

Gems from the Teachers of World's Religions

We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of the RELIGION which is Oneness. — Swami Vivekananda



Celebration of
150th Birth Anniversary of
Swami Vivekananda
Ramakrishna Math &
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Sri Ramachandra



- Those who take shelter under Me in this world, meditating on Me and repeating the Mantra of My sacred name, will surely get My vision, even unasked, as I know they have no other refuge.
- It does not matter whether you are a man or a woman; your caste, name and position are not taken into account. You might belong to any Ashrama of life. Devotion is the only thing that is essential to worship Me. It is impossible for a person to see Me by the merit of sacrifice, austerity, charity or by the study of the Vedas or by performing the scriptural rites, if he is devoid of devotion to Me.
- The following is the way for cultivating devotion: Keeping company with My devotees, always serving Me and My Bhaktas, fasting on Ekadasi, celebrating the festivals connected with Me, hearing, reading and expounding My glories, worshipping Me with continuous devotion, and singing of My excellences. If one follows these precepts daily, one gets pure devotion.
- Those that have devotion towards Me will get knowledge and renunciation and they will attain to liberation from the round of births and deaths.
- Know that the chanting of My name destroys all sins in this world, if the chanting is done with one-pointed devotion and complete dependence upon Me.
- Sadhu, only they are to be reverenced and only they deserve to be called men, who have crossed the crisis of youth with ease.
- Do not be overjoyed if you get a fortune, neither should you be dejected if you lose it. Your mind should be well balanced. I, Rama, is the life of all souls. Your mind should be fixed on Me alone.
- If you have patience, you will never have any enemy.
- Even if you have got eyes, you need a light to see your steps in darkness. In the same way, even if you have enough knowledge, you need devotion to Sri Rama in order to see the right path.
- If you have devotion, then what more do you want? My Bhakta will get Jnana, Vijnana and Vairagya automatically. The sages say like this.
- When someone comes to me for refuge, I cannot disappoint him. This is my dharma. It does not matter if as a result I suffer. Even at the cost of my life I must do this duty of mine. Never can I deviate from this.

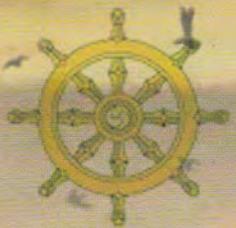




Sri Krishna

- Whenever righteousness declines and unrighteousness prevails, I manifest myself.
- Blessed are the pure in heart, for to them is given the knowledge of God.
- As the rising sun dispels the darkness of night, so the knowledge of Atman drives away all delusion.
- Even as the embodied self attains childhood, youth and old age in this body, so does it attain another body; the wise man does not get deluded by that.
- He who is without attachment for anything, who neither rejoices nor hates when he obtains good or evil, has his wisdom firmly fixed.
- When a person thinks deeply of sense-objects, he feels an attachment for them. Attachment gives rise to desire and desire breeds anger. From anger comes delusion which results in loss of memory (meaning, one forgets the precepts of holy men and scriptures). The loss of memory causes destruction of discrimination and from the ruin of discrimination the man perishes.
- A man of disciplined mind, who has his senses under control and who has neither attraction nor aversion for sense objects, attains tranquillity, though he may be moving amidst objects of the senses.
- Whoever has abandoned desires, and moves about without attachments and the sense of 'I' and 'mine' – he attains to peace.
- Whoever with devotion offers Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, that I accept—the devout gift of the pure-minded.
- Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give away, whatever austerity you practise, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering unto Me.
- When someone comes to me for refuge, I cannot disappoint him. This is my dharma. It does not matter if as a result I suffer. Even at the cost of my life I must do this duty of mine. Never can I deviate from this.

