

*Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs
& Philosophical Quotes*

From Around the World

Yoji K. Gondor

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From the text:

- *Coyote is always out there waiting, and Coyote is always hungry.*
- *The man who claims to be the boss in his own home will lie about other things as well.*
- *When a finger points at the moon, the imbecile looks at the finger.*
 - *The white dogs, the black dogs, are all sons of bitches.*
- *Don't catch a leopard by the tail; but if you do, don't let go!*
 - *Even after the wound is healed, the scar remains.*
 - *Divide and share an orange, it tastes just as good.*
 - *Better to give cherries to a pig than advice to a fool.*
- *The way to gain reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.*
 - *Cats don't catch mice to please God.*

Contents

Proverbs of NORTH AMERICA	8
Native North Americans	9
Eskimo	11
Amish	13
Old American West	14
United States	16
Famous quotations	22
Proverbs of SOUTH AMERICA	23
Argentina	24
Colombia	25
Mexico	26
Peru	27
Proverbs of ASIA	28
China	29
Tibet <i>Province of China</i>	34
India	36
Japan	38
Mongolia	39
Australia	41
Proverbs of CENTRAL ASIA	42
Middle East	43
Afghanistan	45
Babylon/Iraq	46
Ottoman Empire/Turkey	47
Persia/Iran	49
Hebrew	50

Proverbs of AFRICA	51
Assyria/Ethiopia	52
Egypt	55
Ghana	58
Nigeria	60
Kenya	62
South Africa	63
Uganda	64
Proverbs of EUROPE	65
Latin	66
Denmark	68
France	70
Germany	71
Greece	72
Ireland	74
Italy	76
Russia	77
Spain	79
Sweden	80
Transylvania <i>Province of Romania</i>	81
United Kingdom	83
Miscellaneous Proverbs	85
Classical PHILOSOPHERS' Quotations	87
Thomas Aquinas	88
Aristotle	88
<i>De Anima</i>	88
<i>Ethica Nichomachea</i>	89
<i>De Interpretatione</i>	89
<i>Politica</i>	90
<i>Rhetoric</i>	90
<i>Metaphysica</i>	91
Averroes, also known as Ibn Rushd	92
Avram Noam Chomsky	92
René Descartes	93
John Dewey	94
Sigismund Schlomo Freud	94
Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel	95

6 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Martin Heidegger	95
David Hume	96
Edmund Husserl	97
Immanuel Kant	98
Søren Aabye Kierkegaard	100
Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz	101
John Stuart Mill	101
Isaac Newton	102
Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche	102
Plato	103
Jean-Jacques Rousseau	105
Bertrand Arthur William Russell	106
Arthur Schopenhauer	107
John Rogers Searle	110
Baruch Spinoza and later Benedict de Spinoza	111
Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein	111
Yoji K. Gondor	112
Ancient Chinese Philosophy	115
Kong Zhongni or Confucius	116
Meng Ke or Mencius	118
Mo Ti or Mo Tzu	119
Han Feizi or Han Fei Tzu	120
Lao Tzu	121
Zhuang Zhou or Zhuangzi	122
Philosophical Quotes of Ancient India	123
Buddhism	124
Carvaca	124
Vaiseika	124
Mahabharata	125
Epic	125
Vedanta	125
Yoga	125

Foreword

Proverbs use fine crafted sentences and provide a general truth about diverse matters - they represent the popular wisdom, the words of the ancestors, and are the spirit of a nation. Proverbs are anonymous; they are culture specific and commonly spread over large geographical areas. They associate with a specific language rhyme and rhythmus that provides them a unique tone and meaning, qualities that are tied to a specific terminology. Proverbs commonly lose some of their original characteristics during translations, and from that point on they merely qualify as aphorisms - aphorisms that are intended to preserve the general meaning of the proverbs; however in the process they lose their special cultural connection. I also included here a few of my favorite philosophical quotes. The quotes were collected during the years from my personal reading. I am certain the reader will identify and enjoy quotes that are new and unique to this publication.

In memory of Marioara!

Proverbs of
North America

...

Native North Americans

...

Take only what you need, and leave the land as you found it. –Arapaho

We will be forever known by the tracks we leave. –Dakota

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset. –Blackfoot

All who have died are equal. –Comanche

Life is not separate from death, it only seems that way. –Blackfoot

Coyote is always out there waiting, and Coyote is always hungry. – Navajo

There is nothing as eloquent as a rattlesnake's tail. – Navajo

You can't wake a person that is pretending to be asleep. –Navajo

What is past and could not be prevented should not be grieved for. – Pawnee

With all things and in all things, we are all relatives. –Sioux

Old age is not as honorable as death, but most people want it. –Crow

The weakness of the enemy makes us strong. –Cherokee

It is better to have less thunder in the mouth, and more lightning in the hand. –Apache

Do not judge your neighbor until you walk two moons in his moccasins. –Cheyenne



10 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Day and night cannot dwell together. –Duwamish

Force, no matter how concealed, begets resistance. –Lakota

Knowledge that is not used is abused. –Cree

There is no death; it is only a change of worlds. –Duwamish

Wonder often, the gift of understanding will come. –Arapaho

There is never a good reason for arguing. –Hopi

You are required to live your life from the start to the end; no one else can do it for you. –Hopi

Every fire is small at first. –Seneca

Eskimo

...

Maybe they are not stars on the night sky, but rather openings in heaven here the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy.

You do not know your friends from your enemies until the ice breaks.

May you have kindness in your heart, a plump woman in your furs, and seal meat in your larder.

May you have warmth in your igloo, oil in your lamp, and peace in your heart.

Summer is the season of inferior sledding.

Yesterday was wood; tomorrow will be ashes. Only today does the fire shine bright.

If you are often afraid, change your ways.

Don't let the windows of your home be so small that the light of the sun cannot enter your rooms.

May your charity increase as much as your wealth.

The caribou feeds the wolf, but it is the wolf that makes the caribou grows strong.

Those who know to play can overcome the challenges of life, and the ones who can sing and laugh never brew mischief.

Unless you're the lead sled dog, the view is pretty much the same.

Even the mighty eagle can't soar higher than the stars.



12 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Love comes, sometimes after marriage.

He that shows off own knowledge proclaims his ignorance.

Whether you think that you can or can't, you're right!



Amish

...

***T**he man who claims to be the boss in his own home will lie about other things as well.*

We pass our principles to our children by what we tolerate.

You can tell when you're on the right track. It's when you go uphill.

Instead of putting others in their place, put yourself in their place.

Experience is an unusual teacher; it is giving you the test first and the lesson, latter.

The young learn, the old understand.

A happy marriage is like a long conversation that seems very short.

Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear, and even the blind can see.

There is no magnitude of honesty.

Many things are opened by mistake, but none as frequent as the mouth.

It is annoying to have someone go on talking when you are busy interrupting.

Old American West

...

If someone outdraws you, smile and walk away—here's plenty of time to look tough when you're out of sight.

Whoever said a horse was dumb—is dumb.

You live in hell? HA! I ride him everyday.

Real cowboys never run; they just ride away.

Never ask a barber if you need a haircut.

The way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back into your pocket.

If you're riding in front of the herd, look back every now and then to see if it's still there.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

The way to eat crow is while it's still warm.

Don't interfere with something that ain't bothering you.

Talk slowly, think quickly.

You can tell a true cowboy by the type of horse that he rides.

The cowboy is a patriot.

A true cowboy is gentle with children, the elderly and animals.

A cowboy's horse always eats first.

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

The biggest rascal you'll ever have to deal with watches you shavin' his face in the mirror every mornin'.



Never saw on the branch that's supportin' you,—unless you're bein' hung from it.

Never lie unless yuh have to, and if yuh don't have a dang good lie, tell the truth.

Just 'cause trouble comes visiting doesn't mean you have to offer it a place to sit down.

The cowboy must never shoot first, hit a smaller man or take an unfair advantage.

If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.

It's best to keep yer troubles pretty much to yerself, 'cause half the people yu'd tell 'em to won't give a dang, and the other half will be glad to hear yu've got 'em.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment

United States

...

***T**he length of a conversation tells nothing about the depth of your intellect.*

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Winning isn't important, it's everything.

The only stupid question is the one that is not asked.

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back.

Never corner something meaner than you.

Don't judge people by their relatives.

When you lose, don't lose the lesson.

Behind every successful rancher is a wife who works in town.

Take care of your pennies and your dollars will take care of themselves.

Live a good, honorable life—when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.

It's better to be a has-been than a never-was.

Never slap a man who's chewing tobacco.

Boots, chaps and cowboy hats... nothin' else matters.

If it doesn't seem like it's worth the effort, it probably ain't.

If you think bull ridin' isn't extreme, come sit on his back and try on my boots.

If it doesn't involve ropin', ridin', or saddles, count me out.



When you ask for free advice, you get exactly what you paid for.

Silence is sometimes the best answer.

It is easier to get an actor to be a cowboy than to get a cowboy to be an actor.

Actions speak louder than words.

The bigger they are, the harder they fall.

Do as I say, not as I do.

If you can't beat them, join them.

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

Lightning never strikes twice in the same place.

No news is good news.

No pain, no gain.

Nothing hurts like the truth.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

In God we trust; all others pay cash.

Praise makes a bad man worse.

When pleasure interferes with business, give up business.

Give a man enough rope and he'll hang himself.

The more arguments you win, the fewer friends you will have.

If your time ain't come yet, not even a doctor can kill you.

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

18 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.

After all is said and done, more is said than done.

If we blame others for our failures, then we must give others credit for our successes.

The opportunity of a lifetime is seldom so labeled.

An ounce of proof is worth a ton of assertions.

Self-help is the best help.

The unknown is always great.

There are two sides to every story—then there's the truth.

If you make yourself into a doormat, people will wipe their feet on you.

Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free?

What goes around comes around.

If slavery isn't wrong, nothing's wrong.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

When you're trying' somethin' new, tell only a few people.

You don't need decorated words to make yer meanin' clear. Say it plain, and save some breath for breathin'.

There's no place like home.

Everything has its price.

A refusal is better than a broken promise.

A picture is worth a thousand words.

Attitudes don't prove anything.

Banks are heartless.



No need to lock an empty barn.

An ignorant consent is no consent.

A councilman must be a good listener.

Determination is not action.

Facts are facts.

Opportunity is money to be made.

A promise is comfort to a fool.

One cannot live upon prospects alone.

Some people are masters of money, some are slaves.

Ask no questions and you'll get no lies.

Accept an undeserved gift and you have sold your freedom.

One can't spoil what was never good.

Success is its own reward.

Talk is cheap.

A praying drunkard is an ugly thing.

The young may die; the old must die.

A person who talks about his inferiors hasn't any.

Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age regret.

Dreams are what you hope for; reality is what you plan for.

You can go home when you can go nowhere else.

If you don't have a plan for yourself, you'll be a part of someone else's.

In this world, nothing is permanent except change.

20 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Philosophy is reasoning why you are happy when you are poor.

When a father praises his son, he flatters himself.

There is no better time than now.

A half truth is a whole lie.

If everyone says so, it must be true.

Revenge a wrong by ignoring it.

It is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong.

An onion can make people cry, however there's never been a vegetable that can make people laugh.

God does not deduct from a man's life the hours spent fishing.

When the law is against you, argue the facts. When the facts are against you, argue the law—when both are against you, change the subject.

Better to die on your feet than live on your knees.

The money you dream of will not pay your bills.

Nothing seems too expensive on credit.

Some thieves have iron chains, others have gold chains.

