

~HIGHWAY, ROAD (275)

[Hebrew, *mesil-lah'*, *de'rekh*, road, Greek, *ho-dos'*]

- The terms *mesil-lah'*, highway and *de'rekh*, road, in Hebrew and the term *ho-dos'*, way, road, in Greek are all used to refer to a public way, track, or route, generally between towns or cities.

See Also WAY, THE

- From ancient times **highways** and **roads**, including several important trade routes, linked cities and kingdoms in the area of Palestine.
- Let us pass, please, through your land. We shall not pass through a field or a vineyard, and we shall not drink the water of a well. On the **king's road** we shall march. We shall not bend toward the right or the left, until we shall pass through your territory. (**Numbers 20:17**)
- However, Edom said to him; You must not pass through me, for fear I may come out with the sword to meet you. (**Numbers 20:18**)
- In turn the sons of Israel said to him; By the highway we shall go up, and if I and my livestock should drink your water, I shall also certainly give the value of it. I want nothing more than to pass through on my feet. (**Numbers 20:19**)
- Israel now sent messengers to Sihon the king of the Amorites, saying; (**Numbers 21:21**)
- Let me pass through your land. We shall not turn off into a field or a vineyard. We shall drink water of no well. On the king's road we shall march until we pass through your territory. (**Numbers 21:22**)
- He now sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is by the River of the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying; Look! A people has come out of Egypt. Look! They have covered the earth as far as one can see, and they are dwelling right in front of me. (**Numbers 22:5**)

- After that Balaam got up in the morning and saddled his she-ass and went with the princes of Moab. (**Numbers 22:21**)
- And the anger of God began to blaze because he was going, and Yehowah's angel proceeded to station himself in the **road** to resist him. And he was riding upon his she-ass, and two attendants of his were with him. (**Numbers 22:22**)
- And the ass got to see Yehowah's angel stationed in the road with his drawn sword in his hand, and the ass tried to turn aside from the **road** that she might go into the field, but Balaam began to strike the ass in order to turn her aside to the **road**. (**Numbers 22:23**)
- So they went and came to the mountainous region and kept dwelling there three days, until the pursuers had come back. Now the pursuers were looking for them on every **road**, and they did not find them. (**Joshua 2:22**)
- Finally they said; Look! There is a festival of Yehowah from year to year in Shiloh, which is to the north of Bethel, toward the east of the **highway** that goes up from Bethel to Shechem and toward the south of Lebonah. (**Judges 21:19**)
- And you must look! If it is the **road** to its territory that it goes up, to Beth-shemesh, it is he that has done to us this great evil, but if not, we must know that it was not his hand that touched us, an accident it was that happened to us. (**1 Samuel 6:9**)
- And the cows began to go straight ahead on the road to Beth-shemesh. On the one **highway** they went, lowing as they went, and they did not turn aside to the right or to the left. All the while the axis lords of the Philistines were walking after them as far as the boundary of Beth-shemesh. (**1 Samuel 6:12**)
- And the force of pillagers would sally forth from the camp of the Philistines in three bands. The one band would turn to the road to Ophrah, to the land of Shual. (**1 Samuel 13:17**)
- And the other band would turn to the **road** of Beth-horon, and the third band would turn to the **road** to the boundary that looks toward the valley of Zeboim, toward the wilderness. (**1 Samuel 13:18**)

- What is considered to have been the principal **route** led from Egypt to the Philistine cities of Gaza and Ashkelon and gradually bent northeastward in the direction of Megiddo.
- It continued to Hazor, North of the Sea of Galilee, and then led to Damascus. This route via Philistia was the shortest from Egypt to the Promised Land. But Yehowah kindly led the Israelites by another way so that they would not get disheartened by a Philistine attack.
- And it came about at the time of Pharaoh's sending the people away that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines just because it was near, for God said; It might be the people will feel regret when they see war and will certainly return to Egypt. (**Exodus 13:17**)

See Also KINGS ROAD

- In the Promised Land the maintenance of a good **road** system took on added importance for the Israelites, as there was only one center of worship for the entire nation.
- Therefore many of the Israelites had to travel considerable distances each year to comply with the Law's requirement that all the males assemble for the three seasonal festivals.
- Three times in the year every male of yours should appear before Yehowah your God in the place that he will choose, in the festival of the unfermented cakes and in the festival of weeks and in the festival of booths, and none should appear before Yehowah empty-handed. (**Deuteronomy 16:16**)
- Additionally, tithes, contributions, and any offerings, whether voluntary or obligatory, had to be presented at the place Yehowah would choose.
- You must not do that way to Yehowah your God. (**Deuteronomy 12:4**)
- But to the place that Yehowah your God will choose out of all your tribes to place his name there, to have it reside, you will seek, and there you must come. (**Deuteronomy 12:5**)
- And there you must bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tenth parts and the contribution of your hand and your

- vow offerings and your voluntary offerings and the firstborn ones of your herd and of your flock. ([Deuteronomy 12:6](#))
- And there you must eat before Yehowah your God and rejoice in every undertaking of yours, you and your households, because Yehowah your God has blessed you. ([Deuteronomy 12:7](#))
 - After Solomon's building the temple, that place was Jerusalem. So, as the Israelites traveled on the **roads** to and from Jerusalem, there were fine opportunities for fathers to teach God's Law to their sons.
 - And these words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart. ([Deuteronomy 6:6](#))
 - And you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the **road** and when you lie down and when you get up. ([Deuteronomy 6:7](#))
 - Attention also had to be given to maintaining the **roads** leading to the six cities of refuge. These **roads** had to be well marked and kept clear of obstacles that might impede the accidental manslaughterers progress.
 - You will prepare for yourself the way, and you must divide up the territory of your land that Yehowah your God proceeded to give you as a possession into three parts, and it must be for any manslayer to flee there. ([Deuteronomy 19:3](#))
 - According to Jewish tradition, a signpost indicating the direction to the city of refuge was placed at every crossroad. [[Babylonian Talmud, Makkot 10b](#)]
 - Although the Bible gives no description of the ancient **roads**, it does contain allusions to their construction and maintenance. At times hills and other irregularities may have been leveled, and the **roads** cleared of stones and banked up.
 - Listen! Someone is calling out in the wilderness; Clear up the way of Yehowah, you people! Make the **highway** for our God through the desert plain straight. ([Isaiah 40:3](#))
 - Let every valley be raised up, and every mountain and hill be made low. And the knobby ground must become level land, and the rugged ground a valley plain. ([Isaiah 40:4](#))

- And one will certainly say; Bank up, you people, bank up! Clear the way. Remove any obstacle from the way of my people. (Isaiah 57:14)
- Pass out, pass out through the gates, you men. Clear the way of the people. Bank up, bank up the **highway**. Rid it of stones. Raise up a signal for the peoples. (Isaiah 62:10)
- The historian Josephus claims that King Solomon paved the **roads** leading to Jerusalem with black stone. [Jewish Antiquities, VIII, 187, vii, 4]
- However, nothing definite is known about the structure of ancient roads until the days of the Roman Empire. The Romans distinguished themselves as road builders, linking their vast empire to facilitate the movement of their armies.
- Their **roads** were paved with flat stones, and the **roadbeds** usually consisted of three layers: (bottom) rubble. (middle) flat slabs set in mortar, and (top) concrete and crushed stone. The **roads** sloped from the center toward both sides and were equipped with milestones, curbstones, and drainage ditches.
- Also, wells could be found at convenient intervals. Running in nearly straight lines, Roman **roads** passed over hills rather than around them.
- The famous Roman **highway**, the Appian Way, measured some 5.5 meters (18 feet) in width and was paved with large lava blocks. The apostle Paul, while en route to Rome as a prisoner, traveled over this **road**, parts of which are still used today.
- And from there the brothers, when they heard the news about us, came to meet us as far as the Marketplace of Appius and Three Taverns and, upon catching sight of them, Paul thanked God and took courage. (Acts of Apostles 28:15)
- When, finally, we entered into Rome, Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier guarding him. (Acts of Apostles 28:16)

See Also APPIUS, MARKETPLACE OF

- The words of;

- In that day there will come to be a **highway** out of Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will actually come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and they will certainly render service, Egypt with Assyria. (**Isaiah 19:23**)
- About the coming into existence of, a **highway** out of Egypt to Assyria, pointed forward to the friendly relations that would one day prevail between these two lands. In effecting the release of his people, Yehowah, as it were, made **highways** for them that led out of the lands of their captivity.
- And there must come to be a **highway** out of Assyria for the remnant of his people who will remain over, just as there came to be one for Israel in the day of his coming up out of the land of Egypt. (**Isaiah 11:16**)
- And there will certainly come to be a **highway** there, even a way, and the **Way of Holiness** it will be called. The unclean one will not pass over it. And it will be for the one walking on the way, and no foolish ones will wander about on it. (**Isaiah 35:8**)
- No lion will prove to be there, and the rapacious sort of wild beasts will not come up on it. None will be found there, and the repurchased ones must walk there. (**Isaiah 35:9**)
- And the very ones redeemed by Yehowah will return and certainly come to Zion with a joyful cry, and rejoicing to time indefinite will be upon their head. To exultation and rejoicing they will attain, and grief and sighing must flee away. (**Isaiah 35:10**)
- And I will make all my mountains a way, and my **highways** themselves will be on an elevation. (**Isaiah 49:11**)
- Look! These will come even from far away, and, look! These from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim. (**Isaiah 49:12**)
- Give a glad cry, you heavens, and be joyful, you earth. Let the mountains become cheerful with a glad outcry. For Yehowah has comforted his people, and he shows pity upon his own afflicted ones. (**Isaiah 49:13**)

- Set up **road** marks for yourself. Place signposts for yourself. Fix your heart upon the **highway**, the way that you will have to go. Come back, O virgin of Israel. Come back to these cities of yours. (**Jeremiah 31:21**)