Lord Buddha

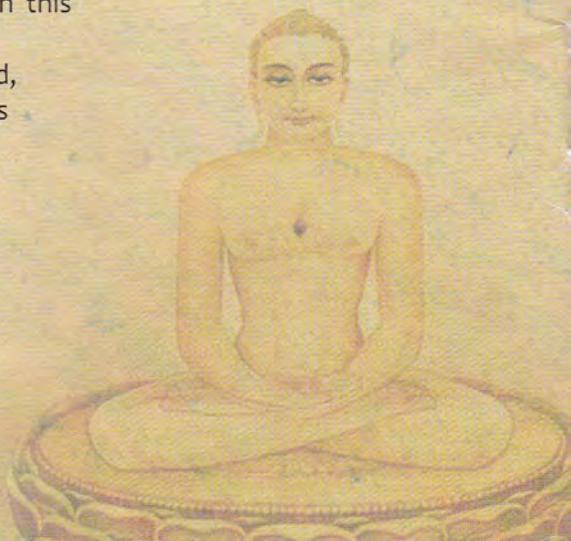


- The Tathagata does not seek liberation in austerities, but for that reason you must not think that he indulges in worldly pleasure, nor does he live in abundance. The Tathagata has found the 'Middle Path'.
- He who recognizes the existence of suffering, its cause, its cessation, and path leading to its cessation has fathomed the Four Noble Truths. He will walk in the right path. Right views will be the torch to light his way. Right aims will be his guide. Right words will be his dwelling-place on the road. His gait will be straight, for it is right behaviour. His refreshments will be the right way of earning his livelihood. Right efforts will be his steps; right thoughts his breath; and peace will follow in his footprints.
- Happy is he who has overcome all selfishness; happy is he who has attained peace, and happy is he who has found the truth.
- There is no immortality except in truth. For truth alone abides forever.
- Be like brothers; one in love, one in holiness, and one in your zeal for the truth.
- The distinctive signs of true religion are goodwill, love, truthfulness, purity, nobility of feeling and kindness.
- As a mother, even at the risk of her life, protects her son, her only son; so let him who has recognized the truth, cultivate goodwill among all beings without measure.
- That which is most needed is a loving heart.
- He who has attained mastery over himself is indeed a greater conqueror than one who has vanquished a thousand enemies, yet remains a slave to his sensory self.
- What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relatives could do, a well-directed mind does, and thereby elevates one.
- Let a man overcome anger by love, evil by good, greed by liberality, the lie by truth.



Lord Mahavir

- Sensuous enjoyments yield momentary pleasures but cause prolonged misery. By their very nature, they give maximum sorrow and minimum happiness. They are an obstacle to emancipation and a veritable mine of evils.
- A worldly person becomes the subject of attachment and aversion; as a consequence, karma binds his soul; the bondage of karma results in cycle of births. As a result of birth, he gets a body; the body has senses; the senses lead to their respective enjoyments which in turn result in attachment and aversion. Thus the soul is involved in the cycle of births and deaths.
- Supreme forgiveness, supreme humility, supreme straightforwardness, supreme truthfulness, supreme purity, supreme self-restraint, supreme austerity, supreme renunciation, supreme detachment and supreme continence are the ten characteristics of Dharma.
- I forgive all living beings; may all living beings forgive me. I cherish friendliness towards all and harbour enmity towards none.
- One who has overcome attraction towards women, can overcome all other temptations of his life easily just as a person who has crossed the great ocean, can cross a big river like the Ganges.
- As for men observing celibacy, company of women is prohibited; similarly for women observing celibacy company of men is condemned. (Both should avoid each other.)
- There are many virtuous women who are renowned for their purity and chastity. They are like goddesses on this earth and are even revered by celestials.
- One must conquer one's own self, for difficult it is to conquer it. One who does so, is blessed in this world and also in the next.
- Just as a fetter, whether made of iron or gold, binds a person, so also karma, be it auspicious or inauspicious, binds the soul.
- Just as fire fanned by powerful winds destroys heaps of firewood in no time so also the fire of meditation destroys heaps of Karma in a moment.



Lord Zarathushtra



- Ahura Mazda is the Lord of life and wisdom, light and the truth.
- When you go out into darkness, take Ahura Mazda's hand in your hand. That will be better than light and safer than a known way.
- If one acts according to Ahura Mazda's commandments, one need not be afraid of any mortal however mighty and powerful he may be.
- Sun, Moon and stars give light, but Ahura Mazda is the Light that lights them to light the world.
- Let your thought be inspired by Ahura Mazda; your words dictated by Him; and your deeds guided by Him.
- One need not scale the heights of heavens nor travel along highways of the world to find Ahura Mazda. With purity of mind and holiness of heart one can find Him in one's own heart.
- Neither mountains nor oceans separate man from Ahura Mazda, but evil thoughts do.
- Just as fire is broad-based at the bottom but pointed at the top, all differences and diversities at lower levels become resolved into unity and universality at the highest level, i.e., of divinity.
- Just as the different beams of fire, when brought close merge into one another, in the same way all individual souls merge with one another to constitute the universal soul.
- Prayer is the heavenward soaring of the soul on the wings of words.
- Great indeed is the efficacy of prayer. It opens the gate of one's inner temple to let Ahura Mazda in.
- A chaste woman is the noblest creation of Ahura Mazda.
- Woman is the teacher of gentility to man. She helps man to grow in moral height. She is the sustaining power of the life of man.





