



Blessed Be

September 2022

Welcome to this edition of Blessed Be. If you have anything you wish to contribute to Blessed Be, or any suggestions you'd like to make, please contact me at helenmacauley@gmail.com

Spring is here, a time of new life and of new growth and our focus turns to the world around us and our connection to it.

We begin this edition with some words from the Australian Aborigines whose lives have traditionally been close to the cycles of nature, and who feel an intense connection with the land and all of creation. Out of this interconnectedness comes a responsibility to work with and protect all elements of the natural world.

These are some Aboriginal sayings from unknown authors:

We believe as Aboriginal people, Australia has been here from the first sunrise, our people have been here along with the continent, with the first sunrise. We know our land was given to us by Baiami, we have a sacred duty to protect that land, we have a sacred duty to protect all the animals that we have an affiliation with through our totem system.

Traveller, there are no paths. Paths are made by walking.

Those who lose dreaming are lost.

We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love... and then we return home.

The more you know, the less you need.

Keep your eyes on the sun, and you will not see the shadows.

The land owns us.

Being Aboriginal is not the colour of your skin or how broad your nose is. It is a spiritual feeling, an identity you know in your heart. ... It is a unique feeling that is difficult for non-Aboriginal to fully understand.

And from the First Nations of America (with thanks to Judy Brown) we have some words of wisdom:

Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.

~ Chief Seattle

When the last tree is cut down, the last fish eaten, and the last stream poisoned, you will realize that you cannot eat money.

~Native American saying

Oh, Great Spirit, help me always to speak the truth quietly, to listen with an open mind when others speak, and to remember the peace that may be found in silence.

~Cherokee prayer

When a storm is coming, all other birds seek shelter. The Eagle alone, avoids the storm by flying above it. So, in the storms of life... May your heart soar like an Eagle.

~Unknown

Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The Earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it....Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade....free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to think and talk and act for myself, and I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty.

~Heinmot Tooyalaket "Chief Joseph" Nez Perce

Everything on the earth has a purpose, every disease a herb to cure it, and every person a mission. This is the Indian theory of existence.

~Mourning Dove-Salish

When a man moves away from nature, his heart becomes hard.

~Native American Proverb, Lakota Sioux

If you listen close at night, you will hear creatures of the dark, all of them sacred- the owls, the crickets, the frogs, the night birds – and you will hear beautiful songs, songs you have never heard before. Listen with your heart. Never stop listening.

~Henry Quick Bear, Lakota

Native American Ten Commandments

1. Treat the Earth and all that dwell thereon with respect.
2. Remain close to the Great (Creator) Spirit.
3. Show great respect for your fellow beings.
4. Work together for the benefit of all mankind.
5. Give assistance and kindness wherever needed.
6. Do what you know to be right.
7. Look after the well-being of mind and body.
8. Dedicate a share of your efforts to the greater good.
9. Be truthful and honest at all times.
10. Take full responsibility for your actions. *~Source unknown*

The Tale of the Two Wolves

One evening, an elderly Cherokee brave told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said "my son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all. One is evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one that you feed."

~Although the exact origin of this story is unknown it is generally attributed to the Cherokee people.

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass the world is too full. Ideas, language, and even the phrase each other doesn't make any sense.

~Rumi

Meister Eckhart

Meister Eckhart was embraced the concept of God in all things, and consequently can be seen as an early Pantheist. Here are some of his words:

God is infinite in his simplicity and simple in his infinity. Therefore, he is everywhere complete. God is in the innermost part of each and every thing.

If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.

All God wants of man is a peaceful heart.

God is at home, it's we who have gone out for a walk.

You may call God love, you may call God goodness. But the best name for God is compassion.

He who would be serene and pure needs but one thing, detachment.

What a man takes in by contemplation, that he pours out in love.

The price of inaction is far greater than the cost of making a mistake.

To be full of things is to be empty of God. To be empty of things is to be full of God.

The sun is my father, the earth is my mother. The world is my country and all men are my family. *~Toland (Toland coined the term 'pantheism')*

I was introduced to the Bishnoi in a recent article on the ABC

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2022-08-07/tree-hugger-bishnoi-chipko-defiance-deep-historical-roots/101247020> *I was interested to learn a bit more...*

The Bishnoi

The Bishnoi are a Hindu community, which began in a small village in Rajasthan in 1485, when Guru Jambhoji set out 29 rules to live by. One of those rules prohibited the cutting down of living trees.

In 1730, the Maharajah of Jodhpur sent woodcutters to collect khejri trees for a building project. The Bishnoi villagers refused to allow them to cut down the trees, and one woman and her three daughters clung to the trees to stop them. The men cut their heads off. Other villagers joined the protest, and 363 people died. As a result, the Maharajah, hearing of the massacre and feeling remorseful, declared the khejri trees protected.

Here are the rules of the Bishnoi (bishnoi meaning 29):

1. To observe segregation of a mother and newborn for 30 days after delivery (to prevent infection to the mother and baby).
2. To keep a woman away from all activities for 5 days during her menstrual periods (to provide compulsory rest).
3. To take a daily early morning bath.
4. To maintain both external and internal cleanliness and remain content (good intentions, humble behaviour, good character...).
5. To meditate twice a day at dawn and dusk.
6. To sing the Lord's glory and recite his virtues every evening.
7. To offer daily oblation to the holy fire with a heart filled with feelings of welfare, love and devotion.
8. Use filtered water, milk and carefully cleaned fuel/ firewood (to prevent killing or burning insects).
9. Watch your speech. Think before you speak.
10. To be forgiving in nature.
11. To be compassionate.
12. Do not steal.
13. Do not condemn or criticize.
14. Do not lie.
15. Don't indulge in any unnecessary / wasteful debates.
16. To fast and meditate on a new moon night.
17. To recite the holy name of Lord Vishnu.
18. To be compassionate towards all living beings.
19. Do not cut the green trees, save the environment.
20. To crush lust, anger, greed and attachment.
21. To only take food cooked by oneself, or by a religious / pure person.
22. Provide shelters for abandoned animals to avoid them being slaughtered.
23. Don't sterilize bulls.
24. Don't use opium.
25. Don't smoke and use tobacco.
26. Don't smoke and cultivate cannabis.
27. Don't drink alcohol.
28. Don't eat meat or non-vegetarian dishes; feed and protect wildlife.
29. Don't use blue coloured clothes (in ancient India, the blue colour used to be obtained from indigo trees)

ranckvogel.com/publications/29-rules-Bishnois.pdf

