

Birth is a beginning,  
And death a destination;  
But life is a journey,  
A going—a growing  
From stage to stage.

From childhood to  
maturity  
And youth to age.  
From innocence to  
awareness  
And ignorance to  
knowing;  
From foolishness to  
discretion  
And then perhaps to  
wisdom.

From weakness to  
strength  
Or strength to  
weakness—  
And, often, back again.  
From health to sickness  
And back, we pray, to  
health again.

From offense to  
forgiveness,  
From loneliness to love,  
From joy to gratitude,  
From pain to  
compassion,  
And grief to  
understanding—  
From fear to faith.

From defeat to defeat to  
defeat—  
Until, looking backward  
or ahead,  
We see that victory lies  
Not at some high place  
along the way,  
But in having made the  
journey,  
Stage by stage—  
A sacred pilgrimage.

Birth is a beginning,  
And death a destination;  
But life is a journey,  
A sacred pilgrimage  
Made stage by stage—  
From birth to death  
To life everlasting.  
(Alvin Fine)