

# A QUESTION

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Each with his question, an answer begging:  
Why is it I live, desire, and am denied?  
Why do I die, my hands still reaching  
To touch the forbidden? Why have I died  
Not knowing one step of the life I trod?  
And why should I stand defeated?  
And why should I cry on God  
To mend, to slacken, to take, to give?  
Why do I fear what death may be,  
Who, living, know not why I live?

"This be the one and only creed,"  
Men scream from minaret, pulpit, and stone,  
And box in a square—"This be your need",  
"Love", "Do not love", "Stand together", "Alone"—

Pacifist, Priest, Iconoclastic Red,  
The driven of Finland, the merciless Hun,  
The Jew of Our Christ, a price on his head,  
The Neutral, smug in his short peace won,  
And our own, our own who go forth to war—  
Which of their creeds be justified?  
Which called right in the settled score?

And through the wind and up the sky  
The voice of man in terror climbs,  
And breaks against the feet of God—  
"Which, O God, and why?"