

EVERY DAY IS A BLESSING

*A Year of the World's Most Inspirational Quotes, Jokes,
and Anecdotes to Lift Your Spirit and Delight Your Soul*

Aaron Zerah



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A Personal Note from the Author

There's an old Russian proverb that says: Every day is a messenger of god. That's what I hope *Every Day Is A Blessing* will be for you — a daily message that lifts your spirit and delights your soul.

When you look inside, you'll discover a vast array of wise sayings, proverbs, and stories from the world's great spiritual traditions and cultures. You'll also find hundreds of quotes, jokes, and anecdotes given to us by the great souls of our planet.

There's everyone from Jesus to Buddha to Mother Teresa; Aesop to Abraham Lincoln to Yogi Berra; St. Francis of Assisi to Albert Einstein to Anne Frank; Martin Luther King to Muhammad to Muhammad Ali; Confucius to Shakespeare to Chief Sitting Bull; Marilyn Monroe to Mark Twain to Michelangelo; Mahatma Gandhi to Helen Keller to John F. Kennedy and Dolly Parton to the Dalai Lama.

These great souls are all gifts in my life and *Every Day Is a Blessing* is my way to share their blessings with you. For your information and enlightenment, I've included a brief description of each of them at the end of the book in the *Roster of Great Souls*.

Now, I'm going to quote here one additional great soul — my daughter, Sari. One morning, when she was three, she said, "Abba, I've got something to tell you." "Okay, Sari," I asked, "what is it?" She briefly paused, then said, "Today is... today!" May today and every day for you be a blessed one!

In kindness and joy,

Aaron Zerah

P.S. To find more free spiritual books to share, please visit atozspirit.com.

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A TO Z SPIRIT PUBLISHING



JANUARY 1

**The man who removed the mountain began
by carrying away small stones.**

- CHINESE PROVERB



JANUARY 2

**The moment one definitely commits oneself,
then Providence moves too.**

**All sorts of things occur to help one
that would never otherwise have occurred.**

**A whole stream of events issues from the commitment,
raising in one's favor all manner
of unforeseen incidents and meetings
and material assistance
which no one could have dreamed**

would come one's way.

**Whatever you can do,
or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.
Begin it now.**

- GOETHE



JANUARY 3

He who is outside the door has already a good part of his journey behind him.

- DUTCH PROVERB



**It is good to have an end to journey towards;
but it is the journey that matters in the end.**

- URSULA K. LE GUIN



**If you don't know where you're going,
you'll end up somewhere else.**

- YOGI BERRA



JANUARY 4

**The winds of grace are always blowing,
but you have to raise the sail.**

- RAMAKRISHNA



JANUARY 5

When the saint Nam Dev was but a very young boy, his father entrusted him to make the daily milk offering to the divine. In his father's absence, Nam Dev was to place the milk before the statue in their home, and with great reverence the young boy did just as his father had instructed.

Nam Dev's father always drank the milk after the ritual offering but the pure-hearted Nam Dev did not know this. One day when his father was unable to do this, and the statue did not take the milk he brought, Nam Dev pleaded, "My lord, please drink the offering before you."

But the statue still did not drink. Nam Dev was persistent. "My lord," he cried out, "do you wish to see a fight in our house? If you do not take this milk, my father will be very angry with me."

Nam Dev kept imploring the statue in this way until at last a hand stretched out — and the

statue drank up all the milk.

-TRADITIONAL TALE OF INDIA



JANUARY 6

To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.

- CONFUCIUS



Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

- KARL BARTH



JANUARY 7

**Strange is our situation here on Earth.
Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why,
yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose.**

**From the standpoint of daily life, however,
there is one thing we do know:
that man is here for the sake of other men —
above all for those upon whose smiles
and well-being our own happiness depends.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



JANUARY 8

Have patience with all things but first of all with yourself.

- ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



JANUARY 9

**The Lord is my pace-setter: I shall not rush.
He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals.
He provides me with images of stillness
Which restore my serenity.
He leads me in the way of efficiency**

**Through calmness of mind
And His guidance is peace.
Even though I have a great many things
To accomplish each day,
I will not fret.
For His presence is here.
His timelessness,
His all-importance,
Will keep me in balance.
He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of activity
By anointing my mind with the oil of tranquility.
My cup of joyous energy overflows.
Surely harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruit of my hours,
For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord
And dwell in His house forever.**

- PSALM 23 (JAPANESE VERSION)



JANUARY 10

**Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can.**

- JOHN WESLEY



JANUARY 11

**Dwell on the past and you'll lose an eye;
ignore the past and you'll lose both of them.**

- RUSSIAN PROVERB



JANUARY 12

**The one who takes things too seriously all day long has no joy in his life.
The one who wastes the day in seeking amusement cannot maintain a position of fortune.**

- PTAH-HOTEP



**No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless.
There's too much work to do.**

- DOROTHY DAY



JANUARY 13

One bitter cold winter morning, at the first light of dawn, the poor janitor came in to clean the synagogue. When he finished his work, he put down his broom and began to say his prayers. “Oh God,” he whispered, “before you I am the smallest of the small. I am nothing.”

Meanwhile the shammes, the rabbi’s assistant, had come in and was saying his own prayers on the other side of the synagogue. “Oh Lord,” the shammes said, “I am nothing but a simple shammes. Please hear my prayer.”

Then the rabbi joined him and prayed: “Almighty God, you know I am just the rabbi of a small congregation, nothing in your eyes, but, I beg you, please listen to my prayer.”

After the shammes and rabbi had finished, they crept near to the janitor. When they heard the janitor repeating his prayers, the shammes at once elbowed the rabbi in the ribs and said: “Now just look who thinks *he’s* nothing!”

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH JOKE



JANUARY 14

**If people knew how hard I have to work
to gain my mastery,
it would not seem wonderful at all.**

- MICHELANGELO



JANUARY 15

**All are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality,
tied in a single garment of destiny.
Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.
I can never be what I ought to be until
you are what you ought to be,
and you can never be what you ought to be until
I am what I ought to be.**

- MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



It is the chiefest point of happiness that a man is willing to be what he is.

- ERASMUS



JANUARY 16

**In the depths of winter,
I finally learned that within me
there lay an invincible summer.**

- ALBERT CAMUS



JANUARY 17

A great Mongol general had led his army in victory after victory. Most of central Asia, except the grand city of Samarkand, was theirs. The general was confident they could conquer the city despite the fact that his soldiers were war-weary and homesick and that they would be greatly outnumbered. He was sure of their destiny but equally certain he could not force his soldiers to fight.

So the wise general gathered the troops around a sacred altar to pray for guidance from the gods. Then he took out, for all to see, a large gold coin with a face on one side. If it shows the face when I toss it,” the general declared, “it is a sign from heaven of our victory in Samarkand.” The coin landed face up and the soldiers, believing the gods were behind them, easily captured the city.

After the battle, one of the soldiers told the general: “When we know the gods are with us, there is nothing between us and our destiny.” The general laughed and brought out the large gold coin. There was a face on both sides.

- CLASSICAL CHINESE TALE



JANUARY 18

**Habit is habit, and not to be kicked out the door at any time,
but coaxed down the stairs little by little.**

- MARK TWAIN



JANUARY 19

**May no one who ever meets me
Have a meeting of little consequence.
May the simple fact of our meeting
Assist in the fulfillment of their wishes.**

**May I be a lamp
In the darkness of life,
A home for the homeless,
And a servant to the world.**

- ANCIENT BUDDHIST BLESSING



JANUARY 20

**Leadership means not giving orders to others
but giving of yourself.**

- EAST AFRICAN TRIBAL PROVERB



JANUARY 21

**Do not disregard evil, saying, “It will not come unto me.”
By the falling of drops even a water jar is filled;
likewise the fool, gathering little by little, fills himself with evil.**

**Do not disregard merit, saying “It will not come unto me.”
By the falling of drops of water even a water jar is filled;
likewise the wise man, gathering little by little, fills himself with good.**

- FROM THE DHAMMAPADA (SACRED BOOK OF BUDDHISM)



JANUARY 22

**If you cry because the sun has gone out of your life,
your tears will prevent you from seeing the stars.**

- RABINDRANATH TAGORE



JANUARY 23

**Home is the place where,
when you have to go there,
they have to take you in.**

- ROBERT FROST



JANUARY 24

**What a wonderful life I've had.
I only wish I had realized it sooner.**

- COLETTE



**It's never too late
to have a happy childhood.**

- TOM ROBBINS



JANUARY 25

**Thou, who kindly doth provide For ev'ry creature's want!
We bless the God of Nature wide
For all Thy goodness lent.
And if it please Thee, heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But, whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content.**

- ROBERT BURNS



JANUARY 26

**A person who hides the truth that he is sick
cannot expect to be cured.**

- ETHIOPIAN PROVERB



The main reason for healing is love.

- PARACELSUS



JANUARY 27

**I believe in the sun even when it is not shining.
I believe in love even when feeling it not.
I believe in God even when he is silent.**

-TRADITIONAL JEWISH PRAYER



Do not despair; life wins.

-ELIE WIESEL



JANUARY 28

**Never be ashamed to own you have been in the wrong;
'tis but saying you are wiser today than you were yesterday.**

- JONATHAN SWIFT



**To be really sorry for one's errors is like
opening the door of Heaven.**

- HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN



JANUARY 29

A hungry wolf came out of the woods and into the little town of Gubbio. In the night he howled and the next morning the inhabitants discovered that a fellow villager had fallen victim to the wolf. Day after day, upon awakening, the people of Gubbio found another neighbor dead and mangled in the streets.

Deeply afraid, they decided to seek the help of St. Francis, the holy man who everyone said spoke with all of God's creatures. They wanted St. Francis to tell the wolf to obey the commandments and stop murdering his neighbors. If the wolf did not listen, then the holy man was to instruct the beast to move somewhere else - anywhere but Gubbio.

And so St. Francis went to the forest to speak to Brother Wolf about the fears of the townsfolk. When he returned, everyone was anxious to hear his report. "Good people of Gubbio," St. Francis said, "there is an answer for your predicament. You must simply find a way to feed this wolf of yours."

- TRADITIONAL ITALIAN STORY



JANUARY 30

**The wise man in the storm prays to God,
not for safety from danger, but for deliverance from fear.
It is the storm within which endangers him, not the storm without.**

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

- FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT



**Keep your fears to yourself;
share your courage with others.**

- ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



JANUARY 31

**The force of arms cannot do what peace does.
If you can gain your desired end with sugar, why use poison?**

- FROM THE SOMADEVA (JAIN SACRED TEXT)



FEBRUARY 1

**You cannot prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head,
but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair.**

- CHINESE PROVERB



FEBRUARY 2

**I find letters from God dropped in the street,
and every one is signed by God's name.**

- WALT WHITMAN



**There is no way of telling people
that they are all walking around
shining like the sun.**

- THOMAS MERTON



**People see God every day;
they just don't recognize him.**

- PEARL BAILEY



FEBRUARY 3

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience.

We are spiritual beings having a human experience.

- PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN



FEBRUARY 4

A poor man lived with his wife and six children in a very small one-room house. They were always getting in each other's way and there was so little space they could hardly breathe!

Finally the man could stand it no more. He talked to his wife and asked her what to do. "Go see the rabbi," she told him, and after arguing a while, he went.

The rabbi greeted him and asked, "I see something is troubling you. Whatever it is, you can tell me."

And so the man told the rabbi how miserable things were at home with him, his wife, and all their six children eating and living and sleeping in one room. The man told the rabbi, "We're even starting to yell and fight with each other. Life couldn't be worse."

The rabbi thought very deeply about the poor man's problem. Then he said, "Do exactly as I tell you and things will get better. Do you promise?"

"I promise," the man said.

The rabbi then asked him a strange question. "Do you own any animals?"

"Yes," the man said. "I have one cow, one goat, and some chickens.

"Good," the rabbi said. "When you get home, take all the animals into your house to live with you. "

The poor man was astonished to hear this advice from the rabbi, but he had promised to do exactly what the rabbi said. So he went home and took all the farm animals into the

tiny house.

The next day he ran back excitedly to see the rabbi. "What have you done to me, Rabbi?" he cried. "It's awful. I did what you told me and the animals are all over the house! Rabbi, help me!"

The rabbi listened and said calmly, "Now go home and take the chickens back outside."

The man did as the rabbi said, but hurried back again the next day. "The chickens are gone, but Rabbi, the goat!" he moaned. "The goat is smashing up all the furniture and eating everything in sight!"

The good rabbi said, "Go home and remove the goat."

So the poor man went home and took the goat outside. But he ran back again to see the rabbi, crying and wailing. "What a nightmare you have brought to my house, Rabbi! With the cow it's like living in a stable! Can human beings live with an animal like this?"

The rabbi said sweetly, "My friend, you are right. Go home now and take the cow out of your house." And the poor man went quickly home and took the cow, the last of the animals, out of the house.

The next day he came running back to the rabbi again. "O Rabbi," he said with a big smile on his face, "we have such a good life now. The house is so quiet and we've got room to spare! What a joy!"

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



FEBRUARY 5

**There is no expedient to which a man will not go
to avoid the real labor of thinking.**

- THOMAS EDISON



FEBRUARY 6

**Any disaster you can survive is an improvement
in your character, your stature, and your life.**

- JOSEPH CAMPBELL



**When we accept what happens to us and make the best of it,
we are praising God.**

- ST. TERESA OF AVILA



FEBRUARY 7

**The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched.
They must be felt in the heart.**

- HELEN KELLER



**Happy are the pure in heart
for they shall see God.**

- JESUS



**Words that come from the heart
enter the heart.**

- ABRAHAM IBN EZRA



**There is a polish for everything that becomes rusty,
and the polish for the heart is the remembrance of God.**

- MUHAMMAD



**Do what you do to another person,
but never put them out of your heart.**

- KABIR



FEBRUARY 8

**The Holy Spirit is our harpist and all strings
which are touched in love must sound.**



FEBRUARY 9

Even at the venerable age of eighty, Master Hyakujo worked alongside his students on the monastery grounds. He gardened, pruned trees and cleaned just as younger monks did. They dared not ask him to stop, so the students, not wishing to see their old master work so hard, hid his tools.

From that time on the master did not eat. He did not eat the next day, nor the one after. The students thought, “Perhaps the master is angry at missing his tools,” and so they returned the tools to their proper place.

That day the master worked and ate his food as always. In the evening, he gave a simple teaching: “No work, no food.”

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



FEBRUARY 10

Every man’s life is a fairy tale, written by God’s fingers.

- HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSON



FEBRUARY 11

A man who wished to live a saintly life went to his teacher and said, “O guru, bringer of light into the darkness, how shall I become a saint, a true sadhu? Please tell me.”

The guru told the man to own as little as possible and to live as simply as he could. So the student gave up his possessions and moved to a tiny shack far from other people. Every day, after his morning devotional rituals, he’d wash and hang out to dry his loincloth, the only thing he owned. One day he discovered birds had pecked holes in it, and since he had nothing else to wear, he went to the village to beg for a new one.

A few days later the new loincloth met an identical fate. “Well,” the villagers said, “you not only need a loincloth, but you need a cat to protect it from the birds.” So the man asked for and got a cat.

Then he needed to beg for milk to feed the cat. After a time the villagers grew weary of giving him milk for the cat. “You need to keep a cow,” they told the poor man.

So he went and asked for a cow. Once he had the cow, he needed hay to feed the cow. His neighbors told him to stop begging and grow his own hay; there was plenty of farmland to be had.

So the simple man became a farmer. Soon he had to build barns and hire laborers. Then, because he was a landholder, he married, had children, and spent his days like all the other busy householders.

At last, his guru returned to visit the area and came upon the now prosperous farm. Finding the barns filled with goods and the homestead buzzing with servants, the guru inquired of one, “A poor holy man used to dwell in these parts. Do you know where he has gone?” Receiving no answer, the guru went to the main house where he ran into his surprised student. “What happened?” the guru asked.

The man fell at the feet of his master and said pitifully, “My Lord, it all started with a single loincloth.”



