

THE CHRIST OF CYNEWULF

A Poem in Three Parts

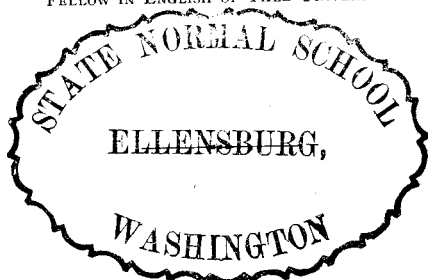
*THE ADVENT, THE ASCENSION, AND
THE LAST JUDGMENT*

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE

BY

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TO
PROFESSOR ALBERT S. COOK

PREFACE.

My purpose in the present translation is so to combine faithfulness with literary quality as to afford reasonable satisfaction to both the specialist and the general student of literature. In my diction I have endeavored to avoid unintelligible archaisms, and have sought after simple idioms, with a preference for words of Germanic origin.

All things considered, prose has been adopted as the most satisfactory medium of translation. Verse may be the ideal form, but it requires an ideal translator; and with the exception of Tennyson's version of *The Battle of Brunanburh*, and perhaps one or two others, I can think of none that are at all adequate. Nor is prose without its peculiar advantages; in at least one important respect it is superior to verse, since its flexibility offers a more facile medium for reproducing that metrical variety which is one of the principal charms of Old English poetry.

Up to the present time there have appeared three complete translations of this poem—Thorpe's in his edition of the *Codex Exoniensis*, Gollancz's in his two editions of the *Christ*, and Grein's in his *Dichtungen der Angelsachsen*. I have made free use of these translations, and am indebted to them for an occasional word or phrase.

The line-numbering follows the original, which necessarily causes irregular intervals between the marginal numbers. Square brackets indicate words inserted by the translator for the sake of clearness.

This translation was undertaken at the suggestion of Professor Albert S. Cook, and closely conforms in readings and punctuation to his recent edition of the *Christ*. Through his kindness I have been furnished with the proof-sheets as needed, and have thereby found my labor materially lessened. Specific acknowledgments to this edition are usually made in the foot-notes, but many of the Biblical parallels come from the same source. Throughout my work I have had the benefit of Professor Cook's ripe scholarship and sound judgment; for his unfailing kindness and helpfulness I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude. It also gives me pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Robert K. Root, who has carefully read the whole of my manuscript; and to Dr. Charles G. Osgood and Dr. Frank H. Chase for various helpful suggestions.

The introduction to Professor Cook's volume relieves me from attempting a literary appreciation. Suffice it to say that, as the beauties of the *Christ* have gradually unfolded before me, I have come to feel that it is the most spiritual expression of an age in which poetry, vital and genuine, if somewhat unformed, welled directly from the depths of man's nature.

If this translation should serve to win even a few readers to an ardent and appreciative love of Old English verse, the author would feel amply rewarded; yet the fitting and adequate recompense of such labor as it has cost lies in the disclosure to the soul of the worker of a beauty and truth hitherto unapprehended.

YALE UNIVERSITY,
April 12, 1900.

THE CHRIST.

PART I.—THE ADVENT.

— to the King.

Thou art the corner-stone which the builders once rejected in their work; fitting indeed is it for Thee, O King of glory, to become the head of this noble temple, and to join in bond secure the broad walls of adamantine rock, so that throughout the cities of earth all things endowed with sight may wonder¹ evermore. Reveal then, righteous and triumphant One, through Thy wisdom, Thine own handiwork, and leave wall firm against wall. The work hath need that the Master Builder, the King Himself, should come and forthwith restore the house that beneath its roof hath fallen into ruin. He formed the body, the limbs of clay; and now is it time for Him, the Prince of life, to deliver this miserable host from their enemies, the wretched from their fears, as He full oft hath done.

¹ The construction in lines 7 and 8 is largely conjectural. Cf. Cook's *Christ*, p. 74.

O Ruler and righteous King, Thou who holdest
 20 the key and openest life, bless us with victory, with
 that glorious success denied unto him whose work
 availeth naught! Verily in our need do we speak
 these words: We beseech¹ Him who created man
 that He choose not to pronounce judgment upon us
 25 who, sad at heart, sit yearning in prison for the
 sun's joyous course until such time as the Prince of
 life reveal light unto us, become our soul's defense,
 and compass the feeble mind with splendor; of all
 30 this may He make us worthy, we whom He admitted
 to glory, when, deprived of our heritage, we were
 doomed to turn in wretchedness unto this narrow
 land. Therefore he who speaks truth may say that
 when the race of men was turned away [from God],
 35 He saved it. Young was the virgin, a sinless
 maiden, whom He chose for His mother; it was
 brought to pass without the embraces of man that
 the bride became great with child.² Never before
 40 or after in this world was there conception of woman
 like unto that; it was secret, a mystery of the Lord.
 All spiritual grace overspread the regions of earth;
 then was many a wise saying illumined by the Lord
 of life, such ancient teaching, prophetic song, as of old

¹ Manuscript defective at lines 23 and 24. Cf. Cook's *Christ*, p. 77.

² The phrase *þurh bearnes gebyrd* omitted in translation.

lay wrapped in darkness, when the Ruler came who 45
 magnifieth the course¹ of their words who wisely de-
 sire to praise without stint the name of the Creator.

O vision of peace, holy Jerusalem, best of royal 50
 thrones, city of Christ, native abode of angels, in
 thee alone the souls of the righteous rest ever,
 rejoicing in their glory! Never shall trace of sin
 be brought to light in that dwelling-place, but all 55
 iniquity, all curse and strife, shall flee far from thee.
 Thou art gloriously full of holy joy, as thy name
 bears witness. Behold now thyself how the wide
 creation round about and the vault of heaven regard 60
 thee far and near on every side;² the King of
 heaven seeketh thee in His course, yea, cometh Him-
 self and taketh up His abode in thee, as long ago
 wise prophets spake in words, when they proclaimed
 the birth of Christ, told it for thy joy, thou chiefest 65
 of cities. Now is the Child come, born to interpret
 and fulfill³ the works of the Jews. He bringeth
 thee joy; He looseneth thy bonds; He draweth
 nigh⁴ to men, for He knoweth their wants—how
 the wretched must needs await succor. 70

¹ With evident reference to 2 Thess. 3. 1.

² This interpretation does not conform to the Antiphon. Cf. Cook's *Christ*, p. 83.

³ *Tō wyrpe*, the noun suggesting the pregnant sense of 'trans-
 form.'

⁴ Reading *genēhwað* with Cook.

O thou joy of women in heavenly glory, fairest of all maidens throughout the regions of earth, so far as ocean-dwellers have ever learned, reveal to us the mystery that came to thee from the skies, 75 how thou didst ever conceive so that a child might be born, and yet hadst¹ not at all carnal intercourse after the manner of men! Of a truth we have never heard that in days of old there came to pass such a 80 thing as thou didst receive by special grace, nor may we look for such an event in time to come. Truly a noble faith dwelt in thee; for thou didst bear within thy womb the Lord of glory, and yet thy splendid 85 virginity was not defiled. All the children of men, as they sow in tears, even thus they reap—they bring forth unto death. Then spake the blessed maiden, the holy Mary, ever full of triumph: 'Why marvel 90 ye thus, why grieve ye and sorrowfully lament, ye sons and daughters of Salem? Ye ask in curiosity how I preserved my virginity, my chastity, and yet became the mother of God's illustrious Son? Verily 95 the secret is not known unto men, but Christ declared that in David's beloved daughter all the guilt of Eve is blotted out, the curse removed, and the weaker 100 sex exalted. Hope hath arisen that a blessing amid the joy of heavenly angels, with the Father of right-

¹ Lit. 'knewest.'

eousness, may now abide for both men and women evermore through all eternity.'

Lo! Thou Splendor of the dayspring, fairest of angels sent to men upon earth, Thou Radiance of 105 the Sun of righteousness, bright beyond the stars, Thou of Thy very self dost illumine all the tides of time! Even as Thou, God begotten of God, Son of the true Father, didst ever dwell without begin- 110 ning in the glory of heaven, so Thine own handiwork in its present need imploreth Thee with confidence that Thou send us the bright sun, and come in Thy very person to enlighten those who have long 115 been covered with murky cloud, and sitting here in darkness and eternal night, shrouded in sins, have been forced to endure the shadow of death. Now in the fulness of hope we believe in the salvation brought to men through the Word of God, who was in the be- 120 ginning co-eternal with God the Father almighty, and afterward became flesh without blemish, being born of the virgin as a help for the afflicted. God appeared among us without sin; the mighty Son of God and 125 the Son of Man dwelt together in harmony among mankind. Wherefore it is right that we should ever give thanks by our deeds¹ unto the Lord of

¹ The rendering of *bi gewyrhtum* is here somewhat doubtful.

victory, for that He was willing to send Himself unto us.

