

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,
God's holy Word, and write with their hands
Bright in a book how best God's bidding
They might carry out, the kith of mankind.
There were four from the many: they had might from the
 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,
Committing to writing so many commandments of God,
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 Lord who layeth low the loathsome thing,
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
For the kinsmen of earth — and now the sixth was to
 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,
Had strengthened the heart of the crowds of the host,
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,
Over the heathens all. Herod was chosen

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 Rome-
 burg,
So that then the fighting men, famed for their fierce-
 ness,
The children of Israel, friends changeless in strength,
Were subject to him, since he held sway —
Herod — over kinships and councillors
Of Israel's landsmen. There lived there then
An aged man, a wise man of reasonable mind:
He was come from the people of the clan of Levi,
The famed son of Jacob of a very fair family:
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,
Since not ever could they be granted an heir:
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
 Might-Wielding God for His grace,
 The Lord of All Heaven to release them from evil.
 The folk stood around by the holy house, and the
 high-born man

Entered the temple. The others all,
 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
 God's angel inside there in the sanctuary.
 And he spoke to the sage, said with words not to fear
 Nor to have any dread. "For thy deeds," quoth he,
 "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
 From thy aged wife. In this world shall be given unto
 thee:

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 ye hold him

And faithfully foster him. Quoth that he would find

Honors so many up in God's kingdom.

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,

Thane of His Own Son. And quoth that they both

Betake themselves here swiftly for tidings."

Zachery then spoke and said to God's angel,

Beginning to wonder about his deeds and his words:

"How can that so come to pass?" quoth he,

"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,

Could beget no babe in our bedchamber —

Now that we are old, and age has robbed us of deed-

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,

And our appearance: alas, 'tis altered —

Mind both and might: so many a day

We have wandered this world. Methinks 'twere a wonder

If it ever so happed, as thou hast said with thy words."

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 wise gathered quickly, the closest of kinsmen,
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
What the babe's name should be here below in this
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 wisely 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.

IV

’Twas not long thereafter that all came to pass,
As Almighty God had promised mankind:
That He would send the Son of Himself,
The Heavenly Bairn, here to this world,
So that He might save the folk all from sin,
The clansmen from hell-pangs. There came His herald,
Gabriel, down to Galilee-land,
The All-Wielder’s angel, where he knew a woman of
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!

Aye, 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 man-
child,

Son of the Heaven-King. His name shall be Healer
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
To answer the maid. “From the meadows of sky
The Holy Ghost shall descend through the strength of
God.

From Him will a Wee One be granted thee here in this
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,
Nor my word nor my way.” So I heard that the woman
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,
That she had conceived through the All-Wielder’s
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 with-
in 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
He no longer wished, his wife in his halls.
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
Among the many. He feared that the children of men
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
Mid the land-folk, could live ’mid the world-lords.
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
 Hurried to him in a dream, the Heaven-King's herald,
 And bade him keep her and care for her well
 And love her, too, in his mind. "At Mary," quoth he,
 "thy maid,
 Be not thou wrathful; she is a right good wife.
 Scorn her not sternly. Thou shalt hold her
 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,
 For the maid, Marie. God's might he now understood,
 The Wielder's bidding. Great was his will,
 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

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,
The Child in the crib, though He had God's strength,
The Master of Men. There His mother sat by Him,
The woman there waking; she herself warded Him,
Held there the Holy Bairn; and her heart doubted not —
The mind of the maid. It became known to the many
Over this wide, wide world. The warders did hear it:
Grooms were they there, keeping guard outside,
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,
These men, in their minds. Then God's mighty angel
They saw coming afar. To them together he spoke,
Hight that the grooms not dread any grief
From the light. "For lo!" quoth he, "A glad thing
I tell you and truly, long longed-for tidings
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 —
And on earth be peace to all children of men,
To folk of good will who accept their God
With hearts ever pure." The herdsmen understood
That a mighty thing had admonished them:
Blithe tidings there. They turned back to Bethlehem
That selfsame night, for their spirits longed
Most greatly to see Christ Himself.

VI

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 mother did raise the Master of Men,
The Holy Heavenly Bairn. The heroes did speak

On the eighth day, the earls of the kingdom,
Very wise men all, with the handmaid of God:
That His name should be "Healer," as the Heaven King's
herald,

As God's holy angel, Gabriel had spoken,
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
The sign and the symbol, and the Child of God,
The Heaven-King Holy. "Now, Lord," quoth he,
"I gladly shall bid Thee, since aged I be,
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,
Is glory and honor to Israel's children,
To Thine own landfolk, Thy beloved people."
Secretly then the old man there at the altar
Spoke to the good woman, truly did tell her
How her Son would become to some certain ruin,
To some consolation, to the children of men —
A love-thing to those who list to His teaching,
But harm yet to them, refusing to hearken
To the gospel of Christ. "Thou shalt suffer," quoth
he, "great care
And hurt in thy heart, when the earth-children
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
From inside the temple. Anna was she called,
Was Phanuck's daughter. Full well her Lord had she
served

With a grateful heart, was an excellent woman.

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 —

She knew God's Holy Bairn, to the heroes announced it,
To the folk at the altar, this spell all welcome.
Said that so near was the Savior's salvation,
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

Spoken by God. The woman had ended the sacrifice,
As her vow and the book in the shining bastion had
told her,

Her handwork most holy. They went on home
To Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph,
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.

Although all holy men
 Recognized Christ, at the court of the king
 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.
 Bright beacon they followed and sought God's Bairn;
 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,
 In his house the sages; and straightway he asked them
 What business had brought them out here,
 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
 Why ye art come indeed to this land."
 They answered in turn, the men from the East,
 Word-wise warriors. "We can," quoth they,
 "Most easily tell thee our business with truth,
 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,
Hoary and sage — so long ago was that now —
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
He most soothly said what is since then come,
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;
Quoth that in this world He would wield power
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,

In the heavens on high, such as never before we have
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 bea-
con here,
The while through ways and through woods. That was
our greatest wish —
To see Him ourselves, to know where to seek Him,
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 seethe with sorrow within him,
For he heard them say that he should now have a Head
over him,

A mightier King and One of good clan,
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
Told the truth-sayers' word to the travellers, the earls
from abroad
Those faring from far — he questioned them fully,
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,
The master of Jews, gave order most sternly
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
His slayer by the weapon's edge. Yet All-Wielding God
Was minded otherwise. 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.
Then they saw it so wisely shining forth 'neath the
clouds,
High in the heavens, where fared the white stars.
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,
Until they well saw, these way-weary men,
The clear beacon of God bright in the heavens
Suddenly stop. The star shone light
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 fit-
tingly
They took Him and held Him. They betook themselves
then,
The wise men, into the house — way-weary were they —
The sages into the guest hall. There the angel of God
Did come to the sleepers, showed a dream in the night,
Revealed in a vision, as the Lord Himself,
The All-Wielder, did will it. They thought a man had
commanded with words
That they seek them another way: the aethlings should
Leave and go to their own land and not seek the loath-
some 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 bore in their breasts. They bade the All-Wielder,
The Heaven-King on High, that hencefore they might
still
Work His grace and His will; quoth that their souls
were turned unto Him,
Their minds every morn. Then the men travelled hence,
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
The king of the Jews account of the birth of the Babe;
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
Would seek Him indeed, the Child of God:
He was after His life. "Now thou shalt lead Him
Out into Egypt-land, live midst the land-folk
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
He sought other folk. For he wished to lead forth
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

So many a babe, bairns born in Bethlehem
And bred these two years. The thanes of the king
Did evil deed. So had to die there,
Though sinless, many a man-child. Never since nor be-
 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,

With their arms embrace them, their own dear bairns,
Their loved and little ones. But life it had to relin-
 quish —

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
A child-young man. The mothers bewailed
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,

The child-young men lying murdered:
Bloody they lay on their laps. The baneful murderers
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
Dwelt 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
His heir was to rule. Archilaus
He was hight, hero of helm-wearers — he!
He was to rule o'er the Jewish folk there in Jerusalem,
Wield power o'er the people. Then the word did come
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
Back to the land. "Now he hath left the light,"
Quoth he, "Herod the king. Once 'twas his will to kill
 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
God's token completely. Straightway they readied
 themselves,
The thane with the Maid. They speedily sought to go
 thence,
Both with the Bairn. Bright fate they fulfilled,
The will of the Wielder, as He bade them with words.

