

UW Readings
May 10, 2026
Energy of the Artist & Suffering

Hinduism

The design of poetry.

I look not from the secure shelter of Rama, but through that big hole right in the middle of time.

That's the vantage point from which I see.

A narrow, black, shiny strip of tarmac.

Zooming out as if it were crossing infinity.

But this thing called Mukti (liberation), if you look at it from another angle--as rocks look at their own inarticulate heat or as trees look at it--then what is it? What is it?

"The Design of Poetry", Kabir

Without Rama my body's fever won't go down:

The fire burns in water. In water it flares.

You're an ocean. I'm a fish inside you.

I live in water, but water I crave.

You're a cage. I'm the parrot inside you.

What can death, that pouncing cat, do to me?

You're the true master. I'm your disciple. A newborn child.

Kabir says, we'll meet when time has run its course.

"Fever", Kabir

Buddhism

Four and 50 years I've hung the sky with stars.

Now I leap through--what shattering!

"Death Poem", Eihei Dogen (Founder of Soto Zen)

Zoroastrianism

Give me that prize, oh good, strongest Druwaspa, that I may bring flocks of sheep and herds of cattle to Ahura Mazda's creatures and bring them

non-destruction; that I may remove hunger and thirst, old age and death, heat, and cold from Ahura Mazda's creatures for 1000 autumns!

Yima Yasht 9

Taoism

I received life because the time had come; I will lose it because the order of things passes on. Be content with this time and dwell in this order and then neither sorrow nor joy can touch you. In ancient times this was called the 'freeing of the bound.' There are those who cannot free themselves, because they are bound by things. But nothing can ever win against Heaven - that's the way it's always been. What would I have to resent?"

Chuang Tzu

Baha'i

Be a shelter and refuge to every oppressed one, and a helper and supporter to every vanquished one. Be a skilled physician to every sick one, and a healing balm to every wounded one. Offer a safe haven to every fearful one and bring comfort and solace to every dismayed one. Gladden the heart of every sorrowful one and bring joy to every tearful one. Be as refreshing water to every thirsty one, and as heavenly food to every hungry one. Become the cause of glory to every abased one, and the source of blessings to every poor one.

Bahá'u'lláh

Judaism

Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:
"Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge?
Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.
Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.
Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?
On what were its footings set? Or who laid its cornerstone—while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?
Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb?
When I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness.

When I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place.
When I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther. Here is where your proud waves halt’?
Have you ever given orders to the morning? Or shown the dawn its place--that it might take the earth by the edges and shake the wicked out of it?”

Job 38:1-13

The LORD said to Job:

“Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!”

Then Job answered the LORD:

“I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth.

I spoke once, but I have no answer—twice, but I will say no more.”

Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm:

“Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?

Do you have an arm like God’s? And can your voice thunder like his?

Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor and clothe yourself in honor and majesty.”

Job 40:1-10

Christianity

It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

1 Peter 2:19-25

Islam

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness. Some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house--empty of its furniture.

Still, treat each guest honorably. He may be clearing you out for
some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door
laughing, and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a
guide from beyond.

"The Guest House", Rumi

Truth

Do not weep with the sad but console them. If not by your tears, you
will but water the plant of their sorrow.

The Gayan, Hazrat Inayat Khan