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Entering the Stream

Readings for the Spiritual Life

From the World's Scriptures



Compiled by Lucky Joy Wells

for SpiritPrayer.com

Sources & Resources:

These readings include, but are not limited to:

Indigenous Teachings, Hinduism, Buddhism,
Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Baha'i Faith.

This writing includes many excerpts from the book *Holy Inheritance: Reflections on the Reality of God, the Prophets and the Human Condition*, which draws heavily on the readings of the Baha'i Faith, whose voices speak most clearly to the contemporary mind. One of the youngest, most widespread of the minority faiths, the Baha'i has offered, for this author, a fresh, abundant and easily accessible resource on the topics of this work.



For Meditation:

”Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls - a prayer that shall rise above words and letters and transcend the murmur of syllables and sounds - that all things may be merged into nothingness before the revelation of Thy splendor.” (Compilations, Baha’i Prayers, p. 69)

“The wise in spirit cleave to Me, into My Being brought;
Hearts fixed on Me; breaths breathed to Me; praising Me,
each to each, So have they happiness and peace, with pious
thought and speech;

And unto these- thus serving well, thus loving ceaselessly-
I give a mind of perfect mood, whereby they draw to Me;
And, all for love of them, within their darkened souls I
dwell,

And, with bright rays of wisdom's lamp, their ignorance
dispel.”

(Hindu, Bhagavad Gita (Edwin Arnold tr))

*“There is no power or might save in God,
the Protector, the Self-Subsistent.”*

Islam : Qur’án 18:3[1]

“For every one of you his paramount duty is to choose for himself that on which no other may infringe and none usurp from him. Such a thing ... is the love of God, could ye but perceive it.”

Baha’i Faith

“Find God. That is the only purpose in life.” -- Ramakrishna

*“Creatures differ because they have different likes and dislikes.
Therefore, the sages never require the same ability from all
creatures...the true saint leaves wisdom to take his cue from the fishes,
leaving willfulness to the sheep.”*

Taoism; Chang Tzu

“Put your trust in God, and commit your affairs to His keeping.”

Baha’i Faith



"...Earth and heaven cannot contain Me; what can alone contain Me is the heart of him that believeth in Me, and is faithful to My Cause."

Baha'i Faith

***“If you want to nourish a bird, you should let it live
in a way it chooses.***

*“Creatures differ because they have different likes and dislikes.
Therefore, the sages never require the same ability from all
creatures...*

*....the true saint leaves wisdom to take his cue from the fishes, leaving
willfulness to the sheep.”*

--- Taoism; Chang Tzu

*“O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been
endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny.” --*

--Baha'i scripture

On Spirituality

***“True spirituality is ...
a lake of clear water which reflects the divine.”***

“Of such was the spirituality of Jesus Christ. There is another kind which is like a mirage, seeming to be spiritual when it is not.”

“That which is truly spiritual must light the path (to Spirit)..., and must result in deeds.”

-Abdu'l-Baha in London, p. 107

“Illumine our eyes with the rays of the sun of... reality... our ears to hear, under all circumstances, the call” of the Kingdom.”

Abdu'l-Baha, Divine Philosophy, p. 46,7

*“More than any earthly power,
More than all the joys of heaven,
More than rule o'er all the world,
Is the Entrance to the Stream.
And, verily, those who are filled with unshaken faith
in me,
all those have entered the stream.”*

The Eightfold Path), Buddha, the Word (The Eightfold Path))

On Truth

“Provide all things honest in the sight of all men.”

—King James Bible Hebrews

*True loss is for him whose days have been spent in
utter ignorance of his self. “ -- Baha’u’llah, Baha’i*

“Know thy God.”*

***“... you shall know the truth and the truth
will set you free.”***

*-- The Holy Bible : [1 Chronicles 28:9] ; John 8:3

*“...there are three things that accompany and follow upon
right understanding, namely: right understanding, right
effort, and right attentiveness.”*

The Eightfold Path, Buddha, the Word (The Eightfold Path))

One Spirit

*“For a single purpose were the Prophets, each and all,
sent down to earth...”*

Abdu'l-Baha, Selections p. 30

***“In whatever way and path humans worship me; In that same path
do I fulfill their aspirations and grace them. It is always ... (Spirit’s)
path that humans follow in all their different roads and journeys on
all sides.”*** —Bhagavad-GitaIV-11

“All mankind were once one single community; (when they began to differ) whereupon God raised up the prophets as heralds ... yet none other than the selfsame people who had been granted this, began out of mutual jealousy, to disagree about its meaning...”

Koran; 2:213; tr M. Asa

"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"

The Bible Deuteronomy 6:4

“We did not send any messenger before you except with the inspiration: “There is no god except Me; you shall worship Me alone.” Your god is one god.

