Bahá’u’lláh’s “Long Healing Prayer”
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Daniel Azim Pschaida, Ph.D. Religious Studies
Faculty: Wilmette Institute, Gonzaga, Eastern Washington University
Two short stories:

- Mírzá Jaʿfar-i-Yazdi
- Dr. Muhajir
Káfí/Coffee is All-Sufficing: Names of the Prayer/Tablet

- The Long Healing Prayer
- Spanish: Oración Larga de Curación
- German: Das Lange Heilungsgebet
- Arabic:
  - Lawḥ al-Shafá' al-Ṭawíl ("The Long Healing Tablet")
  - Lawḥ-i-Shifá ("Tablet of Healing")
  - Lawḥ Anta al-Káfí (literally "Tablet of Thou the Sufficing")
Versions of the Prayer

- *Huwa al-Sháfí al-Káfí al-M‘únu -l-Ghafúru -l-Raḥím*: He is the Healer, the Sufficer, the Helper, the All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful


- 1980 authorized translation into English under the Universal House of Justice

- *Bism-i-llahi -l-Amn‘ai -l-Aqdasí -l-Arf‘ai -l-Abhá*: In the name of God the Invincible/Inaccessible, the Most Holy, the Sublime, the Most Glorious

- *Tasbih va Tahlil* and also in *Ad‘íyyih Hadrat-i-Mahbub*; Bahá’í prayer book phone apps

- Basis of 1945 translation by Marzieh Gail and ‘Ali Kuli Khan, hand-typed and only distributed informally

- 96% the same

- A response from the Research Department, dated September 23, 2019, “The most authentic version of the Long Healing Prayer in Arabic that has been identified is in the handwriting of Zaynu’l-Muqarrabín, and it is this version that served as the basis of the current authorized English translation.”

- Revealed twice? Scribal error? ??? Date of revelation? “Akka period”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 1: Main differences between the Two Versions of the Long Healing Prayer</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BISMI VERSION</strong></td>
<td><strong>HUWA VERSION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 17: I call on Thee O Beneficent One, O Interceding One, O Encouraging One!</td>
<td>Verse 17: I call on Thee O Beneficent One, O Withholding One, O Creating One!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 17: Bika yá Náfi‘, bika yá Sháfi‘, bika yá Dáfi‘…</td>
<td>Verse 17: Bika yá Náfi‘, bika yá Máni‘, bika yá Sáni‘…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 29: I call on Thee O Greatest Remembrance, O Most Ancient Name, O Noblest Way!</td>
<td>Verse 29: I call on Thee O Greatest Remembrance, O Noblest Name, O Most Ancient Way!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 29: Bika yá Dhikra-l-A‘zím, bika yá Isma-l-Áqdam, bika yá Rasma-l-Ákram</td>
<td>Verse 29: Bika yá Dhikra-l-A‘zím, bika yá Isma-l-Ákram, bika yá Rasma-l-Áqdam…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verse 37: I call on Thee O Ready to Forgive, O Advocate, O Dissolver!</td>
<td>(This line does not exist in this version)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verse 37: Bika yá Tá‘ib, bika yá Ná‘ib, bika yá Dhá‘ib…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verse 39: I call on Thee O Guardian, O All-Seeing God, O Lord of Utterance!</td>
<td>Verse 38: I call on Thee O Thou Who penetratest all things, O All-Seeing God, O Lord of Utterance!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verse 39: Bika yá Háfiz, bika yá Láhiz, bika yá Láfiz</td>
<td>Verse 38: Bika yá Náfidh, bika yá Láhiz, bika yá Láfiz</td>
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Significance of “the Healing Prayer”?

These daily obligatory prayers, together with a few other specific ones, such as the Healing Prayer, the Tablet of Ahmad, have been invested by Bahá'u'lláh with a special potency and significance, and should therefore be accepted as such and be recited by the believers with unquestioning faith and confidence, that through them they may enter into a much closer communion with God, and identify themselves more fully with His laws and precepts. (Bahá'í Prayers 208)

► “Thy name is my healing, O my God and remembrance of Thee is my remedy...”
  ► part of Bahá'u'lláh’s Tablet of Medicine (Lawḥi al-Ṭibb) on living healthfully
  ► Translated in Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh, including this prayer (page 282)
► “it is probably the one known as the Long Healing Prayer, but nothing specific about this has been located at this time.” (Department of the Secretariat replied in October 2008, reply to Mr. Robert Yoder)
  ► promise within the text of the Long Healing Prayer of potency to heal and protect
Some Islamic Precedents

“Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon Raḥmán: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names.” (Qur’an 17:110; cf. 7:180. 20:8, 59:24)

- phrase “Most Beautiful Names” (al-Asmá’ al-Ḥusná) appears in concluding paragraphs of Long Healing Prayer

- “There are ninety-nine names of Allah; he who commits them to memory would get into Paradise...” (Sahih Muslim Book-48 Hadith-5); cf. Sahih Bukhari 50:894 & in Shia through Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣádiq)

- More than 99 Names of God mentioned in Qur’an itself; also Long Healing Prayer

- Abu Ḥámid al-Ghazālī: a king who has ninety-nine soldiers with whom no enemy could oppose him, even if that king actually has a thousand soldiers
Two somewhat distinct lists: Al-Tirmidhi in a chapter on “supplication” (Book 48, hadith 138); ibn Majah—one of six major Sunni hadith collectors—also in a chapter on supplication (Chapter 37, Hadith 3861); similar Shia lists

**Only ~30** of the 91-root-word Names of God in the Long Healing Prayer are the same—or have the same three-letter-roots and also basically the same meaning—as popular Islamic lists

### Table 2: Comparison of the 99 Names of God in the Islamic tradition and the Long Healing Prayer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Al-Ghazali / Tirmidhi list &amp; ibn Majah list:</th>
<th>Long Healing Prayer: Shared or Similar Names of God</th>
<th>Long Healing Prayer: Some Names of God not typically found in Islamic 99 Beautiful Names Listings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Adl (The Just)</td>
<td>‘Adl (Just One)</td>
<td>‘Áshiq (The Best Lover)</td>
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<td>‘Alf (The Most High)</td>
<td>‘Alî (Exalted One)</td>
<td>Musta‘ān (Helping One)</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Azîm (The Tremendous)</td>
<td>‘Azîm (Most Great One)</td>
<td>‘Atûf (Kind to All)</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Azîz (The Eminent)</td>
<td>‘Azîz (Mightiest One, Powerful)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allâh (The God)</td>
<td>Allâh (God)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bâqî (The Everlasting)</td>
<td>Bâqî (Abiding One)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da‘îm (Eternal)</td>
<td>Da‘îm (Abiding One)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bhâhâj (Bringer of Delight)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bâlih (Perfecting One)</td>
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<td>Ballâj (Brightener)</td>
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<td>Naﬁth (Quickening One)</td>
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<td>Nâshîf (Ravager)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Naﬁr (Sustaining One)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nâbit (Life-Giving One)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Naﬁdîh (Who penetratest all things)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Some Islamic Precedents

- **Greatest Name of God?** “Bika yá (I call on Thee O) ‘Alí (“Exalted One”), bika yá Wafí (“O Faithful One”), bika yá Bahí (“O Glorious One”). Anta al-Kāfī wa Anta ash-Shāfī”
  - potency of hidden names of God to work miracles (e.g. Joseph’s cloak; Moses’ staff)

- **Name of God having talismanic potency:** composed by a Muslim for a Christian woman, “O my God, I ask you by your name which you have preferred to all names to heal, cure and cleanse the bearer [ḥámilah] of this book... guard [bi-ḥ'fiţ] this human body from all malice...from every evil and from the mischief and injury of all things created by God” (Fodor 134)

- **dhikr**—recollecting, remembering, bringing to mind, mentioning, or praising God
  - with a rosary of 33 or 99 prayer beads—called *tasbíh* or *subha*
  - No official form, names, or combination of names for all of Islam
  - 1 popular approach: 33 sets of repetitions of *Subḥana Alláh* (Glory is to Allah), *Al-Hamdu Lilláh* (praise is due to Allah), and *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the Great).
  - 95x Allah-u-Abha; Long Healing Prayer
Some more Islamic precedents

- Particular names of God as having healing, protective, & transformative effects:
  - e.g. reciting *Al-Aḥadu* (The One) in the company of angels; *al-ʿAlí* (The Highest) one’s status improving; *Al- Başír* (The All-Seeing) improving eye ailments; *Wadúd* (Affectionate/Loving) healing broken relationships

