The Heliand

Translated from the Old Saxon

Translated by Mariana Scott

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FOREWORD

Every translation is perforce an interpretation, influenced not only by the personality as well as the training of the translator, but by the age of which he is a product. The best a conscientious translator can do, unless his translation is to become a mere soulless, colorless prose retelling of the original, is to try to become attuned to the mind and the times of the author with whom he is working and then to attempt to reproduce a semblance at least of the melody he hears. He is aware that he must make certain compromises: neither a literal translation nor one which concentrates on the externals of the metrics will reproduce the ideas and emotions which he knows are present. He is constantly forced to adapt and to shape. Yet with the adapting and shaping, too, there is inevitably a loss.

It is with these things in mind that I began my work on that anonymous 9th century Old Saxon masterpiece, the Heliand. After discarding an attempt to confine my vocabulary as much as possible to Anglo-Saxon roots, I settled on a somewhat archaic style as most appropriate for reproducing not only the biblical but somewhat primitive, naive atmosphere of the original. Christ, for example, is frequently called the "Bairn of God." Words like "weeds" for "clothing," "quick" for "alive" have been used - often, however, with the more usual word in the repetition. The various pronominal forms of "thee," "thou," and "ye" have been regularly employed. Since they are so essential to the Old Saxon style, the kennings have been retained wherever possible. So have the repetitions. The name, "Heliand," one of the kennings for Christ and therefore source of the title, has caused some difficulty. "Savior" has become for us a rather colorless word, having few of the connotations of the Old Saxon "Heliand." I have therefore used the translation, "Healer," since so often the emphasis is on His healing both of men's bodies and also their souls.

It was important for me to remember that the Heliand was originally intended for recitation. This accounts for the very great emphasis on rhythm. While the exact form of the old alliterative verse, though common to both early English and German poetry, proved too confining, a freer adaptation was possible. Let us remember that much of the effect of modern free verse depends on the interplay of sounds: assonance and alliteration. Keeping in mind the purpose of the original, I read my translation aloud as I worked, repeating lines several times, varying and checking rhythms, trying to imitate the surge of the meter and yet avoid monotony. The end result was a line of variable feet, usually a rather free alternation of anapests and iambics with a few scattered tribrachs and spondees, divided by the traditional caesura. I aimed for an alliteration of at least one accented syllable in the first half line with one accented syllable in the second half. If more sounded right, I was delighted. If none worked, I tried to make the rhythm carry the line along to the next cadence. Not all of it, I painedly admit, turned out to be poetry — but then not all of the Old Saxon is!

In the course of my work, I also tried to make a study of the sounds which were dominant in the Old Saxon. By far the most common was the alliteration of "w," followed by "l," "m" and, for certain effects, "s," "b" and the plosives. Since the heavy "w" sound carried the weight of the meter, it was important for me to reproduce it as often as possible. I had good precedent: the Old Saxon author often padded his lines for the same reason with some form of willeon or with such formulas as *mit wordun*, or *wordo eftha werco*. Using my precedent, I therefore translated such words as werod or wer as "world folk" and world man, sometimes even - if sense permitted - as "war-folk" or "warrior," etc. Waldand, as an epithet of God or Christ, became "the Wielder." Search for alliteration sometimes even led the Old Saxon poet astray. A very good example of that would be that graf an theson griote --- "grave on the sand," after the grave had been described as hewn in the rock. In such a case I considered a translation, "grave in the grotto," not too far from the point. There are many other such cases, though in general I tried to keep as close to the original as possible, both in meaning and in style.

Lastly, I wish to thank all those who have read, criticized, and

corrected my translation in the six years of my labor. Most especially however, my gratitude is directed to Dr. Philip M. Palmer, now of the University of California at Berkeley, who not only introduced me to the fascination of the *Heliand* many, many years ago, but undertook the onerous task of checking the many passages about which I still had some doubt.

MARIANA SCOTT

HELIAND

I

Many there were tensing their minds To say what was whispered: that Might-Wielding Christ Had here among men done miracles many With His words and His works. Wise men aplenty, People of earth — all would praise the preachings of Christ, and write with their hands God's holy Word, Bright in a book how best God's bidding They might carry out, the kith of mankind. they had might from the There were four from the many: Maker, Help, too, from Heaven and from the Holy Ghost, Strength from the Savior: so were they chosen for this. Singly they were to inscribe the Gospel there in a book, so many commandments of God, Committing to writing Holy, heavenly Word: nor dared any here, Any child of man, emulate them, these four, Picked for the task by the power of God: Matthew and Mark, as these men were called, Luke, also John they were beloved of God. Worthy were they for the work. The Wide-Wielder Had filled the hearts of the heroes with the Holy Ghost, Perfectly all with pious opinion, And wise words many and still more of wit, That they should begin the goodly Gospel With their holy voices, raise it on high ---

The Word in this world which has nowhere a like: That it praise Him ever, the Prince All-powerful, the loathsome thing, The Lord who layeth low Who doth stamp out all sin and the hate of Satan, Withstandeth the strife. For He is strong of mind, Mild, too, and good — He who is Master of these, Aethling and Maker, Almighty Lord. So were those four to inscribe with their fingers, Set down and sing and say forth boldly That of Christ's might and His strength much had they heard And had seen indeed, which He Himself had here spoken; Proclaimed and accomplished miracles countless, As He Himself had promised — He, Wielder of Power, Wide Ruling Lord when He first shaped world, Surrounding it all with a single Word, Heaven and earth and all that they held, Full-worked or still waxing: with God's Word All was encompassed and set forth accordingly Which world-men should rule over widest lands And when each age of this earth should come to its end. There was still one before them for five had slipped by and now the sixth was to For the kinsmen of earth ---come, Blessed by God's strength and the birth of Christ, Best of All Healers, and the Holy Ghost, Come to this mid-world to help the many, The world-children all 'gainst the wiles of the Fiend And his secret snares. So to the Roman folk Had Lord God granted the greatest of realms, of the crowds of the host, Had strengthened the heart So that they laid low much land-folk all over. Their helm-wearers had rule from the city of Rome, Their leaders had power in every land o'er the people there. Herod was chosen Over the heathens all.

King of Jerusalem over the Jew-folk. Caesar in Rome's city, the mighty ruler, Had set him there 'mid his thanes. Verily, though, He was not kin to the clanships of Israel, not come From their best-born; but his bounty he had Through the grace of Caesar straight from the Romeburg, famed for their fierce-So that then the fighting men, ness, The children of Israel, friends changeless in strength, Were subject to him, since he held sway — Herod — over kinships and councillors There lived there then Of Israel's landsmen. of reasonable mind: An aged man, a wise man of the clan of Levi, He was come from the people of a very fair family: The famed son of Jacob Zachery he was hight, was so holy a man, For he gladly did give service unto God, Worked to His will. So did his wife — She was already a very old crone, and no offspring Had been granted to them in their youth. They lived without fault, warding God's love, Were humbly submissive to the King of Heaven, Praising our Prince; nor practiced they evil Among mankind; nor did any meanness, Neither fault nor sin. Still were they sorrowed of soul, be granted an heir: Since not ever could they Bereft they of bairns. The bidding of God He did in Jerusalem. As oft as his duty And the rightness of time did remind him thereof, So oft did he hie himself hence to the holy place, To the High One's temple, to the Heaven-King's house, To serve Him all selfless and make sacrifice, Yearning to work with a God-wise mind.

The time was then come as they did tell it, Wise men with words that Zachery should stand watch There in God's temple. Many were gathered In Jerusalem there of the folk of the Jews, Hordes in the holy place. Most humbly they begged for His grace, Might-Wielding God The Lord of All Heaven to release them from evil. The folk stood around by the holy house, and the high-born man The others all, Entered the temple. The folk stayed outside of the sanctuary, The host of the Hebrew, till the holy man Had worked and had done the All-Wielder's will. As he took the incense, the sage in the temple, Round the altar the censer, to serve his Liege — Piously labored for his own dear Lord; And gladly he served in God's thralldom With a generous heart, as one should joyously Follow one's master. There a fright befell him, Terror there in the temple. Trembling he espied there in the sanctuary. God's angel inside said with words not to fear And he spoke to the sage, "For thy deeds," quoth he, Nor to have any dread. "Are of worth to the Wielder and thy words as well. Thy thralldom has earned thee His thanks. since thou hast believed in Him And in His strength alone. I am His angel, And Gabriel I am hight. Ever I stand before God, Stand in the Almighty's sight, except that He send me forth On some errand for Him. And now He hight me fare forth, Bade me to tell thee, that to thee a babe will be born In this world shall be given unto From thy aged wife. thee:

II

Wise he of word. Of wine he shall never partake, In life neither of wine nor of cider. So have the Weird Ones set down: The Measurers have marked it and the might of God. He bade that I tell thee: he shall be thane To the Heaven-King's Self; bade that ve hold him Quoth that he would find And faithfully foster him. up in God's kingdom. Honors so many Quoth that the good man should be called John. Commanded that ye so call it, that child, When it doth come. Quoth that Christ's thane It was to become in this wide, wide world, And quoth that they both Thane of His Own Son. Betake themselves here swiftly for tidings." Zachery then spoke and said to God's angel, Beginning to wonder about his deeds and his words: come to pass?" quoth he, "How can that so "So late in our lives? For us 'tis too late To win such rewards as thy words have spoken. For we two were equal of age: twenty winters Here in this world, when this woman did come unto me; And together we have shared for seventy winters Both board and bed, since I chose her my bride. In our youth we acquired no offspring, no heir, in our bedchamber ----Could beget no babe and age has robbed us of deed-Now that we are old, strength ----Dulled is our sight and slow are our loins, Our flesh falleth away, our skin is unfair, Our limbs unlithe, withered our once-live bodies, alas, 'tis altered — And our appearance: Mind both and might: so many a day Methinks 'twere a wonder We have wandered this world. If it ever so happed, as thou hast said with thy words."

was hurt in his mind Then the Heaven-King's herald That Zachery should wonder so at His works And would not believe that Holy Lord God, If He so willed it, could well make him young, As once he had been. So the angel chastised him, The sage, so that he could not say e'en a single word, "until thy son is come, Nor speak with his mouth Sprung from thy old wife, an earl and shining, Until a young bairn is born to the best of clans Here in this world. Then shalt thou again speak words. Nor shalt thou be Thy voice shall have strength.

silent

For any time longer." And straightway it was What the Almighty's angel had there uttered, Had told in the temple: that became true. Bereft of speech was the sage, Though a clear mind he bore in his breast. before the God-house, the folk -All day they bided And they wondered all, why this praiseworthy man, This sage should need so long to serve his Master, As never did other thanes in the Lord's thralldom Make such sacrifice with their hands there in the

sanctuary.

Lo: the ancient sage did leave the temple. The earls thronged nearer. There was longing in them, To hear what he would say most soothly to them, How wise he would guide them. But no word could he

speak

Nor say to his retainers; but with his right hand He instructed the folk to follow God's teachings. The folk understood that verily he had seen Some token from God, though he could not tell them Nor show them the truth. There in his turn He had worked full well our Wide-Wielder's service, As 'twas marked among men. Soon God's might was made known,

God's strength and His skill: for the crone so aged, The wife was with child. Offspring was granted unto them. Bairn in the bastion a so God-like babe. And the woman awaited the workings of Weird. The winter wore on, the year fell away. John came, A light to the earth-folk: fair was his flesh, Seemly his skin, and shimmering was he of cheek, And the hair of his head and his nails. Now the hoary, the closest of kinsmen, The wise gathered quickly, Wondering much at the work, how well it could happen That a couple so aged could still bear a child, A babe in the bastion, unless at God's bidding. They well understood that unless this was so, It could never have been this babe — quite so fair. Then an old man spoke, one of learned and reasonable mind. Who knew wise words. With zeal he did ask here below in this What the babe's name should be world: "Methinks in his way and his bearing he is greater than we. So I wean that verily God from Heaven hath sent him Himself." Then the child's mother did straightway speak. She who had borne him did say With the babe on her lap: "Last year God's bidding Did come unto us, commanded with words of great weight That he be called John, according to the teaching of God. Even, indeed, if I might, in my mind I cannot, I dare not so change it." Then spoke thereupon A most haughty man: from her homeland he was, "No aethling is named so," quoth he, "no kith of our clan.

Now then! Let us choose us another, a nicer name. Later indeed he will like it, if he is so able." Again spoke the elder, who there could say much: "I can never counsel any knight whatever To alter God's word. Let us ask the old man. The father, who sitteth wiselv in his wine-hall there. Though he cannot speak, say a single word, He may with his book-letters make us some writing, May spell us a name." Now he came nearer, Laid a book on his lap and bade him to write, To set down wisely with word-mark and sign What they were to name him, that holy babe. He took the book in his hand, thought in his heart Right gladly of God and writ the name John ----Wisely he worked it: and with words thereupon He did speak unto them, and shrewdly indeed. Once more he had power to speak, had wisdom and way. His pain was now past, his punishment dire. God the Mighty had so made it that in his mind He could not so soon forget Him, should He again send His herald.

ΙV

'Twas not long thereafter that all came to pass, As Almighty God had promised mankind: That He would send the Son of Himself, here to this world, The Heavenly Bairn, So that He might save the folk all from sin, There came His herald, The clansmen from hell-pangs. Gabriel, down to Galilee-land, where he knew a woman of The All-Wielder's angel, worth, A maiden right mild. She was called Mary. The girl was grown. To a man of good clan, To a thane hight Joseph her troth she had given, The daughter of David. A dear wife was she,

A graceful woman and good. There the angel of God In Nazareth-burg did greet her by name; Stood there before her and spoke to her for Lord God: "Hail to thee, Mary!" quoth he, "Loved by the Maker art thou! Ave, worthy art thou of the Wielder, for thou hast wisdom, Lady, gifted with grace. Glorified art thou ever Above all women. Be thou not weakly of mind, Nor fearful of heart. I come not to hurt Nor to bring thee a gull-thing. Thou shalt be our God's, Be our Master's mother here among men, bearing a manchild, His name shall be Healer Son of the Heaven-King. Here mid the earth-folk. His end cometh not, Nor hath whereover He ruleth ever an end — His realm — He, Finest of Folk-Leaders." The fairest of women, The maiden then answered unto God's angel, The loveliest among ladies. "Lo, how may that be?" quoth she, "That I shall bring forth a son? Never knew I man in my life." The All-Wielder's angel had ready his word "From the meadows of sky To answer the maid. The Holy Ghost shall descend through the strength of God. be granted thee here in this From Him will a Wee One world. The Wielder's strength will o'ershadow thee, The Heaven-King All High with His shade. Below was never a birth so fair, Never so wonderous down among men. For from God's might It cometh here to this world." The heart of the woman was again Utterly turned to God's will at these tidings.

"All ready stand I," quoth she, "for such service, If He will so have me. His handmaid am I. I trust in these things. Therefore let it then hap, As thou sayest with thy word, as is His will, My Lord's, my God's. My mind doubteth not, So I heard that the woman Nor my word nor my way." Received God's tidings all gladly indeed With a shimmering soul, with bright shining truth And faith clear and fair. The Holy Ghost became The Babe in her womb; and in her breast. In her heart itself she understood. She said to all whom she wished, through the All-Wielder's That she had conceived strength, Holy from Heaven. Then was Joseph's heart, His mind right worried. For this maiden, This pious woman, this high-born wife He had bought as his bride. He knew she had bairn within her. Yet he thought not a whit but that his wife Had kept herself carefully. He could not yet know The Wielder's blithe tidings. But to make her his bride his wife in his halls. He no longer wished, And thus he began to think in his mind How he might forsake her, yet cause her no hardship nor sorrow. He wanted it not noised nor known about that the children of men Among the many. He feared Would bereave her of life. For this was the land-way, The hallowed, old law of the Hebrew folk: Whensoever a woman was unrightly wed, She must pay with her life for this bedship. Never was lady so good that she could long live could live 'mid the world-lords. Mid the land-folk. Then in his mind the wise man, the good man, Joseph, Began to bethink himself of these things,

How he might slyly forsake the girl. 'Twas not long thereafter that the Almighty's angel the Heaven-King's herald, Hurried to him in a dream, and care for her well And bade him keep her And love her, too, in his mind. "At Mary," quoth he, "thy maid, she is a right good wife. Be not thou wrathful; Thou shalt hold her Scorn her not sternly. And ward her well in the world, as before, Fostering thy love-pledge and thy friendship as well. Nor let her be loathsome to thee, though she hath Bairn 'neath her limbs, A babe in her womb. Through God's bidding It cometh, Through the Holy Ghost from the Heaven-heath here. Jesus Christ is that Babe! God's own Bairn shall He be, The All-Wielder's Son. Thou shalt hold Him well With holiness, too. Nor let thy heart doubt, Nor thy mind be disturbed." Then the man's heart Was turned by these words, so that he again won love for this woman. God's might he now understood, For the maid, Marie. Great was his will, The Wielder's bidding. That he should hold her, in holiness keep her. He cared for her in his home. And she carried all cleanly The Holy Ghost all for God's glory, The Man of Goodness, until God's fate-word Reminded her mightily that unto the light of mankind She should bring Him, the Best of all Bairns.

v

There came from Rome-burg from the mighty man Over the earth-folk, from Octavian himself, Ban and bidding over his broad fealty; This was come from Caesar unto every king: To the home-sitting ones as far as the war-lords

Wielded their power o'er the people and land. 'Twas hight that all men habited outside their own boroughs Should seek now their homeland, all heroes their heritage, To bide their lord's heralds: each landsman should go of his kinsmen. Quickly to the clan To the burg of his birth. The ban was proclaimed Over this wide, wide world. And the world-folk did gather, The messengers fared In every bastion the men all. forth. Those come from Caesar, book-learned thanes. each name on a scroll, And neatly they wrote Both land and the man, so that no lord could avoid it, but all must pay tribute, No man his tax: The heroes each for his head. So to his homeland Came Joseph, the good man, as God the Almighty, The Wielder had willed it; with his family he came, Sought his shining castle, his lordly seat, The bastion at Bethlehem, where they both did dwell, Mary the good. Hero and holy maid, There stood in earlier days the shining throne of the earl of the Hebrews, Of the high-born king, Of David the good, as long as he governed And kept lofty seat. They were his kith, Were come from his clan, were of good kin all, Both through their birth. Then I heard that the bright tidings Admonished Mary, and the might of God: That on this site a Son should be hers, Born here in Bethlehem, the Mightiest of Bairns, Come was the Shining One, The Strongest of Kings. Mighty here to man's light, as for many a day and tokens aplenty Pictures of Him Had foretold in this world. So all had turned true, As the sages had spoken it in the long, long ago. Through His Own Self's strength, how most surely He would come

To this earth-realm here — with humility — He, Protector to many. Then His mother did take Him, And she swaddled Him well, the fairest of women, With garments and goodly gems. With her two gracious

hands

She lovingly laid Him, the Little Man, though He had God's strength, The Child in the crib. The Master of Men. There His mother sat by Him, she herself warded Him, The woman there waking: and her heart doubted not ---Held there the Holy Bairn; The mind of the maid. It became known to the many Over this wide, wide world. The warders did hear it: keeping guard outside, Grooms were they there, Were war-men on watch: with the horses they were, With the beasts in the field. And lo: before them they

saw

The darkness divide in the air. Down came God's light — Through the clouds came shining, surrounding the grooms Afar in the fields. And sorely they feared, Then God's mighty angel These men, in their minds. They saw coming afar. To them together he spoke, not dread any grief Hight that the grooms From the light. "For lo!" quoth he, "A glad thing long longed-for tidings I tell you and truly, Bespeaking great power: for in this selfsame night Christ, Blessed Bairn of our own God, is born in the bastion of David, He — our Master All Good. That is joy to mankind, The weal of all folk. So that ye may find The Mightiest of Babes in Bethlehem-burg, Take this as a token that I now tell unto you With soothy words: that He lieth swaddled,

A Child in a crib, though He be King

Over earth and heaven and the children of men, All-Wielder o'er World." Verily as he spoke this word, There was come with this single one of the angels

A multitude down from the meadows of Heaven —

A holy host, the fair folk of God. They spoke, lauded greatly the Lord of Mankind. They raised holy song, as they returned through the clouds To the meadows of Heaven. And the warders did hear How the great host of angels gave praise unto Almighty God With these words most reverently: "Honor be" quoth they, "To our Lord Himself in the highest, to the King of Heaven ---to all children of men, And on earth be peace To folk of good will who accept their God The herdsmen understood With hearts ever pure." That a mighty thing had admonished them: Blithe tidings there. They turned back to Bethlehem for their spirits longed That selfsame night, Christ Himself. Most greatly to see

vı

The angel of God had shown unto them the shining token, So that they themselves — they could wander forth To the Bairn of God. Straightway they found Him, the Babe,

The Lord of Mankind, the Master of Peoples. They praised God the Wielder, and with their words They made known far and wide in the shining castle What tokens holy they had seen indeed from the meadows of Heaven,

What signs there, fair in the field. The woman full well Kept these things in her heart, the holy virgin, The maid in her mind: whatever she heard the men there

saying.

Fittingly she reared Him,the fairest of women;With her love the motherdid raise the Master of Men,The Holy Heavenly Bairn.The heroes did speak

the earls of the kingdom, On the eighth day, Very wise men all, with the handmaid of God: That His name should be "Healer," as the Heaven King's herald. Gabriel had spoken, As God's holy angel, Had bade the woman with words of truth, When she first conceived Him, so fair in this world. God's angel she followed, and right gladly, too. For great was her will to hold Him in holiness. The year strode on, till the Peace-Child of God Had forty days and as many nights, too. There a deed needed doing; To Jerusalem they must take Him, to the Wielder's temple. That was the way then, the world-folk's custom, Which no Hebrew woman would dare to neglect, But that when she had brought forth her first-born son She needs must take him to the Lord God's temple. So they did travel, Mary and Joseph, the good folk twain, Both from Bethlehem. The Babe they had with them, The Holy Christ. They sought then God's house In Jerusalem; they accomplished the custom of Jew-folk, Made sacrifice unto the Wielder there in His sanctuary, To God in His temple. There they found them a good man, An old one, hard by the altar aethling-born he — So many summers and winters had he spent in the temple, Lived in the light, working God's love With a clean soul. Holy spirit he had And a joyous heart. Simon was he hight; Long had the Lord's power pointed out to him That he would not leave the light of this world, Until 'twould be granted him to see with his eyes Holy Christ Himself, the King of the Heaven. His heart was most blithe in his breast, when he saw the Bairn Coming into the temple. He gave thanks to the Wielder,

To Almighty God, that with his eyen he had seen It.

To Him he did go and gladly received Him, The old man with his arms: all well he did know and the Child of God, The sign and the symbol, "Now, Lord," quoth he, The Heaven-King Holy. since aged I be, "I gladly shall bid Thee, To let me, Thy most humble thane, take leave from here. To fare forth in Thy peace to where my forebears did dwell, Folk in this world, since my wish is fulfilled — The dearest of days: I did see my Liege, The Loveliest of Lords, as long, long ago It was promised unto me. To all peoples Thou art the Light great Light to all heathen lands, Who have not yet accepted the All-Wielder's power. Thy coming, o Master of mine, O my Lord, my dear Lord, to Israel's children, Is glory and honor To Thine own landfolk, Thy beloved people." there at the altar Secretly then the old man Spoke to the good woman, truly did tell her to some certain ruin, How her Son would become To some consolation, to the children of men who list to His teaching, A love-thing to those refusing to hearken But harm yet to them, To the gospel of Christ. "Thou shalt suffer," quoth he, "great care when the earth-children And hurt in thy heart, here Will kill Him with weapons. This thy great work will be: To suffer this sorrow." The Maid understood all, The wise man's words. There came, too, a woman Anna was she called, From inside the temple. Full well her Lord had she Was Phanuck's daughter. served was an excellent woman. With a grateful heart,

After her maidenhood, when a man's wife she became, An earl's on his estate, this excellent girl, With her husband she had held sway Seven years o'er his lands. I heard that she then suffered grief: That the great might of the Measurer Did divide them, Weird most woeful. A widow, She dwelt in the temple eighty and four Winters here in the world. Well she had served Him, her God And her Lord, day and night, never leaving the temple. She, too, came to this selfsame place. Straightway she saw ---to the heroes announced it, She knew God's Holy Bairn, To the folk at the altar, this spell all welcome. was the Savior's salvation, Said that so near The help of the Heaven King. "Now Holy Christ, The All-Wielder Himself, is come to the sanctuary To deliver the folk who have bided so long, So many a while in this mid-world here ----Poor people they so that in this present thing Mankind all may rejoice." Many were joyous, The world-folk there in the temple: they heard the glad tidings The woman had ended the sacrifice, Spoken by God. As her vow and the book in the shining bastion had told her. Her handwork most holy. They went on home Mary and Joseph, To Jerusalem, The Holy Family. They had the Heaven-King At their landhouse ever, the Son of the Lord, Protector of many. Thus to the people it was not made known — Not further known in the world; but so was His will, The Heaven-King's mind.

\mathbf{VII}

Although all holy men at the court of the king Recognized Christ, It was not yet known to the men who in their minds Were not rightly inclined; rather concealed from them With words and with works, until the wise ones. Those men from the East did come to the folk. Swift lords on the long way over the land. and sought God's Bairn; Bright beacon they followed And with pureness of soul they purposed to kneel And confess themselves as His thanes. So they brought to pass the Providence of God. When they found Herod enthroned on high, King, speaking slime-words, as mighty he sat Mad with his men, ever anxious for murder ----They addressed him gravely in kingly wise, and straightway he asked them In his house the sages; had brought them out here, What business These war-men from far, far away. "Whether ye carry wound gold To give to some man? To whom are ye going, Travelling on foot? What? I know not whence ye come from afar, Earls of another folk. I see ye art aethling born, Kin of good clan. Never before are come here Such envoys from another land, since over this folk of men I have wielded my power in this great, wide realm. Ye shall tell me truly before these retainers indeed to this land." Why ye art come They answered in turn, the men from the East, "We can," quoth they, Word-wise warriors. our business with truth, "Most easily tell thee Rightly reveal why we are come here on this road From the east of this earth. Aethlings were there, Good speaking men, who promised us good

And help aplenty from the King of Heaven Verily with their words. There was a wise man there, so long ago was that now — Hoary and sage — Our ancestor there in the East nor has any man since then Ever spoken so sharply. God's spell he could tell, For the Lord of the Land-people had lent him the gift To hearken up from the earth To the All-Wielder's word. His wisdom was great, The thoughts of that thane. Then when he was to depart, To forfeit his home and the crowd of the human folk. Forsaking the life of the landsmen ----and seek the other light: Then he called his followers all to come closer — His heirs were they there and to the earls what is since then come, He most soothly said Hath happed in this world: A Wise King would come here, Mighty and shining come to the mid-world, Best by His birth; quoth that God's Bairn He would be; He would wield power Quoth that in this world Eternally through all of time over heaven and earth: Said that on the self-same day, when He — so blessed — Was born to His mother on this mid-world here ----So quoth he — in the East would shine a single white star, such as never before we have In the heavens on high, had Between earth and heaven or anywhere else: Neither such Bairn nor such beacon bright; That three men from the people should go offer prayer; Hight them think well when they would see God's beacon Rise in the East, hight they should ready themselves straightway; Hight that we should follow where'er it might fare Westward over the world. Now well it hath happed, Come through God's power: a King is born, Bold He and strong. We have seen the beacon shining bright

Over Heaven's stars. So I know Holy God, The Mighty One, hath marked it Himself. Every morn we did see it. This brilliant star shining. So we followed the beacon here. The while through ways and through woods. That was our greatest wish to know where to seek Him. To see Him ourselves, The King in this kingdom. Tell us to which clan He is born." There arose in Herod's breast a great rage 'round his heart. Spirit and heart began to see the with sorrow within him, For he heard them say that he should now have a Head over him, and One of good clan, A mightier King Blessed 'mongst His folk. Then he ordered them all To gather together, what good men there were, In Jerusalem the wisest with their speech and their words. And in their breasts in book-craft Most verily learned. And he asked them with words, Most anxiously asked them — this evil-souled man, The king of the people where Christ would be born In this world-realm here, the Peace-Wielder Good. Then the folk replied, the people most truly; Quoth that they knew quite well that He Would be born in Bethlehem. "So 'tis writ in our books And wisely inscribed, as the truth-sayers, Those full wise sages, have spoken it further: That from Bethlehem the Herdsman of Bastions, The Loved Warder of Land should come to the light; The Counselor of Clans should come to His rule O'er the hordes of the land-folk; and His grace will hover Mild o'er this mid-world for the peoples many."

There I heard that as soon as the evil-souled king to the travellers, the earls Told the truth-sayers' word from abroad he questioned them fully, Those faring from far — When first on the east-path they had then seen it — The king-star acoming, the token all clear, Bright and high in the sky. They wished to hide nothing from him And truly they told him. He hight them travel, Go forth on their way; hight that they fathom the news Of the New Child's coming; and the king himself, gave order most sternly The master of Jews, To the wise men three that when they fared from the West, That they should give him account where he could seek that King In His hall and His home. Quoth that he with his thanes Wished to reverence the Bairn. But he thought to become Yet All-Wielding God His slaver by the weapon's edge. Was minded elsewise. He could accomplish, Could finish far more in this light: for that shines still long — The prophesied power of God! There appeared the symbol Clear 'neath the clouds. Those men, wise and clever, made ready To travel. They fared forth now from there, Bold on their mission. They would seek God's Bairn, They themselves and alone. No thralls had they with them. But they were just three: well versed in such things, Were indeed clever men, who came carrying their gifts. shining forth 'neath the Then they saw it so wisely clouds. where fared the white stars. High in the heavens, They recognized clearly the beacon of God through Christ it was worked

Here in the world. The world-men went following it, Full piously thence. Those who could further them, these way-weary men, Until they well saw, The clear beacon of God bright in the heavens The star shone light Suddenly stop. And white o'er the house where for His will Dwelt the Holy Bairn. And the wife did keep Him, The Maid most fittingly. The minds, the hearts of the thanes Became blithe in their breasts. Through the beacon's light they well understood That they had indeed found the Peace-Bairn of God, The Holy King of the Heaven. When they entered the house, Did go with their gifts, the great of the East, The way-weary men — quickly the warriors Did know Him rightly, All-Wielding Christ. In reverence now They fell on their knees before Him, the Child. In kingly wise They greeted the Good One and gave Him their gifts ----Gold and incense as tokens of God, And myrrh with it. The men stood ready, Fair before their Lord. And with their hands all fittingly They took Him and held Him. They betook themselves then, The wise men, into the house way-weary were they ----There the angel of God The sages into the guest hall. Did come to the sleepers, showed a dream in the night, as the Lord Himself, Revealed in a vision. The All-Wielder, did will it. They thought a man had commanded with words the aethlings should That they seek them another way: Leave and go to their own land and not seek the loathsome man, Herod, the mad-minded king. Then morning did come Shining down to the world. The wise men began

To tell each other their dreams. They did rightly fathom The All-Wielder's word. For great wisdom They bade the All-Wielder, They bore in their breasts. The Heaven-King on High, that hencefore they might still Work His grace and His will; quoth that their souls were turned unto Him, Then the men travelled hence, Their minds every morn. The earls from the East, as the angel of God Had told them with words. They took them another way, Following God's message. Nor would they give account of the birth of the Babe; The king of the Jews But as they did will it, they went on their way, The road-weary men, saying nothing.