Jesus the Christ

- Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
- Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.
- And you shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment.
- And the second is this: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than this.
- Not everyone that says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but only he that does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say, 'Lord, Lord, have we not worked in your name? And in your name cast out devils? And in your name done many wonderful works?' And then I will say to them, 'I never knew you: You that work iniquity, depart from me.' Therefore whoever hears these sayings of mine and follows them, I will compare him to a wise man, who has built his house upon a rock.
- Heaven and earth will pass away: but my words will not pass away.
- What I say to you, I say to all. Watch, watch and pray, lest you should be tempted. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.
- Whosoever saves his life shall lose it: and whosoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what is a man profited, if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?
- No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
- I and my Father are one. Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.



Prophet Muhammad



- A man said, 'O Prophet of God! Which is the best (part) of Islam?' He said, 'That you give food (to the hungry), and extend greetings to all whom you know and whom you know not.'
- A Perfect Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands mankind is safe, and a Muhajir is he who flees from what God has forbidden. (*Those companions of Prophet Muhammad who fled from Mecca and went into exile with him were called Muhajir*)
- The greatest enemies of God are those who are entered into Islam, and do acts of infidelity, and who without cause, shed the blood of men.
- God's kindness towards His creatures is more than a mother's towards her babe.
- Adore God as you would if you saw Him; for, if you see Him not, He sees you.
- God is a unity, and likes unity.
- Go in quest of knowledge even unto China, i.e. even unto 'edge of earth'.
- He who knows his own self knows God.
- God enjoins you to treat women well, for they are your mothers, daughters, and aunts.
- Do not exceed bounds in praising me; I am only the Lord's servant; then call me the servant of God and His messenger.
- The most excellent Jihad (Holy War) is that for the conquest of self.



Sri Shankaracharya

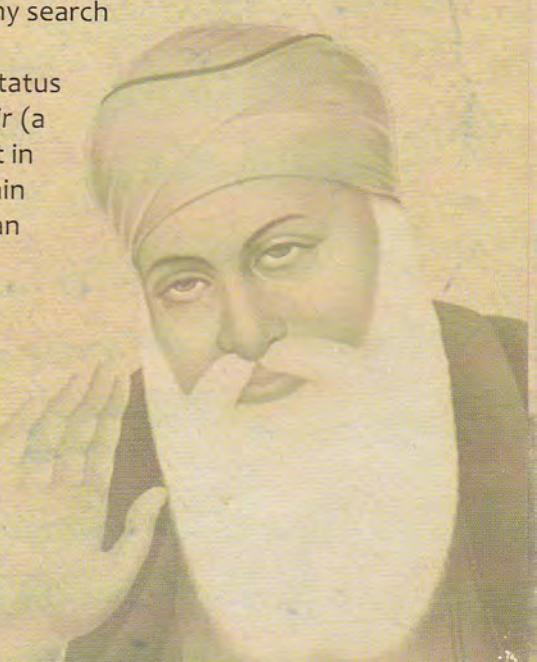
- Just as a piece of rope is imagined to be a snake (in the semi-darkness) and an oyster to be a piece of silver, so is the Atman taken to be the body by an ignorant person.
- Maya or Avidya can be destroyed by the realization of the pure Brahman, the one without a second, just as the mistaken idea of a snake is removed by discrimination about the rope.
- Just as a jar is all earth, so also is the body, all consciousness. The division, therefore, into the Self and non-Self is made by the ignorant to no purpose.
- Just as to a person suffering from a defect in the eye (jaundice), white things appear yellow, so does a person on account of ignorance sees Atman as the body.
- It is verily through the influence of ignorance that you who are the Supreme Self, find yourself under the bondage of the non-self, whence alone proceeds the round of births and deaths.
- A father has got his sons and others to free him from his debts, but he has got none but himself to remove his bondage.
- My refuge is neither my mother, nor my father, nor sons, nor brothers, nor others. My supreme refuge shall be the foot placed by my master on my head.
- There are three things which are rare indeed and are attained by the grace of God, namely a human birth, desire for liberation and the protecting care of a perfected sage.
- Among things conducive to liberation, devotion alone holds the supreme place. The seeking after one's real nature is designated as devotion.
- I do not ask of You, O Mother! Riches, good fortune, or salvation; I seek no happiness, no knowledge. This is my only prayer to You, that as the breath of life forsakes me, still I may chant Your holy name.
- When the mind becomes purified like a mirror, knowledge is revealed in it. Care should therefore be taken to purify the mind.