Koran [21:25]

“This indeed is the true meaning of Divine Unity.. the works and acts of each and every one of these Manifestations of God,... are all ordained by God, and are a reflection of His Will and Purpose.”
Whoso make(s) the slightest possible difference between their persons, their words, their messages, their acts and manners,” has...” betrayed the Cause of His Messengers.”

GL 59 ^{xxiv}.Baha'u'llah

“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

King James Bible, James) 12:25-27

“... attributes of God are not, and have never been, vouchsafed specially unto certain Prophets, and withheld from others... all the Prophets of God,... are, without exception, the bearers of His names, and the embodiments of His attributes. They only differ in the intensity of their revelation, and the comparative potency of their light.”

49 Baha'i GI

“He, being one, rules over all and everything, so that the universal germ ripens its nature, diversifies all natures that can be ripened, and determines all qualities.”

Hindu; SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD; 1. FIFTH ADHYAYA; 5

“Inasmuch as these Birds of the celestial Throne are all sent down from the heaven of the Will of God, and as they all arise to proclaim His irresistible Faith, they... are regarded as one soul and the same person. For they all drink from the one Cup of the love of God, and all partake of the fruit of the same Tree of Oneness.” -- Baha'i



The Human Condition

“In this world we are influenced by two sentiments,
Joy and Pain.

“Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere of usefulness. But when sadness visits us we become weak, our strength leaves us, our comprehension is dim and our intelligence veiled. The actualities of life seem to elude our grasp, the eyes of our spirits fail to discover the sacred mysteries, and we become even as dead beings.

“There is no human being untouched by these two influences; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter -- the spiritual world bestows only the joy!

**“If we suffer it is the outcome of material things,
and all the trials and troubles come from this world of illusion.”**

Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i

“You see all round you proofs of the inadequacy of material things -- how joy, comfort, peace and consolation are not to be found in the transitory things of the world. Is it not then foolishness to refuse to seek these treasures where they may be found? The doors of the spiritual Kingdom are open to all, and without is absolute darkness

“... If your days on earth are numbered, you know that everlasting life awaits you. If material anxiety envelops you in a dark cloud, spiritual radiance lightens your path. Verily, those whose minds are illumined by the Spirit of the Most High have supreme consolation.

“Thus, spirituality is the greatest of God's gifts, and 'Life Everlasting' means 'Turning to God'. May you, one and all, increase daily in spirituality, may you be strengthened in all goodness, may you be helped more and more by the Divine consolation, be made free by the Holy Spirit of God, and may the power of the Heavenly Kingdom live and work among you.”

Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 109-12; Baha'i

Question: *“Does the soul progress more through sorrow or through the joy in this world?”*

“The mind and spirit of man advance when he is tried by suffering. The more the ground is ploughed the better the seed will grow, the better the harvest will be. Just as the plough furrows the earth deeply, purifying it of weeds and thistles, so suffering and tribulation free man from the petty affairs of this worldly life until he arrives at a state of complete detachment. His attitude in this world will be that of divine happiness. Man is, so to speak, unripe: the heat of the fire of suffering will mature him. Look back to the times past and you will find that the greatest men have suffered most.”

“To attain eternal happiness one must suffer. He who has reached the state of self-sacrifice has true joy. Temporal joy will vanish.”

“Through suffering he (man) will attain to an eternal happiness which nothing can take from him. The apostles of Christ suffered: they attained eternal happiness.”

Abdu'l-Baha, in Paris Talks, p. 179)

“All processes are impermanent.

When one sees this with understanding, then one is disillusioned with the things of suffering. This is the Path of Purification.

All processes are painful. When one sees this with understanding, then one is disillusioned with the things of suffering.

This is the Path of Purification.”

“All processes are out of my control.

When one sees this with understanding, then one is disillusioned with the things of suffering. This is the Path of Purification.

Be guarded in speech, restrained of mind and not doing anything wrong physically. Perfect these three forms of action, and fulfill the way taught by the sages.

(Buddhist, Dhammapada - Sayings of the Buddha 1 (tr. J. Richards))

“...ye cannot find the depth of the heart of man, neither can ye perceive the things that he thinketh: then how can ye search out God, that hath made all these things, and know his mind, or comprehend his purpose?”

Judaism (Deuterocanonical Apocrypha, Judith)

“Behold, we count them happy which endure.”

King James Bible, James 5:11



When you live in virtue, you are expressing the

Ideal Human Qualities

“Praise be to God, your hearts are turned to Spirit, your souls attracted to the Kingdom, you have spiritual aspirations, and your thoughts soar above the world of dust.

“You belong to the world of purity, and are not content to live the life of the animal, spending your days in eating, drinking, and sleeping. You are indeed men!

“Your thoughts and ambitions are set to acquire human perfection.

“You live to do good and to bring happiness to others.”

“We have eyes... to see, but if we do not use them how do they profit us? We have ears... to hear, but if we are deaf of what use are they? We have a tongue... to praise God and proclaim the good tidings, but if we are dumb how useless it is!”