IX

Soon after the Wielder's, God's angel did come and to Joseph did speak, In a dream did say to the sleeper at night — The Master's own herald — that the slime-mouthed king

the Child of God: Would seek Him indeed, He was after His life. "Now thou shalt lead Him live midst the land-folk Out into Egypt-land, There with God's Bairn: and with God's handmaid as well Thou shalt dwell with the folk, until unto thee cometh The Word of the Master, that thou mayest lead The Holy Bairn, lead the Lord back to this landscape." Then from his dream Joseph did waken, jump up In his great hall. God's orders He soon recognized; started out on his way, The thane with the Maid. Over the mighty mountains For he wished to lead forth He sought other folk. God's Bairn from His foes. Soon after the word Came to Herod the king, as he sat in his kingdom,

That the wise men were gone from the West Home to their Eastlands, had fared on another way. He knew that they had not wanted to tell him the news Here in his halls. Then his heart was troubled, His mind most mournful; quoth that the men had done this. The heroes, to scorn him. So he sat there sorrowed, Bitter rage in his breast. Quoth that a better idea. Another he had now thought out. "I know His age now, Know His winters' number; thus I can now bring it to pass That on this earth He shall never grow old, Here 'mid my hosts." So Herod sent harshly A command o'er his kingdom. The king of the people Hight his men go forth; hight them behead with their hand-strength bairns born in Bethlehem So many a babe, And bred these two years. The thanes of the king Did evil deed. So had to die there, Never since nor be-Though sinless, many a man-child. fore Such a pitiful killing of young kin was there, Such a wretched death! The women wept. Many mothers did see their sons killed and dead; Nor might they help them a whit, with their two hands hold them, their own dear bairns, With their arms embrace them, Their loved and little ones. But life it had to relinquish — The babe in front of its mother. Their misdeeds these rogues Saw not, saw not their sins. With the sword's edge They committed great crimes. They cut down many The mothers bewailed A child-young man. The death of their babes. Care was in Bethlehem, Loudest lamenting: if they had lashed Their hearts with a sword's edge, they could not have hurt

Them worse in this world. The women many, The brides there of Bethlehem: they saw before them their bairns, lying murdered: The child-young men The baneful murderers Bloody they lay on their laps. Killed the innocent crowd. From their crimes They refrained not a whit: it was their will To kill Christ Himself. But God, strong and clever, Saved Him from them and their hatred. In the night He had the earls lead Him to Egypt-land, The good men with Joseph to the green fields, To the richest earth, where that river floweth, The Nile-stream wide, north to the sea, The fairest of floods. There the Peace-Bairn of God Dwelled as He willed until Weird did remove Herod the King. Hate-filled, forsook he the children of men. The life of the earth-folk. O'er his lands Archilaus His heir was to rule. He was hight, hero of helm-wearers - he! He was to rule o'er the Jewish folk there in Jerusalem, Then the word did come Wield power o'er the people. There in Egypt to the aethling man: That he spoke to Joseph — God's angel himself, The Lord God's herald. Hight him again lead the Babe "Now he hath left the light," Back to the land. Once 'twas his will to kill Quoth he, "Herod the king. Him. Delivering Him from this life. Now in peace ye may lead The Child to His kinsmen. Now the king liveth not, That insolent earl." Joseph understood Straightway they readied God's token completely. themselves, The thane with the Maid. They speedily sought to go thence, Both with the Bairn. Bright fate they fulfilled, as He bade them with words. The will of the Wielder,

Mary and Joseph were again come to Galilee-land; The Holy Family of the King of Heaven Were with Him at Nazareth-burg. There he waxed 'mid the folk. Our saving Christ. He grew full of sense, full of knowledge, And the grace of God was with Him, and great the love Of His mother's kin: like no other man was He, This Youth in His goodness. When twelve years He did have, When such an age He'd attained, there the time was then come, When they in Jerusalem, the Jewish folk all, Should serve their Lord, their God Himself And should work His will. They were in the temple There in Jerusalem, the Jews all together, Mighty gathering of men. And Mary herself Was there in the crowd; and her Son she had with her, God's Own Bairn. When they now had made sacrifice goodly, The earls at the altar, as their law did order, Had fulfilled their folk-way the folk fared thence, The world-men as they willed it; while in the temple Stood God's Mighty Child, though His mother most truly Knew nothing of it. Now, she weened He had left, Had fared with her friends. She first found it out On the day that came after, the aethling's wife, The holy Maid — that He was not 'mid the men-folk. Then Mary's spirit was deeply in sorrow, Her heart most troubled, that she did not find the Holy Child Greatly she was grieved then, Among the crowd. The handmaid of God. She hied herself to Jerusalem once more To seek her Son. And she found Him sitting

Inside the temple, where sat the sages, who verily read The very wise men And learned God's law, how with their words They could work the praise of Him Who created this world. There sat in their midst God's Mighty Bairn, All-Wielding Christ although those who there warded The temple could not recognize Him even a whit. And anxious for knowledge, He asked them questions With wise words indeed. They wondered all How so childlike a Man could utter such speeches, He with His mouth. There His mother did find Him Sitting down 'mongst the sages; and she greeted her Son, The Wise 'mid the folk. And with her words she did speak: hast Thou given Thy mother "Why, dearest Man, that I needs must seek Thee ----Such sorrow indeed. I, worried wife, a woman so troubled, Among these burghers?" Then answered the Bairn With wise words, indeed: "What? Thou knowest right well," quoth He, "That I here belong; with happiness here Most rightly dwell where My Mighty Father Wieldeth His powers." The woman understood not, Nor the sages there in the temple, why He said such a word, Did speak with His mouth such a sentence. Mary kept all Concealed in her breast, what she heard her Bairn speak With His wise words. Then they went from there, Left Jerusalem both, Mary and Joseph. They had with them the Son of the Lord, The Best of all Bairns that was ever born, Child from a mother: they had for Him mighty love With pureness of heart, and He hearkened to them, God's Own Bairn to His blood-kin,

through His humble mind. To His parents twain In His childhood He never sought to reveal His greatness of strength, that so mighty a power He did have in this world; but He bided His time — In proper manner thirty years in the midst of the people, Before He would show a single token, that He Himself was Say to the people Here in this mid-world the Master of Mankind. To Himself He had kept it, God's Holy Bairn — The word and the wisdom and all His great wit, His very wise mind. From His words no man would know, From His speech, that such wit was His -That this Hero harbored such thoughts. But as was proper to Him, He awaited the shining token: His time was not come yet, When He o'er this mid-world should make it wide known, Should teach the folk to follow their belief And to work God's will. But many well knew, Folk in the land, that He was come to the light, Though they could not recognize Him all clearly as yet, Until He Himself would indeed say the word.

ХI

John had grown up out of his earliest youth, Had waxed in the wilderness. Nor was there any worldman But him alone who so served All-Wielding Christ. Faithful His thane, he forsook the multitude, The company of men. Then came to him mightily There in the wilderness word from Heaven: gave John command God's goodly voice To proclaim Christ's coming, proclaim His great strength Wide o'er this mid-world with words of truth;

Hight that he say that the true Kingdom of Heaven Was close for them, the children of mankind, In this landscape here was near for the land-folk, The most wonderous riches. His will was great To relate to them of such blessed raptures. He set out and went where the water, The Jordan did flow all joyfully there, Made known through the land to the landsmen all day, with fasting they might atone To the folk that make better their sins themselves. For many a wrong, "That ye may now become clean," quoth he. "The Heavenly Kingdom is close For the children of men. Ye yourselves in your minds In your spirits, too, rue all your sins, rue The hurts ye have done against folk, and hearken ye to my teachings, Into the water Turn to my words. I shall dip you all dearly, though from your deeds, Your sins, though, themselves I cannot absolve you ----That ye through my handwork are henceforth cleansed Of your loathsome deeds. But He is come to this light, Mighty to mankind, and standeth right in your midst; Though ye yourselves do not want to see Him. both in the name of the Lord He will baptize you And of the Holy Ghost. He is Lord High over all. He can free each man from his misdeeds, who would be blessed of soul Shear him from sin, Here in this world, if such be his will: To do what God's Own Dear Bairn doth command For these earth-folk here. As His herald now I am come to this world and shall make Him His way, Teaching the clansmen to keep their belief Through pureness of heart, that they go not to hell Nor face the fire. Full glad be his soul then, Joyous so many an hour — whosoever forsaketh sin And the devil's ambush: he acquireth the grace Of the Good One, the Heaven-King — he who hath a heart pure and loyal

Many an earl For Almighty God." Through these teachings, many folk truly, that this was All-Wielding Christ, World-men did ween Since he did so speak so much of soothness, Such words of truth. Then wide and far it was known over the promised land, To every man then there did come To all kin in their courtyards: Jewish folk seeking him out from Jerusalem, and asked if he were God's Grooms from the bastions, Bairn "About whom so long," quoth they, "the land-folk have spoken, that he should come to this The world-men said verily, world." and boldly did speak But John took the word To the heralds. "I am not," quoth he, "God's Bairn, The Verily Wielding Christ. But I am here to make way For Him, for my Lord." The heroes then asked. The earls who were hearing asked the herald then; "If thou are Those from the town asked him for tidings. not truly God's Bairn, Art thou then Elias, who in earlier days Certainly he is again Was amid the folk? Come on this mid-world. Say what manner of man Art thou? One of those who was once here, One of the soothsayers? What shall we say To the folk, tell them of truth? Never was come To this mid-world another man ever So famous of deed. Why dost thou dip These folk here, if the foretold Savior Thou art not?" Then John the Good wisely gave answer: "I am the foreboder, the envoy of Him, of my Master, I am to make ready the land, My beloved God. The world-folk right to His will. Through His word indeed My voice is made strong, though few understand it, The world-folk here in the wilderness. In no way am I like unto Him,

Like my Master and Lord. He is mighty of deed, that shall be soon known to Is so noble and strong the many, The war-men here in this world so that I am not worthy Of tying the lace of His shoe, though His own slave I be — and He so lofty a Lord; so much better Is He than I. No herald on earth Is His equal now nor ever shall be On the face of this world. Keep ye your will with Him, O ye folk, your belief, for long shall ye be Then joyous of heart; for the forces of hell Ye have forsaken and the evils of life; and seek ye then for yourselves God's light, home of all heavenly good, eternal kingdom, High meadows of Heaven. Nor let ye your hearts be in doubt."

XII

So the young man told, as were God's teachings, Revelations to mankind. Many did gather In Bethany there, the bairns of Israel ----Came there to John, the king's underlings all, and received belief. People to learn, He dipped them each day and reproached them their deeds, Their will to do wrong; and for them praised God's Word, The Word of his Lord: "The Heavenly Kingdom," quoth he, "Standeth ready and right for all men who are mindful of God And believe in the Healer with pureness of heart, And list to his teachings." He was not long there, That from Galilee came God's Own Bairn, Our Dear Lord's Son, seeking to be dipped. Our Good Wielder's Bairn was now so grown That among the land-folk He had lived Thirty winters here in this world. As was His will,

He came there, when John baptized them in Jordan's stream, Dipped the folk right dearly and all day long. Straightway when he saw his Master Sweet, His Lord, his heart grew blithe, for that was his wish. And with words he addressed Him: this goodly man, John, spoke to Christ: "Now Thou art come to my dipping, my Lord, O my God, Thou Best of Folk-Rulers. So I shall do for Thee, Since Thou art the strongest of kings." Christ Himself hight him, The Wielder all verily, that he utter such words no more. "Knowest thou that it is fitting," quoth He "that we now fulfill as is truly His will?" Forthwith all that is right, John stood and dipped much folk all the day, Many world-men in water; and also All-Wielding Christ, The High King of Heaven, with his hands he baptized In the best of baths; and he bent his knee To pray, strong as he was. And Christ arose, Peace-Bairn of God, Fair from the flood, The Lord of all Land-Folk. When He entered the land, and from the All-Wielder above Heavens door did ope, came down to the Christ. Came the Holy Ghost, He came in the likeness of a lovely bird, A strong, fair dove, and He sat Him down upon our sweet Lord's shoulder, Hovered over the Wielder's Bairn. Then word came from Heaven, Loud from the high, cloudless vault, and greeted the Healer Himself, Christ, the Best of All Kings. Quoth that He Himself had chosen Him from His kingdom. Quoth that He loved His Son Best of all born men. Quoth that He was His all-dearest Bairn. As God willed it for him, John verily saw this And heard it as well. Soon after this he did make known

To the children of men that they had a Mighty Lord, "the Heaven-King's Son, "This is," quoth he, The One All-Wielder. Of this I will be witness Here in the world: for God's word did tell it, The voice of my Lord, when He hight me dip them, The world-folk in water, when I truly did see The Holy Ghost mightily coming down from Heaven's meadows, in this mid-world here. Seeking a single Man 'That,' quoth that voice, 'that will be Christ, The Fair Son of the Lord. He shall dip the folk and heal many a man In the Holy Ghost From his dire misdeeds.' This power He doth have from Lord God: That He can remove from all mankind This is Christ Himself, Their blame and their sins. the Best of all Men, God's Own Bairn, Bulwark against the baleful fiend. Well — ye may be joyous of mind Here in this world. As it was your will, While still alive, to see your Land-Ward Himself. Released from its sin, many a soul, Many a ghost will go to his God, will be Freed from his misdeeds, which here toileth loyally with friends And firmly believeth in All-Wielding Lord, In Christ Himself. That will be of great help, Of goodly avail to all men, whosoever gladly so do."

XIII

Then I found this to be: that to all folk, To all peoples, John praised Christ's teachings, Those of his Lord, through which they could win The Kingdom of Heaven, the holiest of goods, Blessed life eternal. But He Himself, our Lord so good,

The Son of The Wielder went in the wilderness After the dipping. He was there in the desert, Our Lord of Earls, a long, long while, Nor had He more folk about Him, more men in His following. He Himself chose it to be even so. He wished To be tempted by the most terrible of demons, Strong Satan Himself, who drives folk to sin, Drives men to their misdeeds. He knew Satan's mind. The evil will of the varlet. who once in this world At its very beginning betrayed them, the earth-folk, Seduced them with sinfulness, since he caused those two, Partners in wedlock, Adam and Eve, to become untrue the children of men Through deceit — so that After their earth-trip must travel to hell, The ghosts of all folk. This God Almighty — All-Wielder, He — wanted to change; He wanted to give to the earth-folk all The high realm of Heaven. Therefore He sent here a Holy Herald. Sent His Son Himself. Then Satan was filled With hate in his heart. He begrudged Heaven's kingdom To the children of men. He aimed to cheat Him, the Mighty, Cheat the Son of the Lord with the selfsame tricks With which he had once so treacherously Gulled Adam himself, so that he grew hateful to God -He deceived Him with sin: the same he minded to do But He kept steadfast His heart To All-Healing Christ. the All-Wielder's Bairn 'Gainst the wicked wight — Kept hardened His heart. He wished Heaven's kingdom Secure for the land-folk. The Land-Warden lay lonely He did fast there, For forty nights. The Master of Mankind. As long as He partook not of meat, Then they did not dare, those devilish wights, The hate-minded fiends, fare nearer unto His face that that long He was truly as Or greet Him. He weened God,

Unmixed with something of mankind — the Mighty One Heaven's Holy Warder. As He let Himself hunger, So that He began to want meat because of His manliness. There came closer the Fiend after the forty days, The murky misdoer. He weened that surely He was simply a man. Then he went and spoke unto Him with these words. The spear-foe did greet Him: "If Thou art God's Son," quoth he, "Why hast Thou not, if Thou hast the power, Ordered these stones to be bread, and, Best of all Bairns, Hast not healed Thyself of Thy hunger?" Then spoke again Holy Christ: "The children of men," quoth He, "may not live alone By bread, the earth-folk all, but they shall be In this world for the teaching of God and shall do the works Which have been proclaimed aloud by the Holy Tongue, The gums, the voice of Lord God: that is a good man's life, For the kinfolk all, that they accomplish by the word of the Wielder." What they are bidden The noisome fiend came nearer then For another time and slyly tempted The Peace-Bairn of God suffered And baited his Master. The will of the Evil One and indeed gave him power That he might try himself against His great might. He let him lead Him — the scourge of the land-folk — And take Him on to Jerusalem there to the temple of God: High over all on the very highest of houses He did set Him up and spoke scorn-words to Him, The Evil One with such mockery. "If Thou art the Almighty's Son," Quoth he, "glide down to earth. Long hath it stood Written in books that He hath bidden — The Almighty Father bidden His angels That they be Thy warders on all of Thy ways,

Hold Thee under their hands. Why then? Thou mayest never Stub even Thy foot on any hard stone." Then spoke again Holy Christ, the Best of all Bairns: "So it is also most rightly written in books," quoth He, "That thou shalt not try Him, shalt not tempt Thy Master, Thy Liege Lord ever. That befits thee not in the least." For a third time then He let the scourge of the landfolk Take Him up high on a mountain. There the treacherous Fiend all of the land-folk. Let Him look over Over winsome goods and the worldly kingdoms And all such possessions as the earth surrounds For fairer use. And there spoke The Fiend once again to Him, Quoth that He would give unto Him all those so goodly things, These noble fiefdoms, "If Thou wilt kneel before me, Fall in front of my feet, confess me Thy lord, And pray at my lap: then will I let Thee enjoy All these possessions, which I have here placed before Thee." No longer would He listen to the loathsome word; but He drove him Holy Christ no longer would hear, forth, Away from His favor; swept Satan away, and then spoke: The Best of All Bairns bade that men all should pray and Him alone To Almighty God; Should they serve the many thanes, "There help will reach The heroes hoping for grace, Every man whosoever he be." Then the menace of men, Satan himself became saddened of mind: The devil went down to the dales of hell. There came much folk from the Almighty above down to Christ: God's angels did come to give unto Him Friendship and following and to serve Him faithfully, humbly, 36

As one should one's God, one's Liege, the King of Heaven Himself, for His grace.

XIV

For a long while then, God's Blessed Bairn dwelt in the wilderness, Till it seemed to Him better for the benefit of all to the folk. Thus He That He show His great strength forsook The shade of the forest, the spot in the wood, And again He did seek the company of earls, The illustrious thanes and the throngs of men, And He betook Himself to Jordan's shore. There John found Him, The Peace-Bairn of God. his Master all good, The Holy Heaven-King. And he said to the Hero, when he saw Him coming: John, His disciple, "That is the Lamb of God. who shall release the folk In this wide, wide world from their wicked sins, All men from their misdeeds: glorious Master, Christ then went forth Most Strong of All Kings!" To Galilee-land, God's Own Bairn Fared to His Friends, where fair He was born And most rightly reared; and related with words, Christ 'mongst His kinfolk, the Richest of Kings, How they themselves should atone for their sins; Hight them to rue their harmful works many, To let fall their false deeds: "Now 'tis fulfilled, As the old men have said, as the sages did speak, Promised help unto you from the Heavenly Kingdom. Now it is near through the Savior's strength. And ye shall rejoice therein, Each of you will gladly give service to God And will work His will." There arose joy 'mid the worldfolk, 'Mid the gathered crowd. Christ's teachings became sweet

To the followers all. He began to gather together Youths for disciples, young men and good, Word-wise warriors. He went to the shores of a water, There where the Jordan had spread to a sea On the border of Galilee-land. There He saw sitting Andrew and Peter, found the two by the flowing water. The brothers both down by the broad stream throwing their nets, Were very neatly There first the Peace Bairn of Fishing in the flood. God Himself did greet them on the shores of the sea. Hight that they follow Him, quoth that He would give them "As ye here catch fish, Much of God's kingdom. So shall ye both with the force of your hands fetch the children of men, So that they may enter the Kingdom of Heaven, People aplenty through your message and word." Much pleased of spirit were they, Both of the brothers. They perceived God's Bairn, Their beloved Lord. They left all things, Andrew and Peter, whatever they owned by the flood, Had won by the water. Truly the will was great in them To go along with the Bairn of God, To be in His retinue and to reap blessed reward. who would earn their Lord's favor So do all folk And would work His will. As they went along The shores of the water, they met a sage Sitting by the sea and his sons twain, Jacob and John, young men on the Jordan. Sons and father, they sat on the sands; Neatly they knotted and mended their nets With both their hands, the nets which the night before They had slit in the sea. Then He spoke unto them; God's Blessed Bairn bade them be on their way now with Him. Jacob and John, they both did go,

The child-young men. Christ's word was for them So worthy here in this world, that on the shores of the water alone by the flood, They forsook their father The ancient alone, and all that they owned, Their nets and their well nailed ships. They chose All-Nurturing Christ, Holy Savior and Lord. To earn His help So feel all thanes, Was the need they felt. All warriors here in this world. Then the All-Wielder's Son Went forth with the four. And He chose the fifth; Christ picked at a market place a king's young vassal, A wise-minded man: Matthew was he hight. A thane was he to an aethling-born. There he was to take with his hands tithe and toll loyal he was to his task. For his lord: But he left them all -Noble his looks and his bearing. and gifts so many, Gold and silver and became our Lord's man. Treasures most dear — The king's thane chose Christ for his Lord. A more generous Gift-Giver than ever his master Had been in this world. He received a worthier thing, Longer lasting gains. It became known to the landfolk. that the Bairn of God To each in his bastion, Was gathering disciples, and He Himself spoke So many a wise word and such words of truth, That shining wonders He did show them and tokens Did work in this world. Through His works It was visible, through His deeds as well, that He was the Master, The Heavenly Lord who had come to help The children of men in this mid-world here — The land-folk toward light.

xv

To the land He oft made this clear; For He worked there so many a wonderous token, As He healed with His hands the halt and the blind, Relieved many land-folk from loathsome ills. From such sickness as at that time Fiend Satan Had thrown on the children of men --the hardest of all. Long lasting illness. The land-folk came there Day after day, where our Dear Lord was Himself with His faithful, until many folk Were gathered together, a very great crowd Of land-folk, though they were not all come with a like belief, World-men all with one will: some sought the All-Wielder's Bairn and in want of food ----Poor men were they So that they might beg Him amid the multitude For meat and for drink, amid the crowd; for there was many who gladly did give A goodly thane Of his alms to the poor. And again there were some, Clans of the Jews, sly folk were they. They were come to this place, So that they might discover our Master's deeds And His words as well. Stealthy of mind were they, Wrathful of will. They wanted to make All-Wielding

Christ

Loathed by all land-folk. Thus would they not list To His teachings nor turn to His will. Some others

were sages,

Wise men indeed and worthy of God:

Among the people the pious. They were come for the preaching of Christ,

So that they might hear the Holy Word And learn and listen. Their belief they had firmly established —

and straightway they became They had pious hearts; His thanes. So that on the day of their death He would take them to the dearest of goods ----The Kingdom of Heaven. Christ gladly received So many of mankind and granted unto them His merciful rule for that so well He could do. For a long, long time gathered round glorious There was a great crowd Christ: So much of the folk was assembled. He saw them come from all lands. the world-men together, From all the wide ways, Fine folk and strong. His fame was spread far To many a man. Then the Mighty Christ Went up on a mountain, the Mightiest of Bairn; And He sat aside from the rest. There He chose for Himself Twelve specially picked, men true and loyal ----Good folk whom He wished with Him as His vassals, Disciples of Him, their Master, each day. He called them by name and bade them come nearer: First surely Andrew and Peter also, The brothers twain, and these two with them, Jacob and John — they were worthy of God. Mildly inclined was His mind unto them. They were one man's sons The Bairn of God chose them, Both through their birth. These fair ones, as followers; and much folk, too, Most famous men: Matthew and Thomas, The Judases twain and the other Jacob; He was a cousin of His they were come from two sisters. Come from the same clan, Christ and Jacob, very good kin. Now All-Healing Christ counted nine of His men, Loyal hearted thanes they. Then He hight the tenth also come

And join His disciples: Simon was he called. to fare up the mountain And He called Bartholomew, too, Away from the folk. And Philip was with them. True hearted men were they all. The twelve went together, The fighters all to the confab, there where the Councillor sat; made known unto them The Protector of Many How He planned to help mankind 'gainst the pangs of hell, 'Gainst the infernal flame ---help those who would follow as He sought to reveal it The fair, sweet message, There in His wisdom to the world-folk many.

XVI

Then they stepped nearer to All-Saving Christ, Such disciples, as He had chosen Himself, The Wielder amid His vassals there. And the wise men The heroes, stood all gladly about God's Son, The war-men most willingly; they awaited His word, Thought and were silent, longing to hear what the Lord of the Land-folk, The Wielder Himself, would make known with His words For love of the land-folk. There sat the Shepherd of Lands Across from his good men, God's Own Bairn. With His talk 'twas His will to teach them — the people — Wise words aplenty: how in the realms of this world They could best bring about bounteous praise of our Lord. He sat there, was silent our Holy Savior — And looked at them long. Our Lord was gracious of spirit, and as He unlocked His mouth. Mild was His mood: The All-Wielder's Son did show them with words

Many a marvelous thing; and to the men He said Such wise words — to them, whom He, All-Wielding Christ Had chosen here for this speech: those of the children of earth Who were worthiest of God, men of good clan. He spoke to them soothly; and said those were blessed, The men on the mid-earth, who in their minds, Their hearts, were poor for humility's sake. "For to them is given The Eternal Kingdom, the holiest of Heaven's meadows. Life without end." And He also told them, "They may That blessed were, too, the gentle and mild. inherit this glorious earth, Quoth that those, too, were The very same kingdom." blessed Who bemoan here their misdeeds. "Await joy they may, in their Master's kingdom. Consolation perfect Blessed be those who have done good, heroes who justly have judged: For their piety they will be plenteously filled In the kingdom of God: such good things will greet them. These world-men who have judged well and justly. Nor will they be cheated Blessed be also In secret, when they sit at the confab. such men Whose hearts are mild in their heroes' breasts. For them will the Holy Lord, Blessed those 'mid the folk The Mighty, be mild. Who have cleaned their hearts: They will see the Heaven-Wielder In His own kingdom." Quoth that they, too, were blessed Who live in peace 'mid the folk. "Have started no feud, no affair, With their doing. Sons of the Lord indeed they'll be called.

For He Himself will be gracious to them, Most gladly will they Long enjoy the Lord's kingdom." Quoth that they, too, were blessed, Those war-men who ever will right, "and through this willingly suffer The harm and hatred of richer men. To them is the Meadow Of God's Heaven then given, and the spirit's good life Forever, for all days, and the end never cometh Of the winsome possessions." So All-Wielding Christ Had told the earls 'round about Him of eight blessed states; Through these shall each one straightway find Heaven. if that be his wish: Or he shall be deprived of joy and possession For eternal times, as soon as he exits this world, Life's fate on this earth, and seeketh another light, Either a fair one or a foul even as he hath lived 'mid the folk, Worked with them here in the world. Thus He spoke with His words. the Richest of Kings, All-Wielding Christ, The Own Bairn of God did say to His disciples; "Ye shall also become blessed," quoth He, "because the people, The folk of the land will fight you, speak evil of you all, Hold you up to scorn and harm you muchly Here in this world; and working worse wrong, Condemn you with sinful speech and so much of hatred; Denying your teachings and doing loathsome deeds, Harm for your Lord's sake. But let ye your hearts still be happy, Your lives ever, too, since reward standeth ready for vou In the kingdom of God; and every good, also, Great and manifold: that is given unto you as a gift,

A treasure, since here first ye have toiled, have endured It is worse for those others: Pain in this world. Grimmer judgment awaits them who have goods here on earth, They waste here their pleasure, Wide worldly treasure. These men shall suffer Enjoy them enough. A harrowing judgment after their journey. They shall bemoan their misery, who are now so merry And living in lust, nor let go willingly which tempt their spirits, Their sinful thoughts, Their loathsome wrongs. For them shall come as reward will see sadly An evil most painful. These people their plight, Face troubled their end. All sore shall their spirits be, For too much in this world they followed their will, These men, as they were minded, indeed. Now for their misdeeds ye shall Reproach them, rise against them with words, as I now shall reveal unto you And most soothly say, O ye, My disciples, With words of truth: that of this world Ye shall henceforth be the salt of sinful mankind, Absolve them from bad deeds, so that to a better thing They may turn the land-folk: to forsaking the Fiend's work, The deeds of the devil; and to seeking their dear Lord's realm. ye shall turn the land-folk So with your lessons To My will. However, if any of you fade away, Turn aside from the teachings which are entrusted to you, Then ye are like unto salt which is scattered then it is of worth to none, Wide on the seashore; And the bairns of the land-folk will walk on it with their feet,

Men grind it in grit. All who are to proclaim it, God's Word, Will thus suffer: if he permiteth his spirit to doubt, If he is not bent to spur men to the blithe realm of Heaven, then the Wielder groweth But wavereth in his word grim, The Almighty is enraged, and the children of men, also. To the bairns of the earth he will become hated, To all the land-folk, if his lesson be not of worth."

XVII

and said God's spell. So spoke He wisely The Land-Warder taught them, His people with pureness of mind. 'round the Son of God, The heroes stood gladly World-men to His will. They longed for His words; They thought and were silent. They heard Him say it — The Lord of the Land-folk give God's law to the children of men: He promised them Heaven and thus spoke to the heroes: This, too, I may tell you, My disciples, most truly With soothy words: that ye henceforth shall be The light in this world to the bairns of the landsmen, Friend to all people and over much folk, Shining and winsome: nor may your great works Remain hidden, nor yet with what hearts ye proclaim them ---can remain ever concealed No more than a castle Which standeth on a mountain or steep on a cliff, A giant-made work. No more can your words In this mid-world, your deeds be hidden to men. Do as I teach you: Let your light shine forth large to the land-folk, To the bairns of men. that they may know your minds and your souls,

Your words and your will, and thus praise All-Wielding God. Their Father in Heaven. with pureness of heart; Here in this light praise Him who gave this lesson to you. leave it not hidden from the Let him who hath light land-folk, Nor cover it heavily; rather high in his great hall so that all within shall have sight He shall set it up, thereof, The heroes in the great hall. Even so may ye not hide The Holy Word from the folk here in this land. Keeping it from man's kind; but the commandment of God Ye shall spread abroad so that all the bairns Over this large landscape, the folk shall indeed understand. that which in former days And so do ye The wisest men did speak with their words, When they then, the earls, did follow the old law, And for this reason as well, as I now say unto you: That all men may serve God as the old law doth bid them. Never ween for one instant that I come to this world To lay low and destroy the old law Among the people, or to contradict the word of the prophets, gave clear commandments Who, as men of truth, In days of yore. Sooner shall both fall apart, Heaven and earth, which are held bound together, Before any word which verily the wise men Commanded the folk remaineth one whit unfulfilled I came not to World Here in this light. That I should fell it, the prophets' word, but to fulfill it rather — To enlarge it and make it anew for the aethling bairns, For the good of this folk. That was formerly written

In the old law: ye have oft heard it spoken By word-wise men: whosoever doth act thusly here in this world, That he berefts another of his old years, Whosoever cheats him of life: to him shall the children of men Deal out death; and now I shall tell you more deeply, Shall discuss it still further: whosoever shall foster hatred, One man 'gainst another, deep in his mind — Who beareth a grudge in his breast, though they be all brothers, bound together in kinship, God's blessed folk, Men into clans. And still a one becometh so grim of mood 'Gainst the other, that he would rob him of life, if he could right well do it, Then he is straightway doomed — deprived of his life. Is indeed so judged, as was the other Who through the might of his hands cut off the head Of another earl. Also in the law it is written With words of truth: and ye all know it well -That with all one's heart one should love one's neighbor, be kind to one's Most zealously love those closest, kinsmen, and mild in one's gift-giving; Good to all kith, Have love for his friends and hate for his foes. Withstand them with a strong, with a strife-eager heart. Ready 'gainst their evil and wrath. But I relate yet another law, A fuller one still for the folk: that ye have fondness now for your foe, In your heart love him well as ye would your kin ---And in God's name ye so do it. Do ye much good unto him, 48

Show him pureness of spirit and loyalty sweet; In return for his loathsomeness do ye love him. That is long lasting counsel whose mind hath been turned For every man In hate 'gainst his foe. Ye shall all gain from this, For ye shall be called the Heaven King's sons, His bairns all blithe. Nor may ye find better counsel Anywhere here in this world. I verily tell unto you, Say to each bairn, that ye may not bring Your goods with an angry heart into God's temple, Into the Wielder's house: it be not worthy For Him to accept, as long as ye harbor anger, Foster fiendishness, one to another, far deep in your hearts. First shalt thou be reconciled with him who opposeth thee, Shalt be tranquil of spirit; then mayest thou offer thy treasures, worthy they be of our good On God's altar give them — Lord, Of the Heaven King worthy. For His kindness shall ye serve Him more, For His favor follow God's will more, than most of the other Jews do, If ye would someday own the Eternal Kingdom, See life without end. I shall still say unto you, As the old law once bade you: An earl should never covet another man's wife, Seduce her with sin. This I also say unto you now, Soothy words: that a man's eye may quickly lead him astray Into murky misdeeds, if he letteth his mind be driven, So that he beginneth to yearn for her who may never be his. done sin unto himself, Then he hath straightway Hath loaded hell-pangs upon his heart. If then a man's eye or again his right hand

Or some limb lead him along the loathsome way, Then 'twould indeed be better for yon earl, Better for that bairn of men, that from his body he loose it, Cast it from him afar, coming to Heaven without it — Than that he flee with all to Inferno,

That with a whole body he go to the grounds of hell. Human frailty so willeth, that no man shall follow his

friend,

Though a dear friend he be, if he driveth him on to sin,

Draweth him down to guilt. 'Tis no matter then, how close they do stand in the

clan,

How mighty their kinship, if he maketh him murder, Draweth him down to misdeeds. Better he do this: That he cast his friend far away from him And lose all his kinsmen and have no love for a one, That he may alone mount on high To the kingdom of Heaven, than in the pangs of hell Both would suffer broad punishments, too, And horrible pain.