- Prayers that concentrate on the names of God
  - **Ramadan prayer of Bahá',** credited to the fifth Imam Muḥammad al-Báqir: “O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Splendor (*Bahá’*) at its most Splendid (*Abhá’*) for all Thy Splendor (*Bahá’*) is truly resplendent (*Bahíy*)…” (Stephen Lambden translation) **23 verses, overlaps closely with Baha’i/Badi calendar**
  - Shia healing prayer, traditionally attributed to the Imam ‘Alí: “Allah is Ancient (*Qadímun*), Ever-Living (*Azalíyun*); He removes (*yuzillu*) suffering (*al-ʿalala*); He is Self-Subsisting (*Qá'imun*), Ever-Existing (*Azalíyun*) by His eternity (*Azalíyatí*)...by Thy Mercy (*bi-Raḥmatika*)...”
Numerical structure of the prayer

- names of God invoked 296 times total
- 126 distinct Names total (9x14)
- \((39 \times 3) + 2 = 119\) names of God invoked 119 times among 3-name invocations in the 40 verses
- 91 names of God when reduced to common root words
- 38 of the 40 verses have 19 words each
- grammatically 38 syllables (typically 35 when recited)
Poetic Structure of the Prayer

- rhythmic, hypnotic, consistence cadence through most lines having the same syllables
- 3-set names of God typically rhyme
- **chant** by Ms. Ahdieh Badiee Long Healing Prayer

1. I call on Thee O Exalted One, O Faithful One, O Glorious One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!


بِكَّ يَا علِيٌّ بِكَّ يَا وَفِيَ بِكَّ يَا بَحِيُّ أَنَّتَ الكَافِي وَأَنَّتَ السَّابِقِي وَأَنَّتَ الباقيِ يَا بَاقِي
Rhyming interrelationships

2. *Bika yá Sulṭán, bika yá Rafʻán, bika yá Dayyán* (“I call on Thee O Sovereign, O Upraiser, O Judge…”)

7. *Bika yá Mʻashúq, bika yá Maḥbúb, bika ya Majdhúb* (“I call on Thee O Beloved One, O Cherished One, O Enraptured One…”)

12. I call on Thee O Concealed One, O Triumphant One, O Bestowing One (*Bika yá Ghá'ib, bika yá Ghálīb, bika yá Wáhib*…)

14. *Bika yá Ṣáni‘, bika yá Qáni‘, bika yá Qáli‘* (I call on Thee O Fashioner, O Satisfier, O Uprooter…)
24. Bika yá Maládh, bika yá Mʿádh, bika yá Mustʿádh... (I call on Thee O Haven for all, O Shelter to all, O All-Preserving One....)

27. Bika yá Ján, bika yá Jánán, bika yá 'Īmán... (“O Thou my Soul, O Thou my Beloved, O Thou my Faith!”)

35. Bika yá Wahháj, bika yá Balláj, bika yá Bahháj (I call on Thee O Enkindler, O Brightener, O Bringer of Delight!)
Invocation and Meditation in Light of a Metaphysics of Unity

“...protect [taḥfīẓ] the bearer [ḥámil] of this blessed Tablet, and whoso reciteth it, and whoso cometh upon it, and whoso passeth around the house wherein it is. Heal Thou, then, by it every sick, diseased and poor one, from every tribulation and distress, from every loathsome affliction and sorrow, and guide Thou by it whosoever desireth to enter upon the paths of Thy guidance, and the ways of Thy forgiveness and grace.”

invoking and having faith in the potency of spiritual forces, God and Concourse on High “closer than [our] life vein”

instead of atomization, isolation, and separation, a worldview of the deep interweaving, interdependence, interpenetration, and wholeness of the physical, psychological, and spiritual both within an individual and in our social relationships and with the earth itself.
18. I call on Thee O Most Sublime One, O Beauteous One, O Bounteous One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!


19. I call on Thee O Just One, O Gracious One, O Generous One! Thou the Sufficing, Thou the Healing, Thou the Abiding, O Thou Abiding One!

*Bika yá ‘Ádil, bika yá Fáḍil, bika yá Bádhi’. Anta al-Káfí wa Anta ash-Sháfí wa Anta al-Báqi yá Báqí.*