

The Guru Guide



By Septic Radio

Each week on a Minute of Meditation we record a quote from a great eastern philosopher. The quotes are to inspire expand your horizons but mostly get you thinking about your own values. This Guru Guide will be updated monthly as new episodes of A Minute of Meditation are released. Above each quote from the philosopher is a link to where you can listen to the quote on Septic Radio. Find additional information by following the link on the philosopher's name. Finally we would love some feedback so please when you follow the links for the individual quotes, leave your comments.

The Western world has taken a great interest in Eastern philosophy. Whether your interest was sparked by trying to escape the rat race or from watching a "Kung Fu" rerun, there is much to learn from an alternate tradition. While there are many great teachers to learn from, here is a small selection to start your journey.

[Confucius](#)

Confucius (more correctly Kung Fu Tzu) is the most well known Chinese philosopher. He valued self improvement and responsibility to one's family, ancestors and community. He considered a strong society, guided by wisdom and ethics, to be a spiritual goal. His term 'ren' defines people by their roles and relationships to others, as these are not separable from personal identity. Compare this in your mind with the more individualistic definitions we see these days.

[Listen to the following here](#)

"Do you want to know what knowledge really is?
The master said: Spend your time thinking about what is right for the people
While keeping the demons far from your mind.
When you know something, you have to recognize that you know it.
When you don't know something, you have to recognize that you don't know it.
If you can do these' that is knowledge."

[Listen to the following here](#)

"When you see a man worth admiring, examine him so you can be like him. When you see a man who is unworthy of admiration, examine yourself.

If your thoughts are for this year, grow a plant; if your thoughts are for ten years, plant trees; if you are thinking about the next 100 years, teach the people"

[Sri Guru Granth Sahib](#)

The Sri Guru Granth Sahib is a collection of devotional hymns and poetry stressing long term peace through internal meditation and shows the reader a meaning of True God as morality, honesty and peace within your mind and not as a physical human form. Sri

Guru Granth Sahib is the highest regarded scripture in the Sikh religion. It not only contains the works of its own founders but also the writings of philosophers and prophets from other faiths who inspired these leaders. It is respected and revered by followers of other religious groups such as the Sindhis, Balmikis and Meenas.

Sikhs consider it a universal collection and all religions are welcome to join the audience as it is read aloud within the Gurdwaras. You should go and listen. You might hear something like this:

[Listen to the following here](#)

What good is it to have a high social class and status? Truthfulness is measured within. Your high-class pride is like poison. You can hold it in your hand and admire it, But if you eat it, you will die.

You know your Guru's has had Power for all time.

Welcome his Commands and you will be welcomed into his home... Remember, you have come to this world only because of his command. His word is spoken to you as loud as if pounded by a drummer.

[Guru Nanak](#)

Guru Nanak's teachings can be found in the Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib, a vast collection of verses in a variety of poetic forms, recorded in Gurmukhi script but from a variety of North Indian and some central Asian languages.

The various contributors follow a few common principles: A supreme Godhead common to all faiths. This is the Singular Force of the entire Universe -- beyond human life and often described as indestructible or timeless.

Guru Nanak warned against egotism, hypocrisy and falsehood saying that these are pervasive in humanity and that religious actions can also be in vain. Instead of blindly following rigid rules and harsh ascetic practices, Guru Nanak who suggests remaining inwardly detached whilst living as an honest householder, responsible to the greater community. Guidance comes from meditation -- indeed, he considers the ideal life to be a constant state of meditation

[Listen to the following here](#)

Do not follow a guide because he is a miracle worker.
Miracle workers attract only small minds who are easily impressed.
I could become a mystic and make miracles happen before your eyes.
That would fill my chests with treasure.
I could make myself disappear then reappear, saying I have great power

People would be amazed and follow me.
These tricks will only feed my ego but not my mind.
I will leave the path of truth and my mind will never be at peace.