FEBRUARY 12

**No man has a good enough memory
to make a successful liar.**

- ABRAHAM LINCOLN



FEBRUARY 13

**Love does not consist in gazing at each other,
but in looking outward together in the same direction.**

- ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY



FEBRUARY 14

**When two people are at one
in their innermost hearts
They shatter even the strength of
iron or of bronze.**

**And when two people understand
each other in their innermost hearts
Their words are sweet and strong
like the fragrance of orchids.**

- FROM THE I CHING (ANCIENT CHINESE SACRED TEXT)



FEBRUARY 15

**What lies behind us and what lies before us
are tiny matters
compared to what lies within us.**

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



FEBRUARY 16

**Holiness consists in
doing the will of God
with a smile.**

- MOTHER TERESA



FEBRUARY 17

**Some day, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity,
we shall harness for God the energies of love,
and then, for the second time in the history of the world,
man will have discovered fire.**

- PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN



**Where there is no love,
pour love in,
and you will draw out love.**

- St. JOHN OF THE CROSS



**The moment you have in your heart
this extraordinary thing called love
and feel the depth, the delight, the ecstasy of it,
you will discover that for you the world is transformed.**

- JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI



FEBRUARY 18

**If your parents take care of you up to the time you cut your teeth,
you take care of them when they lose theirs.**

- TRADITIONAL WEST AFRICAN PROVERB



FEBRUARY 19

**Let me show you the straight path to God:
Work hard at honest labor with your own hands to support yourself,
always remember God, and share the fruits of your labors.**



**If people retreat to the mountains to recite the name of God,
who will put out the fire of the burning world?**

- GURU NANAK



FEBRUARY 20

**When people say to you “it’s good to cry”,
they don’t mean you ought to cry all the time.**

**When they say to you “stop your crying”,
they don’t mean you should always act like a clown.**

- SHAH NAQSHBAND



FEBRUARY 21

**To carry on a conflict
to the bitter end has evil effects
even when one is in the right,
because enmity is then perpetuated.**

- FROM THE I CHING (ANCIENT CHINESE SACRED TEXT)



FEBRUARY 22

**Labor to keep alive in your breast
that spark of celestial fire called conscience.**

- GEORGE WASHINGTON



FEBRUARY 23

**My favorite piece of music
is the one we hear all the time
if we are quiet.**

- JOHN CAGE



FEBRUARY 24

**If I am not for myself, who then will be for me?
If I am only for myself, who am I?
And if not now, when?**

- RABBI HILLEL



FEBRUARY 25

**At fifteen, I set my heart upon learning.
At thirty, I had planted my feet upon firm ground.
At forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities.**

**At fifty, I knew what were the biddings of Heaven.
At sixty, I heard them with a docile ear.
At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart,
for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right.**

- CONFUCIUS



FEBRUARY 26

For twenty years, an old woman provided for a monk so that he could meditate and seek enlightenment. He lived in a little hut the old woman had built for him and there his food was brought.

One day, the old woman decided to check on the progress of the monk and sent a young woman, experienced in providing bodily pleasure, to visit him. The young woman caressed the monk in seductive ways and invitingly asked, “Now what is your desire?” The monk responded, “There is nothing warm here. Just an old tree growing on cold wintry stones.”

Hearing the story, the old woman became very angry. She shouted, “I kept that fake alive for twenty years and he shows you not a bit of kindness! It wasn’t necessary for him to have been passionate, just a little compassion would have been enough!”

And that was the last time the old woman fed the monk.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



FEBRUARY 27

**A keen sense of humor helps us
to overlook the unbecoming,
understand the unconventional,
tolerate the unpleasant,
and outlast the unbearable.**

- BILLY GRAHAM



FEBRUARY 28

The poor Mullah Nasruddin, out of work as usual, awoke one day and informed his wife, “I no longer will be seeking employment. I work now only for Allah.”

Not one to be put off easily, she replied, “If that is true, please ask Allah for your back wages.”

“A good idea,” thought Nasruddin, and he proceeded to his backyard and prayed for a hundred pieces of gold as his just reward. Overhearing him, his well-to-do neighbor decided to play a joke on the simple mullah. He hurriedly put a hundred gold pieces in a sack and, without being seen, threw the sack over the fence at Nasruddin’s feet.

The Mullah took the gold, and he and his wife began to spend it. Enough was enough, and the neighbor soon demanded his money back. Nasruddin refused, claiming that the money was a gift of providence. The neighbor became irate and threatened to bring Nasruddin before a judge.

After a moment’s thought, Nasruddin said, “Let’s go right now. But so the court will not be prejudiced against me, lend me a fine robe and a horse so we can appear on an equal footing.”

The neighbor agreed, and off they went. At the court the neighbor stated his complaint. Then it was Nasruddin's turn. His defense was insanity; Nasruddin claimed that his neighbor was insane! "What is your evidence for this?" the judge inquired. "If you ask the man, he'll say that not only was the money his, but the fine horse I rode here and this very robe I'm wearing, too," Nasruddin said calmly. "But that is indeed so," cried the exasperated neighbor. "Case dismissed," said the judge.

- *TRADITIONAL SUFI TALE*



FEBRUARY 29

(LEAP YEAR)

Living is a form of not being sure, not knowing what next or how.

The moment you know how, you begin to die a little.

The artist never entirely knows. We guess.

We may be wrong, but we take leap after leap in the dark.

- *AGNES DE MILLE*



MARCH 1

If one person tells you that you have the ears of an ass, pay no attention.

If two should tell you, go get yourself a saddle.

- ANCIENT HEBREW PROVERB



MARCH 2

**A man's own mind
sometimes has a way of telling him more
than seven watchmen posted on a high tower.**

-FROM WISDOM OF BEN SIRA (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



MARCH 3

**Keep a green tree alive in your heart
and a songbird may come to sing there.**

- CHINESE PROVERB



MARCH 4

**The beating heart of the universe
is holy joy.**

- MARTIN BUBER



**You will go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills before you
will burst into song.**

- FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



**Keep knocking and the joy inside will eventually open a window
and look out to see who is there.**

- RUMI



MARCH 5

One day, a woodcutter went out to chop a load of firewood to sell in the market, but his favorite ax was gone. He looked all through the woodpile, behind his house, and even in his house.

He looked everywhere he thought he might have put the ax, but he could not find it. The more he looked, the more upset and frustrated he became. He exhausted himself looking for his precious ax.

Then he noticed a boy — his neighbor's son — standing near the woodshed. The woodcutter stared at the boy and thought to himself, "What's he doing hanging around the woodshed, just walking back and forth? He's got his hands behind his back and his face has a guilty look too."

The longer he stared at the boy the more convinced the woodcutter was that he was a thief. "Why that boy must have stolen my ax! I can't prove it, but I'll make that boy pay anyhow."

The next day the woodcutter walked over to a pile of firewood he had forgotten about and tripped on something. It was his ax!

"Oh yes," he remembered, "that's where I left it when I was cutting wood the other day."

Then the woodcutter saw the neighbor's son again. He inspected the boy up and down, from head to toe. He looked at him right in the eye.

"How strange," the woodcutter thought, "today the boy looks completely innocent."

- TRADITIONAL CHINESE TAOIST STORY



MARCH 6

Once the Roman emperor Hadrian was walking along the road near Tiberias in Galilee, and he saw an old man planting fig trees.

“If you had worked in your early years, old man,” he said, “you would not have to work now so late in your life.”

“I have worked both early and late,” the man said, “and what pleased the Lord He has done with me.”

“How old are you?” asked Hadrian.

“A hundred years old,” the man said.

“A hundred years old, and you are still digging up the earth to plant trees!” said Hadrian.

“Do you truly expect to eat the fruit of those trees?”

“If I am worthy, I will eat,” answered the old man. “But if not, as my father worked for me so I am working for my children.”

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



When eating a fruit, think of the person who planted the tree.

- VIETNAMESE PROVERB



MARCH 7

**It is better to be
In God’s hands and be poor
Than to have your wealth
In your own storehouse.**

**It is better to have
Bread with a happy heart**

**Than great riches
And a troubled heart.**

- AMENEMOPE



MARCH 8

**In woman is found the form of all things,
of all that lives and moves in the world.**

**There is no kingdom, no wealth,
to be compared with a woman.**

**There is not, nor has been,
nor will be any holy place like unto a woman.**

**There is no prayer
to equal a woman.**

**There is not, nor has been,
nor will be any treasure more valuable than a woman.**

- FROM THE SAKTISANGAMA TANTRA (SACRED TEXT OF BUDDHISM)



MARCH 9

In the marketplace, Rabbi Beroka often met the prophet Elijah, who descended from heaven to help the poor and the pious. One day Rabbi Beroka asked Elijah, “Does any soul in this market have a place in the world to come?”

As they were talking, two men came by and Elijah said, “Those two have a place in the world to come.”

Rabbi Beroka walked up to them and asked, “What do you do?”

They answered, “We are jesters. When we see people sad or depressed, we try to cheer them up, and when we see two people arguing, we work hard to make peace between them.”

- FROM THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



MARCH 10

The seed of God is in us.

**Given an intelligent and hard-working farmer,
it will thrive and grow up to God, whose seed it is;
and accordingly its fruit
will be God-nature.**

**Pear seeds grow into pear trees,
nut seeds into nut trees,
and God seeds into God.**

- MEISTER ECKHART



MARCH 11

The poor Mullah Nasruddin had been saving his money for a long time to buy a new shirt. At last he had enough, and full of excitement, he went to the tailor's shop to place his order. The tailor took the Mullah's measurements and, that completed, told him: "Come back in a week and — *Insh'allah*, as God wills it — your shirt will be done and waiting for you."

Nasruddin, keeping to this agreement, returned one week later right to the hour and asked for his new shirt. "Something has come up," the tailor informed the poor Mullah. "Your shirt is not yet finished, but — *Insh'allah*, as God wills it — tomorrow your shirt will be ready."

Still hopeful Nasruddin returned the next day. "I'm sorry, Mullah," the tailor apologized, "but it's still not quite done. Try again tomorrow and — *Insh'allah*, as God wills it — it will be ready."

"How long then will it take," Nasruddin inquired this time, "if you leave God out of it altogether?"

- TRADITIONAL SUFI TALE



MARCH 12

Don't ask yourself what the world needs.

**Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and go do that,
because what the world needs is people who have come alive.**

- HOWARD THURMAN



**How wonderful it is that nobody
need wait a single moment
before starting to improve the world.**

- ANNE FRANK



MARCH 13

A deer came to a pool to drink, and stopped to look at his image in the water. When he saw his mighty antlers, the deer swelled with pride, but when he saw his legs reflected in the water, the deer was abashed because they appeared to be so skinny and weak.

While he was thinking these thoughts, a lion suddenly ran right at him. The deer took off and quickly outran the lion chasing him, for a deer's strength is in his legs and lion's strength is in the heart. So as long as the deer kept running on the plain, he kept ahead of the lion.

But when the deer ran into the forest, his antlers got stuck on some tree branches and the

lion caught up to him. Just as the lion was about to kill him, the deer sadly said to himself, “How strange things are! My scrawny legs almost got me away to safety, and my magnificent antlers have cost me my life!”

- FABLE OF AESOP



MARCH 14

**There are two ways to live your life.
One is as though nothing is a miracle.
The other is as though everything is a miracle.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



MARCH 15

**You are not yet blessed,
if the multitude does not laugh at you.**

- SENECA



MARCH 16

**You have the power to strip away
many superfluous troubles located wholly in your judgement,
and to possess a large room for yourself
embracing in thought the whole cosmos,
to consider everlasting time,
to think of the rapid change in the parts of each thing,
of how short it is from birth until dissolution,
and how the void before birth and that after dissolution are equally infinite.**

- MARCUS AURELIUS



MARCH 17

**May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,**

**The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again, may
God hold you in the hollow of his hand.**

- TRADITIONAL IRISH BLESSING



MARCH 18

**A great man calls attention to the good points in others;
he does not call attention to their defects.
A small man does just the opposite.**

- CONFUCIUS



**One who praises you for qualities you lack
will next be found blaming you
for faults not yours.**

- ALI



MARCH 19

**Each man takes care that his neighbor shall not cheat him.
But a day comes when he begins to care that he does not cheat his neighbor.
Then all goes well — he has changed his market-cart into a chariot of the sun.**

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



MARCH 20

**When I walk through thy woods,
may my right foot and my left foot
be harmless to the little creatures
that move in its grasses: as it is said
by the mouth of thy prophet,
They shall not hurt nor destroy
in all my holy mountain.**

- RABBI MOSHE HAKOTUN



MARCH 21

There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in.

- LEONARD COHEN



You must be lamps unto yourselves.

- BUDDHA



What is to give light must burn.

- VIKTOR FRANKL



MARCH 22

**Walk on a rainbow trail,
walk on a trail of song,
and all about you will be beauty.
There is a way out of every dark mist,
over a rainbow trail.**

- TRADITIONAL DINEH/NAVAJO TRIBAL SONG (NATIVE AMERICAN)



The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.

- DOLLY PARTON



MARCH 23

The humble Rabbi Zusya of Hanipol was very old and nearing death. Thinking of the world to come, he said, “If they ask me ‘Why were you not more like Abraham?’ I will have an easy answer; I was not born with a great intellect like Abraham.

“If they ask me ‘Why were you not more like Moses?’ I will also have an easy answer; I was not born with his gift for leadership.

“But if they ask me ‘Why were you not more like Zusya?’ I will have no answer to give.”

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



**When you are who you are meant to be,
you will set the world on fire.**

- ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA



MARCH 24

**The things, good Lord, that we pray for,
give us the grace to labor for.**

- THOMAS MORE



**God give me work
Till my life shall end
And life
Till my work is done.**

- EPITAPH ON AN OLD ENGLISH TOMBSTONE



**Blessed is he who has found his work.
Let him ask no other blessedness.**

- THOMAS CARLYLE



MARCH 25

**One cannot help but be in awe
when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity,
of life, of the marvelous structure of reality.
It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend
a little of this mystery every day.
Never lose a holy curiosity.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



MARCH 26

**Be a gardener, dig a ditch,
toil and sweat, and turn the earth upside down
and seek the deepness and water the plants in time.
Continue this labor and make sweet floods to run
and noble and abundant fruits to spring.
Take this food and drink and
carry it to God as your true worship.**

- JULIAN OF NORWICH



MARCH 27

**It is not a matter of thinking a great deal,
but of loving a great deal,
so do whatever arouses you most to love.**

- ST. TERESA OF AVILA



**It is not necessary to have great things to do.
I turn my little omelet in the pan for the love of God.**

- BROTHER LAWRENCE



**Do not think that love, in order to be genuine, has to be extraordinary.
What we need is to love without getting tired.**

- MOTHER TERESA



MARCH 28

Reb Lieb was leaving his village to begin his studies of the holy books, the Torah, with the learned Rabbi Dov Baer. A friend asked, “What are you going to learn from such a great teacher, the Maggid of Meseritz?”

“I am not going to gain knowledge of holy scripture from him,” Reb Lieb said. “I am going to watch how he ties his shoes.”

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH ANECDOTE



MARCH 29

Do not fear mistakes. There are none.

- MILES DAVIS



**Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.**

- MARIANNE WILLIAMSON



The main thing in life is not to be afraid of being human.

- PABLO CASALS



MARCH 30

**I've learned that people will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget how you made them feel.**

-MAYA ANGELOU



MARCH 31

A man wanted to have a lion tattooed on his back but as soon as the tattoo artist pricked him with the first needle he cried out, "You're killing me! Which part of the lion are you doing?"

"I'm doing the tail first," said the tattoo artist.

"Leave off the tail then," shouted the man.

So the tattoo artist began again and the man screamed, "Which part are you doing now?"

"The ear," said the artist.

"Leave off the ear," demanded the man.

So the tattooist started once more and the man shrieked, "What part of the lion is that?"

"The belly of the lion."

“I want a lion with no belly,” ordered the man.

The frustrated tattooist had enough. He threw down his needles and said, “A lion that has no tail, no ear, and no belly? Who can make a creature like that? Even God did not!”

- RUMI



APRIL 1

One day the Emperor Akbar complained to his counselor, Birbal, “I am allowed to meet only wise and learned men. Bring me the ten greatest fools in the kingdom.”

So Birbal brought him a collection of fools: one man, riding a horse, carried a bundle of firewood on his head, reasoning that the burden would be too heavy for the horse if he placed it on the saddle; another was found looking at night for a ring he had lost, searching not where he dropped it in the dark under a tree, but in a nearby clearing where the light was better.

Birbal brought eight such fools to the king who soon reminded him that he had asked for ten.

“There are ten,” the trickster laughed, “including you and me — the two biggest fools of all — you for giving me such a ridiculous order, and me for obeying it!”

- TRADITIONAL TALE OF INDIA



Only a fool tests the depth of the water with both feet.

- AFRICAN PROVERB



APRIL 2

**Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life,
what you shall eat or what you shall drink,
nor about your body, what you shall put on.
Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?**

**Look at the birds of the air:
they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns,
and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not much more than they?**

- JESUS



APRIL 3

**The chakora bird longs for the moonlight,
The lotus longs for sunrise,
The bee longs to drink the flower's nectar,
Even so my heart anxiously longs for you, O Lord.**

- FROM THE BASAVANNA (SACRED HINDU TEXT)



APRIL 4

**If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for,
he isn't fit to live.**

- MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



APRIL 5

**When you are proclaiming peace with your lips,
be careful to have it even more fully in your heart.**

- ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



APRIL 6

**If you have two pieces of silver,
sell one and buy a lily.**

- ANCIENT GREEK PROVERB



APRIL 7

**Consider the trees which allow the birds to perch and fly away
without either inviting them to stay or desiring them never to depart.**

If your heart can be like this, you will be near to the way.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST TEACHING



APRIL 8

As a young boy, the Dalai Lama of Tibet was oftentimes impatient and angry. When he

first attempted to garden, he followed his teacher's instruction most carefully, planting his seeds in a well-prepared and moistened bed. Somehow he was convinced in his own mind that the seeds would become fully-grown plants by the very next day.

But when he returned, there was nothing at all showing. He went home and came back again the following day, once more expecting to see the new plants, but, as before, there were none.

On the third day, seeing again only the bare earth, in frustration the Dalai Lama dug out all the seeds he had placed in the garden.

Now, he laughs and says, "You plant; you water; it blossoms."

- STORY OF THE DALAI LAMA



APRIL 9

Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes.

