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# Road to the Heart

Poems by Frithjof Schuon

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#### The River

Without beginning is the river's start: It rises from the mountain's unknown ground And seeks the endless. So the wise man's heart: The river flows; its end is never found.

Neither the mountain nor the sea can limit The river's song. Love flows from God to God; Forms have an end, yet timeless is the Spirit.

# Creation

They think that out of nothing God has made The Universe, and that it is His shade — Less than reality, more than a play. The world is real and unreal, so to say.

The hidden Treasure never had been shown; God mace the world, He wanted to be known.

# The Mystery

Some people ask: Had God to make the world? First let us say: there is in God no need; And then: He radiates His nature's Good; And so He did conceive the cosmic seed.

We should say that Reality is He Who needs no thing; but Māyā wants to be.

# The Good

Why should the Sovereign Good not overflow? Its brightness and its bliss cannot but glow. A hidden treasure nobody can see; Therefore the whole creation had to be.

We have been made in order that we might Be as a mirror for the Godhead's Light.

# Remember

O men of little faith, do not forget What prophets, saints and pious men have said: Remember God, God will remember you. A better thing on earth we cannot do.

Albeit low, we should not be ashamed; God wanted us; He needed to be named.

# Regina Coeli

Thou art more than a symbol; Thou art near To me as blood and heart; Thou art the air That makes me live, that makes me pure and wise; A sweet and tender air from Paradise.

Thou art more than the words describing Thee And more than all the sacred songs that we Sing in Thy praise; my ecstasy was Thine Before God's very making of the vine.

# The Drink

Because the drink is of an earthly brand The drinker's heart they do not understand. Now earthly beauty, to the wise, is more Than just a sign; it is an open door.

They think the lover's pilgrimage will fail Because he meets not Laylā, but her veil. They do not see that with the Angel's kiss We drink the wine of everlasting Bliss.

#### Immanence

They think the world is blooming, while the heart Renouncing it for God is poor and dark; In this abyss, they say, thou wilt not find The golden Paradise thou hast in mind; They see not that the mystery of night Means Laylā dancing in a globe of light.

Thy deepest heart contains the holy shrine, The naked goddess and the cup of wine.

#### Laylā

She may be dark, a deep and silent night, Yet she is beautiful, a wondrous sight. By greedy men she never will be seen; Her peerless body hides behind a screen.

Her breasts are like the sun, now East, now West; They are the pilgrim's refuge and his rest; She gives him joy and peace with tender lips And with the rapture of her dancing hips.

#### Memento

Thou knowest that thou canst not change the world; Renounce it, let things be what they must be. There are things we can change and others not; There is a meaning in all destiny.

Do not forget: there is a Sovereign Good Whose Mercy may defeat Fatality. The reason is that Being's deepest sound Comes from the harp of pure Felicity.

#### The Wave

There are things we can change and others not: Let us accept what is our written fate. In God's Compassion we will find no spot; And we should know that Being's inmost sound Is sheer Beatitude. And faith will wait; For faith means patience. Happy is the man Who Mercy's Mystery and way has found —

Who with his love and in his very core Becomes a Wave that leads to Allah's Shore.

#### $M\bar{a}y\bar{a}$

The Sovereign Good is real, the world is dream; The dream-world has its roots in the Supreme, Who casts His image in the endless sea Of things that may be or that may not be.

The fabric of the Universe is made Of rays and circles, or of light and shade; It veils from us the Power's burning Face And unveils Beauty and Its saving Grace.

#### Time

Even the wisest cannot change the Law Of stern and merciless Necessity That rules the world. Life is a measured dream; Time is a night of cold Eternity.

"I may be black yet I am beautiful": Within the Law is Love and Liberty And saving Grace. For Being's very heart Is Joy, and Peace, and Immortality.

#### The Island

Islands of bliss and everlasting youth, Floating like flowers on an endless sea And never touched by sorrows from this world: Such happy islands thou wilt never see.

Behold: what thou hast dreamt of may be real, It is not elsewhere, it is what thou art If thou rememb'rest God; then thou wilt find The golden island in thy deepest heart.

The singing of a flute came from the sea; The waters vanished, and the flute was me.

#### Nearness

As long as we are clad with time and space, Men think, we will not reach the Heavens' place; In exile here we scarcely can rejoice In God, because so feeble is our voice.

