

Wisdom for Walking the Good Road

"Great Spirit, Great Spirit, my Grandfather, all over the earth the faces of living things are all alike.... Look upon these faces of children without number and with children in their arms, that they may face the winds and walk the good road to the day of quiet."

Black Elk, Oglala Sioux Holy Man

"Every society needs these kinds of sacred places. They help to instill a sense of social cohesion in the people and remind them of the passage of the generations that have brought them to the present."

Vine Deloria, Jr., Standing Rock Sioux

"My words are tied in one

With the great mountains, With the great rocks,

With the great trees,

In one with my body And my heart.

Do you all help me

With supernatural power, And you, day,

And you, night

All of you see me One with this world!"

Yokuts prayer

“Will you teach your children what we have taught our children? That the earth is our mother? What befalls the earth befalls all the sons of the earth. This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. One thing we know: our god is also your god. The earth is precious to him and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its creator.”

Chief Seattle, of the Duwamish Tribe

“The time will soon be here when my grandchild will long for the cry of a loon, the flash of a salmon, the whisper of spruce needles, or the screech of an eagle. But he will not make friends with any of these creatures and when his heart aches with longing he will curse me. Have I done all to keep the air fresh? Have I cared enough about the water? Have I left the eagle to soar in freedom? Have I done everything I could to earn my grandchild's fondness?”

Chief Dan George, Tsleil-Waututh Nation

"It is Good for man to have his head in the clouds,
and let his thoughts dwell among the eagles, but he
must remember also that the higher the tree grows
into the sky, the deeper the roots must penetrate into
the heart of Mother Earth."

Frank B. Linderman

"Plants are thought to be alive, their juice is their
blood, and they grow. The same is true of trees. All
things die, therefore all things have life. Because all
things have life, gifts have to be given to all things."

William Benson Pomo

"The outline of the stone is round, having no end and no beginning; like the power of the stone it is endless.

The stone is perfect of its kind and is the work of nature, no artificial means being used in shaping it.

Outwardly it is not beautiful, but its structure is solid, like a solid house in which one may safely dwell."

Chased-by-Bears, Santee-Yanktonai Sioux

"The soil you see is not ordinary soil—it is the dust of the blood, the flesh, and bones of our ancestors....

The land, as it is, is my blood and my dead; it is consecrated...."

Shes-his, Reno Crow

"In the heart of the Earth Mother, in the Circle of Life, and under the Tree of Understanding, the ancient teachings that have been given to all people by the Sky Father still call to us. You hear their words in the murmur and the laughter of the brook, in the whisper of the wind in the leaves of the cottonwood and the needles of the pine, in the 'killy-killy' cry of the sparrow hawk, in the flute-like call of the thrush from the shadows, in the chatter of the red squirrel and the prairie dog, in the deep bugling of the bull elk and soft falling of a good rain. Be still and listen! Still! Still! Listen! listen! Too long have we not listened; too long have we let the blind and the deaf lead us, those

who think small. But the voices of the earth tell us the time has come to work to build the Great Circle of Mankind, to overcome the divisions of the peoples, to create appreciation of all cultures, not with force, but with love and the power of the Spirit...."

Vinson Brown

"I am going to venture that the man who sat on the ground in his tipi meditating on life and its meaning, accepting the kinship of all creatures, and acknowledging unity with the universe of things was infusing into his being the true essence of civilization."

Luther Standing Bear 1868-1939, Oglala Sioux Chief

"The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it. You might as well expect the rivers to run backward as that any man who was born a free man should be contented when penned up and denied liberty to go where he pleases."

Joseph Himmaton Yalatki, Nez Perce Chief

"Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Rise free from care before dawn, and seek adventures. Let the noon find thee by other lakes, and the night overtake thee everywhere at home. . . . Grow wild according to thy nature, like these sedges and

brakes, which will never become English hay . . . Take shelter under the cloud . . . Let not to get a living be thy trade, but thy sport. Enjoy the land but own it not."

Henry David Thorough, Walden

"However men approach me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is mine."

Bhagavad-Gita, IV, II, Hindu

"The heavens are still; no sound. Where then shall God be found? Search not in distant skies;

In man's own heart He lies."

Shao Yung, Shinto

"Wherefore it has been said, 'In tranquility, in stillness, in the unconditioned, in inaction, we find the levels of the universe, the very constitution of Tao.'"

Chuang Tzu, XV, Taoist

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

Old Testament, Psalm LXXXIX. 1, 15

"All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise..."

Koran, Surah LVII, 1, 3-6

"Blessed is the spot, and the house,
and the place, and the city,
and the heart, and the mountain,
and the refuge, and the cave,
and the valley, and the land,
and the sea, and the island,
and the meadow where mention
of God hath been made,
and His praise glorified."

Baha'u'llah, Baha'i Prayers