

Meeting the Divine Mother in Nature
The Natural Foundations of Morality
Universal Worship, February 13, 2022

HINDUISM:

Mother's fire has purified all dross
From the gold of consciousness.
My only desire is to shape your human temple
From this golden energy,
O blissful Goddess,
Adorning it with your priceless gems:
Compassion, beauty, clarity, intensity.
How I long to behold this sanctuary,
This fully awakened humanity,
Diamond refuge for all suffering beings!
-Ramprasad Sen (trans. Hixon)

BUDDHISM:

There are no moral absolutes in Buddhism, and it is recognized that ethical decision-making involves a complex nexus of causes and conditions. 'Buddhism' encompasses a wide spectrum of beliefs and practices, and the canonical scriptures leave room for a range of interpretations. All of these are grounded in a theory of intentionality, and individuals are encouraged to analyze issues carefully for themselves. ... When making moral choices, individuals are advised to examine their motivation—whether aversion, attachment, ignorance, wisdom, or compassion—and to weigh the consequences of their actions in light of the Buddha's teachings.

-Karma Lekshe Tsomo, Tibetan Buddhist teacher

ZOROASTRIANISM:

Each shall act in full agreement with these principles which are the Primal Laws of Life; and so shall the sage

behave, with the utmost circumspection, in justice towards the Follower of the Lie and the Follower of Truth, and also to those in whom the falsehood and truth are exactly balanced.

-Yasna 33:1 (trans. Adapted from Bode)

TAOISM:

Get rid of wisdom and reason
and people will live a hundred times better
get rid of kindness and justice
and people once more will love and obey
get rid of cleverness and profit
and thieves will cease to exist
but these three sayings are not enough
hence let this be added
wear the undyed and hold the uncarved
reduce self-interest and limit desires
get rid of learning and problems will vanish
-Taoteching 19 (trans. Red Pine)

INDIGENOUS:

The whites, too, shall pass - perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your own bed, and you might suffocate in your own waste.

-Chief Seattle

JUDAISM:

There was an incident involving one gentile who came before Shammai and said to Shammai: Convert me on condition that you teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot. Shammai pushed him away with the builder's cubit in his hand. This was a common measuring stick and Shammai was a builder by trade. The same gentile came before Hillel. He converted him and said to him: That which is hateful to you do not do

to another; that is the entire Torah, and the rest is its interpretation. Go study.

-Shabbat 31a (William Davidson Talmud)

CHRISTIANITY:

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

— Mark 12:28-31 (NRSV)

ISLAM:

(And mention) when thy Lord drew forth from the children of Adam - from their loins- their descendants, and made them testify, "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yea! We do testify!" This, lest they should say on the Day of Judgment: "Of this we were unmindful."

-Quran 7:172 (Tr. Yusuf Ali)

The seven heavens and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: There is not a thing but celebrates His praise: and yet you understand not how they declare His glory!

-Quran 17:42 (Tr. Yusuf Ali)

Truly, We presented the trust to the heavens and the earth and mountains, but they refused to carry it, and were apprehensive of it. But the human being carried it.

-Quran 33:72 (Tr. Bahktiar)

So set thy face towards a way of life as a monotheist. It is the nature originated by God, in which He originated humanity. There is no substitution for the creation of God. That is the truth-loving way of life, but most of humanity knows not.

-Quran 30:30 (Tr. Bakhtiar)

TRUTH:

Then the only purpose of our life here on earth, if there be any, is the successful attainment of life's demands. It may seem strange at first sight that all which life demands should be allowable and worthwhile attaining; but on a closer study of life we see that the demands of our external self are the only ones we know, and we are ignorant of the demands of the true self, our inner life. For instance, we know that we want good food and nice clothes, comfort of living and every convenience for moving about; honor, possessions, and all necessary means for the satisfaction of our vanity, all of which for the moment appear to us as our life's only demands; but neither they nor their joy remain with us constantly. We then come to think that what we had was but a little and that perhaps more would satisfy us, and still more would suffice our need; but this is not so. Even if the whole universe were within our grasp it would be impossible fully to satisfy our life's demands. This shows that our true life has quite different demands from those with which we are familiar. It does not want the joy experienced by this individual self only; it desires joy from all around. It does not wish for a momentary peace, but for one that is everlasting. It does not desire to love a beloved held in the arms of mortality. It needs a beloved to be always before it. It does not want to be loved only for today and perhaps not tomorrow. It wishes to float in the ocean of love.