To saving Truth they give not willing ear: With God in mind His Paradise is near. And "if there is a Paradise on earth" — An old inscription tells us — "it is here."

It was meant for the palace of a king. We mean God's name; so let us dance and sing!

#### The Name

Thy Name is wine and honey, melody That shapes our sacred way and destiny. Who is the Speaker and who is the Word? Where is the song Eternity has heard?

The liberating Word comes from the sky Of Grace and Mercy; and we wonder why Such gift can be; the truth is not so far: Thy Name is That which is, and what we are.

# The Symbol

The Symbol thou shouldst carry in thy heart, And in the Symbol thou shouldst always dwell; It is a treasure and a shelter, and A weapon and a saving boat as well.

It is a divine Grace which gives us life; Within this saving Grace thou canst not fall. And know: thou also art the Symbol and The Sign of God, or thou art not at all.

#### Freedom

Thou feelest that this earthly world is sad, But o'er this sadness thou shouldst not lament; Do not say that the Universe is bad.

For every earthly shadow has an end, And endless is the hidden bliss in things; Life may be heavy, but the soul has wings.

The double nature of this world behold: One side is iron, and the other gold. Thy blissful inner nature thou shouldst see, Then thou wilt know: God made it pure and free.

#### The Spot

The world is woven of Necessity And Play: this web is cosmic Harmony. Don't think the world is like a wicked plot, But know that evil is a fading spot.

Even this single spot will disappear, It is an instant in a blessèd year. It had to be, but do not wonder why; The Possible is endless like the sky.

We have to travel through this earthly shade; Yet for the Light of Heaven we are made.

#### World's Web

Mysterious is World's hidden harmony; The Universe is like a web of dreams Which come and go — haphazard, as it seems —

Like in the wind a passing melody. The wisest cannot change the play of things; But he is rooted in Eternity —

In a Beatitude that flows and sings.

# Lallā

Shrī Lallā Yogīshwarī had to enter From Māyā's reign into her deepest center. "And therefore naked I began to dance"; Shrī Lakshmī cast on her a blessing glance.

Body and heart; give each of them its due. For "Beauty is the splendor of the True".

#### Haqīqah

Form can be true, but Truth is never form; Haqīqah dances with her thousand veils — Protecting thus the ignorant form harm — Yet to the wise her Beauty She reveals.

And Beauty's nature is to liberate. The secret Grace is "Night", because the day May mean world's din. Impersonal is Truth; But sweet and loving is Haqīqah's Ray.

#### Truth

"In Beauty is the splendor of the True": If Truth we know, we will know Beauty too. And if in Beauty we can see the Good, Our spirit understands all that it should.

Words in our earthly language may be weak, Yet Truth is strong; with Heaven's Heart we speak To show a path to living's inmost duty.

"Allah is beautiful and He loves Beauty": There is a Splendor we can hear and see; A mirror of the True we ought to be.

#### Jamā1

Beauty is ours of we belong to God; From outside let it stream into the heart. What comes from God must lead us back to Him; The beautiful is not of worldly art.

If you see Truth in Beauty, all is well; Unselfish is the love that makes us wise. To see the pleasure only, leads to hell; Love God, then Beauty leads to Paradise.

The earthly good reveals the Good as such; First see the Essence, and the form will shine. In love of Truth there is a hidden death; So die in God before you drink the wine.

# Confession

She, my Belovèd, is a wondrous day; And I, who love Her, I am life and death And storm and lightning, and my word is wine; The world lies in my blood and in my breath.

O thou who seekest me, do never ask Which is my homeland, nor what is my name; The Universe is made of Light and Love, And from this Light and from this Love I came.

# One Word

There is one Word, it is the saving key: Dwell thou in God, and God will dwell in thee. Out of compassion to our world He came; His are two homes on earth: our heart, His Name.

# The Choice

Life is a choice: to love or not to love What makes us live, the Sovereign Good above This petty world; to love what makes us free From nothingness; to be or not to be.

# Conclusion

This Garland comes form Heaven, and I pray To Heaven it may trace a golden Way. It must be so; for what comes from Above By itself brings us back to Light and Love.

Limited are the words, not what is meant; For neither Truth nor Beauty has an end.