- HENRY DAVID THOREAU



APRIL 10

Ambrosia can be extracted even from poison;

**elegant speech even from a child;
good conduct even from an enemy;
gold even from impurity.**

- FROM THE LAWS OF MANU (SACRED TEXT OF HINDUISM)



APRIL 11

**Whatever a man fears may happen to him is only a matter of probability —
either it will happen or it will not happen.**

**And just as it is possible that something painful, worrisome and fearful may happen,
it is also possible that, because of his reliance on God,
the reverse of what he feared may happen.**

- MOSES MAIMONIDES



**If you keep on saying things are going to be bad,
you have a good chance of being a prophet.**

- ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER



APRIL 12

A bird sings like a flute
In a hidden grove of willows.
The golden-threaded trees sway gracefully.

The mountain valley hushes
As the clouds return.
A breeze carries the fragrance of apricot flowers.

Here I have sat the whole day,
Enveloped by peace,
Until my mind is cleansed inside and out.

Free of cares and idle thoughts,
I wish to tell you how I feel,
Yet, words are lacking.

If you come to this grove,
We can then compare our notes.

- *FA-YEN*



APRIL 13

**Yours are the hands
with which He is to bless.**

- ST. TERESA OF AVILA



APRIL 14

A poor farmer lived with his only son on a very small farm near the border of the country of the barbarians. His only real possession was a prize horse, but one day it disappeared, last seen heading there. Poor like him, his neighbors knew how much the horse meant to him and came to express their sympathy. The farmer said only, “How do you know this is not truly good fortune?”

A few months passed. Lo and behold, the farmer’s horse came back, bringing with it another horse, strong and of new stock. The neighbors congratulated the farmer for his good luck. The old farmer was terse. “How do you know this doesn’t forebode disaster?” he declared. The other farmers merely shook their heads and went back to their work.

The two horses mated, and soon the family had many fine horses and became rich. The farmer’s son, now with a great deal of leisure time on his hands, took a fancy to riding his beautiful horse every day. But one day he had an accident, fell off and broke his hip. Once again came the neighbors to offer the farmer condolences for his misfortune and to wish him a quick recovery for his son. The farmer simply replied, “How do you know this is not a good thing?”

Well, the hip did not heal well and the son became lame as a result. Some time went by, and the barbarians crossed the frontier. War had begun and all able-bodied young men were required to fight. Nine out of ten of them died. The farmer’s son, limp and all, stayed home and alive.

- TRADITIONAL TAOIST TALE



APRIL 15

**God, give us grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
courage to change the things which should be changed,
and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.**

- REINHOLD NIEBUHR



APRIL 16

**One going to take a pointed stick to poke a baby bird
should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts.**

- TRADITIONAL WEST AFRICAN PROVERB



APRIL 17

Chelm was a little village in Poland known as the home of fools. In the village lived a shoemaker who one day decided to head off for the big city of Warsaw.

It was a long way to walk, and after a while the poor shoemaker grew very tired. But he was afraid to go to sleep. "Whichever way I look," he said to himself, "the road seems exactly the same. When I wake up, I won't know which way to go."

So the shoemaker thought up a clever idea. Before he lay down, he took off his boots. He placed one boot with the toe pointing toward the big city and the other one with the heel pointing back home to Chelm.

But as luck would have it, while the shoemaker snored away in a deep sleep, a forester's wagon passed by and a tree branch hanging over the side bumped into the shoemaker's boots. The boots got all turned around and now the toe of one boot pointed to Chelm, his hometown, and the heel of the other to Warsaw, the strange big city.

So what did the shoemaker do when he woke up and looked at his boots? What else? He followed the toe straight back to Chelm!

He walked right by the village marketplace with its few small shops. He passed the little synagogue where the people came to study and pray.

"Why did people tell me so much about the wonderful things I'd see in Warsaw?" he wondered. "We have things just like this in Chelm."

Soon he saw a small stone house that looked completely like his own, and in the house was a woman and six young girls who smiled happily at him. They were the very image of his own wife and six daughters. The woman and girls hugged and kissed the shoemaker just as if he were their very own husband and father returning home from a very long journey.

Then the shoemaker said to himself, "I must have a twin here in Warsaw and this must be his home. I think I'll stay here and wait to see if he returns."

And as anyone who has been to Chelm will tell you, that is exactly where the shoemaker lived for the rest of his life!



APRIL 18

**Some of your hurts you have cured
And the sharpest you've even survived,
But what torments of grief you've endured
From evils which never arrived.**

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



**I never think of the future.
It comes soon enough.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



**The crisis of today is
the joke of tomorrow.**

- H.G. WELLS



APRIL 19

**Seek first the kingdom of God
and all else shall be added
unto you.**

- JESUS



APRIL 20

Chuang-tzu was fishing in the P'u River when the prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to ask him to take charge of the administration of the state. Chuang-tzu went on fishing and without turning his head said, "I have heard that in Ch'u there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years. And that the prince keeps his tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral people. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains revered or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?"

The two officials answered: "It would rather be alive."

"Then begone!" cried Chuang-tzu. "I too will wag my tail in the mud."

- FROM THE BOOK OF CHUANG-TZU (CLASSICAL TAOIST TEXT)



APRIL 21

**And the day came when the risk
to remain tight in a bud
was more painful than the risk
it took to blossom.**

- ANAÏS NIN



APRIL 22

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness therein.

- FROM PSALM 24 (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



A person must live so that it is possible to create the kingdom of love on earth.

- LEO TOLSTOY



Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

- SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE



APRIL 23

**The greatest revolution in our generation is
the discovery that human beings,
by changing the inner attitudes of their minds,
can change the outer aspects of their lives.**

- WILLIAM JAMES



APRIL 24

One day the ruler of heaven had some important business in a distant part of his realm, which would keep him busy for three days. He therefore transferred all his duties to the old mother of heaven and asked her to look after everything in his absence. “But for these three days you must grant man's every wish,” he warned her. The mother of heaven smilingly nodded in agreement.

She left her palace, mounted a cloud, and traveled everywhere to attend to the wishes of men. As she was passing a river, she heard a man say, “Heavenly Father, send wind. If a wind blows, I can sail away.” She ordered the wind to blow and went on her way.

Soon she arrived at a large orchard where she heard someone calling, “Heavenly Father, please tell the wind to stop. If it goes on any longer, all my pear-blossoms will fall.” This was too much for the mother of heaven, and she returned to her palace.

The next morning she set off again and heard an old voice saying, “Heavenly Father, send

rain. If it rains, I can sow my beans.” She sent a heavy rain, which lasted all day.

But in the evening on her way home, she heard a young girl say with a sigh, “Heavenly Father, please send fine weather. Otherwise all the ginger I am drying will rot.” The mother of heaven could bear it no longer, and with a groan she returned to her palace. During the third day she kept to her room.

In the evening the ruler of heaven returned from his journey, and she told him all that had happened and begged him to forgive her. He said generously, “It isn't very difficult. You must send a strong wind to blow on the rivers, and a gentle breeze on the pears. Rain must fall during the night in order to sow beans, and the sun shine during the day to dry the ginger.”

The mother of heaven understood at once, but asked with a smile, “Why didn't you tell me before?”

- TRADITIONAL CHINESE TALE



APRIL 25

More than any other time in history, mankind faces the crossroads.
One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness, the other to total extinction.
I pray we have the wisdom to choose wisely.

- WOODY ALLEN



APRIL 26

One of Master Bankei's students came to him and asked, "How can I get rid of my terrible anger?"

Without pause Bankei commanded, "Show it to me now."

"I can not just bring it out and show it to you," the student confessed. "It comes on its own without warning."

Bankei said, "Then it is not your true nature. If it were, it would always be with you."

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



The fly cannot be driven away by getting angry at it.

- TRADITIONAL WEST AFRICAN PROVERB



APRIL 27

Believe nothing because a wise man said it.

Believe nothing because it is generally held.

Believe nothing because it is written.

Believe nothing because it is said to be divine.

Believe nothing because someone else believes it.

But believe only what you yourself judge to be true.

- BUDDHA



APRIL 28

Overstraining is the enemy of accomplishment.

**Calm strength that arises from
a deep and inexhaustible source
is what brings success.**

- RABINDRANATH TAGORE



APRIL 29

**Like a lovely flower,
full of color but lacking in fragrance,
are the words of those
who do not practice what they preach.**

Like a lovely flower

**full of color and fragrance
are the words of those
who practice what they preach.**

**The scent of flowers or sandalwood
cannot travel against the wind;
but the fragrance of the good
spreads everywhere.**

**Neither sandalwood nor the tagara flower,
neither lotus nor jasmine,
can come near
the fragrance of the good.**

- FROM THE DHAMMAPADA (BUDDHIST SACRED TEXT)



APRIL 30

**Before enlightenment,
I chopped wood and carried water.**

**After enlightenment,
I chopped wood and carried water.**

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST SAYING



MAY 1

**If two angels were sent down from heaven —
one to conduct an empire, and the other to sweep a street —
they would feel no inclination to change employments.**

- ISAAC NEWTON



A dairymaid can milk cows to the glory of God.

- MARTIN LUTHER



MAY 2

**He is enlightened who joins in this play knowing it as play,
for man suffers only because he takes as serious what the gods made for fun.**

- ALAN WATTS



MAY 3

**Happiness is neither within us only, or without us;
it is the union of ourselves with God.**

- PASCAL



**A happiness that is sought for ourselves alone can never be found:
for a happiness that is diminished by being shared is not big enough to make us happy.**

- THOMAS MERTON



One of the best ways to worship God is simply to be happy.

- TRADITIONAL HINDU SAYING



MAY 4

A pious man came in lamentation to the great Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, the one people called the Baal Shem Tov, the Master of the Good Name. The man's son had forsaken the religion of his people and the father was grief-stricken.

“What shall I do, Rabbi?” he cried.

“Do you love your son?” the Baal Shem Tov asked.

“Of course I do,” said the man.

“Then,” said the rabbi, “love him even more.”

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



MAY 5

**Even as the scent dwells within the flower,
so God resides always within your heart.**

- TRADITIONAL SIKH WISDOM



**You are a second world in miniature;
the sun and moon are within you,
and also the stars.**

- ORIGEN



**If you wish to know the Divine,
feel the wind on your face**

and the warm sun on your hand.

- BUDDHA



MAY 6

**That prayer has great power
which a person makes with all his might.
It makes a sour heart sweet, a sad heart merry,
a poor heart rich, a foolish heart wise,
a timid heart brave, a sick heart well,
a blind heart full of sight, a cold heart ardent.
It draws down the great God into the little heart;
it drives the hungry soul up into the fullness of God;
it brings together two lovers, God and the soul,
in a wondrous place where they speak much of love.**

- MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG



**Everyone prays in their own language,
and there is no language that God does not understand.**

- DUKE ELLINGTON



Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of Himself.

- MOTHER TERESA



**More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.
Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.**

- ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON



**Prayer does not change God,
but it changes the one who prays.**

- SOREN KIERKEGAARD



Falling into prayer is the same thing as falling in love.

- YOGI BHAJAN



MAY 7

A holy man named Aman made a journey to see the powerful Haroun Al-Rashid, the Caliph who governed a great empire. When Aman at last was allowed to see the Caliph, he

put forth a simple question to him: “If you were dying of thirst and alone in the desert, what would you give for a single cup of water?”

The Caliph did not even pause for a moment. “I’d give half my kingdom!” he shouted.

Aman nodded. Then quietly he asked, “And, what if the water you drank somehow filled you up so much you were about to burst? With your life in danger, O great Caliph, what would you give for a few pills that would cure your condition and keep your soul alive?”

“Surely I would give up the other half of my kingdom,” Haroun Al-Rashid proclaimed.

“Why then, O great Caliph,” the saintly Aman inquired, “do you talk about what fantastic worth your kingdom has when you yourself are willing to give up the whole of it for a mere cup of water and a handful of pills?”

- TRADITIONAL SUFI STORY



MAY 8

Consider the flame of a single lamp.

**Though a hundred thousand people come and light their own lamps from it
so that they can cook their food and ward off the darkness,**

the first lamp remains the same as before.

Blessings are like this, too.

- BUDDHA



MAY 9

None are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm.

- HENRY DAVID THOREAU



MAY 10

**God could not be everywhere,
so He made mothers.**

- JEWISH PROVERB



The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother.

- ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX



Paradise is found at the feet of the mothers.

- MUHAMMAD



MAY 11

In the beginner's mind, there are many possibilities.

In the expert's mind, there are few.

- SHUNRYU SUZUKI



MAY 12

A man came across the Buddha on the road one day and was awestruck. "Are you a God?" he asked.

"No," the Buddha replied.

"Are you an immortal?"

"No."

"A holy saint?"

Once again, the Buddha answered, "No."

"Then," the man asked him, "what are you?"

The Buddha simply said, "I am awake."

- TRADITIONAL BUDDHIST ANECDOTE



MAY 13

**I am mad with love
And no one understands my plight.
Only the wounded
Understand the agonies of the wounded,
When the fire rages in the heart.**

- MIRABAI



**Love shook my heart,
Like the wind on the mountain
Troubling the oak-trees.**

- SAPPHO



**In sandy earth or deep
in valley soil I grow,
a wildflower thriving
on your love.**

- FROM THE SONG OF SONGS (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



MAY 14

**Things never go so well that one should have no fear,
and never so ill that one should have no hope.**

- TURKISH PROVERB



MAY 15

**If simply saying God's name brought liberation,
saying candy made your mouth sweet,
saying fire burned your feet,
saying water quenched your thirst,
saying food eliminated hunger,
the whole world would be free.**

- KABIR



MAY 16

The Zen Master Ikkyu was clever even as a child. His master had a precious old teacup that one day Ikkyu mishandled and broke. He stood there stunned with the pieces of the cup in his hands.

When he heard the footsteps of his teacher, Ikkyu instantly put his hands behind his back. When his master approached, Ikkyu promptly asked him, “Master, why do people have to die?”

His teacher replied simply, “This is only natural. Everything has just so long to live and then it comes time to die.”

Ikkyu then brought the broken teacup into view and said, “Dear master, it was time for your cup to die.”

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST TALE



MAY 17

**How much more foolish are those who depend upon words
and seek understanding by their intellect!
They try to hit the moon with a stick.
They scratch their shoes when their feet itch.**

- *WU-MEN*



MAY 18

It is forbidden to live in a town that does not have a green garden.

- FROM THE JERUSALEM TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



MAY 19

Heracles was journeying on a narrow road when he saw what looked like an apple on the ground. When he stepped on it, the object instantly became twice as big. Seeing the extraordinary growth, Heracles stomped on it with both feet and smashed it mightily with his club. As a result, the thing expanded so rapidly it blocked the road. Heracles threw down his club and stared at it dumbfounded.

The goddess Athena appeared to him then and said, “Dear brother, leave that thing alone! It is the spirit of argument and disharmony. If you keep from touching it, it can do no harm. But, as you have seen, if you try to fight, it only grows greater.”

- FABLE OF AESOP



MAY 20

Every child is an idea of God.

- EBERHARD ARNOLD



The child within us is simple and daring enough to live the Secret.

- LAO-TZU



**If you want to see the face of the Messiah,
just look at the children.**

- RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON



MAY 21

Chuang-tzu had a dream and when he woke up this is what he said: "I, Chuang-tzu,

dreamed that I was a butterfly, flying here and there. I thought only of things a butterfly takes a fancy to and thought about none of the things a man like myself does. Suddenly I woke up. There I was, Chuang-tzu, the man once more.

“Now I do not know if I am a man dreaming I was a butterfly or if I am a butterfly dreaming I am a man!”

- TRADITIONAL TAOIST STORY



MAY 22

**If for a moment we make way with our petty selves,
wish no ill to anyone, apprehend no ill,
cease to be but as a crystal which reflects a ray —
what shall we not reflect!**

What a universe will appear crystallized and radiant around us.

- HENRY DAVID THOREAU



MAY 23

Never has a man who has made himself crooked

been able to make others straight.

- MENCIUS



MAY 24

**May the hand of a friend always be near to you
and may God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.**

- TRADITIONAL IRISH BLESSING



**I want to be your friend
For ever and ever without break or decay.
When the hills are all flat
And the rivers are all dry,
When there is lightning and thunder in winter,
When it rains and snows in summer,
When Heaven and Earth come together,
Not till then will I part from you.**

- ANCIENT CHINESE OATH



It is because one antelope will blow the dust from the other's eye

that two antelopes walk together.

- TRADITIONAL WEST AFRICAN PROVERB



MAY 25

**Sometimes I go about pitying myself,
and all the time I am being carried on great winds across the sky.**

- TRADITIONAL OJIBWE TRIBAL SAYING (NATIVE AMERICAN)



MAY 26

God often visits us, but most of the time we are not at home.

- FRENCH PROVERB



Our best chance of finding God is to look in the place where we left him.



MAY 27

Once there was a man who wandered the world seeking to fulfill his greatest wishes, but no matter where he searched he still found himself disappointed. At last one day, weary from the quest, he sat down underneath a great tree at the foot of a mountain. To him the tree seemed to be just like any other, but he was soon to discover that it was really The Great Wish-Fulfilling Tree, and that whatever one wishes for when seated underneath it instantly becomes true.

As he rested there, he pleasantly thought to himself, "What a delightful place this is. I wish I could have a beautiful big house built for me to live here." And in that moment a great mansion appeared before him.

The man was amazed that his wish had been granted and thought, "O, how wonderful it would be if I had a partner here to live with me. Then I would be completely happy!" In a flash a lovely woman appeared calling him "husband" and beckoning to him.

