

A prayer prose poem for Madiba

The Messiah is born – always - to show us how to live
In 1918 a light was lit in Mveso and the Messiah was born again
The light was moulded and intensified in Qunu
Surrounded by mountains and rivers, rolling fields
And goats
And tranquillity and silences carried on the breeze, long silences
A Carefree space, with all the children round about
Who played with and shaped Messiah and planted the seeds of the greatness we would become
through him
The heights he would scale
The leader he was to be

Then that light which began tentatively; flickering
Grew into a light that eventually would enlighten the whole world
The fuel of that light - a host of angels; a constellation of family and humanity
-Now no longer just the familiars-
But Evelyn, Walter and George and Katy and Winnie and ten thousand beside
(Then tens of Millions more)
As well as those who declared themselves hostile:
Politicians, prosecutors, Percy, the police and prison warders and the pass laws
All fashioned Messiah whose heart would swell to hold close and take in all of them and beyond
them every human being regardless
Like Moses, Jesus, Mohamed, Buddha, Gandhi and King.

Then, justice, injustice, incarceration and violation and another silence, separation and aloneness
Cruelly cut off from family; his beloved
Locked into the isolation and silence on an island in the sea
-Designed to steal humanness; humanity-
But that in the end became the incubator of the greatest leader of our time - perhaps all time
An initiation of Twenty Seven Years

Then on a Sunday in February a walk out of the dark - the light yet undiminished -
initiated our freedom and a return to dignity and unity and life

On a Thursday in December the light went out but the Flame still burns
Momentarily the dark engulfs, but only for the briefest of moments
as we awake to our calling, we who called him Grandfather and loved him,
our calling to keep the Light ablaze.

The cost though, enormous on the wives Evelyn, Winnie and Graca and children and family and
friends

The cost too much

Oh God for all of them we pray: *“restore the years that the locusts have eaten.”*
Peace on everyone named Mandela - all who are related to his clan – the extended family - and his
beloved and dedicated Zelda
And all the citizens of the world who mourn.
Peace and plenty upon all of them all. *“Lord increase their territory.”*

Now the whole world sits flat on the ground, squatting, sitting quietly, staring into the near, middle
and far distance

Overwhelmed, dazed, silent once again as the wind blows around us all and the rivers flow beside
us; at our feet

Carrying the words that speak of hope and love

And now we are comforted

Realising that our greatest tribute to Madiba is simply to be a Madiba-Messiah in the world.

We pray therefore:

God bless Africa and the whole world and begin with Madiba's eternal soul. May he rest
eternally in that singular space where he may see you for all eternity and may his prayers for
the world be remembered by You always.

Rest in Peace and rise in Glory Tata. The world loves you and will miss you but we will be your
presence in the world especially for all children including your children and your children's children.

Selah!

Amen