

**UW Readings
Compassion
August 11, 2024**

Hinduism

Love is the firstborn,
Loftier than the Gods;
You, O Love, are the eldest of all,
Altogether mighty.
To you we pay homage!

Greater than the breadth
Of Earth and Heaven
Or of Waters and Fire,
You, O Love, are the eldest of all,
Altogether mighty
To you we pay homage!

Greater than the quarters and directions,
The expanses and vistas of the sky,
You, O Love, are the eldest of all,
Altogether mighty.
To you we pay homage!

Greater than all things moving and inert,
Than the Ocean, O Passion,
You, O Love, are the eldest of all,
Altogether mighty.
To you we pay homage!

Beyond the reach of Wind or Fire,
The Sun or the Moon,
You, O Love, are the eldest of all,
Altogether mighty.
To you we pay homage!

In many a form of goodness, O Love,
You show your face.
Grant that these forms may penetrate
Within our hearts
Send elsewhere all malice!

--Atharva Veda IX: 2:19-21, 23-25

Buddhism

May I be a guide for those who journey on the road.
May I be a boat, a raft, a bridge
For those who wish to cross the water.

May I be an isle for those who yearn for land,
A lamp for those who long for light;

For all who need a resting place, a bed;
For those who need a servant, may I be their slave.
May I be the wishing jewel, the vase of wealth,
A word of power and the supreme healing,
May I be the tree of miracles,
For every being the abundant cow.

Thus, for everything that lives,
As far as are the limits of the sky,
May I be constantly their source of livelihood
Until they pass beyond all sorrow.

--*Way of the Bodhisattva 3:18-20, 22*

Zoroastrianism

We are those who welcome the good thoughts, good words, and good acts which, here and elsewhere, are and have been realized. We are not those who denigrate good...That have we chosen for ourselves, O Wise Lord, that through beautiful Aša [Truth or Goodness] we may think, say, and do what, of the actions which there are, should be best for the two existences.

--*Yasna 35.2-3 (Narten trans)*

Taoism

The world calls me great
Great but useless
It's because I am great I am useless
If I were of use
I would have remained small
But I possess three treasures
I treasure and uphold
First is compassion
Second is austerity
Third is reluctance to excel
Because I'm compassionate
I can be valiant
Because I'm austere
I can be extravagant
Because I'm reluctant to excel
I can be chief of all tools
If I renounced compassion for valor
Austerity for extravagance
Humility for superiority
I would die
But compassion wins every battle
And outlasts every attack
What Heaven creates
Let compassion protect

--*Taoteching 67 (Red Pine trans)*

Indigenous

Wakan Tanka, Great Mystery,
teach me how to trust
my heart,
my mind,
my intuition,
my inner knowing,
the senses of my body,
the blessings of my spirit.
Teach me to trust these things
so that I may enter my Sacred Space
and love beyond my fear,
and thus Walk in Balance
with the passing of each glorious Sun.

--*Lakota Prayer*; (<https://www.sapphyr.net/natam/quotes-nativeamerican.htm>)

Judaism

The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens;
You shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

--*Leviticus 19:34*

That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow.
That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn.

--*Talmud, Shabbat 31a*

Christianity

Love is patient, love is kind;
It does not envy, it does not boast,
It is not proud, nor is it rude;
It is not self-seeking, nor easily angered,
It keeps no record of wrongs.
Love does not delight in evil,
But rejoices in the truth.
Love bears all things, believes all things,
Hopes all things, and endures all things.
Love never ends.

--*St. Paul, First Letter to the Corinthians*

And God said to the soul;
I desired you before the world began.
I desire you now
As you desire me.
And where the desires of two come together
There love is perfected

--Teachings of the Christian Mystics, Mechthild of Magdeburg

Muslim

The sickness of love is not like any other;
Love is the astrolabe of God's mysteries.
Whether Love is from heaven or earth,
It points to God.
However I may try to explain it,
When faced with Love itself
I'm ashamed of my explanations.
Whatever the tongue can make clear,
Love's silence is better.

And though the pen wanted badly to write,
When it came to Love its nib split apart.
When it was the turn of the Intellect
To unfold the meaning of Love,
It stumbled like a donkey in the mud.
In the end only Love
Could explain itself
And what it is to be a lover.

--Mathnawi I, 110-111, Jalaluddin Rumi (Camille & Kabir Helminski trans)

My soul is a furnace
Happy with the fire.
Love, too, is a furnace,
And ego its fuel

--Mathnawi II, 1376-7, Jalaluddin Rumi (Camille & Kabir Helminski trans)

Truth

[The lovers of God] cannot act except with kindness, they cannot feel anything but forgiveness; every movement they make, everything they do, speaks of their love, but not their lips.

— *The Way of Illumination, The Sufi Message Vol 1, Hazrat Inayat Khan (gender updated)*