

Universal Worship Readings

Transforming Suffering

June 14, 2026

Hinduism

(The practice Krishna explained to Arjuna to transform suffering...)

At the beginning, mankind and the obligation of selfless service were created together. Through selfless service, you will always be fruitful and find the fulfillment of your desires; this is the promise of the creator.

~Bhagavad Gita 3:10 (E. Easwaran trans)

Selfish desire is found in the senses, mind, and intellect, misleading them and burying the understanding in delusion.

Fight with all your strength, Arjuna! Controlling your senses, conquering your enemy, the destroyer of knowledge and realization. The senses are higher than the body, the mind higher than the senses; above the mind is the intellect, and above the intellect is the Atman (soul).

Thus, knowing that which is supreme, let the Atman rule the ego. Use your mighty arms to slay the fierce enemy that is selfish desire.

~Bhagavad Gita 3:40-43 (E. Easwaran trans)

Buddhism

Avoid all evil, cultivate the good, purify your mind: this sums up the teaching of the buddhas.

Cultivate the patience that endures, and attain Nirvana (heaven), the highest goal of life. Do not oppress others or cause them pain; that is not the way of the spiritual aspirant.

Do not find fault with others, do not injure others, but live in accordance with the Dharma (the right way of living/duty). Be moderate in eating and sleeping and meditate on the highest. This sums up the teaching of the buddhas.

~Dhammapada 183-185 (E. Easwaran trans)

Zoroastrianism

Mazda (God), Righteousness turns to the one who in life is guided by good thought and self-dominance. It is in the radiance of these forces that [a person] can redesign and cause this oppressed world to flourish.

~*The Gathas 15:3 (Khosro Khazai, Pardis trans)*

Taoism

Favor and disgrace are like fear. Honor and distress are like the self. What does this mean? Favor debases us. Afraid when we get it, afraid when we lose it. The self-embodies distress. No self, no distress. Respect the world as yourself: the world can be your lodging. Love the world as yourself: the world can be your trust.

~*Tao Te Ching 13 (Lao-Tzu, Addiss/Lombardo trans)*

Indigenous

(Great Spirit Prayer)

Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds and whose breath gives life to all the world.

Hear me! I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever hold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

Help me remain calm and strong in the face of all that comes towards me.

Help me find compassion without empathy overwhelming me.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy: myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

~*Great Spirit Prayer, Lakota Sioux (Chief Yellow Lark trans)*

Judaism

(After Moses died, the Lord spoke to Joshua. Joshua was Moses' assistant and succeeded him in leading the tribes of Israel.)

Be strong and resolute, for you shall apportion to this people the land that I swore to their fathers to assign to them.

But you must be very strong and resolute to observe faithfully all the Teaching that My servant Moses enjoined upon you. Do not deviate from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Let not this Book of the Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it. Only then will you prosper in the undertakings and only then will you be successful.

I charge you: Be strong and resolute; do not be terrified or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

~Tanakh, Joshua 1:6-9 (JSP)

Christianity

(James, Jesus' brother wrote this letter to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Mediterranean...)

Consider it pure joy, my brothers [and sisters], whenever you face trials of many kinds,

because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

If any of you lacks wisdom, [they] should ask God, who gives generously to all finding fault, and it will be given to [them].

But when [they ask], [they] must believe and not doubt, because [one] who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

That [one] should not think [they] will receive anything from the Lord;

he [or she] is a double minded..., unstable in all [they do].

~*New Testament, James 1:2-8 (NIV)*

Muslim

Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children - like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the tillers; then it dries and you see it turned yellow; then it becomes [scattered] debris. And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion.

Race towards forgiveness from your Lord and towards the garden whose depth is as the breath of the heaven and earth it was prepared for those who have believed in God and [God's] messengers. That is the grace of God. [God] gives it to whom [God] wills. And God is the possessor of this supply sublime grace.

~*Quran 57:20-21 (Laleh Bakhtiar trans)*

Truth

It makes no difference to me if I am so praised that I am raised from earth to heaven, or if I am so blamed that I am thrown from the greatest heights to the depths of the earth. Life to me is an ever-moving sea in which the waves of favor and disfavor constantly rise and fall.

~*The Gayan, Hazrat Inayat Khan*