

DISCUSSIONS
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MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

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Poetical
Work

Christology of the Angels.

(An unpublished poem found in the manuscript collection of R. L. Dabney, Union
Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.)

Place;—The Summit of Golgotha.

Time;—The second night after the Crucifixion.

Speakers;—Michael the Archangel, Gabriel, Zerah, Ithiel,
Salathiel, Adiel.

These appointed to guard the Savior's body until the Resurrection Morn, beguiled the Night watches with high discourse touching, "the suffering of Christ, and the Glory that should follow." Others of the heavenly host, some singly, and others in troops, descend and form themselves in circles around the Guard, listening to their debate.

Michael.

Brothers, the day is near for which were made
All other days. The hinge of ages past
And future, which complete Gods best decree,
Two days ago we saw with sad amaze
How impious men, madly essayed to slay
The Prince of life; and we are here to guard
The sacred flesh, until the Word return
To reunite the soul to this dead form.
Our precious trust, and conquered death and hell.

Gabriel.

Great Prince the task set me two nights ago
 Taught me some dread event was near at hand,
 Go to Gethsemane, God's Spirit said,
 And lend thy help to Him thou findest there.
 I went: and lo! deserted of His friends,
 I found the Christ prone on the darksome sod,
 Forlorn and wrung with Solitary Grief
 Which pressed the bloody sweat from every limb.
 And while he prayed, came troops of gibbering fiends,
 Who late had cowered at His word like slaves,
 Intent to seize their cruel hour, and mock
 His anguish. Prostrate on the Ground lay He,
 Woeful and weak, whose birth at Bethlehem,
 Angelic bands were set to watch, what time
 The stars stooped from their spheres, and homage did
 To their Creator born in human flesh;
 And Seraph choirs made earth and sky resound
 With that high chant taught in the Heavenly Court:
 "On earth good will to man; in highest Heaven
 Glory supreme to God the Three in One."
 And this was He! whose voice divine we heard
 Rebuke disease, compel the greedy grave
 To yield its prey, control the raging sea,
 And rule the demon cohorts with a word.
 Him I must strengthen, (I, poor servitor,)
 Creative source of all my being's power!
 Must strengthen Him whose arms upheld the world.
 I heard the mournful cry: "Father, may not
 This bitter cup pass by: Or must I drink
 Its dregs of gall? Yet knew I not what woes
 Infused the draught of death." This task alone

Was mine, to whisper to His ear the pledge
 Of God's eternal love, and promise strength,
 Full of Omnipotence to bear Him, through.

Zerah.

Yea Brother, but the next day's terrors raised
 New questions, darker than Gethsemane.
 Why must the Holy One, by angels loved,
 Alone of men all worthy Heaven's reward,
 Declared of God in words that rent the skies,
 His best beloved, meet so dark a fate?
 Behold the man doomed to a felon's death,
 Deserted by that nearer band who vowed
 A fealty to Him dearer than their blood;
 Spurned by the venal throng who hailed him King
 Six days ago. But this nor new nor strange;
 For man is weak and fickle. Wherefore now
 Is he, forsaken of the Father's care?
 His, by a pledge more changeless than the stars
 While He, forlorn, must meet His direst need?
 Friends fled, sky dark, the midday sun gone out,
 Earth quaking, outcast from the eternal arms;
 Sure succor of the poorest earth-born saint,
 He dies alone. We heard that bitter cry,
 My God, My God, must thou forsake me too?
 The agony of rending heart strings filled It.
 What this woe that crushed Him? What the pain
 That pierced Him now? More sharp than thorns and nails,
 More terrible than that grim death He sought
 So calmly, freely, through His toilsome years?
 Death came by sin, decreed its righteous wage;
 But here the sinless dies the blackest death;
 Sinless alone, amidst His dying race.

