

SILENCE.

Reticence. Right speech.

Universal Worship, September 12, 2021

HINDUISM:

Since there is no difference between the Shakti and the one who embodies her, nor between substance and object, the Shakti is identical to the Self. The energy of the flames is nothing but the fire. All distinction is but a prelude to the path of true knowledge.

The one who reaches the Shakti grasps the nondistinction between Shiva and Shakti and enters the door to the divine. As space is recognized when illuminated by sun rays, so Shiva is recognized through the energy of Shakti, which is the essence of the Self.

-Vijñāna-bhairava-tantra (trans. Daniel Odier)

BUDDHISM:

Like the center of a cloudless sky,
The self-luminous mind is impossible to express.

It is wisdom of nonthought beyond analogy,
Naked ordinary mind.

Not keeping to dogmatism or arrogance,
It is clearly seen as dharmakaya.

The appearance of the six sense objects,
like the moon in water,

Shines in the state of wisdom.

-Vajra Song of the First Jamgon Kongtrul (1813-1899)

ZOROASTRIANISM:

Answer me aright that which I ask You, O Ahura. How may I walk in beatific joy, hand in hand with You, O Mazda, and be Your intimate companion? When shall my speech grow in power so as to eventually reach up to Perfection and Immortality through that Holy Word, the Manthra, which is the driving force radiating from Asha, the Divine Order?

-Yasna 44:17 (trans. FA Bode, adapted)

TAOISM:

The way that can be spoken of

Is not the constant way;

The name that can be named

Is not the constant name.

The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth;

The named was the mother of the myriad creatures.

Hence always rid yourself of desires

in order to observe its secrets;

But always allow yourself to have desires

in order to observe its manifestations...

Therefore the sage keeps to the deed that consists in taking
no action and practises the teaching that uses no words.

The myriad creatures rise from it yet it claims no authority;

It gives them life yet claims no possession;

It benefits them yet exacts no gratitude;

It accomplishes its task yet lays claim to no merit.

It is because it lays claim to no merit

That its merit never deserts it.

-Taoteching 1...2 (trans. DC Lau)

INDIGENOUS:

As a little child, it was instilled into me to be silent and

reticent. This was one of the most important traits to form in

the character of the Indian. As a hunter and warrior, it was

considered absolutely necessary to him, and was thought to

lay the foundations of patience and self-control.

-Ohiyesa (Charles Alexander Eastman) (1858-1939), Santee

Sioux

I will keep my words until the stones melt.

-Delshay, Apache

It does not require many words to speak the truth.

-Chief Joseph, Nez Perce

JUDAISM:

Sometime after Rabbi Yitzhak's death, when each of his sons already had their own congregation, they once met in a town far from the home of either and a banquet was held in their honor. Rabbi David delivered a lengthy sermon but Rabbi Mendel said nothing. "Why don't you also 'say Torah'?" Asked his brother.

"Concerning the Heavens we read in the psalms," Mendel replied, "There is no speech, there are no words, neither is their voice heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth."

-Tales of the Hasidim, collected by Martin Buber

CHRISTIANITY:

Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and tell me what I am like."

Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a just messenger."

Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher."

Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like."

Jesus said, "I am not your teacher. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have tended."

And he took him, and withdrew, and spoke three sayings to him. When Thomas came back to his friends they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?"

Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the sayings he spoke to me, you will pick up rocks and stone me, and fire will come from the rocks and devour you."

-Gospel of Thomas, Logion 13 (trans. Patterson and Meyer)

ISLAM:

Are you not aware how God offers the parable of a good word? It is like a good tree, firmly rooted, reaching its branches towards the sky, always yielding fruit, by consent of its Sustainer. This is how God offers parables to human beings, so that they might consider the truth. And the parable of a corrupt word is that of a corrupt tree, torn up from its roots onto the surface of the earth, unable to endure. Even so God grants firmness to those who have come to faith through the word that is unshakably true, in this world as well as in the life to come. ~Qur'an 14:24-27
(Trans. Camille Helminski)

TRUTH:

What I may not see, let me not see;
What I may not hear, let me not hear;
What I may not know, I ask not to know.
Beloved, I am contented with both Thy speech
and Thy silence.
Let him not see me who should not see me;
Let him not hear me who will not hear me;
Let him not know me who need not know me.
Beloved, veil and unveil me as Thy wisdom chooseth.