But thoughts of hunger came first to his mind. "I wish to have a great banquet of food to eat." Straightaway a huge table materialized, covered with all sorts of rich foods and delicacies of the man's liking. The man immediately began to feast, but midway through the meal, still feeling quite fatigued, thought to himself, "I wish I had a servant to serve me," and this too came to be.

After the meal, the man leaned against the tree with satisfaction and began to reflect, "How extraordinary it is that everything I wish comes true. There must be some mysterious power in this tree. I wonder if there is a demon who lives in it." And then another terrible thought followed. "O my," he said to himself, "this demon will probably eat me up," and that is just what it did.



MAY 28

**There is an ever-rotating wheel in this world.
He who is rich today may not be so tomorrow,
and he who is poor today may not be so tomorrow.**

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH SAYING



MAY 29

**Though the fig tree does no blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord.**

- FROM THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



MAY 30

**As the bee takes the essence of the flower
and flies without destroying its beauty and perfume,
so wander in this life.**

- BUDDHA



MAY 31

**The world was not left to us by our parents.
It was lent to us by our children.**

- AFRICAN PROVERB



JUNE 1

**We are all of us stars
and we all deserve to twinkle.**

-MARILYN MONROE



JUNE 2

Nasruddin brought a bow and arrows with him to the country fair and all his students came to see their teacher compete in the archery contest. As it was for each contestant, Nasruddin was given three shots at the target. Before he took his first shot, Nasruddin put on the kind of hat a soldier wears and stood up very straight. Then he pulled the bow back hard and fired. Nasruddin missed the target completely, and the crowd laughed mightily at him.

Then Nasruddin picked up the bow once more and drew it back. This time he used much less strength, and although the arrow flew straight at the target, it fell far short.

Nasruddin had only his third shot left. Now he simply turned to face the target and fired the third arrow. It hit dead center and the whole crowd went crazy! Everyone wanted to know how he made the last shot after not even having come close with the first two.

“I’ll tell you,” Nasruddin said. “For the first shot I was imagining I was a soldier and a terrible enemy faced me. Fear caused the arrow to fly high over the target. When I took the second shot, I was thinking like a man who had missed the first one and was so nervous he could not concentrate. He was weak with worry, and the shot was too.”

Nasruddin paused. Finally a courageous soul spoke up. “And what about the third one? Who fired that arrow?”

“Oh,” said Nasruddin. “That was *me!*”

-TRADITIONAL SUFI STORY



JUNE 3

**One should follow the wise, the intelligent, the learned,
the much enduring, the dutiful, the noble;
one should follow a good and wise man,
as the moon follows the path of the stars.**

- BUDDHA



JUNE 4

A fox was crossing a river when the waters carried him away into the narrows, and he became trapped. Seeing him helpless, a host of horseflies descended upon him.

After a long time, a wandering hedgehog came by, and, out of sympathy for the miserable fox, asked him: “Would you like me to drive off those terrible flies for you?” The fox pleaded with the hedgehog to do nothing of the kind.

“But why not?” asked the hedgehog very surprised.

“Because,” the fox said, “the flies on me now have sucked for so long they are completely full. If you got rid of them, the new ones would take the very last drop of blood from my body!”

- FABLE OF AESOP



JUNE 5

**Dear God, be good to me.
The sea is so wide, and my boat is so small.**

- BRETON FISHERMAN'S PRAYER



JUNE 6

**Love your enemies,
for they tell you your faults.**

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



JUNE 7

**When we look deeply into the heart of a flower,
we see clouds, sunshine, minerals, time, the earth,
and everything else in the cosmos in it.
Without clouds there could be no rain,
and without rain there would be no flowers.**

- THICH NHAT HANH



JUNE 8

**When I behold Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and stars that You set in place:
What is man that You have been mindful of him,
Mortal man that You have taken note of him,
That You have made him little less than divine,
And adorned him with glory and majesty.**

- FROM PSALM 8 (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



JUNE 9

**May all beings live happily and safe from harm
And may their hearts rejoice within themselves.
Whatever beings there may be with breath of life,
Whether they be weak or very strong,
Without exception, be they long or short,
Or middle-sized, or be they big or small,
Or thick, or visible, or invisible,
Or whether they dwell far or they dwell near,
Those that are here, those seeking to exist -
May all beings rejoice within themselves.
Let no one bring about another's ruin
And may none be despised in any way or place.
When provoked to animosity,
May no one wish ill of another being.**

- FROM THE SUTTA NIPATA (SACRED TEXT OF BUDDHISM)



JUNE 10

**It is better to suffer wrong than to do it,
and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.**

- SAMUEL JOHNSON



JUNE 11

The rabbi of Berdichev saw a man running down the street. He asked the man, “Why are you hurrying so?”

“I’m rushing to find my livelihood,” the man answered.

“And how do you know,” the rabbi said, “that your livelihood is running ahead of you. Maybe it’s behind you, and all you need to do is stop running and it will catch up to you.”

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH TALE



JUNE 12

If a pickpocket meets a Holy Man,

he will see only his pockets.

- BABA HARI DASS



JUNE 13

**God is really only another artist.
He invented the giraffe, the elephant, the cat.
He has no real style.
He just keeps on trying other things.**

- PABLO PICASSO



**Life is a great big canvas
and you should throw all the paint on it you can!**

- DANNY KAYE



JUNE 14

**Be content with what you have;
rejoice in the way things are.
When you realize there is nothing lacking,
the whole world belongs to you.**

- LAO-TZU



JUNE 15

Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly.

- G. K. CHESTERTON



JUNE 16

**It is as if a king had sent you to a country to carry out one special, specific task.
You go to the country and you perform a hundred other tasks,**

**but if you have not performed the task you were sent for,
it is as if you have done nothing at all.**

So man has come into the world for a particular task, and that is his purpose.

If he doesn't perform it, he will have done nothing.

- RUMI



JUNE 17

**So a man who is learning to use his eyes should begin by seeing a cartload of firewood;
a man who is learning to use his ears should begin by hearing the clang of bells.**

Whenever there is ease within, there are no difficulties outside.

- FROM THE BOOK OF LIEH-TZU (CLASSICAL TAOIST TEXT)



JUNE 18

Once, it is told, in ancient China there lived a father and his young son. As is appropriate, the father taught his son to practice the most beneficial behavior and admonished him to refrain from committing certain misdeeds. But over the years the child observed his father often did the very things he had proscribed.

One day, after receiving yet another warning, the boy spoke up. “But father, you do just the same,” he said. With that, the father took his son to a workshop where sacred statues for the temples were made. As they walked through the yard, they saw many great blocks of precious wood awaiting their time at the carver's hand. Inside, the master showed them figures of gods and goddesses, all in varying stages of completion. Some were just beginning to be sculpted while others glowed with brilliant colors and gold.

The father turned to his son and said, “Because I am older than you I am like one of the statues here that are finished. I have some achievements, but I also have my flaws. Once a statue has been carved, we must know, it cannot be changed.”

He paused. “But you, my child, are like the precious wood in the yard, yet to be formed. I do not want you to have the same faulty marks and misshapes that I have. This is why I tell you not to do certain acts, even though I, as you rightly say, do them myself. When you look at me, can you not understand how difficult it is to correct an error once it has been carved into you?”

“Please, my child, do not imitate your father and repeat my mistakes. In this way, you will become even more beautiful than I.”

- TRADITIONAL CHINESE STORY



JUNE 19

**God does not look at your forms and your possessions,
but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.**

- MUHAMMAD



JUNE 20

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



The man who has no imagination has no wings.

- MUHAMMAD ALI



JUNE 21

**We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark;
the real tragedy is when men are afraid of the light.**

- PLATO



JUNE 22

**He who stops completely before taking the next step
will spend a lifetime standing on one leg.**

- CHINESE PROVERB



Every step of the way to heaven is heaven.

- ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA



JUNE 23

A man was walking when he came upon a tiger. He ran and the tiger chased him to the top of a cliff. The man grasped a wild vine and swung himself over the edge.

As he hung suspended, the man heard the tiger above eagerly sniffing him. When he looked below, another hungry tiger awaited him. The man trembled, for only the thin vine kept him from the tiger's jaws.

Then two mice, a white one and a black one, began to nibble on the vine. The man saw right near him a delicious strawberry. Holding on tightly to the vine with one hand, the man snatched the strawberry with the other. How sweet it tasted!



JUNE 24

One day, while hunting, two brothers stumbled on a magic fish hidden in a tree. The older brother was cautious, but the younger brother had a great hunger in his belly. He grasped the fish and ran home with it in great haste. There he immediately cooked and greedily devoured the magic fish.

By the next day, the young man had himself become a fish. Soon other people came to fish from the magic pond, but the voracious hunter-turned-fish would have none of that. He turned into a great bear and killed a member of each fishing party.

A council was called and they concluded that if the bear lived, the people would be destroyed. Three men were chosen to kill the bear, but they failed and never returned.

Finally, the elder brother went to kill what his brother had become. He could not do so, but because he pursued the bear so doggedly, the bear, exhausted, agreed to leave his homeland. Once the bear had gone, the fish were plentiful again and the people prospered.

- TRADITIONAL SENECA TRIBAL TALE (NATIVE AMERICAN)



JUNE 25

**They deem me mad because
I will not sell my days for gold;
and I deem them mad because
they think my days have a price.**

- KHALIL GIBRAN



JUNE 26

**There is nothing as easy as denouncing.
It don't take much to see that something is wrong,
but it takes some eyesight to see what will put it right again.**

- WILL ROGERS



JUNE 27

**Advice is what we ask for
when we already know the answer**

but wish we didn't.

- ERICA JONG



JUNE 28

The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself.

- HENRY MILLER



JUNE 29

Nasruddin planted a flower garden but when the flowers came up so did a great crop of dandelions among them. Wishing to eliminate the unwanted guests, Nasruddin consulted with gardeners near and far, but none of their solutions worked.

Finally, Nasruddin traveled to the palace of the sheikh to seek the wisdom of the royal gardener himself. But alas, Nasruddin had already tried all the methods the kind old man recommended to him for eradicating such troublesome weeds.

Silently they sat together for a good long time. At last, the royal gardener looked at Nasruddin and said, "Well, then, the only thing I can suggest is that you learn to love

them.”

- TRADITIONAL SUFI TALE



JUNE 30

**When love is strong, a man and woman can make their bed on a sword's blade.
When love grows weak, a bed of sixty cubits is not large enough.**

- FROM THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



JULY 1

**The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities.
But to know someone here and there who thinks and feels with us
and who, though distant, is close to us in spirit,
makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.**

- GOETHE



JULY 2

**If a man is crossing a river, and an empty boat collides with his own skiff,
even though he be a bad-tempered man, he will not become very angry.**

But if he sees a man in the boat, he will shout at him to steer clear.

If the shout is not heard, he will shout again, and yet again, and begin cursing.

And all because there is somebody in the boat.

Yet if the boat were empty, he would not be shouting, and not angry.

**If you can empty your own boat crossing the river of the world,
no one will oppose you, no one will seek to harm you.**

- CHUANG-TZU



JULY 3

**Freedom is not worth having
if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes.**

- GANDHI



JULY 4

**A very good vision is needed for life
and the man who has it must follow it —
as the eagle seeks the deepest blue of the sky.**

- CHIEF CRAZY HORSE



JULY 5

**To be always talking is against nature.
For the same reason a whirlwind
never lasted a whole morning,
nor a rain storm all day.**

**Who is it that makes the wind and rain?
It is heaven and earth.
And if even heaven and earth
cannot blow or pour out for so long,
how much less in his speaking should man?**



JULY 6

**The clearest way into the universe
is through a forest wilderness.**

- JOHN MUIR



JULY 7

On a road among the eastern hills a Burmese traveler heard a Hillman shouting out his wares, which happened to be rice. But as he was shouting in his own language, the Burmese traveler did not understand and asked, “What is it? What is it?”

The Hillman, of course, knew Burmese, but like most Hillmen, he spoke it with a twang. To enlighten the Burmese stranger, he shouted the Burmese word for rice.

The Burmese word for rice was *sunn*, but because of his twang, it sounded like *sinn*, which meant “elephant.” So the Burmese traveller thought that the Hillman was warning him of an approaching wild elephant, and he started to run as fast as he could. The Hillman, although puzzled by the man’s behavior, ran behind him. The sun was hot, and the road was rough. About an hour later the two arrived at a village, and both fainted from sheer

exhaustion.

After the two strangers had been nursed back to consciousness, the villagers asked, “Why did you come running so hard? Did robbers waylay you, or did some wild animal chase you?”

“This Hillman here warned me of an approaching wild elephant,” explained the Burmese.

The Hillman looked at his fellow runner with amazement and denied that he had ever given such a warning. “Then why did you run?” the villagers asked.

“It was quite simple,” replied the Hillman. “I ran because he ran.”

- TRADITIONAL BURMESE BUDDHIST TALE



JULY 8

**The young man who has not wept is a savage;
the old man who will not laugh is a fool.**

- GEORGE SANTAYANA



JULY 9

**Deep peace
of the running wave to you,
Deep peace
of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace
of the air to you,
Deep peace
of the shining star to you.**

- CELTIC CHRISTIAN PRAYER CHANT



JULY 10

**Just to be is a blessing.
Just to live is holy.**

- RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL



JULY 11

**A person will be called to account on judgment day
for every permissible thing that he might have enjoyed but did not.**

- FROM THE JERUSALEM TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



JULY 12

**Trying to extinguish the drive for riches with money
is like trying to quench a fire by pouring butterfat over it.**

- HINDU PROVERB



Money can buy the husk of many things, but not the kernel.

**It brings you food, but not appetite;
medicine, but not health;
acquaintances, but not friends;
days of joy, but not peace and happiness.**

- HENRIK IBSEN



Money has never yet made anyone rich.

- SENECA



JULY 13

Master Tanzan, on the day of his death, called upon his assistant to send a batch of identical postcards. Each one simply said: “I am departing this world. There will be no further messages. Tanzan.”

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST TALE



JULY 14

In the face of an obstacle which is impossible to overcome, stubbornness is stupid.

- SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR



**I tell you the truth,
if you have faith as small as a mustard seed,
you can say to this mountain,
move from here to there and it will move.
Nothing will be impossible for you.**

- JESUS



JULY 15

**When I am done thinking,
I wander in the woods gathering handfuls of flowers.**

- RYOKAN



JULY 16

**What if you slept?
And what if in your sleep, you dreamed?
And what if in your dream you went to heaven
and there plucked a strange and beautiful flower?
And what if when you awoke, you had the flower in your hand?
Ah! What then?**

- SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE



If you dream it, you can do it.

- WALT DISNEY



JULY 17

On his early morning walk along the shore, an old man noticed a young woman picking up starfish and tossing them into the ocean. As she was passing him, the old man said, “Pardon me, but why are you picking up all those starfish?”

The young woman answered, “Because if I leave them stranded, they’ll die in the hot sun.” “But,” the old man said, “this beach is miles long and there must be millions of starfish on it. No matter how many you rescue, how can it make any difference?”

The young woman looked down at the starfish in her hands, threw it into the sea, and said: “It makes a difference to this one.”

- CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL STORY



JULY 18

**God is an angel in an angel,
and a stone in a stone,
and a straw in a straw.**

- JOHN DONNE



The distance between you and God is as thin as an insect's wing.

- FROM THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB (SACRED SIKH SCRIPTURE)



The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

- GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS



JULY 19

**Grant me the ability to be alone;
may it be my way every day to go outdoors
among the trees and grasses,
among all growing things,
and there may I be alone,
to talk with the one
that I belong to.**

- PRAYER OF RABBI NACHMAN OF BRATZLAV



**Teach us, Lord, to accept our limitations.
It is of great advantage that we shall know our place,
and not imagine that the whole universe exists for us alone.**

- MOSES MAIMONIDES



JULY 20

In a small hut, Hakuin lived a quiet life devoted to monastic purity. When the young unmarried daughter of the village grocer became pregnant, she named Hakuin as the father.

Her outraged parents went to Hakuin and charged him with the deed. Hakuin simply said, “Is that so?”

When the child was born, once again the parents came to Hakuin. They handed him the baby and demanded he take responsibility for raising it. Hakuin said, “Is that so?” and took the baby in his arms. Dutifully, he began to look after the infant.

A year later, the young woman could bear it no longer. She confessed that the real father was a young man who worked in the nearby fishmarket. The parents went to Hakuin once more, this time making deep apologies and asked him to return the child.

Hakuin said only, “Is that so?” and returned the baby to them.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



JULY 21

A troubled mother took her daughter to see Mahatma Gandhi, who was world-renowned for his great spiritual discipline. It seems the young girl had become addicted to eating sweets and her mother wanted Gandhi to speak to her about this harmful habit and convince her to drop it.

Upon hearing the request, Gandhi paused in silence and then told the mother, “Bring the girl back to me in three weeks and I will speak to her then.”

Just as she was instructed, the mother returned with her daughter, and Gandhi, as he had promised, spoke to the girl about the detrimental effects of eating too many sweets. He counseled her to give them up.

The mother gratefully thanked Gandhi, but was perplexed. “Why,” she asked him, “did you not speak to my daughter when first we came to you?”

“My good woman,” Gandhi replied, “three weeks ago I myself was still addicted to sweets!”

- STORY OF GANDHI



JULY 22

**Generosity is not in giving me that which I need more than you do,
but it is in giving me that which you need more than I do.**

- KHALIL GIBRAN



JULY 23

**The little that one produces oneself with a broken hoe
is better than the plenty that another gives you.**

- TRADITIONAL WEST AFRICAN PROVERB



JULY 24

**Fear less, hope more;
eat less, chew more;
whine less, breathe more;
talk less, say more;
hate less, love more;
and all good things are yours.**

- SWEDISH PROVERB



JULY 25

**The stick that is at your friend's house
will not drive away the leopard.**

- CENTRAL AFRICAN PROVERB



JULY 26

An old guru and his disciple were on their way, about to cross a turbulent river, when they came upon a young woman standing on the shore. Sensing her tremendous fear, the guru asked if they could be of service. The woman thanked him greatly. Although she desperately needed to cross, she confessed, her fear of drowning had paralysed her.

Immediately upon hearing this, the old guru lifted up the woman in his arms, took her safely to the other shore, and left her to go happily to her destination.

The old guru and his disciple simply walked on in silence, but after some hours had passed, the young disciple abruptly cried out: "Tell me, my teacher, how did it feel to hold such a woman in your arms?" Almost breathlessly he went on: "Her lovely arms embracing you, her thighs wrapped around you, her sparkling eyes gazing into yours, her beautiful breasts brushing against your chest?"

The old guru remained silent for quite a while. At last he turned to his disciple and said,

“You are the one who knows how it feels to carry such a woman. I put her down hours ago at the riverbank, but you are still holding her.”

- TRADITIONAL HINDU TALE



JULY 27

**The clouds above us come together and disperse;
The breeze in the courtyard departs and returns.**

**Life is like that, so why not relax?
Who can keep us from celebrating?**

- LU-YU



JULY 28

**This I know:
the only way to live
is like the rose which lives
without asking why.**

- MEISTER ECKHART



**The fragrance always remains
in the hand that gives the rose.**

- GANDHI



JULY 29

**The body is the soul's house.
Shouldn't we therefore take care of our house
so that it doesn't fall into ruin?**

- PHILO JUDAEUS



JULY 30

When you make the two one,

**and when you make the inner as the outer
and the outer as the inner
and the above as the below,
and when you make the male and female into a single one —
then shall you enter the Kingdom.**

- JESUS



JULY 31

**The origin of all trouble
Within this world
Is a single word
Spoken in haste.**

- FROM THE MORITAKE ARAKIDA (CLASSICAL SHINTO TEXT)



**Do not open your mouth
But keep guard over your lips
When you are provoked and angered.**

**If you speak out in haste
You shall have to atone later
So soothe your soul with silence.**



AUGUST 1

**Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart
and learn to love the questions themselves
like locked rooms and books that are written
in a very strange language.**

- RAINER MARIA RILKE



AUGUST 2

**And now, may kindly Columba guide you
To be an isle in the sea,
To be a hill on the shore,
To be a star in the night,
To be a staff for the weak.**

- TRADITIONAL CELTIC PRAYER



AUGUST 3

**A man should not breed a savage dog,
nor place a shaking ladder in his house.**

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH PROVERB



AUGUST 4

**It is a funny thing about life;
if you refuse to accept anything but the best
you very often get it.**

- SOMERSET MAUGHAM



AUGUST 5

**Do not tell tales about either friends or enemies.
Unless silence makes you an accomplice, never betray a secret.
Have you heard a rumor? Let it die with you.
Never fear, it will not make you burst.
A fool with a secret goes through agony like a woman in childbirth.**

- FROM THE WISDOM OF BEN SIRA (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



AUGUST 6

A pious nun made a beautiful golden statue of Buddha which she kept with her on all her journeys. After many years, she came to live in a small country temple where there were numerous altars, each with its own statue of Buddha.

The nun desired to worship only before her golden Buddha, so she fashioned a funnel to direct the sacred incense smoke directly to it — and not to any of the others. In just a short time, the face of the golden Buddha became black and ugly.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST TALE



AUGUST 7

**Out beyond fields
of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field.
I will meet you there.**

- RUMI



AUGUST 8

Integrity is so perishable in the summer months of success.

- VANESSA REDGRAVE



AUGUST 9

A poor and troubled man came to Kotzk to ask his rabbi's help. "Do not worry," the rabbi told him. "Pray with all your heart and surely God will hear and be merciful to you."

But the man was still grieved. "Rabbi," he confessed, "I do not know how to pray."

The rabbi's heart then filled with pity. "In that case," he said, "you really do have a lot to worry about."

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



AUGUST 10

God fits the back to the burden.

- SCOTTISH PROVERB



AUGUST 11

All that is sweet, delightful, and amiable in the world,

**in the serenity of the air, the fineness of seasons, the joy of light, the melody of sounds,
the beauty of colors, the fragranciness of smells, the splendor of precious stones,
is nothing else but Heaven breaking through the veil of this world.**

- WILLIAM LAW



AUGUST 12

**I would rather be ashes than dust,
I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze
than it should be stifled by dry rot.**

**I would rather be a superb meteor,
every atom in me in magnificent glow,
than a sleepy and permanent planet.**

- JACK LONDON



AUGUST 13

**The perfect man is a spiritual being.
Were the ocean itself scorched up, he would not be hot.
Were the Milky Way frozen hard, he would not feel cold.
Were the mountains to be shaken by thunder,
and the great deep to be tossed up by storm,
he would not tremble in such case;
he would mount upon the clouds of heaven and,
driving the sun and the moon before him,
pass beyond the limits of this world,
where death and life hold no more power over man.**

- CHUANG-TZU



AUGUST 14

**Think of Divine Abundance as a mighty, refreshing rain.
Whatever receptacle you have at hand will receive it.
If you hold up a tin cup, you will receive only that quantity.
If you hold up a bowl, that will be filled.
What kind of receptacle are you holding up to Divine Abundance?**

- PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



AUGUST 15

A lion fell in love with the daughter of a farmer and asked permission to marry her. The farmer was not pleased with the idea of his daughter marrying such an awful beast, but was not happy, to say the least, with the prospect of rejecting the lion either.

So the farmer took the lion aside and told him that he approved the marriage, but his daughter, understandably, was trembling with fear. If the lion would agree to have his long, sharp teeth and terrible claws removed, the farmer would then give his consent.

The lion was so enamored of his beloved that he agreed. But when he came, toothless and clawless, to claim his bride, he was met with laughter and ridicule. Then with nothing but a stick, he was chased off back to the forest.

- FABLE OF AESOP



AUGUST 16

**Of all that God has shown me
I can speak just the smallest word,
Not more than a honey bee
Takes on his foot
From an overflowing jar.**

- MECHTILD OF MAGDEBURG



AUGUST 17

Master Soyen Shaku was known to his students as a tough taskmaster who never wasted a moment. Nonetheless, he allowed them to sleep on hot summer days and they often wondered at this unexplained leniency on his part.

Their master had never spoken of it, but as just a boy of twelve he had already begun studying the deepest of spiritual questions and, as a consequence, related to the older monks as if he were even then a full-fledged monk himself.

One summer day, however, while his teacher was away, he could no longer maintain his concentration and became so sleepy in the monastery's stuffy air that he lay down on the floor near the doorway and napped. Three hours later, he suddenly woke up. His master had come back and it was too late to move!

"I beg your pardon," Soyen Shaku's master quietly said as he opened the door and most carefully stepped over his little student's body. "I most humbly beg your pardon."

Soyen Shaku never slept in the afternoon again.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



AUGUST 18

When it is dark enough,

you can see the stars.

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



AUGUST 19

**When an arrow is released from the bow, it may go straight,
or it may not, according to what the archer does.**

**How strange, therefore, that when the arrow flies straight,
it is due to the skill of the archer,
but when it goes amiss,
it is the arrow which receives the curses!**

- ATTAR



AUGUST 20

The Creator, Fidi Mukullu made everything in the world. He made the animals and people and food for them to eat. He planted banana trees in the earth, too.

When the bananas became ripe, he sent the sun to gather them. The sun brought a full basket back and Fidi Mukullu asked, “Did you eat any of the bananas?”

The sun said that he did not, but Fidi Mukulla decided to test him. He put the sun in a deep hole and asked, “When do you want to get out?”

“Early tomorrow morning,” said the sun.

“If you told me the truth, you will arise then,” said Fidi Mukullu and the sun did arise just so the next morning. The moon, too, was tested, and having told the truth like the sun, came out of the pit to find her place in the sky.

Then came man’s turn. He gathered the bananas but ate some on the way to Fidi Mukullu. When questioned, he said he had eaten none. The man wished to come out of the deep hole in the earth in five days, but once into the earth he never came out. Fidi Mukullu said, “The sun appears again, the moon appears again, but man, because he did not tell the truth, dies and does not reappear again.”

- TRADITIONAL CENTRAL AFRICAN STORY



AUGUST 21

**Our minds are like crows.
They pick up everything that glitters,
no matter how uncomfortable our nests get
with all that metal in them.**

- THOMAS MERTON



AUGUST 22

**When a man begins to call on the sacred name,
a lotus flower begins to grow in Paradise for him.**

- FA-CHAO



AUGUST 23

**It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life
that no man can sincerely try to help another
without helping himself.**

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON



**Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself,
and you will find that
this is the shortest way to benevolence.**

- MENCIOUS



**If you help others you will be helped,
perhaps tomorrow, perhaps in one hundred years,
but you will be helped.**

- GEORGE GURDJIEFF



AUGUST 24

**Why was Adam created on the sixth day, after all the other creatures?
So that should a person become prideful, he may be reminded
that the gnats preceded him in the order of creation.**

- FROM THE *BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)*



AUGUST 25

**I am not going to die,
I'm going home like a shooting star.**



AUGUST 26

Some children were playing by a river making sandcastles. Each one built his own and then defended it, saying, “It’s mine.”

When all the castles were finished, one child kicked over another one’s, completely destroying it. That castle owner flew into a rage, punched the offender in the face, and pulled his hair. “He has ruined my castle,” the child shouted to the others. “Come help me give him what he deserves.”

The children beat the one who had knocked over the castle, and they stomped on him too. Then they went back to play with their own castles, each one saying, “This castle is mine; don’t touch it!”

After a while, it began to get dark and the children thought they ought to be going home. No one cared about the sandcastles anymore. One child trampled on his and another pushed his over with his hands. Then they all turned away and went home.

- TRADITIONAL BUDDHIST STORY



AUGUST 27

**Even after all this time
The Sun never says to the Earth,
"You owe me."
Look what happens with a love like that.
It lights the whole sky.**

- HAFIZ



AUGUST 28

Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we stoop than when we soar.

- WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



AUGUST 29

**People are afraid when dark clouds gather and thunder clashes.
But clouds and thunder are nothing;
they are only the sources of rain for the hot and parched earth.**

Do not be afraid of clouds; do not be afraid of difficulties.

Keep moving straight ahead.

**Give your hand to God,
and He will keep you
in the light twenty-four hours a day.**

- BABA VIRSA SINGH



**It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare;
it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.**

- SENECA



AUGUST 30

**How beautiful it is to do nothing,
and then rest afterward.**

- SPANISH PROVERB



AUGUST 31

What else can I do, a lame old man, but sing hymns to God?

If I were a nightingale, I would do the nightingale's part;

if I were a swan, I would do as a swan.

But now I am a rational creature, and I ought to praise God.

This is my work. I do it, nor will I desert my post,

so long as I am allowed to keep it.

And I ask you to join me in this same song.

- EPICETUS



SEPTEMBER 1

As it is told, a man made a long journey to seek the wisdom of a renowned rabbi in a far away land.

When he arrived at the rabbi's house, he was much surprised to see that it was nothing more than a room. There, the rabbi sat on a bench at a small table surrounded only by the numerous volumes of books he continually pored over in study.

The seeker asked, "Good rabbi, where are all your furnishings? Where are all your belongings?"

Without pause, the rabbi answered, "Tell me, where are yours?"

"Where are mine?" said the startled man. "But I only came here for a short visit."

"So did I," the rabbi said.

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



SEPTEMBER 2

Rajah Koranya had a king banyan tree called Steadfast, and the shade of its widespread branches was cool and lovely. No one guarded the tree, and no one hurt another for its fruit.

Now there came a man who ate his fill of fruit, broke down a branch, and went his way. Thought the spirit dwelling in that tree, “How amazing, how astonishing it is, that a man should be so evil as to break off a branch of a tree, after eating his fill. Suppose the tree were to bear no more fruit.”

And the tree bore no more fruit.

- TRADITIONAL BUDDHIST STORY



SEPTEMBER 3

In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart.

- ANNE FRANK



SEPTEMBER 4

**God respects me when I work,
but loves me when I sing.**

- RABINDRANATH TAGORE



**There are halls in the heavens above
that open but to the voice of song.**

- FROM THE ZOHAR (ANCIENT MYSTICAL TEXT OF JUDAISM)



SEPTEMBER 5

One day, King Shavaji's great elephant ran amok, destroying everything in his path. As it so happened, the village know-it-all was just then returning from a lecture completely unaware of the rampaging elephant coming his way. The villagers tried to warn the man but he dismissed their fears for his safety. "Look, you ignorant fools," he snorted, "don't you know that you must see the God Rama in everything? Have you no spiritual understanding? Rama is in all things and creatures, so what do I care about an elephant? Remember to see Rama in everything."

The people thought the man was as mad as the elephant, but as he would not listen, they

let him go. When he came upon the enraged elephant, it lifted the man up like a stick and dashed him on some rocks beneath. Then it picked him up and threw him down several times more. Somehow the elephant was seized while the man still had life in him.

After a long time the man recovered from his injuries and went to have a word with his teacher. "See here," he argued, "you told me that Rama is all there is. I believed that the elephant was Rama and it almost killed me."

The teacher answered: "You fool. Why couldn't see Rama in the people who told you to stay clear of the elephant?"

- TRADITIONAL HINDU TALE



SEPTEMBER 6

**All ambitions are lawful except those which climb upward
on the miseries or credulities of mankind.**

- JOSEPH CONRAD



SEPTEMBER 7

A poor man scraped together just enough money to buy an old run-down farm. The very

next day he began to make improvements on the neglected property. After two years of hard work and good management, the farm began to prosper.

Having caught wind of the farmer's good fortune, the village priest showed up. "Well, neighbor," he declared, "God be praised, for He has done wonders with your farm."

"Pardon me, Father," retorted the man, "but you should have seen the farm when it was in God's hands."

- *CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL STORY*



SEPTEMBER 8

He who offers to me with devotion
only a leaf, or a flower, or a fruit,
or even a little water,
this I accept with joy,
because with a pure heart
it was offered with Love.

- *FROM THE BHAGAVAD GITA (HINDU HOLY BOOK)*



SEPTEMBER 9

**It is glory enough for me
That I should be Your servant**

**It is grace enough for me
That You should be my Lord.**

- TRADITIONAL MUSLIM PRAYER



SEPTEMBER 10

One hour of justice is worth a hundred of prayer.

- TRADITIONAL MUSLIM PROVERB



SEPTEMBER 11

Treat people and live amongst them in such a way

**so that when you die they will cry over you,
and while you are alive they long for your company.**

- TRADITIONAL MUSLIM SAYING



SEPTEMBER 12

**He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare,
and he who has one enemy will meet him everywhere.**

- ALI



**Pray for your enemies, that they may be holy
and that all may be well with them.**

**And should you think this is not serving God,
rest assured that more than all prayers,
this is indeed the service of God.**

- FROM THE TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



SEPTEMBER 13

In the middle of the hot desert the prophet Muhammad was reading from the holy book to a large group of eager listeners when a sickly cat walked up. After Muhammad nodded a warm welcome to the cat, it sat right down on the hem of his very precious robe, and went to sleep.

All day long Muhammad shared with the assembly, and as the sun rose to its greatest strength and fell again, no one moved from their place. The cat as well remained asleep and still, healing in the way cats do, in the protection of the prophet Muhammad and the softness of his robe.

At last, the day came to its end and everyone returned to their dwelling places to find peace for the night. Muhammad was the last to leave.

All alone under the stars, Muhammad took a knife and cut off the hem where the cat lay sleeping. He had ruined his precious robe, but had not woken up the cat!

- TRADITIONAL MUSLIM STORY



SEPTEMBER 14

I am a creature of God and my neighbor is also a creature of God.

I work in the city and he works in the country.

I rise early for my work and he rises early for his work.

Just as he cannot excel in my work, I cannot excel in his work.

Will you say that I do great things and he does small things?

We have learned that it does not matter whether a person does much or little

As long as he directs his heart to heaven.

- FROM THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



SEPTEMBER 15

**Let nothing frighten you.
Everything is changing;
God alone is changeless.
Patience achieves the aim.
Who has God lacks nothing;
God alone fills all needs.**

- PRAYER OF ST. TERESA OF AVILA



SEPTEMBER 16

Where there is forgiveness, there is God Himself.

- FROM THE ADI GRANTH (SIKH SACRED TEXT)



SEPTEMBER 17

There are seven kinds of offering that can be practiced by even those who are not wealthy.

The first is the physical offering. This is to offer service by one's labor.

The highest type of this offering is to offer one's own life.

The second is the spiritual offering.

This is to offer a compassionate heart to others.

The third is the offering of eyes.

This is to offer a warm glance to others, which will give them tranquility.

The fourth is the offering of countenance.

This is to offer a soft countenance with a smile to others.

The fifth is the speech offering.

This is to offer kind and warm words to others.