# Knowledge

There are things we do know and others not; Knowledge of space and time I do not miss. Maybe I do not know what people are Or what I am; I know that Being is.

# Science

Some say the Universe is like a book And at the stars for Knowledge we should look. Whatever brain and heart may understand — With patient faith we are in Heaven's Hand.

# The Fence

What is the magic of this World? A fence Around That which to being gives a sense. To draw us downwards heaviness will try; Truth brings us to the endless open Sky.

## Questions

There are things our poor thinking cannot find; Infinity of space it can't discern. So we may ask: what is this useless mind? What are its objects, what is brain's concern?

The wise sees with the Heart's immortal face, His mind is never troubled by the mask Of Māyā. What is endless? what is space? All is a proof of God — so do not ask.

# Enigma

Infinity of number, space and time And possibility is an abyss For human brains; they find in it no rhyme. Yet it proves God; it shows what Being is.

If there were not the Real above the mist Of Māyā, space and time could not exist.

## Gnosis

On one side, there is consciousness, that knows, And on the other side, there is the known; Whereas in God, in His most Holy Name, Knowing and Being ever are the same.

And so it is with Love: the "Thou and I"; For in each other's life they want to die; From East to West Love brings the mighty Sun. The Lover and the Loved: they will be One.

# The Play

There is no melody without a truth; There is no truth without a melody. The very Universe is like a book Combining sternest facts with poetry; If to our mind a lofty truth is clear, The music of its evidence we hear.

And if on destiny we cast a look: Without God's Mercy, Justice cannot be. To Harmony Existence always tends; Its play of laws and graces never ends.

Sometimes life gives us more and sometimes less; Our substance is pure Being's Happiness.

## Cosmos

Cosmic infinity is not the same
As God's Infinity; it must be round
— A sphere that out of God's own Radiance came —
Because by cosmic limits it is bound.

The two Realities we could compare: A perfect ball within the endless air. Perfection is Creation's wondrous root; Infinity: Life of the Absolute.

# Vedānta

Brahma and Māyā: this has been revealed. Māyā in Brahma: for He was concealed And in His Silence He became the Word. Māyā alone? This never has been heard.

Brahma in Māyā: for the Most-High can Reveal His Grace in Angel and in Man.

Brahma alone: "I am That which I am"; First Silence, then the Word. Brahma Satyam.

# The Way

Within our deepest center dwells the Self; And so they say: you ought to realize Your own divinity. But they forget: Without God's help we never can be wise. Ignoring this, too many go astray.

With Heaven's Grace alone we find the Way.

## Dreaming

Some people teach: dream is reality, Reality is dream; priority Can be ascribed to either. In this case A dreaming dog could have a wise man's place.

Real is the wise man's wisdom, not his state, Whatever in a dream may be his fate. The whole World is a dream with dreams; but he Who dreams is all: it is the cosmic "We".

# Inquiry

"Ask who thou art, and thou wilt find the Self." The sense is true, the wording is too bold. For your inquiry you need Heaven's help; Without God's Grace the thought is dry and cold.

You heard part of the Truth, you need the whole Reality: with God you reach the Goal.

# The Offering

The calling of God's Name, some people think, Is easy, there must be a missing link. Now with all that we are it must be done, For otherwise its saving bliss is gone.

You offer it to God? Then understand: Give with the heart, not only with the hand. You call your Lord and then you pray with hope; To Heaven this will be the saving rope.

# Fear

Some dreamers think: if you love God, then all Is well. But they forget: not any call To God will He accept; you are a fool If you ignore that Love requires Rule.

For in the mystery of Love is Fear; Through pious distance only you come near.

## The Point

A mystic said: God is a playful child, He makes fruits sweet and bitter, hot and mild. Now God is limitless — this point is missed — So He permits the "nothing" to exist.

Explaining God, you should not simplify; The Possible is vast, you don't know why. The naught wears being's dress; it is World's fate. Absurdity must be; and God is great!

#### Discernment

Nothing on earth is bad — some people muse — Except the "I", the "mine". There is a link Cruelly missing; see things as they are! Virtue is not forgetting how to think.

For God nothing is bad, these people mean; He manifests Himself, and all is clean; All is His trace, except the "I", the "mine"; And upon all the rest the sun will shine! They overlook the question's very clue: If all is good, then "mine" is perfect too.