¹³⁰ O God of spirits, how wisely and how rightly wast Thou named Emmanuel, as the angel first called it in Hebrew, which, fully interpreted in its hidden meaning, is: 'Now is God Himself with us, the ¹³⁵ Guardian of the skies!' Even so of yore ancient men foretold the coming of the King of kings, the spotless Priest. Thus long ago the great Melchisedec, wise of spirit, revealed the divine majesty of ¹⁴⁰ the eternal Ruler. He was the bringer of laws and precepts to those who had long looked for His advent; for it was promised them that by the power of the Spirit the Son of the Creator would Himself ¹⁴⁵ pass through the regions of earth, and visit the lowest depths. Now were they waiting patiently in captivity until the Son of God should come unto them in their sorrow. And thus they spake, prostrated ¹⁵⁰ by suffering: 'Come now Thyself, high King of heaven. Bring salvation unto us wretched prisoners, worn out with weeping, with bitter burning tears. In Thee alone is relief for those in dire need. Seek ¹⁵⁵ us here, captives sad of heart; leave not² behind Thee, when Thou goest hence, a multitude so great;

¹ Reading *gesēce* with Gollancz. ² Reading *ne lāt* with Gollancz.

but do Thou royally manifest Thy compassion upon us, O Christ our Savior, Prince of glory; let not the accursed have dominion over us. Leave unto us the eternal joy of Thy glory, that those whom Thou didst ¹⁶⁰ first create with Thine hands may worship Thee, the radiant King of hosts, who dwellest eternally on high with God the Father.'

[*Mary*]. 'Alas my Joseph, son of Jacob, descendant of the great king David, art thou bound to break ¹⁶⁵ off thy firm troth and forsake my love?'

[*Joseph*]. 'I am full deeply troubled, bereft of my good name; on thy account I have heard many words, boundless causes of grief,¹ taunts and con- ¹⁷⁰ tumely; they utter insults and many reproaches against me. Sad in spirit I must needs pour out my tears. God alone² can easily heal the sorrow of my heart and comfort me in my misery. Alas young damsel, maiden Mary!'

[*Mary*]. 'Why grieveest thou and criest out in sorrow? Never have I found in thee any fault, or cause for suspicion that thou hast wrought evil; and yet thou speakest these words as if thou thyself wert filled with every sin and iniquity.'

¹ Lit. 'griefs.'

² So the sense seems to require, though the word is lacking in the text.

[*Joseph*]. 'I have endured too much misery because of this child-bearing. How can I refute their hateful words, or find any answer to my enemies? It is known
 185 far and wide that from the glorious temple of the Lord I willingly received a pure maiden free from sin, and now all is changed by I know not what. Neither speech nor silence avails me aught. If I declare the
 190 truth, then must the daughter of David perish, slain with stones. Yet is it harder for me to conceal crime; as a perjurer I should be forced to live thenceforth, hated of all peoples, despised among the tribes of men.'
 195 Then the maid unraveled the mystery, and thus she spake: 'I swear truly by the Son of God, the Savior of souls, that I have never yet had intercourse with
 200 any man on earth; but it was granted unto me, while yet young in my home, that Gabriel, heaven's archangel, bade me hail, and said in truth that the heavenly Spirit would shine upon me with His splendor, and that I should bear the Glory of life, an
 205 illustrious Child, the great Son of God, the bright King of glory. Now without guilt have I been made His temple; the Spirit of comfort hath dwelt within me. Do thou henceforth forego all grievous care. Give eternal thanks unto God's great Son
 210 that I have become His mother, though still a maiden, and that thou art reputed His earthly father

in the thoughts of men; thus was prophecy to be truly fulfilled in Himself.'

O Thou King of kings, righteous and peaceful, Christ almighty, how didst Thou spring into being 215 with Thy glorious Father before all the hosts of the world, a child begotten by His power and might! There is now no man under heaven, no hero so exceeding wise and prudent that he can relate or 220 truly explain to the ocean-dwellers how the Guardian of the skies took Thee in the beginning for His noble Son. Of all the things created under the welkin, so far as the race of men¹ hath heard among the peoples, first did the wise God, Author of life, 225 divide in majesty the light from the darkness. His was the power of decision, and the Lord of hosts gave this command: 'Let there be a bright light henceforth for ever and ever, a joy to all living men 230 who in their generations shall be born.'

And straightway it came to pass when it was so to be; a light, bright amidst the stars, shone forth for the nations of men after the lapse of time; Himself 235 ordained that Thou, His Son, shouldst be co-dwelling with Thine only Lord before aught of this should ever come to pass. Thou art that Wisdom who

¹ Lit. 'nations.'

240 with the Lord didst frame all this broad creation.
Wherefore there is no one so wise and prudent that
he can clearly set forth Thy parentage unto the sons
of men. Come now, O Prince of victory, Lord of
245 mankind, and graciously show Thy favor here ; we
all desire to understand the mystery of Thy mater-
nal descent, since we can no further unfold Thy
250 paternal lineage. O Savior Christ, by Thine advent
graciously bless this world, and the golden gate,¹
which full long stood locked in ages past, do Thou,
high Lord of heaven, give command to open ; do
Thou visit us, coming in Thy very person humbly to
255 earth. We have need of Thy help. The accursed
wolf,² that dark shadow of death, hath scattered Thy
flock, O Lord, driven it far and wide ; those whom³
Thou, O sovereign Prince, didst redeem with Thy
260 blood, those⁴ the evil one cruelly oppresseseth and
taketh captive against our will.⁵ Wherefore, O
Savior, we earnestly pray Thee in the thoughts of
our hearts that straightway Thou grant help unto us
unhappy exiles ; that the baleful destroyer⁶ may

¹ Lit. 'gates,' and so 321.

² Professor Cook calls attention to Bugge's theory that the Fenris wolf of Old Norse poetry is an imaginative reflex of the Christian conception. Cf. *The Home of the Eddic Poems*, Grimm Library, pp. lvii, lxxiii ff.

³ Lit. 'what.'

⁴ Lit. 'that.'

⁵ Lit. 'contrary to the longing of our desires.'

⁶ Lit. 'er of torment'; perhaps = 'slayer dwelling in torment.'

fall headlong into the abyss of hell ; and that Thy 265
handiwork, O Creator of men, may arise and come,
as is fitting, to that fair heavenly kingdom whence
the dark spirit, through our love of sin, erstwhile
enticed and beguiled us, so that, stripped of glory, 270
we must evermore endure misery, unless Thou, Lord
eternal, living God, Protector of all creatures, wilt
speedily free us from the universal foe.

O renowned throughout the world, purest of 275
women upon earth of those who ever were born,
how with joyful heart do all men endowed with
speech, all heroes throughout the world, rightly de-
clare and say that thou art the bride of heaven's most 280
excellent King ! Even so in the skies the highest
retainers of Christ proclaim and sing that in thy holy
virtues¹ thou art queen of the heavenly host, of the 285
ranks of men under heaven, and of the dwellers in
hell ; for thou alone of all mankind with splendid
courage didst resolve to bring thy virginity unto the
Lord, and offer it up without sin. No ring-adorned 290
bride like unto thee hath since come among men,
bringing in due time with pure heart that fair offering
to the heavenly home. Wherefore the Lord trium-
phant bade His archangel fly hither from the majesty 295

¹ Or, 'powers.'

of His glory, and straightway reveal to thee the fulness of His power, that thou, Mary, in compassion for mankind, shouldst bear in pure nativity the Son of
 300 God, and shouldst keep thyself unspotted for ever. We have heard also that long ago in days of old a righteous prophet, Isaiah,¹ spake concerning thee, [saying] that he was led where he fully beheld the
 305 mansions of life in the eternal abode. Then the wise prophet looked out over that region, till he saw where there was set a noble portal. The towering gate was bound all about with precious metal, begirt
 310 with wondrous bands. He fully believed that no man unto all eternity could ever lift bars so firmly fixed, or open the fastening of that city-gate, until
 315 the angel of God, with benign purpose, made known the manner of it, and spake these words: 'I can declare to thee the truth² that in course of time God
 320 Himself, the Father almighty, will pass by the power of the Spirit through this golden gate, and through these firm barriers will visit earth; and after Him it shall for evermore remain so tightly locked
 325 that, save God the Redeemer, none shall ever again open it.'

Now is that fulfilled which the wise one there

¹ Properly, 'Ezekiel.'

² Lit. 'that it has truly come to pass.'

looked upon with his very eyes. Thou art that door; through thee the sovereign Lord once issued forth upon this earth, and even thus did Christ almighty find thee adorned with virtues, pure and elect; so
 330 also did the Prince of angels, Giver of life, close thee after Him with a key, [still] free from all blemish. Show now unto us the grace which God's messenger,
 335 the angel Gabriel, brought to thee. Lo! the dwellers in cities beseech thee that thou grant to the peoples this comfort, even thine own Son. Henceforth we may all rejoice with one accord, now that
 340 we behold the child [lying] on thy breast. Plead for us now with bold words, that He suffer us no longer to hearken unto error in this valley of death, but that He bring us to the Father's kingdom, where,
 345 free from sorrow, we may thenceforth dwell in glory with the Lord of hosts.