XVIII

Here in the law it also

Standeth written with soothy words, so that ye may all understand it: That all people should ever avoid perjury, Nor themselves swear falsely, since that is great sin, Leading much folk astray along loathsome ways. Then I shall also say unto you, that no one should swear. No child of man swear any such oath, (since that is the Lord's Neither by Heaven on high throne) Nor by the earth here below (since that is All-Wielder's

Footstool so fair), nor should any child of the folk Swear by his own head, since he may turn not a single hair. but as Holy God Either black or white, Therefore the many, Hath mightily marked it. The earls should avoid every oath-word. He who oft Sweareth becometh steadily worse, since no longer can he ward for himself. Therefore I say unto you with soothy words That ye shall never swear any stronger oaths, except as with My words Mightier ones with men I most verily here do command you: If a man hath trouble with another, let him speak the truth; confess that it is true; Say 'yea,' if it be so, Say 'nay,' if it be not, and let that be enough. If a man sayeth more, much beyond that, It becometh a bad thing for the bairns of men. So that earls, all disloyal, will not believe Then I also verily tell unto you: One another's word. As by the old law you were so bidden: Whosoever taketh the eye of another man, Looseneth it from his body, or some limb indeed ---to the person for the loss That he shall pay With a like limb of his own. Now I give you this lesson: Ye shall not wreak vengeance for deeds done wrong. Instead shall ye suffer most humbly all things yourselves, that people will do you here The pain and the wrong in this world. Let each earl do unto another whatsoever is good and is useful, that the children of men If he so willeth, Do good unto him; that God will be mild unto him, Mild unto each man who doeth the Master's will. Respect ye the poor and divide ye your riches, Among those who are needy. Nor be ye troubled, if ye receive no thanks,

No reward in this passing world. But well may ye hope That your Dear Master, your Mighty Liege, Will reward you with gifts, grant you good pay For what ye have done for your love of Him. to good men all If thou wouldest give Fair shining coins, and thinkest thereby how willest thou then have return To reap a reward, from God, For these are brief-Or largess here in the light? lasting goods. that thou doest for others, So it is for all For love of the land-folk if thou thinkest to receive the like In word and in work: why should the Wielder know thanks, Since thou givest to them and gettest from them in return? to the poor men, who give unto Give thou thy riches thee and strive then for the No rewards in this world: Wielder's realm. when thou givest thy alms But act thou not loudly, but be thou meek all of mind, To the needy of men; Glad for God's thanks; for a goodly reward wilt thou take, Find a fair return, where far longer Thou shalt use it. That which thou givest with a pious heart, is esteemed by our Lord. And sharest in secret, Nor boast of thy giving let no great lord do so either — Lest through idle boasts the gift is made nought Before the eyes of the Lord And forlornly lost. Shalt thou receive thy reward for thy work right and good. Also shall I bid thee, when thou bendest thy knee from the Lord, begging In prayer, begging help

That He grant thee release from the loathsome thing, From sin and from shame, which ye yourselves Have wrongfully wrought ask not before others Nor make it known to the many, lest men extol you and the prayer to your Lord And give praise unto you; You lose most forlornly for idle fame. from your Lord on high, But if ye do ask help Praying most humbly to Him that must ye surely here do befree you from sin, That your Battle-Lord Do ye so in the darkness: yet your Lord doth know, since nothing is hidden to Him, He, Holy in Heaven, Neither of words nor of works. Thus will He make it, As ye have bidden of Him if unto Him ye have bent Your knee, your hearts being pure." The heroes all rose, The men stood gladly around God's Son, The world-men to their will. They longed for such words, Pondered and kept their peace. The people had need all that the Holy Bairn To think over again Had told unto them on this first time. Had all clearly proclaimed. Then spoke one of the twelve; to ask of God's Bairn: Of the goodly men one began

XIX

"Master good," quoth he, "we are in need of Thy grace To work Thy will and Thy word as well, Best of All Bairns, and we bid Thee teach us To pray, Thy disciples, as doeth John, The dear Baptist, on every day, Teaching his world-folk with words how to greet the Wielder, To speak to their God. For Thy disciples do Thou the same.

Reveal Thou the runes." Then the Ruler had ready His answer for them, the Son of the Lord, For them His good word. "If ye would greet God," quoth He, "With your words greet the Wielder, The King Full of Strength, speak ye then as I teach you: Father of us, who art all Thy folk-bairns, Thou who art on high in the kingdom of Heaven, Hallowed Thy name here in every world, Thy kingdom come in strength and craft, Thy will be done over all the world; As here on earth; so there above On high in the kingdom of Heaven. Give us each day, good Lord, Thy gracious guidance, Thy holy help, and absolve us, O Warder of Heaven, From the manifold mischief we do against mankind, Let not loathsome wights lead us astray, As is their will and as we are worthy: all our evil deeds. But help us against So shall ye bid Him, when ye bend for prayer, Ye men, with your words, that the Mighty Wielder Release you from the loathsomeness that is in all land-folk, the land-folk all If ye then would forgive Of their sins and their selfishness, such wrongs as they Have done against you — The Great Wielding God will absolve you, The Father forgive you your frequent faults And your heavy sins. But if ye harden your hearts, Are not willed to absolve other earls, other men from their wrong, Then Almighty God will not forgive you your grim sins, But ye shall receive from Him just reward, Payment most pain-filled throughout plenteous time, For all the unrightness ye have done against others

In the light of this world, without that ye have willed with the children of To make peace in your matters men Before ye shall wander, O ye men, out of this world. Today I shall also tell you how ye shall bring My teachings to pass: For if ye would indeed keep a fast To make little your misdeeds, make it not known To the many, but hide it from all; yet Almighty God knoweth well, if other world-bairns, The Wielder, your will; Other land-folk fail to laud you, yet lovely reward He will give, in Heaven's kingdom, Your Holy Father, Since ye have served Him, ye men, so humbly here, So piously all 'mid the people. Unright possessions, O my earls, covet them not; but care for rewards above With All-Wielding God. That is a weightier thing Than if a man liveth richly here on this earth, Winning the goods of this world. If ye would hear then My word, Gather ye not great treasures, neither silver nor gold In this mid-world here, nor hoards of riches: For it reddens with rust here, and robbers will steal it. Worms gnaw it away; the garments wear threadbare, The gold-wealth is gone. Do ye good works And gather in Heaven a hoard far greater, Your foe cannot rob you, Riches fairer by far. Can take nothing from you. For treasures stand ready as much as ye there For you up yonder, Have gathered in Heaven riches and goods, Heroes, ye, through your hand-gifts. And keep ye steadfast your hearts For this; for there lie the thoughts of men, Their minds and their hearts; there lieth the hoard, The goods all gathered. Nor is any man so greatly blessed,

That both he may do in this broad, wide world: That on this earth he may live richly indeed In all of his world-lusts, yet thankfully serve All-Wielding God At the selfsame time: but he shall ever or the other, Forsake wholly one Either the lusts of the body or life everlasting. Therefore grieve ye not for your garments, but hold ve fast unto God, Nor mourn in your minds, how on the morrow Ye may find eat and drink, or, ye aethlings, What weeds ye will wear; for All-Wielding God Knoweth the needs of them who now serve Him well, Following the will of their Liege. Why, by the winged birds Ye may verily see it: they that are in this world Flitting about in their feather-dress. Though they have won no fortune, Yet the Lord, our God, giveth to them each day Ye may in your hearts Help against hunger. Eke gaze at the flowers, when ye think of your garments, How fairly they are garbed, as they stand in the field Brightly blowing. Nor did that warder of bastions, Solomon the King, who had costlier treasure, Greater gold-hoards than any had e'er gained, Had won more wealth, the choicest of weeds — Still in this life, though he was lord of these lands all — He never found raiment as fair as this flower hath on. Which here in the field standeth ready and fair, Lily with so lovely a bloom. The Wielder of Lands hath so garbed it From the high fields of Heaven. But this folk is far dearer,

The men mean far more, those whom He hath made in this land,

Wielding o'er them, as He willed. Therefore may ye not worry concerning your

dress,

Grieve over your garments so much; God will give counsel,

Help from Heaven's meadow, if ye willingly serve for His favor,

Always yearn for God's kingdom; then act ye according to those, His good works.

Strive ye for right things. Then will our Rich Lord Gift you with all goods indeed, if ye so willingly

go,

Following Him, as I tell unto you with soothy words.

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Ye shall never speak an unjust, a wrong judgment Over any man, or accuse him falsely; For doom falleth over him, so that the cares full well.

The worries wax large of him who did speak such words Of wrong against others. Not a one of you Shall give wrong measure to another man, Being feloniously bent in buying or selling While on this earth here; for to each earl will hap Even as he hath done unto others even there where he would dearly Not see his sins. Eke must I say yet unto you Where ye must guard against the greatest of evils, Against wrong-doings many: Why wilt thou reproach a man? Thou seest under his brow He is thy brother. but are not willing by one whit A wisp in his eye,

To think of the beam which thou hast in thy own,

A hard tree and heavy. Into thy heart let it

First fall: how to remove it. Then wilt thy light shine forth, Thine eyen will be opened. Thus mayest thou later of thy sweet friend, Make better the sight Heal it, lo, in his head. Let each in his heart, Each man in this mid-world, think more of his own misdeeds of the sins of another, Than he thinketh The faults of a friend and hath himself done far worse. If to himself he would do good, Far greater wrongs. Then shall he first make himself free of all sin, Loose of all loathsome deeds. Later may he then with his teachings when he knoweth himself to Be a help to the people, be pure And safe from sin. Nor shalt thou strew Thy sea-pearls down before swine, nor scatter thy iewels, for they will trample it now Nor thy neckband holy; in the mire, Besmirch it in sand. For they know nothing, the swine, of cleanness. Of sea-pearls so fair. Here there are many such folk Who will not hear thy holy word Nor follow God's teachings, and know of no good. have low, useless things, They would far liefer Have empty words, than the work and the will Of your Wielder and God. They are not worthy, That they hear your holy word. For in their hearts they do not think, Do not want to learn it nor do it. Say ye nought of your words unto them, Lest ye squander God's speech and many a spell. who do not Lose ye not your word 'mid the land-folk, want to believe it, The great and true word. Eke shall ye guard against

The wiles of this folk, as ye wander, ye earls, through the land, Lest the teachers of lies lead you astray With words and with works. They come wearing such garbs, To you wearing fairer jewels: but their hearts are wily. They speak wise words, but their works are worth nought, For ye know that thorns The thoughts of these thanes. never grow On the wineberry nor on that which is worthy, On the fairer fruits. Nor does a man gather figs From the hawthorn tree. Keep ye this truth in your hearts: which standeth there in the earth That the bad tree Never giveth forth good fruit; and that God hath not shaped it, That the good tree of the bairns of men bear bitter fruit: But from every tree whatsoever there cometh forth only Such fruit to this world as was born from the root, Either bright fruit or bitter. That is the feeling in the breasts. of the kinfolk of man. In the hearts of so many Wherever each one of the earls showeth himself all openly, of what mind he is, Maketh known with his mouth The thoughts in his heart; nor may he hide them ever; But from an evil man cometh unwise counsel, Words bitter and blameworthy, such as he hath in his breast. here his thoughts Harboring them 'round his heart: become known, His will along with his words; and his works follow, too. There cometh from a good man an answer, gracious and clear,

Wise in his wit, that he ever speaketh with words — The man with his mouth; such words as he hath in his mind. Hoarded round his heart. Thence cometh the Holy Gospel, That most Winsome Word. and his works shall thrive For the good of men, for many a thane, As indeed is his will, even as the Wielder Did grant unto good men, God Almighty, The High Liege of Heaven, since without His will Neither with words nor with works can they do one whit Of good in this world-garden here. Therefore all the bairns of mankind should most gladly Believe in the strength and the might of this One

Single Lord.

XXI

Here I must tell you, too that pathways twain Lie in this light. Thereon the land-bairns Must travel, the children of earth. One of the twain Is a street broad and wide: much folk wandereth on it, Of mankind so many; for their mind doth drive them — The world-lust, these war-men. On the worse side It doth lead them, the landsmen, where they are lost, The heroes in hell fire; there it is swarthy and hot, Horrible within. Easily may the children of earth Travel thereto. Still in the end it availeth them

not.

Then lieth again another and narrower path, A way in this world, on which do wander But few of the folk. The bairns of men follow it Ungladly, though it goeth on to God's kingdom, Leadeth all aethlings into eternal life. But take ye the narrow one; though it be never so easy For world-folk to wander on, it availeth well

Whosoever trespasseth it; he hath bounteous pay, Long-lasting reward and life never ending, The dearest of doing. And do ye so pray To your Lord, the Wielder, that this be the way Ye follow forthwith, and going further along this path Into God's realm. For He is ready ever To give in return, if a man biddeth rightly, If the folk-bairns do ask him. Seek ye your Father, Which is in the kingdom unending. There can ye find Him Make ye known your travels For your welfare eternal. At your Master's door; for you they may open, Heaven's portals unlock, so that to the holy light, To God's realm itself, now ye may go, Seeing life everlasting. Lo, I shall say unto you, Tell you one token more truly for the earth-folk all, That every man whosoever keepeth My teachings Held in his heart, who thinketh of them in his mind, And worketh them in this world he worketh indeed Like a wise man having great wit, A head that is clearer. And he chooseth his homestead On right fast ground, and upon a rock He worketh the walls. where neither the wind Nor the wave nor the water's stream can harm it a whit, But it standeth there strong 'gainst all storms High on the rock, since right firmly it was Set on the stone. From beneath, the spot holds it steady, True and straight 'gainst the wind, that it cannot topple. Thus doeth each man, who willeth not To hear these, my teachings, or to carry them out: He acteth indeed like the unwise earl, Like the witless world-man, who on the water's shore, On the sand itself, would set up his great halled house.

Where the western wind and the waves of the stream. The tides of the sea do tear it. sand and grit cannot Hold it up 'gainst the flood, since it stood not fast, Firmly timbered in earth. So shall the work of each earl Strive for this, each aethling who followeth My Word, Holdeth My holy commandments." In their hearts they began, The many children of men, to wonder: they heard the Almighty God's Love-filled lessons. In this land they were truly not wont being said ever before, To hear such things Either of words or of works. But wise men understood, That He so taught unto them words of great truth, The Liege of the Land-folk, since He, lo, had power Unlike unto others, who in earlier days Were chosen to teach from the children of men From the clans themselves. Never had of Christ's words The like been heard 'mid the land-folk, when He set down His law

To the bairns on the mountain.

XXII

He bade them do both: Not only should they say and spread His word, How one should reach the realms of Heaven, The Farspreading Fiefdom; but first He did lend Unto them the power to heal the halt and the blind, The ills of the world-folk, their manifold weakness And terrible plagues; and He bade them, too, Never to garner money from any man Or to take treasured pay. To them He did tell this: "Keep ye well in mind, how this wit and this wisdom were come unto you, And the Father of all Folk hath lent you the force. Ye

need not buy it

With goods nor pay for it with gold. Therefore be ye gracious unto men; Mild in your hearts and ready to help, Teaching the land-bairns long-lasting counsel, Deal ye right heavily still with Enduring deeds. their wrongs, With their swarthy sins. Let not silver nor gold Be of such worth unto you, that ye would e'er own them, Fair glimmering gold-pieces; for they will give you no joy, Ye shall own no more garments, Be useless to you. My earls, no more weeds, than those which ye wear, Ye good men, to garb you, when ye do go forth Ye shall not think of your meat, Among the many. Not long of your body's food; for the folk shall feed Them that are teaching. That shall be of use, Which ye say to the folk of right fair reward. Worthy is the workman, that he be fed well, The man given meat, who shall care for so many, The souls of the folk, making firm the way For the ghosts to God's meadow. That is a greater thing, for the souls of the That a man should make ready many, for the kingdom of Heaven, Should keep them all for the bodies of folk Than that he careth With meat, for the children of men. Therefore should mankind Keep fondly and sweetly those who show them The way to Heaven's kingdom and hold the harm-doer, The Fiend far from them; who give them blame for their faults, For their sins dire and swarthy. Now I shall send you Throughout the landscape, like a lamb among wolves. So shall ye fare 'mid the foe, amid world-folk many, Keep ye your minds toward them Amid unlike men.

So clear and clever as the bright-colored worm, The slyly wise serpent, when it doth suspect A deadly foe. Then men of the folk Cannot lead you astray. Ye shall take care Lest men turn away the thoughts of your mind And destroy your will. Be ye wary of them, Of their furtive deeds again like the dove: Having toward all folk a simple heart, Meekness of mind, so that no man can be cheated, Be ever deceived by your deeds, Led astray by your sins. Now shall ye fare On your way with these tidings: much toil shall ye bear and oppression together, Amid the people Much and varied, if in My name Ye do teach the land-folk. Ye shall yet receive much of evil From the people of world and still worse pain For this, My right word; before the kingdoms of World Shall ye oft stand bound and suffer both Mockery and scornful speech: but let not your spirits feel doubt, Nor your souls ever err; nor need ye ever Harbor care in your heart when they call ye forth from the crowd, Bid you go with them to the guest hall ----What ye will say unto them with your good words, How ye will speak to them wisely; for success will come unto you, and the Holy Ghost will speak Help come from Heaven, Mightily out of your mouth. Therefore dread ye not the hatred of men, Fear not their fiendishness. For though they have power Over your life, may rob your body of breath, Slay you with swords yet not a whit of your soul Can they e'er destroy. Dread ye All-Wielding God, Fear ye your Father. For Him gladly

Do ye His commandment, for He hath might and power Over both, o'er the life of a man, o'er his body as well, Yea, even o'er the soul itself. If for the sake of these teachings Ye lose your life on the way, then in the light of God Ye shall find it again, for the Father, The Holy Lord God, hath kept it in the kingdom of Heaven.

XXIII

Not all will reach Heaven who here hail Me Protector, Their Master and Lord. There are many of them Who willingly kneel to the Liege every day, Calling on Him for help, but have other thoughts in their hearts, Working dastardly deeds; they win no gain from their words. But those may hasten toward Heaven's light, Go on to the kingdom of God, who gladly here and His will Accomplish the work of the Wielder, as well. They need not call unto Him, their Master, with words so many, since All-Holy God, Hailing Him for help, Knoweth of every man the thoughts in his mind, His word and his will, and payeth him right for his work. let this be your worry As ye fare on your way, And your task as well: to fulfill my tidings, As ye fare on your path, far o'er the landscape Through the wideness of world, where your ways will lead you, straightway seek The broad street to the borough: ve the best

Men among the multitude, and make ye known unto them With words of truth what lieth in your minds. If they be worthy Of this: that they gladly give help to your good works then may ye dwell in the With pureness of heart, house rewarding them well: With them as ye will, Pay them with goodness — give them to God Himself With your words, foretelling the Wielder's sure peace, The holy help of the King of Heaven. become blessed Yet if they cannot By their own deeds, cannot do your works, Carry out your message: then leave ve these men, Fare forth from this folk; and your peace will fare forth with you Once more on the very same way; and leave ye them in their wickedness, In their works of sin, and seek for yourselves another way, nor leave ye of dust one A much larger gathering; single grain To follow your feet from there, where one hath received you unfairly; But shake ye that dust from your shoes, so that it becometh a shame. A witness there to the world-folk, that their work is worth nought. Then I tell unto you and in truth: that when this world doth come to its end And that Famous Day fareth over all mankind, That the city of Sodom, which for its sins Was felled to its fundament by the force of the flame, The power of fire it will have more peace, A milder protector than shall have those men Who cast you aside, were unwilling to accomplish your word.

Whosoever receiveth you with a pious soul And mildness of mind, he hath done so for Me, Hath accomplished My will, accepted All-Wielding God, Your Mighty Father, Master of Mankind, The Rich Giver of Truth, who knoweth all right. The Wielder Himself doth know and reward the work Of each earthling, if to any man ever for the love of God: He doeth some good Willingly giveth water to drink That the needy man is healed of his thirst From the cold well-spring. The word will come true. It will never fail, that he find fair Reward in the eyes of God, receive recompense Of many a sort for that which he doeth in God's sweet love. But whosoever of the bairns of men doth deny Me here, Of the warriors before the host, in Heaven I shall likewise do unto him Far above before the All-Wielding Father and before the strength of His angels, Before their multitude. Whosoever of the children of men Doth not with his words deny Me here in this world, But before the kinship of men confesses he is My disciple, Him will I vouch for before God's very eyen, Before the Father of All, there where so many folk Wend their way to the All-Wielder To justify their deeds before the Great Judge. There will I be, for whosoever hearkeneth As is meet, a mild Protector unto Me. Who hath heard My word, and accomplished the work, Which I have commanded of you up here on the mountain." So the Son of the Wielder verily taught the worldfolk How they should work God's love. Then He sent them away,

The men of His host, each to his own home. They had heard the Word, the Heaven King's holy Spell. Whosoever in this world was wiser in word and in deed, Many of mankind over the face of this mid-world, Smarter in speech — he heard the Spell Which the Richest of Men spoke on the mountain.

XXIV

It was three nights later, that the Lord of the Land-folk

Went into Galilee-land there to a wedding feast: God's Bairn had been bidden. A bride would be given, A most lovely maid. Mary was there, The Mighty One's mother. The Lord of the Many, God's Own Bairn, did go with His followers where the hordes were drinking, To the high house, The Jews in the guest-hall. He did go to the feast, Made known to the guests, that He had God's power, Help from the Heaven-Father and the Holy Ghost, The All-Wielder's wisdom. The warriors were blithe, The land-folk together loud in their joy, Glad-hearted the guests. The grooms went about Pouring from pitchers; the pure wine they Carried in jugs and in cups. The crowd's tumult Was gay in the great hall, when the folk began, one 'mid the other, To feel their best blitheness: there on the benches In rapture were they, when the wine ran out, The fruit drink of the folk for nought was there left, which to the hordes No drop in the house, The butlers might bear, when all of the vessels Were empty of mead. 'Twas not long after that That the fairest of ladies did find this out,

The mother of Christ. She went to speak to her Kin, To her Son Himself; she said with her words had no more of wine, That the host of the house Hight the Holy Christ, that He find some help There again God's Mighty For the joy of the many. Bairn Had ready His word: with His mother He spoke: "What doth the mead of these men," quoth He, "mean to Me, The wine of this world-folk? Why, O goodwife, speaketh thou before these many? So much, admonishing Me My time is not come yet!" Yet she still trusted well Deep in her heart, the Holy Maid, even after these words ----That the Wielder's Bairn — Would help indeed, the Best of All Healers. Then the sweetest of ladies hight all the servants, who had here been serving, The butlers and cup-bearers That they omit not a whit either of words or of works would hight them do Of that which the Holy Christ For the people there. The pots all stood empty, Stone vessels six. Quite softly He bade them — God's Mighty Bairn so that many a man what He said with His words. Was verily all unaware He hight that the butlers should fill the barrels, The cup-bearers there, with clearest water; with His fingers He blessed it, With His hands turned it to wine; and He hight the vessels be filled, The pitchers be poured from; and He spoke to the servants, to the foremost Hight that they give with their hands guest Who was here at the feast: for him pour a fulsome jug, Who next to the host was the noblest there. When he now drank the wine. He was loathe to keep still; but before the many he spake

To the bridegroom then; quoth that the best mead should have been brought, The finest of the fruit-wines given first to the earls "So is a man's wit At once at the wedding. Awakened by the wine, and he waxeth blithe, Maketh merry with drink. Then mayest thou bring on The worser wines. That is the way of this folk. But most strangely indeed hast thou marked thy hostship thou hast hight thy serv-Among the multitude here; ing men, bring out at the ban-Thy butlers and cup-bearers quet the very worst forsooth, Of all the wines Serving that first at the feast. Now that thy guests are filled, are already most drunk, The dear banqueteers thou hightest brought forth The folk feeling merry, which I ever saw lifted The loveliest of all wines Thou shouldst have Anywhere in this earth-light. given that earlier, Such thanks wouldst thou then Have served us sooner. Have garnered from all the good men." Many a thane grew Aware after these words ---as soon as they had drunk of the wine — That here in the house the Holy Christ Had revealed a token. They trusted thereafter The more in His rule: that He had God's might To wield in this world. So it came widely known Over Galilee-land to the Jewish folk That the Son of the Lord had Himself turned That was of His wonders The water to wine. The first which He showed as a sign to the Jewish folk, As a token in Galilee-land. Nor may anyone tell

Nor say forsooth, what hath happed since then In the way of wonders among the folk; for All-Wielding Christ unto the people of Jews Told His teachings in the name of Lord God, The livelong day Promised the kingdom of Heaven; with His words protected them, too, Hight that they should seek From the press of hell. the wardship of God And eternal life. There is the light of the souls, The Lord's life ever joyous, the glow of the day, The good glory of God. There many guests Dwell to His will, who here have thought well How best they should keep it, the Heaven-King's commandment.

XXV

With His followers He went forth from the feast,
Christ to Capernaum, the Richest of Kings,
To that famous town. Much folk was assembled,
Was gathered around Him, men of good stock —
A blessed following it was. They wanted to hear His
word,
Which was sweet and holy. There came toward Him a
centurion;
A good man, he approached Him and bade Him most
earnestly,
That the Holy One help him. Quoth that at home
He had long had a man lame and sickly,
In his family a feeble one, "For I tell Thee no one
Can heal him with hands. Now I have need of Thy help,
Good Lord, my Liege." Then spoke the Peace-Bairn
of God
And straightway Himself did say unto him,
Quoth that He would come and save his young kin
From his direst need. Then came nearer

The man from the multitude to speak to the Mighty Christ, "I am not worthy," To exchange words with Him. quoth he, "Good Lord, my Liege, that Thou wouldst come to mv house — Wouldst seek out my dwelling, for I am a sinful man With my words and my works. I believe Thou wieldest might, Canst work his healing here in this place, My Wielder and Lord; if Thou speakest Thy word, He is cured of his sickness; clean and bright shining Doth his body become, if Thou wilt but give him Thy help. I am a man holding office and have wealth enough, Have gained goodly things; though I stand governed By an aethling king, yet have I of earls quite a following, who listen alone unto me, Loyal warriors in arms, Who leave of word or of work not a whit undone Of that which I bid them do here in the land; But they fare forth and finish it, do return to their master, Being obedient to me, their lord. Though I do own broad Spreading goods in my house, have servants enough, still may I not dare War-minded men, To bid Thee, God's Bairn so Holy, to enter my building, To seek out my dwelling, since I am so sinful, So mindful, my Lord, of my misdeeds." Then spoke once more All-Wielding Christ, The Finest of Men, to His followers; quoth that never had He found Anywhere 'mongst the Jews, among the offspring of Israel, in the landscape; The like of this man one who believed 72

More deeply in God, more purely in Heaven — "Now may Ye hear, ye too, what I say at this time with words of truth: from the East and the West, That much foreign folk Many clans of mankind shall come together, God's holy folk in the Heavenly Kingdom: They will rest right well in the lap of Abraham, Of Isaac himself and of Jacob, good men all, and enjoy Goods and good will and a winsome life And the great light with God. But lo, many Jews, The sons of this realm will then be robbed, Be sundered from such splendor, and shall have to lie in the farthest distance of In the darkest dales all. There one can hear the heroes lamenting And gnashing their teeth in terror and pain. There is furious rage and a hungry fire And the hard pangs of hell, hot and thirsty, Swarthy might, never ending, as payment for sin, For wretched wrong-doing, to all who have not willed to rid Themselves of their wrongs before they relinquish the light, Wend their way from this world. Now if 'tis thy will, Thou mayest go home. In thy house thou wilt find hale And sound the child-young man: he will be joyous of mind. The bairn hath been healed: even so as thou badest Me, All hath been done, even as thou hast belief Firm fixed in thy heart." Then to the Heaven-King, To the All-Wielding Child of God the centurion gave thanks Before all the folk for this. that He had helped him thus in his anguish.

It was all worked, even as he had wished it And most blessed indeed: he did go on his way, Went as he willed, where he had ownership, A house and a home. There he found hale his bairn, The child-young man. Christ's word was accomplished, for He had The might to show forth tokens, so that no man could tell, Over the earth could reckon, that He through His own power,

Through His strength had made miracles on this midworld here,

Accomplished such marvels. For all things stand in His might,

Both Heaven and earth.

XXVI

Then the Holy Christ bethought Him

To fare on farther. For the bairns of the folk The Master of All, the Almighty, the Good, Every day did accomplish deeds dear and good; to the people, had always With words taught God's will Followers aplenty about Him, blessed folk of God, come from many peoples, A mighty crowd of men, A holy army and host. He was good in His help, Mild to the men. Then He came with the many: Now the Bairn of God with a noisy crowd came to Nain, The Savior to the high-standing city. There His name Would become famed among men. There mightily The Saving Christ walked along until He came closer, The Best of All Healers. They saw folk bringing a body ---They came carrying a corpse without life. On a bier they bore it through the gates of the bastion. The mother did follow, A child-young man.

Her heart being heavy; herself did she beat with her hands,

the death of her bairn — Bewailed and lamented Unhappy woman was she it was her only child. She was a widow, in this world had no joy Except this one son, whom Weird had now taken. She had lost all things, had lost joy and happiness; And now fate, ill-famed, had robbed her of him. Many people did follow, A crowd of the burghers, as they carried the bier, The young man to his grave. There the Son of God, The Mighty grew mild; and to the mother He spoke; leave off with her weeping, Hight the widow Nor care for her child; "Thou shalt see here the strength, The work of the Wielder: thy will shall be granted thee. Comfort in front of the folk: from now on thy spirit May not bemoan thy bairn." Then He went to the bier, He Himself did touch it, the Son of the Lord, and to the hero He spoke, With His holy hands Hight this child, all too young, to stand up, hight him Right away the youth Arise from his rest. Did sit up, the bairn on the bier; and into his breast came and he spoke His soul through the strength of God; unto them, The man to his kith. Christ commended him then to his mother. The Holy One into her hands. Her heart was consoled, Happy the woman, since to her so much grace had happed. She fell to Christ's feet and praised Him, the Folk-Lord. Master, before all the multitude, since He had here helped Her loved one to live 'gainst the working of Weird. Well she knew that He was The Mighty Lord, the Holy, who governed the Heaven, who could help so many

Of earthlings all. Then many began to attend The wonder, which had come to pass there 'mid the folk: quoth that The Wielder Himself, The Mighty, had come to teach them, the many, that He had sent A prophet, most wonderous, to the kingdom of world; one who did His will. Then truly many an earl was taken by terror, The folk full of fear, for they saw him again Alive and seeing the light of day; him whom death had but lately taken, Stretched low on his sick-bed. Again he was sound, The young kin quickened; and soon this did spread To the heirs of all Israel. And when evening came, There were gathered about many sick men together, The halt and the lame of hand whosoever was here And lived 'mid the land-folk: they were led to the place, who through His strength and Were come to the Christ, His craft and sent them hale from Helped them and healed them the place To wend where they willed. Therefore should one praise His words, of all mankind, The Mighty Minder Of whatsoever land-folk verily believeth In His word and His work.

XXVII

There were come so many From all the foreign folk for the glory of Christ, For His mighty guardianship. There onto a sea God's Son Wished to go with His vassals — 'twas on Galilee's borders — The Wielder onto a wave-tide. There He willed that the other folk

Go wandering ahead, and He went with a few the Savior Christ, Into a small ship, The weather-wise men Way-weary, to sleep. let the wind drive the sloop Raised high the sail, until they did come to the center, Over the sea-tide, The Wielder there with His vassals. There began the force of the weather; the waves waxed high, The storm-wind rose, Swarthy clouds swung down in between: the sea was astir. Wind battled water; the men were worried. The sea was so angry, not a man expected The Land-Warden they then To live any longer. Awakened with their words. They told unto Him of the weather's strength; to be gracious and kind, to help They bade saving Christ "Else will we die, 'Gainst the waters. Martyred here in the sea." Then the Good Son of God Arose, Himself from His sleep. To His disciples He spoke, Bade them not to dread the weather's battle one bit. "Why art ye so fearful?" quoth He. "Are your hearts not yet firm, Your belief yet so little. 'Twill not be long now Then the stream shall become stiller And the weather all winsome." Then He spoke to the wind. And to the sea itself. And He said unto them Both, that they should grow still. And they hearkened to His bidding, To the Wielder's word. The weather grew calm, The flood became fair. There the folk around Him, and with their words some The world-men did wonder. did speak this Man was indeed, What a Mighty One That the wind and the wave would heed His word, The Bairn of God Both doing His bidding.

