

Strength in Faith December 31, 2015

HINDUISM

Krishna:

Arjuna, is this hour of battle the time for scruples and fancies? Are they worthy of you, who seek enlightenment? Any brave man who merely hopes for fame or heaven would despise them.

What is this weakness? It is beneath you. Is it for nothing men call you the foe-consumer? Shake off this cowardice, Arjuna. Stand up.

Arjuna:

Bhishma and Drona are noble and ancient, worthy of the deepest reverence. How can I greet them with arrows, in battle? If I kill them, how can I ever enjoy my wealth, or any other pleasure? It will be cursed with blood-guilt. I would much rather spare them, and eat the bread of a beggar.

Which will be worse, to win this war, or to lose it? I scarcely know. Even the sons of Dhritarashtra stand in the enemy ranks. If we kill them, none of us will wish to live.

Is this real compassion that I feel, or only a delusion? My mind gropes about it in darkness. I cannot see where my duty lies. Krishna, I beg you, tell me frankly and clearly what I ought to do.....

Krishna:

Your words are wise, Arjuna, but your sorrow is for nothing. The truly wise mourn neither for the living nor for the dead.

There was never a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor any of these kings. Nor is there any future in which we shall cease to be.

Just as the dweller in this body passes through childhood, youth, and old age, so at death one merely passes into another kind of body. The wise are not deceived by that....

That which is non-existent can never come into being, and that which is can never cease to be. Those who have known the inmost reality know also the nature of *is* and *is not*....

That Reality which pervades the universe is indestructible. No one has power to change the Changeless.

Bhagavad Gita, ch. 2

Strength in Faith

BUDDHISM

We are what we think,
Having become what we thought.
Like the wheel that follows the cart-pulling ox,
Sorrow follows an evil thought.

And joy follows a pure thought,
Like a shadow faithfully tailing a person.
We are what we think,
Having become what we thought.

How will hate leave one if a person forever thinks,
'He abused me, he hit me, he defeated me, he robbed me'?

Will hate ever touch one if a person does not think,
'He abused me, he hit me, he defeated me, he robbed me'?

There is only one eternal law:
Hate never destroys hate; only love destroys hate.

Dhammapada, ch. 1

Strength in Faith

ZOROASTRIANISM

Hear with your ears the Highest Truth I preach,
And with illumined minds weigh them with care.
Before you choose which of two Paths to tread --
Deciding one by one, each one for each --
Before the great New Age is ushered in
Wake up, alert to spread Ahura's world

The first created were the Spirits two,
As twin co-workers they reveal themselves;
Yet, in each thought and word and deed these two
Are never agreed; -- one is Good, the other Bad;
And of these Two the wise do choose aright,
The unwise choose not thus, -- and go astray.

And when together these Spirits Two
Fore-gather at Creation's early dawn,
Life did One make, the Other made Not-Life;
And thus Creation's purpose is achieved.
Dark is the mind of those that cling to False,
But brightly shines the Mind that holds to Truth.

Songs of Zarathustra, Yasna 30:2-4

Strength in Faith

JUDAISM

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters;
He restoreth my soul.
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For thou art with me.
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil;
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalms 23

Strength in Faith

CHRISTIANITY

“The body has not one member, but many. If the foot should say ‘*I am not a hand, I don’t belong to the body*’, does that alter the fact that the foot *is* a part of the body?...

God has arranged all the parts in one body, according to his design. If everything was concentrated in one part, how could there be a body at all? The fact is that there are many parts, but only one body. So, the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ On the contrary, those parts of the body which have no obvious function are the more essential to health; and to those parts of the body which seem to be less deserving of notice, we have to allow the highest honor of function. The parts which do not look beautiful have a deeper beauty in the work they do, while the parts which look beautiful may not be at all essential to life! But God has harmonized the whole body, by giving importance of function to the parts which lack apparent importance, that the body should work together as a whole, with all the members in sympathetic relationship with one another. So it happens that if one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it, and if one member is honored, all the members share a common joy.”

Corinthians 12:14-26 (Phillips Modern English version of the New Testament)

Strength in Faith

‘A lifetime is not sufficient to learn how to live in this world.’

“Do not fear God, but regard carefully God’s pleasure and displeasure.”

“Satan comes in most beautiful garbs to hide from a person’s eyes their highest ideal.”

Life is an opportunity, and it is a great pity if one realizes this when it is too late.”

“All situations of life are tests to bring out the real and the false.”

“Right and wrong depend upon attitude and situation, not upon the action.”

“Do not do anything with fear, and fear not whatever you do.”

Hazrat Inayat Khan

Gayan, Boulas

Strength in Faith

ISLAM

God knows what goes into the earth,
And what comes out of it,
And what descends from the sky, and what ascends to it,
And God is most merciful, most forgiving.

But the ungrateful who disbelieve will say,
'The hour will never come to us.'
Say, 'Oh no!
It will surely come to you,
By my Lord,
Knower of the unseen,
From whom not an atom is hidden
In all the universe.
And there is nothing smaller than that,
And nothing greater,
But is in a clear Book,

That God may reward
Those who have faith and do good;
for them is forgiveness
And a generous provision.'
But for those who strive to frustrate Our signs
Is chastisement with a painful punishment.

Koran, chapter. Sheba

JUDAISM

O mighty ones, do you really decree what is just?
Do you judge mankind with equity?
In your minds you devise wrongdoing in the land;
With your hands you deal out lawlessness.
The wicked are defiant from birth;
The liars go astray from the womb,
Their venom is like that of a snake,
A deaf viper that stops its ears,
So as not to hear the voice of charmers
Or the expert mutterer of spells.

O God, smash their teeth in their mouth;
Shatter the fangs of lions, O Lord;
Let them melt, let them vanish like water;
Let Him aim His arrows that they be cut down;
Like a snail that melts away as it moves;
Like a woman's stillbirth, may they never see the sun!
Before the thorns grow into a bramble,
May He whirl them away alive in fury.

The righteous person will rejoice when he sees revenge;
He will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked.
People will say,
'There is, then, a reward for the righteous;
there is, indeed, divine justice on earth.'

Psalms 58

CHRISTIAN

Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved...

Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 10: 21-22, 34-38