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

Among the crowd. Greatly she was grieved then,
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,
The very wise men who verily read
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:

"Why, dearest Man, hast Thou given Thy mother
Such sorrow indeed, that I needs must seek Thee —
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,

To His parents twain through His humble mind.
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,
Say to the people that He Himself was
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.

XI

John had grown up out of his earliest youth,
Had waxed in the wilderness. Nor was there any world-
man
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:
God's goodly voice gave John command
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,
To the folk that with fasting they might atone
For many a wrong, make better their sins themselves.
“That ye may now become clean,” quoth he. “The Heaven-
ly 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,
Turn to my words. Into the water
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,
He will baptize you both in the name of the Lord
And of the Holy Ghost. He is Lord High over all.
He can free each man from his misdeeds,
Shear him from sin, who would be blessed of soul
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

For Almighty God.” Many an earl
Through these teachings, many folk truly,
World-men did ween that this was All-Wielding Christ,
Since he did so speak so much of soothness,
Such words of truth. Then wide and far it was known
To every man over the promised land,
To all kin in their courtyards: then there did come
Jewish folk seeking him out from Jerusalem,
Grooms from the bastions, and asked if he were God’s
Bairn

“About whom so long,” quoth they, “the land-folk have
spoken,
The world-men said verily, that he should come to this
world.”

But John took the word and boldly did speak
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;
Those from the town asked him for tidings. “If thou are
not truly God’s Bairn,

Art thou then Elias, who in earlier days
Was amid the folk? Certainly he is again
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,
My beloved God. I am to make ready the land,
The world-folk right to His will. Through His word in-
deed

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,
 Is so noble and strong — that shall be soon known to
 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 king-
 dom,
 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,
 People to learn, and received belief.
 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

Forthwith all that is right, as is truly His will?”

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,
Fair from the flood, Peace-Bairn of God,
The Lord of all Land-Folk. When He entered the land,
Heavens door did ope, and from the All-Wielder above
Came the Holy Ghost, came down to the Christ.
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,
“This is,” quoth he, “the Heaven-King’s Son,
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,
Seeking a single Man in this mid-world here.
‘That,’ quoth that voice, ‘that will be Christ,
The Fair Son of the Lord. He shall dip the folk
In the Holy Ghost and heal many a man
From his dire misdeeds.’ This power He doth have from
 Lord God:
That He can remove from all mankind
Their blame and their sins. This is Christ Himself,
God’s Own Bairn, the Best of all Men,
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,

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
What they are bidden by the word of the Wielder."
The noisome fiend came nearer then
For another time and slyly tempted
And baited his Master. The Peace-Bairn of God suffered
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 Al-
mighty'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 spokē 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 land-

 folk

Take Him up high on a mountain. There the treacherous

 Fiend

Let Him look over all of the land-folk,

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;

Holy Christ no longer would hear, but He drove him

 forth,

Away from His favor; swept Satan away, and then spoke:

The Best of All Bairns bade that men all should pray

To Almighty God; and Him alone

Should they serve — the many thanes,

The heroes hoping for grace, “There help will reach

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,

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
That He show His great strength to the folk. Thus He
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,
John, His disciple, when he saw Him coming:
"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,
Most Strong of All Kings!" Christ then went forth
To Galilee-land, God's Own Bairn
Fared to His Friends, where fair He was born
And most rightlly 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 world-
folk,
'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
Were very neatly throwing their nets,
Fishing in the flood. There first the Peace Bairn of
God
Himself did greet them on the shores of the sea.
Hight that they follow Him, quoth that He would give
them
Much of God's kingdom. "As ye here catch fish,
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.
So do all folk who would earn their Lord's favor
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
They forsook their father alone by the flood,
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
Was the need they felt. So feel all thanes,
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
For his lord; loyal he was to his task,
Noble his looks and his bearing. But he left them all —
Gold and silver and gifts so many,
Treasures most dear — and became our Lord's man.
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 land-
folk,
To each in his bastion, that the Bairn of God
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.

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 —

Poor men were they and in want of food —
 So that they might beg Him amid the multitude
 For meat and for drink, amid the crowd; for there was
 many

A goodly thane who gladly did give
 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 —

They had pious hearts; and straightway they became
 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 merci-
 ful rule

For a long, long time — for that so well He could do.
There was a great crowd gathered round glorious
 Christ:

So much of the folk was assembled. He saw them come
 from all lands,

From all the wide ways, the world-men together,
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

Both through their birth. The Bairn of God chose them,
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 sis-
 ters,
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.
And He called Bartholomew, too, to fare up the mountain
Away from the folk. And Philip was with them.
True hearted men were they all. The twelve went to-
gether,
The fighters all to the confab, there where the Coun-
cillor sat;
The Protector of Many made known unto them
How He planned to help mankind 'gainst the pangs of
hell,
'Gainst the infernal flame — help those who would
follow
The fair, sweet message, as He sought to reveal it
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,
Mild was His mood; and as He unlocked His mouth,
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,
That blessed were, too, the gentle and mild. "They may
inherit this glorious earth,
The very same kingdom." Quoth that those, too, were
blessed

Who bemoan here their misdeeds. "Await joy they may,
Consolation perfect in their Master's kingdom.
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
In secret, when they sit at the confab. Blessed be also
such men

Whose hearts are mild in their heroes' breasts. For them
will the Holy Lord,

The Mighty, be mild. Blessed those 'mid the folk
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.
All-Wielding Christ, the Richest of Kings,
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
 you
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 en-
dured
Pain in this world. It is worse for those others:
Grimmer judgment awaits them who have goods here on
earth,
Wide worldly treasure. They waste here their pleasure,
Enjoy them enough. These men shall suffer
A harrowing judgment after their journey.
They shall bemoan their misery, who are now so merry
And living in lust, nor let go willingly
Their sinful thoughts, which tempt their spirits,
Their loathsome wrongs. For them shall come as reward
An evil most painful. These people will see sadly
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.
So with your lessons ye shall turn the land-folk
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
Wide on the seashore; then it is of worth to none,
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,
But wavereth in his word — then the Wielder groweth
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

So spoke He wisely and said God's spell.
The Land-Warder taught them, His people with pureness
of mind.
The heroes stood gladly 'round the Son of God,
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 lands-
men,
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 —
No more than a castle can remain ever concealed
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.

Let him who hath light leave it not hidden from the
 land-folk,

Nor cover it heavily; rather high in his great hall
He shall set it up, so that all within shall have sight
 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 un-
 derstand.

