

on friendship

friendship is a sacred bond that transcends utility and pleasure.

loyalty in hardship, mutual correction and growth, presence.

in all religions, friendship is not accidental; it is chosen, cultivated, and guarded.

a shelter in adversity, a bridge from individuality toward shared meaning and transcendence.

CHRISTIANITY

Proverbs 17:17–18

Hebrew (Masoretic Text):



*“A friend loveth at all times,
and a brother is born for adversity.
A man void of understanding striketh
hands,
and becometh surety in the presence of
his friend.”*

רַע אֱהָב בְּכָל־עֵת
וְאָח לְצָרָה יוֹלֵד:
אָדָם חֲסֵר־לֵב תִּקַּע כַּף
עַרְב עֲרִיבָה לִפְנֵי רֵעֵהוּ:

Holy Bible, King James Version. (1769/2017). Proverbs 17:17–18. Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1611)

CATHOLICISM

Sirach / Ecclesiasticus 6:14–17

Hebrew (Masoretic Text):



*“Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter;
whoever finds one has found a treasure.
Faithful friends are beyond price;
no amount can balance their worth.
Faithful friends are life-saving
medicine;
and those who fear the Lord will find
them.*

φίλος πιστὸς καταφυγὴ ἰσχυρά·
ὁ δὲ εὐρὼν αὐτὸν εὗρηκεν θησαυρόν.
φίλος πιστὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντάλλαγμα,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν σταθμὸς τῆς ἀξίας αὐτοῦ.
φίλος πιστὸς φάρμακον ζωῆς,
καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον εὐρήσουσιν
αὐτόν.
ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν κύριον κατευθυνεῖ τὴν
φιλίαν αὐτοῦ,

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*Those who fear the Lord direct their
friendship aright,
for as they are, so are their friends."*

ὅτι κατ' αὐτὸν ἔσται ὁ πλησίον αὐτοῦ.

The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition. (1989). Sirach 6:14–17. National Council of Churches. (Original work in Septuagint, ca. 2nd century BCE)

JUDAISM

Pirkei Avot 1:6

Hebrew (Masoretic Text):



*"Yehoshua ben Perachyah said:
Make for yourself a teacher,
acquire for yourself a friend,
and judge every person favorably."*

יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרָחְיָה אוֹמֵר:
עֲשֵׂה לָךְ רֵב,
וּקְנֵה לָךְ חֵבֵר,
וְנִגְדִי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת.

Danby, H. (Trans.). (1933). The Mishnah: Pirkei Avot 1:6. Oxford University Press. (Original text ca. 200 CE)

ISLAM

Qur'an 49:10–12

Arabic:



*"The believers are but one brotherhood,
so make peace between your brothers,
and be mindful of God, so that you may
be given mercy.
... Do not defame one another,
nor insult one another with nicknames.
Avoid much suspicion, for some
suspicion is a sin.
Do not spy on one another,
nor backbite one another.
Would any of you like to eat the flesh of
his dead brother?
You would abhor it. So be mindful of
God;
truly, God is ever accepting, most
merciful."*

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ
فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ
وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ ...
اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ
إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ
وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا
وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا
أَيُّجِبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا
فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

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HINDUISM

Bhagavad-gītā 12:13–15

Sanskrit (Devanagari)



“One who is not envious but is a kind friend to all living entities, who does not think himself a proprietor, who is free from false ego, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who is tolerant, always satisfied, self-controlled, and engaged in devotional service with determination, his mind and intelligence fixed on Me—such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.

He by whom no one is put into difficulty and who is not disturbed by anxiety, who is steady in happiness and distress, such a devotee is very dear to Me.”

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥
सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥
यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥

Prabhupada, A. C. B. S. (Trans.). (1972). Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (12.13–15). The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. (Original Sanskrit text ca. 2nd century BCE)

BUDDHISM

Dhammapada 76–78

Pāli:



“Should one find a man who points out faults, who reproves, let him follow such a wise and sagacious person. It will be better, not worse, for him who follows such a one.

... Do not associate with mean people; do not seek the fellowship of the vile.

Nindanti tuṇhīm nipuṇaṃ,
nindanti bahubhāṇinaṃ;
Mitabbhāṇimpi nindanti,
natthi loke anindito.
... Na bhaje pāpamittaṇca,
na bhaje purisādhamāṃ;
Bhajetha mitte kalyāṇe,
bhajetha purisuttamaṃ.

*Associate with the noble ones,
seek the fellowship of the best.”*

Buddharakkhita, A. (Trans.). (1985). The Dhammapada: Verses 76–78. Buddhist Publication Society. (Original Pāli text ca. 3rd century BCE)

NORSE / VIKING

Hávamál 44–47

Old Norse (Poetic Edda)



*“When you have a friend,
and you trust him well,
and you wish to get good from him,
you should share your thoughts with
him, exchange gifts with him,
and visit him often.*

Vin sínum skal maðr vinr vera,
ok gjalda gjöf við gjöf.
Hlát við hlæja skal hǫlðar oft,
en ósnotr við ósnotran.
... Því at ótroðinn vegur verðr auðr,
en vinr til vinar kemr.

*... For weeds and high grass
will grow quickly on the road
that no one travels.”*

Crawford, J. (Trans.). (2015). The Poetic Edda: Hávamál 44–47. Hackett Publishing. (Original Old Norse text ca. 13th century, preserving older oral tradition)

GREEK

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VIII.3

Greek



*“There are therefore three kinds of
friendship, corresponding to the three
lovable qualities.*

*... But those who love for the sake of the
good love because of what they are in
themselves; and these are friends most
of all, because they love for the sake of
the friend himself, and not for any
incidental quality.”*

τριῶν οὖν ὄντων τῶν φιλουμένων καὶ
τριῶν φιλιῶν ἐστίν,
καὶ κατὰ ἕκαστον γὰρ φιλεῖται.
... οἱ δὲ δι’ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν φιλοῦντες
διὰ τὸ οἷοί εἰσιν φιλοῦσιν ἀλλήλους.
καὶ οὗτοι δὴ μάλιστα φίλοι,
διὰ τὸ αὐτοὺς αὐτῶν ἕνεκα φιλεῖν.

Aristotle. (1934). Nicomachean Ethics (H. Rackham, Trans.). Harvard University Press. (Original Greek text ca. 4th century BCE)