The sixth is the seat offering.

This is to offer one's seat to others.

The seventh is the offering of shelter.

This is to let others spend the night at one's home.

These kinds of offering can be practiced by anyone in everyday life.

- BUDDHA



SEPTEMBER 18

On Rosh Hashanah, the Rabbi of Berdichev sought the most righteous person to blow the sacred ram's horn. Blowing the shofar was the sign that the New Year had begun and all were to prepare for the upcoming Day of Atonement.

As each candidate came forward, the rabbi asked, "What holy thoughts will you be thinking when you blow the shofar?" But no one's answer satisfied him.

Finally, a man approached who said that he was ignorant of holy teaching and had no great and lofty thoughts. "Then what is it you will be thinking as you blow the shofar?" asked the rabbi.

"I'll be thinking about my four unmarried daughters and how they are to find husbands. I'll say to God, 'I'm doing my duty by You, now You do your duty by me.'"

He was the one chosen to blow the shofar.

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



SEPTEMBER 19

God is our refuge and strength,

a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
The holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
God will help it when the morning dawns.

- FROM *PSALM 46* (*HEBREW SCRIPTURES*)



SEPTEMBER 20

Children begin by loving their parents;
as they grow older they judge them;
sometimes they forgive them.

- *OSCAR WILDE*



SEPTEMBER 21

**Though a tree grow ever so high,
the falling leaves still return to the ground.**

- MALAY PROVERB



SEPTEMBER 22

**We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.**

- WINSTON CHURCHILL



SEPTEMBER 23

**The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer,
and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen,**

while several persons are at the same time calling for different things,

**I possess God in as great tranquility
as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament.**

- BROTHER LAWRENCE



**Let us know peace.
For as long as the moon shall rise,
For as long as the rivers shall flow,
For as long as the sun will shine,
For as long as the grass shall grow,
Let us know peace.**

- TRADITIONAL TIS-TSIS-TAS/CHEYENNE TRIBAL PRAYER (NATIVE AMERICAN)



**You have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless,
until they rest in you.**

- ST. AUGUSTINE



SEPTEMBER 24

Never try to teach a pig to sing.

It wastes your time and annoys the pig.

- MARK TWAIN



SEPTEMBER 25

Be kind; everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

- JOHN WATSON



Those who act kindly in this world will have kindness.

- FROM THE QUR'AN (HOLY BOOK OF ISLAM)



My religion is very simple — my religion is kindness.

- DALAI LAMA



SEPTEMBER 26

King Solomon wanted to build a great temple for people to pray to God. He wanted to build on the holiest of places in all Israel, but what spot was that?

One night, it is said, Solomon took a long walk in the fields. He saw a man carrying heavy sacks of wheat, one after the other, from one barn to another nearby. Then the man slipped away into the dark night. “He must be a thief,” Solomon thought, but he decided to keep watching.

Soon a different man appeared. He did the same thing, only he carried the sacks of wheat back to the original barn! Then he, too, left in silence.

The next day Solomon commanded the first man to see him. “Why do you steal wheat from your neighbor in the middle of the night?” he asked him.

The man replied, “I do not steal. My neighbor is my brother. He has a wife and many children to feed while I do not. He needs much more than I do, but he won’t take any extra wheat from me. So every night I secretly carry wheat from my barn to his.”

Then Solomon asked the other man to come and asked him why he took wheat from his barn and put it in another. The man answered, “I have the help of my whole family, but my brother has none. He has to pay for help, and so he needs more wheat. He won’t take it from me, so in the night I secretly bring the wheat to him.”

Solomon brought the two men together and told them what each of them had done. “No wonder my pile of wheat sacks always stays the same,” they both said, and laughed. And then they embraced each other with a hug full of love!

Solomon said, “Now I know the holiest place in all Israel! It is your land, where brothers love each other this much. So the temple shall be built here!”

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



SEPTEMBER 27

Oh Great Spirit, Whose voice I hear in the winds,

**Life to all the world, hear me.
I come before you, one of your many children.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.**

**Let me walk in beauty and make
my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made,
my ears sharp to hear your voice.**

**Make me wise, so that I may know
the things you have taught my people,
the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
I seek strength not to be superior to my brothers,
but to be able to fight my greatest enemy — myself.**

**Make me ever ready to come to you
with clean hands and straight eyes,
so when life fades as a fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.**

- PRAYER OF CHIEF YELLOW LARK



SEPTEMBER 28

A man went to the same house of prayer as the holy Baal Shem Tov. However, he never

brought his simple-minded son with him, for the boy had not learned to read from a prayer book.

When the boy turned thirteen and was to become a full-fledged member of the community, the father decided at last to take him to worship on Yom Kippur, the Holiest of Holy Days. But without his father's knowledge, the boy slipped his little shepherd's flute into his pocket just before they left home.

All through the service, for hour after hour, the boy sat perfectly still and quiet. But when the additional holiday service began, the boy asked if he now could play his flute. His father angrily told him to hush. When the boy persisted, the father clasped his hand over the boy's pocket to stop him from getting out his flute.

At last, the Closing Service began. The boy suddenly grabbed his father's hand away, pulled out his flute, and blew mightily into it. The worshipers were horrified but the Baal Shem Tov, without pause, went on with the service.

Afterward, the Baal Shem Tov revealed it was only because the boy played his music that the congregation's prayers had been carried up to heaven.

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



SEPTEMBER 29

**If we are to achieve greatness
and a name celebrated all over the earth,
but find not favor with the Lord,
what would it all be worth?**

- GURU NANAK



SEPTEMBER 30

**We never know how high we are
till we are called to rise.**

- EMILY DICKINSON



OCTOBER 1

Go slowly and you shall surely arrive.

- MILAREPA



OCTOBER 2

**The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them,
but to be indifferent to them.**

- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



OCTOBER 3

When a customer came to buy his donkey, Rabbi Safra was saying his morning prayers so he made no response at all to the buyer's offer. Taking the rabbi's silence as a rejection, the man upped the price. As the rabbi remained still, the buyer again substantially added to his bid. But Rabbi Safra remained concentrated all the while in prayer.

After the rabbi finished, he said to the buyer, "I had decided to sell you my donkey at the first price you spoke of, but I did not want to interrupt my prayers to talk to you. So, you may have the donkey at that price — any other offers I will not accept."

- AHA OF SHABHA



OCTOBER 4

**If at first the idea is not absurd,
then there is no hope for it.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN



OCTOBER 5

**When you waste a moment,
you have killed it in a sense,
squandering an irreplaceable opportunity.
But when you use the moment properly,
filling it with purpose and productivity,
it lives on forever.**

- RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON



OCTOBER 6

**When a man suffers he ought not to say, “That’s bad!”
Nothing that God imposes on man is bad.
But, it is all right to say, “That’s bitter!”
For among medicines there are some made with bitter herbs.**



OCTOBER 7

**You never know what is enough
unless you know what is more than enough.**

- WILLIAM BLAKE



OCTOBER 8

Once there was a man who was not only a very pious Jew, he was also a student of the mystical Kabbala. Over the years, he had increased the time he devoted to prayer and holy invocations to the point where they occupied virtually the whole day. This poor man slept only a few hours each night, for he was certain not to miss either of the especially sacred times for prayer to the Almighty, midnight and dawn. With all this, he expected to be showered with blessings, but instead he waxed poorer and poorer and found it terribly difficult to support his family even in the most meagre way. With his wife's encouragement, he went to see his teacher, a master of the Kabbala known for his great wisdom.

The rabbi heard the man's story and asked only, "What do you do the first thing in the

morning?”

The man answered truthfully, “I wash and purify myself for morning prayers. I prepare my ritual garments properly so as to make sure I am right before my God.” And so he spoke, describing how he completed the morning prayers so righteously that it was well into the day before he began work, taking care of the animals and his other tasks.

The rabbi said only, “Feed your chickens,” and with that ended the meeting.

The poor man spent many a day pondering the mystical meaning of his rabbi’s instructions, “Feed your chickens.” Deciding it could only mean that he had been lacking in truly nourishing his soul and that he needed to pray even more, he did just that. But his affairs (if it were possible) took a still greater turn for the worse.

In desperation, he returned to the rabbi and told him of his woes. Once again, the rabbi simply said, “Feed your chickens.”

On the way home, the good man received a revelation — a divinely simple revelation. The rabbi meant exactly what he said: “Feed your chickens” — the real chickens his family kept to both eat and sell for profit!

The next morning he fed the chickens the very first thing, and from then on he prospered in all ways.

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



OCTOBER 9

**When one who has a true hold on life walks on land
he does not meet tigers or wild buffaloes.
In battle, he is not touched by weapons of war.
Indeed, a buffalo that attacked him
would find nothing for his horns to butt,
a tiger would find nothing for its claws to tear,
a weapon would find no place for its blade to lodge.**



OCTOBER 10

Wonder rather than doubt is the root of knowledge.

- RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL



**Spiritual knowledge is like water;
it takes the color and shape of the cup.**

- SHAH NAQSHBAND



**If one is not oneself a sage or saint,
the best thing one can do is to study the works of those who were.**

- ALDOUS HUXLEY



**Trees and stones will teach you that which
you can never learn from masters.**

- ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX



**It is possible to fly without motors,
but not without knowledge and skill.**

- WILBUR WRIGHT



I am still learning.

- MICHELANGELO



OCTOBER 11

You must always do the thing you think you cannot do.

- ELEANOR ROOSEVELT



OCTOBER 12

**You are to be a wanderer,
coming to and going from strange villages.**

**It may be that you
accomplish nothing in any of those places.
It may be that the goods you carry to trade
are not found favorable anywhere.**

Do not turn back; keep your step strong.

**You will accomplish that which
the Master of the Universe gives you to do.**

- CHILAM BALAM



OCTOBER 13

**The beauty of the trees,
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass,
speaks to me.**

**The summit of the mountain,
the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me**

**The faintness of the stars,
the freshness of the morning,**

**the dewdrop on the flower,
speaks to me.**

**The strength of the fire,
the taste of salmon,
the trail of the sun,
and the life that never goes away,
they speak to me.
And my heart soars.**

- CHIEF DAN GEORGE



OCTOBER 14

One day a farmer went out from his farm. He closed the gate to the yard where all the animals stayed, meaning to return in a short while. But days and days went by and the farmer did not come back. All the animals became very hungry and thirsty. Even the rooster lost the energy to crow.

The animals sat motionless in the shade of a big tree, trying to stay alive until the farmer gave them food and water again. But the peacock gathered all his remaining strength together.

He rose up, opened his multi-colored tail, and strutted before all the other animals.

“Mama,” asked a little chicken, “why is the peacock showing off his tail like that?”

“Because the peacock is so proud of the way he looks,” she answered. “My child, this is a fault that will only disappear with death.”

- FABLE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI



OCTOBER 15

Laughter is the language of the soul.

- PABLO NERUDA



**I am especially glad of the divine gift of laughter:
it has made the world human and lovable,
despite all its pain and wrong.**

- W. E. DU BOIS



**If you're not allowed to laugh in Heaven,
I don't want to go there.**

- MARTIN LUTHER



OCTOBER 16

Poor Nasruddin was reduced to living on a diet of chickpeas and bread, while his neighbor dined on fancy delicacies provided by the King himself.

One day his neighbor said to Nasruddin: “If you were truly wise, you would learn to flatter the King and obey his every whim like I do. Then you would not have to live on chickpeas and bread.”

Nasruddin answered, “And if you would learn to live on chickpeas and bread like I do, then you would not have to flatter the King and obey his every whim.”

- TRADITIONAL SUFI TALE



OCTOBER 17

In their freedom, birds make
Expanding circles in the sky.
How do they learn to be free?
They fall — and by falling
Are given wings to fly.

- RUMI



OCTOBER 18

An elderly Chinese martial arts master who could still toss around eight of his best students simultaneously was asked, “If you were accosted by a gunman in an alley, what would you do?”

“Run like hell,” he replied.

- CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL ANECDOTE



OCTOBER 19

A gentle hand may lead an elephant with a single hair.

- ANCIENT PERSIAN PROVERB



OCTOBER 20

**Hold on to what is good
Even if it is a handful of earth**

**Hold on to what you believe
Even if it is a tree which stands by itself.**

**Hold on to what you must do
Even if it is a long way from here.**

**Hold on to life
Even when it is easier letting go.**

**Hold on to my hand
Even when I have gone away from you.**

- TRADITIONAL TEWA/PUEBLO TRIBAL WISDOM (NATIVE AMERICAN)



OCTOBER 21

**Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
but trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.**

- WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



OCTOBER 22

**Turn yourself into gold
and then live wherever you please.**

- RAMAKRISHNA



OCTOBER 23

**A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile
the moment a single man contemplates it,
bearing within him the image of a cathedral.**

- ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY



OCTOBER 24

When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.



OCTOBER 25

Arriving at the marketplace, a poor priest, dressed in rags, begged for a pear from a rich farmer. Instead, the busy farmer cursed the priest for pestering him.

The market guard, seeing the large crowd getting upset at the farmer's refusal, bought a single pear himself and gave it to the priest. The humble priest thanked the guard, turned to the crowd, and announced, "Please allow me to offer some fragrant pears to all of you."

"But you have only one yourself," they said, "and no money to buy more."

"I need only one," he replied, proceeded to gobble up the precious pear, and removed a single seed from its core. The priest took this seed, quickly dug a small hole, and planted it. He asked for a large bucket of hot water and poured it over the pear seed.

Behold! A tiny seedling appeared. In what seemed like just a brief moment, it became a full-grown tree laden with masses of ripe, golden pears. The priest calmly picked the luscious fruits, presented them to the people, and his promise fulfilled, walked on.

- TRADITIONAL TAOIST TALE



OCTOBER 26

Useless is a great yield of milk from a cow that kicks the pail over.

- MUHAMMAD MUINUDDIN CHISHTI



OCTOBER 27

**My heart stands in waiting and hope
as the trees stand still through the darkness of night.**

- HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN



OCTOBER 28

**Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence.
Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with great talent.
Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.
Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence, determination alone are omnipotent.**

- RAY KROC



OCTOBER 29

How do geese know when to fly to the sun?

Who tells them the seasons?

How do we, humans, know when it is time to move on?

**As with the migrant birds, so surely with us,
there is a voice within, if only we would listen to it,
that tells us so certainly when to go forth into the unknown.**

- ELISABETH KÜBLER-ROSS



OCTOBER 30

The one known as the Laughing Buddha lived as a poor monk in the monastery of Fenghua. He always had a bag with him, even when eating or sleeping, so everyone called him the Monk with the Bag.

One day, the God of Fire came to visit the temple and reduced it to ashes. The abbot ordered the Monk with the Bag to collect offerings to rebuild the temple, and in obedience he set off with his bag. After many days wandering, he arrived at the house of a widow who owned an entire mountain covered with tall trees, most of which had not been touched in over a hundred years.

The Monk with the Bag begged the widow to let him fill his bag with her trees, and thinking he was making a joke, she gave him her permission. The monk employed some foresters, cut down every tree on the mountain, and put them all in his bag.

When she saw what had happened, the widow was shocked. She knelt down before the Monk with the Bag but he said, “Do not kneel. You have made your offering.” And smiling he added, “In just three years, you will have all your trees once more.”

- ANCIENT CHINESE BUDDHIST STORY



OCTOBER 31

We ourselves cannot put any magic spell on this world.

The world is its own magic.

- SHUNRYU SUZUKI



NOVEMBER 1

The heron's a saint when there are no fish in sight.

- BENGALESE PROVERB



NOVEMBER 2

One day, the Mullah Nasruddin was walking through a cemetery, when he fell into an old grave. “How would it feel to be really dead?” he wondered. In this frame of mind he heard a noise, and it occurred to him that it must be the Angel of Reckoning coming to take him. In truth, it was only a caravan passing nearby.

Nasruddin leaped out of the grave and, stumbling, spooked the entire train of camels. It took the camel drivers a great while to recapture their beasts and, frustrated, they beat Nasruddin for having caused such a problem.

By the time he got home, Nasruddin was in quite a state. His wife asked him why he looked the way he did and why he was so late.

“I have been dead,” Nasruddin said matter-of-factly.

She could not resist. “Well, then,” she asked, “what is it like?”

“Oh, it’s all right,” Nasruddin answered, “as long as you don’t upset the camels.”

- TRADITIONAL SUFI STORY



NOVEMBER 3

If you are reluctant to ask the way, you will be lost.

- MALAY PROVERB



NOVEMBER 4

**This is the greatest success I can dream of for my life:
to have spread a new vision of the world.**

- PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN



NOVEMBER 5

**It is said that a wise man rules over the stars,
but this does not mean that he rules over the influences
which come from the stars in the sky.**

**It means that he rules over the powers
which exist in his own constitution.**

- PARACELUS



NOVEMBER 6

There was a young man who had gone to school to learn things of the spirit. He considered himself to be a great teacher, but when he moved to a new town nobody came to listen to him. Everybody there was already studying with a wise and well-respected rabbi.

The young teacher was frustrated, so he figured out a way to make the rabbi look stupid. After that, he thought, people would come to him instead of the master.

One day the young teacher caught a small bird and went to see the rabbi and his students. He strode right up to the rabbi, held out his hand, and said, "If you are so wise, tell us, is the bird in my hand alive or dead?"

