

Dr. Md. Sharique Haider
Assistant Professor
Department of English
Maharaja College

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Discuss the "Philosophy of Optimism" in Rabbi Ben Ezra.

Robert Browning is often called the "prophet of optimism," and "Rabbi Ben Ezra" is his manifesto. Unlike many poets who lament the loss of youth (like Keats or Wordsworth), Browning celebrates the arrival of old age.

- **The Best is Yet to Be:** The poem opens with a defiant call to embrace aging. Browning argues that life is a planned sequence. If God is perfect, His plan for the end of life must be better than the beginning.
- **Youth as a Prelude:** He views youth as a chaotic "preparation" time. In youth, we are distracted by physical beauty and desires. Old age, however, brings the "quiet" necessary to look at the soul.
- **Purpose of Pain:** His optimism is not blind; he acknowledges suffering. However, he sees pain as a tool for growth. He believes that "strains" and "rebuffs" (failures) are actually gifts that turn us into better human beings.

Conclusion: Browning's optimism is rooted in faith. He believes that because our "times are in His hand," every stage of life—including death—is a step toward a higher state of existence.