Read in the Psalms; King David never would Have said that all his enemies were good. God is in our existence and our powers, Not in Good's absence. Blessèd be His flowers!

## Transcendence

Philosophers may say: God is above Both good and evil, white and black — one should Know that He is transcendent. They forget: Transcendence is Itself the Sovereign Good.

There is an opposition: wrong and right; Do not forget that white alone is white! Good is not good because we know the bad, But through the Bliss its very Substance had.

Before the World emerged from Being's Might.

#### Greatness

You ask me what is greatness: it is not A quality of man; it comes from God. Our heart must know before it is too late: Only our consciousness of God is great.

There is one consciousness of Him, not two; A thousand mirrors drink the single Light. Contingency is dream, but Truth is right; Be what thou art and ask not who is who.

# III

# Virgin Nature

## Virgin Nature

Although man always king on Earth has been, Creation is his mother and a queen. So take your living from this earthly place, Not with a foolish pride, but saying grace.

You fear the Lord: respect His holy shade. You love the Maker: love the work He made. And let the hunter for his victim pray; Its Archetype has given it, they say.

# Space

The North, the South; the East and then the West: Their mysteries we carry in our breast. Zenith, Nadir, Spirit and Earth, 'tis we: Purity, Love, Strength and Serenity.

Each value in the universal frame Within our soul and spirit is the same. Each quarter or each quality of Space Shows a divine and cosmic Beauty's face.

So let us hear Eternal Wisdom's call: Be thyself truly, and thou art the All.

## Tell Me

Tell me why thou hast loved the mountain top, Its serene silence and its purity, And I will tell thee that our spirit's rest Is solitude with God; serenity Above the noise of thoughts. And tell me why Thou lov'st the secret of the whispering wood, Its sacredness and dark security, And I will tell thee that our lasting joy Is union, love within our deepest heart, Diving into our being's Mystery; Union with what I am, and what you art.

#### Pte-San-Win

She came, a holy maiden clad with air And walking as a deer, with playful hair and blissful breasts; she brought a wondrous good, A living prayer fashioned of stone and wood.

Maybe the Sacred Pipe we could compare To Krishna's Flute, which gave us Heaven's food: Half a command to make us wise and strong And half a joy, a liberating song.

She was a snow-white calf, and then a girl Naked as truth and spotless as a pearl. Down from the Sky she brought the Praying Pipe; And she will come again, when time is ripe.

# Straightness

In presence of the Pipe, they did not lie; The sacred Smoke brought prayers up to the Sky. Within the Sacred, life is pure and straight; Drinking the Light, man's heart will radiate.

#### Dance

The magic power of a sacred song, The thunder of a drum afar one hears. The movement of the stars is in the dance, The everlasting music of the spheres.

Our inner truth needs to be heard and seen: The dance means our deep nature and its speech. Our body shows the language of the Self; It lets us grasp what thinking cannot reach.

Dancing is born of nature's inner part; From thence it comes, then goes back to the Heart.

# Wámbali Galeshka

He is the Lightning and the golden Ray Which from the Sun comes downwards to the land Of human joy and pain, the ancients say.

The Spotted Eagle carries us away From Earth to Heaven, as God's saving Hand; Blessèd the man who is the Angel's prey!

## Heart's Wisdom

It was within yourself, what Heaven brought. What comes from God is in your heart the wine Of Bliss and Wisdom. It will ne'er be found By those who do not stand on sacred ground.

The singing of a flute came from Above; The flute was in my heart; the song was Love. It was the Ocean's endless melody: A song of God and of Eternity.

## Prayer

"Grandfather, hear my words, I talk to Thee: Look down, take pity, not alone on me But on my people," prays a noble mind. In this a deeper meaning thou wilt find.

When thou invokest God, His Grace is thine, But like the living sunlight it will shine For other too; the sacred, saving Sound Will bless believing people all around.

A Sound that always in our heart should be; A Wave of Bliss, Peace, Immortality.

# IV

# Creatures

# Angel

Created are the Angels, yet divine; To that their glorious power is the clue. Man is ambiguous, what can we say? Potentially he is an Angel too.