And God yet rules supreme! This maddened crowd,
 These tempting fiends: all these but do His will.
 The bigot priests, this ruthless pagan power
 Are but God's pliant instruments to work
 His plan determinate, of old ordained.
 By His permission was this murder done,
 Foulest of all that blot the earth or hell.
 Father forgive my thoughts. Let angels stand
 With folly charged: be Thou all wise, all right.
 But Oh! illum this narrow mind, resolve
 These black, perplexing doubts, which chill my heart:
 And clear my spirit of this sore suspense.

Michael.

Nay Brother, fear not lest thy questioning
 Be sin, so be it thou do not rashly charge
 Our God with wrong. Twas He that formed our minds
 To know, to crave the truth, to love the right.
 He will approve this thirst to comprehend,
 So it be humble as befits our powers:
 The rather that this woe of Calvary
 Is set by His deep purpose to instruct
 His angels and the principalities
 Of all the worlds. Now be it mine to teach
 My younger brethren somewhat of the mind
 Of God, all wise, in this dread mystery,
 And justify His ways to you in part,
 As finite souls may take the infinite;
 E'en as the dew drops, tiny sphere, reflects—
 The sun and sky but in minutest lines.
 And teach thou me, Oh Holy Ghost, the Source
 Of light and truth, that I may teach thy sons.

For this I must recall remotest times
 When some of you were not: When power divine
 And infinite, beyond angelic ken,
 First brought this globe from nothing, new and fair,
 Free hung in empty space. Material, dead,
 Unknowing, and inert, it must obey
 That gravity whose universal sway
 Attracts by mutual ties each world to all;
 And so must inward wander, helpless drawn
 To yonder sun, Vast central orb, and find
 Its speedy end in all consuming fire.
 E'en such its fate, had not another force
 Straight outward bearing, with a balance nice
 Restrained the first, and bent this moving orb
 In perfect round returning on itself.
 Whence this momentum? Not from passive earth:
 But the Creator's hand, which impulse gave
 With skill of nicest measurement, nor more,
 Nor weaker, lest this vagrant globe be driven
 To outer realms of night and frozen death:
 Or merged by fatal 'traction in that globe
 Of all devouring flame. Thus wise, Thus strange
 The power and skill consummate, which could found
 Stability on motion, ceaseless, swift,
 And settle rest upon perpetual change.

God doeth naught in vain: A destined use
 Was set for His new world; to be the home
 And rest of some among the heavenly hosts,
 Whose captain Satan was: Name now abhorred,
 But then of primal rank and noblest held
 In heaven; my comrade and my single peer,
 He held with me the archangelic place,

Nearest the throne. Ten myriad Spirits bright
 Filled his well ordered ranks, and flew and came
 With holy pride to aid his ministry.
 Here was their heritage: their Father's hand
 With glory decked it for his favored sons.
 Hence they flew forth on joyful errands bent,
 Hither returned to seek well earned repose,
 Blessed beneath their Chief's deputed away.
 For Angels have their dwelling place like men.
 Their incorporeal substance hath no weight,
 Nor figure, nor doth feel the downward force
 Which draws man's limbs to earth: They tread the air,
 And fly through inter-stellar spaces void.
 Yet must they have their space definitive.
 To fill all space at once, confined to none,
 Is His alone, whose being is infinite.

So rolled this earth through happy centuries,
 New worlds were born, and younger angels sprung
 As thou my Zerah, from their Maker's hand,
 To blissful life. The sequent woe we saw.
 There is but one who can not err or sin,
 The Eternal, Absolute, Unchangeable.
 Wisdom and knowledge, perfect, infinite,
 Forbid each false, or e'en deficient thought;
 His Holiness, old as eternity,
 More fixed than fate, directs His sovereign will.
 All finite spirits may admit defect,
 Thought may be incomplete, attention flag,
 Desire, no longer taught by perfect truth,
 May leap its rightful bound, and sin is born!
 Then he alone is safe, or high, or low,
 Angel, or man, who leans upon his God,

In deep humility, and guides his ways
 By that sure light, shed by the Eternal Son
 Of righteousness. Thus fell my great compeer.
 His state so lofty gendered pride of power;
 His keen desire beguiled him to forget
 His place and duty. Wide the space between
 Him and his humbler mates; but this a speck
 Beside the distance infinite which metes
 The chasm from them to God, The downward look
 Which dwelt on that was sweet; the upward gaze
 Was humbling, for it set our littleness
 In contrast 'gainst the immensity of God.