And so do ye that which in former days
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,

Who, as men of truth, gave clear commandments
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
Here in this light. I came not to World
That I should fell it, the prophets' word, but to ful-
 fill 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 fos-
ter hatred,
One man 'gainst another, deep in his mind —
Who beareth a grudge in his breast, though they be
all brothers,
God's blessed folk, bound together in kinship,
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,
Most zealously love those closest, be kind to one's
kinsmen,
Good to all kith, and mild in one's gift-giving;
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,

Show him pureness of spirit and loyalty sweet;
In return for his loathsomeness do ye love him. That
is long lasting counsel

For every man whose mind hath been turned
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,

On God's altar give them — worthy they be of our good
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.

Then he hath straightway done sin unto himself,

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,
Neither by Heaven on high (since that is the Lord's
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,

Either black or white, but as Holy God
Hath mightily marked it. Therefore the many,
The earls should avoid every oath-word. He who oft
Swareth 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,
Mightier ones with men except as with My words
I most verily here do command you:
If a man hath trouble with another, let him speak the
truth;

Say 'yea,' if it be so, confess that it is true;
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
One another's word. Then I also verily tell unto you:
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 —
That he shall pay to the person for the loss
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 your-
selves,

The pain and the wrong that people will do you here
in this world.

Let each earl do unto another whatsoever is good and
is useful,

If he so willeth, that the children of men
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.

If thou wouldest give to good men all
Fair shining coins, and thinkest thereby
To reap a reward, how willest thou then have return
from God,

Or largess here in the light? For these are brief-
lasting goods.

So it is for all that thou doest for others,
For love of the land-folk — if thou thinkest to re-
ceive the like

In word and in work: why should the Wielder know
thanks,

Since thou givest to them and gettest from them in
return?

Give thou thy riches to the poor men, who give unto
thee

No rewards in this world; and strive then for the
Wielder's realm.

But act thou not loudly, when thou givest thy alms
To the needy of men; but be thou meek all of mind,
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,

And sharest in secret, is esteemed by our Lord.
Nor boast of thy giving — let no great lord do so
either —

Lest through idle boasts the gift is made nought
And forlornly lost. Before the eyes of the Lord
Shalt thou receive thy reward for thy work right
and good.

Also shall I bid thee, when thou bendest thy knee
In prayer, begging help from the Lord, begging

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 give praise unto you; and the prayer to your Lord
You lose most forlornly for idle fame.
But if ye do ask help from your Lord on high,
Praying most humbly to Him — that must ye surely here
do —

That your Battle-Lord befree you from sin,
Do ye so in the darkness: yet your Lord doth know,
He, Holy in Heaven, since nothing is hidden to Him,
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
To think over again all that the Holy Bairn
Had told unto them on this first time,
Had all clearly proclaimed. Then spoke one of the
twelve;
Of the goodly men one began to ask of God's Bairn:

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.

In the light of this world, without that ye have
 willed

To make peace in your matters with the children of 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.

The Wielder, your will; if other world-bairns,

Other land-folk fail to laud you, yet lovely reward
He will give,

Your Holy Father, in Heaven's kingdom,

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,

Riches fairer by far. Your foe cannot rob you,

Can take nothing from you. For treasures stand ready

For you up yonder, as much as ye there

Have gathered in Heaven riches and goods,

Heroes, ye, through your hand-gifts. And keep ye steady
fast 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
Forsake wholly one or the other,
Either the lusts of the body or life everlasting.
Therefore grieve ye not for your garments, but hold ye
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
Help against hunger. Ye may in your hearts
Eke gaze at the flowers, when ye think of your gar-
ments,

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.

xx

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?
He is thy brother. Thou seest under his brow
A wisp in his eye, but are not willing by one whit
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
Make better the sight of thy sweet friend,
Heal it, lo, in his head. Let each in his heart,
Each man in this mid-world, think more of his own
misdeeds
Than he thinketh of the sins of another,
The faults of a friend — and hath himself done far
worse,
Far greater wrongs. If to himself he would do good,
Then shall he first make himself free of all sin,
Loose of all loathsome deeds. Later may he then with
his teachings
Be a help to the people, when he knoweth himself to
be pure
And safe from sin. Nor shalt thou strew
Thy sea-pearls down before swine, nor scatter thy
jewels,
Nor thy neckband holy; for they will trample it now
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.
They would far liefer have low, useless things,
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.
Lose ye not your word 'mid the land-folk, who do not
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,
The thoughts of these thanes. For ye know that thorns
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:
That the bad tree which standeth there in the earth
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,
In the hearts of so many of the kinfolk of man,
Wherever each one of the earls showeth himself all
openly,
Maketh known with his mouth of what mind he is,
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,
Harboring them 'round his heart: here his thoughts
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

For your welfare eternal. Make ye known your travels
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

To hear such things being said ever before,
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,

Enduring deeds. Deal ye right heavily still with
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,

Be useless to you. Ye shall own no more garments,

My earls, no more weeds, than those which ye wear,

Ye good men, to garb you, when ye do go forth

Among the many. Ye shall not think of your meat,

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,

That a man should make ready for the souls of the
many,

Should keep them all for the kingdom of Heaven,

Than that he careth for the bodies of folk

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,

Amid unlike men. Keep ye your minds toward them

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
Amid the people and oppression together,
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,
Help come from Heaven, and the Holy Ghost will speak
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
Accomplish the work of the Wielder, and His will
as well.
They need not call unto Him, their Master, with words
so many,
Hailing Him for help, since All-Holy God,
Knoweth of every man the thoughts in his mind,
His word and his will, and payeth him right for his
work.
As ye fare on your way, let this be your worry
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,
The broad street to the borough: straightway seek
ye 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
With pureness of heart, then may ye dwell in the
 house
With them as ye will, rewarding them well:
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.
Yet if they cannot become blessed
By their own deeds, cannot do your works,
Carry out your message: then leave ye 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,
A much larger gathering; nor leave ye of dust one
 single grain
To follow your feet from there, where one hath re-
 ceived 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
He doeth some good for the love of God:
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,

As is meet, a mild Protector for whosoever hearkeneth
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 world-
folk

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
To the high house, where the hordes were drinking,
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,
No drop in the house, which to the hordes
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
That the host of the house had no more of wine,
Hight the Holy Christ, that He find some help
For the joy of the many. There again God's Mighty
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

So much, admonishing Me before these many?
My time is not come yet!" Yet she still trusted well
Deep in her heart, the Holy Maid,
That the Wielder's Bairn — even after these words —
Would help indeed, the Best of All Healers.