Marry or not—you'll regret it!

God does not love those who did not suffer.

Consider each day of your life to be the best.

Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he will never be disappointed.

Don't spread all the butter on your loaf.

A polite question deserves a polite answer.

Dirt sticks to the innocent too.



A tree never hits a car except in self-defense.

Age brings experience; experience is knowledge that brings wisdom.

The future is only one step ahead.

Anyone who goes hungry for three days will steal.

Nobody can predict the future, not even those who get it right.

When all you have is a hammer, all your problems tend to look like nails.

Famous quotations

...

To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. -Elbert Hubbard

I swear by my life, and my love of it, that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine. -Ayn Rand

Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one. - Albert Einstein

We don't know a millionth of one percent about anything. -Thomas A. Edison

Under capitalism, man exploits man. Under communism, it's just the opposite - John Kenneth Galbraith

Your manuscript is both good and original, but the part that is good is not original and the part that is original is not good. - Samuel Johnson

Train up a fig tree in the way it should go, and when you are old sit under the shade of it - Charles Dickens

The nine most terrifying words in the English language are, 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help. - Ronald Reagan

You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can not fool all of the people all of the time. - Abraham Lincoln

It is better to be silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt. - Abraham Lincoln, (attributed)

Proverbs of
South America

...



Argentina

...

It's not the fault of the pig, but of the one who scratches his back.

Fortune favors the brave.

It's easy to trust a cat once you put the cream out of reach.

He who does not honor his wife dishonors himself.

It takes two people to make one person angry.

He, who knows nothing neither doubts nor fears anything.

Colombia

...

***R**ecognizing his major mistakes places a man on the road to wisdom.*

He, who is always miserable, does not even have joy when drunk.

When force is unavoidable, the law becomes a joke.

To love and be wise is not easy.

There is no better friend than a burden.

There is no genuine honor among thieves.

Teaching the youth is like engraving in stones.

By overcoming his passions a person overcomes his greatest enemies.

Better to beg forgiveness than to ask permission.

If there's not enough bread, cakes will do.

In times of need, kindness is more than ever sweet.

Mexico

...

All trees are made out of wood, but pine is not mahogany.

No schooling is needed to become a fool.

There'll always be a dead creature for the hungry vulture.

A few people don't say what they think, and some others don't think before they speak.

Since the excuse was invented nobody is ever in the wrong.

All time spent angry is time lost being happy.

Everyone stones the tree that bears fruit.

He, who never comes to your house doesn't want you in his.

I never ask God to give me anything; I only ask him to put me where things are.

The whole arena shouts to kill the bull, yet the bull should kill no one.

When young, it's all dreams; when old, all memories.

Fear and hope are the parents of God. –Aztec

Selfrestrain like an opossum, hunt like a jaguar. –Mayan

First men were made from sticks, now they roam as apes. –Mayan

Peru

...

***F**rom the tree of silence we harvest the fruit of tranquility.*

Favor your own first, then others.

Fortune and olives are alike; sometimes a man has it in abundance and other times not at all.

When listening I have the benefit, if I speak others do.

Love makes copper look like gold, poverty like riches, and tears like pearls.

Don't try to fly like the Cóndor; mountains are high.

Frogs do not drink all the water from the pond in which they live. –Inca

Instead of giving them corn, teach them how to grow it. –Inca

We must spare our enemies or it will be our loss, since they and all their belongings will be ours soon. –Inca

Proverbs of
Asia

...



China

...

Great eloquence will not change wrong into right.

The darker the night—the brighter the stars.

A little help is worth more than a lot of sympathy.

Ability in itself is not much when denied opportunity.

Judge a person not by the ability to make money, but by the ability to keep it.

The best form of flattery is to master the art of listening.

Harsh words and poor reasoning never settle anything.

That which is beautiful is not always good, but that which is good is always beautiful.

Better to be too skeptical than to be too trusting.

A wolf may lose its fangs, but not its inclination.

We cannot clap with only one hand.

One who hears flattery, but no criticism, will go astray.

Prevent defect and you will avoid success.

Do not hope to reach a destination without ever leaving the shore.

One evening's conversation with a superior man is better than ten years of study.

Intelligence consists of recognizing opportunity.

Of the ten reasons a judge decides a case, nine will remain unknown.

30 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

When the king makes a mistake, all the people suffer.

If you don't want anyone to know it, don't do it.

Better free in a foreign land, than a serf at home.

If you do not need help, all men are good natured.

A wife is sought for her virtue, a concubine for her beauty.

Men can live on hope alone, no other animal can.

A fool must be handled as frying a small fish, very carefully.

Do not set the forest on fire to drive out the wolves.

The tide must turn the lowest before it turns around.

Savings makes one independent.

It is better to like what you have than to have what you like.

Divide and share an orange, it tastes just as good.

Prejudice springs from ignorance.

A goal without a deadline is only a wish.

One who does not read is the same to one who cannot read.

Without oars, a boat drifts.

One acquires more knowledge from failures than from success.

It does not matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice.

To earn a living, a man must depend on his environment.

No journey is ever too long with good company.

It is better to be ignorant than to be ill taught.

You eggs; don't fight with rocks.



Don't judge the one who tries and fails, but the one who fails to try.

The one who oppresses others is always a coward.

One who does not know when he has enough is poor indeed.

Avoiding conflict is also a victory.

Shame is forgotten—debts are not.

The miracle is not to fly in the air, or to walk on the water, but to walk on the earth.

The swiftest horse is slower than a word once spoken.

The ripest fruit falls by itself.

Neither fortunes nor flowers last forever.

Slow work is sometimes the finest work.

To know others, know yourself first.

Teachers open the door; you enter by yourself.

Deadly as she can be, a tigress will never eat her own cubs.

A friend made is like a road paved; an enemy created is like a wall.

There is no wisdom like silence.

A person cannot be judged by his appearance in the same token as the sea cannot be measured with a bucket.

A life with love is happy; a life for love is foolish.

If people no longer fear death how can you threaten to kill them?

Scholars are invaluable to a nation, same as the main course to a banquet.

A day of sorrow is longer than a month of joy.

32 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

One should not refuse to eat just because there is a chance of getting choked.

A bit of fragrance always clings to the hand that gives you roses.

A place where flowers are priced so as to make them a luxury has yet to learn the first principles of civilization.

At first, all things appear difficult.

A wise man makes his own decisions; an ignorant man follows public opinion.

An ignorant doctor is no better than a murderer.

Be not disturbed by being misunderstood; be disturbed by not understanding.

Cheap things are not good, good things are not cheap.

Do not insult the crocodile until you've crossed the river.

Gold has its price; learning is beyond price.

Dogs have so many friends because they wag their tails, not their tongues.

If a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing well.

A person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the man doing it.

Learning is a treasure no thief can touch.

He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.

The best time to plant a tree was many years ago, the second best time is today.

If you don't climb the mountain, you can't view the plain.



If you suspect a man, don't employ him; and if you employ him, don't suspect him.

Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.

Man fools himself; he prays for a long life and he fears old age.

No wind, no waves.

Medicine can only cure curable disease, and then not always.

Slander cannot destroy an honest man; when the flood recedes the rock is there.

The rich man plans for tomorrow, the poor man for today.

The wise man never does what can't be told.

He who travels a lot becomes wise; he who is wise stays at home.

You win by not saying the things you don't have to say.

The world is our house; keep it clean.

Tibet

Province of China

...

Inconsiderate people forget after the favor is done just as a boat is abandoned after crossing the river.

Don't ask a hungry man to watch your rice.

Can the pouring of hot water help the one who grows flowers?

If you don't know where you are, any road will do.

Learned people distinguish the true from the false by sensible study, foolish people run after rumor.

Water is like medicine, but can be deadly in excess.

Harsh words and anger are often springing from affection.

The ocean reflects the moon and the stars but does not see its own depth; it is simple to see other people's faults but difficult to see your own.

Just as drawing water from a well increases it, it will dry up with sediments if left unused.

Those who are blinded by the darkness of ignorance are swept away by the dark river of cravings.

Just as rainwater doesn't expect anything in return for the nourishment it provides to the flowers, sons sharing their wealth are the best of generosity.

The Heaven is at the bottom of patience.

The old man's experience is more than the young man's knowledge.

If it is here, it is everywhere. If it is not here, it is nowhere.



If the master gets drunk, it is honorable; if the servant gets drunk, it is a malicious disposition.

Better to be a tiger for a day than a sheep for a thousand years.

Don't need to cut the tree to get the fruit.

The unfortunate is bitten even by a toothless dog.

Your character is your destiny.

The elder's plan can be superior to the young's strength.

If a mouth is toothless it has more space for the tongue.

A long rope is better, a conversation short.

Talk and arrows are better if straight; roads and bows are better if curved.

Thinking in advance is wise.

It is foolish to be regretting after.

Little knowledge generates great pride; the wise are quiet.

Torrents always make much noise while the ocean seldom roars.

What is directly observed might be real.

Having no debt is to be rich.

No disagreement is to be happy.

If you practice love even your adversary will become a friend.

Who depends on others will likely fail; like the turtle carried by cranes that has, in the end, plunged to the ground.

There is no other happiness but peace.

India

...

***E**ven if a fool is alongside a wise man all his life, he does not recognize the truth like a spoon does not know the taste of soup.*

The fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least to that extent; but the fool who thinks himself wise is called a fool indeed.

Mental punishment is a significant crime; however most of the time it goes unpunished.

Attribute your faults to nature; it does not change the nature of your faults.

Great desire causes endless poverty.

The way to overcome the angry man is with gentleness, the evil man with goodness, the miser with generosity, and the liar with plain truth.

To the mediocre, mediocrity comes out great.

Giving advice to a stupid man is like giving salt to a squirrel.

One and one are, on occasion, eleven.

When the danger is in the past, God is forgotten.

When pumpkins are watered weeds also get nourished.

The greatest hero is one who has control over his desires.

The gardener had not yet dug out the radish when the beggar holds the empty bowl in front of him.

The wise must be respected even when the advice they give is not suitable.

They who give have all things; they who withhold have nothing.



Truth has but one color, a lie has many.

Why would a man without a bow look for arrows?

Learn about the future by looking at the past.

Never strike your wife, even with a flower.

Take a close look at today because yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is barely a vision.

Abstinence is good medicine.

As people go their own way, destiny goes with them.

Can the monkey know the taste of ginger?

Even the devil needs a friend.

Anger is more destructive than the sword.

Japan

...

***T**here are lots of paths to the top of the mountain but the view is the same.*

If one makes an offering, what does it matter whether it's persimmons or pears?

Waiting for luck is similar to waiting for death.

Even the street dog has his lucky days.

Thieves and scholars look the same.

An untried friend is like an un-cracked nut.

Fools and scissors require careful handling.

When a finger points at the moon the imbecile looks at the finger.

There are false truths as there are true lies.

In the pursuit of pleasure there is no difference between a woman and a man.

A true word is not beautiful, and a beautiful word is not always true.

The old forget, the young don't know.

To die is easy, to live with dignity is hard.

The cherry blossom among flowers—the warrior among men.

When you talk about the future the devil starts to laugh.

The mouth of a man is a terrible opening.

It is the mystery of this world that makes life worth living.



Mongolia

...

Don't look for bad things in the good that you do.

If you endeavor, fate will favor you.

It is easier to catch a runaway horse than to take back a spoken word.

Once you locked the door you are the emperor in your own home.

The more you listen, the more doubt you are able to acquire.

