

Scriptural Texts for Sermon "Protection" October 2008

Hinduism

Bhagavad Gita, translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, 1944.

Chapter 2

Your words are wise, Arjuna, but your sorrow is for nothing. The truly wise mourn neither for the living nor for the dead.

There never was a time when I did not exist, not you, nor any of these kings. Nor is there any future in which we shall cease to be.

Just as the dweller in this body passes through childhood, youth, and old age, so at death he merely passes into another kind of body. The wise are not deceived by that.

Feelings of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, are caused by the contrast of the senses with their objects. They come and they go, never lasting long, you must accept them.

A serene spirit accepts pleasure and pain with an even mind, and is unmoved by either. He alone is worthy of immortality.

That which is non-existent can never come into being, and that which is can never cease to be. Those who have known the inmost Reality know also the nature of *is* and *is not*.

That Reality which pervades the universe is indestructible. No one has power to change the Changeless. Bodies are said to die, but That which possesses the body is eternal. It cannot be limited, or destroyed. Therefore you must fight.

Buddhism

"The Anger-Eating Demon." *Buddhism in Translations*. H.C. Warren, 1973, translated from the Samyutta Nikaya: pp. 426-427.

Thus have I heard.

On a certain occasion The Blessed One was dwelling at Savatthi in Jetavana monastery in Anathapindika's Park. And there The Blessed One addressed the priests:

"Priests!" said he.

"Lord!" said the priests in reply.

And The Blessed One spoke as follows:

“Once upon a time, O priests, a certain sickly-looking and decrepit demon took his seat on the throne of Sakka, the leader of the gods. And the Gods, O priests, of the Suite of the Thirty-three, were angered, annoyed, and spoke indignantly: ‘O wonderful is it! O marvelous is it! Here this sickly-looking and decrepit demon has taken his seat on the throne of Sakka, the leader of the gods!’ Now, O priests, in proportion as the Gods of the Suite Thirty-three were angered, annoyed, and spoke indignantly, in the same proportion did the demon grow handsomer, better-looking, and more pleasing.”

Then, O priests, the Gods of the Suite Thirty-Three drew near to where Sakka, the leader of the gods, was; and having drawn near, they spoke to Sakka, the leader of the gods as follows:

“Sir, a certain sickly-looking and decrepit demon has come here and taken his seat on your throne. And the Gods, sir, of the Suite of the Thirty-three, are angered, annoyed, and speak indignantly: ‘O wonderful is it! O marvelous is it! Here this sickly-looking and decrepit demon has taken his seat on the throne of Sakka, the leader of the gods.’ And, Sir, in proportion as the Gods of the Suite of Thirty-three are angered, annoyed, and speak indignantly, in the same proportion does the demon grow handsomer, better-looking, and more pleasing. Sir, surely now, it must be an anger-eating demon.”

Then, O priests, Sakka, the leader of the gods, drew near to where the anger-eating demon was; and having drawn near, he threw his upper garment over his shoulder, and planting his right knee-pan on the ground, he stretched out his joined palms to the demon, and thrice announced himself:

“Sir, your obedient servant, Sakka, the leader of the gods! Sir, your obedient servant, Sakka, the leader of the gods! Sir, your obedient servant, Sakka, the leader of the gods!”

And the more, O priests, Sakka, the leader of the gods, proclaimed his own name, the more sickly-looking and decrepit became the demon; and straightway he disappeared.

Zoroastrianism

The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra, translated by I. J. S. Taraporewala, 1993: pp. 307 & 322

In full accord with Law shall all people act, the Law that forms the basis of all Life;

With strictest justice shall the Spiritual Guide judge, whether it be the True Man or the False;

Against the false in him he shall with care weigh all the Truth that with it has been mixed.”

“As thy true worshipper, in Asha firm, with all my heart, Thy Spirit holiest for His Protecting grace do I invoke;

I will fulfill the guardianship He planned; So, Ahura Mazda, I would ask of Thee a vision of Thyself and speech with Thee.

Judaism

Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, 1952.

I love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon my Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. Psalm 18: 1-3.

Christianity

Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, 1952.

Pray then like this:
Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
As we have forgiven our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Matthew 6: 9 – 13

Islam

“The Heights.” *The Essential Koran*, translated by Thomas Cleary: pp. 155 – 157.

Moses chose seventy of his people for an appointment with God: and when violent shaking seized them, he said, ‘My Lord! If you wished, You could have already destroyed them and me as well;

Will You destroy us for the deeds of the ignorant fools among us?

Surely this is but a trial from You, by which You mislead whomever You will; and You guide whomever You will.

You are our protector: so forgive us and have mercy on us; for You are the best of forgivers. And ordain for us in this world and the hereafter: for we have turned to You.