Then the sweetest of ladies hight all the servants,
The butlers and cup-bearers who had here been serving,
That they omit not a whit either of words or of works
Of that which the Holy Christ would hight them do
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
Was verily all unaware what He said with His words.
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,

Hight that they give with their hands to the foremost
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
At once at the wedding. “So is a man’s wit
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 host-
 ship
Among the multitude here; thou hast hight thy serv-
 ing men,
Thy butlers and cup-bearers bring out at the ban-
 quet
Of all the wines the very worst forsooth,
Serving that first at the feast. Now that thy guests
 are filled,
The dear banqueteers are already most drunk,
The folk feeling merry, thou hightest brought forth
The loveliest of all wines which I ever saw lifted
Anywhere in this earth-light. Thou shouldst have
 given that earlier,
Have served us sooner. Such thanks wouldst thou then
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
The water to wine. That was of His wonders
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

Told His teachings unto the people of Jews
The livelong day in the name of Lord God,
Promised the kingdom of Heaven; with His words pro-
tected them, too,
From the press of hell. Hight that they should seek
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,
To exchange words with Him. “I am not worthy,”
 quoth he,
“Good Lord, my Liege, that Thou wouldst come to
 my house —
Wouldst seek out my dwelling, for I am a sinful man
With my words and my works. I believe Thou wieldsdest
 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,
Loyal warriors in arms, who listen alone unto me,
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,
War-minded men, still may I not dare
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,
The like of this man in the landscape; one who be-
 lieved

More deeply in God, more purely in Heaven — “Now may
Ye hear, ye too, what I say at this time with words
of truth:

That much foreign folk from the East and the West,
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 darkest dales in the farthest distance of
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 mid-
world 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;
With words taught God's will to the people, had always
Followers aplenty about Him, blessed folk of God,
A mighty crowd of men, come from many peoples,
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,
A child-young man. The mother did follow,
Her heart being heavy; herself did she beat with her
hands,

Bewailed and lamented the death of her bairn —
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;
Hight the widow leave off with her weeping,
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,
With His holy hands and to the hero He spoke,
Hight this child, all too young, to stand up, hight
him
Arise from his rest. Right away the youth
Did sit up, the bairn on the bier; and into his
breast came
His soul through the strength of God; and he spoke
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,
Were come to the Christ, who through His strength and
 His craft
Helped them and healed them and sent them hale from
 the place
To wend where they willed. Therefore should one praise
 His words,
The Mighty Minder of all mankind,
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
Into a small ship, the Savior Christ,
Way-weary, to sleep. The weather-wise men
Raised high the sail, let the wind drive the sloop
Over the sea-tide, until they did come to the center,
The Wielder there with His vassals. There began the
force of the weather;
The storm-wind rose, the waves waxed high,
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
To live any longer. The Land-Warden they then
Awakened with their words. They told unto Him of the
weather's strength;
They bade saving Christ to be gracious and kind, to help
'Gainst the waters. "Else will we die,
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,
The world-men did wonder, and with their words some
did speak
What a Mighty One this Man was indeed,
That the wind and the wave would heed His word,
Both doing His bidding. The Bairn of God

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,
A great crowd did throng. There was many a thane
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
Of this poor, sick man. There He hied Himself within,
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 be-
 fore God's Bairn,
Through the world-folk within, so that Wielding Christ
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:

Gave life to those destined to die, even if
The hero was on hell's path already. The Healer Him-
self 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 and 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
How they could gain the kingdom of Heaven;
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
Unto a ship, hight that it shove off
Further from the land so that the folk,
The crowd, could not throng quite so close. Many
 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
From above, and the grains had not earth enough
In which to grow rightly and send down roots,
To sprout and cleave fast. And that corn was lost,
That lay on those rocks. Some fell on the land,
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,
The hoofbeats of horses and the feet of heroes.
There was soil for them and indeed they sprouted,
Began to wax on the way, but the walking of men did
 kill them,

The wayfaring of folk; and the flying birds picked
 them up,

So that they were not one whit of use
To the owner there, those that did fall on the way.
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,
Since the thornbrush thronged all around them.”
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
The Beloved Lord, bent low before Him
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
Follow true parables; and a need, most great, is in
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.
“I did not mean,” quoth He, “to disguise My deeds
In any way, either my words or my works; but ye
shall know all,
Ye disciples Mine; for unto you hath He granted,
The Wielder of Worlds, that ye may well know
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;
But My lessons all are indeed lost unto them,
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.
So all will be lost, the speech of the aethling,
The message of God — whatsoever one telleth
To an evil man; and he chooseth the path,
The way on the left, on the worse hand to God's dis-
pleasure,

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

Who is young and clever and hath kindness of heart,
Is wise in his speech, understandeth your spell,
Pondereth it in his heart and heareth it with his
ears

Very zealously indeed; and stepping closer,
Accepteth in his heart the bidding of God,
Learning and carrying it out. If his belief is so
good,

He will then wonder how he can woo another,
A wrong-doing man; so that his mind be filled
With a loyalty clear for the King of Heaven.
The bidding of God groweth broad in his bosom,
The willing belief, even as on the land
The grain doeth with its sprouts, when it hath right
ground,
Good soil to suit it, and the changing of weather —
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
Is nearer to him in the nights and the days,
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;
Then loathsome wights lead him astray,

And avarice doth seize him again
And killeth now his belief: thus was it little use
 unto him
That he ever thought in his heart, if he willed not
 hold it.
Even so is the waxing which began on the wayside,
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,
Many differences of mind among mankind,
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
Will down on earth. Therefore it waxeth not —
God's holy commandment — though it may cleave there
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
Stood 'round God's Bairn and busily hearkened,
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,
That his foe had slyly sown weeds: “These fruits he be-
 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:

“I would not that ye weed them,” quoth he, “since
ye cannot avoid it,

Cannot prevent in your passing, though ye do it un-
gladly,

That ye kill young sprouts and corn aplenty,
Fell them under your feet. Henceforth let both

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,

The Mighty, the Master of Men, could mean

And proclaim with His parables, the Most Priceless of
Bairns.

Most eagerly they bade their Master Good

To unlock the lesson, so that the land-folk about

Might henceforth hear it, His Holy Word. Their Lord here
replied unto them —

Famed, Mighty Christ. “This is,” quoth He, “the Son of
Man.

I myself am He Who there soweth; and these blessed men

Who hearken closely to me are the fair, clean corn.

They do work my will. This world is the field,

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,
Hath ripened all in the realm. And the children of men
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
They shall seek out the sinless men; bring such men to
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 that it riseth on high, "So doeth the realm of
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,
Doth fish in the flood, and findeth both in his
catch —
Both evil and good — toweth both to the shore,
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
Of Heaven and the light that is long, long lasting.”
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.
His kinships are all in our ken; and all of his clans
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,
Despised Him, Who was holy, and would not hear
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 Galilee-
land,
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,
The world-men to wonder, how worst of all
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
Up high on that mountain, the bitter thoughts
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,
No one could recognize Him. So could He stand 'mid the
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,
Into a wilderness, the Son of the Wielder,
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.

On another way went John
 With his disciples, the servant of God.
 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,
 To good men and kind. There he sought the king of the
 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
 And changed his abode. Then came the king,
 Took this woman for his wife. There were children
 already,
 The bairns of his brother. *He* began to blame her —
 John the Good — said it was repulsive to God,
 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,

That I will give unto thee all that thou asketh
Before these my ring-friends, though thou demandest
Half of my realm, half of my kingdom;
So shall I do, nor shall any world-men
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,
Their hearts were happy. When the maiden had served
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 —
What she should bid him, bid the bastion’s warden give
 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
To go from the guest hall, take the good man
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
With the sword's edge. The Son of the Lord had no wish
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 wisdom 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,
Folk from all over and from foreign lands, until in the
 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,
The world-folk in the wilderness there; "Not well can
 they hold themselves upright,
The heroes, for the pangs of their hunger; now, Lord Good
 and Most High,
Let them go to find lodgings. Nearby lie towns
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:

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

The Lord of Mankind at this moment did bless the meat,
The Holy Heaven-King, and with His hands He did break it,
And to His disciples He gave it, hight that they should
 take it and divide it

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

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
He would have greater might in this mid-world here,
A more honest heart. All of them did say
That He was worthy of holding all wealth,
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
Believed naught of that: that all stood 'neath His rule —
The power over kingdoms and over empires, too,
The judgment of man. Still through the speech of these
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

With these people there; but He went where He willed
Up on a mountain; God's Mighty Bairn fled
The insolent talk, and He told His disciples
To sail over a sea; and He Himself said
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,
Splendid and Mighty. "Now in your minds
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
Through the battle of waters; and said thanks to the
 Wieler,

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 en-
 snared 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

From the grievous devils.” But All-Wielding Christ gave
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 —

Harboring treacherous hearts. Nor is the host of Israel
Willing to hear their Lord; but they are unbelieving,
The men in their Master. Then to the rest of mankind
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,

Grim, hateful hunger; and feedeth his hound-dogs with
their food.”