Wise-men talk about ideas, intellectuals of facts, and the common man of food.

As the fish sees the bait not the hook, a man sees no danger, only the profit.

The winner has many friends, the loser has true friends.

Never count a Hordes-man dead until you have seen the body—even then, do not be sure.

When faced with only two choices, take the third.

The thief shouts too but he walks backwards.

The owner of a stolen camel commits ten sins (by suspecting others).

Plant the seed of virtue; fruit will be harvested.

The sun illuminates the world, knowledge illuminates a man.

Some men walk through the woods and see no trees.

Sorry puts no coins in the purse.

What you give away with love, you have.



40 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

What one man calls his natural rights, another man calls treason.

Honor itself is its own reward.

The mouth can turn into a knife.

To speak is to sow and to listen is to reap.

Steel is strong. Flesh is stronger. Will is strongest.

You can call a rock "fish" but you cannot make it swim.

A smart head has a soft tongue.

Choose your friends with care; your enemies will pick you.

The weak are cruel, need gentleness to be strong.

The difference between a hero and a coward is the direction in which they run.

Rome did not create a great empire by counsel. Rome did it by killing all those who opposed them.

One can't repay the debts to one's mother.

The sharper the thorn—the nicer the rose.

Help first, chat later.

We put a face on God, not the other way around.

An argument is like a dagger, it has two sharp cutting sides.

Without council, there is no wisdom—without praise, no heroes.

A rich man resides in heaven.

If you look like a donkey they'll put a load on your back.

Ride on the back of a calf—you'll never reach the nomad camp.

Read stories—you'll never achieve wisdom.



Australia

...

***H**health is hope, and who has hope has everything.*

I have never seen anyone rehabilitated by punishment alone.

It is better to lose on principle than to win on lies.

If you want to help the poor, don't become one!

The clash of ideas brings forth the spark of truth.

You might as well be hanged for a sheep than for a lamb.

The more you know, the less you need.

Fear is the thief of dreams.

Why wait for the storm to pass when you can go and dance in the rain?

Proverbs of Central Asia

...



Middle East

...

A thousand dogs can't catch up with a gazelle.

The white dogs, the black dogs, are all sons of bitches.

A free dog is braver than a caged lion.

If you want to know who the bravest coward is, it is the one who first dares to kick the fallen lion.

If you set your house on fire, you'll warm up with it once.

Two pieces of wood burn higher together.

The different sorts of madness are innumerable.

Trust God, but tie your camel.

If not for Allah's forgiveness the Paradise would stay empty.

In prayer and in prison all people are equal.

The actual defects of work will only show when it is finished.

Having only money, one is poor indeed.

Success is never final, failure is never fatal. It's the courage that counts.

Habit is the guide of the narrow minded.

It is the cause, and not the death, that makes the martyr.

Patience heals the broken bone.

Peace with fear is not true peace.

Politicians plan things no devil can think of.



44 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

There is no finer compliment to leadership than clemency.

The wet one fears no rain.

The Late one will bring you the latest news.

The fox pissed in the sea and said: This is mine!

Malice is the chosen weapon of the ignorant.

It takes love to give, and to take with love is also giving.

The heart of the ungrateful person is like desert sand; it swallows water but it does not grow plants.

Do not try to squeeze blood from a stone; God has not placed any in there.

When God shuts one door, He opens another.

The Allah might tell you about the treasure, but you need to dig it yourself.

He who does not know is forgiven by God.

To threaten the brave with death is like promising water to a duck.

If you are obsessed with what goes in your belly, you are worth as much as what comes out of it.

Afghanistan

...

Five fingers are brothers but not equals.

The appropriate answer to a fool is silence.

There is a path to the top of even the highest mountain.

A bad wound heals, but a bad word doesn't.

Cats don't catch mice to please God.

Smart people get the point from a single hint.

They asked the fox, "Who is your witness?" The fox said, "My tail."

To speak ill of anyone is to speak ill of you.

When the wine is free even the judge drinks it.

Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit.

That which is obvious does not need to be explained.

Unless God helps, what can a doctor do?

Babylon/Iraq

...

Friendship in days of prosperity is servitude forever; friendship in the day of trouble is posterity for the future.

You shall do no evil; that way you may gain eternal life.

The strong live by their own wages; the weak by the wages of their children.

If you go and take the field of an enemy, the enemy will come and take your field.

Writing is the mother of eloquence and the father of artists.

Be gentle to your enemy, same as to an old oven.

Do not drive away a debtor; he will become hostile towards you.

A loving heart maintains a family, a hateful heart destroys it.

Without suburbs, a city has no centre either.

An ass here, in another city becomes its head.

Ottoman Empire/Turkey

...

It is not disgraceful to ask, it is worse not to know.

Many will point to the right road after the wheel is broken.

The real friend tells you the bitter truth.

Hope is the bread of the poor.

Reversing losses at whatever point is a profit.

Demand a task from a lazy person, and be ready to receive advice.

He, who eats when full, digs his own grave with his teeth.

A man without a trade is like a tree without fruit.

When a wise man talks to a fool, two fools are talking.

There is no sovereignty like bachelorhood.

The hare was angry with the mountain, but the mountain was unaware of it.

A lion sleeps in the heart of every brave man.

Do not shorten the donkey's tail in a crowd; some will say it's too long, others that is too short.

He who does evil harms himself as well.

Don't tell your secret to your friend, he will tell it to his friend.

Explaining something to an ignorant person is harder than making a camel jump over a ditch.

If skill could be gained by watching, every dog would become a butcher.



48 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Coffee should be black as hell, strong as death, and sweet as love.

A thousand friends are too few; one enemy is one too many.

A weapon is an enemy even to its owner.

Fear an ignorant man more than a lion.

The wise man says what he knows; the fool does not know what he is saying.

Persia/Iran

...

Man goes towards his grave carrying in his hands only what he has given away.

Go as far as you can see, and from there you'll see further.

For a man to live in peace, he must be blind, deaf, and dumb.

If fortune turns against you, even jelly breaks your tooth.

Luck is fanatical about the efficient.

Excessive praise is like an insult.

Bribery makes both parties happy.

Forgiveness hides a pleasure that you can't get from revenge.

He who eats alone is Satan's brother.

If the Sultan demands five eggs, let his soldiers roast a thousand chickens.

Maturity comes from wisdom, and not only by the passing of years.

A rich man cannot afford unrest.

The night hides our world but reveals the majestic universe.

You are the master of the secrets you keep, but the slave of those who go away.

Who can walk on water is perhaps made out of straws.

Hebrew

...

A rich man has no need of character.

Admission by the defendant is worth a hundred witnesses.

Do not confine your children to your own learning, for they were born in another time.

Eat vegetables and fear no creditors, rather than eat duck and hide.

If a word is worth one shekel, silence is worth two.

Love him who tells you your faults in private.

Prejudiced opinions are frequently upheld with great intensity.

No bride is ugly on her wedding day.

Learn to say: I do not know!

The court is very merciful when the accused is rich.

More people die from eating too much than from starving.

The kind man provides for his cat before sitting to dinner.

Proverbs of
Africa

...

Assyria/Ethiopia

...

Don't catch a leopard by the tail; but if you do, don't let go.

A good name is better than fine perfume.

Pride is no substitute for a dinner.

When spider webs combine, they can tie up a lion.

A fool and water will go the way they are diverted.

Don't spend the evening in a house where you can't spend the night.

He who conceals his disease should not expect to be cured.

What one hopes for is always better than what one has.

Evil enters like a needle, and spreads like an oak tree.

The eye of the leopard is on the goat, and the eye of the goat is on the leaf.

After the hyena has gone, the dog barks.

He who knows a great deal does not speak much.

Fifty lemons are a load for one person, but for fifty persons they are perfume.

One who tries to hide along with a dog, a child, a goat, or a person with a cold, will not remain hidden for long.

The slimming of an elephant and the losses of a rich man are not noticeable.

The first camel in the train holds everyone up, but it is the last which gets the beating.



It is better to be the cub of a live jackal than of a dead lion.

A mouse that desires to die goes to sniff the cat's nose.

Thorns prick lightly the man who walks slowly.

Dine with a stranger but put aside your love for your family.

An excessively modest man goes hungry at times.

If you offend, ask for pardon; if offended, forgive.

Anticipate the good so that you may take pleasure in it.

Even over cold pudding, the coward says: "It will burn my mouth."

A loose tooth will not take a break until it is pulled out.

He who digs too deep for a fish may come out with a serpent.

Confiding a secret to an unworthy person is like carrying grain in a bag with holes in it.

The dog I bought bit me; the fire I kindled burned me.

If relatives help each other, what evil can harm them?

Ignorance is blindness of the mind.

Poverty is similar to slavery.

Youth is beautiful, even in cattle.

To try and fail is not called laziness.

For the benefit of the flowers we water the thorns as well.

He who understands music understands the universe.

If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes, and the monkey remains as it is.

Cats dream of mice.

54 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Advise and counsel him; if he does not listen, let adversity teach him.

You don't show a fool a job half done.

God is never in a hurry, but He is always there at the proper time.

Do not blame God for creating the mighty lion, but thank him for not giving him wings.

Egypt

...

Self-knowledge is the foundation of true knowledge.

Great respect waits for the quiet person.

The purpose of all human life is to achieve a state of consciousness apart from bodily concerns.

True happiness lies in what is eternal.

Ignorance is slavery.

Report on things observed not heard.

The greatest bounties given to us are judgment and will.

Speculation is the domain of the ignorant.

Nothing in heaven is a slave, nothing on earth is free.

The way to gain reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.

The fool is obstinate and doubts not, knowing all but his own ignorance.

You can create enemies by speaking the truth; however they are better than the friends obtained by flattery.

Man governs himself much easier in poverty than in abundance.

People are many and diverse, however humanity is one.

Be not fooled—magic does obey the laws of nature.

Don't bother to speak if nobody is there to listen.

There is a difference regarding of what you want, and what you deserve.



56 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Disregard what it seems absurd and you might fail to understand.

Ambition is to the mind what termites are to wood.

In its essence, infinity is un-knowable.

Some words are noisy.

When an idea exclusively occupies the mind, it is transformed into an actual physical matter.

Everything is formed by habit, even praying.

One who marries for love alone will have bad days but good nights.

Silence is more than just a lack of words.

The barking of a dog does not disturb the man on a camel.

Listen to your convictions, even if they seem absurd to reason.

Know the world in yourself.

Peace is the fruit of activity, not of sleep.

Our senses serve to affirm, not to know.

Judge by cause, not by effect.

All seeds answer light, but the color is different.

Images are nearer reality than written descriptions.

By knowing, one reaches belief.

By doing, one gains conviction.

When you know, you dare.

The seed cannot sprout upwards without sending roots into the ground.

Does sheep manure ever turn to caramel?

Dress up a stick and you get a doll.



They found no fault with the rose, so they blame that it is red!

The one who told you of the insult insulted you as well!

We let him in, he brought his donkey along.

Lies have short legs.

A house has the character of the man who lives there.

The image of friendship is truth.

If not for wrongdoing, there would be no forgiveness.

It is better if the catastrophe happens, better than waiting for it.

Pronounce the name of the dead; that way, make him live again.

Cover up the good you do—like the Nile, conceal your sources.

About a stepchild: if he does not wash his hands, he is dirty; if he does, he is wasting water.

The world has made no promise to anyone.

Ghana

...

***B**y the time the fool has learned the game, the players have dispersed.*

Do not call the forest that gives you shelter a “jungle”.

There is no medicine for hate.