Abdu'l-Baha'i, Paris Talks, p. 109-12

“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.” Christianity. Matthew 5.29-30

“The All-loving God created man to radiate the Divine light and to illumine the world by his words, action and life.” Yet without virtue (we are) “no better than a mere animal.”

*Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 113

“... whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good, his reward is with his Lord; and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.” 112

... he verily hath grasped the firm hand-hold.” 22

(The Qur'an (Pickthall tr), Sura 31 - Lukman)

“... whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good, his reward is with his Lord; and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.” 112

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(The Qur'an (Pickthall tr), Sura 31 - Lukman)

Question: “*What is evil?*”

“Evil is imperfection. Sin is the state of man in the world of the baser nature, for in nature exist defects such as injustice, tyranny, hatred, hostility, strife: these are characteristics of the lower plane of nature. These are the sins of the world, the fruits of the tree from which Adam did eat. Through education we must free ourselves from these imperfections.

“The Prophets of God have been sent, the Holy Books have been written, so that man may be made free. Just as he is born into this world of imperfection from the womb of his earthly mother, so is he born into the world of spirit through divine education. When a man is born into the world of phenomena he finds the universe; when he is born from this world to the world of the spirit, he finds the Kingdom.”

Baha'i Abdu'l-Baha Paris Talks

The Purpose of Human Creation

Question: *'What is the purpose of our lives?'*

'To acquire virtues. We come from the earth; why were we transferred from the mineral to the vegetable kingdom -- from the plant to the animal kingdom? So that we may attain perfection in each of these kingdoms, that we may possess the best qualities of the mineral, that we may acquire the power of growing as in the plant, that we may be adorned with the instincts of the animal and possess the faculties of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, until from the animal kingdom we step into the world of humanity and are gifted with reason, the power of invention, and the forces of the spirit.'

Abdu'l-Baha Paris Talks: Baha'i

“Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”

(King James Bible, Romans) 9:17

“For that man who obeys the law prescribed in the revealed texts and in the sacred tradition, gains fame in this (world) and after death unsurpassable bliss.” (Hindu, Laws of Manu) 9

“... goodly is the reward of those who travailed virtuously.

And thou shalt see the Angels circling around the Throne with praises of their Lord: and judgment shall be pronounced between them with equity: and it shall be said, "Glory be to God the Lord of the Worlds."

The Qur'an (Rodwell tr), Sura 39 - The Troops)

“The Heavenly Father gave the priceless gift of intelligence to man so that he might become a spiritual light, piercing the darkness of materiality, and bringing goodness and truth into the world. “...*
Baha'i Scriptures

“It is my heartfelt prayer that each one of you may attain to this perfect joy.”

Baha'i: Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 113)

“Worship God, and join not aught with Him in worship. Be good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to a neighbour, whether kinsman or new-comer, and to a fellow traveler, and to the wayfarer, and to the slaves whom your right hands hold; verily, God loveth not the proud...” -- The Qur'an (Rodwell tr), Sura 4 – Women 4:40



“... the right act

Is less, far less, than the right-thinking mind.

Seek refuge in thy soul; have there thy heaven!

Scorn them that follow virtue for her gifts!

The mind of pure devotion- even here-

Casts equally aside good deeds and bad,

Passing above them. Unto pure devotion

Devote thyself: with perfect meditation

Comes perfect act, and the righthearted rise...

--(Hindu, Bhagavad Gita (Edwin Arnold tr))

“From among all created things He hath singled out for His special favor the pure, the gem-like reality of man, and invested it with a unique capacity of knowing Him and of reflecting the greatness of His glory. This twofold distinction conferred upon him hath cleansed ... from his heart the rust of every vain desire, and made him worthy ... to rescue his soul from the wretchedness of ignorance.”

--Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 78 Baha'i

"The purpose of the one true God... hath been to bring forth the Mystic Gems out of the mine of man -- they Who are the Dawning-Places of His Cause and the Repositories of the pearls of His knowledge; for, God Himself, glorified be He, is the Unseen, the One concealed and hidden from the eyes of men..”

“God... hath ever regarded, and will continue to regard, the hearts of men as His own, His exclusive possession. All else, whether pertaining to land or sea, whether riches or glory, He hath bequeathed unto the Kings and rulers of the earth.”

Gleanings Baha'u'llah, p. 205 Baha'i

“These energies with which the Day Star of Divine bounty and Source of heavenly guidance hath endowed the reality of man lie... latent within him, even as the flame is hidden within the candle and the rays of light are potentially present in the lamp. The radiance of these energies may be obscured by worldly desires even as the light of the sun can be concealed beneath the dust and dross which cover the mirror.”

-- Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 66

“God truly will not wrong any one of the weight of a mote; and if there be any good deed, he will repay it doubly; and from his presence shall be given a great recompense.”

--- The Qur'an (Rodwell tr)

“Meditate on what the poet hath written: "Wonder not, if my Best-Beloved be closer to me than mine own self; wonder at this, that I, despite such nearness, should still be so far from Him."..