So Satan gloated and forgot: his pride
 To fell ambition grew; he spurned his yoke,
 And what was first defect, to treason ran.
 Let us not rail but fear; we too can fall!
 But other part befits the Almighty Judge,
 Changeless, supreme: Vengeance condign is His:
 The more that now is sin contagious found,
 And Satan's taint, like mortal pestilence,
 Infected all his host. Our Adiel
 Sole incorrupt, amidst the apostate herd,
 Denounced their crime and made report to Heaven.

Adiel.

Now must the plague be stopped by justice dire,
 Lest it should farther spread, and poison all.
 Then was there war in Heaven; by God's command
 My legions fought with Satan's and expelled
 The traitors from their desecrated home.

Their destined prison is that nearest orb,

Men call their Moon whose cold and lifeless beams
Now from the Zenith, bathe the silent earth.

Fit goal is this for desperate guilt, a world
Where utter desolation reigns, and wreck
Of earthquake throes, and fierce volcanic fires,
Of horrent ridges, black unmeasured deeps,
And arid crags. No herb is there, nor tree,
Nor flower, nor fruit, pasture or verdant mead:
No fount, nor rill, nor lake, nor spreading sea;
No air to float their genial wings, or break
With twilight', neutral shades the contrast hard
Of midday glare and mid-night's blackest gloom,
Or to imbibe the genial solar warmth:
Wherefore eternal cold like alpine snows
Reigns there, and this white sheen is chill and dead.
The future wrath is heavier: prison walls
Are not yet closed forever round the doomed.
They mitigate their pains by respites short,
And restless range this earth, their ancient home.
The distant day will come when respite ends,
Messiah's mighty arm shall drive their hosts
Back to their ghastly home, and bind them there.
Their pangs will change from cold to scathing heat,
Those central fires, whose rage first wrecked their world,
Imprisoned long, shall at Messiah's touch
Break forth again in flame and sulphurous fumes,
That orb, deceitful silver, then shall burn,
Blood-red amidst the shuddering stars unquenched
Through endless time. Such is the sinners doom.

Ithiel.

But can an incorporeal being feel
These grosser pains of cold and fire and wounds?

We hear those Sadducees in scorn reject
 All hope and fear of future joy or pain,
 And call Gehenna's flames a fable.

They say the body dead, resolved to dust,
 No more can live again than other clods:
 Its band withdrawn, the disembodied soul
 Exhales to nothingness. Or could it live
 Without a sense or nerve, or limb, or form,
 It knoweth naught, feels naught of outward pains.

Michael.

In both they reason blindly, Ithiel ,
 For we are spirit pure; no bands of flesh
 Need we to give us being substantive,
 Essential, permanent. Not matter dead,
 But spirit is the spring original
 Of power and e'en of that material force
 Which moves all else. We have no eyes but see;
 No ears, yet hear; no hands, and yet we move
 The sea and air. If bodies thus we know
 With all their properties, we might percipient be
 Of their assaults and force to gander pain.
 We see these corporate men receive, indeed,
 The pangs of heat, or cold, disease or wounds
 Through nerve and sense; but whose the consciousness
 That feels and knows its feeling? Not the nerves,
 But that percipient soul, which dwells within.
 Let but that soul depart, these quivering nerves
 Are senseless as the clouds. The spirit claims
 Knowledge and consciousness as hers by birth,
 So, when its outward vestment falls away,
 'Tis but more sentient of all outward things.

Ithiel.

But say, O Prince, was that fair world decreed
 To stand untenanted? Or was it struck
 From being back to nothing, whence it came?

Michael.

Nay, Ithiel; we stand Upon it now.
 Hearken, while I, its wondrous story tell.
 Long time it bore the curse of Satan's sin.