Hunger is felt by a slave and king alike.

If there were no elephants in the jungle, the buffalo would be a great animal.

If things are getting easier, maybe you're heading downhill.

No one tests the depth of the river with both feet.

One camel does not make fun of another camel's hump.

Rain wets a leopard's skin, but it does not wash out the spots.

When a man is coming toward you, you don't need to say: Come here!

A woman is a flower in a garden; her husband is the fence around it.

All that we do on earth, we shall account for by kneeling in heaven.

If you want to speak to God, tell it to the wind.

However kind a man is he would never give his wife as a gift to his friends.

If God gives you a cup of wine and an evil-minded person kicks it over, God fills it up for you again.

If you do not spare a day to fix the door to your room, you will waste three years searching for your money but you will never find it.

To a quarter of beggars, stealing, and not begging, is considered a crime.

When the cock drinks water, it raises its head to God in thankfulness.

“Though I am not edible,” says the vulture, “yet I nurse my eggs in the branches of a high tree because man cannot be trusted”.

You do not become a chief simply by sitting on a big chair.

Nigeria

...

D*o not look where you fell, but where you slipped.*

A chick that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches.

You can tell a ripe corn by its look.

A proud heart can survive a general failure because such a failure does not prick its pride.

As the dog said: 'If I fall down for you and you fall down with me; it is playing.'

You must judge a man by the work done by his hands.

A man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness.

Looking at a king's mouth, one would never think he sucked his mother's breast.

People should not talk while they are eating, or pepper may go down the wrong way.

The lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did.

When the moon is shining, the cripple becomes hungry for a walk.

It is the brutally outspoken man that earns enmity.

A child's fingers are not scalded by a piece of hot yam which his mother puts into his palm.

To do one's duty is to eat the prized fruit of honor.

An old woman is always troubled when dry bones are mentioned.



It is not only the fox; even the snail arrives at its destination.

Without knowing well a person we must not hate him.

Thoughts and dreams are the foundation of our being.

A performing masquerader who tries too hard to outclass his colleagues may expose his anus.

Greatness and beauty do not belong to the Gods alone.

Our personal examples are like seeds on a windy day—they spread far and wide.

As the archer loves the arrow that flies, he loves as well the bow that remains constant in his hands.

There is no elephant that complains about the weight of its trunk.

No elephant is burdened by the weight of its tusks.

If gold rusts, what will iron do?

Kenya

...

***H**e who is unable to dance says that the yard is stony.*

Hurrying has no blessing.

We have not inherited this land from our ancestors; rather we have borrowed it from our children.

A slave has no choice.

How easy it is to defeat people who do not kindle fire for themselves.

A lion does not eat its own cubs.

Stolen things bring shame and misfortune.

He that has never traveled thinks that his mother is the only good cook in the world.

Even the forest has ears.

South Africa

...

The leopard that visits you is the one which kills you.

Do not desire a woman with beautiful breasts if you have no money.

An elephant does not die of one broken rib.

Do not laugh at the snake because it crawls on its belly.

One does not follow the footprints in the water.

Sleep killed the mighty lion.

The true strength of the crocodile is the water.

The way to overcome the cold is to warm each other.

We are humans when together; alone we are just animals.

The poor man's main tool is his tongue with which he defends himself.

Do not try to teach the paths of the forest to an old gorilla.

A fig tree found on the way is enough to keep you from starving.

Wisdom is like a baobab tree; it is hard for an individual to embrace it.

Uganda

...

Cattle are born with ears, the horns grow later.

Hunger does not know a beggar from a king.

People get fed up even with honey.

Whoever arrive last drinks muddy water.

Heaven never dies, only people do.

A child does not laugh at the ugliness of its mother.

Proverbs of
Europe

...

Latin

...

***E**mpy pots make the most noise.*

They condemn what they do not understand.

We learn by teaching.

Viewed from a distance, everything is beautiful.

Everything unknown passes for miraculous.

We are slaves of the law so that we may be able to be free.

To accept a favor is to sell one's freedom.

If others are allowed, that does not mean you are too.

Authority, not the truth, makes the law.

Celebrate the day only in the evening.

It is glorious to forget injustice.

Peace is better than the most just war.

He who speaks for the innocent is eloquent.

Knowledge has no enemies but the ignorant.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

It is the part of a good shepherd to shear his flock, not to skin it.

*There is no duty more obligatory than the repayment of kindness. –
Cicero*

*Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others. –
Cicero*

Denmark

...

Art and knowledge brings bread and honor.

It is a great art to laugh at your own misfortune.

Beauty without virtue is like a rose without perfume.

A tight cord is near snapping.

An evil eye can see no good.

The eye provides direct evidence, the ears the evidence of others.

The fool can find faults that great men can't remedy.

There is no virtue in an un-kept promise.

Happiness is a place between too little and too much.

Hope for miracles, but don't wait on one happening.

Poverty is not joy—even if sometimes it makes you laugh.

For the optimist, every weed is a flower; to a pessimist every flower is a weed.

Life is unpredictable—eat your cake first.

An honest man does not play dog for the sake of a bone.

Man has two ears and one mouth; he should listen more than he talks.

A bad hair cut is two people's shame.

The fool laughs when others laugh.

A short cut is often a wrong cut.

Advice after injury is like medicine after death.

Ask advice of your equals, help of your superiors.

Everything has an end—except a sausage, which has two.

He is young who has health, and rich who has no debts.

He who gives to me also teaches me to give.

He who tells the truth will stand before closed doors.

Hope and expectation are a fool's earnings.

Lies to be believed must be wrapped up in truths.

It is folly to fear what one cannot avoid.

Lend to your friend—ask repayment from your enemy.

The new is liked, though the old is often better.

None is as deaf as those who will not hear.

Time and tide waits for no man.

Bad is not good until worse happens.

Even baseless accusations stain.

All wish to live long, but none likes to be called old.

You can give advice, but not good luck.

It is hard to pay for the bread that has been eaten.

France

...

It is necessary to break the shell to have the almond.

A day with no wine is like a day without sunshine.

Hooray for the difference!

Comparison is not proof.

All flatterers live at the expense of their flatterers.

Don't talk about rope in the house of the hanged man.

When in doubt, don't do it.

Giving charity has impoverished no one.

Great love causes great sorrow.

Bargains can ruin you.

A deaf husband and a blind wife are a happy couple.

A fair promise binds a fool.

Almost and about are not lying.

When you are rich, it is hard to know who your real friends are.

Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake. –Napoleon Bonaparte.

Germany

...

What can you expect from a pig but a grunt?

The absent are always in the wrong.

No answer is also an answer.

Forgiving is not forgetting.

Poverty is no disgrace, but it is a great inconvenience.

He gives twice who gives quickly.

The best physicians are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merry-man.

All are not saints that go to church.

After the cow is stolen, they lock the barn.

He who puts up with insult invites injury.

Never give advice unasked.

No one is wise enough to advise himself.

A pack of playing cards is in the devil's prayer book.

Everybody's companion is nobody's friend.

What is sport to the cat is death to the mouse.

A doctor and a farmer know more than a doctor alone.

Speaking is by nature, silence is by understanding.

Undeserved praise is mockery.

Better a polite refusal than a worthless promise.



Greece

...

***T**ime is a doctor that heals all grief.*

Idleness is the mother of want.

The master's eyes make the horse fat.

He who becomes sheep is eaten by the wolf.

It's better to tie your donkey than to go searching for it.

A person in a desperate situation will try the most desperate measures.

From a child and a crazy person you learn the truth.

It's the old hen that makes good broth.

He, who has nothing else to hold on to, grasps even on a drawn sword.

The way of speaking honors the person.

Wonder is the beginning of wisdom.

When poverty comes in through the door, love goes out through the window.

When the wolf gets old, he becomes the clown of dogs.

God saves money, the devil spends it.

The right hand washes the left.

A straight enemy is better than a false friend.

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

He who doesn't find a little enough will find nothing enough. –Epicures

Another victory like that one and we are lost. –Pyrrhus

War is sweet to those who never tried it. –Pindar

The prosperity of a fool is a heavy burden to put up with. –Aeschylus

Milk the cow nearby; why chase the one that runs away. –Theocritus

It is shameful for a young man to question an old one. –Homer

*We know nothing for sure—truth is hidden at the bottom at the well. –
Diogenes*

Democracy is the worst form of despotism. –Aristotle

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. –Aesop

Ireland

...

A good friend is like a four leaf clover—hard to find and lucky to have.

A dog owns nothing, yet is seldom dissatisfied.

A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book.

A kind word never broke anyone's mouth.

A lie travels farther than the truth.

A man is incomplete until he is married, after that he is finished.

A silent mouth is sweet to hear.

A son is a son until he has a wife; a daughter is a daughter all of her life.

A turkey never voted for an early Christmas.

What butter or whiskey does not cure—cannot be cured.

As the old cock crows, the young cock learns.

If you want praise, die. If you want blame, marry.

It is difficult to maintain honor, more so than to become prosperous.

Forgetting a debt doesn't mean it's paid.

Who gossips with you will gossip of you.

No point in keeping a dog if you do your own barking.

The friend that can be bought is not worth buying.

A diplomat must always think twice before he says nothing.

Even black hens lay white eggs.



Seclusion is better than bad company.

Only the rich can afford genuine compassion.

The quiet are guilty.

Watch out for the patient man's anger.

If you buy what you don't need, you might have to sell what you do.

There's nothing so bad that it couldn't be worse.

A man loves his sweetheart the most; his wife the best, but his mother the longest.

Better give cherries to a pig than advice to a fool.

A busy mother makes a lazy daughter.

Italy

...

***H**e who has but one child will eventually drive him mad.*

Do not stick your finger between husband and wife.

Charity begins at home.

It is good to trust, but not to trust is better.

The best is always the cheapest.

Promising too much means little.

If you want something done, then do it yourself.

He who lives by hope alone will die of hunger.

There is hazard in delay.

Counsel is no command.

He who acts too friendly does not seek your affection, but something from you.

Speak well of your friend, and do not speak of your enemy.

A Christian forgives, an idiot forgets.

Thanks cost nothing.

Russia

...

If you hang a melon from a poplar, you are sure to find a fool who will think the poplar is a melon tree.

When war is a game, how can peace be serious?

There are many monasteries on the road to Hell.

The man who keeps falcons is surely no friend of pigeons.

It is better for the sheep to have the wolf as an enemy than as a friend.

Bread and water is better than cake and trouble.

Every family has an ugly member.

It's not for the stealing that you are punished, but for getting caught.

When God punishes the cabbages, he also punishes the hares.

The donkey knows seven ways to swim; when he falls into the water, he forgets them all.

Robbing a church is not a pious act.

You don't need to teach a cow how to moo.

Fools complain much about good times until they have bad times to complain about.

Even whores become pregnant.

Cruelty is the child of anger and revenge.

Girls dream of marriage, married women dream of love.

It is easier to make a baby than to make the crib.

78 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

When the fool wants to increase the number of his fish, he puts pikes into his carp ponds.

Regretting the past is like chasing after the wind.

If you drink you die, if you don't drink you die; so it is better to drink.

Spain

...

A smoky house, a leaky roof, and a shouting wife drive a man out of his home.

It is better to stay single than to marry badly.

It is better to put up with a bad donkey than to carry the wood by yourself.

Opportunity makes the thief.

Let the giver be silent, and let him speak who received.

Joke with a fool at home, and he will joke with you in the square.

It is better to deserve honor and not have it, than have it and do not deserve it.