If the rabbi said the bird was dead, the young man would open his hand, the bird would fly away, and the master would be shown to be foolish. If the rabbi said the bird was alive, the young man would swiftly crush the bird to death in his hand. Then he'd open it and say, "Look, the bird is dead." Either way the rabbi would be proven wrong and all the students would choose to study with the new teacher.

The young man was impatient. He demanded the rabbi answer. "Tell me now," he said, "if the bird is alive or dead!"

The rabbi looked at the young man and smiled. "My friend," he said, "the answer is entirely in your hands."

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



NOVEMBER 7

**If you meditate on your ideal,
you will acquire its nature.**

**If you think of God day and night,
you will acquire the nature of God.**

- RAMAKRISHNA



NOVEMBER 8

**Man is a ladder placed on the earth
and the top of it touches heaven.
And all his movements and doings
and words leave traces in the upper world.**

- CHASSIDIC JEWISH SAYING



NOVEMBER 9

**Those who bring sunshine to the faces of others
cannot keep it from themselves.**

- JAMES M. BARRIE



NOVEMBER 10

**Just as a few dead flies cause perfume to stink,
so do a few stupid acts ruin a reputation for wisdom.**

- FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



NOVEMBER 11

**It is the wind and the rain, O God,
the cold and the storm that make this earth of Thine
to blossom and bear its fruit.**

**So in our lives it is storm and stress and hurt and suffering
that make real men and women bring the world's work
to its highest perfection.**

- W. E. B. DU BOIS



**Although the world is full of suffering,
it is also full of the overcoming of it.**

- HELEN KELLER



NOVEMBER 12

Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch.

- BAHÁ'U'LLÁH



NOVEMBER 13

Death was walking toward a city one morning and a man asked him, “What are you going to do there?”

“I’m going to take one hundred people,” Death replied.

“That’s horrible!” the man said.

“That’s the way it is,” Death said.

“Well, we’ll see about that” said the man as he hurried to warn everyone he could about Death’s plan. As evening fell, he met Death again. “You told me you were going to take one hundred people,” the man said. “Why did one thousand die?”

“I kept my word,” Death answered. “I only took one hundred. Worry took the rest.”

- CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL STORY



NOVEMBER 14

In the hand that made the rose shall I with trembling fall?

- GEORGE MEREDITH



NOVEMBER 15

If, in order to succeed in an enterprise,

**I were obliged to choose
between fifty deer commanded by a lion,
and fifty lions commanded by a deer,
I should consider myself more certain of success
with the first group than with the second.**

- ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



NOVEMBER 16

**In terms of space,
the universe embraces me
and swallows me up like an atom;
still by my thought I may embrace the universe.**

- PASCAL



NOVEMBER 17

A man in charge of sacrifices to the gods gave his assistants a single goblet of wine. One

apprentice said to the others, “There isn’t enough here for all of us to drink. Let’s each draw a snake in the dirt, and the one who finishes first can drink the wine.”

They agreed and began drawing. The first to finish his snake reached for the goblet and was about to drink. But as he held the wine in his left hand, he kept drawing with the other. “I still can draw feet for it,” he said.

But before he was done, another man finished drawing and grabbed the goblet from him saying, “No snake has feet.” And he drank up the wine.

- ANCIENT CHINESE STORY FROM CHAN-KUO TS’E



NOVEMBER 18

**Right is right, even if everyone is against it;
and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it.**

- WILLIAM PENN



NOVEMBER 19

God gives nothing to those who keep their arms crossed.



NOVEMBER 20

**Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God
like a little child will never enter it.**

- JESUS



**If we are to reach real peace in the world,
we shall have to begin with children.**

- GANDHI



**Let us put our minds together
and see what we will make for our children.**

- CHIEF SITTING BULL



NOVEMBER 21

Yet when that light shines upon my soul which no place can contain,
that voice sounds which no tongue can remove,
I breathe that fragrance which no wind scatters,
I eat the food which is not lessened by eating,
and I lie in the embrace which satisfaction may never be taken from me.
That is what I love, when I love my God.

- *ST. AUGUSTINE*



I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God
who is sending a love letter to the world.

- *MOTHER TERESA*



NOVEMBER 22

We expect too much of God,
but He always seems ready.

- *JOHN F. KENNEDY*



NOVEMBER 23

**You never enjoy the world aright,
till the Sea itself floweth in your veins,
till you are clothed with the heavens,
and crowned with the stars;
and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world,
and more than so, because men are in it
who are every one sole heirs as well as you.
Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God,
as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres,
you never enjoy the world.**

- THOMAS TRAHERNE



NOVEMBER 24

**When you arise in the morning,
give thanks for the morning light,
for your life and strength.
Give thanks for your food**

and the joy of living.

- CHIEF TECUMSEH



Let those who have need of more ask for it humbly.

And let those who have need of less thank God.

- ST. BENEDICT



Gratitude is heaven itself.

- WILLIAM BLAKE



NOVEMBER 25

**May the blessed sunlight shine upon you
and warm your heart till it glows like a great fire
and strangers may warm themselves as well as friends.**

**And may the light shine out of the eyes of you,
like a candle set in the window of a house,
bidding the wanderer to come in out of the storm.**

- TRADITIONAL IRISH BLESSING



NOVEMBER 26

When King David was still a boy watching over his father's sheep, he often came upon spiders' webs strung across tree branches and shining in the sun. David thought the spiders were wonderful to weave such webs, but he could see no use for them.

David decided to ask God about it. "Why, O Creator of the world, did you make spiders? You can't even wear their webs as clothing!"

God answered David, "A day will come when you will need the work of this creature. Then you will thank me."

David grew up and became a courageous warrior. He defeated the giant Goliath and many enemies of the people of Israel. He married King Saul's daughter and the people adored him as the greatest man in the land.

Nonetheless, King Saul was jealous and afraid of David and sent his soldiers to kill him. David ran away to the wilderness in hopes that King Saul's anger would pass and David could return. But King Saul's men kept chasing him.

At last, the soldiers were very close. David ran into a cave to hide. He heard the footsteps of the men and knew that they would soon find him. David was so afraid his bones shook and hurt.

But then David saw a big spider at the front of the cave. Very quickly, it was spinning a web all the way across the opening. Just before the soldiers came up to the cave, the spider finished its work.

As the men started to enter, they ran into the web. "Look," they said, "this web is unbroken. If David were here, he'd have torn it to pieces. He must be hiding somewhere else. Let's go!"

So because of the spider, David's life was saved. David understood that God was wise and thanked God for creating all the creatures, including the spiders.

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



NOVEMBER 27

**A thankful person is thankful under all circumstances.
A complaining soul complains even if he lives in paradise.**

- BAHÁ'U'LLÁH



No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks.

- ST. AMBROSE



If the only prayer you say in your whole life is “thank you,” that would be enough.

- MEISTER ECKHART



NOVEMBER 28

First a person should put his house together, then his town, then the world.

-RABBI ISRAEL SALANTER



NOVEMBER 29

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

- ELEANOR ROOSEVELT



Whoever is small, is big.

But whoever is big, is small.

- FROM THE ZOHAR (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



NOVEMBER 30

Rabbi Akiva travelled with a donkey to lighten his load, a rooster to awaken him at dawn, and an oil lamp to study by at night. He trusted in God and believed that all God does is for the good.

One day, God made it that Rabbi Akiva arrived at a town after the gates had been closed,

so he had to sleep outside in the dangerous woods. When he, at last, sat down to study by the light of his lamp, a great wind arose and blew it out. So, saying to himself, "All is for the good" he lay down to sleep, confident the rooster would wake him early the next morning.

But then a fox came and carried the rooster away. Rabbi Akiva said again, "This too will be for the good," and with that fell asleep.

In the middle of the night, a lion pounced on the donkey and, before it made a sound, devoured it. Rabbi Akiva mourned over the life of his donkey, but saying, "Everything is surely for the good," he found joy and comfort and returned to a deep sleep.

When Rabbi Akiva awoke in the morning, he saw the town had been attacked and burned to the ground. "See," he said, "all is truly for the good. If I had gained entry into the town, or if my lamp had remained bright, or if my rooster had crowed, or my donkey brayed, these attackers who destroyed the town would have certainly come after me, too!"

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



DECEMBER 1

**Three things drain a person's health:
worry, travel, and sin.**

**Three things restore a person's good spirits:
beautiful sounds, sights, and smells.**

- FROM THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



**Never underestimate the healing effects
of beauty.**

- FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE



DECEMBER 2

**Always do right.
This will gratify some people,
and astonish the rest.**

- MARK TWAIN



DECEMBER 3

**How far that little candle throws his beams.
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.**

- WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



DECEMBER 4

**Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,
for thereby some have entertained angels unaware.**

- FROM PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS (CHRISTIAN NEW TESTAMENT)



DECEMBER 5

A visitor came to see a sick man and asked him what ailed him. After the sick man told him, the visitor said: "Oh, my father died of that same disease."

The sick man became terribly anxious, but the visitor said, "Don't worry, I'll pray to God to heal you."

To which the sick man answered: "And when you pray, add that I may be spared visits from stupid people like you."

- TRADITIONAL JEWISH STORY



**An anxious heart weighs a man down,
but a kind word cheers him up.**



DECEMBER 6

You have been granted, with your birth on this planet earth, extensive privileges.

The establishment strongly requests you follow this guide:

- 1. You may go anywhere you wish (as long as you pay the bills).**
- 2. You must check in regularly.**
- 3. Your visa may be revoked at any time with or without notice.**
- 4. Most services are provided freely (ask management about details).**
- 5. Enjoy your stay.**

- AARON ZERAH



DECEMBER 7

A soldier approached the monk Hakuin and demanded of him, “Tell me, is there really such a thing as heaven and hell?”

“Who are you?” Hakuin asked.

The soldier answered “I am a samurai warrior.”

“Ha!” Hakuin laughed at him. “You, a samurai! What kind of lord would take in a fellow like you? You look like nothing more than a common beggar in the streets.”

The soldier became furious and began to draw his sword, but Hakuin kept on: “So you have a sword, do you? I’ll bet it’s so dull you couldn’t cut my head off with it, even if you wanted to!”

With that, the enraged soldier lifted his sword above the monk’s head and Hakuin said, “Now the gates of hell are opening.”

The soldier, hearing these words, put back his sword and bowed in reverence to the monk.

“And,” said Hakuin, “now open the gates of heaven.”

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



DECEMBER 8

**He who forces time is forced back by time,
but he who yields to time finds time standing at his side.**

- FROM THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD (SACRED BOOK OF JUDAISM)



It is the wisest who grieve most at the loss of time.

- DANTE



Do not walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage.

- POPE JOHN XXIII



DECEMBER 9

**We can make our minds so like still water
that beings gather about us,
that they may see their own images,
and so live for a moment with a clearer,
perhaps even with a fiercer life
because of our quiet.**

- WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



**A mind that is fast is sick.
A mind that is slow is sound.
A mind that is still is divine.**

- MEHER BABA



DECEMBER 10

**It is time to come to your senses.
You are to live and to learn to laugh.
You are to learn to listen to the cursed radio music of life
and to reverence the spirit behind it
and to laugh at its distortions.
So there you are. More will not be asked of you.**

- HERMAN HESSE



DECEMBER 11

Eighty percent of success is just showing up.

- WOODY ALLEN



Success consists of getting up just one more time than you fall.

- OLIVER GOLDSMITH



DECEMBER 12

**Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,
where moth and rust destroy,
and where thieves break in and steal.**

**But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,
where moth and rust do not destroy,
and where thieves do not break in and steal.**

**For where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also.**

- JESUS



DECEMBER 13

What is life?

It is a flash of a firefly in the night.

It is a breath of a buffalo in the winter time.

**It is as the little shadow that runs across the grass
and loses itself in the sunset.**

- CHIEF ISAPWO MUKSIKA CROWFOOT



DECEMBER 14

Think of all the beauty still left around you and be happy.

- ANNE FRANK



**The Earth is beautiful
The Earth is beautiful
The Earth is beautiful
The top of its head is beautiful
Its legs, they are beautiful
Its body, it is beautiful
Its chest, it is beautiful
Its breath, it is beautiful
Its head-feather, it is beautiful
The Earth is beautiful**

- TRADITIONAL DINEH/NAVAJO TRIBAL SONG (NATIVE AMERICAN)



God is beautiful and loves beauty.



DECEMBER 15

**Where the spirit does not work with the hand,
there is no art.**

- LEONARDO DA VINCI



DECEMBER 16

There was a man who traveled throughout the world seeking the fulfillment of his deepest desires and the greatest of happiness. But in all his wanderings, he did not come to it. At last, tired from his arduous journey, he sat underneath a great tree at the foot of a mountain, which unbeknownst to him was really the Great Wish-Fulfilling Tree.

As he rested beneath the tree, he thought to himself, “It is so beautiful here. I wish I had a home on this very spot.” And instantly, a lovely home arose before him.

The man was delightfully surprised and he mused, “Ah, if only I had a wife to join me, then my happiness would be complete.” And with that, a beautiful woman approached, calling him “my sweet husband” and other such endearments.

“First things first,” he thought. “I am hungry, and I wish there was food to eat.” And

immediately a banquet table covered with the most exquisite dishes and delicacies appeared before the man. He hungrily began to feast, but, still tired, he thought, "I wish I had a servant to wait on me." The servant, too, promptly appeared.

His meal complete, the man leaned against the great tree, and thought, "How marvelous! Everything I wish for here comes true. There must be a mysterious power in this tree. I wonder if some kind of demon lives in it."

And with that thought, a great demon came forth. "Oh," the man thought, "this demon will probably devour me." And that is precisely what the demon did.

- TRADITIONAL HINDU TALE



DECEMBER 17

An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.

- FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)



DECEMBER 18

Soyen Shaku, the abbot, each morning took a walk to the nearby town accompanied by his assistant from the monastery.

One day, as the abbott passed a house, he heard a great cry from within. Stopping to inquire, he asked the inhabitants, “Why are you all wailing so?”

They said, “Our child has died and we are grieving.”

Without hesitation, the abbot sat down with the family and started wailing himself. As they were returning to the monastery, the abbot’s companion asked, “Master, is this family known to you?”

“No,” the abbot answered.

“Why then, Master, did you also cry?”

The abbot said simply, “So that I may share their sorrow.”

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST STORY



DECEMBER 19

**Men go abroad to wonder
at the height of mountains,
at the huge waves of the sea,
at the long courses of the rivers,
at the vast compass of the ocean,
at the circular motion of the stars,
and they pass by themselves without wondering.**

- ST. AUGUSTINE



DECEMBER 20

**The world will never starve for want of wonders,
but only for want of wonder.**

- G.K. CHESTERTON



DECEMBER 21

**From the Unreal lead me to the Real.
From Darkness lead me to Light,
From Death lead me to Immortality.**

- FROM THE UPANISHADS (SACRED TEXT OF HINDUISM)



DECEMBER 22

No snowflake falls in an inappropriate place.

- TRADITIONAL ZEN BUDDHIST SAYING



DECEMBER 23

**When you make peace with yourself,
you make peace with the world.**

- MAHA GHOSANANDA



DECEMBER 24

**The prophets are one family of God.
Some have come in one country, some in another.
But they belong to us all.
If we celebrate the day of our prophet and criticize others,**

**it is my feeling that our prophet will not be pleased,
and we will never become enlightened.**

God has emphasized the same message through each prophet:

**“Go and teach the people love,
teach them how to live well,
take away their fears and their evils.”**

In essence, all prophets sacrificed to create good human beings.

- BABA VIRSA SINGH



DECEMBER 25

You are the light of the world.

- JESUS



DECEMBER 26

**What you have may seem small;
you desire so much more.**

**See children thrusting their hands into a narrow-necked jar,
striving to pull out the sweets.
If they fill the hand, they cannot pull it out
and then they fall to tears.
When they let go of a few,
then they can draw out the rest.**

- EPICETUS



DECEMBER 27

I matter to God as He does to me.

- ANGELUS SILESIVS



DECEMBER 28

**When you get to the end of your rope,
tie a knot and hang on. And swing!**

- LEO BUSCAGLIA



DECEMBER 29

**I have been to the end of the earth.
I have been to the end of the waters.
I have been to the end of the sky.
I have been to the end of the mountains.
I have found none that were not my friends.**

- TRADITIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN PRAYER SONG



DECEMBER 30

The Baal Shem Tov, may he be remembered, used to go to a certain place in the forest whenever he faced an especially difficult situation. There he would light a fire and pray, and whatever needed to be done was done.

After the Baal Shem Tov died, his successor followed in his footsteps, and he, too, went to the very same place in the forest. He said, “We cannot light the fire anymore, for we don’t know the Master’s way with it, but we can say the prayer.” And whatever he asked in

prayer was, as before, accomplished.

This generation passed, and the new rabbi went to the woods and said, “The fire we are unable to light, and the prayer is gone from our minds. All we know is this holy place in the forest, and that will have to do.” His prayers also came to be.

In the fourth generation, the rabbi no longer made the journey to the holy place. He stayed at home, for, as he said, “The fire we cannot light, the prayer we don’t know anymore, nor do we remember the right place to go. All we can do is tell the story.” And that, too, was quite enough.

- TRADITIONAL CHASSIDIC JEWISH STORY



DECEMBER 31

It is at the year’s end that the fisherman tells of his fishing.

- GAELIC PROVERB



DEDICATION

To my parents Joseph and Bronia Krause, who from the very beginning showed me that

life is a great blessing, and to my daughter, Sari, who is one!