#### Animals

Most animals are horizontal, since
Their homeland is not other than this Earth;
But man's essential stance is vertical;
Free will to choose Salvation proves his worth.
Nobility some animals possess:
The genius of their symbol lives in them.
They can be more than a corrupted man;
Only their possibilities are less.

Be humble when you meet creation, for An animal may be a sacred door. Do not despise a noble plant, a stone: They bring a message from God's blessèd Throne.

### Dimensions

The Eagle with the lightning shares his flight; Among the water lilies swims the Swan. With thunderstorm comes Revelation's Light; Calm is the heart who with the Ray is one.

The two dimensions make the wise man's soul; Wisdom is not a part, it is the whole.

## Image

The buffalo, the deer: with priestly horns And antlers, and with strength and majesty, They mean both Earth and Heaven. So we might Combine the root and crown in harmony;

With depth and height Heart's image will be right.

### Levels

The lion's wrath goes with serenity; Yet his celestial model needs no fight. For the Eternal Sun means Strength and Peace: The burning Rigor goes with blissful Light.

On Earth, hard oppositions must appear Even within the good, for World is dark; Disharmony is earthly level's mark; Empyrean's Law is Peace; for God is near.

### Man

Man on this earth is Heaven's incarnation; His nature he forgot and his vocation. He should remember with a pious awe: His very substance is a sacred Law —

A Law involving work and dignity,
Faith in a destiny he cannot see.
Happy the man who without sight believes —
Who feeling death and Immortality
To God his life, his heart, his being gives.

### Archetypes

The blessèd Angels are the archetypes Of man's most noble possibilities; The archetypes of Angels are in God, In all His Qualities and Mysteries; Immeasurable the Empyrean's road.

And then: our archetype is also that Which we will be in Heaven. Ask not where We came from; in the Godhead is our home. Look at the Sky: our roots were always there.

# V

# Road to the Heart

## The Song

A finite image of Infinity:
This is the purpose of all poetry.
All human work to its last limits tends;
Its Archetype in Heaven never ends.
What is the sense of Beauty and of Art?
To show the way into our inmost Heart —

To listen to the music of the Sky; And then to realize: the Song was I.

### Gratitude

Ungrateful are those on this earthly road Who do complain that life is made of tears, That happiness on earth one cannot find, That we are made of sorrows and of fears.

Our soul itself is what we seek and need: Our very heart is a relieving shade And at the rim of night a rising sun. Of Heaven's Peace and Joy our souls are made.

### Prudence

There is the faith of simple people, and There is deep Wisdom on the other hand; Don't think there is a problem after death; There is no scission in Salvation's land.

Don't say thou seekest God, not Paradise, That for created things thou art too wise. On earth to Heaven's Way we give its due; In Heaven God knows best what He will do.

### Intention

Don't turn to God for favors in the Way; Remembrance by itself is happiness. A mere desire brings no inwardness; Be happy then, and pray because you pray.

## The Path

There are the servants of the Sovereign Good; There are the seekers of the Inner Sun. There are two manners of approaching God The Most High; yet the twofold Path is one.

## Sincerity

Prayer is more than just an easy fact, Because with all our being we then act.

Sense of the true, peace, generosity: Each virtue is our being's golden key.

"Thou art all-beautiful, there is no spot In thee"; our soul is pure, or we are not.

### The Real

Among our aspirations, one comes first: It is our longing for the Real; our thirst For rays of Everlasting Truth that brings Us what we need above all worldly things.

Two main dimensions has the human soul: With things we are a part, with God the whole. Let us remain under the Godhead's Tree: The world is like a dream; our heart is He.

#### Treasures

Serenity: the eagle's flight may show That world and suffering are far below. Soul's liberty is like the open sky; Blessèd the mind who like a bird can fly.

Then Certitude: in winter's cold and storm My home is in my heart: deep, strong, and warm. Because I made my heart a holy shrine, My soul belongs to God, and God is mine.

Submission: for this earthly life is still A trial; let us rest in Heaven's Will.

And Confidence: if we do what we should, The door is open for the saving Good.

There must be Combat too: without this load We would not find the liberating Road.

### Radiation

Substance is Truth, the accidents are naught; The Heart must radiate, Shrī Lallā thought. She left her home and dancèd in the street: Naked her body's gold, and drunk her feet.

The inmost we don't always have to hide; The inward and the outward coincide. World veils and unveils, it is Māyā's mood —

It is the Godhead's Play; and Truth is nude.