A hungry wolf is never at rest.

Learning is the eye of the mind.

A cheerful wife is the spice of life.

When the fool has made up his mind, the market is over.

I cried when I was born, now I know why.

Don't talk much; your ignorance is greater than your knowledge.

Sweden

...

***H**e who always knows best never learns.*

If you buy what you don't need, you steal from yourself.

When the sea is calm, every ship has a good captain.

You cannot ask more of an ox than a steak.

One spot stains the whole dress.

He who stays quiet consents.

What is unclearly said is unclearly thought.

A clenched fist can neither give nor take.

The sun also has its spots.

Love me when I least deserve it, because that's when I really need it.

Luck never gives; it only lends.

A life without love is like a year without summer.

When it rains soup, the poor man has no spoon.

No one becomes a good doctor before he fills a churchyard.

Worry gives a small thing a big shadow.

Transylvania

Province of Romania

...

Blood is not water!

Adversity makes a man wise, not rich.

It is easier to forgive than to forget.

The one who trusts is happy; the doubter is wise.

Choose a wife to please yourself, not others.

Fools are wise as long as they are silent.

Fools ask questions that wise men cannot answer.

He is rich enough who wants nothing.

Hope often deludes the foolish man.

It never troubles a wolf the number of sheep in the herd.

When the wolf is mentioned, he is already near you.

A gardener's dog neither eats cabbage, nor lets anybody else.

He who pardons the bad harms the good.

If you don't cherish the little, you don't deserve more.

Even a white lily casts a dark shadow.

In the dark, all birds are grey.

Patience yields a rose.

Don't make a goat your gardener!



82 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

A promise is a pleasant declaration.

Even after the wound is healed, the scar remains.

Nice words are not nourishing to a starving belly.

If one cannot speak well, one should not speak at all.

Running away can be shameful, but not when it evades annihilation.

Where is now the snow of last year?

A change of ruler is the joy of fools!

Charm is better than beauty.

An imaginary illness hurts the most.

Inadequate defense induces wrong judgments.

Intuition is inherited knowledge.

A neutral man wants to feast on eggs and to break none.

A lazy man takes five steps to avoid one.

United Kingdom

...

***K**ings have many eyes and many ears.*

A crown is no cure for the headache.

If you would like to know the value of money, try to borrow some.

A rolling stone gathers no moss.

Bread and cheese is good to eat when cannot get another meat!

Beauty is eloquent even when silent.

There is only one beautiful child in the world, and every mother has it.

It is profound ignorance that inspires the dogmatic tone.

Misfortune is not that which can be avoided, but that which cannot.

Self-praise is no recommendation.

A penny-weight of love is worth a pound of law.

There is no blindness like ignorance.

A house well-furnished makes a woman wise.

A ragged colt may make a good horse.

A cat in gloves catches no mice.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

A jack of all trades is master of none.

Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies.

Beauty is only skin deep, but ugliness is deep to the bone.



84 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

Beauty may open doors but only virtue may enter.

Great minds think alike, but fools seldom differ.

He, who lives too fast, arrives to his grave too soon.

You can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.

Adversity brings knowledge, and knowledge wisdom.

Bad is "a bad" servant, but worse is being without him.

Barbers learn to shave by shaving fools.

Better to bow than break.

He seems brave who is afraid to run away.

Eaten bread is soon forgotten.

Two bullets never hit the same place.

Some are busy by doing nothing.

Better to be inside of a cottage than outside a castle.

A fool is busy with anyone's business but his own.

Only fools live poor to die rich.

The fool wanders—the wise man travel.

Lose an hour in the morning and you'll be all day hunting for it.

Ignorance is the mother of devotion.

Wise men have their thoughts in their hearts—fools have their thoughts in their mouths.

He will be soon a beggar that cannot say no.

Get what you can, and keep what you have. That's the way to get rich.

One whiskey is all right; two is too much; three is too little.



Miscellaneous Proverbs

...

You are not foolish enough if are not proud of your errors. –Romanian

If a fool holds the cow by her horns, a clever man can milk her. –Yiddish

If it does not get better, depend on it, it will get worst. –Yiddish

After a trial, one party is naked and the other without shirt. –Serb

The ugliest life is better than the nicest death. –Yiddish

Tap even a stone bridge before crossing. –Korean

Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worse. –Wolof

The higher the house—the worse the storm. –Norwegian

Three kinds of people die poor: those who divorce, those who incur debts, and those who move around too much. –Wolof

Who buys cheap pays twice. –Slovak

If a flea had money, it would buy its own dog. –Jamaican

If you follow a fool, you're a fool yourself. –Jamaican

When one is poor, even his ox is not willing to pull. –Romanian

The wolf loves the fog. –Hungarian

Measure three times before you cut once. –Romanian

A lawyer's opinion is worth nothing until paid for. –Hungarian

A tall tree is hated by the wind. –Malagasy

*Don't be so much in love that you can't tell when the rain comes. –
Malagasy*



86 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

The hand suffers at work, but the mouth must eat. –Sudanese

*He that makes himself an ass must not take it ill if men ride him. –
Brazilian*

*If the snake has no poison or the man has no ego–no one fears them. –
Nepalese*

*Even a fish would not get into trouble if it would keep its mouth shut. –
Korean*

Classical
Philosophers'
Quotations



THOMAS AQUINAS [about 1225–1274AD]

Born at Roccasecca, a hilltop castle in the Kingdom of Sicily, midway between Rome and Naples. He died at the Fossanova Abbey in the Kingdom of Sicily and is considered the Church's greatest theologian and philosopher.

Nothing, except God, is eternal.

Further, if the world always was, the consequence is that an infinite number of days proceeded this present day. But it is impossible to travel what is infinite. Therefore we should never have arrived at this present day; which is manifestly false.

It would seem that there is not only one world, but also many.

Because, as Augustine says, it is unfitting to say that God has created things without reason. But for the same reason that He created one, He could create many, since His power is not limited to creation of one world, but it is infinite, as was shown above. Therefore God has produced many worlds.

It seems that besides the philosophical sciences; we have no need of any further knowledge. For man should not seek to know what is above reason.

Choice is an act, not of the will, but of the reason.

ARISTOTLE [384–322 BCE]

Born on 384 BC in the Greek colony of Stagira that is located in the ancient Macedonia. He died in 322 BC, at Chalcis; a town on the island of Euboea in Greece. He is venerated as the father of formal logic, and of the formal system for reasoning.

DE ANIMA

Meditation strengthens memory.

It is simplicity that makes the uneducated more effective than the educated when addressing popular audiences.

Those who assert that the mathematical sciences say nothing of the beautiful or the good are in error. For these sciences say and prove a great deal about them; if they do not expressly mention them, but prove attributes, which are their results or definitions, it is not true that they tell us nothing about them. The chief forms of beauty are order and symmetry and definiteness, which the mathematical sciences demonstrate in a special degree.

For man, when perfected, is the best of animals, but when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all, since armed injustice is the more dangerous, meant to be used by intelligence and virtue, he is the most unholy and savage of all animals,...

He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god.

ETHICA NICHOMACHEA

A man will become a grammarian, only when he has both done something grammatical and done it grammatically.

The Millenniums are not without sense, but they do the things that senseless people do.

Most men identify friends with useful people.

For we are busy that we may have leisure, and make war that we might live in peace.

It is hard, if not impossible, to remove by argument the traits that have long since been incorporated in the character.

DE INTERPRETATIONE

Spoken words are symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words.

POLITICA

Private property makes man happier, and enables him to cultivate such virtues as generosity.

In democracies, revolutions may arise from persecution of the rich.

Liberty is the first principle of democracy.

The good ruler is the same as good man.

Hence is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal.

The real difference between democracy and oligarchy is poverty and wealth.

Wherever men rule by reason of their wealth, whether they are few or many, that is an oligarchy, and where the poor rule, that is a democracy.

Many are more incorruptible than the few.

Democracy is the form of government in which the free are rulers.

Democracy, for example, arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal.

Equality is of two kinds, numerical and proportional.

Where absolute freedom is allowed there is nothing to restrain the evil which is inherent in every man.

Neglect of education does harm to the constitution.

RHETORIC

It is absurd to hold that a man ought to be ashamed of being unable to defend himself with his limbs, but not of being unable to defend himself with speech and reason, when the use of rational speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs.

The example is an induction.

Wealth as a whole consists in using things rather than in owning them.

Sometimes is more desirable to seem just than to be just.

Wondering implies the desire of learning.

Honor is the token of a man's being famous for doing good.

If a man has often success - he can take the credit not luck.

Only rich men are able to command endless pleasures.

There are crimes for which is no punishment severe enough to be adequate.

Not to use the laws is as bad as not to have laws at all.

The cause of pleasure enjoyed by the insolent man is that he thinks himself greatly superior to others when ill-treating them.

Life on the whole is a bad business.

Responsibility makes one serious.

That if anything is possible to inferior, weaker, and stupider people, it is more so for their opposites.

Presently, there came a stag and began to spoil his pasturage. The horse, wishing to revenge himself on the stag, asked a man if he could help him to do so. The man said: "Yes, if you will let me bridle you and get on to your back with javelins in my hand". The horse agreed, and the man mounted; but instead of getting his revenge on the stag, the horse found himself the slave of the man.

No particular probability is universally probable: for what is improbable does happen, and therefore it is probable that improbable things will happen

METAPHYSICA

It is an accident that man is pale, but it is not accidental that he is an animal.

Some thinkers are saying nothing, while they appear to say something remarkable.

AVERROES, also known as **Ibn Rushd** [April 14, 1126 – December 10, 1198]

Born in Cordova, Andalusia, located in today Spain. He died in Marrakech, Morocco. Averroes was a Muslim philosopher, and is regarded as the founding father of the secular thought in Europe.

False interpretation (of Quran) is the root of the rise of heretical sects in Islam.

Interpretation is needed when there it seems to be a conflict of Scripture statements and the principles of natural reason.

Justice is entirely dependent of religion.

If it is divisible at infinitum, then there should be infinite parts in the finite thing.

Void is nothing else but dimensions, when dimensions are removed void becomes nothing.

All mankind are in agreement, except for those whose views are not worthy of consideration.

Avram Noam Chomsky [Born on December 7, 1928]

Born in Philadelphia, the United States. He is an American linguist, philosopher, and an influential social activist.

It is the responsibility of the intellectuals to speak truth and to expose lies.

He did not foresee that in a predatory capitalist economy, state intervention would be an absolute necessity to preserve the human existence and to prevent the destruction of the physical environment – I speak optimistically.

René Descartes [31 March 1596 – 11 February 1650]

Born in Indre-et-Loire, France. He died in Stockholm, Sweden.

He lived most of his life in the Dutch Republic. Descartes is regarded as the “father of modern philosophy” and has also contributed to the field of mathematics.

I found myself embarrassed with so many doubts and errors that it seemed to me that the effort to instruct myself had no effect other than the increasing discovery of my own ignorance.

Multiplicity of laws often furnishes excuses for evil doing. Sometimes is very difficult to untangle the truth.

By the name God I understand a substance that is infinite [eternal, immutable], independent, all knowing, all powerful, and by which I myself and everything else, if anything else exist, have been created.

We can conceive nothing that is extended as being so small as not to be capable of being divided, in thought at least.

The present time has no causal dependence on the time immediately preceding it.

Our errors are defects of our mode of aucion, but not of our nature; and that the faults of subordinates may often be attributed to other masters, but never to God.

The reading of all good books is like a conversation with the finest men of past centuries.