Guru Nanak



- God is one, but He has innumerable forms. He is the creator of all and He Himself takes human form.
- The absolute is wordless, imageless and nameless. When It came into being, It was called Word, which is the cause of all creation.
- Everyone utters the name of the Lord but only by mere utterance alone one does not realize Him.
- When through the Guru's grace the Lord is enshrined in the mind one gathers the fruit of that grace.
- To meet the saints and to have their company is the greatest pilgrimage. To see a saint gives one the merit of all the sixty eight places of pilgrimage.
- Remember the true Master within yourself and with the tongue repeat the word given by the Master.
- True devotees are not soiled in mind. Their pure minds dwell on the Lord alone. Through the Guru, they realize the word and they immerse themselves in the Lord's nectarine name. The wisdom of the Guru burns bright in them and the darkness of their ignorance is dispelled.
- The true Guru has given me the treasure of the name and my mind is filled with gladness.
- Like the black bee, I crave day and night for the honey of Your lotus feet. Grant Nanak, the Chatrik, the nectar of Your mercy, Lord, that he might merge in Your Name!
- As fragrance abides in the flower, as the reflection is within the mirror, so does the Lord abide within you, why search for Him without?
- By communion with the Word one can attain the status of a *Siddha* (a man of supernatural powers), a *Pir* (a Muslim divine), a *Sura* (a god) or a *Nath* (an adept in yoga). By communion with the Word, one can attain the powers of Shiva, Brahma, and Indra. One can win esteem from all irrespective of one's past.





Sri Ramakrishna

- You see many stars in the sky at night, but not when the sun rises. Can you therefore say that there are no stars in the heavens during the day? O man, because you cannot find God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.
- Many are the names of God and infinite the forms through which he may be approached. In whatever name and form you worship Him through that you will realize Him.
- One cannot see one's face in a mirror if the mirror is covered is covered with dirt. After the purification of the heart one sees God, through His grace. Chant His name and purify your body and mind. Purify your tongue by singing God's holy name.
- All women are parts of the Blessed Mother and should be looked upon as mothers.
- Don't find fault with anyone, not even with an insect. As you pray to God for devotion, so also pray that you may not find fault with anyone.
- The nearer you come to God, the more you feel peace. Peace, peace, peace – supreme peace! The nearer you come to the Ganges, the more you feel its coolness.
- When going to a strange country, one must abide by the directions of the guide who knows the way. Taking the advice of many would lead to utter confusion. So in trying to reach God one must implicitly follow the advice of one single Guru who knows the way to God.
- Do all your duties, but keep your mind on God. Live with all – with wife and children, father and mother – and serve them. Treat them as if they were very dear to you but know in your heart of hearts that they do not belong to you.
- I tell you the truth: there is nothing wrong in your being in the world. But you must direct your mind toward God; otherwise you will not succeed. Do your duty with one hand and with the other hold to God. After the duty is over you will hold to God with both hands.
- The darkness of centuries is dispersed as soon as a light is brought into a room. The accumulated sins of countless lives vanish by a single glance of God.
- I tell you, your salvation is assured if you put into practice even one-sixteenth of what I say to you.



Sri Sarada Devi

- Really and truly Sri Ramakrishna was God Himself. He assumed this human body to remove the sorrows and sufferings of others. He moved about in disguise, as a king walks through his city. He disappeared the moment he became known.
- You will gain everything if you but take refuge in the Master. Renunciation alone was his splendour.
- The Master did not come to destroy anything; he only came to fulfil.
- Repeat the name of God always in the innermost core of your heart, and in all sincerity take refuge in the Master. Do not bother to know how your mind is reacting to things around. And do not waste time in calculating and worrying over whether or not you are progressing in the path of spirituality. It is vanity to judge progress for oneself. Have faith in the grace of your Guru and Ishta.
- He who has really prayed to the Lord even once, has nothing to fear.
- If you pray to him constantly before his picture, then he manifests himself through that picture. The place where that picture is kept becomes a shrine.
- Sri Ramakrishna would tell me, "One should always be active. One should never be without work. For, when one is idle, all sorts of bad thoughts crop up in one's mind."
- Whenever you go from one place to another, observe the things around you, and also keep yourself well-informed about what happens in the place where you live. But keep your lips shut.
- What else does one obtain by the realization of God? Does he grow two horns? No, his mind becomes pure and, through a pure mind one attains knowledge and awakening.
- The mind is everything. It is in the mind alone that one feels pure and impure. A man, first of all, makes his own mind guilty and then alone he sees another man's guilt.
- Always try to do the Lord's work and at the same time try to practise Japa and meditation. If you do such work, your mind will not be obsessed with evil thoughts. If you sit alone idly, all sorts of thoughts may come and disturb your mind.
- If you do good action, that will counteract your past evil actions. Past sins can be counteracted by meditation, Japa and spiritual thought.
- Sri Ramakrishna left me behind to manifest the Motherhood of God to the world.
- If my child gets covered with mud or dust, is it not my duty to cleanse him and take him on my lap?
- I tell you one thing. If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others.