Had there saved them from need. The sloop sailed on farther,

The high-horned ship. The heroes did come, The leaders, to land. They all lauded God And praised His great power. Then many people did come

To the Son of God. He received them most gladly, Whosoever sought help with a clear, pure heart. He did teach them to believe, and lo, their bodies He healed with His hands; though a man were hard And piteously pressed with plagues through Satan's Wily followers, though the force of the Fiend Held him fast in his hands, had destroyed his heart And his wit as well, that he went about Mad among mankind; yet Mighty Christ always, The Healer, gave him back his life, if he were come to His hands,

Drove the devils hence with the power of God, With words of truth, and returned him his wit, Let him be healed against the haters, Gave him peace 'gainst the foe; and they went forth, Each into his own land, whichever he loved the most.

XXVIII

So our Dear Lord's Son did on each day God's work with His followers. But the Jews had no faith, Believed not at all in the largeness of His strength:

That He was the All-Wielder over all things, Of lands and of people. Their reward is still lasting: 'Tis farflung exile, since they acted so evilly 'Gainst the Lord's Son Himself. With His retainers He soon went

Again into Galilee-land; He did go with His friends, God's own Bairn, to where He was born, Where as a young child He had waxed with His kin,

He, the Healer All Holy. Around Him a host, There was many a thane A great crowd did throng. So blessed 'mid the crowd. There some carried a sick man, Certain earls in their arms. Before Christ's eyen they would Bring him, before God's Bairn. Betterment he needed, Needed Heaven's Wielder to heal him indeed, The Minder of Men. For many a day He had been lamed of limb. Little could he Govern his body at all. There were such great numbers That they could not bring him before God's Bairn, Could not press through the people to tell Him the plight There He hied Himself within, Of this poor, sick man. To the hall, All Healing Christ a great crowd was around Him. A multitude of mankind. There the men who had so long Carried with them the weak-limbed cripple Began to speak how they might bear him on the bed before God's Bairn, so that Wielding Christ Through the world-folk within, Would see him Himself. So his servants went, With their hands they did lift him, climbed high on the house, Slit open the hall from the roof above, and with ropes Let him down in the building where the Rich Lord was, The Strongest of Kings. When He saw him coming Through the house's rafters, right well He knew from the hearts, From the minds of these men, that mighty indeed Was their faith in Him. And so spoke He before all the folk, Quoth that He would absolve the sick man from sin. In answer to this the people did speak, Rage-hardened Jews, quoth how could it be so:

God alone can forgive works of crime, The world's All-Wielder. His word He had ready, God's Mighty Bairn. "I make manifest," quoth He, "in this man Who lieth so ill here in this large hall --Most grievously pained that I have the power and to heal the sick man To forgive the sins Without even touching My hand to him." admonished the man Then our Mighty Lord to rise there before the land-folk, Who lay there lame To stand up hale. And He hight him take on his shoulders, On his back his bedding; and he did our Lord's bidding, Straightway before the assemblage, and went away sound, Hale from the house. Then many a heathen, Many a world-man did wonder, quoth that the Wielder Himself, Surely God the Almighty had given unto Him More splendid might than unto any man's son, The skill and the strength; still they would not acknowledge, That folk of the Jews, that He was God, Nor believed they His lesson, but struggled evilly with Him. Fought against His word. For this they have won weary care, Reaped a grievous return; and right long will that last For those who hear not the Heaven-King's teachings, The lesson of Christ, which is proclaimed over all, Wide and far in the world: and He let them all see His work, Each day and every look on His deeds, Hear His holy word, which He spoke for the help Of the bairns of mankind. And so many and mighty A token He showed, that they trusted Him better, Believed in His word. So many a body He unbound from ills baleful and granted them betterment,

Gave life to those destined to die, even if The hero was on hell's path already. The Healer Himself did so — Christ through His might and His power quickened even the dead after death, Let them further enjoy the winsomeness here in the world.

XXIX

So healed He the halt fand the lame of hand, Made better the blind, let them see the bright light, See Heaven's splendor; absolved them from sin, The world-men from wickedness. But the Jews grew no better.

This loathsome land-folk, in their belief In the Holy Christ; but they were hardened of heart, Strove very strongly against Him, wanted not to perceive They were well ensnared by the devil's will, This folk through its faith; for He was not idle. The Son of the Lord; but with His words He said unto them the kingdom of Heaven; How they could gain And through all the land He did teach; a multitude He did turn Unto Him with His words, so that many a world-man, A great crowd of folk, did follow Him. And in figures God's Bairn spoke unto them things which in their breast they could not perceive Nor grasp in their hearts, till the Holy Christ With open words willed to speak To all people through His power and strength, And make clear what He meant. A mighty crowd, A very large one, thronged 'round Him. They longed greatly To hear the true word of the King of Heaven. On the shores of the sea by the water He stood.

Because of the great crowd, He cared not to proclaim His lesson to His thanes there on the land; But the Good One did go ---and His disciples with Him all gladly — The Peace-Bairn of God did go to a water that it shove off Unto a ship, hight Further from the land so that the folk. quite so close. Many The crowd, could not throng a thane, Much world-folk stood by the water, where All-Wielding Christ Did reveal His lesson to the land-folk there. "Lo, I may say unto you," quoth He, "My disciples, How an earl began to sow good grain In the soil with his hands. Some fell on hard stones had not earth enough From above, and the grains In which to grow rightly and send down roots, To sprout and cleave fast. And that corn was lost, Some fell on the land, That lay on those rocks. On excellent soil. This soon began To wax winsomely tall and take root right well; And most merrily it grew. The land was so good, So fruitful its kind. Again, some had fallen On a stiff, hard street, where steps did tread, and the feet of heroes. The hoofbeats of horses There was soil for them and indeed they sprouted, but the walking of men did Began to wax on the way, kill them, The wayfaring of folk; and the flying birds picked them up, So that they were not one whit of use those that did fall on the way. To the owner there, Some fell on that day where there stood so many Thickets of thorn. There was soil there for them, And they came up, they sprouted and cleaved; but weeds Came between and kept them from growing. The cover

Of forest spread out before them, and they could not grow fruitful, thronged all around them." Since the thornbrush Christ's disciples did sit and were silent all, The word-wise thanes. For they wondered muchly With what goodly pictures the Bairn of God Would begin to say such a true and wise spell. Then one of the earls began to ask bent low before Him The Beloved Lord, Most humbly indeed. "Why," quoth he, "Thou hast might Both in Heaven and on earth, Holy Master, Above and beneath. Beest Thou All-Wielder Over the souls of men, and we Thy disciples, Given to Thee with all our hearts, O Lord most Good. If that be Thy will, let us hear Thy good word, That we can proclaim it to all Christian folk. We know indeed that upon Thy words and a need, most great, is in Follow true parables; us, That in this land, here with Thee, we may teach

Thy word and Thy work — since from such wisdom it cometh."

XXX

Then the Best of All Men spoke in answer to them. "to disguise My deeds "I did not mean," quoth He, In any way, either my words or my works; but ye shall know all, Ye disciples Mine; for unto you hath He granted, that ye may well know The Wielder of Worlds, In your hearts and your minds the mysteries of Heaven. Yet one must give unto others the commandments of God With pictures in words. Now will I tell you Most truly what I mean indeed, so that ye may better

Understand my teachings over all the landscape. The seed which I spoke of is the Word of Himself, The Holy Scripture of the King of Heaven, As one should spread it o'er the mid-earth here. Wide in this world. World-folk, at heart, Men are most different: some are of such mind, So hard of spirit and evil of heart, That it seemeth not worth their while to act by your words Or to be so willed to accomplish My teachings; are indeed lost unto them, But My lessons all And the commandments of God and the teachings of you, My men, On these evil folk; as I earlier said unto you, That the corn did wither, which could not there Strike root with its sprouts upon the stones. the speech of the aethling, So all will be lost, whatsoever one telleth The message of God — To an evil man; and he chooseth the path, The way on the left, on the worse hand to God's displeasure, To the foe of the folk and the onslaught of fire And the devil's joy. From that day on He shall heat the broad flames with the heart in his breast. Nonetheless in this land shall ye spread My lesson, Proclaim it with words, if there be many people, Such earls on this earth. Yet another man still may exist and hath kindness of heart, Who is young and clever Is wise in his speech, understandeth your spell, Pondereth it in his heart and heareth it with his ears Very zealouly indeed; and stepping closer, the bidding of God, Accepteth in his heart Learning and carrying it out. If his belief is so good,

He will then wonder how he can woo another, so that his mind be filled A wrong-doing man; With a loyalty clear for the King of Heaven. groweth broad in his bosom, The bidding of God even as on the land The willing belief, The grain doeth with its sprouts, when it hath right ground, and the changing of weather ----Good soil to suit it, The rain and the sun, so that it hath its right. So doeth the teaching of God in a good-souled man Through the day and night; and the devil stayeth far, The wicked wight; and the word of God in the nights and the days, Is nearer to him So that it causeth him to accomplish both ----This lesson is a blessing to the bairns of the land ----That which cometh from his mouth, and the man becometh of God. So hath he bought with his heart in this hour of world A piece of Heaven's kingdom, the greatest possession. Into God's power he fareth, freed from wrong deeds. Faithfulness Is so good for each man. No treasure of gold Is like unto belief. Henceforth teach ye the lesson Mildly to mankind. These are so varied of mind, The heroes of men; some have hard strife, An evil will and a wavering spirit. They are full of deceptions and deeds of wrong. As one beginneth to think, as he standeth there Among the crowd, and harkeneth with great care To the teachings of God; then he thinketh he would gladly Henceforth carry them out. Then the teachings of God Begin to cleave to his heart, until there come once more Through his hands possessions and proud wealth of others; lead him astray, Then loathsome wights

And avarice doth seize him again And killeth now his belief: thus was it little use unto him if he willed not That he ever thought in his heart, hold it. which began on the wayside, Even so is the waxing Grew fair on the land; there the footsteps of folk could destroy it again. So mighty sins in the soul of that man Do unto God's teachings, if he take not heed. Otherwise will they follow him down far to the bottom, To the heart of hell. To the King of Heaven He is of no further help, but the Fiend Will punish him direly with pain. Likewise repair ye forth, Teaching with words in the world; I will know the hearts of the folk, among mankind, Many differences of mind Their varied ways...1 Some have turned their spirits entirely to this And come more to keep their hoard than to work the Heaven King's Therefore it waxeth not ----Will down on earth. though it may cleave there God's holy commandment — And send forth roots. But riches do crowd it, Even as the weeds and the thorn entangle the corn And keep it from waxing: so doeth wealth to a man. He fettereth his heart so that he here pondereth not, The man in his mind, what he needeth most: How he will work that indeed as long as he liveth here in this world, That he have Heaven's Kingdom, through his High Lord's grace, Days everlasting and endless riches, As no man knoweth them here in the world. Never ¹ Lacuna in MS.

May he think so widely, the thane in his mind, Nor may the heart of a man hold it and grasp it To know most verily what good All-Wielding God Hath made ready so that for each man All standeth open — for each who loveth Him well And hath kept his soul so turned ever That he will here enter the light of the Lord."

XXXI

So He taught them with words; and a wide crowd and busily hearkened, Stood 'round God's Bairn As He told with His words the way of the world through His parables many. He told how an aethling once sowed an acre Of fine corn with his hands, good grain in the field. He wanted to gain the most winsome of growths, The fairest of fruits. But his foe did follow him With treacherous mind; and with tares he sowed over the top. With the worst of weeds. And they waxed there both, The corn and the tares. So came along The husbandmen to the house, and told this to him, to their lord. The thanes to the warden with honest words. "Why, thou didst sow fine grain, master most good, Unmixed on this acre. Yet each earl can see Nought but weeds are waxing. Well, how can that be?" There spake again the aethling, the man to his earls, To his vassals the warder: quoth that he could well understand That an unfriendly man had sown after him, "These fruits he be-That his foe had slyly sown weeds: grudgeth me so, That for me he hath stamped out this growth." Then to him spoke again His friends, his followers, quoth that they would fare there,

Go with force and would uproot the growth, The weeds with their hands. Then their lord spake once more unto them: quoth he, "since "I would not that ye weed them," ye cannot avoid it, Cannot prevent in your passing, though ye do it ungladly, That ye kill young sprouts and corn aplenty, Henceforth let both Fell them under your feet. Wax together, till the harvest doth come And the fruits are ripe in the fields, Ready all on the acre. Then to that acre Let us fare; with our hands fetch and gather the fair grain, The pure corn cleanly together, keep it stored in my halls, So that not a speck can be spoiled. Take ye the weeds Bind them in bundles and cast them into bitter fire. Let the hot flames fetch them away, The insatiable blaze." Then many an earl stood silent, Many a thane in thought, pondering what the Glorious Christ, of Men, could mean The Mighty, the Master And proclaim with His parables, the Most Priceless of Bairns. their Master Good Most eagerly they bade To unlock the lesson, so that the land-folk about Might henceforth hear it, His Holy Word. Their Lord here replied unto them ----"This is," quoth He, "the Son of Famed, Mighty Christ. Man. I myself am He Who there soweth; and these blessed men are the fair, clean corn. Who hearken closely to me This world is the field, They do work my will. The broad farmland of the bairns of mankind: And it is Satan himself who soweth after Me

Such loathsome lessons. Of the land-folk so many,

Of the people, so many hath he ruined, so that they wreak much wrong, Working *his* will. Yet they shall wax henceforth, Those men who are damned, even as do the good, Until the Judgment Day journeyeth on over them — The end of the world. Each field then, each acre, And the children of men Hath ripened all in the realm. will rightly Finish their fore-ordained fate. Earth will explode: That is the broadest of harvests; and the Bright, Glorious Lord Cometh above with the force of His angels; all folk shall gather, Who have seen this light; and shall receive such reward, Both evil and good. Then God's angels go forth, Heaven's holy warders; and from the host bring such men to They shall seek out the sinless men; beauty unending, To the high light of Heaven; throwing the others to the grounds of hell, To the surging fire, those who were forfeited. There in bonds shall they suffer the bitter fire, The awful pain, while the others have riches In the kingdom of Heaven, surely giving light on high, Like unto white suns. Such rewards will they reap, Those men for their murderous deeds. Whosoever hath wit in his mind. Thoughts in his heart, who would like to hear -An earl with his ears — let that indeed be his care In his innermost heart, how he will face God the Richest on that renowned Day of Reckoning Of all the words and the works which he hath done in this world. That is the most awful of all things indeed, The most fearful for the folk-bairns: that they must speak face to face with the Lord -The men to their Master Good; there would each man

And all most gladly be rid of his misdeeds, His ugly sins. Instead each one should take care earlier, All the land-folk ever, before they must leave this light, That they will have this eternal honor, The high kingdom of Heaven and God's holy grace."

XXXII

So I discovered that He Himself, the Son of God, The Best of All Bairns told boldly in parables What there might be in the kingdom of world Among the races of heroes like unto the kingdom of Heaven: Quoth that that which is little often waxeth lighter, "So doeth the realm of So that it riseth on high, Heaven. That is ever more than any one man Can envision here in this world. Also his work is like unto him: That a man doth cast his nets into the sea, and findeth both in his Doth fish in the flood, catch toweth both to the shore, Both evil and good — Getteth them both onto land, throweth the good on the grit, Letteth the other return again into the sea, To the wide waves there. So doeth All-Wielding God On the best-known Day to the bairns of men. He bringeth the earthlings together all, Picketh then the pure ones for the kingdom of Heaven, Letteth the damned ones fare down to the bottom, To the fire of hell. Nor doth any hero of men Know how to counter the pain, which a person, A man of the folk, must suffer in infernal hell. Likewise can no man find a like reward,

Either in riches or rejoicing, as the Right-Wielder granteth, God Himself doth give to each man of goodness Who here keepeth himself so, so that he may enter the kingdom that is long, long lasting." Of Heaven and the light So with His wiles He did teach them. And the folk wended hence From all Galilee-land to see God's Bairn. They did so for the wonderment, whence such words came to Him, So sagely spoken; that He could say unto them The Gospel of God in such goodly fashion, Could quote it so cleverly. "He is of these clans here," quoth they, "This man through His kinships. Here is His mother among us, A wife 'mid this world-folk. What, we all know them here. and all of his clans His kinships are all in our ken; as well. He waxed 'mid this world-folk. Whence cometh such wit, Whence cometh more might than hath any other man?" So the men of the land did scorn Him and spoke on their silly words, and would not hear Despised Him, Who was holy, The Gospel of God. Because of their great disbelief He would not make known His parables many, His shining tokens, for He saw the doubt of their minds, Their wrath-harboring hearts: that here never were Men so grim-minded 'mongst the Jews as were in Galileeland, So hard of heart. Though He was the Holy Christ — As God's Bairn was He born — they would never believe Nor piously receive the gospel. Now the people began to plot, how worst of all The world-men to wonder, They might torment Mighty Christ. They hight their men,

Their companions come together; they would accuse Him Gladly, the Son of God, accuse Him of sin With an evil design; for there was no longing in them For the Word, for the wise spell; but they began to speak 'mongst themselves, How they might cast Him, the Clever and Strong, over a cliff. Over a mountain's wall. The Wielder's Bairn they would kill, Loose Him from life. Along with His folk He fared happily forth. There was no fear in His heart, For He knew full well that the Jewish folk, That the children of men could do Him no harm Because of His godliness e'er His time was come, Do no loathsome deeds. But with that folk He did go, Climbed high up a cliff, till they came to the place Where they planned to cast Him from the craggy wall, Fell Him to earth. that He would forfeit His life, That His age be ended. But the minds of the earls the bitter thoughts Up high on that mountain, Of those Jews did pass, so that not a one possessed such grimness of mind, Such wrathful spirit, that he could recognize Christ, The Son of the Wielder. But to no one was He known, So could He stand 'mid the No one could recognize Him. crowd. Walk along 'mongst the multitude there, Fare forth through the folk. He found peace for Himself, Found protection 'gainst the host, and went forth through their midst, Through the folk of the foe. He fared, since He willed so, the Son of the Wielder, Into a wilderness, The Strongest of Kings: He had the power to choose Where in this land He would liefer be, Where in this world He would tarry.

XXXIII

On another way went John the servant of God. With his disciples, He taught the land-folk long-lasting counsel: Said that they should do good, forsaking all sin, All misdeeds and murderous works. To many he was most dear, There he sought the king of the To good men and kind. Jews, The leader of his hosts in his house. Herod he was hight For his elders. this over-proud man. His bride did bide with him --she, who had been his brother's, *His* wife in his wide home, until he went forth Then came the king, And changed his abode. Took this woman for his wife. There were children already, The bairns of his brother. *He* began to blame her it was repulsive to God, John the Good — said To the Wielder Himself, for any world-man to do so: To take in his bed the bride of his brother And have her as wife. "If thou would'st hear me, Would'st believe in my lesson, thou should'st have her no longer, But in thy mind should'st avoid her: Thou shalt not have such love. Shalt not sin so greatly." Sorrow did enter The woman's heart at these words. She feared he would persuade The world-king with his speech and his words of wisdom To leave, to forsake her. Many loathsome things she began To plan and to plot; and she hight her squires, Her earls to take captive the innocent And put him in prison, place him in chains,

Lock him in limb-fetters. She dared not deprive him of life

Because of the folk, since all were his friends: They knew him as good and as worthy of God, Held him for a soothsayer, as so well they could. There was come the time for the Jew-king's birthday, As the wise men of the folk had reckoned well, That he had been born and brought to this light. It was the custom that each earl should celebrate, Each man of the Jews mark it with feasting. There was a mighty crowd

Of men gathered together in the guest hall, Leaders and dukes in the house, since their lord Was indeed on the king's throne. Many Jews did come Into the great hall there. Glad-hearted were they, Blithe in their breasts. They beheld their ring-giver, Were really in rapture. Wine was brought to the room, Clear wine in the bowls, and the cup-bearers ran back and forth,

Going with golden cups; gladness was there, Loud in the halls. The lords were drinking; The herdsman of Jews bethought him with joy, Pondered how best he might please the people. He hight go forth that gay, young girl, His brother's bairn, as he sat on his bench Haughty with wine; to the woman he spoke, Greeted her before the men-guests and most eagerly bade her.

That she begin some merriment here before the guests, Something fair in the feast-hall. "Let the folk see What thou hast learned to make joyous the many, Make them blithe on the benches; if thou doest my bidding,

My word before this world-folk; then will I verily tell unto thee

Loudly before all these landsmen, and thus let it be done,

all that thou asketh That I will give unto thee Before these my ring-friends, though thou demandest half of my kingdom; Half of my realm, nor shall any world-men So shall I do, Turn me with words; but truly it shall be accomplished." Then the maid was thereafter inclined in her mind, In her heart, to her lord, so that in the house, In the guest-hall she began much gaiety now, Even as the custom of the folk did command, The way of the people. The maid did play, Most merrily romped through the house. The minds of the many, When the maiden had served Their hearts were happy. The folk-king there for his thanks then, And had served, too, his earlships all, as many as were Of good men present, she would fain claim her gift — The maid in front of the multitude. To her mother she went To speak and asked her forthwith for she was anxious to know ---bid the bastion's warden give What she should bid him, unto her. Of her own mind her mother did tell her, hight that before the men She should ask for naught else except that he give her There in the hall John's holy head Bereft of its body. For the folk it was baleful, For the men in their minds, when they heard the maid speaking thus, For the king it was, also; but he could not break it, his pledge, Turn his word away. Therefore he bade the bearers of weapons take the good man To go from the guest hall, And relieve him of life. Not long thereafter they brought The holy man's head up to the hall, gave it the girl, To the maid before the many. To her mother she took it.

And that was the end-day of the wisest of all men, Who ever came to this world as a child born of woman, Of a wife from an earl — excepting ever that One, Whom the Maid did bear, she who had known no man Anywhere in this world; but the All-Wielder so destined it From the fields of Heaven by the Holy Ghost — The Mighty God had so marked it. Never was man like unto him,

Neither before nor after. Now the earls turned to him, The men around John, his followers many, His beloved disciples. In the sand they buried His beloved body. But well did they know He could claim God's light, along with his Lord, Heavenly glory in that home on high — He, who was blessed indeed.

XXXIV

So his disciples fared thence, John's followers went, most woeful of spirit But holy of mind. The death of their master Filled them with sorrow. They repaired then to seek The Son of the Wielder away in the wilderness, Christ the Almighty, and made known unto Him The good man's demise: how the master of Jews Did heave off the head of the holiest of men The Son of the Lord had no wish With the sword's edge. To speak of His own pain; for He knew that this soul Was held in all holiness against the haters, In peace 'gainst the foe. Thus He grew famous Across the country, He, the best of those teaching In the wilderness there; world-men did gather; To the folk He did come, for they had great longing For the wisom of words; and He had long wanted, The Son of the Lord, to lead such a gathering Of the land-folk to the light of the Lord, To turn the folk to His will. The Wielder did teach,

The Mighty Lord taught all the long day so many of mankind, and from foreign lands, until in the Folk from all over evening The sun did sink to its seat. Then His disciples twelve Did go to God's Bairn and told their Good Lord In what dire need the men did there dwell; quoth that they did need His help, "Not well can The world-folk in the wilderness there; they hold themselves upright, The heroes, for the pangs of their hunger; now, Lord Good and Most High, Nearby lie towns Let them go to find lodgings. Filled with folk aplenty; there they will find meat to buy, The world-folk there in those bailiwicks." Thereupon Wielding Christ spoke again, The Lord of the Land-folk, quoth that there was little need. "That they forsake My fair teachings Because of their poverty. Give these people enough. Let them come here gladly!" His words had he ready, The wise man named Philip; quoth that there were so many, Such a multitude of mankind, "Though we might have meat Ready to give them, were we able to buy it And for that sold together two hundred pieces of silver, Still would I doubt that each would have some. So little were that for these land-folk." Then again the Land-Warder spoke And asked them, anxious for knowledge, The Master of Men, how much of meat, Of food they had gathered. Then again with his words Andrew did speak before the earls to the All-Wielder Himself. And said now to Him that they had naught for the journey,

"Naught but five breads of barley among the followers, and fishes twain: How can that serve such a many?" Mighty Christ spake again, The Good Son of God. and hight they divide into groups, The crowd, into sections: and hight they should sit, All the lords, on the ground; the hordes of the land-folk should lie and to His followers goodly he spoke, On the green grass; The Best of All Bairns; hight them go bring the bread And fetch forth the fish. The folk bided still — The great crowd was sitting. Through His strength and His power The Lord of Mankind at this moment did bless the meat, and with His hands He did break it, The Holy Heaven-King, And to His disciples He gave it, hight that they should take it and divide it Among the multitude there. Their Master's word they accomplished. To each man gladly they carried His gift, The holy help. It waxed in their hands, The meat for each man: for the multitude There came a life full of joy; the landsmen all, The folk had their fill as many as had fared there together From all the wide ways. Then Wielding Christ Hight His disciples go, and hight them watch well, That the leavings left there would not be lost, the many of mankind Commanded them gather There was left of the When they had had their fill. food, Of the bread so much. that they gathered baskets — Twelve of them filled. That was a great token, A great deed of God, since one counted together, Without wife or child, of world-folk there, Fully five thousand. The folk understood, The men in their minds, that it was a Lord Most Mighty

Whom they did have. They did laud the Heaven-King, The people did praise Him; said that no wiser prophet Would ever fare in this light or that from God in this mid-world here, He would have greater might A more honest heart. All of them did say of holding all wealth, That He was worthy That indeed He should own all the realms of earth. The wide throne of world, "since He hath such wit, Such great power from God!" The people all thought it meet That they raise Him to the highest of hights, Choose Him their King: to Christ this was worthy of naught, Since He Himself had worked this world-realm all through his power alone, Had made earth and the high heaven, and had held them since, Both the land and the landsmen but the loathsome foe that all stood 'neath His rule ----Believed naught of that: and over empires, too, The power over kingdoms Still through the speech of these The judgment of man. men He cared not to have it, His rule — He, Holy Lord — Have the name of World-King. Therefore He began no further word-strife but He went where He willed With these people there; God's Mighty Bairn fled Up on a mountain; The insolent talk, and He told His disciples and He Himself said To sail over a sea; Where they should go to greet Him again. XXXV

The people parted and spread through all lands, A great folk scattered, for their Lord had gone Up on the mountain, the Mightiest of Bairns, Wielding as was His will. On the water's shore Gathered the disciples of Christ, whom He Himself had chosen,

The twelve for their goodly faith; nor felt they doubt; But in God's service they would gladly go Over the sea. They let the high-horned ship Cut through the strong stream, the clear wave and the water sheer; The light of the day, the sun strode to rest. Night surrounded The seafarers with mist; the earls strove on. Forward in the flood. Now the fourth hour Of night was come. All-Saving Christ Warded the wave-farers: the wind grew great, The sea 'gainst the stem; with trouble they steered it, The ship through the wind. The warriors grew fearful of mind. Their hearts filled with care. The lake-farers indeed Never believed that they would ever reach land Because of the battle of weather. There they beheld Christ, The Wielder, walking over the waves on the sea, Faring on foot. Into the flood he could Not sink, not sink into the sea; for the power of Him Himself Held Him on high. Their hearts became fearful, The minds of the men. They feared the mighty Fiend Had done this to deceive Him. Then their Dear Lord did speak unto them, The Holy Heaven-King; and said that He was their Lord, "Now in your minds Splendid and Mighty. Shall ye all take courage; nor be ye frightened of spirit. But behave ye boldly: for I am God's Bairn, The Son of Himself. and against the sea I shall help you, Against these flood-streams." Then a man did answer From upon the ship, a sage most worthy, Peter the good: that no longer he wished to endure the pain,

The woe of the water, "If Thou beest the Wielder, Master Most Good, as I think in my mind, Bid me come unto Thee across the flood of the sea. Dry over the deep water if Thou art indeed my Lord, The Master of Many." Then Mighty Christ Hight him come unto Him. He was soon ready, Stepped on the stem; and striding, he went Forth to the Lord; the flood held him upright, The man through God's might, until in his mind he began To dread the deep water, when he saw it driven — The wave — by the wind: The flood wound around him, The billows about him. But even as in his mind he did doubt.

So the water grew weak beneath him. And into the wave, Into the sea-stream he sank; and straightway he called To the Bairn of God and eagerly bade Him, That He save him there, since he, His thane, was In distress and in need. Then the Lord of the Nations Embraced him with His hands and His arms, and straight-

way did ask him,

Why he was doubtful. "Why, thou should'st trust well And know most verily that the might of the water, Of the sea itself could not hinder thy steps, That of the lake-flood thy feet for as long as thou

believest in Me,

In thy heart hath a faith steadfast. Now I shall help thee, In thy need shall save thee." The Almighty so took him, The Holy Man by the hand: here again the clear water Became firm under foot, and they fared together Both step in step, until they came aboard ship, Stepped from the stream. And at the stem Sat the Best of All Bairns. Then the broad water, The stream became stilled; and they came to the shore, The landfarers indeed did come to the land and said thanks to the Through the battle of waters; Wielder. Gave praise to their Dear Lord in deed and in word.

They fell to His feet and did speak full many Words of wisdom; quoth that they right well knew That He Himself was verily the Son of the Lord Here in the world and wielded power Over the middle earth; and all men He could help, Whosoever they were, as He had done on the flood 'Gainst the battle of waters.

XXXVI

Then All-Wielding Christ

Turned His steps from the sea: The Son of the Lord,

God's only Child. Heathens did come to Him,

Foreign folk fared to Him there. For from afar

They had heard of His good works: that so many true words He did speak; for He longed greatly to further such

folk,

So that straightway they would serve God gladly,

Becoming true vassals of the King of Heaven,

The many of mankind. So He made His way across Judea,

Sought out the city of Sidon; His disciples He had with Him,

Christ's followers good. There a woman came toward Him From another tribe: of aethling birth was she,

From the kith of Canaan-land; she bade the Lord Christ so strong,

The Holy One, to grant her His help: quoth that great trouble had come to her,

Sorrow for the sake of her daughter; said she was ensnared by sickness,

Deceived by treacherous devils. "Now is her death at hand.

The wrathful wights have robbed her of wit. Now I beg Thee, my All-Wielding Ruler,

Thou Son of David himself, from such sickness release her,

That Thou mayest mercifully protect this poor maid

But All-Wielding Christ gave From the grievous devils." Her no answer. Therefore she went after Him, Followed Him boldly, till she came to His feet, And weeping did speak unto Him. The disciples of Christ Bade the Master that He be mild in His heart To the woman. Then had ready His word The Son of the Lord, and unto His disciples He spoke: "First shall I be of use to the folkships here, To the people of Israel, so that a pious spirit They shall have for their Lord. For they are in need of help: The land-folk are lost; they have left and forsaken The word of the Wielder: with doubts are they troubled these people — Nor is the host of Israel Harboring treacherous hearts. but they are unbelieving, Willing to hear their Lord; Then to the rest of mankind The men in their Master. Help shall come later." Lo, most zealously then The woman begged with her words, that All-Wielding Christ Become mildly inclined, that she might henceforth enjoy Her child, having her hale. Then the Lord spoke to her, The Magnificent and Mighty. "No man," quoth He, "hath the right, No person ever, to do good or give alms in such manner, That his own bairns will be bereft of their bread, Deprived 'gainst their will, so that they suffer great pain, and feedeth his hound-dogs with Grim, hateful hunger; their food." "what Thou speakest "True it is, Wielder," quoth she, indeed with Thy words, Why, oft 'neath the tables Most truly dost say. In the halls of the lords, the puppies hop hither full many of which fall And yon for the crumbs, The Peace-Bairn From the board of their master." of God heard

The will of the woman, and with words He did speak: "Well that thou, wife, hast goodness of will. Great is thy faith in the power of God, In the Lord of the Land-folk. Lo, all will be done For the life of thy bairn, even as thou hast bidden of Me!" And straightway was she healed, as the Holy Lord had said With words of truth; and the wife was happy That henceforth she would be blessed with joy in her bairn. Christ the Healer had helped her indeed, Had snatched her away from the strength of the Fiend, Guarded her against the loathsome wight. The Wielder went forth. sought Him another borough, The Best of All Bairns Which was so thick with the throngs of the Jews, Settled with south-dwellers. There, I discovered, He greeted His followers whom in His goodness he had chosen, Disciples who gladly stayed for His wise speech. ۴T shall ask of you all, With My words," quoth He, "My followers: What say the Jews, That notorious folk, who I am among men?" Happily His friends gave answer to Him, "The Jewish folk," they said, His disciples: "The earls are not of one mind. Some say Thou art Elias, The soothsayer wise, who was here long ago, A good earl among these folk; some say Thou art John, Our Dear Lord's herald. who once did dip The world-folk in water. But with words they all say, That Thou art some sort of noble, some aethling man, Some soothsayer or prophet, who hath taught the people Once before with his words. And once again Thou art come to this light To teach the kith of mankind." Wielding Christ spake again:

"What quoth ye that I be?" quoth He, "My followers, My landsmen beloved?" Then not late with his words was he, Simon Peter; but straightway he spoke — One for them all — of good spirit was he: Daring in thought, he was dear to the Lord.