“True it is, Wielder,” quoth she, “what Thou speakest
indeed with Thy words,

Most truly dost say. Why, oft ’neath the tables
In the halls of the lords, the puppies hop hither
And yon for the crumbs, full many of which fall
From the board of their master.” The Peace-Bairn
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.

The Best of All Bairns sought Him another borough,
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. “I
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,
His disciples: “The Jewish folk,” they said,
“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,
The Father of All Folk-Bairns, that thou spakest so
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,
God’s holy house. There shall His family, His household
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 pro-
claim 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,
In guiltiness tie Me and torture Me most terribly,
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 —
"Why," quoth He, "thou art now opposed to My will,
Thou best of My thanes? Thou knowest this folk,
Hast ken of the customs of men. But God's might, which
I must accomplish,

That wittest thou not. With words of truth
I can tell thee much: that here 'mid the people stand

Disciples of Mine who shall not die,
Not begin the trip hence, before they shall see Heaven's
 light,
The kingdom of God." From His disciples He chose
Soon after that Simon Peter,
Jacob and John, those good men twain,
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,

The air clove in twain: from the clouds light shone
clear,

A glistening glow. And the good men
Were wrapped in a radiance. Then from the clouds rolled
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

From these blessed sights which ye have now seen,
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

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
Of the sight they had seen. "Until I Myself here
In splendor shall stand up from My death,
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-Wield-
ing 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,
Hath neglected it. Nor will my lord like this,
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 worldly master.

So Holy Christ did teach

His disciples good: "If against you," quoth He, "any man
Do act in sin, then take ye this man aside,
This warrior, with whispers, and speak ye wise counsel
And teach him with words. Should he not be worthy
To hear your teachings, then fetch ye hither
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,
But scorneth such a many, then let this man fare forth,
Believe him a heathen, and let him be loathsome unto
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
Who hath done loathsome work against me, Beloved Lord?
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

From evil, from sin. So I would give unto thee
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,
So that I may reach the realms of Heaven?”
All goodly riches had he gained indeed,
Many a treasure, too, though mildness of heart
He bore in his breast. Then spake God’s Bairn unto him;

“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

And tellest with words; that I have no whit left undone
Since the days of my childhood.” Then Christ did begin
To turn His eyes onto him. “One thing,” He told 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,
The All-Wielder, since He so willed,
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,
Simon Peter; and speaking, he bade
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

“In My might and My power on that most Renowned Day,
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 guest-
 hall

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
In all winsomeness. Then Weird came also,
That fateful hour, to the man of fortune,
So that he should forsake this light; the loathsome
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

The good man, see Abraham, where he dwelt above
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 rap-
ture 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,

Any thane through the darkness — it is here too thick
under us.”

Then the earl spake again to Abraham:
From that hot hell did he beg for help,
That he do send Lazarus himself
Down to the tumult of men, “so that he may tell
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 accom-
plish that,

They will also not listen to Him, who riseth from here,
A Man from death. In their minds let them
Choose for themselves which seemeth sweeter
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,
That they give unto each man his money and pay,
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 prom-
ised 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,

Entice him to evil; but eagerly he learneth
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,
Repaid with good in the realm of God.

Thereby was meant those workmen who in the morning
Early began with their work, who until evening
Did so continue their tasks. ‘ Some also came to the work
At the midmorn, having squandered the morning
And spoiled their day’s duties. So do many dullards,
Frivolous folk. For much folly have they done,
Varied deeds in their youth. Yea, they have learned
wrong,

Have learned scornful speech and such words of evil,
Until their childhood passeth away.
And after their young years God’s grace doth admonish
them

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,
Crying out loud their lament, begging their Holy Lord,
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
Doth He want to reject; but the Wielder Himself doth
 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,
Giveth pay to all people, whosoever receiveth His belief:
One kingdom of Heaven: He granteth to all the kith of this
 earth
A reward, to all men. Mighty Christ did mean that,
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
Full pay from his liege. Likewise shall the children of
 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
Unto them, serving them meekly. And for all those men
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 forward. 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 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
By the wayside and endured wicked pain,
Most bereft of the light: by that are meant the children
 of men,
All of mankind; how Almighty God
In the very beginning through His own great power
Himself created that single couple,
Adam and Eve. He gave them the upward way,
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

Would send unto these the True Son of Himself:
The Mighty Lord sent Him to this mid-world here
To make free the light for the bairns of mankind,
Opening for them eternal life, so that they could know
The All-Wielding Lord, the God ever Mighty.
I may eke tell unto you, if ye are so willed
To hope and to hear, so that the Healer's, the Savior's
 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,
On this mid-earth here, the bairns of mankind.
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

And beauty eternal, before He Himself had assumed
Man's body and flesh in this mid-world here.
Then the children of men, who before sat in sin
And in suffering, bereft of their sight,
Enduring the darkness — they did perceive and did know
That to this folk the Healer was come from the kingdom
 of Heaven,

Christ the Best of All Kings. They could soon recognize
 Him,
Had perceived His path. Then the people cried out so
 greatly,
The men to the Mighty God, that He became mildly inclined,
The Wielder, unto them. But their wickedness kept them
Most dreadfully, the dire sins, which once they had
 done,
Prevented their believing; but they could not prevent
The will of the people. For unto All-Wielding God
They did call most loudly, until He did grant unto them
 wholeness,
So that they might see the life never ending,
Eternal light open before them and journey on
To the bright dwelling above. So did the blind men mean
Who at Jericho-burg called to God's Bairn,
Who did cry aloud that He grant them healing,
Light in this life. But a great lot of the folk
Who stood in His way, both before and behind Him,
Kept Him away with their words. So do those weightied with
 sin
Unto the kith of mankind in this mid-world here.
Hear ye now how the blind men acted after they had been
 healed,
So that they could see the light of the sun —
Hear what they then did: they went along with their
 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.

No stone on another. But all the townships surrounding
Jerusalem will be desolation for the folk of the Jews,
Since they cannot see that their time draweth nearer;
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
Into the bright borough. When the Bairn of God
Went into Jerusalem with His host of men,
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
So much with their words: “It doth worry this folk,”
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:

There were countless men, so many together,
Who had chosen for themselves a selling-place in there,
Haggling o'er multitudes of small matters: and money-
changers did sit

Within the temple. For transactions daily
They held it ready. Then God's Bairn was enraged,
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
Know ye in God's house, ye folk of the Jews."
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 to 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,

A poor, ill-weirded woman; and she went to the altar,
And in that treasure-house she put down just two
Small coins of bronze; she was simple of heart,
A woman of good will. Then spake All-Wielding Christ,
The Man, to His followers; quoth that a far greater gift
Had she brought to the altar than any other son of man-
kind.

“If wealthy men,” He did tell them, “bring a treasure-
trove,

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,
Most long-lasting return, since she possessed such be-
lief.”