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I feel blessed that today we have access to so many spiritual traditions from all over the earth — and so many great people, too. I've had a marvelous time putting this book together, for by so doing I've deepened my connection to old friends and made many new ones. I am grateful for each and every source, and very happy to share their wisdom, wit, and wonder with you.

In addition, I especially want to thank my dear friend and agent, Nancy Ellis, and my original editor, Jackie Joiner, for first bringing this book to life in the world. I also greatly appreciate Donna Jenni who, with grace and good humor, miraculously transformed my handwritten manuscript into a real book and Matt Joubert who, with patience and diligent poise, revitalized it for today's digitally-savvy audience.

And, dear reader, one more thanks — to you for reading and enjoying *Every Day Is A Blessing*. I'd love to hear from you, so please... email me at zerah2@hotmail.com.

Many Blessings,
Aaron Zerah



ROSTER OF GREAT SOULS

Aesop (c. 6th century BCE) - Ancient Greek storyteller

Aha of Shabha (680-752) - Babylonian scholar and writer

Ali (c.602-661) - Arabian; Muhammad's son-in-law and eventual caliph of Islam

Muhammad Ali (Contemporary) - African-American world boxing champion and convert to Islam

Woody Allen (Contemporary) - American comedian, film maker, and writer

St. Ambrose (c. 339-397) - Roman Catholic Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Amenemope (c.11th century BCE) - Ancient Egyptian whose *Instructions* read like the Biblical Book of Proverbs

Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) - Danish story-teller and writer

Maya Angelou (Contemporary) - African-American writer, educator and sage

Eberhard Arnold (1883-1935) - German founder of Society of Brothers

Attar (died c.1229) - Persian Sufi mystic and poet

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) - North African convert to Christianity and author of the autobiographical *Confessions*

Marcus Aurelius (121-180) - Roman Emperor and Stoic philosopher

Meher Baba (1894-1969) - Indian mystic and spiritual teacher

Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892) - Persian prophet and founder of the Bahá'i faith

Pearl Bailey (1918-1990) - African-American singer, entertainer and Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations

Chilam Balam (c.12th century) - Mayan prophet known as the Jaguar Priest

James M. Barrie (1860-1937) - Scottish playwright and author of *Peter Pan*

Karl Barth (1886-1968) - Swiss theologian and professor who defied Hitler's edicts

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) - French Existentialist novelist; her book, *The Second Sex*, stimulated the feminist movement

St. Benedict (c. 480-547) - post-Roman founder of Christian monastic tradition

Yogi Berra (Contemporary) - Hall of Fame baseball player and celebrated sage

Yogi Bhaian (1929-2004) - Indian-born American spiritual leader and entrepreneur

William Blake (1757-1827) - English poet, painter, and mystic

Martin Buber (1878-1965) - Austrian-born Jewish philosopher and author of *I and Thou*

Buddha (c.563 BCE-c.483 BCE) - Born an Indian prince, he became the awakened one

Chief Sitting Bull (1834-1890) - Lakota/Sioux spiritual leader and medicine man; he helped defeat Custer but years later was arrested and killed for speaking for his people

Robert Burns (1759-1796) - Scotland's most renowned poet

Leo Buscaglia (1924-1998) - American philosopher of hugs and love

John Cage (1912-1992) - American composer of experimental new music

Joseph Campbell (1904-1987) - American scholar who renewed interest in *The Power of Myth*

Albert Camus (1913-1960) - French Existentialist writer, WWII resistance fighter, and Nobel Prize winner

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) - Scottish historian, philosopher, and social critic

Pablo Casals (1876-1973) - World-famous Spanish cellist and composer

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) - French Catholic priest and paleontologist who created a new philosophy of evolution

G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) - English Roman Catholic essayist and writer of detective stories

Muhammad Muinuddin Chishti (1142-1236) - Indian who helped establish a Sufi Order founded on music

Chuang-tzu (c.370 BCE-286 BCE) - Chinese philosopher and a principal founder of Taoism

Winston Churchill (1874-1965) - English statesman who lead his nation in WWII

St. Bernard de Clairvaux (1090-1153) - French Catholic monk and mystical writer

Leonard Cohen (Contemporary) - Canadian poet and songwriter

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) - English lyric poet

Colette (1873-1954) - French authoress of sensual, naturalistic novels

Confucius (c.552 BCE-c.479 BCE) - Chinese philosopher-sage and teacher

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) Polish-born English seaman-turned-writer of exotic stories and novels

Chief Isapwo Muksika Crowfoot (1830?-1890) - Siksika/Blackfoot warrior and peacemaker

Dalai Lama (Contemporary) - World spiritual leader; Tenzin Gyatso, is the 14th Dalai Lama (Ocean of Wisdom) in the history of Tibet and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize

Dante (1265-1321) - Italian Romantic poet and author of *The Divine Comedy*

Baba Hari Dass (Contemporary) - Indian-born American guru; silent for over a half century

Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519) - Italian painter, scientist, and genius

Miles Davis (1926-1991) - celebrated African-American trumpeter and composer of “cool jazz”

Dorothy Day (1897-1980) - American social activist and co-founder of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) - Reclusive American poet noted for her spirituality

Walt Disney (1901-1966) - American cartoonist who created Mickey Mouse and Disneyland

John Donne (1573-1631) - English adventurer, poet, preacher, and metaphysician

W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) - African-American professor and civil rights activist; at age 91 he moved to Africa

Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1327) - German priest and mystic accused of heresy

Thomas Edison (1847-1931) - American inventor of (among others) the light bulb, recording, and movies

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) - German-born Jewish physicist; he revealed the Theory of Relativity

Duke Ellington (1899-1974) - African-American jazz composer, pianist, and band leader.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) - American minister and writer who developed the philosophy of transcendentalism

Epictetus (c.55-c.135) - Roman slave who became a Stoic philosopher

Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466-1536) - Dutch humanist and writer

Abraham ibn Ezra (1092-1167) - Spanish Jewish scholar and poet

Fa-Chao (c.8th century) - Chinese Buddhist poet

Fa-Yen (885-958) - Chinese Zen Buddhist monk and teacher

St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) - Italian monk who gave up wealth and a military career to help the poor and seek peace between Christians and Muslims

Anne Frank (1929-1945) - German-Jewish girl who hid from the Nazis in Holland but eventually was captured and killed; her diary captivated the world

Viktor Frankl (1905-1997) - Austrian-Jewish Holocaust survivor and author of *Man’s Search for Meaning*

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) - American philosopher and author who helped write the *Declaration of*

Independence

Robert Frost (1900-1980) - One of America's most celebrated poets

Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) - Indian spiritual leader (known as Mahatma or Great Soul) who practised and preached non-violence

Chief Dan George (1899-1981) - Tell-lall-wwatt Indian (Canada) spiritual leader, Oscar-nominated film actor, and environmental spokesperson

Maha Ghosananda (1929-2007) - Cambodian Buddhist monk and global Interfaith leader for peace

Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931) - Syrian-born American mystic, poet, and painter

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) - German philosopher, scientist, and author of *Faust*

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774) - Irish poet and playwright

Billy Graham (Contemporary) - American Christian evangelist who has preached all over the world

George Gurdjieff (1877-1949) - Georgian-born mystic and spiritual teacher

Hafiz (c.1320-c.1389) - Persian-born Sufi poet and mystic

Rabbi Moshe Hakotun (unknown) - Legendary Jewish sage

Thich Nhat Hanh (Contemporary) - Vietnamese-born Buddhist monk who teaches meditation as a path to peace

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) - Polish-born American Jewish scholar, civil rights activist, and religious dialogist

Herman Hesse (1877-1962) - German-born novelist and mystic whose books were banned by the Nazis

Rabbi Hillel (died early 1st century) - Jewish sage who lived in Jerusalem and taught kindness like his successor, Jesus

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) - English Jesuit priest and poet

Chief Crazy Horse (c.1849-1877) - Oglala/Sioux who defeated Custer and was later killed resisting capture

Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) - English novelist and early experimenter with hallucinogenic drugs

Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) - Norwegian playwright and early feminist

William James (1842-1910) - American writer, philosopher and psychologist

Jesus (c.4 BCE-c.30) - Jewish rabbi whom Christians see as the Messiah, the Son of God, or Divine himself

Pope John XXIII (1881-1963) - Italian who initiated a great change in the Roman Catholic Church

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) - Spanish mystic, monk, and friend of Teresa of Avila

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) - English writer, lexicographer, and moralist

Erica Jong (Contemporary) - American feminist novelist

Julian of Norwich (c.1342-after 1413) - English mystic and poet who saw God as mother and father

Kabir (died 1518) - Indian saint and poet who saw no difference between people of religions

Danny Kaye (1913-1987) - American film entertainer and United Nations Ambassador to the children of the world

Helen Keller (1880-1968) - American writer who overcame both deafness and blindness

John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) - American President - the youngest in history and the first Roman

Catholic

Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882-1927) - Indian-born musician who brought Sufism to the West and created the world's first Interfaith worship service

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) - Danish theologian known as the father of existentialism

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) - African-American civil rights activist whose dream of equality inspired millions; practised and preached non-violence and won the Nobel Peace Prize

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986) - Indian-born philosopher and writer

Ray Kroc (1902-1984) - American entrepreneur and creator of McDonald's franchise business

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926-2004) - Swiss-born American author of *On Death and Dying*

Lao-Tzu (unknown) - Legendary Chinese "Old Master" known as the author of the Tao te Ching, and the founder of Taoism

Chief Yellow Lark (1854?-?) - Lakota/Sioux spiritual leader who shared the prayers of his people with non-natives

William Law (1686-1761) - English spiritual writer and mystic

Brother Lawrence (1605-1691) - French foot soldier who became a monk and discovered the grace of a simple life

Ursula K. LeGuin (Contemporary) - American science fiction writer

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) - American President during the Civil War who eventually decreed the end of slavery

Jack London (1876-1916) - American adventurer and novelist

Martin Luther (1483-1546) - German Catholic priest whose "protest" sparked the Reformation and the birth of Protestant churches

Lu-Yu (732-804) - Chinese poet and author of *The Book of Tea*

Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) - born Jewish in Muslim Spain, he wrote great philosophical and religious works, like *Guide for the Perplexed*, in Arabic

Somerset Maugham (1874-1965) - English doctor-turned-novelist

Mechtild of Magdeburg (1212-1297) - German mystic and writer

Mencius (c.391 BCE-c.308 BCE) - Early Confucian philosopher of personal and social responsibility

George Meredith (1828-1909) - English poet and novelist

Thomas Merton (1915-1968) - French-born American mystic and convert to Catholicism who studied and taught Eastern spiritual practices

Michelangelo (1475-1564) - Florentine master painter, sculptor, architect, and poet

Milarepa (1043-1123) - Revered Tibetan Buddhist teacher who, according to legend, gave up revenge and became a yogi

Agnes de Mille (1905-1993) - American dancer and choreographer

Henry Miller (1891-1980) - American author of novels banned for their sexuality

Mirabai (c.1502 – c.1552) - Indian poet and mystic

Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962) - American movie star

Thomas More (1478-1535) - English statesman and Roman Catholic martyr and saint

Muhammad (570-632) - Born in Mecca, he received the Qur'an and became the Prophet of Islam

John Muir (1838-1914) - Scottish-born American naturalist and one of the world's first environmentalists

Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav (1771-1811) - Polish Chassidic Jewish mystic and storyteller

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) - First Sikh Guru and founder of the Sikh religion; he was an accountant who received God's call and began a new life of teaching and preaching

Shah Naqshband (1317-1389) - Central Asian Sufi master whose order has spread throughout the world

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973) - Chilean poet and Nobel Prize winner

Isaac Newton (1642-1727) - English scientist, theologian, and discoverer of the laws of gravity

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) - American theologian who greatly influenced Christians to look at social and political issues

Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) - English nurse called to God's service and renowned for her bravery in war

Anaïs Nin (1903-1977) - French-born American avant-garde novelist best known for her published diaries

Origen (c.185-c.254) - Egyptian Christian theologian who was one of the leading Biblical scholars of the early Church

Paracelsus (1493-1541) - Swiss alchemist, physician, and Kabbalist

Dolly Parton (Contemporary) - American singer/songwriter, actor and activist for children's literacy

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) - French mathematician and philosopher

St. Vincent de Paul (1580-1660) - French priest who founded a women's society to help the poor

William Penn (1644-1718) - English-born Quaker and founder of what later became the State of Pennsylvania

Philo Judaeus (c.25 BCE-c.50) - Egyptian-born Jewish philosopher who became well-known throughout the Roman Empire

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) - Spanish painter and sculptor; still the world's most famous "modern" artist

Plato (c.427 BCE-c.347 BCE) - Greek philosopher and author of *The Republic*

Ptah-hotep (c.2650 BCE) - Ancient Egyptian; world's first writer to be known by name

Ramakrishna (1836-1886) - Bengali mystic who taught all religions are a path to the same goal

Vanessa Redgrave (Contemporary) - English actor, Oscar-winner, and political activist

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) - German lyric poet and mystic

Tom Robbins (Contemporary) - American novelist

Will Rogers (1879-1935) - American humorist and actor known as the "cowboy philosopher"

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) - Popular American First Lady; representative to the United Nations and advocate of human rights

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) - American President who led the country during depression and war

Jellaludin Rumi (1207-1275) - Anatolian Sufi mystic poet of divine love and creator of the "whirling dervish" ecstatic dances

Ryokan (1758-1831) - Japanese Zen Buddhist monk and poet

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-1944) - French aviator and author of *The Little Prince*

Rabbi Israel Salanter (1810-1883) - Lithuanian Jew who founded the highly ethical Mussar movement

St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) - French Catholic co-creator of a new spiritual order

George Santayana (1863-1952) - Spanish-born American philosopher and author

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902-1994) - Ukranian-born American spiritual leader of the Lubavitcher Chassidic Jewish community

Seneca (c.4 BCE-65) - Roman dramatist and Stoic philosopher

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) - English poet and writer of the world's most well-known plays

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) - Irish dramatist, writer, and social critic

Angelus Silesius (1624-1677) - Germanic priest and poet

Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904-1991) - Polish-born American writer and Nobel Prize winner

Baba Virsa Singh (1925-2007) - Indian Sikh guru who founded an Interfaith community where all prophets are honored and all holidays are observed

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) - Scottish novelist most noted for creating Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Shunryu Suzuki (1905-1971) - Japanese Zen master who founded one of America's first Zen centers in San Francisco

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) - Anglo-Irish poet, satirist, and author of *Gulliver's Travels*

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) - Indian poet and philosopher; first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature

Chief Tecumseh (1768-1813) - Chief of the Shawnee who promoted peace among all tribes

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) - English lyric poet

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) - Spanish nun, mystic, and author of *The Interior Castle*

Mother Teresa (1910-1997) - Albanian-born nun who served the "poorest of the poor" in India and for her work won the Nobel Peace Prize

St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897) - French nun; her autobiography is simply called *The Story of a Soul*

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) - American philosopher and author of *Walden, or Life in the Woods*

Howard Thurman (1900-1981) - African-American minister and civil rights leader who in San Francisco founded America's first truly Interfaith congregation

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) - Russian writer, moral philosopher and peace activist

Thomas Traherne (c.1637 - 1674) - English theologian and mystic poet

Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) - American-born slave who became a leading abolitionist and women's rights advocate

Mark Twain (1835-1910) - American humorist and creator of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*

Voltaire (1694-1778) - French writer and philosopher; leading figure of the Enlightenment and catalyst of the French Revolution

George Washington (1732-1799) - American Revolutionary War leader and first President of the United States

John Watson (1850-1907) - Scottish clergyman and writer

Alan Watts (1915-1973) - English-born American spiritual teacher; among the first to actively share

eastern philosophies in the western world

H. G. Wells (1866-1946) - English novelist, social progressive and historian

John Wesley (1703-1791) - English Christian evangelist and founder of Methodism

Walt Whitman (1819-1892) - American poet most noted for his *Leaves of Grass*

Elie Wiesel (Contemporary) - Transylvanian-born Holocaust survivor and Nobel Prize-winning author

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) - Irish dramatist and renowned wit

Marianne Williamson (Contemporary) - American spiritual teacher and author

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) - English lyric poet

Wilbur Wright (1867-1912) - American who with his brother Orville built and flew the first airplane

Wu-Men (1183-1260) - Chinese Zen Buddhist who literally stayed awake until he reached enlightenment

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) - Irish poet and Nobel Prize winner

Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952) - Indian-born yogi; one of the first to teach meditation in America

Aaron Zerah (Contemporary) - Interfaith Minister, teacher, and author



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



From early childhood, Aaron Zerah has had faith that the world could come together in peace. His parents, both Holocaust survivors, showed (and continue to show) him the power of acceptance and love and the way to live in joy.

An ordained Interfaith Minister who honors the wisdom in all peoples and traditions, Aaron is the author of four previously published books: *365 Spirit* (original publication - *The Soul's Almanac*), *How the Children Became Stars*, *A Time to Mourn* (original publication - *As You Grieve*), and *Every Day Is a Blessing* which have been happily received and shared throughout the world. He has recently published the first of a series of children's books called *Spirit Storybooks* and a historical novel entitled *Joseph in the Land of the Mizraim*.

Aaron currently lives in the lovely town of Sechelt, British Columbia (near Vancouver) with his fifteen-year-old daughter, Sari, who is the delight of his life.