

Poem—Prayers Like Shoes
by Ruth Foreman

I wear prayers like shoes.
Pull them on quiet each morning
Take me through the uncertain day
Don't know what might knock me off course.
Sit up in bed,
Pull on the right, then the left,
Before shower, before teeth.
They were my mama's gift to walk
me through this life.
She was strong once.
The kind steady your ankles.
I know 'cause when her man left,
Her children gone,
Her eldest son without goodbye,
They're the only ones keep her standing.
I saw her still standing.
Mama passed on some things to me,
My smile, sense of discipline, my
Subtle behind.
But best she passed on "Girl, you go to
God and get you some good shoes,
'cause this life aint steady ground.
Now I don't wear hers.
You take them with you, you know.
But I suspect they made by the same company.
Pull them on each morning,
First the right, then the left.
Best piece of dress I got.

Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful
Utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that
the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls—a prayer
that shall rise above words and letters and transcend
the murmur of syllables and sounds—that all things
may be merged into nothingness before the revelation
of Thy splendor

Abdu'l Baha

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Words by American Quaker Poet—
John Greenleaf Whittier 1872

Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian Sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm.
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm.

O ye roses in the garden of God's love!
O ye bright lamps in the assemblage of His knowl-
edge!

May the soft breathings of God pass over you, may the Glory of God illumine the horizon of your hearts. Ye are the waves of the deep sea of knowledge, ye are the massed armies on the plains of certitude, ye are the stars in the skies of God's compassion, ye are the stones that put the people of perdition to flight, ye are clouds of divine pity over the gardens of life, ye are the abundant grace of God's oneness that is shed upon the essences of all created things.

On the outspread tablet of this world, ye are the verses of His singleness; and atop lofty palace towers, ye are the banners of the Lord. In His bowers are ye the blossoms and sweet-smelling herbs, in the rose garden of the spirit the nightingales that utter plaintive cries. Ye are the birds that soar upward into the firmament of knowledge, the royal falcons on the wrist of God.

Why then are ye quenched, why silent, why leaden and dull? Ye must shine forth like the lightning, and raise up a clamouring like unto the great sea. Like a candle must ye shed your light, and even as the soft breezes of God must ye blow across the world. Even as sweet breaths from heavenly bowers, as musk-laden winds from the gardens of the Lord, must ye perfume the air for the people of knowledge, and even as the splendours shed by the true Sun, must ye illumine the hearts of human-kind. For ye are the life-laden winds, ye are the jasmine-scents from the gardens of the saved. Bring then life to the dead, and awaken those who slumber. In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames; in the sands of perdition, be ye well-springs of the water of life, be ye guidance from the Lord God. Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. Know ye the value of this chance, this favourable juncture that is limitless grace, ere it

slip from your hands.

Soon will our handful of days, our vanishing life, be gone, and we shall pass, empty-handed, into the hollow that is dug for those who speak no more; wherefore must we bind our hearts to the manifest Beauty, and cling to the lifeline that faileth never. We must gird ourselves for service, kindle love's flame, and burn away in its heat. We must loose our tongues till we set the wide world's heart afire, and with bright rays of guidance blot out the armies of the night, and then, for His sake, on the field of sacrifice, fling down our lives.

Thus let us scatter over every people the treasured gems of the recognition of God, and with the decisive blade of the tongue, and the sure arrows of knowledge, let us defeat the hosts of self and passion, and hasten onward to the site of martyrdom, to the place where we die for the Lord. And then, with flying flags, and to the beat of drums, let us pass into the realm of the All-Glorious, and join the Company on high.

Well is it with the doers of great deeds.

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Pain is a Treasure

Pain is a treasure, for it contains mercies;
The kernel is soft when the rind is scraped off.
O brother, the place of darkness and cold
Is the fountain of Life and the cup of ecstasy.
So also is endurance of pain and sickness and disease.
For from abasement proceeds exaltation.
The spring seasons are hidden in the autumns,
And the autumns are charged with springs

Jelaluddin Rumi

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T'ain't no Reason

*T'ain't no Reason Getting' out of the rain
When the Sun's shinin' brighter than a candy cane.
And there T'ain no reason putting' on your shoes
Cause the grounds still wet with the morning dew.
And there Tain't no reason getting' all afraid
When your jelly belly's full and you're made in the shade.*

Tain't no reason, tain't no reason at all.

*Tain't no reason for to wear a hat
Just cause everybody's sayin that's where it's at*

And there tain't no reason you can single out and out

Not to dance down that valley, sing and shout.

I'm gonna' dance down that valley

I'm gonna' prance down that valley

Tain't no reason

Tain't no reason at all.

Tain't no reason getting' all confused

Cause there's so many stars in the sky you don

't know which one to choose

And there tain't no reason jumpin' overboard

Cause the water's so deep you can't see the lord

And there tain't no reason you can't call on a friend

Come back home and see him again

Tain't no reason, tain't no reason at all.

O Befriended Stranger!

The candle of thine heart is lighted by the hand of My power, quench it not with the contrary winds of self and passion. The healer of all thine ills is remembrance of Me, forget it not. Make my love thy treasure and cherish it even as thy very sight and life.