Disease and death broke out in plant and tree,
 And beast, with mutual war and carnage fierce
 Huge creatures God had made to serve his son's
 Whose bones men dig from rocky graves, and name
 Leviathan, or mammoth, Plesiosaur,
 Or Octopus; with giant strife's torment
 The seas, and drench the lands with blood,
 Till none remained to wage their deadly feuds;
 And death, Sin's off spring, ruled the vacant globe.
 Then rose the Almighty, weary of the shame,
 To work his final wrath. That scepter dread,
 With which He rules the stars, He raised aloft;
 One stroke sufficed! The shattered world remained
 A mass unformed, a chaos black and dead
 Hurl'd from its orbit, forth it wildly shot
 To outer darkness, roaming space immense,
 Aimless and lost; until its deadly blot
 Be purged, by long lustration. Then at last
 Was God's full purpose seen, not new to Him,
 Though hid from us. The sin cursed earth, restored,
 Must fill a nobler use and new design.
 God, with Almighty hand, outstretched, arrests
 Its vagrant flight, and from that outer night

Of void immensity the wanderer brings
 To meet its sun. So was fulfilled the word;
 "Let there be light:" and light again illumed
 The blackened wreck. But what did it reveal?
 No land, no rock, no sea, no air, no sky,
 One weltering mire, foul mixture of them all.
 Formless and void. Again the hand divine,
 Made the dark sphere revolve upon its poles.
 So eve, and morn complete the primal day,
 In quick succession moved the Mighty acts
 Of reparation. Next the Spirit divine,
 With brooding wings infused the foul abyss
 With energy, and disengaged the air.
 Drowned in the murk. The seething deep the while
 Surged like a caldron huge. The finer part
 Released, elastic rose, transparent, pure,
 And spread the azure firmament around
 The grosser globe. Then through the level waste
 Uprose the land as huge behemoth slow,
 From miry couches; crags and mountain peaks
 And hills and rolling plains, with varied shape,
 Divide the solid ground. The waters shrink
 Into their lower beds as lakes and seas,
 And cleansed of soil, they emulate the skies
 Which they reflect with purest tints of Heaven.

And now we saw the Maker's fruitful hand
 With prodigal profusion, sow the seeds
 Of plant and tree, o'er mountain, hill and plain.
 Forthwith up sprang, the innumerable forms,
 Nurtured by light and warmth, and soil and air,
 From tiniest mass to stateliest Alpine fir.
 One day sufficed; for such the power divine,
 To bring the blade, the stem, the flower, the fruit.

So earth was in her verdant vesture robed.
 But life demands the sun, and season's change,
 From Spring to Summer, Autumn's ripening glow,
 And Winter's rest. So set he back the globe
 In her old orbit, governed by the sun,
 The moon by her, restoring days and months,
 And Years full rounded, measures of her time,
 But angels' lives by grander aeons move.

Now was the field prepared for fuller life.
 Creative power with lavish hand bestrews
 Air, sea, and land, with germs of richer growth
 Motion, and sense unfolding. Every realm
 Of nature swells with the prolific birth.
 Insect and reptile, fish and feathered fowl
 Brake from her womb, and buzzed, or swam, or flew
 In joyous youth. Then last the quadrupeds
 Of finer structure and more complicate,
 Born without sire or dam, bespread the groves,
 And coursed the smiling meads; peaceful as yet,
 Of blood still innocent, content to feed
 On-nature's food until another sin
 Should blight their home, and teach to hate and kill.
 God reviewed his finished work and saw it good,
 With more than pristine beauty bright and full
 Of life and joy, fit to proclaim His praise.

Salathiel.

Yea Prince, we saw the work of those six days
 Countless, diverse, each kind a multitude,
 The kinds in number multitudinous;
 All wrought in wondrous skill. But yet a doubt
 Revives the question: why not highest life

In place of lower? Rather spirits than beasts?
 These rank above the plants; they move, they feel
 They drink the joys which from the fountains flow,
 Of God's exhaustless goodness, yet their bliss
 Is brutish, void of thought. They feed, they sport,
 They grow, they multiply and then they die!