Common sense is the best distributed commodity in the world, for every man is convinced that he is well supplied with it.

If you would be a real seeker after truth, you must at least once in your life doubt, as far as possible, all things.

John Dewey [October 20, 1859 - June 1, 1952]

Born in Burlington, and died in New York City, United States. He was an American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform.

The duty of education is to discover what every person is good at.

Sigmund Schlomo Freud [6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939]

Born in Moravian-Silesian Region of the Czech Republic, and died in London, Great Britain. He was an Austrian neurologist, and is regarded as the founding father of psychoanalysis.

In the last analyses, all suffering is nothing else than sensation.

We shall never completely master nature; and our bodily organism, itself a part of that nature, will always remain a transient structure with a limited capacity for adaptation and achievement.

The benefits of order are incontestable; it enables men to use space and time to the best advantage.

The first requisite of a civilization is that of justice that is, the assurance that a law once made will not be broken in favor of an individual.

The liberty of the individual is no gift of civilization. It was greatest before there was any civilization.

Mine is a most peaceable disposition. My wishes are: a humble cottage with a tattered roof, but a good bed, good food, the freshest milk and butter, flowers before my window, and a few fine trees before my door; and if God wants to make my happiness complete, he will grant me the joy of seeing some six or seven of my enemies hanging from those trees. Before their death I shall, moved in my heart, forgive them all the wrongly they did in their lifetime. One must, it is true, forgive one's enemies-but not before they have been hanged.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel [August 27, 1770 – November 14, 1831] Born in Stuttgart, and died in Berlin, Germany. He was a major figure of the German idealism movement and his influence is also important on such philosophical developments as Marxism.

To hang the laws so high that no citizen could read them is injustice, .. that the knowledge of the law is accessible only to those who have made it their professional study.

At one time the administration of justice, which is concerned with the private interests of all members of the state, was in this way turned into an instrument of profit and tyranny, when the knowledge of the law was buried in pedantry and a foreign tongue, and the knowledge of legal process was similarly buried in involved formalities.

One must discard the prejudice that the truth must be something tangible.

God is nothing else than abstract being, which is the same as nothing.

Martin Heidegger [September 6, 1889 - May 26, 1976]

Born on September 26, 1889 in Messkirch, and died on May 26, 1976 in Messkirch, Germany. He was a German philosopher known for his existential and phenomenological explorations. Heidegger was also associated with the National Socialism/Nazi political organization, an act that has stained his legacy.

Man speaks by being silent.

With a worn-out language everybody can talk about everything.

Modern man's future is threatened by the world he created.

David Hume [April 26th, 1711- August 25th, 1776]

Born and died in Edinburgh, Scotland. Hume was a prominent empiricist and skeptic, and he continues to be an exceptionally influential philosopher.

Man is a reasonable being.

Nothing is freer than the imagination.

Human body complexity is beyond our comprehension.

Liberty is a power of acting or not acting according to the determination of our will.

When your opinion leads to absurdities, it is certainly false.

Actions are, by their very nature, temporary and perishing.

The actions themselves can be blamable, but the person is not answerable to them.

The Christian religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but also even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one.

Poets.....though liars by profession, always endeavor to give an air of truth to their fictions.

Beauty in things exists in the mind, which contemplates them.

Everyone has observed how much more dogs are animated when they hunt in a pack, than when they pursue their game apart. We might, perhaps, be at a loss to explain this phenomenon, if we had not experience of a similar in ourselves.

Does a man of sense run after every silly tale of hobgoblins or fairies, and canvass particularly the evidence? I never knew anyone that examined and deliberated about nonsense who did not believe it before the end of his enquiries.

For the purposes of life, conduct, and society, a little good sense is surely better than all this genius and a little good humor than this extreme sensibility.

Liberty is essential to morality, morality implies free choice.

Inferring effects from causes cannot be trusted to uncertain process of reasoning.

A wise man proportions his believes to the evidence.

Friendship is the chief joy of human life, and moderation the only source of tranquility and happiness.

Eloquence addresses itself to the fancy of the affections, captivates the willing ears, and subdues their understanding.

Impressions and ideas – the difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness, with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way in our thought and consciousness.

If something is absurd in fact and reality, it is absurd as an idea.

This is universally allowed that the capacity of the mind is limited, and can never attain a full and adequate conception of infinity.

The answer is unsatisfactory; not because it contains any falsehood, but because it discovers not all the truth.

This is also certain that every perception or object is supposed to have a continued uninterrupted being, and neither be annihilated by our absence, nor to be brought into existence by our presence.

Heaven and hell suppose of two distinct species of men, the good and the bad; but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue.

Edmund Husserl [1859-1938]

Born in the town of Prossnitz in Moravia, at that time it was a part of the Austrian Empire. He is recognized as the “father” of the philosophical movement known as phenomenology.

Some sciences can develop throughout the centuries and still be no genuine.

An absolute reality is as valid as a round-square.

Universal judgments say nothing with definitiveness about individuals.

Psychology, it is said, deals with thinking as it is, logic with thinking as it should be.

In so far as the respective senses are concerned, a veritable abyss yawns between conciseness and reality.

Immanuel Kant [1724–1804]

Born and died in Königsberg, Prussia (now Kaliningrad in Russia). Kant was primarily concerned with the possibility of metaphysics, and the original and brilliant discourse on “pure reason” that ultimately qualifies as dogmatism, more precisely transcendental dogmatism.

The majesty of duty has nothing to do with the enjoyment of life.

Faith ... is the moral attitude of reason as to belief in that which is unattainable by theoretical cognition.

It is therefore correct to say that the senses do not err - not because they always judge rightly, but because they do not judge at all.

Deficiency in judgment is just what ordinarily is called stupidity, and for such a failing there is no remedy.

I have no knowledge of myself as I am, but merely as I appear to myself.

I have therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith.

There can not be doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience.

The true transcendental concept of infinitude is this, that the successive synthesis of units required for the enumeration of a quantum can never be completed.

Time is purely a subjective condition of our (human) intuition, (which is always sensible, that is, so far as we are affected by objects), and in itself, apart from the subject, is nothing.

There can be no a priori knowledge, except of objects of possible experience.

How much smoke weights - subtract from the weight of the wood burnt the weight of the ashes which are left over, and you have the weight of the smoke.

It is also indispensable law of empirical representation of the time-series that the appearance of past time determine all existences in the succeeding time, and that these later, as events, can take place only in so far as the appearances of past time determine the existence in time, that is, determine them according to a rule.

I am identical to myself.

Attitude is the death of sound philosophy, although the former might perhaps be entitled the euthanasia of pure reason.

Pure concepts are not derived from experience.

Transcendental philosophy is unique in the whole field of speculative knowledge.

The savage knows nothing of poverty because he has no acquaintance with wealth.

Faith ... is the moral attitude of reason as to belief in that which is unattainable by theoretical cognition..

We can never represent to ourselves the absence of space, though we can quite well think it as empty of objects.

It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, and not as a determination dependent upon them.

Out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made.

Dogmatism, which teaches us nothing, and of skepticism, which does not even promises us anything.

Space is peculiar to us.

We can know objects only as they appear to us (to our senses), not as they are in themselves; and this assumption is absolutely necessary if synthetic propositions a priori be granted as possible.

All bodies, together with the space in which they are, must be considered nothing. Metaphysics have been but mere representations, and exist nowhere but in our thoughts to and mislead into childish efforts of catching bubbles, because appearances, which are mere representations, were taken for things in themselves.

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard [5 May 1813 – 11 Nov. 1855]

Born and died in Copenhagen, Denmark. He is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher.

Not until a person has inwardly understood himself and then sees the course he is to take does his life gain peace and meaning.

How unreasonable people are! They never use the freedoms they have but demand those who they do not have; they have freedom of thought - they demand freedom of speech.

To get into a rational conversation with an insane person is almost enough to drive you crazy.

Nature, the totality of God's work, and yet God is not there.

To be an author... is about the thankless job there is.

Someone who does not possess a penny can be just as compassionate as a person who gives away a kingdom.

Life must be lived forward, but can only be understood backward.

Providence watches over each of us as we journey through life, providing us with two guides: repentance and remorse. The one calls us forward. The other calls us back. Yet they do not contradict each other, nor do they leave the traveler in doubt or confusion.

There are, as is known, insects that die in the moment of fertilization. So it is with all joy: life's highest, most splendid moment of enjoyment is accompanied by death.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz [July 1, 1646 – November 14, 1716]

Born in Leipzig, and died in Hanover, both in Germany. Leibniz was a German mathematician and philosopher. He occupies a prominent place in the history of mathematics and philosophy.

Although the world is not perfect, it is yet the best that is possible.

Finally, under this perfect government, there will be no good action unrewarded and no evil action unpunished; everything must turn out for the wellbeing of the good.

There are two kinds of truths: those of reasoning and those of fact. The truths of reasoning are necessary and their opposite is impossible; the truths of fact are contingent and their opposites are possible.

A great doctor kills more people than a great general.

Justice consists in that which is pleasing to most powerful.

John Stuart Mill [20 May 1806 – 8 May 1873]

Born in Pentonville, United Kingdom, and died in Avignon, in France. Mill is regarded as the most influential English-speaking philosopher of the nineteenth century.

It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question.

Poverty implies suffering.

Isaac Newton [25 Dec. 1642 - 20 Mar. 1727]

Born at Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth, and died at Kensington, United Kingdom. He was an English physicist and mathematician that is widely regarded as one of the most influential scientists of all time and as a key figure in the scientific revolution.

If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.

I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy.

If I have ever made any valuable discoveries, it has been owed more to patient attention, than to any other talent.

I keep the subject of my inquiry constantly before me, and wait till the first dawning opens gradually, by little and little, into a full and clear light.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche [October 15, 1844 - August 25, 1900]
Born at Röcken, and died at Weimar, Germany. Nietzsche was a classical philologist, literary critic and a philosopher. His influence remains notable in existentialism, post-modernism, and post-structuralism.

The Christian faith is from the beginning sacrifice, sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, and all self-conscience of the spirit, at the same time enslavement and self-mockery. It is such men, who, with their 'equal before God', have hitherto ruled over the destiny of Europe, until at last shrunken, almost ludicrous, species, a herd animal, something full of goodwill (and hate?), sickly mediocre has been bred, the European of today...

One should not go into churches if one wants to breathe pure air.

Ignorance is a way to enjoy inconceivable freedom.

Good man; one that lets himself robbed, humiliated, and exploited.

Not that you lied to me but that I no longer believe you – that is what distressed me.

Moralists hate the jungle, and hate the jungle man therefore.

There is an art in every good sentence.

Human culture hitherto (up until now) has been semibarbarism.

It is a fundamental belief of the aristocrats that the common people are liars.

Under some circumstances, I love mankind.

The thought of suicide is a great source of comfort: with it a calm passage is to be made across many a bad night.

Great indebtedness does not make men grateful, but vengeful; and if a little charity is not forgotten, it turns into a gnawing worm.

Twice, when an honest, unequivocal, perfectly scientific way of thinking had been attained with tremendous fortitude and self-overcoming, the Germans managed to find devious paths to the old 'ideal' - at bottom, formulas for a right to repudiate science, a right to lie.

Plato [424/423 BC – 348/347 BC]

Born and died in Athens, Greece. He was a refined writer of philosophical dialogues, and founder of the Academy in Athens; the first institution of superior learning in the Western world. His mentor was Socrates, and one of his students was Aristotle. Plato is credited with the development of the foundation of Western Philosophy.