[Kabir](#)

Kabir, a highly respected Benares (today: Varanasi) spiritualist whose inspiring couplets promoted both Sufi and Bhakti philosophies. He promoted meditation and thought instead of rituals and idol worship. His poems are known for their clever analogies, even daring to use irony or satire to promote moral pacifism and purity.

[Listen to the following here](#)

"A drop Melting into the sea, Everyone can see. But the sea absorbed In a drop — A rare one can follow!"

[Listen to the following here](#)

The whole world is obsessed with corruption.
Corruption has drowned whole families.
Humanity, why have you wrecked your boat and let it sink?
You have separated from the Lord, and joined hands with corruption.
Both spirits and human beings are going down in flames.
Water is close by, but O you monster, you do not even reach for it.
By meditation, awareness and clear thought, the water appears.
Kabir says, use the cleanest and purest water to fight the fire inside.

[Listen to the following here](#)

“I ask that you give up everything to meditate on peace.

If you could have peace by giving up your possessions
then all the deer of the forest would be freed from the cycle of rebirth.

If you could have peace by shaving your head,
then why haven't sheep been freed?

Some submerge themselves every morning and evening in a ritual bath
They will not be any more liberated than the frogs.

What use is chanting, penance, fasting or bowing to a statue
If your heart loves duality?

Set aside your greed and attachment to material things.

Set aside desire, anger and ego.

My Brothers and Sisters
Remember the words of Kabir
Keep devotion in your heart
With every action and word
And then you will meet the True Lord
And your soul will come to peace.”

Bhagat Namdev

Although he is not very well known to Westerners, Namdev's Hindu poetry has inspired Indians in general and Punjabi people in particular for the past 700 years. He was respected for his total devotion to the deity Lord Vithoba. His Lord came to him, suggesting that he take Visoba Khechar as his teacher and guru. Going eagerly to the great Khechar, Namdev was dismayed to find him reclining on the Vithoba icon. But in the end, Namdev learned the lesson of his guru's action and focused his life on meditation and inner peace. Concentrate on his exact moment of transformation as you follow your own path to inner peace.

[Listen to the following here](#)

Sakhi of Bhagat Namdev

"The holy man Vishoba Khechar came to Namdev in disguise.
Namdev told him to face the stone idol when praying.
So Khechar asked, point me in the direction where God does not exist.
If Gods made of stone will never speak.
How will they advise you on your problems?
People think that stone idols are God,
but the truly divine must be truly separate from our physical world.
If a stone god could really satisfy your needs,
then any fool could easily get relief from all the world's sorrow and pain.
Those who worship gods of stone are truly fools.
Namdev was truly blessed to learn from the great Vishoba Khechar

that God was in his own heart."

[Sheikh Farid](#)

Sheikh Farid (or Farīduddīn Mas'ūd) was a Sufi poet from Punjab. His writings were so popular in that region that they became an important part of the Sikh religion which developed there later. Below is a mythical conversation from the Sikh Guru Nanak to Baba Farid. Notice that reflecting his master's words enhances both the student and the teacher.

[Listen to the following here](#)

Separated from God, my body burns like an oven,
My bones burn like firewood.
To meet the Beloved I would walk until my feet were tired,
Then I would walk on my head.
[Guru Nanak comments:] You need not burn yourself like an oven,
need not inflame your bones.
Why torture your poor limbs?
Behold the spirit in yourself.
Nanak says, I search for my Friend, but my Friend is already with me.

[Gautama Siddhartha \(Buddha\)](#)

Gautama Siddhartha (Buddha) was a spiritual teacher from ancient India on whose teachings Buddhism was founded. In its tradition, he is regarded as the Supreme Buddha of our age. "Buddha" means "the enlightened one." Most early 20th-century historians dated his lifetime as c. 563 BCE to 483 BCE.

