

READINGS - Nearness to God - Page 1

Order of Service

Opening Prayer

Create in me a pure heart, O my God, and renew a tranquil conscience within me, O my Hope! Through the spirit of power confirm Thou me in Thy Cause, O my Best-Beloved, and by the light of Thy glory reveal unto me Thy path, O Thou the Goal of my desire! Through the power of Thy transcendent might lift me up unto the heaven of Thy holiness, O Source of my being, and by the breezes of Thine eternity gladden me, O Thou Who art my God! Let Thine everlasting melodies breathe tranquility on me, O my Companion, and let the riches of Thine ancient countenance deliver me from all except Thee, O my Master, and let the tidings of the revelation of Thine incorruptible Essence bring me joy, O Thou Who art the most manifest of the manifest and the most hidden of the hidden!

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

First Reading

But we created man, and we know what his soul whispers; for we are nigher to him than his jugular vein!

Islam, Sura 50-Q

The one true God is My witness! This most great, this fathomless and surging Ocean is near, astonishingly near, unto you. Behold it is closer to you than your life-vein! Swift as the twinkling of an eye ye can, if ye but wish it, reach and partake of this imperishable favor, this God-given grace, this incorruptible gift, this most potent and unspeakably glorious bounty.

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

Ever is He present with you--think not He is far: By the Master's teaching, recognize Him within yourself.

Sikhism, Adi Granth:M.3

Music

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Second Reading

O Son of Being!

Thy heart is My home; sanctify it for My descent. Thy spirit is My place of revelation; cleanse it for My manifestation.

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

God is not far from each one of us, for “In him we live and move and have our being.”

Christianity, Acts 17:27-28

Thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also within him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite.”

Judaism, Isaiah 57:15

In the golden city of the heart dwells The Lord of Love, without parts, without stain. Know him as the radiant light of lights. There shines not the sun, neither moon nor star, Nor flash of lightning, nor fire lit on earth. The Lord is the light reflected by all. ... Brahman shines forth, vast, self-luminous, inconceivable, subtler than the subtle. He is far beyond what is far, and yet here very near at hand. Verily, He is seen here, dwelling in the cave of the heart of conscious beings.

Hinduism, Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.10-11; 3.1.7

The Essence of God is incomprehensible to the human mind, for the finite understanding cannot be applied to this infinite Mystery. God contains all: He cannot be contained. That which contains is superior to that which is contained. The whole is greater than its parts. Things which are understood by men cannot be outside their capacity for understanding, so that it is impossible for the heart of man to comprehend the nature of the Majesty of God. Our imagination can only picture that which it is able to create.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Music

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Third Reading

Why do you go to the forest in search of God? He lives in all and is yet ever distinct; He abides with you, too, as a fragrance dwells in a flower, and reflection in a mirror; so does God dwell in everything; Seek Him, therefore, in your heart.

Sikhism, Dhanasri:M.9

To every discerning and illuminated heart it is evident that God, the unknowable Essence, the Divine Being, is immensely exalted beyond every human attribute, such as corporeal existence, ascent and descent, egress and regress. Far be it from His glory that human tongue should adequately recount His praise, or that human heart comprehend His fathomless mystery. He is, and hath ever been, veiled in the ancient eternity of His Essence, and will remain in His Reality everlastingly hidden from the sight of men. "No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision; He is the Subtle, the All-Perceiving."...

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

I am the nucleus of every creature, Arjuna; for without Me nothing can exist, neither animate nor inanimate.... Wherever you find strength, or beauty, or spiritual power, you may be sure that these have sprung from a spark of My essence.

Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita, 10.39, 41

O SON OF SPIRIT!

I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? Out of the essence of knowledge I gave thee being, why seekest thou enlightenment from anyone beside Me? Out of the clay of love I molded thee, how dost thou busy thyself with another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

Music

Open Prayers

Music

Fourth Reading

The supreme Self is without a beginning, undifferentiated, deathless. Though it dwells in the body, Arjuna, it neither acts nor is touched by action. As radiation pervades the cosmos but remains unstained, the Self can never be tainted though it dwells in every creature.

Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita, 13.32

Nearness to God is not dependent upon time or place. Nearness to God is dependent upon purity of the heart and exhilaration of the spirit through the glad tidings of the Kingdom. Consider how a pure, well-polished mirror fully reflects the effulgence of the sun, no matter how distant the sun may be. As soon as the mirror is cleaned and purified, the sun will manifest itself. The more pure and sanctified the heart of man becomes, the nearer it draws to God, and the light of the Sun of Reality is revealed within it. This light sets hearts aglow with the fire of the love of God, opens in them the doors of knowledge and unseals the divine mysteries so that spiritual discoveries are made possible.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Closing Prayer

He is the Compassionate, the All-Bountiful! O God, my God! Thou seest me, Thou knowest me; Thou art my Haven and my Refuge. None have I sought nor any will I seek save Thee; no path have I trodden nor any will I tread but the path of Thy love. In the darksome night of despair, my eye turneth expectant and full of hope to the morn of Thy boundless favor and at the hour of dawn my drooping soul is refreshed and strengthened in remembrance of Thy beauty and perfection. He whom the grace of Thy mercy aideth, though he be but a drop, shall become the boundless ocean, and the merest atom which the outpouring of Thy loving-kindness assisteth, shall shine even as the radiant star.

Shelter under Thy protection, O Thou Spirit of purity, Thou Whom art the All-Bountiful Provider, this enthralled, enkindled servant of Thine. Aid him in this world of being to remain steadfast and firm in Thy love and grant that this broken-winged bird attain a refuge and shelter in Thy divine nest that abideth upon the celestial tree.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá