as “the inevitable or necessary fate to which a particular person or thing is destined; one’s lot. A predetermined course of events considered as something beyond human power or control. The power or agency thought to predetermine events.”<sup>4</sup>
47. To the human mind, destiny is often a way of explaining away, justifying, or becoming resigned to negative circumstances or positively, to explain an unexpected but beneficial turn of events.
48. For the believer, his destiny is assured by faith in biblical prophecies regarding life after death. However, the way these prophecies are fulfilled depends upon the spiritual advance or decline of the individual believer.
49. Take escrow blessings for example. Scripture reveals numerous eternal blessing that were imputed in eternity past. Conveyance of these blessing is dependent upon the believer’s spiritual advance in time.
50. Therefore, one’s personal sense of destiny requires ongoing inculcation of biblical doctrines and subsequent application.
51. The word “sense” also requires definition:  
**Ability to reach intelligent conclusions. SENSE: implies a reliable ability to judge and decide with soundness, prudence, and intelligence. WISDOM: implies sense and judgment far above average.**<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (5th ed.), s.v. “destiny.”

<sup>5</sup> *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “sense.”