Baha'i

“When a man has faith, is endowed with virtue, and possessed of fame and wealth, wherever he lives he will be honoured.”

“The perfume of tagara and sandalwood is of little enough power, while the supreme fragrance, that of the virtuous, reaches even up to the devas.”

Buddhist, Dhammapada - Sayings of the Buddha 1 (tr. J. Richards 2- Above, (Buddha The Fool) Ibid

“Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.”

Christianity: The Bible Philippians 3:17



“... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to
virtue knowledge...” Christianity: The Bible 2 Peter 1:5

“Learn that sacred law which is followed by men learned (in the Veda) and assented to in their hearts by the virtuous, who are ever exempt from hatred and inordinate affection. But a learned man after fully scrutinising all this with the eye of knowledge, should, in accordance with the authority of the revealed texts, be intent on (the performance of) his duties.” ⁽¹⁾

“ ... he who befriends (all creatures) is declared (to be) a
(true) Brahmana.” (Hindu, Laws of Manu) (87) (7, 8)

“Greed is a root of unwholesome karma; Anger is a root of unwholesome karma; Delusion is a root of unwholesome karma. Therefore, I say, these demeritorious actions are of three kinds: either due to greed, or due to anger, or due to delusion.” ((The Eightfold Path), Buddha, the Word (The Eightfold Path))

Trials: Angel or Angst?

Tests, Difficulties and the Mystery of Sacrifice

“The trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness.

“ A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene...”

-- Baha'i Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 110)

“ To the sincere ones, tests are as a gift from God, the Exalted, for a heroic person hastens, with the utmost joy and gladness, to the tests of a violent battlefield, but the coward is afraid and trembles and utters moaning and lamentation. Likewise, an expert student prepares and memorizes his lessons and exercises with the utmost effort, and in the day of examination he appears with infinite joy before the master. Likewise, the pure gold shines radiantly in the fire of tests. Consequently, it is made clear that for holy souls, trials are as the gift of God, the Exalted; but for weak souls they are an unexpected calamity. This test ... removes the rust of egotism from the mirror of the heart until the Sun of Truth may shine therein. ”

“Not until man is tried doth the pure gold distinctly separate from the dross. Torment is the fire of test wherein the pure gold...” shines... “resplendently and the impurity is burned and blackened.”

Abdu'l-Baha, Selections p. 120

“The souls who bear the tests of God become the manifestations of great bounties; for the divine trials cause some souls to become entirely lifeless, while they cause the holy souls to ascend to the highest degree of love and solidity. They cause progress and they also cause retrogression.”

Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha v2, p. 324)

“If you are weakened by the pains of hunger and poverty, with no money in your pockets, and no one will give you any comfort, and no one will satisfy your hopes and desires, and none of your works is accomplished ---if you then come to remember the Supreme Lord God, you shall obtain the eternal kingdom.”

S112 1 Sikh Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Section 5 - Siree Raag

“When man experiences severe trials and hardships,

“then his nature will recoil and he will desire the eternal realm -- a realm which is sanctified from all afflictions and calamities. Such is the case with the man who is wise. He shall never drink from a cup which is at the end distasteful, but, on the contrary, he will seek the cup of pure and limpid water. He will not taste of the honey that is mixed with poison.”

“Do not grieve at the afflictions and calamities that have befallen thee. All calamities and afflictions have been created for man so that he may spurn this mortal world -- a world to which he is much attached.”

Baha’i teaching

“In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; God hath made even the one as well as the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him. “

Kesuvim (Writings), Koheles (Ecclesiastes 7,14 Judaism

*“When you are plagued by great and excessive anxiety, and diseases of the body; when you are wrapped up in the attachments of household and family, sometimes feeling joy, and then other times sorrow; when you are wandering around in all four directions, and you cannot sit or sleep even for a moment-- **If you come to remember the Supreme Lord God, then your body and mind shall be cooled and soothed.**”* ||3||Sikh Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Section 5 - Siree Raag

“If sorrow and adversity visit us, let us turn our faces to the Kingdom and heavenly consolation will be outpoured.”

“If we are sick and in distress let us implore God's healing, and He will answer our prayer.” Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 110)

“Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom! If we are hemmed in by difficulties we have only to call upon God...”

'Baha'i Abdul-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 110

“When you are confronted with terrible hardships, and no one offers you any support, when your friends turn into enemies, and even your relatives have deserted you, and when all support has given way, and all hope has been lost, if you then come to remember the Supreme Lord God, even the hot wind shall not touch you.”

Sikh --1 Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Section 5 - Siree Ra

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will...”

1 Thessalonians: 5:18

“Turn... to the divine Kingdom and strive ...” to...” acquire merciful characteristics,... become illumined and acquire the attributes of the Kingdom.... Endeavour to become indifferent to the pleasures of this world and to its comfort, to remain firm and steadfast in the Covenant and to promulgate the Cause of God. This is the cause of the exaltation of man, the cause of his glory and of his salvation.”