### Synthesis

Truth, Way and Virtue: threefold is the Path From Earth to Heaven. First discriminate Between Reality and Dream; then pray: Invoke the Name and reach the Godhead's Gate.

Then Virtue: for we must conform our selves To That which we believe, adapt our soul To That which saves. Our very breath should be One with our Faith and with our highest Goal.

## The Threefold Path

Truth, Way and Virtue: Heaven gave us three Tremendous Treasures, for each faculty: Truth means to think; Remembrance means to do; and Character — soul's Beauty — means to be.

### War

No peace with weakness; with our selfish soul And idle dreams; the worldly powers might Seduce and poison us. We have no choice; Our weapon is God's Name. We have to fight.

Truth gives no strength without humility. Darkness means war; Light's war means victory.

### Peace

Our soul belongs to God, not to the loud And harmful ringing of the restless mind. Serenity is Beauty of the True; It is in Beauty that our Peace we find.

If happiness you want, be calm and wise; In God we rest. And Peace is Paradise.

#### Presence

Forget that there is space and time: forget The near and far, before and after; yet Know that the Sovereign Good is always "Here" And that in Heaven's "Now" there is no fear.

In this Eternal "Now" thy heart should live And in this "Here", in its Infinity, Thou hast thy home. Thy very breathing give To Him Whose Presence shows us what to be.

#### Contentment

If you have reached a mountain's very top Further you cannot go; you have to stop. You wonder at the glory of the peak; But we are heavy, and our acts are weak.

With counting flow'rs our time we cannot spend; Our life must have a sense; dreams have an end. Contentment is the station of the just; His core is Truth and Bliss; the rest is dust.

Limitless is the Center; and if you Are wise, your thought of God is always new.

## Body and Mind

High in the mountains is the eagle's nest; You think about the mountain's wondrous height And then you feel the body's helpless weight. What do you want? God's Presence is your rest.

Do not regret a height of any kind; God is the Sky; the eagle is your mind.

## Essentiality

What makes us happy? It is the Essential; No happiness in dust and agitation! Let the essential be our Morning Star; The sense of life is Truth and Liberation —

Truth with Felicity is what we are.

### Silence

How can we find our rest in restless things, In play and dreams to which desire clings? If happiness you want, then close you eyes; Silence is gold; and Peace is Paradise.

No heaviness is felt, no noise is heard; Yet in this naught: God's Presence and His Word.

### Will and Way

God's Truth is constant like the Morning Star. Our will is not as good as what we seek; "Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Ours is the evil, and the Good is far.

This does not mean that hopeless we should stay; Where there's a will, there also is a way. Trusting in God, always remember this: Patience and Faith mean Everlasting Bliss.

And where we pray, there is the Godhead's Throne; Who knows that God is near, is not alone.

#### Faith and Patience

Do not complain; for Being's Melody Flows from the strings of Everlasting Peace; The breath of Māyā is Serenity.

And faith and patience are Salvation's Keys. Love's price is heavy; light is Mercy's load. Happy the soul who toward the Godhead flees —

A blessèd instant is the freeing Road. Our life is hidden in a single call From heart to God; the saving Word is all.

### The Summit

What was the greatest moment of our life? Where the most happiness, in which event? Was it a day of glory, or of love? A moment we with holy people spent?

It must have been the moment we met God. He entered into time, we don't know how; But time is always there, and God is near; And so the summit of our life is Now.

## The Core

I love because I love; this word is more Than just a feeling, it is Wisdom's core. Love God without conditions; the Most High Will love thee too and will not ask thee why.

## Nostalgia

Nostalgia does not mean disharmony; The web of states is Beauty's alchemy. Where is the peerless island of our tales? The Truth we feel, yet our desire fails.

A saint ascended in a golden car Of light; for others, Paradise is far. For the true lover, Heaven's shore is near — The song of Apsaras his heart may hear.

### Remembrance

O Thou whose Name is sweetest remedy And whose remembrance heals our soul's disease: With Thee each moment is Eternity — A drop from Heaven that consoles and frees.

## The Road

Say "yes" to God, God will say "yes" to thee; To Heaven's gate this is the golden key. About my earthly road I do not care; It may be long; short is God's road to me.