It is just to do good to our friends when they do good, and harm our enemies when they are evil?

People do what it seems best to them.

No one knows whether death may not be the greatest of all blessings to man, but men fearing it as if they knew well that it was the greatest of evils.

Justice is a fine name for the interest of the stronger.

Might make everything right, and always has.

The successful in this world are the unscrupulous and unjust.

There is nothing I like better, Cephalous, than conversing to aged men; for I regard them as travelers who have gone a journey which I too might have to go, and of whom I ought to inquire, whether the way was smooth and easy, or rugged and difficult.

The medicine does not consider the interest of the medicine, but the interest of the body.

No physician, in so far as he is a physician, considers his own good in what he prescribes, but the good of his patient; for the true physician is also a ruler having the human body as a subject, and is not a mere money-maker; that has been admitted.

The universal voice of mankind is always declaring that and virtue are honorable, but grievous and poison me; and that the pleasures of vice and injustice are easy of attainment, and are only censured by laws and opinion.

The Gods are not magicians who transform themselves; neither do they deceive mankind in any way.

Pleasure deprives a man of the use of his faculties quite as much as pain.

Many argue from amusement, and are always contradicting and refuting others in imitation of those who refute them; like puppy dogs, they rejoice in pulling and tearing at all who come near them.

Ignorance, the root and the stem of every evil.

Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau [28 June 1712 – 2 July 1778]

Born in Geneva, Switzerland and died at Ermenoville in France. Rousseau political philosophy influenced the French Revolution as well as the overall development of modern political, sociological, and educational thought. His writing, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, and the *On the Social Contract* remain foundational in modern political and social science.

No government, however efficient, was morally justified unless it rested on the active participation of all its citizens.

Thus reason and morality do not exist in the state by nature; they are products of civil society.

The desire to have cake and eat it too is as old as human nature. Social order is a sacred right.

Men are not natural enemies.

You cannot corrupt the people, but you often can deceive them.

In a well-governed state they are a few criminals.

Nothing is more dangerous than the influence of private interests in public affairs; and the abuse of laws by the government is a lesser evil than the corruption of the legislative authority, which is the inevitable result of particular opinions. When all this occurs, the substance of the state changes, and all reforms become impossible. ... In the strict sense of the term, there never has been, and there never will be, a real democracy.

The tyrant is one who presumes, in defiance of the law, to rule in accordance with the law; the despot is one who places himself above the law itself.

Bertrand Arthur William Russell [18 May 1872 – 2 February 1970]
Born in Trellech and died in Penrhyndeudraeth, United Kingdom. Russell is widely held to be one of the last century's foremost logicians and philosophers. His work has had a substantial influence on logic, mathematics, and the set theory. In 1950 Russell was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, "in recognition of his varied and significant writings in which he champions humanitarian ideals and freedom of thought."

Secularists, who dismiss religion as simply false, and fundamentalists, who insist on literal truth, both miss the point.

A revolt should be so unthinkable, as an organized insurrection of sheep against the practice of eating mutton.

Democracy is the even distribution of ultimate political power among all adults except lunatics, criminals and peers.

When people think about democracy, they generally couple with it a considerable measure of liberty for individuals and groups.

Unemployment, illness, and old age do not deserve punishment.

No nation has ever shown more heroism than was shown by the Japanese, but they were defeated by American industrial productivity.

The hope that human race will allow itself to survive, is therefore somewhat slender.

Men will have to submit to the law, even when they think that the law is unjust and iniquitous.

They were historical beliefs which, after being generally accepted for a long time, have in the end been admitted to be mistaken.

All fanatical creeds do harm, they promote hatred and strife.

Some people who say to love your neighbor, in fact think it right to hate people who do not do that.

The attitude that believing or accepting a belief unquestionably on a basis of authority is contrary to the scientific spirit.

Is there any knowledge in the world which is so certain that no reasonable man could doubt it?

Domestic animals expect food when they see the person who usually feeds them.

We know independently of experiences.

Absolute idea can describe the absolute reality.

Many people would sooner die than think. In fact they do.

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts.

Arthur Schopenhauer [22 February 1788 – 21 September 1860] Born in Gdańsk, now in Poland, and died in Frankfurt, Germany. Born Schopenhauer, often called the “philosopher of pessimism,” was the first to speak of the suffering of the world, of confusion, passion, and evil. He was a philosopher who had the courage to see that “all” was not for the best in universe.

To use many words to communicate a few thoughts is everywhere the unmistakably sign of mediocrity.

The gather much thought into a few words stamps the man of genius.

In schools students gather information, and not always insight.

In comparing two great men, injustice can be done to either of them.

The impression made by a masterpiece varies with the capacity of mind to understand it.

Many books are bad, and should have remained unwritten.

The superiority of mind isolates a man. It is only by practicing restraint and self-denial that we can act and talk with other people.

The man’s genuine superiority is that of mind and character.

Innocence is in its very nature stupid.

A man is wise only on condition of living in a world full of fools.

Vulgar people take a huge delight in the faults and follies of great man; and great man are equally annoyed at being thus reminded of their kinship with them.

Stupid people are generally malicious.

The only freedom that exists is of metaphysical character. Freedom is also independent of any knowledge, because is antecedent to it.

If a man shows by his absolutely unscrupulous and selfish behavior in small things that a sentiment of justice is foreign to his disposition, he cannot be trusted. No bad friends, better alone than among traitors.

Men, therefore, may be called irrational, if, like the lower animals, they allow themselves to be determined by the moment; reason is the source of morality.

Man's rights are easy to define: everyone has a right to do anything that injures no one else.

In the machinery of the state, the freedom of the press performs the same function as a safety valve in a machinery; because facilitates the discontent to find a voice.

There is no idea so foolish but that it cannot be put in to the heads of ignorant and incapable multitude, especially if the idea holds out some prospect of any gain or advantage.

Every miserable fool who has nothing at all of which he can be proud, adopts as a last resource pride in the nation to which he belongs; he is ready and happy to defend all its faults and follies tooth and nail, thus reimbursing himself for his own inferiority.

No animal ever torments another for the mere purpose of tormenting, but man does it, and it is this constitutes the diabolic feature in his character which is so more worst than the merely animal.

Delight in misfortune of others which remain the worst trait of human nature.

The faculty of judgment should be left to itself; and care should be taken not to participate in its action by in calculating prejudice, which will paralyze it for ever.

Man is, at bottom, a savage, horrible beast. We know it only in the business of taming and restraining him which we call civilization. Hence it is that we are terrified if now and then his nature breaks out. But it is unnecessary to wait for anarchy in order to gain enlightenment on this subject. A hundred records, old and new, produce the conviction that in his unrelenting cruelty man is in no way inferior to the tiger and the hyena.

Animals are instinctively afraid of the sight, or even the track of man.

If you laugh a great deal, you are happy; if you cry a great deal, you are unhappy.

The life of a fool is worse than death.

Great intellectual gifts mean an activity pre-eminently nervous in its character, and consequently a very high degree of susceptibility, to pain in every form. Further, such gifts imply an intense temperament, larger and more vivid ideas, which, as the inseparable accompaniment of great intellectual power, entail on its possessor a corresponding intensity of the emotions, making them incomparably more violent than those to which the ordinary man is prey.

Mankind is in itself not all inclined to award praise and reputation; it is more disposed to blame and find fault, whereby indirectly praises itself.

Men of great genius stand in all ages like isolated heroes, keeping up single handed a desperation struggling against the onslaught of an army of opponents. Is not this characteristic of the miserable nature of mankind?

A professor looks at the genius as at a hare: it is good to eat after it was killed and dressed up. As long he is alive it is only good to shoot at it.

The greatest wisdom is to make the enjoyment of the present the supreme object of life; because that is the only reality, all else being merely the play of thought.

When the terrors of life outweigh the terrors of death one can commit suicide.

We know that a man is in general superior to all other animals, and this is also the case in his capacity for being trained.

Time is nothing more than that form of the principle of sufficient reason, and has no further significance.

Succession is the whole nature of time.

Health outweighs all other blessings so much that one may really say that a healthy beggar is happier than an ailing king.

John Rogers Searle [born July 31, 1932]

Born in Denver, Colorado, in the United States. Searle is an American philosopher and currently the Slusser Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley. He is widely noted for his contributions to the philosophy of language, philosophy of mind and social philosophy.

The problem for language was how to get from sound to meaning.

Nothing ever has an absolute existence, not even planets or hydrogen atoms. They just “show up”.

Consciousness is a mental and therefore not physical feature of the brain. Our capacity for consciousness is and other mental phenomena are a result of long periods of biological evolution.

If the supernatural existed, it too would have to be natural.

Baruch Spinoza and later Benedict de Spinoza [24 November 1632 – 21 February 1677]

Born in Amsterdam, and died in his rented room in The Hague, in Nederland. He's parents had immigrated to Amsterdam from Portugal in order to escape the atrocities of Inquisition. Spinoza is difficult to categorize from a philosophical point of view, though he is usually regarded, along with Descartes and Leibniz, as one of the three major Rationalists.

Our mind is staggered by the immensity of the infinite universe, and a discovery that is so vast, beyond ordinary human power of understanding.

There is war, no peace, in the world of the learned.

The universe cannot be known by our senses, but only by our mind as an idea or an imagination because it is infinite.

Some things exceed even the power of imagination.

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein [26 April 1889 – 29 April 1951]

Born in Vienna, Austria and died in Cambridge, Great Britain. Bertrand Russell portrayed him as “the most perfect example I have ever known of genius as traditionally conceived, passionate, profound, intense, and dominating”. Wittgenstein worked primarily in logic, the philosophy of mathematics, the philosophy of mind, and the philosophy of language. He is now considered one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century.

When we say: Every word in language signifies “something”, we have, so far, said nothing whatsoever.

What really comes before our mind when we understand a word? – Isn't it something like a picture? Can't it be a picture?

Could someone understand the word “pain” that has never felt pain?

A rose is red in the dark too?

Describe the aroma of coffee – why can't it be done? Do we miss the words?

What is the natural expression of an intention? –Look at a cat when it stalks a bird; or at a beast when it wants to escape.

When we do philosophy we are like savages, primitive people, who hear expressions of the civilized men, put a false interpretation of them, and then draw the queerest conclusion from it.

Yoji K. Gondor [20 October 1953,..]

Born in Arad, in Transylvania. In early 1980s he has immigrated to the United States in order to escape the atrocities of communism. Gondor has published a writing named 'The Delude' from where the following quotations are taken.

At times, facts are in front of us; the blind can not see them, the deaf can not hear them, and the deluded fool can not believe them.

Delude: an individual who regards his own mental fascinations as reality, and is predisposed to strongly dedicate his or her entire life to a single idea which can be useful or destructive to his or her own life.

What the deluded fool says typically is not right or even wrong; it is downright stupid.

The concept of The Delude forwards the inference that man is not guaranteed rationality but is merely capable of being rational.

A generally accepted opinion is not, on that basis, guaranteed valid or a proof of its accuracy; equally, it is not proof of its falsity.

Extremism, therefore, is a direct consequence of a highly deluded mind.

Thought is not a physical object; it can only be understood by the actions generated by its exteriorization or projection.

Some univocal statements can be, at times, equally true and false. For example we can state: Today is Monday. That can be true - if and only if today is in fact Monday; this implies the cyclical real-time validation.

Snobbism and a craving for superior social standing sometimes lead to racism. This is achieved not by elevating yourself but by an attempt to denigrate others; that fits the deluded fool's route to fulfill deludes desired exclusive social status.