— 240 Abdu'l-Baha, Selections p. 238

“...whatever ye expend in God's way He will repay you; and ye shall not be wronged.”

Qur'an (E.H. Palmer tr), Sura 8



“...As to the subject of babes and infants and weak ones who are afflicted by the hands of oppressors: This contains great wisdom and this subject is of paramount importance. In brief, for those souls there is a recompense in another world and many details are connected with this matter. For those souls that suffering is the greatest mercy of God. Verily that mercy of the Lord is far better and preferable to all the comfort of this world and the growth and development of this place of mortality. “

Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith –Selection p. 370

“Do ye not look upon the beginning of the affairs; attach your hearts to the ends and results. The present period is like unto the sowing time. Undoubtedly it is impregnated with perils and difficulties, but in the future many a harvest shall be gathered and benefits and results will become apparent. When one considers the issue and the ends, inexhaustible joy and happiness will dawn.”

Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets v2, p. 264)

Spirit “will never deal unjustly with any one, neither will He task a soul beyond its power....” (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 105)

“...for holy souls, trials are as the gift of God... but for weak souls they are an unexpected calamity. Tests of the spirit remove ”... the rust of egotism from the mirror of the heart until the Sun of Truth may shine therein.”

Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 371

“These tests... cleanse the spotting of self from off the mirror of the heart, till the Sun of Truth can cast its rays thereon; for there is no veil more obstructive than the self, and however tenuous that veil may be, at the last it will completely shut a person out, and deprive him of his portion of eternal grace.” —Baha’i Faith



The Way of Spirit and of the World

“Every created thing in the whole universe is but a door leading into His knowledge, a sign of His sovereignty, a revelation of His names, a symbol of His majesty, a token of His power, a means of admittance into His straight Path....

-- Baha'u'llah,

Gleanings

The Great Being says: “The structure of world stability and order hath been reared upon, and will continue to be sustained by, the twin pillars of reward and punishment....

“There is no force on earth that can equal in its conquering power the force of justice and wisdom.... “There can be no doubt whatever that if the day-star of justice, which the clouds of tyranny have obscured, were to shed its light upon men, the face of the earth would be completely transformed.” Baha'u'llah, *Gleanings* p. 217

***“Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the humble,
than to divide the spoil with the proud.”***

16,19 Judaism (Kesuvim (Writings), Mishlei (Proverbs))

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the
fulfilling of the law.”

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth
another hath fulfilled the law. “

King James Bible, Romans 13,18' 13,20

***“You have been told, O man,
what is good, and what the Lord requires of you:
Only to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your
God.”***

Judaism; The Bible, Micah 6:6-8

“Blessed is he who prefers his brother before himself.” -- Baha’i

Detachment

"Detachment is as the sun; in whatsoever heart it shines, it (shall quench) the fire of covetousness and self. He whose sight is illumined with the light of understanding will assuredly detach himself from the world and the vanities thereof "

"...the trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene." -- Baha'i

"Cling unto the robe of the Desire of thy heart, (God) and put thou away all shame; bid the worldly-wise be gone, however great their name." [1 Qur'án 2:282.] ,70

" In the garden of the soul, plant the seed of the Word (the Lord's name). Water the soil with love and humility, and reap the fruits of divinity."

Sikhism; Guru Granth Sahib



"Let us put aside all thoughts of self;
let us close our eyes to all on earth...

"Rather let us become oblivious of our own selves, and drinking
down the wine of heavenly grace, let us cry out our joy, and lose
ourselves in the beauty of the All-Glorious."

Baha'i Scriptures

**"... the man who seeks his own welfare, should pull out this
arrow-this arrow of lamentation, pain, and sorrow."**

((The Eightfold Path), Buddha, the Word (The Eightfold Path))

“Deliver your souls... from the bondage of self, and purify them from all attachment.” xxxvi Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 259)

“O people of God! Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. This can best be achieved through pure and holy deeds, through a virtuous life and a goodly behavior.” -- Baha'i Faith

“Sometimes a man feels very happy for getting a thing which was actually destined for him and feels sorry for not getting a thing which he was not destined to get. Therefore, you should not feel happy if your desires are fulfilled and should not feel sorry for deprivations. (Leave everything to the Will of Allah).”

Ali b. Abi Taalib, Letters from Nahjul Balaagh Islam

“Arise, and by the power of God's might, resolve to gain the victory over your own selves, that .. the whole earth may be freed and sanctified from its servitude to the gods of idle fancies -- gods that have inflicted such loss upon, and are responsible for the misery of, their wretched worshipers.” -- Baha'i



"O FRIENDS! Abandon not the everlasting beauty for a beauty that must die, and set not your affections on this mortal world of dust."

"Let not the world grieve you."

