

What surprises you?

The late British actor Peter Ustinov said: “I enjoy taking myself by surprise.” You’ve probably discovered this about surprises: bad choices usually bring regrettable shocks. The jolting realization swoops on us like killer bees.

Self-serving catches others unawares. To many folks, it seems right to take sex when one likes and with whomever one chooses. Dreadful surprises like AIDS and new sexually transmitted diseases have resulted. Did you know that about 630 thousand people died of AIDS related illnesses in 2023?

A popular myth that comes more cleverly packaged than light beer commercials states: “All roads lead to the same place—to heaven.” Following that illusion brings a surprise. Jesus said that life has two roads. Most people take one that resembles a busy Interstate with wide on-ramps to accommodate hasty travelers. They speed onward thinking of their own agendas. “Life is good”—especially if you invest well and bring enough antacids.

The entrance to the other road looks less enticing. No glitzy billboards dazzle you. Traveling that way requires effort. Yet loving people who journey with you willingly help others. No one takes advantage of you or deceives you. This less-traveled road has surprises, too. But they are “**like the sunrise, getting brighter and brighter until daylight has come.**” At day’s end, the Universe Creator gives you a warm welcome home.

What about the trendy freeway? Travelers learn late that it leads to breakdowns and disappointments. Wayfarers “**fall, but cannot see what they have stumbled over,**” **Proverbs 4:18, 19 TEV.** If you are on that road, be ready for a surprise tollbooth that charges an extravagant fee—your soul.