O holy Lord of heaven, Thou wast in ages past co-existent with Thy Father in that noble abode!
 350 There was as yet no angel created, nor any of the mighty host who, in the heavens on high, watch over the kingdom, the palace of the Prince, and His service, when Thou, together with God eternal, wast
 355 first establishing the wide creation, all these spacious realms. The Holy Ghost, Spirit of comfort, pro-

ceedeth equally from¹ you both. O Christ Jesus,
 God the Savior, humbly do we all beseech Thee to
 360 hearken unto the voice of these captives, Thy bond-
 slaves, how we are tormented by our own desires.
 Evil spirits, those hateful hell-fiends, have cruelly
 confined us wretched exiles, and bound us with
 365 grievous cords. Relief rests in Thee alone, O Lord
 eternal. Help Thou the sorrowful, that Thine
 advent may comfort the miserable, though we,
 through our lust for sin, have waged war upon
 370 Thee. Have mercy now upon Thy servants, and
 consider our woes — how, feeble in spirit, we stum-
 ble here, and wander miserably about. Come now,
 O King of men, tarry not too long. We have need
 of Thy mercy — that Thou deliver us, O righteous
 375 One, and grant us Thy saving grace, that henceforth
 we may ever do the better things and work Thy
 will among the people.

O Thou glorious heavenly Trinity, full of honor,
 380 high and holy, blessed far and wide over the spacious
 plains, rightly should those endowed with speech,
 wretched dwellers on earth, praise Thee highly with
 all their might, now that God, the faithful Savior,
 hath revealed unto us that we may know Him!

¹ Lit. 'is common to.'

Wherefore the righteous band of seraphim, with 385
 glory crowned, ever chanting fervently with angels
 on high, in unwearied hosts sing adoringly with
 voices clear and sweet, afar and near. Theirs is 390
 the noblest of ministries before the King. Christ
 granted them that with their eyes they might enjoy
 His presence,¹ and, clothed with ethereal radiance,
 ever worship the King far and wide; with their
 wings they guard the presence of the Lord almighty 395
 and eternal, and press forward toward the throne,
 eager who shall hover closest to our Savior within
 the courts of peace. They praise the Beloved, and 400
 in splendor speak these words to Him, magnifying
 the noble Author of all creatures: 'Holy art Thou,
 holy, Lord of archangels, righteous King of victory;
 O Lord of lords, ever art Thou holy; ever doth Thy 405
 glory dwell with men on earth, magnified far and
 near throughout all time. Thou art God of hosts,
 for Thou, O Shield of warriors, Protector of all
 beings, hast filled the heavens and the earth with
 the majesty of Thy glory. Hosanna² unto Thee in 410
 the highest, and on earth praise, renowned among
 men. Blessed mayst Thou live, Thou who in the

¹ Cf. Job 19. 26; Ps. 17. 15; Isa. 33. 17; 1 John 3. 2; Rev. 22. 4.

² Lit. 'Eternal praise'; used as equivalent to 'Hosanna.' Cf.
 Cook's *Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers*, p. 164.

name of the Lord didst come unto the multitudes, a
 comfort to the wretched. To Thee be laud eternal
 415 ever in the highest, world without end.'

Lo ! how wondrous is the change in the life of
 men, that the gentle Creator of mankind took from
 a virgin flesh undefiled ; she knew not at all the
 embraces of man ; the Lord of triumph came not to
 420 earth through the seed of man ; but it was a marvel
 greater than all the dwellers on earth could under-
 stand in its hidden meaning, how the Glory of the
 skies, heaven's high Lord, brought help to mankind
 425 through His mother's womb. So continually the
 Savior of mankind, the Lord of hosts, doth each day
 bestow His forgiveness as a help to men. Wherefore
 we, eager for renown, should loyally praise Him both
 430 in word and deed. That is surpassing wisdom for
 every man who hath an understanding heart, that he
 ever worship God most sincerely and earnestly.
 435 Him shall the hallowed Savior reward for his love
 in the country where as yet he hath not come, in the
 joy of the land of the living, where he shall dwell
 blessed for evermore, there henceforth abiding world
 without end. Amen.

PART II.—THE ASCENSION.

Seek thou earnestly, O illustrious man, that thou 440
 mayst truly understand by the wisdom of thy soul,
 deep searchings of spirit, how it came to pass that
 the angels did not appear in robes of white when the
 Almighty was born in pure nativity, what time the
 Hero, the Prince, came to Bethlehem, having chosen
 the sanctuary of Mary, flower of maidens, the virgin 445
 renowned. Heralds were at hand who spake unto
 the shepherds and proclaimed in words the true joy — 450
 that the Son of God was born into the world in
 Bethléhem. Yet it saith not in Scripture that at
 that great tide they appeared in robes of white,
 as they afterwards did when the glorious Prince, 455
 the Lord triumphant, summoned to Bethany His
 band of disciples, that company beloved. On that
 joyful day they despised not the words of their
 Master, the Bestower of goodly gifts. Soon were 460
 they ready, the heroes with their Lord, [to go] unto
 the holy city, where the Dispenser of glory, the
 King of heaven, revealed many signs unto them in
 parables, before the only-begotten Son, co-eternal 465

with His own Father, ascended on high, forty days after He arose from the dust of death. Thus through His passion had He fulfilled the words of the prophets
 470 as of old they had sung throughout the world. The disciples magnified Him, and gratefully adored the Lord of life, the Father of all created things. Wherefore to His beloved comrades gave He a noble reward, and these words spake the Prince of angels,
 475 the mighty Ruler, as He was about to depart to His Father's kingdom: 'Rejoice in spirit; never will I forsake you, but will for aye continue my love toward you, granting you strength, and abiding with you for ever and ever, so that through my grace
 480 ye shall know the lack of no good thing. Go forth now over all the spacious earth, far-reaching ways; declare unto the multitudes, preach and proclaim the bright faith; baptize the peoples beneath the
 485 welkin, turning them to the skies; destroy the shrines of idols, overthrow them, abhor them; blot out enmity, and in the fulness of power sow peace within men's souls. Henceforth I will abide with you for your comfort, and will everywhere keep you
 490 in peace, in strength unailing.'

Then on a sudden loud music was heard in the sky; a throng of heavenly angels, a radiant host, messengers from glory, in legion came. Our King

departed through the temple's roof while they 495 looked on — those chosen retainers who were still watching in that place of conference the footprints of their beloved Lord. They saw their Master, the Son of God, ascend from earth to heaven. Sad were their souls, hot their sorrowing hearts within 500 their breasts, since now no longer might they behold beneath heaven the One so dear. The heavenly messengers raised a song; they praised the Lord, magnified the Author of life, rejoicing in the light that shone from the Savior's head. Then saw 505 they two glistening angels, fair shining in their splendor round that first-born Son, the Glory of kings. From on high they called with wondrous words, with ringing speech, over the multitude of men: 'Ye men of Galilee, why wait ye thus about? 510 Ye plainly see the righteous King, the Lord of victory, ascending unto heaven; the First of princes, the Creator of all peoples, will go up hence with 515 this angel-band to His dwelling-place, the Father's royal seat. With such a throng, with this joyful host, shall we bear the Lord — the noblest and best of all 520 the sons of glory — far up through heaven's vault unto that beautiful city, Him¹ whom ye now gaze

¹ Possibly *ðe* may go back to *gedryht* for its antecedent. Cf. the parallel expression in line 570.

upon and with joy behold shining in splendor;
yet shall He once again visit the nations of earth
525 with a host innumerable, and then shall He judge
every deed performed by mortals beneath the skies.'

Then was the Lord of glory, King of archangels,
Protector of saints, encompassed with clouds far
above the dwellings [of men]. Joy and gladness
530 were renewed throughout the [celestial] habitations
at the coming of the Prince. The eternal Source of
joy sat down at the right hand of the Father, rejoic-
ing in His victory.

To Jerusalem, the holy city, went the valiant
535 heroes sad of heart from the place where with their
eyes they had but now beheld their God ascending,
the Giver of joy. A fountain of tears¹ gushed
forth; their constant love was overwhelmed with
sorrow, hot within their breasts; their hearts
540 were stirred, their souls burned within them. For
full ten days the illustrious disciples awaited in that
bright city the promises of the Lord, as Himself
commanded, the King of heaven, the Ruler of all, ere
545 He ascended into the far recesses of the skies.

¹ *Wāpes hring*—a difficult phrase to translate. It occurs also *An.* 1280; *El.* 1132; *Gu.* 1313. Professor Cook, referring to Shelley, *Adonais* XI. 4–5; Browning, *By the Fireside* 149–150, suggests as a possible interpretation 'a circling fountain of tears,' tear-drops being likened to pearls upon a string, or beads in a necklace or rosary.

Shining angels came to meet the Giver of bliss to
men. True it is, as the Scripture relates, that at that
holy tide angels resplendent descending from the sky
came unto Him in legions. Then arose great rejoic- 550
ing in heaven. It was indeed fitting that liegemen,
a radiant host, brightly clad, should come unto that
feast in the city of the Lord; welcome was He
whom they saw [sitting] on His throne, the King 555
of heaven, Giver of life to men, ruling in splendor
the whole earth and the angelic host.

'Now¹ hath the Holy One despoiled hell of all the
tribute which of old it wrongfully swallowed up into 560
that place of strife. Vanquished now are the devils'
warriors, brought low and bound in living torments,
bereft of glory in the abyss of hell. His adversaries²
could not prevail in battle, in the hurling of weapons, 565
what time the King of glory, Guardian of heaven's
realm, waged war against His ancient foes by His
sole might, when He led forth from bondage, from
the city of fiends, the greatest of spoils, a countless
multitude of people, even the host which ye here 570
gaze upon. And now after the conflict the Savior

¹ Professor Cook interprets this speech as a continuation of that which ends at line 526. At first it is the disciples who are addressed; at line 575 it is the ascending host.