XXXVII

"Thou art truly the All-Wielder's Son. The Living God, who created the light, Christ, King Eternal: so willingly do we quoth, We Thy disciples, that Thou art God Himself, The Best of All Healers." Then his Lord spoke to him, "So blessed art thou, Simon," quoth He, "Son of Jonas, thou thyself couldst not have Marked such thoughts in thy mind; nor could any man's tongue Show thee with words. But the Wielder Himself did this for thee, that thou spakest so The Father of All Folk-Bairns, forthright, So deep of thy Liege. Dear shall be thy reward, Limpid and pure thy belief in thy Lord: like unto a stone is thy spirit. So strong art thou like unto a rock; and the children of men shall call thee Saint Peter; and on this stone men shall build My great hall, There shall His family, His household God's holy house. All gather, blessed, together, and against thy strength, Thy power, the portals of hell cannot stand. To thee I present it. The key to Heaven's kingdom, so that o'er the Christian folk Thou shalt after Me have the most might; the spirits of men Shall all come to thee; for thou shalt claim great power

O'er the bairns of mankind. Whomsoever thou would'st bind Here on this earth: for him both is done, For him the kingdom of heaven is locked and for him hell lieth open, The burning fire; and whomsoever thou would'st again unbind. Whose hands unfetter: for him is Heaven's kingdom Unlocked, the greatest of lights, and life everlasting, God's fair, green meadows. With such gifts I would Reward thee thy faith. Still I would not that ye proclaim now to the folk, To the multitude yet, that I be the Mighty Christ, The Own Bairn of God. For the Jews shall still bind Me, and torture Me most terribly, In guiltiness tie Me Do Me great wrongs here in Jerusalem, With spear-point attacking, with the sharp edge against Me, Relieve Me of life. Through the power of the Lord here in this light I shall arise though from death on the third day." Then in sorrow was he, Simon Peter, the best of all thanes; Most grieved he of mind. And to the Master he spoke, The warrior in whispers. "That is not the will of the Wielder, Of Mighty God," quoth he. "It cannot be that Thou should'st endure Such pain 'mid this people. There is plainly no need, O Holy Master!" Then Christ Mighty and Marvelous, The Lord, did reply he was dear to His heart — "thou art now opposed to My will, "Why," quoth He, Thou knowest this folk, Thou best of My thanes? Hast ken of the customs of men. But God's might, which I must accomplish, With words of truth That wittest thou not. I can tell thee much: that here 'mid the people stand

Disciples of Mine who shall not die, before they shall see Heaven's Not begin the trip hence, light, The kingdom of God." From His disciples He chose Soon after that Simon Peter, those good men twain, Jacob and John, Both of the brothers. And He betook Himself then upon a mountain With His disciples aside from the others — God's Bairn so blessed With His thanes three: Lord of this Folk, Wielder of World, He would show unto them Wonders a-many, such tokens, so that they should trust and believe That He Himself was the Son of the Lord, The Holy Heaven-King. At a high wall They climbed stone and cliff, till they came to a place, These men, close to the clouds, which All-Wielding Christ, The Strongest of Kings, had Himself chosen, That He would reveal most verily His godliness To His disciples, His divinity — A bright, shining picture.

XXXVIII

When He bent low in prayer, Lo, there upon the mountain His whole appearance, His garb became changed. His cheeks became light, Shone like the bright, shimmering sun: so shone God's Bairn.

Light was His body, and long rays shone Radiant around the All-Wielder's Bairn, His raiment so white To the sight as is snow. Then a marvel was shown

Up there on the mountain: Elias and Moses

Did come there to Christ to exchange words with Him, The Strongest of Kings. There was winsome conversing, Good words among men; where the Son of God Would fain have talk with those famous men. So blithe it was, up there on the mountain. And the light shone bright, And it was like unto that goodly garden, that meadow green, Like unto Paradise itself. And Peter there spoke, Hero hardy of spirit and to His Lord he did speak, Greeted the Son of God, "Good it is to be here, If Thou hast so chosen, O Christ All-Wielding, That men on these hights build Thee a house, Make it most splendid; and for Moses a second; And a third for Elias. This is the home of joy, The most winsome possession." Just as he spoke these words, from the clouds light shone The air clove in twain: clear. A glistening glow. And the good men Then from the clouds rolled Were wrapped in a radiance. God's holy voice. And to the heroes there He Himself said that this was His Son. The Most Beloved of the Living: "I like Him well, To My heart He is dear. Ye shall hear Him, Following Him gladly." Then the followers of Christ, Those men, could not withstand the cloud's clear light, The word of God and its might, which is great. But they fell forward, and they feared indeed They would lose their lives. Then the Land-Warden did go to them; And with His hand He touched them, the Best of Healers, Hight they should feel no dread: "No harm shall come to you here which ye have now seen, From these blessed sights These marvelous things." Then the men's spirits In their hearts were healed, and healed were their minds; In their breasts there was comfort: for they saw God's Bairn

Standing alone. The other, though, Heaven's light, was again hidden. Then the Holy Christ Went Him down from the mountain, and He did then bid His followers that they tell not unto the Jewish folk "Until I Myself here Of the sight they had seen. stand up from My death, In splendor shall Arise from My rest. Then may ye relate it, Spread it over the mid-earth and its many peoples, Wide o'er this world.

XXXIX

Then Wielding Christ

Went again to Galilee-land. Great Christ sought His landsmen, The home of His kin. With bright, clear pictures

He spoke much unto them. And the Son of God Concealed not sorrowful tidings from His blessed dis-

ciples,

But openly He said all things to them,

His followers good, how the Jewish folk

Would torture Him all terribly. Then troubled were they,

The wise men, greatly, and grieved at heart,

Saddened of spirit, when they heard their Lord,

The Son of the Wielder, telling with words

What He would endure here midst the earth-folk,

Willingly all among the people of world. Then All-Wielding Christ,

The Man, went from Galilee and sought a city of Jews. They came to Capernaum. There He found a king's thane, Proud 'mid the people; quoth that he was the trusted courier

Of the noble emperor; he greeted thereafter Simon Peter; and said he had been sent here That he remind each man and every Of his head-tax which he must pay as a tithe

Here to the court: "Nor can any man hesitate,

But he payeth unto him his choicest treasure. Only your Master alone hath omitted His tithe. Nor will my lord like this, Hath neglected it. When they inform him of this, the aethling emperor." Then Simon Peter went straightway. He so wanted To tell this unto His Master. But in His mind Holy Christ already knew; for from Him naught could be hidden, Not even a word; but He well knew indeed The mind of each man; but he admonished His thane, Simon Peter of fame, that into the sea He should cast his hook. "Whatsoever thou dost catch, What fish at the first," quoth He, "from the flood thou must draw it, Wedge open its jaws: from under its chin mayest thou take Golden guilders, with which thou shalt give The man enough of the tax which he seeketh from us, from Me and from thee." He needed bid him thereafter no more, Give him no other words: but the Good Fisher did go, Simon Peter; into the sea he did cast His angle, his hook in the wave; and verily then He drew a fish from the flood. Its jaws He tore open with his two hands. And from under its chin took The golden guilders. And all he so did as God's Son Had told him with words. So was the strength of the Wielder, His might made manifest, how each man and all Should most willingly pay to his world-lord here The taxes and tolls determined against him, And do so gladly; nor should any forget this, Neglect or deny in his mind; but mild in his heart, He should serve him humbly. So should he work The will of God and still gain the grace Of his worldy master.

So Holy Christ did teach

"If against you," quoth He, "any man His disciples good: then take ye this man aside, Do act in sin, and speak ve wise counsel This warrior, with whispers, Should he not be worthy And teach him with words. then fetch ye hither To hear your teachings, Other men and good; and with his grim works reproach him, Say them forth most soothly. If then his sins His evil deeds do not grieve him, so make ye them open to others, Most revealed to the multitude, and let many men Know his wrongs. Then easily he will repent his works, In his heart indeed rue them, when he heareth that so many folk, Bairns of mankind have watched them and warded off with their words The works of his evil. If even then he will not change, then let this man fare forth, But scorneth such a many, and let him be loathsome unto Believe him a heathen, you in your hearts. In your minds avoid him, unless God the Mild, The High King of Heaven, grant help unto him, The Father of All Folk-Bairns." Peter then asked, The best of all thanes then questioned the Lord, "How often shall I absolve from sin this man against me, Beloved Lord? Who hath done loathsome work How many times shall I take from him all his blame For his wicked works, before rewarding the wrongs By wreaking vengeance?" Then spoke again the Warden of the Land. The Son of God did give answer unto His goodly thane: "I shall never say unto thee: seven, as thou thyself hast spoken,

Hast made known with thy mouth. I add more thereto: Seven times seventy! So shalt thou absolve each one

So I would give unto thee From evil, from sin. Teachings, a word most true. Since to thee I have lent the power, That thou beest the highest one of my household To many of mankind; so shalt thou be mild unto them, Merciful unto the multitude." Then a young man Came to the Teacher, and Jesus Christ he did question: "Master Most Good," quoth he, "What must I do, the realms of Heaven?" So that I may reach had he gained indeed, All goodly riches Many a treasure, too, though mildness of heart Then spake God's Bairn unto him; He bore in his breast. "Why speakest thou of a Good One? There is no man But that One Single One, who shaped this All ----This world in its winsomeness. If 'tis thy will, Then shalt thou hold to the holy teachings, Those which the Old Law command thee follow: That thou shalt not slay; nor swear falsely, Neither commit adultery; nor bear thou false witness Nor steal nor cause strife; nor be thou too stubborn of mind. Nor hating nor hateful; commit thou no robbery. Forsake thou all envy; to thine elders show kindness, To thy father and mother. Be thou fair to thy friends, To thy nearest be gracious. Then wilt thou be granted joy In the kingdom of Heaven, if thou wilt keep this And follow God's teachings." Again the young man did speak: "All things have I done," quoth he, "as thou now dost teach that I have no whit left undone And tellest with words; Since the days of my childhood." Then Christ did begin "One thing," He told him, To turn His eyes onto him. "Is still lacking in thy works. If thou hast the will, That thou would'st serve thy Lord most perfectly still, Then shalt thou take thy hoard and thy treasure;

Thou shalt rid thyself of thy riches all, Order thy precious jewels to be portioned out And shared with the poor. Then shalt thou have A hoard in Heaven. Come thou then as healed unto Me And follow My path. Then shalt thou have peace ever after." Then the words of the Christ caused great worry and care To the child-young man. His mind was sore, About his heart his spirit. For he had great wealth, Had won great treasure; he again turned away. In his breast he felt burdened indeed, In his heart most heavy. Then Christ looked after him, since He so willed, The All-Wielder, And said to His disciples, who were there, that it was even so hard For a rich man to reach the realms of Heaven: "More easily may an elephant, though it be unseemly great, Go through a needle's eye, be that eye so narrow — Slip through more softly, than this soul into Heaven. The soul of this wealthy man, who hath turned his will to world-things entirely, The thoughts of his mind, and mindeth not the great might of God."

XLI

Him answered then an aethling most excellent and honored, and speaking, he bade Simon Peter; His Blessed Lord: "What reward shall we look for, What goods to repay us we, who have forsaken Our lands and our heritage for love of Thy following, Our farmyards and families, and chosen Thee for our Lord, Following Thy footsteps? What good will there be for us, What long-lasting reward?" The Lord of the Land-folk Himself said unto them: "When I shall come to sit," quoth He

on that most Renowned Day, "In My might and My power When I shall deal out the dooms to the people of earth, Then may ye sit with your Master, may wield His affairs ----Ye may judge Israel's aethling folk By its deeds: so honored will ye be up there. For I verily say unto you: whosoever acteth on this earth, So that for My love he leaveth the dear home of his kin. He shall receive a tenfold reward, if he acteth Loyally, with pureness of heart. Above shall he have Heaven's light. Eternal life will lie open." Therefore the Lord, The Best of all Bairns, began to speak pictures, Told how a man of great fortune in former days Lived 'mongst the land-folk: "He had laid aside wealth, Gathered great treasures unto him; and ever with gold He was decked and with silken stuff and with the sheen Of fine jewels; and so many goods he had stored away In his buildings; and at banquet He sat every day. There was splendid carousing And joy on his benches. There was a beggar-man also: Lame of limb was he and Lazarus hight; And every day he did lie in front of the door. Where he knew the rich man received food in the guesthall And sat at his banquet; and outside bided The poor man; nor was he ever permitted within, Nor could he bring it about by his begging that bread Be brought out to him, such bread as had fallen from the dish Down beneath their feet. Not a thing did he gain From the high man who ruled over the house; but only the hounds of that man Came and licked on his wounds, as he lay there And endured his hunger. Not one whit of help Came from the man of fortune. Then I found out that fate Admonished the poor man most mightily Of his end-days: that he should renounce

His life and the tumult of men. The Lord's angels Did receive his spirit and so led him from there, So that the poor man's soul did sit in the lap Of Abraham. Ever henceforth he could now dwell Then Weird came also, In all winsomeness. That fateful hour, to the man of fortune, the loathsome So that he should forsake this light; wights Lowered his soul, sank it deep into swarthy hell, In the furnace below to the will of the Fiend, Grubbed him deep into the Grim One's home. There he could gaze on where he dwelt above The good man, see Abraham, In a life of joy; and Lazarus sat Blithe in his bosom; received bright reward For his poverty and wretchedness all. And the rich man there Lay hot in hell, and he did cry up from there: "Father Abraham," quoth he, "It is fearfully needful for me, That thou becomest mild to me in thy mind, Merciful unto me in this flame. Send Lazarus unto me, That he fetch cold water for me in this furnace. Hotly I burn alive in this hell and I am in need of thy help, That he slake my tongue with his little finger. My tongue hath its token now: woeful torture for my evil counsel, For my sinful speech. Now is come to me such reward!" Abraham answered unto him he was the ancient father — "Ponder in thy heart," quoth he, "what thou hast had Of wealth in the world. Why, thou hast wasted thy rapture all. Thy goods in the gardens, and what was to be given Hence unto thee. Lazarus here Endured wrong in the light; had plenteous grief And pain in the world. For this he shall now have wealth,

Living in happiness. But thou shalt suffer hot flames, The burning fire. Nor may any betterment Come hither to hell. So hath Holy God Made it fast with hands and with arms; nor may any one fare, it is here too thick Any thane through the darkness under us." Then the earl spake again to Abraham: From that hot hell did he beg for help, That he do send Lazarus himself "so that he may tell Down to the tumult of men, Unto those brethren mine how I here burn And suffer great pain. Among the people, The folk, there are five: I am in great fear That they shall also become sinful and shall suffer such pangs In this great fire." Then again spoke unto him Old Father Abraham, quoth that they ever had had — The folk — the old law there in their land, The commandments of Moses, and from many a prophet Their words also. "If they are willing To hold and to keep them, then need they never enter into hell. To sear in that fire. If they so fulfill that Which those do bid them who read in the books To teach mankind. But if they are unwilling to accomplish that, They will also not listen to Him, who riseth from here, A Man from death. In their minds let them which seemeth sweeter Choose for themselves To win so long as they are still in this world, So that in the hereafter they have evil or good!"

XLI

So did He teach the land-folk all with His words of light,

The Best of All Bairns; and with bright pictures A-many, the Mighty Lord did speak to mankind: Quoth that a blessed man had begun to gather Men in the morning, promised them money — He, the first of his family — a very fine reward: Said that unto each and to all he would give A coin of pure silver. So came together Many men in the winegarden and he commanded their work -Gathered early at morn. Then also others did come in the forenoon. And some came at the midday the men to the work; Some came then at nones, that was a late time Of the summer-long day. Some even later did come: At the eleventh hour it was. And the evening arrived And the sun went to rest. Then he himself bade His overseers all, this lord of earls. his money and pay, That they give unto each man To each workman his rightful reward; hight that they were to give first, To those who had been last, the land-folk in coming, The workers to work; and with his words he commanded them To give unto those men their mite last of all: To those who had come there first willingly to the work. They weened greatly That they should receive a larger reward, More pay for their work; but to all the people Was equally given. Then were they angered, Were all in a fury, those who came first to that place. "In the morning we came here," quoth they, "and toiled much of the day In hard work, in labor during the unmeasured heat, In the shining sun. Now thou givest unto us no more of silver Than thou dost to the others, who were here only a while Doing their work." Then had ready his word The head of the household; quoth that he had not promised them

More pay for their work. "What," quoth he, "I wield here the power To give to each man and all an equal reward, Equal pay for his work." Thus All-Wielding Christ Meant, however, a mightier thing, when He spoke to the men, Gave the folk such a word about the wine-garden, How the workers did come in an unlike way, The men to their work. So shall the bairns of this world. The children of mankind, do in that clear, marvelous light, Men on God's meadow; some may begin to prepare themselves Already in childhood. Such a spirit is chosen, His will is good, and he avoideth the ways of the world, Leaveth behind him his lusts. He will never let it, his body, but eagerly he learneth Entice him to evil; Wisdom and the law of God, and leaveth behind The will of the devil, the dire foe: so doeth he ever in this world! He is so in this light, until there cometh of life, Of all age the evening; and he fareth thence and up on his way. There his work all will be rewarded. in the realm of God. Repaid with good who in the morning Thereby was meant those workmen Early began with their work, who until evening Did so continue their tasks. Some also came to the work having squandered the morning At the midmorn, And spoiled their day's duties. So do many dullards, For much folly have they done, Frivolous folk. Varied deeds in their youth. Yea, they have learned wrong, and such words of evil, Have learned scornful speech Until their childhood passeth away. And after their young years God's grace doth admonish them

Blithe in their breasts. They turn to the better, Both in words and in works. and lead well their lives And rewards come to them To their very ends. For all their good works in the kingdom of God. Some men, however, forsake their sin Not until mid-life, their dire misdeeds, turning their minds To blessed things; and they begin good works through the power of God And repent their wrong talk and rue their bitter deeds Well in their hearts; there cometh to them help from God, So that they believe as long as life keepeth within them: and receive their reward, With that they fare forth A goodly prize from Lord God; nor are there gifts any better. Some begin still later, when they have become old already And their age grows to its end; then their evil works begin to be Loathsome to them in this light; and the learning of God Admonishes them in their minds and their hearts become milder. They do good deeds to the end of their days and reap their reward, when they repair from here, The high kingdom of Heaven, Receive their rewards. as those men did reap theirs Who came to the work in the vineyards there At the none of the day, at the ninth hour indeed. Yet some grow so ancient and still have not atoned for their sins, But increase them with every evil, until their evening doth come unto them, And their world and its winsomeness passeth away; then they begin to dread their reward; They Their sins make them sorrowful quite in their hearts. ponder sadly that they themselves Have done wrongs as long as they possessed their power, nor can they repent,

Atone for their deeds by other good deeds done so well --but every day They beat their breasts with their hands and they weep bitter tears. begging their Holy Lord, Crying out loud their lament, The Mighty God that He grow mild; nor doth He permit their minds to despair — So merciful is He, who wieldeth His might over all. The longing of no man on earth but the Wielder Himself doth Doth He want to reject; grant unto him The holy kingdom of Heaven. Help is come to him later. All shall receive their reward, though they are not come All at one time, the kith of mankind. Still the Lord, mighty and wise, whosoever receiveth His belief: Giveth pay to all people, He granteth to all the kith of this One kingdom of Heaven: earth Mighty Christ did mean that, A reward, to all men. The Best of All Bairns, when He spoke His parables Of how the workers came to the wine-gardens, The men, all differently. Yet each did receive Likewise shall the children of Full pay from his liege. earth Receive their reward from Righteous God Himself, Most lovely pay, though some come so late.

XLIII

Then He hight them, His disciples, His followers twelve come closer: they were the truest of

men

On this earth unto Him. And the Mighty One did explain Unto them one more time what troubles there were Standing before them. "No doubt can there be," quoth He. Quoth they should go to Jerusalem to the folk of the Jews. "There shall all things be accomplished amid the people

And be brought to pass, even as in earlier times Wise men did speak with their words about Me. Among the strong folk there they shall sell Me, The men to the host. Then shall my hands be held bound, My arms and fingers be fettered; full much shall I suffer, Scorn shall I hear, and hurtful speech, Mockery much and many a threat. They will torture Me wounded with the edge of their weapons, Rob me of life. But through the might and the strength of the Lord, I shall arise again on the third day from death to this light. I have not come, however, to the people here, So that the children of men have labor for Me, That the landsmen should serve Me, nor shall I so ask them, Make such demands of the kith of mankind; but I shall be of use And for all those men Unto them, serving them meekly. I shall give My soul. And I Myself Will release them with My life — those who bide here so long — The many of mankind awaiting My help." Then He fared foreward. For He had firmness of spirit Blithe in His breast the Bairn of the Lord. He would seek in Jerusalem the folk of the Jews: That was His will. Well did He know The hate-raging hearts of the people and the hard strife And their wicked desire. The hordes then went Before Jericho's bastions, and the Bairn of the Lord Was mighty among the multitude. There men sat by the way: Blind were they both: they had need of betterment ----Both these blind men from the Bairn of God. Since for so long they had done without light. They heard the crowd coming and, most curious, did ask — That twain wholly blind — what man, high-born and mighty, Was the first there amid the clans of the folk,

The noblest at their head. Then one hero replied unto them, from Galilee-land, Quoth that Jesus Christ there The Best of all Healers, was the highest of all: Foremost was He 'mid His folk. Full joyous were they of heart, when they knew that God's Bairn, Both the blind men, The Christ, was there 'mid the folk. They called unto Him with their words: Loudly they called Holy Christ, bade that He find them help, "Master and Liege, David's Son, be Thou mild unto us with Thy deeds. Save us from our distress! As Thou doest for so many Of the kith of mankind; Thou art kind to the multitude! Thou helpest and healest!" Then the host of the people With their words began to forbid them from calling the Wielder, But the two listened not, Lord Christ, so loudly. But ever more and still more over the crowd of the men Christ Healer did stop, Did they call most loudly. The Best of all Bairns, hight that they bring them to Him, Lead them to Him through the land-folk; and spoke alike wisely "Why seek ye help of And mildly in front of the many. Me here?" quoth He. They bade Him heal them, bade that He make that their even be opened, That He lend unto them of this light, that they might see the bustling life Of the folk, might see the shining rays of the sun, This winsome, fair world. And the Wielder did so. And with His hands He did touch them; and He granted His help, of the blind men twain, That the eyen be opened That they might see earth and heaven through God's holy strength,

The light and the land-folk. Then they lauded God, Praised our Lord that they could enjoy the light of this day. And the two went with Him and followed His tracks. A favor was theirs; and the Wielder's work was made widely known,

And many did marvel.

XLIV

A mighty picture, A token was shown there where the blind men sat and endured wicked pain, By the wayside Most bereft of the light: by that are meant the children of men, how Almighty God All of mankind; In the very beginning through His own great power Himself created that single couple, He gave them the upward way, Adam and Eve. The kingdom of Heaven, but the hated one was yet near, The Fiend with his wiles, and works of wickedness, With sin he deceived them. until they forsook it the light — Beauty unending. They were banished both To a worse place indeed, to this mid-world here, Endured in the darkness dire human toil, Won unhappy exile, lost their worldly goods. They forgot God's kingdom, but gave the devils service, The Fiend's own bairns. Therefore were they blinded of heart. The children of men in this mid-world here, Since they would not know Him, God Mighty and Strong, The Heavenly Lord, who with His hands did create them, Worked them so, as He willed. So was this world cast away, Forced into darkness and into great despair And the dale of death. They did sit along the way

Of the Lord, lamenting of heart, begging God's help; But aid could not be granted unto them before All-Wielding God the True Son of Himself: Would send unto these The Mighty Lord sent Him to this mid-world here for the bairns of mankind, To make free the light Opening for them eternal life, so that they could know the God ever Mighty. The All-Wielding Lord, I may eke tell unto you, if ye are so willed so that the Healer's, the Savior's To hope and to hear, strength Ye may recognize well how His coming became Great help to the many in this mid-world here; What He, our Master, did mean so many a thing With His acts and His deeds, and why that well-known town Is hight Jericho, the one which standeth there in Judea, Made well with its walls. That is named for the moon, For that bright constellation: it cannot escape its time, But on every day it doeth one or the other: It waneth or waxeth. So do in the world. the bairns of mankind. On this mid-earth here. They fare forth and follow, and from them the old die away, And the young come again and are born. And the children of men Wax great until Weird once more taketh them out of the world. This the Bairn of God did mean, as He left the bastions. The Good Christ from Jericho, that the children of men Would not be healed from their blindness, not see the bright beam before He Himself had assumed And beauty eternal, in this mid-world here. Man's body and flesh Then the children of men. who before sat in sin And in suffering, bereft of their sight, they did perceive and did know Enduring the darkness — That to this folk the Healer was come from the kingdom of Heaven,

They could soon recognize Christ the Best of All Kings. Him, Had perceived His path. Then the people cried out so greatly, The men to the Mighty God, that He became mildly inclined, But their wickedness kept them The Wielder, unto them. Most dreadfully, the dire sins, which once they had done, but they could not prevent Prevented their believing; For unto All-Wielding God The will of the people. They did call most loudly, until He did grant unto them wholeness, the life never ending. So that they might see Eternal light open before them and journey on So did the blind men mean To the bright dwelling above. called to God's Bairn, Who at Jericho-burg Who did cry aloud that He grant them healing, Light in this life. But a great lot of the folk both before and behind Him, Who stood in His way, Kept Him away with their words. So do those weighted with sin in this mid-world here. Unto the kith of mankind Hear ye now how the blind men acted after they had been healed. So that they could see the light of the sun they went along with their Hear what they then did: Master, Followed in His footsteps, spoke full many a word, Lauding the Lord's Herdsman: so do the bairns of the land-folk still Widely here in this world, since All-Wielding Christ Hath illuminated them with His lesson, granted them light everlasting, Granted the kingdom of God to every good man, The high, heavenly light and His help to that end To whosoever worketh to follow along on His way.

Then Christ the Savior, the Good One, soon came Near to Jerusalem. And now there approached Him all of good mind toward Him. A great multitude They received Him with joy, and before Him they strewed The way with their garments, their weeds; and with herbroots, With bright colored blossoms and the branches of trees they did strew it, and it so then came to pass The field, with fair palms; That the Son of God did wish to go To that most hated town. Joyous, the multitude Of the people surrounded Him and raised songs of praise, The folk, all willingly: they said thanks to the Wielder That He Himself was come, He — Son of David — To visit the world-folk. Then Wielding Christ, The Good, saw Jerusalem. The Best of All Men Beheld the town's bastions and the buildings of Jews, and God's house as well, The high-horned halls The most winsome of temples. Then within Him welled

His thoughts 'gainst His heart. And the Holy Bairn Could not help weeping, but troubled of heart With many words He did speak — for His spirit was

sore.

"Woe unto thee, Jerusalem," He wailed, "that the word of thy Weird

Thou knowest not, nor what still shall come over thee, How thou shalt be surrounded by the strength of a host, How grim-minded men shall besiege thee mightily — The foe with its folk. For thou shalt never find peace With these men, or protection. Many will bring thee The weapon's point and its edge, bring thee words of war,

Consume thy folk-clans with the flames of fire, Lay waste to thy bailiwicks; fell these high walls To the earth itself. Not a rock will stand upright,

But all the townships surrounding No stone on another. Jerusalem will be desolation for the folk of the Jews, that their time draweth nearer; Since they cannot see But their souls are in doubt, and they ween not at all, That the strength of the Wielder is visited on them." Then the Lord of Mankind went with the multitude When the Bairn of God Into the bright borough. with His host of men, Went into Jerusalem Was there with His vassals. there waxed the greatest of all songs:

With such loud voices they sang holy words. Lo, the crowds of the folk did laud the word of the

Lord,

The Best of all Bairns. The burg was astir, The people were frightened and asked first of all Who was that who was come there with the crowd, With that multitude great. Then spoke a man in reply: Quoth that this was Jesus Christ from Galilee-land, Who was come as a Savior from the city of Nazareth, Wise Soothsayer and Prophet, as a Help to the people. Then the Jews, who had a grudge against Him already, Became hate-filled of heart and hurting of spirit, Because the people did give unto Him so much praise, Did love so their Master. The dull-minded folk did go forth, So that they might speak words with All-Wielding Christ. Bade that He hight His disciples be silent here, Bade Him not to permit them, the people, to praise Him "It doth worry this folk," So much with their words: quoth they,

"These burghers here." Then again spoke God's Bairn: "If ye keep the children of men," quoth He, Lord Christ, "From praising with words the All-Wielder's might, Then shall the stones still shout it forth To the kinship of men, and the strong, tall cliffs, Before it is left undone; but that He shall be lauded Wide and far in the world." Then He went into the temple. He entered God's house. There He found a horde of the

Jews:

so many together, There were countless men, Who had chosen for themselves a selling-place in there, Haggling o'er multitudes of small matters: and moneychangers did sit For transactions daily Within the temple. Then God's Bairn was enraged, They held it ready. Drove them out of the temple far; quoth that it was a far righter deed. If the children of Israel should come there to pray: "And here in this house let them pray for help, That the Master of Victories make them free from sin ---Rather than that thieves should bargain their things in the house, And villainous men make their usurious deals. The worst of all wrongs. No whit of honor ye folk of the Jews." Know ye in God's house, So did the Lord All-Powerful empty and order The holy house; and of help this was To the many of mankind, who had heard of His might, Of His strength from afar. And they came there faring Over the long, long way. So many a one weak of limb, So many of the halt were healed, and the crippled of

hand,

And the blind were made whole. So did the Bairn of God Do unto the willing folk, since He wields might over all, Over the lives of men and their lands as well.

