

## From Hindu Scriptures and Writings

Look to this day, for it is life, the very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of our existence:  
The bliss of growth, the splendor of beauty.  
For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision  
But today well spent makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and  
every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.

*Sanskrit Salutation to the Dawn*

Wisdom gives life to those who have it.  
Happy the body that can nourish itself on food of the soul.  
When you taste food, if you know who it is that's tastes it, then you  
have known Brahman.

*Sri Ramana Maharshi*

Free from the "I" and "mine" from aggression, arrogance, greed,  
desire, and anger, a person is fit for the state of absolute freedom.  
Serene in this state of freedom, beyond all desire and sorrow, seeing  
all beings as equal.

*Bhagavad Gita*

The *samskaras* (mental impressions and mental habits) are built up  
by continued action of the thought-waves, and they in their turn  
create new thought waves, the process works both ways. Expose the  
mind to constant thoughts of anger and resentment and you will find  
that these anger-waves build up anger-samskaras, which will  
predispose you to find occasions for anger throughout your daily life.  
A person with well developed anger-samskaras is said to have a "bad  
temper." The sum total of our samskaras is, in fact, our character at  
any given moment.

*Yoga Sutras (Patanjali)*

Consider the sky. The sky is finite as well as infinite. None can touch  
it, yet we are in contact with it at every moment of our lives. Similarly,  
you and I have to use finite means—body, mind, intelligence, and  
consciousness – to reach the infinite seat of the soul which is the  
mother of all these things. In this we remain ever fresh, ever peaceful,  
and with ever growing intelligence.

*BKS Iyengar*

# THANKSGIVING

Blessings and Readings to Share  
with Family and Friends

*UU Fellowship of Corvallis  
November, 2014*

## A Harvest of Gratitude

**Once** more the fields have ripened to harvest, and the fruitful  
earth has fulfilled the promise of spring.

**The work** of those who labor has been rewarded; they have  
sown and reaped, planted and gathered.

**How rich** and beautiful is the bounty gathered; the golden  
grain and clustered corn, the grapes of purple and green; the  
crimson apples and yellow pears, and all the colors of the  
orchard and garden, vineyard and field.

**Season** follows season, after winter the spring, after summer  
the harvest-laden autumn...

**From** the harvest of the soil we are given occasion to garner a  
harvest of heart and mind: a harvest of resolve to be careful  
stewards of all life's gifts and opportunities.

**A harvest** of reverence for the wondrous power and life at  
work in things that grow, and in the soul.

**A harvest** of gratitude for every good which we enjoy and of  
companionship of all who are sustained by Earth's beauty.

*Percival Chubb*

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## Blessings and Table Graces

Give us thankful hearts in this season of thanksgiving. May we be thankful for health and strength, for sun and rain and peace. Let us seize the day and the opportunity and strive for that greatness of spirit that measures life not by its disappointments but by its possibilities, and let us ever remember that true gratitude and appreciation shows itself neither in independence nor satisfaction, but passes the gift joyfully on in larger and better form.

*W.E. B. DuBois*

For each new morning with its light  
For rest and shelter of the night  
For health and food,  
For love and friends,  
For everything Thy goodness sends.

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The food which we are about to eat  
is Earth, Water, and Sun, compounded through the alchemy  
of many plants.  
Therefore Earth, Water and Sun will become part of us.  
This food is also the fruit of the labor of many beings and creatures.  
We are grateful for it.  
May it give us health, and strength and joy.  
And may it increase our love.

*Unitarian Prayer*

Let us give thanks for the food we are about to eat.  
May there be food for all, abundant and healthful.  
Let us have the wisdom to choose to eat only that which enhances our  
precious energy and sustains us through our labors and rest.

*Adapted from An Haggadah of Liberation, in A Grateful Heart*

May we be worthy to serve those people throughout the world who live  
and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day  
their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

*Mother Theresa (adapted)*

May the light of this chalice

Bless the work that we do, the silence that falls upon us,  
and the joy that stirs within us.

By its light and warmth, may hope be strengthened inside us,  
And may praise for life rise to our lips  
out of the fullness of our hearts.

*Sheila Crosskey, British Unitarian*

## Readings

As I express my gratitude, I become more deeply aware of it. And the  
greater my awareness, the greater my need to express it. What  
happens here is a spiraling ascent, a process of growth in ever  
expanding circles around a steady center.

*Brother David Steindl-Rast*

It was then that I learned that gratitude is the best feeling I would ever  
have, the ultimate joy of living. It was better than sex, better than  
winning the lottery, better than watching your daughter graduate from  
college, better than any other feeling; it is perhaps the genesis of all  
other really good feelings in the human repertoire.

*Louis Smedes*

We name these things as sacred: air, fire, water, and earth... We know  
that nothing can live without them. To call these things sacred is to  
say that they have a value beyond their usefulness for human ends  
that they themselves become the standards by which our acts, our  
economics, our laws, and our purposes must be judged. No one has  
the right to appropriate them or profit from them at the expense of  
others. Any government that fails to protect them forfeits its  
legitimacy.

All people, all living things, are part of the earth life and so are  
sacred. No one of us stands higher or lower than any other. Only  
justice can assure balance: only ecological balance can sustain  
freedom. Only in freedom can that fifth sacred thing we call spirit  
flourish in its full diversity. To this we dedicate our curiosity, our will,  
our courage, our silences, and our voices. To this we dedicate our  
lives.

*Starhawk*