

Devotional Readings- December 19, 2020 Creating Vibrant Communities Event



From the Baha'i Writings:

O Lord my God! Assist Thy loved ones to be firm in Thy Faith, to walk in Thy ways, to be steadfast in Thy Cause. Give them Thy grace to withstand the onslaught of self and passion, to follow the light of divine guidance. Thou art the Powerful, the Gracious, the Self-Subsisting, the Bestower, the Compassionate, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

From Rig Veda and The Upanishads (Hinduism):

*Sing the song of celestial love, O singer!
May the divine fountain of eternal grace and joy enter your soul.
May Brahma, (the Divine One),
Pluck the strings of your inner soul
with His celestial fingers,
And feel His own presence within.
Bless us with a divine voice
That we may tune the harp-strings of our life
To sing songs of Love to you.*

—Rig Veda

*He who knows Self as the enjoyer of
The honey from the flowers of the senses,
Ever present within, ruler of time,
Goes beyond fear. For this Self is Supreme!*

—The Upanishads

*The world is the wheel of God, turning round And round with all living creatures upon its rim.
The world is the river of God, Flowing from him and flowing back to him.*

—The Upanishads

Readings from the Avesta (Zoroastrianism)

The wise Lord gives to his beloved mankind — to my people, O Lord — the gift of joy which comes from truth and strength. All men will unite in defense of your teaching and in defense of those who are mindful of your hymns.

— The Avesta, Yasna 43:14

O Ahura Mazda, and O Spirit of Truth and Right! Do Ye grant me and my followers such authority and power through Truth, That with the Good Mind, we may bring the world peace and happiness, Of which, Thou, O Lord, art indeed the first possessor.

—The Avesta, Ahunuvaiti Gatha; Yasna 29,
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Readings from the Old Testament (Judaism):

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

—Deuteronomy 31:6

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

—Isaiah 43:18-19

Readings from the Buddhism:

Hope is the one thing that is stronger than fear.

—The Buddha

Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.

—The Buddha

Readings from the New Testament:

And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

—Mark 4:33-41 (King James Version)

Readings from the Quran (Islam):

God will not burden any soul beyond its power. It shall enjoy the good which it hath acquired, and shall bear the evil for the acquirement of which it laboured. O our Lord! punish us not if we forget, or fall into sin; O our Lord! and lay not on us a load like that which thou hast laid on those who have been before us; O our Lord! and lay not on us that for which we have not

strength: but blot out our sins and forgive us, and have pity on us. Thou art our protector: give us victory therefore over the infidel nations.

—Surah Al Baqarah 286.

Then verily along with trouble cometh ease.

Verily along with trouble cometh ease.

But when thou art set at liberty, then prosecute thy toil.

And seek thy Lord with fervour.

—Surah Al Inshirih, 5-8

Readings from the Baha'i Writings:

O SON OF MAN!

My calamity is My providence, outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy. Hasten thereunto that thou mayest become an eternal light and an immortal spirit. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it.

—Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Arabic*, 51

At a time of another crisis, 'Abdu'l-Bahá offered these words of counsel: "In a day such as this, when the tempests of trials and tribulations have encompassed the world, and fear and trembling have agitated the planet, ye must rise above the horizon of firmness and steadfastness with illumined faces and radiant brows in such wise that, God willing, the gloom of fear and consternation may be entirely obliterated, and the light of assurance may dawn above the manifest horizon and shine resplendently." The world stands more and more in need of the hope and the strength of spirit that faith imparts.

—*The Universal House of Justice, Naw Ruz*,

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