So I discovered that All-Wielding Christ
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,

The sweet word He spoke. Some were so blessed,
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.

To some again the lesson of Christ was all loathsome,

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

To help them, these men of the highest one; were thanes
of Herod —

He who was present with an evil intent to overhear all they said —

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
From the city of Rome, "who rules o'er this realm,
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,
That they could receive it and it could then be of bene-
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
In adultery and had forfeited her life,
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 unlif her
By throwing sharp stones. Now Thou mayest see her here
 standing,

Ensnared in her sin: say what Thou wilt!”
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

He bore in His breast, such as God’s Bairn should in-
 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 thane
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.

The grim-minded people of the Jews did go thence,
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,

"But go thou hence, hale and unhurt, and let it be
The care of thy heart, that henceforth thou sinnest no
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,
Have done even so, as their Lord did bid them.
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 many a thane stood silent; and He bade them thusly:
“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.”
With this water All-Wielding Christ,
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,

Art come from these clans.” Then All-Wielding Christ
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
In His Holy word. Each man should well do so ever
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.

They bade that He come, All-Wielding Christ,
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,
A loyalthane of his Lord. "Let us never reproach His deeds,"
Quoth he, "nor reproach His will. But rather we should
remain with Him,

Should suffer with our Lord. For that is the choice of
a thane:

That he standeth steadfast with his Liege together,
Doth die with Him at his doom. Let us all do so there-
fore;

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,

The aethling-born earls, became all of one mind,
Holding the will of their Lord. Then Holy Christ Himself
Did say to His disciples, that a sleep unto death
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
Alive, see the light: Then your belief will henceforth
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,

Mary and Martha, their minds filled with care,
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,
The loss of the child-young man. Then as the Warder of
Lands

Did go through the garden, it spread around that God’s
Bairn

Had now arrived, and that He, so mighty,
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,
Her heart muchly troubled. "Had you, my Master,"
Quoth she, "been nearer, O Best of Saviors,
Healer so good, I would never have needed to suffer
such hurt,

Such bitter care in my breast, and my brother would not
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,
That he shall arise then again from the earth
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
For the resurrection. "Never shall he die,
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

To Him with Her words: "I verily believe," quoth she,
"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,

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

With a loud, strong voice and hight him stand up
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,
Mary and Martha; nor may anyone
Truly say otherwise than that the sisters twain
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.

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,

Be the warder, then, of the temple. "Methinks 'tis a
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
Jews,

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
Through his holy office, since he had to care for God's
house

In Jerusalem there — he, the temple's warder.
Therefore the people's bishop did speak, how the Bairn
of God

Was to save all the children of earth with His single
spirit,

With His own very life: and for all the land-folk
That was a great gain, for He gathered the heathen,
All-Wielding Christ fetched the men, as He willed.
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,

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,

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.
All-Wielding Christ did abide in Ephraim.
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
His every word: "This bodeth no good," quoth they,
"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

Ever their service. Then All-Wielding Christ
Fared forth with His people, the Lord of the Folk,
To Jerusalem, where dwelt the Jews,
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 world-
folk,

So many of the earlships about Him all the day long.
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,
Received the clanships and said much unto them
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
All the teachings He told in the temple there,
Did speak in the holy house; and with His words He hight
them
To make themselves ready for the realm of God,
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
That they atone for their deeds. Told them that in their
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
Were turned to His will, when they heard God's word,
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
The folk could not find it — belief in Him, clear and firm.
The grace was not granted them to be given the kingdom of
Heaven.

Then God's Son did go, and His disciples all gladly with
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
Its covering of clouds; or when can we hope for Thy coming
To this mid-world again to judge mankind and its dead
and its quick,

¹ Lacuna in MS.

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
Either, God's angels, who are ever beside Him
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
Shall choose to call the children of men. He alone
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:
When they make buds and bloom and show forth leaf-blades,
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 land-
folk.

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,
Come to pass in this light, as I have said to these
people.

Verily, wake ye all: for the well-known day,
The day of your doom cometh most certainly, and so doeth
 the strength,
The might immense of your Lord, and that most known of
 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 man-
 kind,
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
Hot down from heaven which surrounded the cities
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
Did lead from there with his daughters twain
High onto a mountain; all others, both land and landmen,
The burning fire, the flames destroyed.
So suddenly did come the fire, and so also was the flood
 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."

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,

All the angels, too, which are above holy in Heaven;
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,

The mighty, which standeth ready, made for the children of
men

From the world's beginning. The Father of Mankind's Bairns
Himself hath hallowed it; ye may enjoy its blessings,
Rule o'er this wide realm; since right often ye accom-
plished 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
And visited Me worthily." Then verily the crowd addressed
Him again.

"My Lord most Good," quoth they. "When didst Thou lan-
guish in chains,

Oppressed by such needs, as Thou now tellest these
people,

As Thou, Mighty Master, dost mention? When hath any man
seen Thee

Oppressed by such needs? Why, Thou hast power over all
people,
Over all treasures as well, whatever the children of men
Have won in this world. Then spoke All-Wielding God to
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,
To such persons indeed poor for their humbleness,
Since they accomplished My will — whatsoever ye gave unto
them of your wealth,
Ye have done for honor of Me. Your Lord Himself hath re-
ceived 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,
By serious plagues; for in My sickness ye never
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,
 Go down into the deep death and there serve the devil,
 The evil Fiend, since thus ye acted before."
 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,
The paschaltide of the Jews, when the people must serve
their God,

These men in the temple. It cannot be turned aside,
That the Son of Man be sold to the multitude,
Full of strength though He be; and be struck to the cross,
Enduring tortures most monst'rous.” 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,
A strong clanship. There was Kaiphas, too —
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

Joyous, those of the folk: “If thou would'st do so,”
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

Put at his disposal pieces of silver,
Thirty together; and he to the gathering did speak
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,
That he might betray Him to the evil men,
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,

Fare to the ancient fief of His Father. Never have
The children of men seen more love than He bore to those
men,

To His disciples good. He prepared a guest meal for them
And sweetly did bid them sit, and said unto them
Many a word most true. The day strode to the west,
The sun to its setting. Then He Himself did bid them,
The Wielder with His words, that they bring Him water,
For His hands clear water; and there the Holy Christ did
rise

At the feast, the Good Lord, and the feet of His followers
He washed with His hands, and wiped them thereafter with
towels,

Dried them most carefully. Then unto his Lord Christ
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,

The Wielder then with His words. "If thou hast not the
will," quoth He,

"To accept this thing, that I wash thy feet
With such love indeed, as I do for the others,

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
And my head as well, to wash them all with Thy hands,
O Ruler, if henceforth I may have Thy grace
And such part of Thy kingdom of Heaven as Thou, Lord
 Christ,
Would’st grant unto me in Thy goodness.”
The disciples of Christ, those earls, suffered His
 service
With patience, those thanes, whatsoever Mighty Christ,
Their Liege, would do unto them, out of love, and He
 thought to do
A thing even greater for the children of men.

LV

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 in-
 tended
To prepare for the feast on this festive day,
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,
“Within the city itself, there will be great confusion,
A mighty seething of men — ye 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 ye busy
Yourselves with My meal. There I shall most certainly
come,
Myself and My disciples, too.” Then straightway there-
after

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,

The Holy Christ was come to the house
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.
On the evening All-Wielding Christ did go
To take His seat in the hall; and He bade His disciples
Come unto Him, the twelve who were truest to Him,
These men most loyal to Him in their minds
Both in words and in ways. Well did He know
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
Most sweetly your thaneship. But now ye wish not to ful-
fill this,

But waver far from the word. Now verily I say unto you
That one of your twelve will become untrue,
One will sell Me among the kinship of Jews,
Will sell Me for silver, and will take such riches,
Such precious treasure; and give his Lord in return,
His sweet, his beloved Liege. But great sorrow shall come
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,

A far better one, if he had never been born
To live in this light, than that he take pay
For evil deeds and wrongful advise.”