The metaphysical description of God as 'that than which nothing greater can be conceived' is particularly puzzling to the fool's mind. Can God be the implied fancy of the infinity concept?

It is self-evident that when we grasp that our understanding of our universe amounts to about nothing, then, in fact, we know something.

There is no profit in pleasure; only hard work can bring it along. And what do we do when we get the profit? Make use of it to get some more pleasure.

An un-kept promise is like a rainy day: useless, cold, and depressing.

When someone asks meaningless questions, as deludes commonly do, what is the merit that one answers them?

A human action commonly implies will and intention, but the choice for no action is also, factually, an action.

The Delude might irrationally believe something that is true.

As Hegel believed, the refusal to verbally defend a point has a barbaric root; the barbarians' language skills were not sufficiently developed to sustain a rational conversation.

Setting up a valid psychological goal requires that the goal must be in the space of obtainable goals.

The deluded fools deeply believe that the only path to achieving peace is to violently destroy whoever is seen as an enemy.

We must fear those who fear nothing, for they do not follow the natural desire for self-preservation.

One has the right to dissent, a right to side with anyone, even a right to be an idiot. However, he or she has no right to lie and to masquerade bigotry as a political view.

The deludes do not embrace the scientific or political reality. They like their world as they perceive it, and therefore, they can't be differentiated as strict political conservatives, for example.

Humans are definitively social beings; they naturally thrive in communities. Most of the time a human community behaves as a bee hive, but at times also acts similar to a pack of angry wolves.

The ancient Chinese Dao philosophy entails the concept that the human body vanishes and dissolves like everything else in the infinite process of change, a fact not probable to be refuted. Envisioned this way, the destruction of the body, as the destruction of the entire universe, becomes simply a transformation.

Ancient Chinese Philosophy

Kong Zhongni or Confucius [551BC – 479BC]

Born and died in Qufu, Shandong province in China. His philosophy is deeply moral, and includes respect and care of one's parents, respect and care of each other. It also forwards the view of obligation for self-improvement, and graceful acceptance of social order and authority. Confucius was a genuine humanist. His influence was passed down by generations, and is deeply rooted and also influenced the popular culture of the Chinese people.

There is no understanding where no sincerity is.

Nowadays, for a person to be filial means no more than that he is able to provide his parents with food. Even dogs and horses are provided with food. If a person shows no reverence, where is the difference?

The profound person understands what is moral. The small person understands what is profitable.

Silence is often advisable but indifference is both criminal and wrong.

The moral force of the profound person is like the wind; the moral force of the small person is like the grass. Let the wind blow over the grass and it is sure to bend.

What you do not desire for yourself, do not do to others.

Profound knowledge no one can obtain without putting aside all feelings of prejudice and self-conceit.

It is always better to do good than wrong

It is not to be inferred that those do not know to control or govern themselves should be able to properly advise others.

Charity is a sublime grace and its bestowments bless both the giver and the receiver.

Others might equal his intelligence, but not equal his stupidity.

The common people can be made to follow a path and not understand it.

We learn something practical, we study something theoretical; in learning the focus is on the learner. In study it is on the object.

All things being equal, is better to be frugal.

When I told him one thing he understands ten.

Repay the injury with straightness, but repay a good turn with a good turn.

It is not the failure of others to appreciate your qualities, but rather your luck of them.

I am a fortunate man. Whenever I make a mistake other people are sure to notice it.

What a good man Tzu is, no one can find fault with what his parents and brothers have to say about him.

Advise the best - but stop when is no chance of success.

Isn't it pleasant to learn with constant perseverance and application? Isn't it pleasant to have friends visit from faraway places? Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no unease though men may make no note of him?

It is cowardice to see what is right and not to do it.

The superior man is conciliatory but not blind-accommodating; the small man is accommodating but not conciliatory.

A superior man makes demands upon himself; a small man makes demands upon others.

To have faults and not to correct them, this, indeed, is to have faults.

To put people to death without having instructed them, that is called cruelty.

When you know a thing, say that you know it; when you do not know a thing, admit that you don't know it. This is wisdom.

If I can attain wealth and honor just because I pursue them, then even a cart-driver could be a successful man; but if I can't attain wealth and honor even though I restlessly pursue them, I'd prefer to do what I really like.

I hate weeds that resemble grain.

Meng Ke or Mencius [about 385BC – 312BC]

Born in the State of Zou, located in present Shandong province, and is buried in the “Mencius Cemetery” located several kilometers to the northeast of Zoucheng’s central area. He was an itinerant Chinese philosopher and sage, and one of the principal interpreters of Confucianism. Disappointed at his failure to effect changes in his contemporary world, he retired early from public life.

We can see that one is without the feeling of sympathy, one is not a human.

The great man is he who still retains the innocent heart of a child.

When his wishes were to be realized, he passes on virtue to people.

When he is unable to realize his wishes, he stands to his principle alone.

Riches and honor can't make his heart sway. Poverty and destitution can't modify his integrity. Force can't subdue his will. Then he can be called a true man.

To feed someone and not respect him is as raising pigs. To love someone and not respect him is as keeping pets.

When those in inferior posts do not obtain the confidence of those in higher positions, they can't succeed in government.

What is the business of the unemployed scholar? It is to elevate his ideal.

There has never been a benevolent person who neglected his parents or an upright person who slighted his lord.

They constantly respect him who respects others.

This is but a madman. Since he conducts himself so, what is there to choose between him and a beast? Why should I criticize a beast?

I desire life, and I also desire uprightness. If I can't have both, I will give up life.

Mo Ti or Mo Tzu [480BC?-390B]

Was a native of the state of Sung, or by other opinion a native of Lu, in China. Mo Tzu founded the school of Mohism, and bitterly argued against Confucianism and Daoism. His main philosophical doctrines are the “Universal Love” and “Honoring the Worthy” have an important role in defining classical Chinese philosophy.

To criticize and yet offer no alternative is like trying to stop flood with water or put out fire with fire. It will surely have no effect.

One who loves will be loved by others; one who hates will be hated by others.

Some are like blind man talking about white and black in the same way as ordinary men, but in practice cannot distinguish between them.

.....Corrupt man with their elaborate and corrupt rites and music and ready to deceive parents with lengthy mornings and hypocritical grief. They propound fatalism, ignore poverty, and behave with greatest arrogance. They turn their back on what is important, abandon their tasks, and find content in idleness and pride. They are greedy for food and drink, and lazy to do any work, but thou they found themselves threatened by hunger and cold, they refuse to change their ways. They behave like beggars, stuff aside food like hamsters, stare like he-goats, and walk around like castrated pigs.

Han Feizi or Han Fei Tzu [280? – 233BC]

He was a Chinese philosopher who advanced the doctrine of Legalism. Legalism assumed that people were naturally evil and always acted to avoid punishment while simultaneously trying to achieve gains. Unlike the other famed philosophers of the time, Han Feizi was a member of the ruling aristocracy, having been born into the ruling family of the state of Han during the end phase of the Warring States Period. In this context, his works have been interpreted by some scholars as being directed to his cousin, the King of Han.

All men are evil.

The ruler should not tell his desires; for if he reveals his desires, ministers will put on a mask that pleases him.

One the whole, the difficult thing about persuasion is to know the mind of the person one is trying to persuade and to be able to fit one's words to it.

The carpenter who makes coffins hopes that men die early. The carpenter has no feelings of hatred towards others; he merely stands to profit from their death.

He who claims to be sure of something for which is no evidence is a fool, and he who acts on the basis of what cannot be proved is an impostor. Those who follow the ancient rules are either fools or impostors.

Lao Tzu [believed born about 400BC]

He is one of the major ancient Chinese philosophers, and the main contributor to the antic concept of Chinese “cosmology”. Lao Tzu had a great impact in influencing the Chinese society, by providing a link of human activities to the natural way.

If the Principle of the universe could be translated into words or letters, it would not be the principle. If its name could be pronounced, it would not be the Principle’s name.

Anyone who has studied the Chuang Tzu book knows perfectly well that the human body vanishes, dissolves like everything else, in the process of change.

The further you go the less you know.

A good warrior is never violent.

Generally speaking, true words are often not welcome, and beautiful words are often not true.

Without the concept of “existence” how could we know “emptiness”?

I don’t know where it came from, it should be here before the heaven and earth was created.

Governing according to the way of nature brings peace instead. Conceit leads do defeat.

For the same reason, so-called “humanity” and “morality” restrict people’s true nature.

Those people who do not have enough faith will not be able to inspire faith to others.

The sage treasures everything; so nothing is wasted.

To use the force of arms is something one resorts to only when one has no choice but to show military strength.

Winning a war is not a glory.

If you celebrate the victory, it means you delight in the slaughter of people.

The person who is satisfied with his present is a wealthy person.

The man who declares himself of great wisdom is but a person who may only know the “superficial” Principle of the universe, a fool who likes to cheat himself.

Between a person’s fame and his life, which one does the person treasure more?

The journey of a thousand miles was began one step at a time.

The Sage constantly has no set mind. Those who are good he regards as good and those who are not good he also regards as good. In this way he attains goodness.

Those who know don’t talk about it; those who talk don’t know it.

Beautiful words can be bought and sold.

Great eloquence is silent.

To understand others is to be knowledgeable; to understand yourself is to be wise. To know when you have enough is to be rich. To die but not be forgotten – that’s true long life.

Zhuang Zhou or Zhuangzi [399BC? – 295B]

He is credited with writing—in part or in whole—a work known by his name, the Zhuangzi. It expresses a philosophy which is skeptical, arguing that life is limited and knowledge to be gained is unlimited. His philosophy can be considered a precursor of relativism in systems of value.

Is the sky blue because is so thin and it has no end, are most endless things also blue?

Words are not like the wind, words have some thing to say.

Understanding that rests in what it does not understand is the finest.

Knowledge has no limit.

Philosophical Quotes of Ancient India



Buddhism

All things pass away, dreams and hopes, fears and desires.

Not a mother, not a father, nor any relative will do so much; a well directed mind will do as service.

Like a beautiful flower, full of color but without scent, are the well spoken words of him who does not act (as he professes too).

Long is the night to him who is awake, long is the chain of existence to the foolish who do not know the true law.

The fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least to that extent; but the fool who thinks himself wise is called a fool indeed.

Do not speak anything harsh, those who are spoken to will answer you (in the same way). Since angry talk is painful, retaliation will touch you.

Victory breeds hatred; the conquered dwells in sorrow. He who has given up victory and defeat, he is calm and lives happily.

It is better to leave alone; there is no companionship with a fool.

Mental punishment is a great crime, and it is hard to be proven.

Carvaca

Perception is held to be of two kinds, external and internal.

The enjoyment of heaven lies in eating good foods, and keeping company of young women.

Vaiseika

Scientific knowledge is cognition free from imperfection.

Knowledge is of four kinds: directly sensuous, inferential, recollective, and supernatural.

Mahabharata

One can become cleansed of all sins by means of knowledge alone.

I don't regard even my own-self to be mine.

Epic

Ignorance and indiscipline are the causes of a man's troubles.

Perception is the only source of knowledge; what is not perceived does not exist.

Vedanta

Our senses might deceive us; our memory might be an illusion.

To remove ignorance is to realize the truth.

Meditation is a way to self-discovery.

Yoga

Burn the seed of false knowledge, so it might not sprout again.

Mind it is not sufficient to explain existence in the universe.

126 - Fine Aphorisms, Proverbs & Philosophical Quotes