1. The Hidden Words; 2. Gleanings, Baha'i teachings

**"Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,
and with all thy soul and with all thy mind..."***

* Christian; Holy Bible MT 27:31

“If sorrow and adversity visit us, let us turn our faces to the Kingdom and heavenly consolation will be outpoured. If we are sick and in distress let us implore God's healing, and He will answer our prayer.”

-- Baha'i scriptures

“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.” (King James Bible, James)

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

(King James Bible, James) 5:14-16

“Just as one does not touch a sensuous woman entering an empty house, so is he who does not touch the sense objects that have entered into him, a renouncer, an ascetic, a self-sacrificer.”

Hindu Maitri Upanishad 6.10

“Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things.” Baha’i Faith

“As for you... lovers of God, make firm your steps in His Cause, with such resolve that ye shall not be shaken though the direst of calamities assail the world....

“By nothing, under no conditions, be... perturbed. Be.. anchored fast as the high mountains, be stars that dawn over the horizon of life, be bright lamps in the gatherings of unity, be souls humble and lowly in the presence of the friends, be innocent in heart.”

“Be... symbols of guidance and lights of godliness, severed from the world, clinging to the handhold that is sure and strong, spreading abroad the spirit of life, riding the Ark of salvation.... You are the lowly, of whom God has thus spoken in His Book: ‘And We desire to show favour to those who were brought low in the land, and to make them spiritual leaders among men, and to make them Our heirs.’

Gleanings, Baha’i teachings

“ O Bondslave of Desire! “Wings have I bestowed upon thee... fly to the realms of mystic holiness and not the regions of satanic fancy.” Baha’i; Persian Hidden Words)

“All bodhisattvas, lesser and great, should develop a pure, lucid mind, not depending upon sound, flavor, touch, odor, or any quality. A bodhisattva should develop a mind which alights upon no thing whatsoever; and so should he establish it.”

Buddhist Diamond Sutra 10

“Follow thou the footsteps of thy Lord... undeterred by either the clamor of the heedless ones or the sword of the enemy....”

Baha’i Faith, Gl 43

“How pitiful, how regrettable, that most men are cleaving fast to, and have busied themselves with, the things they possess, and are unaware of, and shut out as by a veil “ from things of the Spirit...

Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 12)

**“A lover is he who is chill in hell fire,
a knower is he who is dry in the sea.”** *Persian mystic poem.*

***“I beseech God that He may graciously enable every one of you to
adorn himself, in this blessed Day, with the ornament of pure and
holy deeds.”***

Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 205

***“Blessed are they that have soared
on the wings of detachment....***

“Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.

*“Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him
with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an
admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a
preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment,
and guarded in thy speech.*

*“Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all
men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a
joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for
the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim
of oppression.”*

—p 94 Bahai Scripture

“All that is in heaven and earth I have ordained for thee, except the human heart, which I have made the habitation of My beauty and glory.... -- Baha’i teachings

“Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility. .” Bahai Scripture

“O my brother! Take thou the step of the spirit, so that, swift as the twinkling of an eye, thou may... flash through the wilds of remoteness and bereavement ... and in one breath commune with the heavenly Spirits. For with human feet thou canst never hope to traverse these immeasurable distances, nor attain thy goal.”

Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 41)

“... if one deals with objects of the sense
Not loving and not hating, making them
Serve his free soul, which rests serenely lord,
Lo! such a man comes to tranquility;
And out of that tranquility shall rise
The end and healing of his earthly pains,
Since the will governed sets the soul at peace.
The soul of the ungoverned is not his,
Nor hath he knowledge of himself; which lacked,
How grows serenity? and, wanting that,
Whence shall he hope for happiness?”

Hindu, Bhagavad Gita (Edwin Arnold tr)

“Ponder awhile.

Hast thou ever heard that friend and foe should abide in one heart?

Cast out... the stranger, that the Friend may enter His home.”

—Baha'u'llah, Gleanings

“When our thoughts are filled with the bitterness of this world, let us turn our eyes to the sweetness of God's compassion and He will send us heavenly calm! If we are imprisoned in the material world, our spirit can soar into the Heavens and we shall be free indeed!”

Baha'i scriptures

“Desire is never extinguished by the enjoyment of desired objects; it only grows stronger like a fire (fed) with clarified butter.

If one man should obtain all those (sensual enjoyments) and another should renounce them all, the renunciation of all pleasure is far better than the attainment of them.”

--Hindu, Laws of Manu 94, 95



THE HOLY MANIFESTATIONS AND PROPHETS

“The reason of the mission of the Prophets is to educate men, so that this piece of coal may become a diamond, and this fruitless tree may be engrafted and yield the sweetest, most delicious fruits. “

Abdu'l-Baha, Some Answered Questions, p. 236, 7



One of the revered Baha'i teachers in the early part of the 20th century related God as the Sun and the Manifestations as Perfect Mirrors reflecting the light to us in a way that is more understandable and comparable to our own experience..

“It is clear... that the essential reality of God is revealed in His perfections; and the sun, with its perfections, reflected in a mirror, is a visible thing, an entity clearly expressing the bounty of God.”

“God is as the Sun; our souls are created to mirror forth the Godly beauty. However imperfect, our work in acquiring more of the virtues or Godly attributes is the cleansing of “the spotting of self” from the mirror of the heart.

“I beseech God that He may graciously enable every one of you to adorn himself, in this blessed Day, with the ornament of pure and holy deeds.”

Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 205

The Virtues are seen reflected most perfectly in the “mirror” of God’s Prophetic Manifestations; we look to them as our example...

“As to the Holy Manifestations of God, They are the focal points where the signs, tokens and perfections of that sacred, pre-existent Reality appear in all their splendor. They are an eternal grace, a heavenly glory, and on Them depend(s) the everlasting life of humankind.” Abdu'l-Baha, Selections p. 45

Baha’i Faith

“The Bearers of the Trust of God are made manifest unto the peoples of the earth as the Exponents of a new Cause and the Revelers of a new Message.

“The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of (God’s) image, and their revelation a sign of His deathless glory. They are the Treasuries of Divine knowledge, and the Repositories of celestial wisdom. Through them is transmitted a grace that is infinite, and by them is revealed the Light that can never fade.... “

Baha’i Faith

“ Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”

(King James Bible, James 5:10)

“These Tabernacles of Holiness, these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles.

By the revelation of these Gems of Divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty, and grace, are made manifest.”

-- Baha’i



Divine Messengers : **Purposeful Physicians**

“The Prophets of God should be regarded as physicians whose task is to foster the well-being of the world and its peoples, that, through the spirit of oneness, they may heal the sickness of a divided humanity.” GL 79

“The purpose underlying the revelation of every heavenly Book,... is to endue all men with righteousness and understanding, so that peace and tranquility may be firmly established amongst them.” GI 205CI.

“God's purpose in sending His Prophets unto men is twofold. The first is to liberate the children of men from the darkness of ignorance, and guide them to the light of true understanding. The second is to ensure the peace and tranquility of mankind, and provide all the means by which they can be established. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings p. 79 Baha'i Faith

“The Divine Messengers have been sent down, and their Books were revealed, for the purpose of promoting the knowledge of God, and of furthering unity and fellowship amongst men.”

—Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 12)

“...the Lord God is our hope.

“ God the Father is the shepherd of the flock.”

Psalm 71:5 ; Ezek. 34:11-31

“And thou shalt see the Angels circling around the Throne with praises of their Lord: and judgment shall be pronounced between them with equity: and it shall be said, "Glory be to God the Lord of the Worlds."

(The Qur'an (Rodwell tr), Sura 39 - The Troops)





Meditations

“Every cherished effort must extend its powers to other souls.

“... Is there anything more cherished than the mind of man? We must expend this faculty in the cause of human union, for we are the children of one father.

“A delicate spiritual power is ever exercising an influence over the hearts and minds of men. Why should we abandon the holy power which binds us together and cleave to the barbarous traditions which keep us apart?”

--Baha'i Faith

“How pitiful, how regrettable, that most men are cleaving fast to, and have busied themselves with, the things they possess, and are unaware of, and shut out as by a veil “from things of the Spirit...”

Baha'i Scripture

“ O Mother!

***“Let all my speech be your prayer; let all my crafts and technology
be the mystic gesture of my hands, adorning you. May all my
movements become your devotional circumambulations. May
everything I drink be oblations to you.***

***... Let my lying down and rest and sleep be prostrations
to you, Mother!***

***“Whatever I do, may all that become a sacramental
service and worship for you.”***

-- Hindu hymn: Adi Sankara

May my ways and the ways of a bodhisattva
Always go together hand in hand.
In body, speech, and mind
May I attune to their sublime ways.

-- Buddhist

“O My Brother!

“ A pure heart is as a mirror; cleanse it with the burnish of love and severance from all save God, that the true sun may shine within it and the eternal morning dawn. Then wilt thou clearly see the meaning of "Neither doth My earth nor My heaven contain Me, but the heart of My faithful servant... (contains) Me." (1)

“And thou wilt take up thy life in thine hand, and with infinite longing cast it before the new Beloved One.”

[1 Hadith, i.e. action or utterance traditionally attributed to the Prophet Muhammad or to one of the holy Imams.] Baha'u'llah, Seven Valleys

“Those who want to know the truth of the universe should practice reverence for all life; this manifests as unconditional love and respect for oneself and all other beings.”

-- Lao Tzu

“Listen with the ear of equity to the chanting of the Gospels.”

— Compilations, Baha’i scriptures

“ ... how frequently man becomes forgetful of his own self, while God remains aware of His creature, and continues “to shed upon him the manifest radiance of His glory.... in such circumstances, He (God) is closer to him than his own self ... mortal man is prone to err, and is ignorant of the mysteries that lie enfolded within him....”