Then each earl began to look around at the others,
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,
The one most beloved, and Holy Christ gave him leave
To rest in His lap, to lie against His breast,
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
And began to question Him. "Who shall that be, my Liege?"
Quoth 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,
The Holy Christ: "See thou into whose hands I here
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,
Into Judas' hand, and He spoke unto him,
He Himself before His disciples, and He straightway com-
manded
That he fare far away from the folk. "Do as thou thinkest,"
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
Did take of the meat and with his mouth did eat thereof,
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,
The Holy King of the Heavens; and with His hands He did
break it

And gave it to His disciples and gave thanks unto God,
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
body

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 ye 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
That ye are most truly the disciples Mine.
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 stead-
fast

The thoughts in your breasts. By your prayers shall I
stand,
So that the mighty Fiend may not cause your minds to
become doubtful,

So that I may help you against the foe. Once he came
hither to tempt Me;

But his desire sufficed not one whit,
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
Became dreary, their hearts sore indeed.

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 hence-
forth accomplish
The word and the work which I have shown unto you in this
world."
The Mighty Son then rose, Christ Savior,
In the temple there, and with His thanes He fared forth,

¹ Lacuna in MS.

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,

Will cease most swiftly. Then will they be sore of heart,
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 hence-
forth

Not regret My words nor rue My coming.” Then He bade
His retainers

Come on the mountain; quoth that He wished them to climb
Higher up with Him upon the hill-cliff,
And He hight that three of His thanes go with Him,
Jacob and John and Peter the Good,
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,
Kneeling forward to earth; and to the Father of all Earth-
folk

He cried aloud, spoke lamenting words

In His sorrow; for His spirit was grieved
And His heart was moved by His humanness.
His flesh feared indeed; tears fell from Him,
His dear, precious sweat did drip, even as blood doth
drip,
Doth well from a wound. Within God's Bairn
A battle was raging between body and spirit.
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,
To the All-Wielder ever with His words. "If mankind,"
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,
On the good of My flesh. But I shall fulfill
Whatsoever Thy will be: for Thou wieldest power over all."
Then He went to that place, where He had left His disciples
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 Weirð 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 other-
wise,” 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
To His All-Wielding Father, as He had done before.
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
To stride up the mountain. This spot Judas knew well,
The one to which he should lead the land-folk all.
As they now fared to the spot in front of the folk,
He said unto them as a sign, lest they seize by mistake
Some other man: "I shall first go to Him," quoth he,
"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 for-
feited
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, bidding his god-sent fate,
The wonderous time. Then Judas went toward Him,
Man without troth, and unto God's Bairn
He nodded His head and here spoke to his Lord,
Kissed Him, Mighty Christ, carried out his word,
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,

To the other people, and to ask with His words

Why they were come to seek Him so zealously here

With their thralls in the night. "To whom do you wish to
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 straight-
way 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,
Hard by his Lord; nor was his heart e'er in doubt,
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,
Welling up from the wound. Then was the cheek indeed scarred
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,
The Holy Father in the Kingdom of Heaven,
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,

The Father Almighty, hath marked it otherwise:
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

To Me in the night, as one doeth unto a thief
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,
Nor have endured such anguish. But He did so for this
 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,
 The host most haughty, since they had Holy Christ
 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

The word of the prophet, that it would indeed be thus.
 Therefore they could not avoid their own deeds. And after
 the crowd

Went Peter and John, those two men well-known,
 And followed from afar. Full anxious were they
 To know what the grim-minded Jews meant to do with God's
 Bairn,
 To their Lord most Dear. When they were come down to the
 dale

From the hill to the burg in which was their bishop,
 The temple's holder, these haughty men did lead Him
 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,

Until John begged of a Jew to let Peter go
Forth to the foreyard. A woman full of deceit
Did slip up to him there: she was a handmaid
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
Forth amid the folk, until he came to the fires;
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
Did question him of what clan he was:
"Thou art not of these burghers," quoth they. "From thy
bearing we see that,
From thy words and thy ways, that thou art not of this
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,
Fastened His arms with the fetters.” Then for the fear
 in his heart

He again denied his dear Liege, quoth that indeed he would
 forfeit his life,

If there was any man here on this earth
Who can say in truth that he was of that tribe,
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
Felt sadness within him and his spirit was sore.
Filled with hurt was his heart, and most grieved was he.
So troubled was he, that he himself had so spoken before,
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,
Lamenting most loudly. “Woe, Mighty God, O my Lord,” quoth
 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,

This man of his might. This was marked in that marvelous,
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,
The High King of Heaven, doth not strengthen his heart.
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,
Angry and hardened and longing for evil,
Wishing for wrong. They went in groups together,
The men to consult; and they began to consider
How they would accuse the Mighty Christ of sin
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
To deal out such pain, and to condemn Him to death,
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
That He could tear down the temple of God,
The highest of all houses, through the strength of His
 hands;

And through His craft and His might could erect it again
On the third day hence, as no other man could ever thus
 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,

Sayest it truly, that it is I Myself.

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
you

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,
Tore them before his breast; “Now need ye bide no longer,”
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,
Him held in bonds, the most harm indeed.
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,
The crowd of the foe; covered Him with their malice
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,

Not go to that foreign man, so that they need not hear
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

Was Judas of mind, when he saw His Master

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

To give back gladly. "So grievously," quoth he,

"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.

"Thou thyself look to that," quoth they. "What hast thou
to seek among us?"

Do not thou place shame on these people." Then presently
Judas

Did again go thence to the temple of God

Most sorely grieved, and he threw the silver

Inside on the altar, nor dared he own it for long.

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

LXII

Suffering His bonds, God's Bairn still did bide,
Did wait at the law-house until the land-folk
About Him became all of one mind
As to what terrible torture they intended for Him.
Then the envoy of Caesar arose from the bench —
He, come from Rome; and he went to speak angrily
To the crowd of the Jews, there where in the courtyard
The many were milling about. The multitude would not come
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,
Had done them great wrong. "The folk would not give Him
 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 He seduced with His teachings, hath distressed these
 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,

Deal ye His doom, if He is deserving of death,
As your age-old laws do order you.”

Still at this time on this hallowed day,
Quoth they, they could not kill with their weapons,
Become murderers of any man whatsoever.

Then he turned away from the horde — that man, evil-
hearted,

The thane of Caesar, who was over his throngs,
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,

Or whether for others, the earls here, have
Told of My kingdom?” Then truly the envoy of Caesar
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,
No kith of these men, but the many have consigned Thee
to me,

Thy landsmen, the folk of the Jews have given Thee fettered
Into my hands. What harm hast Thou done,
That so bitterly Thou must suffer Thy bondage?
Torture from Thy own true kin?” Then Christ did tell him
again,

The Best of All Saviors, as He stood there bound
Inside the temple. “My kingdom,” quoth He, “is not
Of this hour, of this earthly life. If it were thus,

My disciples would be standing strong against the strife-
minded,

My followers, thanes resisting the throng.