² Reading *wiðerbreocan* with Cosijn.

of souls, God's own Son, is minded to seek the throne of spiritual grace. Thus ye may understand who is
 575 the Lord that leadeth this host. — Now go ye forth boldly to meet your friends, joyful in spirit. Open, ye gates;¹ through you the King, the Ruler of all, the Author of creation, will lead into the city, unto the
 580 joy of joys, the mighty host which He hath wrested from the demons by His victory. There shall be fellowship between angels and men from this time forth and for evermore. There is now a covenant between God and man, a sacred pledge — love, hope
 585 of life, and joy in perfect light.'

Lo! we have heard how the Christ-child by His advent brought again salvation; how He, the Creator's noble Son, freed and kept men beneath the clouds, so that now each mortal, while he dwell
 590 eth here in life, may choose either the shame of hell or the fame of heaven, the shining day or the loathsome night, the power of glory or the pain of darkness, joy with the Lord or wailing with demons,
 595 bliss² with angels or torment with fiends, either life or death, whichever he preferreth to achieve while body and soul abide in the world. Where-

¹ From Ps. 24. 7.

² Lit. 'glory.'

fore let blessing and eternal thanks be unto the glory of the Trinity!

It is meet and right that all nations should give 600 thanks unto the Lord for every blessing which now and aforetime He hath ever bestowed upon us through the mystery of wonders manifold. He giveth us food and abundance of riches, wealth throughout the broad earth, and fair weather 605 beneath the shelter of the sky. The sun and moon, brightest of stars, heaven's candles, shine for all men on the earth. Dew and rain descend; they call forth plenty for the nourishment of man, 610 and increase the riches of earth. For all this, therefore, we ought to give thanks and praise unto our Lord, but especially for the salvation granted for our joy, when by His ascension He 615 brought to end the misery we had so long endured, when the only-begotten King settled for mankind that greatest of feuds with His beloved¹ Father. For our soul's peace He abolished the sentence which had been pronounced in anger to the woe of man: 'I 620 created thee of earth;² upon it shalt thou dwell in misery, living in strife and suffering torment, chanting the death-song to thy foe's delight; and to

¹ Or, 'own.'

² From Gen. 3. 19.

the same shalt thou turn again, teeming with
 625 worms; thence from the earth shalt thou afterwards
 seek the fire of punishment.' Lo! this [curse]
 did the Lord abate for us when He took on Him
 the seed of man, body and limbs. When the Son
 of the Creator, the God of hosts, was about to
 630 ascend to the home of angels, at that holy tide
 there arose [in Him] the desire to help us wretched
 ones.

Concerning this Job fashioned a song, as he well
 knew how; he praised the Protector of men, lauded
 635 the Savior, and out of his love devised a surname
 for the Son of God; He gave him the name of Bird,
 which, by the power of the divine Spirit, the Jews
 could not understand; the flight of that Bird was
 640 secret and hidden from His enemies on earth, from
 those who had a darkened mind and a stony heart
 within their breasts; they would not recognize the
 glorious miracles, many and various, which the noble
 Son of God performed before them on the earth.
 645 And thus the beloved Bird essayed flight: now
 bold and strong in virtue He aspired the home
 of angels, that fair abode; now through the Spirit's
 grace He sought the precincts of earth and wended
 650 His way to the world. Of Him the prophet sang:¹

¹ Cf. Ps. 8. 1; 18. 10; 47. 5.

'He was lifted up, high and holy, in the arms
 of angels, in the fulness of His power, above the
 majesty of heaven.' They who made denial of the
 ascension could not perceive the flight of the Bird, 655
 and believed not that the Author of life, the Holy
 One, in the likeness of man was lifted up from earth
 above the heavenly host.

Then He who created the earth, God's Spirit-son,
 honored us and granted us gifts, eternal seats amid 660
 the angels on high; moreover He sowed manifold wis-
 dom, and planted it within the souls of men. Unto
 the mind¹ of one, through the Spirit of His mouth, 665
 He sendeth wise eloquence and noble understanding;
 such an one can sing and speak many things; unto
 his soul is committed the power of wisdom. One
 can awaken the harp before warriors, touching it
 full loudly with his fingers. One can set forth 670
 aright the law divine. One can tell the course of
 the stars, the expanse of² creation. One can skil-
 fully write the spoken word. To one He giveth
 victory in war, when bowmen send the storm of
 darts, the winged arrows, over their shields. One can 675
 boldly urge forward his bark over the salt sea, and
 stir the raging deep. One can climb the steep and

¹ Lit. 'memory of his mind.'

² Lit. 'wide.'

lofty tree. One can fashion the sword, the well-tempered weapon. One knoweth the compass of the plains, the far-reaching ways. So to us the Ruler, the Son of God, doth dispense His gifts on earth. But to no man will He give all wisdom of soul, lest, exalted above others by his own power, his pride work him evil.

Thus doth God almighty, King of creation, enrich the progeny of earth with gifts and endowments manifold; so also He bestoweth glory upon the blessed of heaven; He establisheth peace for men and angels unto all eternity.

So He honoreth His handiwork. Concerning this the prophet said¹ that holy gems were lifted up on high, the sun and moon, those radiant stars of heaven. What indeed are those gems so bright but God Himself? He is the Sun of righteousness, a glorious Light to angels and dwellers on earth. The moon shineth over all the world, a spiritual star; even so the Church of God shineth brightly through the union of truth and righteousness — as the Scripture saith — since the Son of God, King of all who are pure, arose from the earth. Before that the church of the law-abiding suffered persecution under the rule of heathen shep-

¹ Hab. 3. 11, according to the Septuagint.

herds. Then evil-doers recked not of the truth nor of their soul's need; but they rent and burned the temple of God, they overthrew and destroyed, they wrought deeds of blood. But after the ascension of the Lord eternal, triumph came to God's servants through grace of the Spirit.

Of this sang Solomon, the son of David, ruler of nations, versed in the hidden things of song, and these words he spake:¹ 'This shall be made known, that the Savior, the King of angels, strong in might, shall ascend the mountains, leaping the lofty downs; He shall encompass the mountains and hills with His glory, and by that noble leap He shall redeem the world and all the inhabitants of earth.'

The first leap was when He descended unto the virgin, that spotless maid, and took on Him the likeness of man, yet without sin; that was for the comfort of all the dwellers on earth. The second leap was the birth of the infant, when the Glory of all glories, in the likeness of a child, lay in the manger wrapped in [swaddling] clothes. The third leap, the bound of the King of heaven, was when He ascended the cross, the Father, the Spirit of comfort. The fourth leap was into the grave, when He came down from the tree, [and was held] fast in the

¹ Cant. 2. 8.

730 sepulchre. The fifth leap was when He cast the host of hell into living torment, and with fiery fetters bound their king within, that fierce spokes-
 735 man of fiends, where he lieth yet in prison, fastened with chains, bound by his sins. The sixth leap was the joyous revel of the Holy One, when He ascended to heaven, unto His former dwelling. At that holy time the angel-band grew merry with joy and glad-
 740 ness. They saw the King of glory, the Chief of princes, come unto His fatherland, unto the bright mansions. That exploit of the Prince was an eternal happiness to the blessed, the dwellers in the City.

Thus, while here on earth, the eternal Son of God
 745 leaped boldly over the hills and lofty mountains. So must we mortals, in the thoughts of our hearts, leap from strength to strength and strive after glory, so that we may rise by our holy works to the high-
 750 est summit, where are hope and joy, a glorious band of liegemen. We have great need to follow after salvation with our hearts, to that place where we earnestly believe in our souls that the Saviour-son, the living God, hath ascended with
 755 our human body.

Wherefore we should scorn all idle lusts, the wounds of sin, and rejoice in better things. We have for our comfort the Almighty, the Father in

heaven. The Holy One on high will send His 760 angels hither to shield us against the deadly arrow-flights of evil-doers, lest the fiends inflict wounds upon us, when the author of evil sendeth forth the bitter arrow from his bended¹ bow among the people 765 of God. Wherefore we must ever be warily on our guard against the quick shot, lest the venomous point, the bitter dart, the sudden wile of fiends, penetrate beneath our flesh. Its hurt is grievous, 770 most livid of wounds. Let us then keep watch and ward while we abide here on earth! Let us beseech the Father for protection; let us pray the Son of God and the merciful Spirit that He who gave us life, body, limbs, and soul, will shield us against the 775 weapons of the foe, against the wiles of our enemies! Praise be to Him for ever, glory in the heavens world without end!

None of the race of men on earth need fear the shafts of devils, the spear-flights of the fierce ones, 780 if God, the Lord of hosts, protecteth him. The judgment is at hand when we shall obtain our reward, according as we have ever laid up for ourselves by our deeds on the broad earth. The 785 Scripture saith how in the beginning the Treasury of glory, God's noble Son, descended from on high,

¹ Perhaps this is the 'deceitful bow' of Ps. 78. 57; Hos. 7. 16.

and humbly came to earth into the virgin's womb.
 790 Alas ! I expect, yea, and fear a sterner doom when
 the Prince of angels cometh again, since I have ill
 kept those things which the Savior bade me in the
 Scriptures. For this, as I account truth, I shall
 behold terror, the punishment of sin, when many
 795 shall be led into the assembly before the presence
 of the eternal Judge.

