



## PRAYER FOR PEACE

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*The Prince of Peace is born  
To bring a haunting glimpse of heaven  
And angels sing of peace on earth---*

*But is there peace---*?

*O Lord, there is no peace and never has there been  
When Man desires to make his peace without Thy blessing;  
to measure peace in terms of wasteful pleasure;  
to barter Roman peace with "bread and circus";  
or buy a Munich peace with base appeasement;  
to fight and kill for peace but not to live it,  
to mold and forge his peace with cannons, chains, and bombs  
to build his peace not in the hearts of men  
but o'er the rotting carrion of a million graveless dead,  
Amidst the ruins of a ravaged, blood-soaked land  
Watered by the tears of sonless mothers, fatherless children,  
By ravished, haggard, and hungry women—  
A sullen, deflowered, de-generation.*

*As for goodwill? It's called diplomacy,  
a sugared name for plain hypocrisy,  
For goodwill does not thrive  
When man knows not the will to good  
And men would scorn the Will of God;  
When peace on earth is but a parody,  
A chaotic confusion of wrangling  
Between periodic chaos of fighting;  
When man would set before himself  
A thousand gods and shibboleths;  
The god of money and the machine,  
The god of work and worldly wisdom,  
The god of capital and labor,  
The god of "isms" and "ologies,"  
Of super-efficiency and regimentation,  
And the Great God "I":*

*For through all the lesser gods, man worships himself alone,  
And a million self-worshipping men are a million self-made gods,  
Each supreme unto himself, each a crucifier of Peace---*

And Man, the Conqueror of Peace, enthrones himself  
And sits under a modern Sword of Damocles,  
While all of life becomes a bare existence,  
A breathing spell beneath the gloomy shadow,  
Cast by that ominous Watchdog of the World,  
That man-made monster, marvel of destruction,  
That dreaded and yet doubtful might of present right,  
That evil justified, the devil's own delight,  
the grim Atomic Bomb!

So teach us peace, Oh Lord, and help us live that peace;  
The peace of simple creatures fulfilling nature's mandates;  
The peace of busy bees and thrifty, laboring ants;  
The quiet peace of farmers laboring in the fields  
fearing no lust of an overseer;  
The noisy peace of city workers, manning their machines,  
dreading no boss or union dues;  
The peace that clasps the feeble hand of an unknown,  
or salves the dirty wounds of the unwashed;  
The peace that sings by flower scented springs,  
or drinks the wonders of a dew-clad dawn;  
The peace that bows a sweet-blest brow upon the peal of Angelus,  
Or smiles upon a slumbering child;  
The peace that knows no creed, nor caste, nor color;  
The peace of Freedom, Truth, and Brotherhood;  
The peace of strong, stout-hearted men  
and pure, true-hearted women;  
The peace of mind and heart, the lasting, God-blest peace:

the Peace within ourselves and with ourselves---

For peace we pray, Oh Lord, but grant us above all  
The simple souls to feel and live that peace,  
the humble hearts to cherish and possess:  
The riches one can reap by selfless, gainless giving,  
The will to change existence into living;  
The strength to conquer all the forms of fear,  
The gift to mint a laughter from a tear!