Nor fettered, would I be given o'er to the folk

Of the hating, the Jews, into their hands

To be tortured most terribly. Truly was I born to this
world

To make known unto you a testimony of truth

Through My coming. And that they well may acknowledge,

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

To speak with them angrily. And he said to the many

Who hearkened most carefully, that he could find

No such blasphemous speech, that He should pay with His
life,

Be worthy of death. Then dull-minded,

The Jewish folk did stand and accused God's Son

With their words and said that He had first stirred in-
surrection

And unrest in Galilee-land; and from there had repaired

Hither over Judea; and He caused hearts to doubt,

The minds of men, "and for that He deserves to be murdered,

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,

A host of aethling-born men. Herod held there
A strong, goodly kingdom, which Caesar had given unto him,
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
That they held sacred the holy tide
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,
His hands held in fetters, since He was of that folk
Over which Herod wielded power. The warriors accomplished
The word of their lord. They led Holy Christ
Forth in His fetters in front of the folk-leader.
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

Some token, as indeed He had done through His godliness
Before the crowd of the Jews: He, Christ Great and Mighty;
Then the folk-king did question Him — full envious was
he,

Asked many a word and wanted to fathom
How His spirit inclined, what He minded to do
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 world-
king

Became enraged of heart, and his retainers as well:
In their spirits they scorned Him; for they saw the great
might of God,

Of the Lord of all Heaven; and in their heart there was
darkness

In the grip of sin. But the Son of the Lord
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.
He hight that a strong man should lead Him hence; and
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,
The thane of Caesar, and to the folk he did speak,
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,
From this folk, I cannot find that He hath forfeited
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 I threaten Him with the law, shall urge Him with words,
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
And eagerly hight that He be robbed of His life —
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:

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."

The duke now heard, how the aethlings of the Jews
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 de-
manded

To see the Holy Bairn first hanging in torment
There on the cross; quoth that no other king
Would they have to oversee them, except for high Caesar
From the city of Rome. "He hath here his rule over us.
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 Weirð came nearer,
God's glorious might, and that great midday
When they would cause to be done those death-torments.
There lay also in bonds within the bastion
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
This man was far known for his many misdeeds.
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.

Then the duke began to question the gathering,
The folk of the Jews who stood there before him
Which of the two they wanted to have freed,
To beg for his life: "which are in bonds here,
In fetters in front of the clanships." Then the folk of
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

To the duke great trouble, when he truly knew
That the folk of the Jews loathed Christ Savior as their
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 —

For he knew most truly that He would take from him the
power

So that he would no longer own so much in this mid-world
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

He be told most truly what visions had come unto her
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
Is fused together with rocks. And he fared to his lord
And told the word of the wife unto him. And the folk-
warden

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

To work their will. He warded from himself
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,
Such wrongful works; "Nor will I be responsible," quoth
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 slaying 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,

The men, ’gainst His cheeks, and of His garments they
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,

On Him there, Himself. And the thralls went to Him,
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
A great, strong cross, and they hight that Christ,
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,

Hight that they weep not, "Nor may ye sorrow one whit
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 bitter-
ly 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,
High on the field, the folk of the Jews:
The beam on the hillside; and God's Bairn was tormented
Thereon, on the cross. They struck cold iron

Many harsh words of scorn unto Holy Christ,
And with yelps they did greet Him; they saw the Best of
all Men

Tormented there on the cross: "If Thou beest King over
all," quoth they,

"The Son of the Lord, as Thou Thyself hath spoken,
Save Thou Thyself from Thy suffering. Make Thyself free of
such hate!

Go hence hail and well. Then will this host,
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!

Thou sayest Thou canst cast down in one day
The high, noble house of the King of Heaven,
The greatest of stoneworks, and make it stand once more
On the third day. Up to this time no man of the people
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,
The thoughts of this thrall. "If Thou beest King of this
folk," quoth he,

"Christ, Son of God, go Thou down from the cross,
Slip loose from these snares and save us all,
Help us together. If Thou beest the Heaven-King,
Wielder over this world, make it known through Thy works,
Reveal Thyself to these many!" Then spake the other man
Hanging there who stood held in his fetters,
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
Hath committed no crime; but for the hate of the crowd
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.
And John stood there, too, the disciple of Christ,
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
I hereby consign thee, to him who standeth here before Me.
Enter thou into his household. Thou shalt have him for a
son."

Then He greeted John there, hight that he care for her
well,
Love her so mildly, as one should one's mother,
This maid without stain. Pure of mind, he received her
Into his care, as his Lord had commanded.

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
Died in His ropes, there was straightway revealed
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,

The crags on the fields; and the fair curtain was rent,
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
Burst open and wide; and in their bodies
They rose up living out of the earth —
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,

Let the point of the weapon cut deep in the wound,
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
From the people of Jews. Joseph was he hight;
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
To release Christ's body from the cross, where it stood
in torture,
To let the Good Man be lowered from the gallows and laid
in a grave,
Consigned to earth's folds. And the leader of the folk
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 —
He took the loved body and wound it with linen

And carried it carefully — for his Lord was clearly worthy
thereof —

To where they had hewn a place with their hands,
A spot in the stone, where still no child of mankind,
No person had ever been buried. There they placed God's
Bairn,

Committed the holiest of corpses, as was their custom,
Into the folds of the earth. And with a rock they did
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,
The weeping women, watching most carefully
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
Speaking in secret: "What, thou knowest surely,
That through this One man thy realm was indeed doubt-
rent,

The people confused. Now lieth He wound-pierced
And buried all deeply. He ever did say that He would arise
From the dead on the third day. This many folk do believe.
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,
Rich and mighty, had risen from His rest. Then the
warrior-folk
Will be angered still more, if they begin to announce that
about."

Then there were people appointed from the horde of the
Jews,
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
Came to mankind over the mid-world here,
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 —

That ruthless rabble — when He rose from the dead,
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,
Going to the grave, wives of good clan,
The Marys most lovely. They had sold much treasure
Of silver and gold to buy salves, had sold
Much of wealth for herbs and for worts. Whatsoever they
could gain,
So that they could embalm the body of their beloved Lord,
The Almighty's Son, with their herbs and salves,
Him slashed with wounds. The women sorrowed
So greatly in spirit, and some of them spoke:
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
Had gone to the garden, so that they might see the grave
itself,
The Almighty's angel did come from the sky above,

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,
The thralls, as though dead; then straightway came uncovered
The great stone from the grave; for God's angel
Did roll it aside; and the Lord's radiant herald
Did sit him there on the stone; in his face, in his deeds —
So that all and each might see with their eyes —
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 —
The women beheld him; and from the brightness
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
Most especially he hight that unto Simon Peter
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,
Was too strong to see. Then the Wielder's heralds spoke
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
In Galilee-land: how He would be given over and betrayed,
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
To go from the grave; and unto Christ’s disciples they
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,
Go on in eagerness; and if the folk-leader doth gain
 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
About the Holy Lord. Then were the hearts once more
 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
His belief was unlocked, so that he knew that He would
 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

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. Straight-
way 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 Him-
self 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

And souls filled with sorrow?" They straightway replied
unto Him,

The earls then gave answer: "Why dost Thou ask so?"
quoth they.

"Art Thou from Jerusalem from the folk of the Jews?"...¹

The Holy Ghost from the fields of Heaven

With the great strength of Lord God." Now He took those
good earls,

His disciples there and He did lead them out,

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.

In the temple they tarried. Truly the strength of the
Wielder...

¹ Lacuna in Ms.