Then shall the COURAGEOUS¹ tremble; he shall
 hear the King, the Ruler of heaven, speak stern
 words unto those who in timè past ill obeyed Him
 on earth, while as yet they could easily find comfort
 800 for their YEARNING and their NEED. There in that
 place shall many a one, weary and sore afraid,
 await what dire punishment He will mete out to
 them for their deeds. Gone is the WINSOMENESS
 805 of earth's adornments. Long ago the portion of life's
 joys granted Us was compassed about by LAKE-
 FLOODS, our FORTUNE on the earth. Then shall our
 treasures burn in fire; bright and swift shall the

¹ The large type denotes the runes of the original which in succession spell the name of Cynewulf (in this poem, Cynwulf). These renderings (following Gollancz in the main) are partly conjectural; exactness, where that was possible, has been sacrificed in favor of the proper initials. It would be more correct to substitute *bold* for *courageous*, *misery* for *yearning*, *joy* for *winsomeness*, *sea* for *lake-floods*, *wealth* for *fortune*. Cosijn regards the letters, C., Y., and N. as forming *cyn* = 'mankind.'

red flame rage; fiercely shall it rush through the
 wide world. Plains shall perish, citadels fall. The 810
 fire shall be all astir; pitilessly shall that greediest of
 spirits waste the ancient treasure which men held
 of old, whilst pride abode with them upon the earth.

Wherefore I would exhort each beloved one that 815
 he neglect not his soul's need, nor be dissolved in
 vainglory, while God wills that he dwell here in
 the world, and that the soul journey in the taber-
 nacle of the body. Every man should bethink 820
 him well in the days of his life that, according to
 the angel's word, the Lord of might first came to us
 benignly. He will be austere when He cometh again,
 stern and just. At that day the heavens shall 825
 shake and the mighty ends of the earth shall
 tremble; the bright King shall requite them for
 living on earth in evil deeds, guilty of sin. Where-
 fore weary in soul they shall long suffer fierce 830
 retribution in that bath of fire, hemmed in by
 surging [flames].

When the King of hosts shall come to the assem-
 bly with an innumerable throng, a widespread terror,
 the outcry of the lamenting, shall be loudly heard
 amid the sounds from heaven; the sorrowful, trust- 835
 ing but little in their works, shall wail before
 the face of the everlasting Judge. Then shall

arise a terror greater than was ever heard of on
 840 earth from the beginning. In that sudden hour
 it shall be far dearer than all this fleeting world
 unto every worker of iniquity to hide himself among
 the victorious band, when the Lord of hosts, Chief
 845 of princes, shall adjudge to all peoples, both friends
 and foes, their just reward. O great our need that
 in this barren time, ere that horror, we earnestly
 bethink us of the beauty of our souls!

850 Now is it as though we fared in ships out upon
 the ocean, over the waters cold, and urged¹ our
 barks, our sea-steeds, across the broad flood. A
 perilous stream it is, endless waves and wind-swept
 855 seas, on which we toss throughout this fleeting world,
 over the fathomless reaches. Hard was our life
 ere we sailed to land over the stormy main. Then
 860 came our help: God's Spirit-son guided us to the
 haven of safety, and gave us grace to see, over
 the vessel's side, where with firm-set anchor² we
 should moor our sea-steeds, those ocean-stallions old.
 O let us fix our hope in that holy haven above,
 865 which the Lord celestial prepared for us when He
 ascended into the heavens!

¹ Lit. 'journeyed on.'

² Lit. 'fast at their anchors.'

PART III. — DOOMSDAY.

Lo! at midnight, unawares, the great day of the
 Lord omnipotent shall mightily overtake the dwellers
 on earth, the bright creation; as oft a daring robber, 870
 a crafty thief, prowling about in darkness, in the
 murky night, suddenly comes upon careless men
 bound in sleep, and sorely assails them unprepared.

Then together unto Mount Zion shall ascend a 875
 great multitude, radiant and joyful, the faithful of
 the Lord; glory shall be theirs. Thereupon from
 the four corners of the world, from the uttermost
 regions of earth, angels all-shining shall with one 880
 accord blow their crashing trumpets; the earth
 shall tremble under men. Glorious and steadfast
 they shall sound together over against the course
 of the stars, chanting in harmony and making
 melody from south and from north, from east and
 from west, throughout the whole creation; all man- 885
 kind shall they wake from the dead unto the last
 judgment; they shall rouse the sons of men all
 aghast from the ancient earth, bidding them straight-
 way arise from their deep sleep.

There one may hear a sorrowing people, sad of
 890 heart and greatly disquieted, sorely afraid and piti-
 fully bewailing the deeds done in the body. This
 shall be the greatest forewarning ever shown unto
 men before or since. There all the hosts of angels
 895 and of devils shall mingle, the fair and the swart;
 there shall be a coming of both the white and the
 black, according as an abode is prepared all unlike
 for saints and sinners.

Then suddenly upon Mount Zion a blaze of the
 900 sun, shining clear from the southeast, shall come
 forth from the Creator, gleaming more brightly than
 the mind of man can conceive, when the Son of God
 shall appear hither through the vault of heaven.
 All glorious from the eastern skies shall come the
 905 presence of Christ, the aspect of the noble King,
 gentle in spirit toward His own, bitter toward the
 wicked, wondrously varied, diverse to the blessed
 910 and the forlorn. Unto the good, the host of the
 holy, He shall be joyful of countenance, radiant,
 winsome, loving, gracious, and fair.¹ Sweet and
 pleasant shall it be for His loved ones, for those
 who in days of old pleased Him well by their words
 and deeds, to gaze upon that shining face, winningly
 915 benign, upon the advent of the King, the Lord of

¹ Lit. 'fair in joys.'

might. But unto the evil and wicked, unto those
 who shall come to Him undone by sin, He shall be
 terrible and awful to behold. 920

That¹ may be a prophetic² intimation to him who
 is wise of thought, that he shall have no cause what-
 ever to be afraid; he shall not be dismayed in soul
 at the terror of the Presence, when he beholdeth the
 Lord of all creation approaching with mighty won- 925
 ders to the doom of many, while on all sides press
 round Him a band of angels, a shining host, legions
 of the saints in great multitudes.

The vast creation shall resound, and the fiercest 930
 of raging fires shall sweep over the whole earth
 before the Lord; the fiery flame shall hurtle; the
 heavens shall burst asunder; all the firm-set flash-
 ing stars shall fall. The sun itself, which shone
 so brightly above the former world for the sons of
 men, shall be turned dark, even to the hue of
 blood; the moon, also, which of old gave light for 935
 mortals in the night season, shall fall headlong;
 and the stars shall be hurled from heaven by the
 fury of the storm-vexed air. 940

¹ The meaning of this passage is somewhat doubtful.

² The usual sense of *wiles* is here inappropriate. I have accepted
 Professor Cook's suggestion (cf. his note on line 182) that in *wiles*
 we may possibly have a form of the root *wit*, as seen in *witga*,
 'prophet.'

Now shall the Almighty, the glorious Prince,
 Creator of great kings, come into the assembly with
 His angel band. An exultant host of His retainers
 shall be there also. The souls of the blest shall
 945 journey with their Lord, when the Protector of men
 shall visit the nations of earth with dread punish-
 ment. Then throughout the broad earth shall be
 heard the piercing blast of the heavenly trump;
 from seven quarters the winds shall rush, blowing
 950 and roaring with awful crash, rousing and blighting
 the world with storm, filling with terror¹ the whole
 creation. There shall be heard² a deafening uproar,
 loud and violent, heavy and appalling, terrible unto
 955 mortals, of all tumults the mightiest.

Then the cursed hosts of men shall turn in
 throngs unto the all-embracing flame, and living
 meet the deadly blaze, some above and some
 beneath, filled with fire. Certain is it that there
 960 the race of Adam shall lament, a joyless people,
 full of sorrows, afflicted by no trifling woes but by
 the greatest of miseries, what time the livid surging
 965 of fire, the dusky flame, shall seize far and wide on
 all three at once — ocean with its fish, earth with its
 mountains, and highest heaven bright with its stars.

¹ Reading *fère* with Cook. Cf. his note on line 952.

² Lit. 'made manifest.'

Fiercely and cruelly shall the destroying flame burn
 all three together. At that dread time the whole 970
 earth shall mourn, and be sorely troubled.

Thus shall the all-devouring spirit, the ravaging
 fire, overrun the earth and its lofty structures; the¹
 hot and greedy blast, famed afar, shall, over the earth's
 plain, fill the whole world with the terror of fire. 975
 The city-walls shall fall in ruins. Mountains shall
 melt away, along with the headlands which erstwhile
 firm and steadfast stoutly shielded the earth from 980
 ocean-floods, bulwarks against the waves and heaving
 waters. Then shall the death-fire seize on every
 creature, both bird and beast; the murky flame, a
 raging warrior, shall stride over the earth. Where-
 soever the waters once flowed, the hurrying floods, 985
 there the fishes of the deep, cut off from ocean, shall
 be consumed in a bath of fire; every sea-monster
 exhausted shall die; water shall burn like wax.
 There shall be more wonders than mind of man can
 conceive — how whirlwind, and tempest, and raging 990
 blast shall rend the broad creation. Men shall wail;
 they shall weep and lament with mournful voices,
 downcast and wretched, overwhelmed with sorrow.
 The swart flame shall blaze on those fordome by
 sin; the fire shall consume the golden ornaments, 995

¹ The rendering of lines 973-4 is somewhat doubtful.

all the ancient treasure of the kings of the nations. There amid the sounds from heaven an outcry shall be [heard], wailing and lamentation, the strife of the living, loud weeping, and the sad plaint of men.
 1000 Herefrom no man guilty of crime can win refuge, or anywhere escape from the flame, but that fire shall seize on all things throughout the earth; it shall fiercely delve and eagerly explore the regions of the
 1005 world within and without, until the glowing flame hath wholly purged away by its billowing the stain of earthly sin.