XLVI

Before the temple He stood,	Strong Wielding Christ,
The Land-Warder Beloved,	and lo, He took heed
Of the hearts of the people,	and their will; He saw
a huge host	
Bringing great treasures t	o the well-known house,
Giving unto it gold, goodly webs of silk,	
Precious stones and jewels.	Wisely perceived He,
Our Lord Christ, all this.	There did come also a widow,

and she went to the altar, A poor, ill-weirded woman; And in that treasure-house she put down just two Small coins of bronze; she was simple of heart, Then spake All-Wielding Christ, A woman of good will. quoth that a far greater gift The Man, to His followers; Had she brought to the altar than any other son of mankind. "If wealthy men," He did tell them, "bring a treasuretrove, An honor here to the house, still they have left more at home Of the wealth they have won. Not so did this widow, When she gave all she had upon this altar: All the wealth she had won. Not a whit did she leave, No goods in her garden. Therefore is her gift more And worthier to the Wielder, since she gave with such will To the house of God. So shall she receive goodly reward, since she possessed such be-Most long-lasting return, lief." that All-Wielding Christ So I discovered Taught them with words each day in the temple, The Master of Mankind. And many stood 'round Him, A great folk of the Jews, and hearkened to the good word, Some were so blessed, The sweet word He spoke. Some men from the multitude. that in their minds and their hearts They began to learn and accept the lesson which the Warder of Lands, The Child of the Lord, did speak in His pictures. of Christ was all loathsome, To some again the lesson The All-Wielder's word. Of hate-willed heart Were all those who were the greatest among those governing, The princes of the people. These evil men did plan Trickery and snares with their words; they had taken adversaries these men of the highest one; To help them, were thanes of Herod ---

He who was present with an evil intent to overhear all they said — If the people did capture Him, that they might throw Him in chains, Might lay leg-fetters around His limbs — Around Him, the Christ without sin. The crowd did come toward Him. unto God's Bairn, Bitter-minded, to speak The evil adversaries, to address Him with words. "What, Thou art a sayer of law," quoth they, "unto all people? Thou revealest so wonderous much truth. Nor is it of worth unto Thee To conceal aught from a man because of his might; But ever Thou speakest only that which is right, And with Thy teaching Thou leadest the crowds of the land-folk Upon God's way. Among the people not a whit of reproach Now we shall ask Thee: Can one find in Thee. That rich and great ruler what right doeth he have? Caesar from Rome, who seeketh his tithe From the clansmen here and hath counted out What monies each man of us shall pay every year, How much of the head-tax. Say, what in Thy heart hast Thou thought? Is this right or no? Counsel Thy countrymen well, For we have need of Thy teachings." They wanted His answer, "Why, ye liars all But well did He know their will. Against truth," quoth He, "do ye tempt Me so boldly?" But it shall be of no help, no advantage to you. That ye deceivers seek to capture me secretely." He commanded that they carry forth the coins for the showing, The Jews did bring out "Which are your duty to give." A coin of silver; and many did see How indeed it was minted; in the middle appeared

The pictured head of their lord. Then Holy Christ did question them As to whose likeness lay in this picture. They replied that it was the world emperor there "who rules o'er this realm, From the city of Rome, Wielding power here in this world." "That will I verily," quoth He, "Say unto you, that ye give unto him his own, To the world-lord his wealth, and to All-Wielding God Bring that which is His. That should be your souls, The spirits of men." Then the minds of the Jews were made Small in the gathering. The scoundrels assembled Could not win out with their words, as was indeed their will, To ensnare Him, since the Peace-Bairn of God Warded off their wickedness, and He verily Said unto them a soothy thing; still they were not so blessed. and it could then be of bene-That they could receive it

fit unto them.

XLVII

But they would not leave off, but instead ordered a woman led forth In front of the crowd; she had committed sin, Had truly done wrong; the woman had been taken and had forfeited her life, In adultery So that the bairns of mankind could deprive her of breath — Lay claim to her age: for so was the law. They began to question Him; the bold people there — Wicked they with their words: what they should do with this wife: Whether to kill her by torment or leave her quick and alive — Or what judgment He would deal for such a deed as this. "Thou wist," quoth they, "that Moses commanded these many With words of truth that any woman whosoever Is found in adultery must forfeit her life, And that with their hands the landsmen will unlife her By throwing sharp stones. Now Thou mayest see her here standing. Ensnared in her sin: sav what Thou willst!" His foes had the wish to ensnare Him with words. If He were to say that they should indeed let her live, Should permit her to leave here in peace, then would the people of Jews Say that He had opposed their ancient law, The people's own land-right. If He hight them rob her of life, The maid before the many; then would they say that no mildness of heart such as God's Bairn should in-He bore in His breast, deed possess. So for whichever word Holy Christ would speak To the people, the many, they would then punish Him, Would deal out His doom. This our Lord Christ did perceive. Right well did He know the turn of mind of these men, Their wicked wills, when He spoke then to the folk, To all the earls gathered around. "Which of you," quoth He "Standeth here without evil sin? Let him himself go to her And with his hands be the first of the earls here To pelt her with stones." Then the Jews stood about, Had their thoughts and were silent. Not a single than Could find opposition unto this speech. And each man was reminded of his own evil-mindedness, Of his own dark sins; not a one was sure enough That after this word he would venture to throw A stone against the woman; but they left her standing alone inside. of the Jews did go thence, The grim-minded people One after another, until there was not a single one Of the folk of the foe standing before them

Who would have wanted to rob this woman of her years and her life. Then I discovered that the Peace Bairn of God. the Best of all Men. Did question her. "Whence came this Jewish folk?" quoth He. "Thy opponents here, who have accused thee to Me -? Those who today have wanted to torment thee most terribly, To bereave thee of life have they done one whit of harm unto thee?" Then the woman gave answer again unto Him, Quoth that through the holy help of the Savior no one had harmed her To reward her sins. Then spake again All-Wielding Christ, The Master of Mankind. "Nor shall I do harm unto thee," He made reply, and unhurt, and let it be "But go thou hence, hale that henceforth thou sinnest no The care of thy heart, more." The Holy Bairn of the Lord had helped her indeed, Had protected her life. Then the people of Jews stood there, As bent on evil, as they had been in the beginning, Of wicked intent and wanting to continue their word-strife, Pondering, how to pursue it with the Peace-Bairn of God. They had put doubts in the faith of the people: The little folk standing about would far liefer Have accomplished His will, the word of God's Bairn, as their Lord did bid them. Have done even so, They strove toward right better than those men with riches. Held Him as their Lord; yea, as the Heaven-King even, And followed Him gladly. Then God's Son did go Within the temple. The people surrounded Him truly, The multitude of the men. He stood in their midst, Taught them, the land-folk, with words of light And in a voice loud and bright: there was great listening.

and He bade them thusly: And many a thane stood silent; "Whosoever of the people be oppressed with thirst — Let him come unto Me," quoth He, "and drink every day From that sweet spring. So may I say unto you, Whosoever of the bairns of mankind hath believed in Me Fast and firmly among the folk — that from him shall flow The living flood, flow from his body The gushing water, the great well-springs That are springs of life coming thence. This word shall come true. Shall be done unto all folk, whosoever hath believed rightly in Me." All-Wielding Christ, With this water The High King of Heaven did mean the Holy Ghost, How the children of men should receive Him, Light and reason and the life everlasting, The high kingdom of Heaven and Holy God's grace.

XLVIII

Then the people began to quarrel about the teachings of Christ

And about His words; haughty men stood about, Proud minded Jews — and they spoke much mockery, Heaped scorn upon Him, saying that they could hear full

well

That angry and wicked thought did speak out of Him. "Now He doth teach evil," quoth they, "with every word." And again others did speak: "Ye should not reproach Him who teacheth," quoth they, "for words of life come Mighty out of His mouth, and He worketh many a thing, Many a wonder here in this world: that is no wicked deed, Clearly not the might of the Fiend, else could not such good be accomplished by Him, But surely it cometh from All-Wielding God,

From His strength all rightly. That may ye well recognize In His words of truth, that He wieldeth power

Over all the earth." Then His opposers longed To take Him captive straightway or to cast stones on Him, Had they not feared there the multitude of the folk, Been afraid of the people. Then spoke the Peace Bairn of God. "Much good have I shown unto you," quoth He, "from God Himself, Both in words and in works. Now would ye give me wicked reward With your strong, hard hearts and pelt me with stones And bereave me of life." Then again the people replied, His dire opponents: "We do this not because of Thy deeds," quoth they, "That we should want to deprive Thee of life. But we do so because of Thy words, since Thou speakest such wickedness, Since Thou dost praise Thyself and sayest such blasphemy, Proclaiming before these Jews that Thou art God Himself, The Mighty Master and Lord; and Thou art merely a man like us. Then All-Wielding Christ Art come from these clans." No longer wished to list to the scorn of the Jews, The will of these wicked ones. But from the temple He went Over Jordan's stream. His disciples He had with Him, Those blessed thanes, who forever there tarried To accomplish His will. Another folk He did seek; The Lord Himself did work there, as was ever His wont, Teaching the land-folk: those who so wanted belief Each man should well do so ever In His Holy word. If he accepteth and receiveth it into his heart. Then I did hear there were come to Holy Christ Heralds from Bethany, and they said unto God's Bairn That women had sent them there on this errand — Mary and Martha, maidens most comely, Such winsome women. Both He knew well. They were sisters twain, whom in His spirit He Himself did love for their mildness of heart,

These women for their goodly will. Most verily they sent From Bethany for Him; for their brother was bedfast ---Lazarus he and they feared for his life. All-Wielding Christ, They bade that He come, The Holy, to help them. As soon as He heard them Speak about the sick man, He gave answer straightway, Said that Lazarus' sickness, though so serious it was, Would not do him to death. "But," He did say, "the love of the Lord Shall here be accomplished. Nor shall any harm come unto him The Son of the Lord did Himself stay there Two nights and two days. The time then drew near, That He teach these people the power He had, Teach the Jewish folk there in Jerusalem. Then the Son of the Lord did say to His thanes That He would again seek out the Jews across the Jordan. But His disciples did speak to Him in reply: "For what reason, good Master, goest Thou so gladly," Quoth they, "over there? Was it not recently there, That they thought to kill Thee because of Thy words? Did want to pelt Thee with strong, sharp stones? Now Thou strivest to go again, Among that fight-seeking folk. Thou hast foes enough, Overhaughty earls." Then one of the twelve, Thomas, did speak — he was truly an excellent man, "Let us never reproach His deeds," A loyal thane of his Lord. Quoth he, "nor reproach His will. But rather we should remain with Him, For that is the choice of Should suffer with our Lord. a thane: That he standeth steadfast with his Liege together, Doth die with Him at his doom. Let us all do so therefore: Let us follow His path, nor let our lives Be worth aught against His, unless we may die In this host with our Lord. So honor will live after us,

A good word before the kinships of men." So the disciples of Christ, became all of one mind, The aethling-born earls, Holding the will of their Lord. Then Holy Christ Himself that a sleep unto death Did say to His disciples, Lay on Lazarus on his couch. "He hath given up the light, Doth slumber on, on his bedstead. Now we shall fare on the way To awaken him there, so that he may again see this world Then your belief will henceforth Alive, see the light: Be strengthened still more. So went He hence o'er the flood: The Good Son of God did go with His vassals There to Bethany the Bairn of the Lord Himself with His disciples ---there where the sisters twain, their minds filled with care, Mary and Martha, Were sitting most sadly. Here was gathered together Much folk of the Jews from Jerusalem, Who wanted to comfort the women with words, So that they would lament less the death of Lazarus, Then as the Warder of The loss of the child-young man. Lands Did go through the garden, it spread around that God's Bairn and that He, so mighty, Had now arrived. Did tarry outside the castle. Then the twain, the women, Were most joyous indeed, when they heard that the Wielder, The Peace-Bairn of God. was now come unto them.

XLIX

'Twas the most wonderous joy for the woman to hear Of the Lord's coming and of the word of Christ. Her mind filled with care, Mary did go to the One so Mighty,

Lamenting, exchanged words and spoke with the Wielder, "Had you, my Master," Her heart muchly troubled. Quoth she, "been nearer, O Best of Saviors. Healer so good, I would never have needed to suffer such hurt. and my brother would not Such bitter care in my breast, now be dead. Lazarus, far from the light; but he would still be alive, Filled with this life. But I, my Lord, do believe Most steadfastly in Thee, Thou Best of all Teachers. If Thou would'st so bid the Bright Lord for aught, He would grant it straightway; Almighty God Would fulfill Thy will." Then spoke again All-Wielding Christ, Answering the woman. "Let not thy heart within thee" Quoth He, "become darkened, but I may make known unto thee In words of truth, that thou shalt have neither worry nor doubt. But that thy brother shall at the bidding of God, Through the might of the Lord arise from the dead In his own body itself." "So have I believed," quoth she, That it will thus come to pass when the world doth end, then again from the earth That he shall arise On the day of his doom: then the dead will become quick Through the might of the Lord; and so many of mankind Will arise from their rest." Then Christ the Ruler did speak, The Almighty did utter open words to the women; That He Himself was the Son of the Lord, For the bairns of mankind both a light and a life "Never shall he die, For the resurrection. Take leave of this life, who believeth in Me. Though the bairns of men do bury him deeply And cover him over with earth, he is not yet dead: The flesh is consigned to the soil, but the spirit is saved, And the soul is still sound." Then the good wife again did speak

"I verily believe," quoth she, To Him with Her words: "That Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Well may one see this. May know from Thy words that Thou wieldest power Through this holy creation over heaven and earth." Then I discovered that the other woman did come, Mary, with care-filled mind: and behind her came many Of the folk of the Jews gathered together. And to the Bairn of God She, saddened of spirit, did say, why she was sorrowed With such grief in her heart; she lamented with groans The losing of Lazarus, of the beloved man, Giving forth mournful moans, until the Almighty's Bairn Was indeed moved in His heart; and hot tears streamed, Welling up as He wept. And to the woman He spoke, Hight that they should lead Him, there where Lazarus was lying Consigned to the soil. A stone lay above him; A hard boulder did cover him. The Holy Christ hight Them remove the rock so that right well He might see the corpse, Might gaze on the body. Then despite the folk gathered 'round, Mary could not help making known the care of her mind, and to the Mighty One She did speak, "My Lord so Good," quoth she, "if one taketh away the stone, Removeth this rock, then I ween, it will reek from there. An unsweet stench will come forth, if I may so say Unto Thee with words of truth that there is no doubt of that ----Four days and four nights hath it been, since he was consigned To his grave there." He gave reply unto her, The All-Wielder unto the woman. "Why, I have verily told thee before, "quoth He, "If thou hast will to believe, then will it not be long Before thou shalt see, shalt know the strength of the Lord,

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The great might of God. Then many did go And hove up the hard stone. Then Holy Christ did gaze Upward with His eyes and said thanks unto Him Who had shaped this world. "Since Thou hearest My word," quoth He, "Thyself Lord of Victory, I will know that Thou doest so ever. But I do so only for the great folk of the Jews, That they may verily know that Thou hast sent Me into this world To teach them, this land-folk." Then He called unto Lazarus and hight him stand up With a loud, strong voice And go forth from the grave. And his ghost did return And enter his body. And he began moving his limbs: He stirred 'neath his weeds: but he was still wound in them, Held tight by his shroud. Then All-Wielding Christ did hight That they give him help. Then the men did go And unwound his weeds. Winsome, he rose, Lazarus to this light. His life had been granted him, So that he might spend the fated span of his days Henceforth in peace. The twain rejoiced full well, nor may anyone Mary and Martha; than that the sisters twain Truly say otherwise Were indeed happy of heart. Many did wonder, Those of the Jewish folk, when they did see him Rise sound from his grave him, whom sickness had taken before And whom they had dug deep down into the earth, Him, cut loose from his life. Henceforth he could live Hale and sound in his home. So may the Heaven-King's, May God's great power protect the life Of so many a man, and may help him 'gainst the hate Of the Fiend — Holy God, to whomsoever He giveth His grace.

Then the minds of so many of mankind and their thoughts as well

Were won for the Christ, when they themselves did see His holy works, since in this world such wonders Had never before come to pass. There were also some

people,

Such strong-minded men — the might of God they had no will To acknowledge openly, but against His great power They fought with their words: for the Wielder's message, His lesson, was so loathsome to them, that they sought other landsmen

In Jerusalem — there where the Jews Had their home and inheritance, their foremost town — There they gathered a great crowd of grim-minded folk, And of Christ's work they did tell them; quoth that they had seen him quick

And alive — with their own eyes had seen the earl who had been in the earth,

Consigned to a grave four nights and four days, Had been dead and buried, until He with His deeds, With His words had awakened Him to see this world once again.

igain.

This was so hateful to these haughty men, To the clansmen of Jews, that they commanded their minions, Their people to gather together and to turn the crowd Against Him — the great host; and against Mighty Christ They took counsel in whispers; "That is not good advice," quoth they,

"That we should endure it. Too many indeed of the folk Believe in His lessons. Then the landsmen will come And attack us with horsemen, and our overseers Will be warriors from Rome. Then bereft of our realm, Must we live and suffer the loss of our lives, We heroes, the loss of our heads. Then spoke a hoary man Over the crowd of the men: among the clans

Within the borough was he bishop of the people. Kaiphas was he called, and by the kinsmen of Jews He had been chosen this year to take charge of God's house, "Methinks 'tis a Be the warder, then, of the temple. wonder," said he, "O praiseworthy people ye are informed of a plenty: Why is it that ye yet do not know, O ye folk of the lews, That 'tis better counsel for the bairns of mankind That one relieve one man of his life And that he dieth most bloodily through your deeds, Forsaketh this life for the folk-clans here, Than that all the landsmen should forever be lost." But it was not *his* will that he verily did speak Forth to the land-folk for the weal of mankind, Proclaimed to the people; but from God's power it came since he had to care for God's Through his holy office, house he, the temple's warder. In Jerusalem there — Therefore the people's bishop did speak, how the Bairn of God Was to save all the children of earth with His single spirit. and for all the land-folk With His own very life: for He gathered the heathen, That was a great gain, the men, as He willed. All-Wielding Christ fetched Then those most haughty men became of one mind, The clansmen of Jews, and in their crowd they did speak — This far-known people, that they permit no doubt in their minds! But whosoever might find Him here among the folk — He should straightway make Him his captive, should bring Him Forth to the diet of clans; quoth that they no longer cared To suffer that one man should thus seduce them,

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The world-folk all. But All-Wielding Christ knew full well Even the thoughts in the minds of these men there, Their hate-angry hearts; for nothing is ever hidden To Him in this mid-world here; thereafter He had no wish To appear in the open among the many, among the earls Of the folk, among the Jews. For the Son of God Was biding that bright, glorious time which would be unto Him

Him,

When He would endure great pain for these peoples, Torment indeed for the folk of the earth. For the time of His doom

He knew full well. Thereupon our Lord went forth. did abide in Ephraim. All-Wielding Christ The Holy Lord did dwell in the high-walled city With His vassals there; until it was His will To return to Bethany once more with His mighty host, With His disciples good. The Jews did discuss "This bodeth no good," quoth they, His every word: "For the council of our realm. Though we do speak rightly, Still our cause cannot thrive one whit, since He can turn them.

The folk to His will; and all the world followeth Him, The landsmen for His lesson, so that we may do no whit Of harm unto Him, here in front of the folk."

LI

Thus the Bairn of God did go into Bethany Six nights before it should hap — that gathering there In Jerusalem of the Jewish folk. For the hallowed day they should keep for the holy tide, The Passover of Jews. God's Son did tarry Mighty among the many. A great crowd of men, Of folk did wait for His words. There two women approached Him, Mary and Martha; with mildness of spirit They served Him most humbly. The Master of Peoples

Gave them long-lasting reward. He released them from all that is loathsome. Absolved them from sin; and He Himself did bid That they should fare forth in peace against the Foe, The women with His good permission; To His will had they turned Then All-Wielding Christ Ever their service. Fared forth with His people, the Lord of the Folk, where dwelt the Jews, To Jerusalem, All those hate-filled leaders, who there spent the holy time Warding the temple. There were there many world-folk Of most mighty clans; and they cared not to hear The word of the Christ. nor had they a whit Of love in their breasts for the Bairn of God: But rather they were a proud, a wrath-filled people, An angry minded clan of mankind; and they had murderous thoughts And evil within them: all wrongly they understood The teachings of Christ, wanted to kill Him, the All-Strong, Because of His words. But there were so many of the worldfolk, about Him all the day long. So many of the earlships The small folk did surround Him for the sake of His sweet word, With so many people all the day, so that His enemies Among the folk-clans feared to make Him their captive, Avoiding Him there amid the many. Now Mighty Christ Did stand inside of the temple and said many a word All the day long, until the light, Till the sun went to rest. Then many did wend their way Homeward, that kith of mankind. There was there a famous mountain Outside near the city so broad it was and so high, Green and so fair: it was hight by the Jewish folk The Mountain of Olives. Upon that did He go,

The Savior Christ, where the night did surround Him. He was there with His disciples, though not one of the Jews Did actually know this, since already He had entered the temple — The Lord of the Land-folk when the light came up from the east, and said much unto them Received the clanships In words of truth, so that not one in this world, On this mid-earth here not a single man is so wise, Not one of the bairns of mankind, that he could repeat to the end in the temple there, All the teachings He told and with His words He hight Did speak in the holy house; them for the realm of God, To make themselves ready All men everywhere whosoever they be, so that on that best-known day They may receive the love of their Lord. He told them the sins they had committed and straightway commanded Told them that in their That they atone for their deeds. hearts They should love God's light and leave behind them all wrongs, Evil haughtiness, and assume humility, And take it into their hearts. Quoth that the kingdom of Heaven, The richest of goods was really for them. Then right many of the men when they heard God's word, Were turned to His will, Heard the Holy Message of the King of Heaven, Acknowledged great power and the Master's coming And the help of the Lord; yea, that the heavenly kingdom, That salvation was grown nearer, and the grace of God For the bairns of mankind. But some were so angered — Some of the Jewish folk had such grimness of mind,

Such hate-filled hearts...¹ They wanted not to believe His word, but waged great battle Against Christ's might: because of their wretched contention belief in Him, clear and firm. The folk could not find it — The grace was not granted them to be given the kingdom of Heaven. and His disciples all gladly with Then God's Son did go, Him; The Wielder went from the temple, as He so willed it. And again the Bairn of God did go up on the mountain, And He sat with His disciples and said much unto them In words of truth. They began to talk with Him about the temple, The men about God's house, quoth that no goodlier Building had ever been builded by the hands of earls, By the efforts of man, never such temple erected With such great power. Then the Rich Prince did speak, The High King of Heaven and the others did hear Him ---"I can yet tell unto you," quoth He, "that the time shall soon come That no stone shall be left standing upon any other, But it shall fall to the earth and fire shall devour it, The greedy flames, though it be so goodly, So wisely worked. And that is the Weird of the world: The green meads shall all pass away." Then His followers did go to Him, And they asked Him softly: "How long shall it stand here?" quoth they, "The world in its winsomeness, before the great turning will come, Until the last day of light shineth through or when can we hope for Thy coming Its covering of clouds; To this mid-world again to judge mankind and its dead and its quick,

¹ Lacuna in MS.

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O my Lord most Good? We have longing to know, O All-Wielding Christ, when that time shall come."

LII

Then All-Wielding Christ did give answer, The Goodly Man, Himself, to the many. "That hath the Good Lord so hidden," quoth He "The Father of Heaven's kingdom hath so concealed it, The Wielder over the World, so that not a one Of the children of men can tell when this noted time Shall come to the world; nor in truth can they know who are ever beside Him Either, God's angels, And stand in His sight, nor can they say it, With their words tell all truly, when it shall hap, That from the mid-world here the Mighty Lord the children of men. He alone Shall choose to call knows.

The Father, Holy in Heaven. From all others 'tis hidden: From the quick and the dead, when that coming shall be. Yet may I tell unto you what wonderous token Shall happen here before He shall come to this world On that famous day. For it shall be revealed in the

moon

And in the sun as well; both shall turn swarthy, Be surrounded in darkness, and the stars shall fall, The white, heavenly beacons; this broad earth shall tremble,

This wide world shake. And many such signs shall there be:

The great sea shall rage grimly and the ocean tide grow To bring dread with its waves to the dwellers of earth. Mankind will shrivel and die in its mighty distress. People will pass away in their fears; and in no place will there be peace.

But wars so many will rise over the earth,

Filled with hatred all; and one clan shall lead a host

Against another. The battle of kings will arise, Mighty wanderings of hosts: and many a murder will there be — There open war-death — that is a terrible thing That man should ever commit such murders. Great ruination will spread awide over all the world -The most farflung dying of men that was ever upon this mid-earth here Through plagues and through pestilence. People lie sick; They do drop and they die; and their day endeth. With their life they fulfill it; a famine immeasurable, A grim, hot hunger fares huge o'er the bairns of all men, The greatest of starving; and that is not the slightest Of the torments which shall hap here in this world Before the day of all doom. Whenever ye see such deeds Being done in this world, then may ye verily know That the last day draweth nigh for the land-folk all. That most noted day, and the might of God And the stirring of heavenly strength and the Savior's coming, The Lord's, in His glory. Lo, for these deeds Ye may know a token in the very trees: and show forth leaf-blades. When they make buds and bloom When they unfold their foliage, the children of men may know full well That soon after this the summer draweth near. The warm and the winsome, and the weather is fair: So know ye also by this token which I have told unto you, When the last day of life draweth near for the landfolk. Now will I say unto you most verily that this folk, This people shall not pass away before this be fulfilled And My word becometh truth. Yet cometh the turning Of heaven and earth, and My Holy Word standeth In firmness henceforth, and all will be so fulfilled. as I have said to these Come to pass in this light, people.

Verily, wake ye all: for the well-known day, The day of your doom cometh most certainly, and so doeth the strength, and that most known of The might immense of your Lord, times. The turn of this world. Against this be ye watchful, That He find you not suddenly asleep and stretched out On a couch of ease with all of your evil deeds, And filled with your sins. For the reckoning day Doth come in the deep, dark night, as doeth a thief Furtively all with his deeds: so fareth that day to mankind, The last of this light, so that the land-folk know it not before. Even as was the flood once in former days, Which destroyed mankind with its streams of water In the time of Noah; but now God saved him only. Him with his family. the Holy Lord, From the flood's fierce onslaught; so did come also the fire which surrounded the cities Hot down from heaven Around Sodom-land, as swarthy flames, Greedy indeed and grim, so that no man did go forth Still alive except Lot alone; him the Lord's angels with his daughters twain Did lead from there High onto a mountain; all others, both land and landsmen, the flames destroyed. The burning fire, and so also was the flood So suddenly did come the fire, before: So, too, shall be the end-day of earth. All men whosoever Should think ahead toward this thing. That is a great need For every man; there let each keep this care firm in his heart."

LIII

"When ever it shall come to pass, that All-Wielding Christ,

Man's Glorious Son, shall come with God's might, Shall come with the strength of the Richest of Kings, Sit on high in His own great might; and together with Him. which are above holy in Heaven; All the angels, too, Then shall the children of men and with them the heathen Come all together; all the living kith of the land-folk come, Whosoever was born, hath lived here indeed in this light Of the children of men. To all of mankind, To the folk here all, shall the Lord Most Famous Deal judgments, as were their deeds. The doomed men He shall sort out, The sinful, the lost men, to his left hand; So He shall place the holy and blessed on His right side also, Greeting the good then and speaking most gladly to them: "Come ye," quoth He, "Ye who are chosen, and receive ye the good kingdom, made for the children of The mighty, which standeth ready, men The Father of Mankind's Bairns From the world's beginning. Himself hath hallowed it; ye may enjoy its blessings, Rule o'er this wide realm; since right often ye accomplished My will, Followed Me gladly, and were mild in your giving, When I was plagued here with hunger and thirst, Surrounded by frost; when I lay fettered And oppressed in prison; oft there came to Me in My pain Help from your hands: ye were mild in your hearts Then verily the crowd addressed And visited Me worthily." Him again. "My Lord most Good," quoth they. "When didst Thou languish in chains, Oppressed by such needs, as Thou now tellest these people, As Thou, Mighty Master, dost mention? When hath any man seen Thee 150

Why, Thou hast power over all Oppressed by such needs? peoples, whatever the children of men Over all treasures as well, Then spoke All-Wielding God to Have won in this world. them once again. "Whatever ye have done here," quoth He, "In the name of your Lord, In honor of God, have given of your goods To the men who are the least of those standing here 'mid the many, poor for their humbleness, To such persons indeed Since they accomplished My will whatsoever ye gave unto them of your wealth, Ye have done for honor of Me. Your Lord Himself hath received it, The help did come to the Heaven-King. Therefore the Holy Lord Will reward your belief: He giveth life everlasting unto you." Then the Wielder, the Lord, will turn to those at His left hand. To those men, who are damned, saying that they must pay for their deeds, These folk for their wrongs: "Now shall ye fare From Me," quoth He, "accursed to eternal fire, Fare to the fire made ready for foes of the Lord, For the folk of the Fiend for their foul works of sin, Since ye have not helped Me, when hunger and thirst Did torment Me most terribly; tortured My mind, I went without clothing: so great was My need, For I had naught of help when I was held bound, Locked into limb-fetters, and lay taken in illness, for in My sickness ye never By serious plagues; Did will to visit Me nor was I of such worth unto you, That ye thought of Me ever. Therefore will ye suffer In hell in the darkness there." Then the horde of the people again spoke to Him:

"Well, All-Wielding God," quoth they, "Why wilt Thou speak so 'gainst the folk?

Say such words 'gainst the many? When hast Thou ever had need of men

Or of the goods of mankind? Through Thy giving alone do they own it,

The wealth of this world." Then All-Wielding God speaketh again.

"When ye have scorned," quoth He, "the poorest of the children of earth,

The least among men; have considered little

These men in your hearts; in your hearts have let them be hated,

Have denied them your love: then ye did likewise unto your Lord,

Denied Him your wealth; therefore All-Wielding God, Your Father, refuseth to take you; but ye must fare into the fire,

and there serve the devil, Go down into the deep death since thus ye acted before." The evil Fiend, After these words He parted the people in twain, The good and the evil; and the damned ones did go Down into hot hell they were troubled of heart — There they were punished, received pain never ending, These men who were damned. He doth lead them thence, The High King of Heaven, leadeth the purified host Into long-lasting light there is life everlasting: God's realm is made ready for all of the good.

LIV

So I found out that with His words the All-Wielding God Did tell unto His warriors about the turn of the world, How it fareth on, as long as the bairns of the folk May dwell therein, but how in the end it shall Glide away and be lost. He also said unto His disciples In words of truth: "Why, ye all wit," quoth He,

"That two nights from today the time will come, when the people must serve The paschaltide of the Jews, their God, These men in the temple. It cannot be turned aside, That the Son of Man be sold to the multitude, and be struck to the cross, Full of strength though He be; Enduring tortures most monsterious." Many thanes were there, too - men From the south gathered together, a grim-minded folk, Clanships of Jews who were come to give service to God. Those learned in writing, the rabbis were come Among the crowd of the men: there were considered the wisest Among the multitude of mankind assembled, There was Kaiphas, too ----A strong clanship. Bishop was he among the folk. They spake about God's Bairn, How they would slay Him, who was free from sin, Told how they could not touch Him on this holy day Among the multitude of the men, "Lest the many people, The hordes be aroused, since the host is willing To stand and to battle for Him. In stillness we should Entrap Him, His life, so that the folk of the Jews Will not rise up in rebellion on this holy day." Then Judas came forward to him, the disciple of Christ, One of the twelve, to where the aethlings did tarry, The clanships of Jews; quoth that he indeed Could give them good counsel, "What will ye pay me?" quoth he, "What treasure, reward, if I should turn that Man over to you Without rebellion or battle?" Then the hearts of the men became "If thou would'st do so," Joyous, those of the folk: quoth they, "And keep well thy word, then hast thou the right To ask for whatsoever of goodly wealth Thou dost wish from this folk." Then the men who were there

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Put at his disposal pieces of silver, and he to the gathering did speak Thirty together; Insolent words: that for this he would yield his Master unto them. Then he turned from the men: evil of mind was he, and disloyal. He did calculate when the time would come unto him, to the evil men, That he might betray Him To the folk of the foe. For the Peace-Bairn of God, The True Wielding Christ well knew He must leave this world. Give up the dwellings of men and return to the realms of God. of His Father. Never have Fare to the ancient fief The children of men seen more love than He bore to those men, He prepared a guest meal for them To His disciples good. And sweetly did bid them sit, and said unto them The day strode to the west, Many a word most true. Then He Himself did bid them, The sun to its setting. The Wielder with His words, that they bring Him water, For His hands clear water; and there the Holy Christ did rise and the feet of His followers At the feast, the Good Lord, He washed with His hands, and wiped them thereafter with towels, Then unto his Lord Christ Dried them most carefully. Simon Peter did speak. "Methinks 'tis no seemly thing," quoth he, "For Thee, my Master so Good, that Thou shouldst be washing my feet With those, Thy most holy hands." The Lord gave reply unto him, "If thou hast not the The Wielder then with His words. will," quoth He, "To accept this thing, that I wash thy feet With such love indeed, as I do for the others,

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These men, through My love, then mayest thou not share with Me The kingdom of Heaven." His heart was then changed For Simon Peter. "Thou Thyself wieldest power," said he, "My Lord so good, lo, over my feet and my hands to wash them all with Thy hands, And my head as well, O Ruler, if henceforth I may have Thy grace And such part of Thy kingdom of Heaven as Thou, Lord Christ, in Thy goodness." Would'st grant unto me those earls, suffered His The disciples of Christ, service whatsoever Mighty Christ, With patience, those thanes, Their Liege, would do unto them, out of love, and He

thought to do

A thing even greater for the children of men.