[Listen to the following here](#)

I know that you search for the golden chain of spiritual wisdom.
Grab it. Possess it. It is beautiful.
It impresses others.
But remember that any chain is a prison.
Go ahead and tell yourself that it is only decoration
If you can fool yourself.
Any path to spiritual wisdom that feeds your ego is materialism.

[Listen to the following here](#)

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it.

Do not believe in anything simply because many say it.
Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books.
Do not believe in anything simply on the authority of your teachers and elders.
Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations.
But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason
and is for the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it
and live up to it.

[Chögyam Trungpa](#)

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (February 28, 1939 – April 4, 1987) was a Buddhist meditation master and holder of both the Kagyu and Nyingma lineages, the eleventh Trungpa tülku, a tertön, supreme abbot of the Surmang monasteries.

His fame goes beyond the Tibetan Buddhists and he is very highly regarded by contemporary philosophers and scholars. He is a major figure in bringing Tibetan Buddhism to the Western world. In addition to founding Vajradhatu and Naropa University he was a major supporter of and practically reinvented the Shambhala Training method.

I was motivated by these words of Master Trungpa and mingled them with traditional Hindu philosophy in this short simple teaching:

[Listen to the following here](#)

"What is the meaning of life? To help others? To spread wisdom. across the world? To clean the Earth? To become the greatest teacher, scientist, or mystic? To end hunger? To end war?"

As you search for meaning in your life, remember that death is greater than life. And any definition you choose must include the meaning of death.

[The Gospel of the Buddha](#)

Paul Carus, in "The Gospel of the Buddha," told of the time Buddha was in Jetavana, a supernatural spirit or "deva" made himself look like a Brahman, then came to test the blessed one with some questions. I have adapted the discussion a little for context and completeness because of the short space here.

[Listen to the following here](#)

The deva asked
"What is the sharpest sword?
What is the deadliest poison?
What is the hottest fire?"

What is the darkest night?”

The blessed one answered

“The sharpest sword is a word spoken in wrath.
The deadliest poison is greed.
The hottest fire is hatred.
The darkest night is ignorance.

The deva continued to question the blessed one. After a long exchange, the deva was greatly impressed by the wisdom of the Buddha. Here is another except from their discussion, adapted.

The deva asked

“Who is the most dangerous thief?
What is the most precious treasure?
Who can capture heaven and earth?
Where is the safest treasure?”

The blessed one answered

“The most dangerous thief is unwholesome thought.
The most precious treasure is virtue.
Heaven and earth may be captured by the mind’s eye.
Escape the cycle of rebirth and you will find the safest treasure.”

The Tibetan Book of the Dead

The Tibetan Book of the Dead is intended as a message from the dead to the living on how best to use your lifetime to reach Nirvana. Otherwise, your destiny is to suffer in an endless cycle of rebirth. Many Buddhists think of it as a powerful message from beyond our world. Will it help you find your own path to freedom?

[Listen to the following here](#)

“I travel the cycle of life and death driven by the deep roots of pride.
Great Ratnasambhavna is above the cycle.
Please call me forward. Take me from dark to light so that I can understand.
Great Mamki! Please push me forward.

Together you will free me from limbo and make me a Buddha.”

Jami

Nur ad-Din Abd ar-Rahman (known commonly as ‘Jami’ after his birthplace of Jam) lived in the area of today’s Afghanistan during the 15th century. He studied several subjects at Nizamiyyah University of Herat. He became a poet, mathematician and historian but is most well known for his Sufi spiritual teachings. He viewed Mohamed as an essential part of one’s spiritual development. His poetry is considered some of the last great Sufi (and in general, classical Persian) works and still well respected today for its wisdom and humility. Today’s quote is chosen to show both of these qualities.

[Listen to the following here](#)

"Who is man?
Man is the reflection of the Infinite Light.
What is the world?
The world is wave on the Infinite Sea.
How could the reflection be separated from its Light?
How could the wave be separated from its Sea?
Remember this: When you see the reflection and wave
you are gazing on the Supreme Light and Sea."

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