Then in great majesty shall God almighty come to that dread mount; the holy King of heavenly angels, the Lord omnipotent, shall shine resplendent
 1010 upon the multitudes; round about Him shall brightly gleam a most goodly throng, holy bands, the blessed company of angels; with terror of the Father shall they tremble, dismayed in their inmost thoughts.
 1015 Wherefore it is no marvel that the unclean race of men should greatly fear and pitifully lament, since even the holy race, the white host of archangels, heaven-bright, are sore affrighted before that Pres-
 1020 ence, what time the radiant beings await with trembling the judgment of the Lord. Most terrible of all days shall that be in the world when the King of glory shall chasten all peoples by His might, and bid

speech-uttering men, tribe after tribe, arise from 1025 their graves and come every one unto the assembly.

Then shall the race of Adam assume flesh; there shall be an end to their rest and sojourn in the earth. At ¹ Christ's coming every one of them shall arise in 1030 newness of life, shall take on body and limbs, and again be made young; he shall have within him all the good or evil which in former days on the earth, in the circuit of years, he hath treasured within his heart. He shall have together both body and soul. 1035 The aspect of his works, the memory of his words, and the counsel of his heart, shall come to light before the King of heaven.

Then shall the race of men be increased and renewed by the Creator; a great multitude shall ascend 1040 unto the judgment when the Author of life shall loose the bonds of death. The air shall be enkindled; the stars of heaven shall fall; the greedy flame shall ravage far and wide. Spirits shall depart unto their eternal abode. The deeds of mortals shall be 1045 brought to light throughout the world; in no wise can men conceal their treasures, the thoughts of their hearts, before that Prince; deeds shall not be hidden from Him, but on that great day the Lord shall 1050 know in what sort every man hath merited eternal

¹ Lit. 'before.'

life, and all shall be revealed that they have wrought in the world early or late. Naught of man's thoughts shall be concealed, but that dread
 1055 day shall bring to light all the secrets of his breast, all the meditations of his heart. He must bethink him aforesaid of his spirit's need, who would bring to God a radiant countenance when the hot consuming fire maketh trial before the victorious Judge
 1060 how souls have been kept from sin.

Now the trumpet's blast, the bright ensign, and the hot fire, the exalted host, the company of angels, the pang of terror, the stern day, and the high rood
 1065 raised aloft as a sign of sovereignty, shall summon forward the multitude of men, the souls of all who early or late have taken upon them body and limbs. Then that mighty host, immortal and restored to
 1070 youth, shall, eager or compelled, as they are called by their names, pass into the presence of the Lord, and bear before God's Son the secrets of their hearts, the treasures of their souls. The Father will perceive whether His sons bring untainted souls
 1075 from the land in which they dwelt. They shall be of good courage who bring unto the Creator a radiant countenance; their might and joy, the glorious reward of their works, shall be exceeding plenteous as a recompense to their souls. Well is it for

them who at that dread time shall be acceptable
 unto God.

There shall sinful men, sad at heart, behold the greatest affliction. Not for their behoof shall the cross of our Lord, brightest of beacons, stand
 1085 before all nations, wet with the pure blood of heaven's King, stained with His gore, shining brightly over the vast creation. Shadows shall be put to flight when the resplendent cross shall blaze upon all peoples. But this shall be¹ for an affliction
 1090 and a punishment to men, to those malefactors who knew no gratitude to God, that He, the King, was crucified on the holy rood for the sins of mankind, on that day when He whose body knew no sin
 1095 nor base iniquity lovingly purchased life for men with the price with which He ransomed us.² For all this will He rigorously exact³ recompense when
 1100 the red rood shall shine brightly over all in the sun's stead.

Fearfully and sorrowfully shall they look thereon, those black workers of iniquity, fordone by sin; they shall behold to their bale that which would
 1105

¹ I have not translated the *geteod* of line 1090; it is inserted by Grein and later editors solely for metrical reasons.

² This passage may be corrupt. Cf. Cook's *Christ*, note on line 1097.

³ Reading *gemonian* with Grein.

have been their greatest weal, had they been willing to apprehend it as their good. With sad hearts shall they behold the ancient gashes and open wounds upon their Lord, where His foes pierced with nails
 1110 the white hands and the holy feet, and let forth gore from His side; blood and water gushed forth together before the eyes of all the people, when He was on
 1115 the cross. All this they themselves shall then be able to see, open and manifest, how He suffered many things for the love of sinners. The sons of men shall clearly behold how the false-hearted
 1120 denied Him, mocked Him with blasphemies, spat their spittle in His face, and spake insults against Him; how hell-doomed men, blind of thought, foolish and erring, struck that blessed countenance with their hands, with their outstretched palms, with
 1125 their very fists, and round His head entwined a cruel crown of thorns.

They saw that the dumb creation — verdant earth and high heaven — shudderingly felt the sufferings
 1130 of their Lord; and though they had not life, yet moaned in sorrow when wicked men seized on their Savior with impious hands. The sun became darkened, obscured by misery. In Jerusalem the people saw how¹ that choicest of tapestries, which

¹ Reading *hū* with Grein.

the throng had been wont to look upon as the glory of the holy house, was torn asunder from 1135 the top, so that it lay on the ground in two pieces; the veil of the temple, wrought of wondrous colors for the adornment of that house, was rent of itself in twain, as if a sharp-edged sword had passed through 1140 it. Divers walls and stones throughout the world burst wide asunder; the earth, stirred by terror, quaked with a great noise; the broad sea showed forth the power of its might, and fiercely broke 1145 from its confines over earth's bosom; and the stars in their beauteous station forsook their aspect sweet. At that same time heaven clearly recognized who had nobly made it bright with starry 1150 gems on high; of a truth it sent its herald when first was born the radiant King of creation. Lo! on that same day on which He suffered, even sinful men saw in sooth a wondrous miracle — that the earth gave up those who lay 1155 within her; they rose up living, those, the dead and buried, whom she had firmly confined, even they who had kept in their hearts the Lord's command. Hell, the sin-avenging, also perceived that the Creator, the sovereign Lord, was come, when it 1160 gave forth that host from its hot bosom; the hearts of many were comforted, and sorrows van-

ished from their souls. Lo ! even the sea declared who had set it on its broad bed, the almighty King, 1165 for it made itself passable unto Him when God willed to go over its waves ; the water-flood durst not flow with its billows over its Master's feet. 1170 Trees likewise many, and by no means few, declared who had shaped them with their branches,¹ when almighty God ascended one of them and suffered pain for men's weal, loathsome death for the help of mankind. Then was many a tree suffused with 1175 bloody tears beneath its bark, red and frequent ; the sap turned to gore. The inhabitants of earth cannot tell, with all their wisdom, how many things that have no feeling, lifeless things, felt then the Lord's 1180 sufferings. The noblest of the races of earth and heaven's high creation — all became sad and dismayed for that² alone. Although by their nature they had no understanding, yet miraculously did 1185 they apprehend when their Lord departed the body. Blind-hearted men, harder than flint, could not recognize the Savior, nor that the Lord, God almighty, had saved them from hell-torment by His holy 1190 might. From the beginning of the world far-seeing men, prophets of God, holy and wise of heart,

¹ Perhaps 'fruits,' or 'blossoms.'

² Or 'them,' or 'Him.'

not once but oft through their wise understanding declared unto men this very thing concerning the glorious Son — that, through the noble maid, He, the Lord of glory, the Author of bliss, the Precious Stone, should become a refuge and comfort to all 1195 men in the world.

What can he expect who refuseth to keep in mind the Savior's gentle precepts, and all the afflictions that He endured for men because of His desire that we should possess the home of glory unto all eternity ? On the dread day of that great judgment, sad shall it be for him who, defiled by 1205 deadly sins, must look upon the scars, the wounds, the sufferings of the Lord. With aching hearts shall they see the greatest of sorrows ; them did the King Himself, through His merciful spirit, redeem 1210 from sin with His own body, that they might live without iniquity, and enjoy the eternal blessedness of glory ; but they gave no thanks unto their Lord for this heritage, wherefore the unhappy ones shall see to their sorrow signs manifest in such as are 1215 good.

When Christ shall sit on His royal throne, on the high seat, then shall the Father almighty, the radiant Creator, God of the heavenly hosts, Ruler of the skies, adjudge righteously to each band 1220

according to their deeds. Then shall be gathered on His right hand the folk undefiled, chosen by the election of Christ Himself, those who in the days of their life have faithfully and joyfully obeyed His
 1225 commandments; but to the Creator's left side shall be assigned the workers of iniquity: the righteous King of victory shall bid the sinful host depart unto His left hand. There, detected, they shall wail
 1230 and tremble in terror before the Lord; an impure people, foul as goats, they can expect no mercy. Then in the presence of God shall be determined for the generations of men the doom of their souls, according as they have wrought erewhile.