гv

The Peace-Child of God

Did go to sit once again among the people and gave unto them

Much long-lasting counsel. Then was the light come, The morning come to mankind. Almighty Christ Then greeted His subjects and asked them where they intended

tended

on this festive day, To prepare for the feast Where He would hold, would keep this holy tide Himself with His disciples. Then He hight them, His men, Seek out Jerusalem: "When ye come there," quoth He, there will be great confusion, "Within the city itself, A mighty seething of men ve will see a man Carrying there in his hand a cup of clear water. We shall follow him into whatsoever garden ye do see him go; And unto that lord who owneth this house Ye yourselves shall say that I have sent you hence

To make ready My feast. Then will he show you A goodly house, a high upper hall Hung over with brightest array. There shall ve busy Yourselves with My meal. There I shall most certainly come, Myself and My disciples, too." Then straightway thereafter The servants of Christ set out on the way to Jerusalem, And they did find there all things even as He had said With true word-tokens. Nor was aught truly changed. They made ready the feast there, and right soon the Son of God. was come to the house The Holy Christ Where they should accomplish the custom there of the land. Following the bidding of God, as it was for the Jewish folk Ancient custom and law from time immemorial. All-Wielding Christ did go On the evening To take His seat in the hall; and He bade His disciples Come unto Him, the twelve who were truest to Him, to Him in their minds These men most loyal Well did He know Both in words and in ways. The thoughts in their hearts, our Holy Lord — He greeted them over the banquet. "I yearn indeed," He said, "to sit together with you And partake of the feast, share the Passover Of Jews with you, My beloved. Now must I tell unto you The will of the Lord, that in this world no longer May I enjoy meat with mankind before it must be fulfilled, The kingdom of Heaven. For Me there is at hand Both torment and torture, which I must truly endure For the people, this land-folk here." So did He speak to His thanes, The Holy Lord, and His heart was grieved, His spirit darkend with sorrow, and to His disciples He spoke,

The Good Man to His faithful: "Why, I give unto you the kingdom of God, Give you the light of Heaven, and ye give unto Me But now ye wish not to ful-Most sweetly your thaneship. fill this, But waver far from the word. Now verily I say unto you That one of your twelve will become untrue, among the kinship of Jews, One will sell Me Will sell Me for silver, and will take such riches, Such precious treasure; and give his Lord in return, But great sorrow shall come His sweet, his beloved Liege. unto him From that deed, and much pain. For he shall perceive them, The Weird Sisters, and shall see the end of his care. He shall know most truly that it would be a far sweeter thing, if he had never been born A far better one, than that he take pay To live in this light, and wrongful advise." For evil deeds to look around at the others, Then each earl began To gaze about sorrowfully, for they were sore of soul And troubled indeed of heart; they heard their Lord there Speaking words of lament. They were worried To which of the twelve He would now tell That he was the miscreant, the man who had bargained With the people for the pieces of silver. Nor was it simple for any person, For any thane to confess such a crime, Such a sinful mind; but each man denied it — And all became fearful and dared not ask Until Simon Peter, though he himself dared not speak — This worthy man did make motion To John the good: to the Bairn of God He was in these days the dearest one, and Holy Christ gave him leave The one most beloved, to lie against His breast, To rest in His lap, And on it to lean his head; there heard he so many a holy mystery,

So many deep thoughts; and to his dear Lord he did speak "Who shall that be, my Liege?" And began to question Him. Ouoth he, "Who would sell Thee, the Richest of Kings, To the folk of the foe? Full anxious we are, O Wielder, to know." He had ready His words, "See thou into whose hands I here The Holy Christ: Give of My meat before these men: he hath most wicked thoughts, Beareth great bitterness of mind: he shall deliver Me into bonds. Into the power of the foe, where they shall deprive Me of My age, Shall destroy My life." Thereafter He did take The meat before the men and gave of the meat unto that mean scoundrel, and He spoke unto him, Into Judas' hand, He Himself before His disciples, and He straightway commanded from the folk. "Do as thou thinkest," That he fare far away quoth He, "Do as thou needst must do; no longer mayest thou Hide thy will and intent — thy Weird is at hand, Thy time draweth near." When the troth-breaker and with his mouth did eat thereof, Did take of the meat The power of God did forsake him, and the Fiend did enter Into his body then, that loathsome wight; And Satan was bound more sorely to him, Bound hard 'round his heart, since the help of God Had left him here in this light. To those who change lords Under this heaven: to such woe will indeed come.

LVI

Then setting out from there and thinking up evil, Judas did leave; against his Liege this thane Harbored great grimness of heart. It had grown very dark, It was deep in the night. Now the Son of the Lord Tarried still at the feast; and for His disciples there The Wielder did bless both the wine and the bread, and with His hands He did The Holy King of the Heavens; break it and gave thanks unto God. And gave it to His disciples Grateful unto Him, who created all that was there, The world and its winsomeness; and He spoke many a word: "Believe ye this clearly," quoth He, "that this is My bodv And My blood as well. I give both unto you To eat and to drink. This I shall give on earth, Shall spill and spread onto it, and shall ransom you To the realms of the Lord and to life everlasting In the light of Heaven. Remember ye ever And follow ye that which I give unto you at this feast. Make it known unto the many, for this is a mighty thing. With it ve shall honor Him, who is your Lord. Hold this to My memory as a holy token, So that the children of men will cherish and keep it, All men in this mid-world: that through My love I have done so. Through the grace of the Lord. And think ye ever How I have bidden you to keep firm this brotherhood, To have fastness of mind, much love in your hearts, so that the children of men Over the whole of the earth will all understand the disciples Mine. That ye are most truly I shall also make known unto you how a fierce, wily Fiend. A sword-strong foe shall tempt your spirits, Satan himself. He cometh to ensnare Your souls most boldly. Straightway must ye make steadfast The thoughts in your breasts. By your prayers shall I stand, So that the mighty Fiend may not cause your minds to become doubtful,

Once he came So that I may help you against the foe. hither to tempt Me; sufficed not one whit, But his desire His lust for My body. Nor will I longer conceal from you What trials now lie straight ahead for you: Ye shall be disloyal to Me, ye disciples Mine, Disloyal to your thaneship before this dark night Leaveth the land-folk and the light cometh once more, The morning to mankind." Then the minds of the men their hearts sore indeed. Became dreary, They were troubled of spirit, and for their Lord's words Most sorrowed and grieved. But Simon Peter, The thane, did speak words of solace to the folk, For love of his Lord. "Though all this land-folk," quoth he, "Though all Thy disciples deny Thee, still do I gladly Suffer all pain, all sorrow for Thee. I am ever prepared, if God doth permit me, To stand straight and firm as a shield unto Thee. Though they close Thee deep in their dungeons, Though the land-folk lock Thee away, there is doubt so little But that I would bide with Thee in Thy bonds, Lie with Thee, my so beloved Lord, if they lie in wait To snuff out Thy life with the hate of the sword's edge, O my Master most Good; then shall I gladly give up my life For Thee in the play of weapons, nor verily shall I Ever avoid it, as long as mind And strength of hand are still mine." Then His Lord spoke again unto him. "Why, thou presumest in thyself," quoth He, "an unswerving loyalty. A steadfastness so great! Oh, thou hast the soul of a hero And good will as well. Yet may I tell unto thee how it will hap,

That thou shall'st become so wavering of heart, as thou now canst not ween:

That thou shallst deny Me, thy Lord, three times, Before the crow of the cock, acknowledging Me not as thy

Liege,

But thou shallst renounce My protection." Then again the man did reply.

"If in this world," quoth he, "it will ever so come to pass,

That I should have to face death together with Thee, Have to die in splendor, still that day will never arrive When I would deny Thee, my most dearly loved Lord, Of my own will before these, the Jews." All the disciples spoke likewise,

That they would suffer with Him at the tribunal there.

LVII

Then the Wielder Himself bade them with His words, The High King of Heaven, that they let not their hearts doubt, Hight that they not want ... deep thought¹ "Let not your hearts be laid low by the word of your Lord, Nor fear ye too much. I shall seek Our Father Myself And shall send the Holy Ghost from the kingdom of Heaven. He shall be consolation and succor both unto you, Reminding you in His speech of the many things I have taught Unto you with My words. Wisdom He will give unto you In your hearts, a joyous teaching, so that ye shall henceforth accomplish which I have shown unto you in this The word and the work world." Christ Savior, The Mighty Son then rose, In the temple there, and with His thanes He fared forth.

¹ Lacuna in MS.

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He Himself on that very same night. Christ's disciples Went sorrowing and grieving most sadly, Troubled of heart. Then He climbed up a hill — The Olive Mount was it called: there 'twas His custom To go with His followers. Full well did Judas know this, The man with his mind aimed to ruin: for on this mount he was often with Him. Then God's Son did indeed greet His disciples. "Ye are now so saddened," quoth He, "since ye know of My death. Now ye are grieving and groaning, while the Jews are gay, While the many are merry and happy of mind, While the world is in rapture. Yet this will all come to an end, Then will they be sore of heart, Will cease most swiftly. Grow mournful of mind, and ye may rejoice Until that day everlasting; for your end and a turn Of your fortune never cometh: therefore may ye henceforth Not regret My words nor rue My coming." Then He bade His retainers quoth that He wished them to climb Come on the mountain; upon the hill-cliff, Higher up with Him And He hight that three of His thanes go with Him, and Peter the Good, Jacob and John Loyal thanes three. And they did so go With their Liege most gladly. Then the Son of God, Upon the hill, did bid them bend their knees in prayer, Bade that they greet God and entreat Him greatly That He hold in check the strength of the Tempter The will of the wicked, so that the worker of wrong, The devil, could not bring their minds to doubt. And also the Lord Himself for prayer Did bow with bent knee, the Brightest of Kings, and to the Father of all Earth-Kneeling forward to earth; folk He cried aloud, spoke lamenting words

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In His sorrow; for His spirit was grieved And His heart was moved by His humanness. tears fell from Him, His flesh feared indeed: His dear, precious sweat did drip, even as blood doth drip, Doth well from a wound. Within God's Bairn between body and spirit. A battle was raging The one was ready for the road beyond, The spirit for the kingdom of God, while the other stood yammering, The flesh of Christ; and fearful of death, It sought not to give up the light. Ever He cried to the Lord, Ever more did He call unto the Almighty, To the High Father of Heaven, to the Holy God, with His words. "If mankind," To the All-Wielder ever quoth He, "Cannot be saved. except that I give My own precious blood to the bairns of the people To torture most terribly if this be truly Thy will, Then will I choose to drain it: I take in my hands the chalice. Drink it down to the dregs, my Lord, dear Liege, Mighty Master and Shielder. Look Thou not now down on Me, But I shall fulfill On the good of My flesh. Whatsoever Thy will be: for Thou wieldest power over all." where He had left His disciples Then He went to that place, Biding upon the mountain; and the Bairn of God Did find them in troubled sleep; for their hearts were sore, That they should be parted from their beloved Liege. Such should be the mind-sorrow of every man Who must forsake and leave his beloved lord, Giving up one so good. Then He did go to His disciples, spoke unto them; The Wielder did wake them and greet them with words.

"Why do ye wish to sleep?" quoth He. "Why do ye not watch But a little time here with Me? That Weird is at hand, That it shall so come to pass, even as He. God the Father, The Mighty, hath marked it. There is no doubt in My mind; My spirit is most ready to make done God's will, Is prepared to fare on His way. But My flesh is still troubled, My body still holds Me bound. It is loathe to bear, To endure such suffering. But I shall accomplish My Father's will. Have ye firmness of heart!" He did go then up on the other side Of the mountain in order to pray — The Glorious Lord and many a good word He did indeed speak there. God's angel then came Holy from Heaven and made firm His heart. Made Him bold for the bonds. He bided there ever. Zealous in prayer, and to His Father He cried, To the Wielder with His words. "If it cannot be otherwise," quoth He, "O Lord most splendid, except that I suffer Great torture and torment for the folk of mankind, I shall truly Await then Thy will." And He went again thence To seek His disciples. He found them sleeping And called to them curtly. And again He went thence A third time to pray. And the King of All Peoples, The Son of the Lord, spoke with the selfsame words as He had done before. To His All-Wielding Father, Most zealously did Savior Christ Remind the Mighty One of the good of mankind; And went then again to His disciples, and straightway He spoke unto them. "Sleep ye and rest," said He. "Now will he straightway come, Come with a force, he who hath sold Me, sinless as I am, And hath received silver therefore." The disciples of Christ

Awakened after these words, and they beheld war-men coming, Climbing up the mountain with a great commotion, Wrathful weapon-bearers full many.

LVIII

Judas rightly did lead them, Man hate-filled of heart. After him the Jews did go marching, The folk-clans of the foe. In their midst they carried fire. Lights in lamp-vessels; and they led forth torches, Bright burning down from the city, as they began most eagerly This spot Judas knew well, To stride up the mountain. the land-folk all. The one to which he should lead As they now fared to the spot in front of the folk, He said unto them as a sign, lest they seize by mistake "I shall first go to Him," quoth he, Some other man: "Shall kiss Him and say: that is Christ Himself! Then shall ye seize Him with the strength of the crowd; Shall bind Him up there on the mount and bring Him down to the bastion, Lead Him down 'mid the land-folk: His life hath he forfeited With His words full well." And the people went, Until they were come to the Christ Himself — The grim folk of the Jews, to where He stood with His followers, The Lord Most Glorious, biding his god-sent fate, The wonderous time. Then Judas went toward Him, and unto God's Bairn Man without troth, He nodded His head and here spoke to his Lord, carried out his word. Kissed Him, Mighty Christ, Pointed Him out to the people, as he had promised before. The Lord of All Peoples bore all with His patience, The Wielder of World; and with His words He did speak unto him,

Asked him most boldly: "Why hast thou come to Me with this host? Why dost thou lead this land-folk to Me? And to this loathsome crowd Thou sellest Me with thy kiss, among the clans of the Jews Betrayest Me to these many?" He went to speak to the many, and to ask with His words To the other people, Why they were come to seek Him so zealouly here "To whom do you wish to With their thralls in the night. bring need and distress, To some one of mankind.?" Then once more the many did speak unto Him And said that they had been told that the Savior did tarry Here high on the hillside. "He who hath caused this unrest Amid the Jewish folk and calleth Himself The Son of God. We came here to seek Him, Are most anxious to find Him: He is from Galilee-land From the city of Nazareth." When Saving Christ Said unto them in sooth that it was He Himself. The folk of the Jews became sore afraid. Frightened and shocked were they, so that they straightway fell back, Each and all, and sought the earth: at the same time All the host did retreat. They could not resist The word and the voice of the Lord; yet were there some warlike men. These ran up the hillock; made firm their hearts, Bound fast the thoughts in their breasts; and bitterly raging, They surrounded Christ Savior. There stood the wise men Grieving greatly — Christ's goodly disciples, Before this most dreadful deed; and to their Dear Lord they did speak: "Were it now Thy will," quoth they, "My Wielder, My Liege, That they shall slay us with the spear-point here, Shall wound us with weapons, then would nought be one whit as good,

But that we might die here for our Dear Lord, Pale in expiring. Then plenteously wroth grew he, The swift swordsman, Simon Peter. It welled up with his heart, so that not a word could he speak, So sorrowed his soul, since they were about to enchain His Beloved Lord there. Bloated with anger, the bold-minded Thane strode ahead, stood before his Liege, nor was his heart e'er in doubt, Hard by his Lord; Fearful within his breast, but he drew his bill, The sword at his side, and with the strength of his arm He struck the first of the foe standing before him, So that Malchus was marked by the knife On his right side, slashed by the sword's edge. His hearing had been hewn: sore was the hurt 'round his head. So that sword-gory, cheek and ear in mortal wound Burst asunder, and blood did spring forth, Then was the cheek indeed scarred Welling up from the wound. Of the enemy's leader. Those around stood away, Dreading the bite of the bill. Then spake God's Bairn Himself to Simon Peter, said that he should put his sword, The sharp one, back in its scabbard. "If I truly cared," said He "To wage conflict against this crowd of the warriors, Then would I remind Him, the Glorious, the Almighty God, in the Kingdom of Heaven, The Holy Father That He send hither to Me a host of His angels, Wise in warfaring; these men could indeed not withstand Their weapon-strength ever. Nor could such a host of warriors Stand against them, though gathered together in groups. Still could they not save their lives. But the All-Wielding Lord, hath marked it otherwise: The Father Almighty, We are to bear all the bitterness, whatsoever these people bring unto us,

Nor shall we be angry nor rage 'gainst their strife: For he who doth practice the hatred of weapons, Who gladly partaketh in grim spear-grudges — He again is slain by the sword's edge, Doth die in his own blood. We must not destroy One whit with our deeds." Then He went to the wounded man. With skill He set the flesh-seams together, The head-wounds all, so that it was healed straightway, The bite of the bill. And the Bairn of God Spake to the angry throng. "Methinks 'tis a wonder great," quoth He, "If ye have wanted to do harm unto Me, Why did ye then not take Me, when I stood in the temple, Among your folk and did tell them full many true words? The sun shone, the day's dear beam, and ye did want to do Naught to harm there in this light; but now ye lead your landsmen as one doeth unto a thief To Me in the night, Whom one wishes to seize some scoundrel and wretch Who hath forfeited life." Then the folk of the Jews Grasped at God's Son, the grim-minded host, The persecuting crowd. The people piled 'round Him, The enraged horde of men they saw not their wrongs — They held Him fast, threw His hands in chains, His arms and fingers in fetters. Such frightful torment He needed not have stood, nor such grievous suffering, But He did so for this Nor have endured such anguish. host, Since He wanted to save the children of men, To fetch them from hell to the kingdom of Heaven, To the wide-flung wealth; therefore He reproached them no whit For that which they would do unto Him in their hatred and anger.

Then the angry folk of the Jews did become insolent, since they had Holy Christ The host most haughty, And could lead Him away in limb-bondage, Take Him forth in their fetters. And the foe went again From the mount to the town. And God's Mighty Bairn Did go 'mid the host with His hands all bound, Drear and sad, down to the dale. For His dearest thanes Had broken their troth. as He Himself had foretold. But it was not for fear that they forsook Him, God's Bairn, their Beloved, but so long before there had been that it would indeed be thus. The word of the prophet, Therefore they could not avoid their own deeds. And after the crowd those two men well-known, Went Peter and John, And followed from afar. Full anxious were they To know what the grim-minded Jews meant to do with God's Bairn, When they were come down to the To their Lord most Dear. dale From the hill to the burg in which was their bishop, these haughty men did lead Him The temple's holder, These earls, behind a fence. A great fire was there, There were flames in the foreyard, made nearby for the folk. For the warrior crowd. They went there to warm them, The landsmen of Jews, and they left God's Bairn Waiting in chains. There was a great racket, The noise of the insolent. Since John was known To the highest one there, he could push inside with the host, With the throng through the yard; but the best of all thanes, Peter, still stood outside. The portal's warder would not permit him To follow His Lord, till he begged a friend,

a Jew to let Peter go Until John begged of A woman full of deceit Forth to the foreyard. she was a handmaid Did slip up to him there: Of one of the Jews, of her lord; and this unlovely girl Did speak to the thane. "What, thou mightest be," quoth she, "a man From Galilee, disciple of Him standing yonder With His arms firmly fettered." Then fear overtook Simon Peter straightway, and his mind became slack, And he said that not one word of the wife had he understood. Nor was He a thane of that Leader ever, of that Lord. He avoided Him in view of the many, said verily he knew not that Man. "Thy talk is senseless to me," said he. Then God's strength, The Lord's power did leave his heart. And leaving, he did go until he came to the fires; Forth amid the folk, He went there to warm him. There also a woman began To load loathsome words unto him. "Here may ye look on your foe," cried she, "This is all clearly a retainer of Christ, A disciple of Him Himself." Then straightway there did come nearer To him men of the foe. And the bairns of the Fiend of what clan he was: Did question him "Thou art not of these burghers," quoth they. "From thy bearing we see that, that thou art not of this From thy words and thy ways, world-folk, But art from Galilee come." Yet he would not admit it, But stood there denying and swore a strong oath By all that is true that he was not of that tribe. His words had no power: it was to come to this pass, As He who rules mankind had so marked it indeed In this world. Then came to him also a cousin Of him whom he had hewn with his bill, With his sword's sharpness; and said that he had seen him there

"High on the hillock, there where we bound the hands Of thy Lord in the grove, in the tree-garden there, Then for the fear Fastened His arms with the fetters." in his heart He again denied his dear Liege, quoth that indeed he would forfeit his life. here on this earth If there was any man that he was of that tribe, Who can say in truth That he followed His path. There for the first time The crow of the cock did commence. And Holy Christ, The Best of All Bairns, who stood there bound, The Son of the Lord Himself, did look to Simon Peter, Saw that earl over His shoulder. Then Simon Peter and his spirit was sore. Felt sadness within him Filled with hurt was his heart, and most grieved was he. that he himself had so spoken before, So troubled was he, And he remembered the words then which All-Wielding Christ Had said unto him; that in this swarthy, dark night, He was to deny Him, his Lord, three times, Before the crow of the cock. Bitterly this came up in his breast, Welled up with him; and angry of heart he went away: The man left the many. With care in his mind And deeply sorrowed, he wept at his sinfulness, At his own words, and there came welling up Hot tears from within him for the grief in his heart, Bloodily bursting up from his breast. For he thought Never to atone for his sins nor come again to his Master, To the grace of his Lord. No one hath since grown so old Who ever did see a man rue more sorely His own words and his sins and to bewail them so, "Woe, Mighty God, O my Lord," quoth Lamenting most loudly. he, "Woe that I have forfeited myself, so that for this world, This life I may no longer be thankful. If in my old age I must renounce Thy grace and the realms of Heaven,

Then my Ruler, my King, be there no thanks unto me, My Beloved Liege, that I was born to this light. I am now unworthy, O Thou, my Wielder, That I may thus fare along with Thy followers, Sinful amid Thy disciples. I myself shall avoid them In my heart and my soul, since I have spoken such sin." Thus the best of all men grieved bitterly indeed. He rued most deeply that he had denied Him there, But the bairns of the land-folk, His Beloved Lord. Of mankind should not wonder why God so willed it, That such a beloved man should suffer such sorrow, That he should deny his Lord so disgracefully For the word of a servant maid he, this swiftest of warriors

Deny his Dear Liege; it was done for all those of mankind, For the good of the children of men. He wanted to make them the first,

The highest over His household — He the Lord Holy: He let it be known how little strength hath The heart of man without God's might. He let him sin so that later he might Better believe them, the people, how precious it is For each man indeed, when he hath done evil, That he be absolved from his wicked deeds, From his wrongs and his sins, as he is absolved by God Himself.

The Ruler of Heaven's Realms, from his hurtful wrong.

$\mathbf{L}\mathbf{X}$

Therefore is a man's boasting of but little avail — The pride of his youth: if then God's help doth forsake him,

Because of his sins, then is that man straightway Fearful of thought, though he first uttered threats And boasted of his battles and of the broad strength of his hand —

This was marked in that marvelous, This man of his might. That best of all thanes, when at that time the holy help Of His Master forsook him. Therefore no man should boast All too much of himself. since then often hope And will do forsake him, if All-Wielding God, doth not strengthen his heart. The High King of Heaven, But the Best of All Bairns did wait and did bear His bonds For the sake of mankind. Many of the Jewish folk Did come and surround Him and speak such mockery And held Him to scorn. as He stood there chained And enduring most patiently what the people did unto Him, What loathsome grief these land-folk. Then was the light come again, The morning to mankind. Many were gathered, Wide hosts of the Jews. Wolf-minds had they, Evil hearts as well. Their book-learned ones, Many men together, gathered at morning-tide, and longing for evil, Angry and hardened Wishing for wrong. They went in groups together, The men to consult; and they began to consider the Mighty Christ of sin How they would accuse With false witnesses and with faithless men ----Accuse Him indeed through His own spoken word, So that they might torment Him with tortures most great, Dealing out death unto Him. But on that day they could Find no false witnesses, ones who feared not and to condemn Him to death, To deal out such pain, Release Him from life. Then at last there came forth From the crowd two men without truth and began to tell against Him, Said that they had heard Him Himself say the temple of God, That He could tear down through the strength of His The highest of all houses, hands; And through His craft and His might could erect it again as no other man could ever thus On the third day hence, do.

He was silent and suffered. Never could a folk speak, A people utter such lies, that He would verily Have avenged them with words of evil. Then there arose from the host A man baleful of thought: bishop among the folk, A prince of this people — and put such question to Christ. Exhorted Him strongly with solemn oath, Greeted Him thus in the name of God and bade Him eagerly To say unto him, whether He were the Son Of the Living God: He who created the light, Christ, King Eternal. "We cannot see one whit of this From Thy words or Thy works." Then verily again the True, The Good Son of God did reply: "Thou sayest it now before these Jews, that it is I Myself. Sayest it truly, But these landsmen do not believe Me; and hence will they not release Me, Nor are they worthy of My word. Now verily I say unto vou That ye shall still see Me sitting on the right side of God. Radiant the Son of Man in the might and strength Of the All-Wielding Father, and coming again down here Through the clouds of Heaven and dealing unto all the kith of mankind Such judgments with His words, even as they worked and are worthy thereof." Then was the bishop wrathful and bitter of heart, Sorely enraged at these words; and he rent his raiments, "Now need ye bide no longer," Tore them before his breast; quoth he, "Ye people, wait for a witness, now that such words, Such blasphemy hath come from His mouth. Many men have now heard it: Warriors here in the temple, that He told of His mightiness,

Said that He was the God. Well then, ye Jews, What doom will ye deal Him? Is He now worthy of death For such words?"

LXI

The war-men all spoke, The folk of the Jews, that He had forfeited life, Was worthy of punishment. Yet not for His works was it done, That the Jewish folk there in Jerusalem Condemned Him to His death, Him who had done no sin, The Son of the Lord. Then the land-folk of Jews Did boast of their deeds, how they could do God's Bairn, the most harm indeed. Him held in bonds. The crowd surrounded Him and struck His cheeks, the side Of His head with their hands: unto Him they did this in mockery and scorn, covered Him with their malice The crowd of the foe; And their blasphemous speech. And the Bairn of God Stood firmly amid His foe. His arms were in fetters; He endured most patiently what the people Brought unto Him of bitterness there. He bore no anger Against this riot of men. Then wrathful men Did take Him so bound, that Bairn of God, And they led Him there to where the folk-throng's The people's judging-place was. There thanes aplenty Surrounded their leader. He was the envoy of that lord Of the city of Rome, who ruled over all realms; He was come from Caesar, was sent to the clans of the Jews, To govern their kingdom: he gave them counsel. Pilate was he called, and he was a man from Pontus, Born of that clan. He had collected a great crowd, A multitude of the people at the judging place. This faithless horde of the Jewish host Did give Him up — Him, Son of God, To the folk of the foe: quoth that He had forfeited His

life

And that one should reward Him with the weapon's edge, With the sword's sharpness. Still the crowd of the Jews cared not To throng into the law-house itself; but the land-folk did remain without, And spoke from there to the many within. Into this mob they wished not to go, so that they need not hear Not go to that foreign man, these unrighteous words On that day, nor hear one whit of the wrong being dealt. But said it was their wont to hold the holiest of times, The purest, their Passover. Pilate received The Wielder's Bairn from the wicked sinners. Received Him, the Sinless. Then sorely troubled when he saw His Master Was Judas of mind, Surrounded to death; and his deed he now began To rue in his heart, that he had sold Him, His Lord without Sin. He took the silver, Took there the thirty pieces that they had given to him in return for his Liege. And he went with them to the Jews and told them his grim, wicked deed. Said unto them his sin; and the silver he offered "So grievously," quoth he, To give back gladly. "Have I sold it, the blood of my Liege, my Beloved, That I ween that to me it will be of no worth." But the host of the Jews would not take it, but hight him henceforth To let such a sin be his own care and concern, That e'er he had done against his Lord. "What hast thou "Thou thyself look to that," quoth they. to seek among us? Do not thou place shame on these people." Then presently Judas to the temple of God Did again go thence Most sorely grieved, and he threw the silver Inside on the altar, nor dared he own it for long.

and the bairns of the Fiend He fared forth in fear the devil had seized Admonished him fiercely: and the Mighty God was enraged, The mind of this man; So that he, that wretch, did fashion a rope; did incline his head And in order to hang him, and chose his reward, Through the death-choking noose, The hard pangs of hell, those hot and most dark, The deep dale of death; since unto his Liege he had indeed been disloyal.

LXII

Suffering His bonds, God's Bairn still did bide, until the land-folk Did wait at the law-house all of one mind About Him became they intended for Him. As to what terrible torture Then the envoy of Caesar arose from the bench and he went to speak angrily He, come from Rome; there where in the courtyard To the crowd of the Jews, The multitude would not come The many were milling about. Into the house on the Paschal day. Pilate began To question boldly about the folk of the Jews, Why this Man indeed did deserve His murder, Had reaped such punishment. "Why now are ye wroth, So hostile of mind to this Man?" They said that He had harmed them muchly, "The folk would not give Him Had done them great wrong. over to thee, If they knew not already that noxious He was and evil: He hath forfeited His life with His words. Full many a one of the folk hath distressed these Hath He seduced with His teachings, people, Caused their minds to doubt: that to Caesar's court We need pay no tithe. That may we tell of Him With truthful witness. Great words speaketh He also: Doth say He is the Christ, King over that realm.

With His bigness is He bloated." But then Caesar's envoy Did speak again unto them. "If He hath so openly Done deeds of evil," quoth he, "among the multitude, Then take Him back among your folk; and if He hath forfeited His life, if He is deserving of death, Deal ye His doom, As your age-old laws do order you." on this hallowed day, Still at this time Quoth they, they could not kill with their weapons, Become murderers of any man whatsoever. Then he turned away from the horde ---that man, evilhearted, who was over his throngs, The thane of Caesar, The envoy from Rome and he ordered right quickly That the Bairn of God be brought closer to him; and bluntly And carefully questioned Him, whether He was King of this crowd. Of this land-folk here. And the Son of the Lord Had ready His word, asking "Whether thou speakest that for thyself, the earls here, have Or whether for others, Then truly the envoy of Caesar Told of My kingdom?" Spoke again, evil and insolent of mind, as he wrangled With Christ Wielder there in the temple. "I am not," quoth he, "Of this kingdom, of the Jews, am no kin of Thine, but the many have consigned Thee No kith of these men, to me, Thy landsmen, the folk of the Jews have given Thee fettered What harm hast Thou done, Into my hands. That so bitterly Thou must suffer Thy bondage? Torture from Thy own true kin?" Then Christ did tell him again, as He stood there bound The Best of All Saviors, "My kingdom," quoth He, "is not Inside the temple. Of this hour, of this earthly life. If it were thus,

My disciples would be standing strong against the strifeminded, resisting the throng. My followers, thanes be given o'er to the folk Nor fettered, would I Of the hating, the Jews, into their hands To be tortured most terribly. Truly was I born to this world a testimony of truth To make known unto you And that they well may acknowledge, Through My coming. Those men who have strayed from the truth: they may hear My word, Understand and believe My lesson." Then the envoy of Caesar Could not find a whit of fault with God's Bairn, Not a word of deceit for which He was worthy Of paying His life. Then he repaired once more to the people of Jews And he said to the many To speak with them angrily. Who hearkened most carefully, that he could find No such blasphemous speech, that He should pay with His life. Then dull-minded, Be worthy of death. The Jewish folk did stand and accused God's Son stirred in-With their words and said that He had first surrection and from there had repaired And unrest in Galilee-land; and He caused hearts to doubt, Hither over Judea; "and for that He deserves to be murdered, The minds of men, Is worthy of death with the weapons's edge, If ever a man was deserving of death for such deeds."