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On the outspread tablet of this world, ye are the verses of His singleness; and atop lofty palace towers, ye are the banners of the Lord. In His bowers are ye the blossoms and sweet-smelling herbs, in the rose garden of the spirit the nightingales that utter plaintive cries. Ye are the birds that soar upward into the firmament of knowledge, the royal falcons on the wrist of God.

Why then are ye quenched, why silent, why leaden and dull? Ye must shine forth like the lightning, and raise up a clamouring like unto the great sea. Like a candle must ye shed your light, and even as the soft breezes of God must ye blow across the world. Even as sweet breaths from heavenly bowers, as musk-laden winds from the gardens of the Lord, must ye perfume the air for the people of knowledge, and even as the splendours shed by the true Sun, must ye illumine the hearts of human-kind. For ye are the life-laden winds, ye are the jasmine-scents from the gardens of the saved. Bring then life to the dead, and awaken those who slumber. In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames; in the sands of perdition, be ye well-springs of the water of life, be ye guidance from the Lord God. Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. Know ye the value of this chance, this favourable juncture that is limitless grace, ere it

slip from your hands.

Soon will our handful of days, our vanishing life, be gone, and we shall pass, empty-handed, into the hollow that is dug for those who speak no more; wherefore must we bind our hearts to the manifest Beauty, and cling to the lifeline that faileth never. We must gird ourselves for service, kindle love's flame, and burn away in its heat. We must loose our tongues till we set the wide world's heart afire, and with bright rays of guidance blot out the armies of the night, and then, for His sake, on the field of sacrifice, fling down our lives.

Thus let us scatter over every people the treasured gems of the recognition of God, and with the decisive blade of the tongue, and the sure arrows of knowledge, let us defeat the hosts of self and passion, and hasten onward to the site of martyrdom, to the place where we die for the Lord. And then, with flying flags, and to the beat of drums, let us pass into the realm of the All-Glorious, and join the Company on high.

Well is it with the doers of great deeds.

Abdu'l-Baha

Pain is a Treasure

Pain is a treasure, for it contains mercies;
The kernel is soft when the rind is scraped off.
O brother, the place of darkness and cold
Is the fountain of Life and the cup of ecstasy.
So also is endurance of pain and sickness and disease.
For from abasement proceeds exaltation.
The spring seasons are hidden in the autumns,
And the autumns are charged with springs

Jelaluddin Rumi

Song by Bill

*T'ain't no Reason
T'ain't no Reason Getting' out of the rain
When the Sun's shinin' brighter than a candy cane.
And there T'ain no reason putting' on your shoes
Cause the grounds still wet with the morning dew.
And there Tain't no reason getting' all afraid
When your jelly belly's full and you're made in the
shade.*

Tain't no reason, tain't no reason at all.

*Tain't no reason for to wear a hat
Just cause everybody's sayin that's where it's at*

And there tain't no reason you can single out and out

*Not to dance down that valley, sing and shout.
I'm gonna' dance down that valley
I'm gonna' prance down that valley
Tain't no reason
Tain't no reason at all.*

*Tain't no reason getting' all confused
Cause there's so many stars in the sky you don
't know which one to choose
And there tain't no reason jumpin' overboard
Cause the water's so deep you can't see the lord
And there tain't no reason you can't call on a friend
Come back home and see him again*

Tain't no reason, tain't no reason at all.

O Befriended Stranger!

The candle of thine heart is lighted by the hand of My power, quench it not with the contrary winds of self and passion. The healer of all thine ills is remembrance of Me, forget it not. Make my love thy treasure and cherish it even as thy very sight and life.

Baha'u'llah

Poem—Prayers Like Shoes
by Ruth Foreman

I wear prayers like shoes.
Pull them on quiet each morning
Take me through the uncertain day
Don't know what might knock me off course.
Sit up in bed,
Pull on the right, then the left,
Before shower, before teeth.
They were my mama's gift to walk
me through this life.
She was strong once.
The kind steady your ankles.
I know 'cause when her man left,
Her children gone,
Her eldest son without goodbye,
They're the only ones keep her standing.
I saw her still standing.
Mama passed on some things to me,
My smile, sense of discipline, my
Subtle behind.
But best she passed on "Girl, you go to
God and get you some good shoes,
'cause this life aint steady ground.
Now I don't wear hers.
You take them with you, you know.
But I suspect they made by the same company.
Pull them on each morning,
First the right, then the left.
Best piece of dress I got.

Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful
Utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that
the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls—a prayer
that shall rise above words and letters and transcend
the murmur of syllables and sounds—that all things
may be merged into nothingness before the revelation
of Thy splendor

Abdu'l Baha

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Words by American Quaker Poet—
John Greenleaf Whittier 1872

Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian Sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm.
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm.

O ye roses in the garden of God's love!
O ye bright lamps in the assemblage of His knowl-
edge!

May the soft breathings of God pass over you, may the Glory of God illumine the horizon of your hearts. Ye are the waves of the deep sea of knowledge, ye are the massed armies on the plains of certitude, ye are the stars in the skies of God's compassion, ye are the stones that put the people of perdition to flight, ye are clouds of divine pity over the gardens of life, ye are the abundant grace of God's oneness that is shed upon the essences of all created things.

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