Three signs shall there be visible together unto
 1235 the blessed, inasmuch as they have well kept their Lord's will in word and deed.

First shall appear this — that they shall shine with light before the nations, with glory and splendor over the habitations of cities; their former deeds shall
 1240 shine upon each one of them brighter than the sun.

The second shall likewise be manifest — that they shall know their Sovereign's grace in the bestowal of¹ glory, and shall see, to their eyes' delight, that
 1245 they may possess bright joys in the heavenly kingdom, blessed amid the angels.

¹ Cf. Cook's *Christ*, note on line 1243.

The third shall be that the happy band shall behold the lost, that host of burning creatures, suffering pain in the misery of darkness, as a punishment for their sins — raging fire and the bite of
 1250 serpents with bitter jaws; from this shall spring up a winsome joy for them. When they shall see others suffer the evil that they escaped through the Savior's mercy, they shall the more earnestly
 1255 thank God for the bliss and happiness which they behold — that He hath both saved them from perdition and granted them eternal joys; hell shall be locked against them, the kingdom of heaven shall be granted unto them. This shall be given as reward to those that ever faithfully kept the Crea-
 1260 tor's will in love.

Far different shall be the joy of the others; they can see in themselves too many woes — countless sins, iniquities aforetime committed. Tribulation
 1265 and dire evil shall cleave unto the sorrowing ones in three ways.

One is that they shall see before them too many miseries, dread hell-fire, prepared for their punishment, in which, suffering torment, they shall for
 1270 aye endure damnation.

There shall also be a second misery for the shame of the sinful — that the lost shall suf-

fer there the greatest disgrace; the Lord shall see
 1275 in them loathsome sins by no means few; so, too,
 the shining band of heavenly angels, the sons of
 men, all the dwellers on earth, and the fell fiend,
 shall behold the power of darkness, all the iniqui-
 1280 ties. Through the body they may see the grievous
 sins in their souls; their sinful flesh shall be shame-
 fully transpierced, as if it were clear glass, through
 which one may most easily look.

The third shall be a sorrow and sore grief for
 1285 the wretched — that they behold how the joyful, the
 righteous, rejoice in the good deeds which they, the
 unhappy ones, scorned to do while days were still
 theirs; and concerning their own works it shall be
 1290 a grievous tribulation that they had freely wrought
 unrighteousness. They shall see the better ones
 shine in glory; their own misery shall not be their
 sole punishment, but the happiness of others shall be
 to them a grief, because in former days they forsook
 1295 joys so fair and sweet for the delusive pleasure of
 the body, the vain lust of the sinful flesh. There,
 ashamed and distressed by their ignominy, they
 shall wander dizzily about; they shall bear their
 evil works, the burden of their sin; on that shall
 1300 the people gaze.

Wherefore it had been better for them had they

felt shame before one man for every evil deed and
 transgression, had they told God's messenger that
 they knew to their sorrow the sins within them.
 The confessor cannot look through the flesh into 1305
 the soul [to discover] whether a man speaketh
 truth or falsehood concerning himself, when he
 confesseth¹ his sins. One can, however, heal every
 transgression, every unclean sin, if he but tell it
 to one man; but none on that dread day can con- 1310
 ceal the crime unatoned; multitudes shall there
 behold it.

O that we might now see with the eyes of our
 body the deadly iniquities in our souls, the wounds
 of sin, the wicked thoughts, the impure imaginings! 1315

No² one can tell another with what eagerness
 each should³ strive in every way to sustain his life
 and anxiously prolong his existence, wash away the
 rust of sin and chasten himself, and remove the 1320
 defilement of a former wound during the brief span
 of life here below; so that before the eyes of the
 dwellers on earth he may enjoy an abode among
 men, blameless and unashamed, while body and 1325
 soul may yet dwell together.

¹ The usual translation of *bigān* is 'to commit.'

² This paragraph seems out of keeping with the context; cf.
 Cook's *Christ*, note on line 1316.

³ Lit. 'will.'

Now must we look sharply and earnestly with the eyes of the heart through the soul's covering upon the sin beneath. With our other eyes, the jewels
 1330 of the head, we can in no way look through the seat¹ of thought [to see] whether good or evil dwelleth within each one, so that at that dread time he may be acceptable unto God.

When from His lofty throne the high King of
 1335 heaven shall shine in glory, with a dazzling light, over every nation, then shall He first speak unto the blessed, before the angels and before all nations, and graciously promise them love; He shall gently
 1340 comfort them with His holy speech, and shall proclaim peace to them; He shall bid them depart safe and sanctified to the land of angels' bliss, and joyfully possess it world without end:

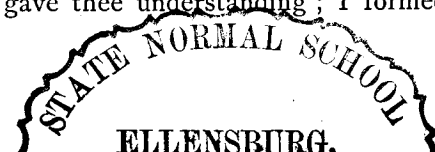
'Receive ye now with friends my Father's kingdom, the bliss and the glory and the fair beauty
 1345 of that home which was joyfully prepared for you before all ages, against the time when with the best beloved ye might behold the riches of life eternal, the precious joys of heaven. This indeed ye mer-
 1350 ited when with compassionate hearts ye willingly received the poor and needy. When in my name they humbly besought mercy of you, then did ye help

¹ Lit. 'soul.'

them and give them shelter, bread to the hungry and clothing to the naked; those that lay sick in pain, 1355 grievously suffering, bound by disease, ye gently strengthened in spirit with the affection of your hearts. For me ye did all this when ye sought them in love, and with consolation stayed their spirits. For this shall ye long enjoy a fair reward 1360 with my loved ones.'

Then with far different words, with fearful menace, shall God almighty begin to address the evil ones on His left hand. They need not then 1365 expect mercy from the Lord, neither life nor grace, but recompense for their words and deeds shall fall to men, to those endowed with speech, according to their works; they shall suffer the one righteous doom, full of terror. On that day the 1370 great compassion of the Almighty shall be withdrawn from the dwellers on earth, when with bitter words He fiercely chargeth their sins upon the stubborn-hearted, and commandeth them to render account of the lives which He had given the sinful 1375 for their weal. Then shall the Lord almighty begin to speak as if to one alone, and yet shall He mean the whole band of the sinful:

'Lo! I wrought thee, O man, of old with my hands, and gave thee understanding; I formed for 1380



thee limbs of clay and gave thee a living spirit;
 I honored thee above all creatures, and caused
 thee to have form and aspect like unto myself;
 I gave thee fulness of power and wealth over
 all spacious lands; thou knewest naught of the
 1385 woe and darkness that thou wast to suffer. Yet
 for this thou wast not grateful. When I had
 shaped thee so beautiful and winsome, and had
 given thee power that thou mightst rule over the
 creatures of earth, I set thee in the fair region
 1390 to enjoy the rich luxuriance and bright hues of
 Paradise;¹ thou wouldst not obey the word of life,
 but at the bidding of thy destroyer didst break
 my commandment; thou didst rather hearken to
 1395 the wily foe, the perfidious fiend, than to thy
 Creator. Now will I pass over that ancient tale,
 how thou didst first devise evil and didst lose by
 thy wicked deeds what I had granted thee for thy
 weal. When I had bestowed upon thee so many
 1400 blessings, and when to thy mind it seemed too little
 happiness unless thou mightst have fulness of
 power equal to God's, then to thy foes' delight didst
 thou become estranged from that joy, cast out afar;
 sad of heart, cheerless and sinful, deprived of all
 1405 blessings and joys, thou wast forced to give up

¹ Somewhat freely rendered.

the glory of Paradise, the abode of spirits; thou
 wast driven into the dark world, where long there-
 after thou didst suffer great hardships, sorrow and 1410
 grievous toil, and swart death, and after thy depar-
 ture, bereft of helpers, wast doomed to fall headlong
 down to hell.

‘Then it began to repent me that my handiwork
 should fall into the power of fiends, that the off- 1415
 spring of man should see destruction, should learn
 to know an inhospitable abode and sore vicissitudes.
 Thereupon I myself descended as a child into my
 mother, yet her virginity was wholly inviolate. I 1420
 was the Only-begotten for the help of men. With
 their hands they swathed me, wrapped me in the gar-
 ments of the poor, and laid me in darkness, wound
 about with sable raiment. Lo! this I endured for
 the world! Little did I seem unto the sons of men;
 on the hard stone I lay, a young child in the 1425
 manger, in order that I might put away from thee the
 torment and hot misery of hell; that thou mightst
 shine holy and blessed in life eternal, for that I
 suffered the pain.