LXIII

The landsmen of Jews lamented loudly to him with their words, Their hearts all hate-filled; then the high lord, The sly-minded man, heard them say unto him From which of the clanships Christ had been born, The Best of All Men: He belonged to a glorious band From Galilee-land — Christ the Good. There dwelt a great crowd. Herod held there A host of aethling-born men. which Caesar had given unto him, A strong, goodly kingdom, The mighty from Rome; and there he dealt justice, Practiced right 'mid the people, keeping the peace And dealing out dooms. On that day also He was there in Jerusalem with his thanes and retainers And came to the temple: that was their custom the holy tide That they held sacred The Passover of Jews. Pilate then bade That the soldiers take that Man in His chains, Take Him in His bonds, the Bairn of God, Hight that the earls bring Him to Herod, since He was of that folk His hands held in fetters, Over which Herod wielded power. The warriors accomplished The word of their lord. They led Holy Christ in front of the folk-leader. Forth in His fetters The Best of All Bairns who had ever been born To the light of the land-folk. In His limb-bonds he went, Until they did bring Him there where he sat on his bench — Herod the king. A crowd of people surrounded him, Proud-minded warriors; a great will was within them To see Christ Himself, for they weened He would show them He had done through His godliness Some token, as indeed Before the crowd of the Jews: He, Christ Great and Mighty; Then the folk-king did question Him full envious was he, and wanted to fathom Asked many a word what He minded to do How His spirit inclined, For the weal of men. There stood Mighty Christ, Was silent and suffered. He chose not to answer him, Herod, the folk-king, nor the earls of his following, Not with one single word. Then the wicked throng,

The folk of the Jews stood there, and the Son of God. They did worry and accuse Him wildly, until the worldking Became enraged of heart, and his retainers as well: In their spirits they scorned Him; for they saw the great might of God, and in their heart there was Of the Lord of all Heaven: darkness But the Son of the Lord In the grip of sin. Endured their direful works, their words and their deeds, Suffered them all with a humble soul. All the wrongs they longed to do unto Him. They ordered white robes wrapped around Him, 'round His limbs In mockery; all the more He became for the men there, For the young ones, a jest; and the Jews did rejoice, When they saw how those held Him in scorn, Those earls overweening. Then Herod again, The king, sent Him thence to the other clanships. should lead Him hence; and He hight that a strong man they spoke To Him sinfully, heaped blasphemy on Him as He went in His bonds, And they laughed in mockery. But His mind never doubted, But He suffered all with a humble spirit; He wished not to repay them for their wicked words, For their mocking speech and their scorn. They brought Him inside the house, Up in the palace, where Pilate was In the judging place there. The thralls then did give The Best of All Bairns into the hands of the baleful, The murderers — Him without sin. as He Himself chose. He wanted to free the bairns of mankind from the bonds of death. To save them from suffering. The foe stood around, Jews before the guest halls: the bairns of the devil Had stirred up the horde, so that they did not hold back

From these grim, wicked deeds. Then he went forth, and to the folk he did speak, The thane of Caesar, The harsh leader of hosts. "What, ye have sent Him here to the hall, Sent this Man unto me in His bonds, have yourselves blamed Him, That He hath brought ruin to right many folk, With His lesson hath led them all wrongly. Now from these landsmen, that He hath forfeited From this folk, I cannot find His life, is guilty of aught. That was indeed all clear this day: Herod, who knoweth your laws, your people, your landways, Could not in anger end His life on this day, Would not say He should die for any sin of His ----Should take leave of this life. Now before this land-folk shall urge Him with words, Shall I threaten Him with the law, Shall better the thought in His breast, so that henceforth He may enjoy life among man." But the multitude Of Jews cried together, called with loud voices that He be robbed of His life — And eagerly hight Christ killed with torture and struck on the cross. Tormented to death. "With His words He hath done it, Hath forfeited life! He sayeth He is the Lord, Truly God's Son. He shall now pay For His evil speech; so our law is indeed writ: That one buyeth with one's life such blasphemous speech."

LXIV

Then he who held sway o'er the folk became sore afraid, In his mind did fear mightily, when he heard the men say That they had heard Him speak thus themselves, Proclaiming in front of the clanships that He was God's Son.

Then the leader of hosts went back in the house, Into the judging hall and hailed God's Son

With confident words and questioned what He was 'mid the clans: "What kind of man art Thou?" quoth he. "Why concealest Thou Thy mind, Hidest Thy deepest thoughts? Wist Thou that Thy life's destiny shall decide. Unto me have these Standeth so, even as I folk. These people of Jews given Thee to wield such power o'er Thee. with the point of the spear, Either to slay Thee To torture Thee unto the cross, or to leave Thee quick and alive, Even as I myself deem it better To act for my people." Then the Peace-Bairn of God spoke again: "Thou wist most verily," quoth He, "that thou would'st wield, Wouldst have no might over Me, but that Holy God Himself And those, too, have sinned more, Hath granted it unto thee. Those who have sent Me to thee in their hatred, Have sold Me, bound fast in these snares." There straightway thereafter The grim-souled man would gladly have released Him, The thane of the emperor in front of the throng, if he could have but done so. But they denied him his will with their every word — The clan-folk of Jews. "Thou art not," quoth they, "Caesar's friend. The beloved of thy lord, if thou leavest Him To go hence sound and unharmed. That may still bring thee sorrow And reprisal, too, if a one speaketh such words, Raiseth himself so high, and sayeth that he here holdeth The name of a kingdom, though Caesar ne'er gave it, He confuseth his world-realms and bringeth scorn to his word, Mocking him in his mind. Therefore must thou avenge such wrongs,

These insolent words, if thou hast worry for thy master's, For thy liege-lord's friendship. Then should'st thou reft Him of life." how the aethlings of the Jews The duke now heard, Threatened him with his liege; therefore he went himself And sat at the judging place, where a great host of people Was gathered together, and hight Christ the Wielder Be brought there in front of the folk. The Jews then demanded To see the Holy Bairn first hanging in torment quoth that no other king There on the cross; Would they have to oversee them, except for high Caesar "He hath here his rule over us. From the city of Rome. Therefore shalt thou not release Him; He hath spoken much harm unto us. Hath done in His life through His deeds. Death shall He suffer here, Punishment and the pangs of torture." The people of Jews Accused Mighty Christ of so many, Of such varied sins. He stood silent There in His humbleness. and not a thing did He answer To the wicked words. He wanted to ransom All men with His life. Therefore He let the loathsome mob Torment Him most terribly, as was truly His will. Yet He had no wish to reveal all things openly To the people of Jews: that He Himself was indeed God. For if they verily knew that He wielded such might Over the mid-world here, then their minds would grow fearful, Be afraid in their breasts; then God's Bairn they'd not dare To touch with their hands; and the kingdom of Heaven, The greatest of lights, would never be unlocked to the bairns of mankind. Therefore He hid it well in His mind and let not the children of men

Know what they were working. Then Weird came nearer, and that great midday God's glorious might, When they would cause to be done those death-torments. within the bastion There lay also in bonds A notorious robber: in the realm he had Committed murders aplenty and done manslaughter. He was known as a mighty thief. Nor was there his like anywhere. He was in chains because of his sins. Barrabas was he hight, and here in the burg for his many misdeeds. This man was far known That was the land-custom of the kinfolk of Jews That each year for God's love they could ask amnesty On that holy day for some man doomed to die; And that the leader, warder of bastions, would give him his life. to question the gathering, Then the duke began The folk of the Jews who stood there before him they wanted to have freed, Which of the two "which are in bonds here, To beg for his life: Then the folk of In fetters in front of the clanships." the Jews Had stirred up all the poorer, the smaller men, So that they asked for the life of the land-robber: They demanded the thief, who in darkness of night Had committed his crimes; and All-Wielding Christ They tortured onto the cross. Then it became truly known unto all How the people had dealt out their dooms. Then had they to accomplish this deed And to hang Him, the Holy Bairn. In times hence that would bring when he truly knew To the duke great trouble, loathed Christ Savior as their That the folk of the Jews foe, That they hated Him; and that he, Pilate, had hearkened unto them

And had granted their will; for this he had evil reward, Punishment here in this light and for long ages after. He won great woe, when he later gave up this world.

LXV

The Wrong-Doer soon grew aware of this, the greatest of scoundrels, Satan himself, when the soul of Judas Came down to the ground of grim, hot hell. Then most verily he knew that it was All-Wielding Christ, The Bairn of the Lord, who stood there bound: And most verily he knew that He wished to release The whole world and its people from the pangs of hell Through His hanging, leading them all to the light of the Lord. Then was Satan indeed sore of heart, Most troubled of mind; truly he hoped To bring it about that the bairns of mankind Would not rob Christ of life, nor torture Him on the cross. But he wanted Christ to remain quick and alive, So that the children of men would not be safe from hell, Safe from their sins. Satan hied himself hence To where was the house of the host's leader Within the bastions. To the bride here openly, To the wife within the weird Fiend began To reveal great wonders, so that with her word-help She would cause it to be that Christ, Lord of Men, Could remain 'mid the quick for already He was destined to die that He would take from him the For he knew most truly power in this mid-world So that he would no longer own so much here, O'er this wide, wide earth. The wife became fearful. Sorely troubled was she, since these visions did come unto her

In the full light of day through the doing of him Who was hidden by a helmet of magic to make him unseen. With words did she plead with her husband: the wife did hight what visions had come unto her He be told most truly From the Holy Man; and she bade him for help To save His life. "I have seen here so much through Him, So many strange things, that well do I know that the sins Shall thrive indeed of any aethling Who so recklessly hopes to rob Him of life." The messenger went on his way, until he did find the folk-warden, The duke sitting there among the throng of the people On the stony way, there where the street And he fared to his lord Is fused together with rocks. And told the word of the wife unto him. And the folkwarden Became troubled of soul. and he went inside. The thoughts in his breast grew fearful, for both were grievous for him: That they should slay Him, who was free of sin. And that before this crowd he dared not leave that task undone Because of the people's word. But then it was turned. The heart in his breast, as the host of the Jews did so want it He warded from himself To work their will. Not a single, dire sin, which he himself there did. He hight them bring him a clear fount for his hands, Bring him water in a vessel, as he verily sat in front of the folk And the thane of Caesar washed himself 'fore the throng, The harsh leader of hosts, and to the horde he did speak, Said that he was freeing himself from such sinful deeds, "Nor will I be responsible," quoth Such wrongful works; he. "Even one whit for this Holy Man; but ye alone shall carry out all

With your words and your works — all which ye do Him here to His woe." Then all the clanships of Jews cried out together, The mighty multitude; quoth that against this man They would carry out sentence for His evil deeds. "Let His gore drip down — His blood over us, and the bane of death — and over our bairns as well — O'er our children's children coming thereafter we shall still be responsible For the slaving itself supposing we commit thereby a sin!" There before the throng of the Jews the Best of All Men was then given Into the hand of the haters, held tightly by chains, Forced into fetters so the foe did receive Him --Those who did loathe Him: the land-folk encircled Him, The churls evil-minded. The Mighty Lord Suffered patiently all that the people did unto Him. They hight He be flogged before they would rob Him Of His life, of His age; and under His eyes they spat at Him. They held Him up to their scorn, and with their hands they did strike Him, and of His garments they The men, 'gainst His cheeks, stripped Him, And then renegades robbed Him and took His red robe, And gave Him another ungracious were they — And a wonderous headband, a crown of hard thorns They hight wound round, and hight it be set on All-Wielding Christ, And the thralls went to Him, On Him there, Himself. In kingly way did address Him, and fell on their knees, And bowed their heads unto Him: in mockery of Him they so did. But all patiently He bore it, the Lord of the Peoples, The Mighty One, for His love for the children of men.

Then they hight that the men work with the weapon's edge, Make with their hands out of the hard wood and they hight that Christ, A great, strong cross, God's Blessed Bairn be brought there Himself; Hight that they lead Him, our Lord, where He was to bleed

And to die — He without sin. And the Jews all went, The world-men, all willingly and led All-Wielding Christ, The Dear Lord to His death. Dire things one could hear, Grievous and wrong; groaning, the women did go, Did follow with weeping, and the men were wailing, Those come from Galilee, who did go with them, Faring from far-off ways. For the death of their Fair Lord They were sorrowing sorely. But He Himself, looking back, did see them,

"Nor may ye sorrow one whit Hight that they weep not, For My wayfaring hence, but your wicked words Ye may bewail and lament with your weeping, With your bitter tears. For the time will come When the mothers will rejoice, the maids of Judea, that

in their lives

No bairn was e'er born unto them. For then will ye bitterly pay

For your wrongs, right grimly. Then would ye be glad If the high mountains did hide you down here,

And bury you deeply. Death would be dearer,

Lovelier for all in the land, than to suffer the loath-

some

Murder of mankind, which will come here to the kinships of men."

LXVI

Then they set up the gallows on the sandy ground, the folk of the Jews: High on the field, The beam on the hillside; and God's Bairn was tormented Thereon, on the cross. They struck cold iron

nails sharp and new, Now in their eagerness, through His hands and His feet: Hard with their hammers, Bitter bonds were they. His blood ran to earth, The gore of our Good Lord. But this grim deed He cared not To avenge 'gainst the Jews, but He bade God the Father, that He be not wrathful The Almighty Lord, 'Gainst these men, this world-folk, "Since they wit not what they do," quoth He. the weeds of the Lord, Then the war-men dealt out coarse men of the foe — His fair, rich robes. But the men could not rightly Become of one mind about the division Until in their crowd they had cast down lots. Which of them was to have this holy garment, The most winsome of weeds. The world-folk's herdsman, The duke himself, hight that over the head Of Christ on the cross there be writ that this be the true king of Jews, Jesus of Nazareth-burg, who stood there nailed On the new gallows because of grim hatred — On the beam of the rood. Then the folk bade him To change that word, quoth that He Himself had so said as He wished, Had spoken so of Himself, that He wielded power over the people, Was King over the Jews. Then Caesar's envoy spoke once again, "Over His head it is now so The harsh leader of hosts: writ, and I choose not to change it." So wisely inscribed, The people of Jews then put on each side Of Christ on the cross two men condemned for their crimes And left them there tortured on the gallows-tree as reward For their works, for their loathsome deeds. And the landfolk did speak 190

unto Holy Christ, Many harsh words of scorn And with yelps they did greet Him; they saw the Best of all Men "If Thou beest King over Tormented there on the cross: all," quoth they, "The Son of the Lord, as Thou Thyself hath spoken, Make Thyself free of Save Thou Thyself from Thy suffering. such hate! Then will this host. Go hence hail and well. The bairns of the folk believe Thee." So also spoke blasphemy A most arrogant Jew who stood at the gallows. "Woe to the world," quoth he, "if Thou didst wield power over it! cast down in one day Thou sayest Thou canst of the King of Heaven, The high, noble house The greatest of stoneworks, and make it stand once more Up to this time no man of the people On the third day. Hath dared to bring such to pass. But see, how Thou now standeth in fetters And in sore distress; nor canst Thou save e'en Thyself One whit from this pain." Then, too, one of the thieves In fetters there did speak — when he heard the folk Uttering wicked words - for his will was ne'er good, "If Thou beest King of this The thoughts of this thrall. folk," quoth he, "Christ, Son of God, go Thou down from the cross, Slip loose from these snares and save us all, If Thou beest the Heaven-King, Help us together. Wielder over this world, make it known through Thy works, Reveal Thyself to these many!" Then spake the other man held in his fetters, Hanging there who stood Suffering great pain. "Wherefore wilt thou speak such a word, Greetest thou Him with such scorn? Thou standeth here held to the gallows, Broken on the beam. We both suffer sorely

Because of our sin: our own deeds themselves Have brought us our pain. But He standeth there, Faultless and free of all sin; for He Himself but for the hate of the crowd Hath committed no crime; He willingly endureth dire pain in this world. I shall most willingly believe," quoth he, "and shall eagerly bid Him, The Son of the Lord. the Warder of Lands, That Thou thinkest of me and that Thou beest my help, O Best of All Rulers, when Thou reachest Thy realm — Have mercy on me!" Then Christ Savior did speak Unto him with His words. "Verily I say unto Thee," quoth He, "That still on this day thou shalt see God's light Together with Me in the kingdom of Heaven, In Paradise, though thou art now in such pain." There stood also Mary, the mother of Christ, Bleached pale 'neath the beam, and beheld her Bairn tortured, Suffering such agony. And there were also women there come With her for love of Him, who was the Almighty. the disciple of Christ, And John stood there, too, Sadly beneath His Lord; and his spirit was sore, Grieved for this death. Then Christ the Great Lord did speak, The Mighty One to His mother: "To My disciples to him who standeth here before Me. I hereby consign thee, Thou shalt have him for a Enter thou into his household. son." Then He greeted John there, hight that he care for her well, Love her so mildly, as one should one's mother, Pure of mind, he received her This maid without stain. Into his care, as his Lord had commanded.

LXVII

Then at the mid-hour of day a mighty token Was wonderously revealed over the whole of the world. When they had raised God's Son onto the gallows, Christ onto the cross: then it became known everywhere How the sun was made swarthy, nor could its fair shimmering, light but its rays were surrounded Shine down any longer, With darkness and gloom, and dim fogs did o'ercast it. Thus came the dreariest day, the greatest darkness Over the whole, wide world, as long as the All-Wielder Christ, suffered pain on the cross, the Richest of Kings, Then the midsts did divide, Till the ninth hour of day. The swarthiness scattered, and the light of the sun Appeared clear in the heaven. Then the Strongest of Kings, The Greatest, cried up to God, as He stood on the cross, Fingers and arms fast bound in their fetters. "Father Almighty," cried He, "Wherefore hast Thou so forsaken Me, Thou My Dear Lord, Thou Holy Heaven-King? And leavest Thy help, Thy support so far? I stand 'mid the foe So terribly tortured." Then truly the folk of the Jews Laughed to revile Him. They heard Holy Christ, The Lord, before His death, ask for a drink, Heard Him say that He thirsted; but the throng could not cease their harrying, His wicked foes. But there was in them a great wish To bring unto Him still something more of bitterness, And the sin-minded folk had mixed for Him Vinegar, unsweet, and gall, and a man stood ready ---A right guilty scoundrel whom they had chosen for this, Had enticed with their speech, so that he took a sponge Loaded with the most loathsome of wines; on a long shaft he put it, and to God's Bairn he did give it, Bound to a beam;

Into the mouth of the Mighty One. Christ saw through this murky deed, Felt well its treachery — He no longer cared to taste Of such bitterness: but the Bairn of God cried aloud To His Father in Heaven. "Into Thy hands I commend Myself," quoth He, "My ghost, My spirit unto God's will. It is now good, It is ready to come unto Thee." The Lord of All Peoples Inclined His head, and His holy breath Escaped from His body. As now the Warder of Lands there was straightway revealed Died in His ropes, A right wonderous token: so that the Wielder's death Would be made known to the speechless many And His end-day fulfilled. The earth did tremble, And the high mountains shook, and the hard stone split open, and the fair curtain was rent, The crags on the fields; Was torn in two down the middle that veil in the temple Which had hung there unharmed and most wonderously Broidered for many a day for the bairns of mankind, The people were never permitted to see what holy things Hung hidden behind that veil. Now they could see the hoard: The Jewish folk could now gaze on it. And the graves of dead men and in their bodies Burst open and wide; out of the earth ----They rose up living All through the strength of the Lord and were there revealed As a marvel to men. This was a mighty thing, That so much should feel, should recognize, too, The death of the Christ: so many a thing that had never spoken One word to any man in this world. Verily the folk of the Jews Saw many strange things; but their cruel spirits Had grown so hard in their hearts, that there was no holy sign,

No token revealed unto them, which made them trust more In Christ's might and strength: that He was the King Over all the peoples of world. But some spoke with their words, Some who were set guarding the bodies there in the ground, That this was truly the Son of the All-Wielder, The Best of All Bairns. Some beat their breasts sorely ----Some weeping women; wonderous pain they felt, Much hurt in their hearts, at their High Lord's death, And they were sorely grieved. Now it was the custom of the Jews, That they did not leave any prisoner hanging there longer On a holy day, except just as long, until life had glided away, Till his soul had sunk from him; and the sly, grim-minded men In their hatred came closer to where, along with the Christ, The two thieves were nailed, both suffering torture Along with Him. They were both still alive, Until the loathsome folk of the Jews Broke their leg-bones, and both together Took leave of life, seeking another light. But they needed not drive Lord Christ to His death With further sins of that sort; but they found He had fared thence, His soul had repaired from here on to the right path, To long-lasting light. His limbs had grown cold, The fire had gone from His flesh; then one of the folk went up to Him With hatred of heart; and in his hand he did bear A spear, sharp and nailed. And with sword-strength he did thrust it, cut deep in the wound, Let the point of the weapon So that on one side Christ's body itself Was laid open. The landsmen there saw That the blood and the water — both did spring forth,

Did well from the wound, as was His will, And as before He had marked it for the kinship of men, For the good of the folk-bairns, and so indeed 'twas fulfilled.

LXVIII

The bright, shining sun with its beacon of beams Had sunk down further close to its seat — On that gloomy day there did come a thane of our Lord: A clever man was he, a disciple of Christ For a long time already, although not many a man Had ken thereof, since with his words he had concealed it indeed Joseph was he hight; From the people of Jews. He was his Lord's disciple in secret, and he wished not to follow this sinful folk In their works of wickedness; but amid the Jewish folk he awaited The holy kingdom of Heaven. He went hence to speak to the duke, To make issue with the envoy of Caesar; and he urged him muchly from the cross, where it stood To release Christ's body in torture, To let the Good Man be lowered from the gallows and laid in a grave, And the leader of the folk Consigned to earth's folds. Did not wish to deny him his will, but did grant him the right To accomplish his deed. Then he did go forth from there, Did go to the gallows, where he knew God's Bairn, Where he knew the body of his Lord was hanging. From the new rood he did take it and from the nails he freed it. And into his arms he received it — as one should do for one's dear lord ---and wound it with linen He took the loved body

And carried it carefully for his Lord was clearly worthy thereof ----a place with their hands, To where they had hewn where still no child of mankind, A spot in the stone, No person had ever been buried. There they placed God's Bairn. Committed the holiest of corpses, as was their custom, And with a rock they did Into the folds of the earth. close The goodliest of graves. Grieving, there sat Women there in their misery, those who had witnessed all, The grim death of the Man. They started to go thence, watching most carefully The weeping women, On what path they should again go back to the grave. They had seen sadness and sorrow aplenty, Mikil grief of their minds: Mary were they both hight, These women in misery. Then was the evening come, The night with its darkness. The dire, hating Jews Gathered again on the morrow, many together...¹ "What, thou knowest surely, Speaking in secret: That through this One man thy realm was indeed doubtrent, The people confused. Now lieth He wound-pierced And buried all deeply. He ever did say that He would arise This many folk do believe. From the dead on the third day. Many people do mark His words. Now order thou a watch, A guard at His grave, lest His disciples Steal Him away from the stone, and say then that He, from His rest. Then the Rich and mighty, had risen warrior-folk Will be angered still more, if they begin to announce that about." Then there were people appointed from the horde of the lews, War-men for the watch. They went hence with their weapons:

¹ Lucuna in Ms.

They did go to the grave. There were they to guard The body of God's Bairn. So passed by the holy day Of the Jews and was gone. They sat over the grave, The warriors on watch in the wide, sparkling night, Biding under their shield-boards, until the bright day over the mid-world here, Came to mankind Bringing light to the land-folk. / It was not long thereafter That through God's strength the spirit returned Under the hard stone. The Holy breath Returned to the body. The light was revealed For the boon of mankind, and many a bolt Was unlatched on hell's doors, and the way to Heaven From the world was fashioned. Full radiant arose The Peace-Bairn of God, and He did go as He willed, So that the wardens of the grave could not recognize Him even one whit when He rose from the dead, That ruthless rabble — Arose from His rest. Outside 'round the grave The warriors did sit, the host with their shields, The folk of the Jews. The fair sun strode forward, The clear, winsome light. And the women went forth, wives of good clan, Going to the grave, They had sold much treasure The Marys most lovely. Of silver and gold to buy salves, had sold Much of wealth for herbs and for worts. Whatsoever they could gain, the body of their beloved Lord, So that they could embalm with their herbs and salves, The Almighty's Son, Him slashed with wounds. The women sorrowed and some of them spoke: So greatly in spirit, Who would roll it aside, the great stone from the grave For them, the stone which they had seen The men lay over the corpse, when they had consigned it Into its nook in the rocks. When verily now the women so that they might see the grave Had gone to the garden, itself. from the sky above, The Almighty's angel did come

Faring down from the firmament in a shroud of feathers, So that the world, the earth did echo and the men Became weak in their spirits, the watchmen of Jews, And fell down in fright. They feared they would have Their lives not much longer.

LXIX

The guards lay there,

then straightway came uncovered The thralls, as though dead; The great stone from the grave; for God's angel and the Lord's radiant herald Did roll it aside; Did sit him there on the stone; in his face, in his deeds might see with their eyes ---So that all and each He was as bright and blithe as a bolt of lightning. And his weeds, his vestments were as the winter-cold snow, Then they did see him, sitting there on the stone that was turned and from the brightness The women beheld him; Great fear struck the wives; they were sore afraid And mightily frightened and dared go no further, Dared not go to the grave, until the angel of God, The Wielder's herald, did greet them with words, Quoth that he knew well what their errand, Their work and their will, and the mind of these good wives; Hight that they fear not, "For I know ye seek Him, Your Lord, Savior Christ, from the city of Nazareth, Him whom the clans of the Jews did torture and nail to the cross. Him sinless they laid in the grave. He Himself is not there, But He hath arisen, and this place standeth empty, This grave in the grotto. Now may ye go nearer, May come much closer; clearly I know that ye long To see inside of the stone; here still is the spot

Where His body was laid." In their breasts the women, wan though they were And pale, began to be greatly comforted, The winsome, fair wives. A most welcome message They had heard here that which the herald of God, The All-Wielder's angel, had said. He hight that they again Go hence from the grave; and go to Christ's followers And say unto His thanes this word most sooth: That their Lord Most Beloved. lo, had arisen from death that unto Simon Peter Most especially he hight Be told with words this most welcome spell Of the coming of the Lord: that Christ Himself Was in Galilee-land, and there again His retainers, Disciples shall see Him, as He Himself did say With His words of truth. Just as the wives Were about to go thence, there stood there before them Two angels clad all in garments of white, In weeds, shining and winsome, and with their words They spoke unto them holy things; and the hearts of the women Were made anxious with fright, for they feared to look at God's angels, Could not gaze into the brightness; for the glory of them was too great, Then the Wielder's heralds spoke Was too strong to see. Again unto them and did ask the women Why they were come to seek Christ the Quick Here 'mid the dead, the Son of the Master. Him filled with life. "Ye shall not find Him Here in this stony grave. But He hath arisen In His body hence; and this shall ye believe; And remember these words, which most verily He Himself hath oft said, when He was with you how He would be given over and betrayed, In Galilee-land: How He would be sold to sinful mankind Into the hand of the hater — the Most Holy Lord — So that they would torment Him, and tack Him to the cross, Would do Him to death, and that on the third day Through the might of Lord God and for the good of all men,

He would arise, once more living. That verily hath been done now,

Brought to pass 'mid the people. Repair ye swiftly — Haste ye hence, and make this known to the followers of Him.

LXX

He hath gone on ahead and is away In Galilee-land, and His retainers shall see Him again, His disciples there." And straightway this was joy, Was winsomeness for the women, when they heard such words spoken, Making known God's might - yet much frightened were they still, Filled with a fear of Him; and they set them forth and unto Christ's disciples they To go from the grave; gladly Did speak of the wonderous sight, while sorrowing still They bided such bettering. To the bastions were come The Jewish guardsmen, too, who had sat by the grave All the long, long night, had lain in watch o'er the corpse, O'er the body there buried; and while they there bided — They said unto the host of the Jews what shock, what fright, What strange sight came unto them; and they said also with their words How it was all so done with the might of the Lord; Nor kept they it hidden within their hearts. And the host of the Jews Offered to them great treasures both of silver and of gold, Bought from them with bright jewels the promise that they would not tell,

Nor make this known to the many; "But say ye that with weary minds Ye did fall asleep; and there did come His disciples And stole Him away from behind the stone. Do ye this ever with zeal, and if the folk-leader doth gain Go on in eagerness; knowledge thereof, We shall help you against that high lord, so that no whit of harm, No grief shall o'ertake you." Then they took great treasures, Precious jewels from the people, but pursued the course they had begun, For they had no power o'er their will; but they broadcast it widely To the folk in the land, that such lies were here spread Then were the hearts once more About the Holy Lord. healed For the disciples of Christ, when they did hear the good wives Give praise unto God's power. Then their hearts grew joyous, And both of them ran, rushing swiftly up to the grave, Until soon after Simon Peter did come, Earl famed for his strength; and he went on Going straight to the grave; and he saw there the garments Of God's Bairn, of His Lord, the linen lying there, The beautiful shroud with which His body Had been bound so fairly. Far from that lay the cloth With which Holy Christ's head had been covered, Our Mighty Lord's face, when He lay in this rest. Then John also did go inside the grave To see this strange thing; and straightway thereafter that He would His belief was unlocked, so that he knew again come to this light — His Lord most dear, would arise from the dead Up out of this earth. Then they again went away, The twain, Peter and John, and the retainers, disciples

With care-filled heart Of Christ came together. One of the women stood for a second time Groaning over the grave — her spirit was grieved — It was Mary Magdelan the thoughts of her mind, Of her soul were seized with sorrow, nor knew she where she should seek Him, The Lord who would grant her help. She could not leave off her lamenting; Nor knew she where The woman could not cease her weeping. she could turn. The thoughts of her mind were distracted. Then she saw Mighty Christ Standing there although she could not perceive Him until He so wished to reveal it, As someone she knew, Until He would say who He was. He asked what she was bemoaning so sorely. So terribly there with her hot tears. She told Him she verily knew not Where they had taken her Lord. "If Thou can'st show me, O my Lord, if I may ask Thee, if Thou hast taken Him awav then instruct me with words --From behind these rocks, that would be my greatest wish: That I could see Him myself." She knew not 'twas the Son of the Lord Whom she was greeting with her good speech. She weened 'twas a gardener, Yard-guardian of his master. Then the Holy Lord did greet her By name, the Best of All Saviors. And straightway she came closer, The wife, with good will, and recognized her Savior Himself. In her love she could not refrain, but with her hands she longed to hold Him, The woman to touch the World-Lord. "Not yet," quoth He, "have I risen to Him, the Heavenly Father.

But haste thou now swiftly, and make it known to the earls, To My brethren here, that I will see Him, The All-Wielder, Father of us both,

Yours and Mine, too, Mighty God, true and fast."

LXXI

The woman was in raptures that she could proclaim such joy,

Could say of Him, that He was sound and was well. Straightway the woman

Was eager to announce this message, and to the earls she did bring it,

Welcome tidings to the warriors: that All-Wielding Christ

She had seen well and sound; and she said that He Himself Had granted unto her this glorious day. They still wished not to trust

The woman's word, that she brought such a message so welcome

Verily from the Son of God, and they sat grieved of heart,

The heroes lamenting. Then Holy Christ, The Lord, revealed Himself openly another time Since He rose from the dead. He did so do this For the sake of the woman, that He met them on the way. He spoke to them as One whom they knew, and they bent their knee before Him, Fell at His feet. He hight that no fear

Should they bear in their breast. "But unto My brethren Shall ye make known My message, that they shall follow Into Galilee-land. There shall I meet them again."

On that selfsame day of the disciples

Two earls early already that morn

Were faring on business. They wished to find them the fortress

Of Emaus, the castle. Among the men many

A word did begin to wax, as they fared on their way, God's Holy Son. Still could they not know Him one whit, Him the Mighty and Strong. He had no wish to reveal Himself unto them. Still He went along with them, and He asked about what they were speaking: "Why go ye so groaning," quoth He, "Ye twain with such grieving hearts They straightway replied And souls filled with sorrow?" unto Him, "Why dost Thou ask so?" The earls then gave answer: quoth they. "Art Thou from Jerusalem from the folk of the Jews?"...1 from the fields of Heaven The Holy Ghost With the great strength of Lord God." Now He took those good earls, and He did lead them out, His disciples there Until He brought them to Bethany. There He held up His hands and made them holy: With His words He did bless them. Then He went Him hence, Sought the high realm of Heaven and His holy throne. And there He doth sit on the right side of God, The Father Almighty. And from there All-Wielding Christ Gazes down and sees what power doth surround the world. Then on the same spot the disciples good Fell down in prayer, and the followers of Christ Fared rejoicing again to Jerusalem. To the city they hastened, and their hearts were joyous. Truly the strength of the In the temple they tarried. Wielder...

¹ Lacuna in Ms.