Baha'u'llah, GL p 186

“In the tender compassion of our God; the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to shine on those who live in darkness, under the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.” --

Luke 1:78-79, “Song of Zechariah”

“In humble adoration, with hands outstretched, I pray to thee, O Lord, Invisible benevolent Spirit: Vouchsafe to me in this hour of joy, all righteousness of action, all wisdom of the Good Mind, that I may thereby bring joy to the Soul of Creation.”

-- Yasna 28:1 (Zoroastrian, from the Eathas)

“Trouble no one about his religion, respect others in their faith and demand they respect yours. Accuse no one and nothing, for abuse turns the wise ones to fools and robs the spirit of its vision.”

Native American— Tecumseh

“Close one eye and open the other.

Close one to the world and all that is therein,
and open the other to the hallowed beauty of the Beloved.”

--Baha'i teachings

“The world of existence is like unto an orchard and humanity is like unto the trees. All these trees are planted in the same orchard, reared through the heat of one sun, watered with one rain. We must be the cause of the adornment of this orchard. The world of humanity is like unto a rose garden and the various races, tongues and people are like unto contrasting flowers.

“The diversity of colors in a rose-garden adds to the charm and beauty of the scene as variety enhances unity. Why should we not look upon the human world with rose-colored vision?”

Abdu'l-Baha, Divine Philosophy, p. 182)

“O my brother! Take thou the step of the spirit, so that, swift as the twinkling of an eye, thou may... flash through the wilds of remoteness and bereavement ... and in one breath commune with the heavenly Spirits. For with human feet thou canst never hope to traverse these immeasurable distances, nor attain thy goal.” -- Baha'u'llah

“... the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night...”

3:10 Holy Bible

"O friends, consort with all the people of the world with joy and fragrance..."

“Ye are all the fruit of one tree and the leaves of one branch.”

Baha'u'llah

Spirit “will never deal unjustly with any one, neither will He task a soul beyond its power”

Baha'u'llah

“Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust;
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.”

Universal Prayer for Peace, Jain

“The meditatives practice meditation, and the wise practice spiritual wisdom, but how rare are those who know God! “

I| Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Section 5 - Siree Raag Sihk

***“Oh God, You are Peace.
From you comes Peace, To You Returns Peace.
Revive us with a salutation of Peace,
and lead us to your abode of Peace.”***

-- saying from *The Prophet*, used in daily prayer by Muslims

“Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze... at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll.

“With the utmost unity, and in a spirit of perfect fellowship, exert yourselves, that ye may be enabled to achieve ... this Day of God.”

Baha'u'llah

“The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.”

Baha'i

“Verily I say, strife and dissension, and whatsoever the mind of man abhor(s) are entirely unworthy of his station... Should the greatness of this Day be revealed in its fullness, every man would forsake a myriad lives in his longing to partake, though it be for one moment, of its great glory -- how much more this world and its corruptible treasures!” - Baha'i

*“In the Day of the Lord, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard lie down with the kid... and a little child shall lead
them.*

*They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*

as the waters cover the sea.”

-- The Holy Bible *Isaiah 11:6-9*

***“Pride is not for him who loves his country,
but for him who loves the world.”***

-- Baha'u'llah, Baha'i Faith

“Make your best endeavor to worship at the temple of the heart.”

-- Ansari of Herat, *A Sufi Prayer*



“In this realm, instruction is assuredly of no avail

“.... The lover's teacher is the Loved One's beauty,

*His face their lesson and their only book. Learning of wonderment, of
longing love their duty, not on learned chapters and dull themes they
look.*

The chain that binds them is His musky hair,

The Cyclic Scheme, [1] to them, is but to Him a stair. [2]**

**[1] The Cyclic Theory of Abu-'Ali Sina (Avicenna -- 980-1037) as
expressed by him in the quatrain: Every semblance, every shape that
perisheth today In the treasure-house of Time is safely stored away. When
the world revolveth to its former place, Out of the Invisible He draweth forth
its face. See also Some Answered Questions, p. 326.] [2] The Mathnavi.*

Prayer is Needed

“Man has reached a critical point in history, where he must turn to God to avoid the consequences of his own faulty thinking. We must pray, not a few of us, but all of us. We must pray simply, fervently, sincerely and with increasing power as our faith grows.

“We must condition the world's leaders by asking God's Spirit to descend upon their hearts and minds. We must condition ourselves, each and every one, by asking god's help in living so that peace may be possible.

“We must pray in church, at home, on the train, while driving, on the job-- and keep at it. Each of us is important now. The ability of every individual to seek divine help is a necessary link in the the golden chain of harmony and peace.

“ Prayer is a dynamic manifestation of love by the concerned, reaching out for God's help for man. You can help change the world by your prayers and your prayerful action.”

-- Dag Hammarskold, former UN Secretary- General



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