‘It was not out of pride, but in my youth I
 endured suffering and shameful pain of body that
 through it I might become like unto thee, and that 1430
 thou, freed from sin, mightst become like me in

aspect; because of my love for man, my head bore the grievous blow. Nor was my face spared:¹ often
 1435 my countenance received spittle from the mouths of the impious, the workers of iniquity. They cruelly mixed for me a sour drink of vinegar and gall. For mankind's sake I endured the hatred
 1440 of foes; they pursued me with outrages—they shrank not from deadly hostility—and smote me with scourges. All that pain, scorn, and abuse, I humbly bore for thee. About my head they wound
 1445 a sharp and cruel crown, and pitilessly pressed it on; of thorns was it wrought. Then was I hanged upon a lofty tree, fastened to a cross. And straightway with a spear they let forth from my side blood and gore upon the earth, that through it thou
 1450 mightst be saved from the devil's tyranny. Sinless, I suffered punishment and sore torment, until I gave up from my body the living ghost. Behold now the deadly wounds which they made in my hands
 1455 and feet, by which I hung there, cruelly fastened; here canst thou also see, still visible, the bloody wound in my side.

'How unequal was the reckoning betwixt us
 1460 two! I bore thy pain that thou, happy and blessed, mightst possess my kingdom; and by my death I

¹ Lit. 'My face suffered.'

dearly bought long life for thee, that thenceforth thou mightst dwell in light, radiant and free from sin. My body, which had harmed no man, lay 1465 buried in the earth, hidden beneath in the tomb, that thou mightst dwell in splendor in the skies above, mighty amid the angels.

'Why didst thou forsake that glorious life which out of love I graciously bought for thee with my 1470 body, as a help to the wretched? Thou wast so witless that thou didst not render thanks unto the Lord for thy redemption. Naught demand I now for that bitter death which I suffered for thee; but 1475 do thou give unto me thy life, for which, in martyrdom, I once gave up mine own as ransom; I claim that life which thou to thine own disgrace hast sinfully destroyed by thy transgressions. Why didst thou, through evil lusts and foul sin, wilfully defile that tabernacle which I consecrated in thee as my 1480 sweet¹ home of joy? Yea, working iniquity, thou didst shamefully pollute the body which I redeemed for myself from the power of fiends, and then for- 1485 bade it sin. Why hast thou crucified me on the cross of thy hands more painfully than when I hung of old? O, this one, methinks, is more grievous! Now is the cross of thy sins, on which I am bound 1490

¹ Or, 'own.'

unwillingly, more bitter to me than was that other which I ascended of my own free will, what time thy misery grieved my heart most sorely, when I drew thee forth from hell — if only thou hadst been willing to hold to it henceforth !

¹⁴⁹⁵ 'I in this world was poor, that thou mightst be rich in heaven ; I was wretched in thy homeland, that thou in mine mightst be blessed. Yet for all this thou wast in no wise grateful in soul unto thy Savior.

'I commanded you that ye should cherish well
¹⁵⁰⁰ my brethren in this earthly kingdom, and help the needy with those possessions which I gave to you on earth. Ill have ye performed it ; ye have forbidden the poor to enter beneath your roof, and with hard
¹⁵⁰⁵ hearts have denied them everything — raiment to the naked, food to the hungry. Though, weary and feeble, distressed for drink, void of all sustenance and parched with thirst, they prayed for water in my name, ye did insolently deny them. Ye sought not
¹⁵¹⁰ out the sorrowful, nor spake to them a kindly word of comfort, that they might pluck up a more buoyant spirit within their breasts. All this ye did in scorn of me, the King of heaven. Wherefore ye shall endure sore punishment for ever, suffering torment with demons.'

Then over them all, over the doomed folk, the ¹⁵¹⁵ Lord of victories shall Himself send forth a dread decree, full of tribulation — He shall say to the host of sinful souls :

'Depart¹ now, accursed, by your own wills dispossessed of the angels' joy, into everlasting fire, ¹⁵²⁰ hot and fierce, which was prepared for Satan and his followers, for the devil and his black crew ; into that shall ye fall headlong.' Nor can they, bereft of resource, disregard the command of heaven's ¹⁵²⁵ King ; those who erstwhile strove against God shall straightway fall into that horrid abyss. Then shall the Lord of sovereign sway be stern and mighty, terrible and full of wrath. No foe upon this earth can then abide His presence.

With His right hand shall He swing the victor- ¹⁵³⁰ sword so that the devils shall fall down into the deep pit, the sinful band into the dusky flame, the fated spirits beneath earth's surface, the corrupt and damned crew to perdition in the abode of fiends, the house of torment, the death-hall of the ¹⁵³⁵ devil. Thereafter they shall in no wise come to the remembrance of the Lord ; they shall not escape from sin, but, guilty of crimes, wrapped in flame, they shall there suffer death. The punishment for

¹ With evident reference to Matt. 25. 41.

¹⁵⁴⁰ transgression shall stand revealed before them ; it is torment everlasting. Never can the burning abyss in that eternal night purge away the sin of the dwellers in hell, the stain of their souls ; but the deep, bottomless pit shall feed the disconsolate, and
¹⁵⁴⁵ hold the spirits in darkness ; it shall burn them with its ancient flame and with its terrible frost ; it shall afflict the multitudes with hateful serpents, with countless torments, with jaws deadly and terrible.

Of this may we be certain, with one voice may we
¹⁵⁵⁰ speak and truly declare, that he hath lost his soul's keeper, the wisdom of life, who heedeth not now whether his spirit is to be sad or joyous in that place where after death it shall abide for ever. He
¹⁵⁵⁵ feareth not, rash man, to commit sin, nor hath he aught of regret within his soul lest because of his misdeeds the Holy Spirit should depart from him in this fleeting time.

Then the sinner, black and guilty of death, cursed
¹⁵⁶⁰ for his crimes, shall stand trembling before the Lord at the judgment ; the transgressor, unworthy of eternal life, shall be filled with fire, and overwhelmed with terror in the presence of God ; ghastly and hideous, he shall have the hue of 'the damned, the
¹⁵⁶⁵ sign of a life of guilt. Then shall the sons of iniquity pour out their tears and bewail their sins,

when the time is past ; but too late shall they seek help for their souls, for¹ the Lord of hosts will not heed how the doers of evil sorely bewail their ancient treasures at that all-revealing time. That ¹⁵⁷⁰ sorrowful season will not be granted to the peoples, in order that he who obtaineth not his life's redemption while dwelling here may there find salvation. There no grief shall be shown to the good, nor weal ¹⁵⁷⁵ to the wicked ; but each one shall bring before [God] his own work.

Therefore he who desireth to have life² with the Creator should bestir himself while body and spirit are joined together. Let him zealously foster the ¹⁵⁸⁰ beauty of his soul according to God's will, and be careful in word and deed, in thought and conduct, while this world, speeding with its shadows, may still shine for him ; so that he lose not in this ¹⁵⁸⁵ fleeting time the blessedness of his joy and the fulness of his days, the beauty of his work and the reward of glory, which the righteous King of heaven shall give at that holy tide as a meed of victory to those who in spirit obey Him with gladness. ¹⁵⁹⁰

Then shall heaven and hell be fulfilled with the sons of men, with the souls of mortals. The deeps shall swallow God's adversaries ; tossing flame shall

¹ Lit. 'when.'

² Reading *līc* with Grein.

1595 harass wicked men, those arch-malefactors, and shall
 not let them depart thence in joy to a place of
 safety; but the fire shall hold the multitude fast,
 and vex the sons of iniquity. Foolhardy methink-
 eth it that beings endowed with souls should take
 1600 no heed, when they commit¹ sin, what the Lord
 hath prescribed as penalty for them, the people of
 his foes. When life and death shall devour souls,
 the house of torment shall stand open and revealed
 1605 before the perjurers, and sinful men shall fill it with
 their black souls. Then as a punishment for iniquity
 the guilty host shall be cut off, the base from the
 holy, unto terrible destruction. There thieves and
 1610 robbers, the lying and adulterous, need not hope for
 life, and the forsworn shall see retribution for sin,
 severe and awful. Then shall hell receive the host
 of the faithless, and the Lord shall give them over
 to the fiends unto perdition; the damned shall
 1615 suffer mortal agony most grievous. Wretched shall
 he be who chooseth to deserve by his transgressions
 that at the judgment day he shall be separated as a
 guilty man from his Savior unto death below, among
 1620 the hosts of hell, in the hot fire, beneath barriers of
 flame; there shall they stretch forth their limbs to
 be bound, and burned, and scourged, as a punishment

¹ Reading *fremmað* with Grein.

for sin. Then the Holy Ghost, through the power
 of God, shall at the King's command lock up hell,
 chiefest of all the houses of torment, filled with fire 1625
 and the host of fiends. That is the greatest of
 agonies for both devils and men. It is a joyless
 abode. There none can ever escape from the cold
 fetters. They broke the King's command, the sub-
 lime precept of the Scriptures; wherefore those 1630
 who here scorned the glory¹ of the heavenly realm
 must dwell in eternal night, and, guilty of sin,
 thenceforth endure their everlasting pain.

But the elect shall bring before Christ bright
 treasures; their glory shall live at the judgment 1635
 day; they shall possess the joy of a tranquil life with
 God, such as is granted unto every saint in the king-
 dom of heaven. That is the home which shall have
 no end, and there for evermore the sinless shall 1640
 possess their joy, and, clothed with light, enfolded
 in peace, shielded from sorrows, honored by joys,
 endeared to the Savior, shall praise the Lord, the
 beloved Protector of life; radiant with grace they
 shall enjoy in bliss the fellowship of angels, and 1645
 worship the Guardian of men for ever and ever.
 The Father of all shall have and hold dominion over
 the hosts of the sanctified.

¹ Or, perhaps, 'Lord.'