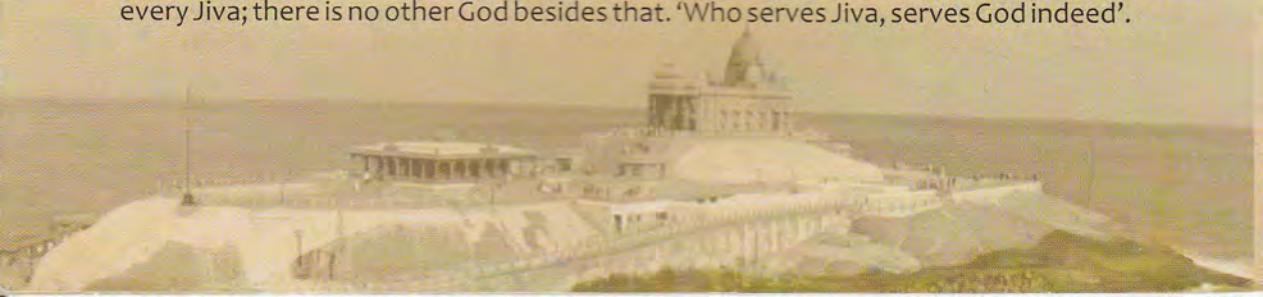
Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own.

No one is a stranger, my child; the whole world is your own.



Swami Vivekananda

- He is an atheist who does not believe in himself.
- All power is within you; you can do anything and everything. Believe in that, do not believe that you are weak; do not believe that you are half-crazy lunatics, as most of us do nowadays. You can do anything and everything without even the guidance of any one. All power is there. Stand up and express the divinity within you.
- Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life; strength, it says, strength, O man, be not weak.
- Throughout the history of mankind, if any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all great men and women, it is that of faith in themselves. Born with the consciousness that they were to be great, they became great.
- Never quarrel about religion. All quarrels and disputation concerning religion simply show that spirituality is not present. Religious quarrels are always over the husks. When purity, when spirituality goes, leaving the soul dry, quarrels begin, and not before.
- Truth, purity, and unselfishness – wherever these are present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof. Equipped with these, one individual is able to face the whole universe in opposition.
- There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing.
- Who are you to solve women's problems? Are you the Lord God that you should rule over every widow and every woman? Hands off! They will solve their own problems.
- In the Vedas and Upanishads, women taught the highest truths and received the same veneration as men.
- The only God to worship is the human soul in the human body. Of course all animals are temples too, but man is the highest, the Taj Mahal of temples. If I cannot worship in that, no other temple will be of any advantage.
- Him I call a Mahatman (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Duratman (wicked soul).
- So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them!
- Do you love your fellow men? Where should you go to seek for God – are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, Gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganga?
- After so much austerity, I have understood this as the real truth – god is present in every Jiva; there is no other God besides that. 'Who serves Jiva, serves God indeed'.



Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu?
God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist
would become Christian? God forbid.

The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist,
nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian.
But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and
yet preserve his individuality and grow according to
his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to
the world it is this:

It has proved to the world that
Holiness, Purity and Charity are not the exclusive
possessions of any church in the world, and that every
system has produced men and women of the most
exalted character.

In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the
exclusive survival of his own religion and the
destruction of the others,

I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out
to him that

upon the banner of every religion will soon be written,
in spite of resistance:

“Help and not Fight,” “Assimilation and not
Destruction,”

“Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.”

~ Swami Vivekananda



I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan;
I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before
the crucifix;
I shall enter the Buddhistic temple,
where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his Law.
I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation
with the Hindu,
who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the
heart of every one.

Not only shall I do all these,
but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come
in the future.
Is God's book finished? Or is it still a continuous
revelation going on? It is a marvellous book — these
spiritual revelations of the world.
The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, and all other sacred
books are but so many pages, and an infinite number
of pages remain yet to be unfolded.
I would leave it open for all of them.
We stand in the present, but open ourselves to the
infinite future.
We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the
light of the present, and open every window of the
heart for all that will come in the future.
Salutation to all the prophets of the past, to all the
great ones of the present, and to all that are to come
in the future!

~ Swami Vivekananda