They see no beauty, splendor which God's hand
 On matter throws. The symmetry of truth
 Has no delight for them. E'en virtues' ray,
 Brightest to reason's eye, best influence
 Of God's chief glory, hath no delight for them.
 And therefore know they naught of God Himself,
 Fountain supreme of wisdom and of bliss.
 They use his gifts, but pay no recompense
 Of thanks of honor to the Giver's name.
 Hath Earth no higher end? For such as these
 Did God this beauteous fabric thus restore?
 Hard question! Till the sixth day's crowning work
 Gave answer: Earth's true lord we then beheld.
 That wondrous creature man, our humbler peer,
 Angel and animal in one. Of dust
 His frame was molded. Stately and erect
 And head not prone to earth, but proud, elate,
 The sky confronting, claiming, title there:
 Nor wrongfully! For lo, the Three in One
 Held counsel high, as though for weightiest task.
 From the creative hand a Spirit came,
 Godlike in Knowledge, freedom, holiness,
 In creatures' finite measure. This they breathed
 Into the flesh, and bound by wondrous ties
 To its investment, joining essences
 Opposed, in union fixed and personal.

And man stood forth connecting earth and heaven.

But here a contrast strong the Maker showed
 Twixt brutes and man. The first he formed
 With hand profuse, in countless multitudes:
 Of man, but One! And why this sparing hand?
 As jealous lest an essence of such price
 Be cheapened. Yet our angel ranks he filled
 With numbers prodigal. It man was held
 So high, 'twas better to have filled the space
 So thronged with mindless brutes by human hosts
 As numerous. So might the Maker gain
 The larger revenue of loftier praise
 From sons who could not only use His gifts,
 But know his love and of His glory speak.

Zerah.

This dual person, Brother, raiseth doubt
 As dark as thine. Thou askest why all earth
 Was not bestowed on men, God's nobler sons:
 I ask why is ethereal mind thus bound
 In bonds of matter? Why is reason's torch
 Encased in walls opaque? Our spirits free
 From contact with the flesh, have percepts quick,
 Immediate, full of all the outer world.
 For intuitions certain and direct
 To see, to know, are our essential powers.
 But now must God make inlet for the lights,
 To these imprisoned souls by apertures
 More dim and weak, of eye, and ear, and touch
 And quivering nerves without inherent life,
 Corruptible, deceivable and blind.
 And worse; may appetite and brutish lust
 Mix with the spirits rational desires
 And taint their holiness and cheat the will.

Resolve, O Prince, these weary doubts for us.

Michael.

Parts of the Maker's ways 'tis ours to know,
His deeper works surpass our finite ken.

Remember how the man stood single, lone;
When God's creative hand a second made
Of Adams substance: therefore like him, man
And yet not man, his beauteous complement,
His other self, the mother of a seed,
Who, parents in their turn, should reproduce
New generations, multiplying each
Its predecessor, still the mighty throng,
Out numbering the stars, should fill the world
With good and glory, worthiest of God.
Nor think Salathiel, these meaner tribes
Preclude the spread of man. Each hath its verge
Ample and large as earth: the space, the food
By either claimed, is useless to the rest.
What these must needs consumes, needless to those.
Nor think the poorest joy of earth too mean
To share God's thought, or to engage his love,
From insect basking in the summer beam
Or grazing lamb or sportful hind
Or, king of birds exulting in his flight,
Or war-horse, whose career devours the plain,
To Godlike blessedness of holy men.
So infinite His being and His love,
To Him is naught on earth or great or small!
So hath He made this world of life so full
Pleroma of His goodness, nor hath cribbed,
Nor cabined, nor confined his favorite sons,

But rather set them countless slaves to serve
 Their wants and multiply their powers.

Nor, son thou, Zerah, man's embodiment.
 Here too, the Omniscient has His glorious end.
 We are His son's, but can not parents be:
 To each is given an endless destiny,
 Full charged with glory; but to each remains
 His glory single. To eternal years
 No son shall spring from him to multiply
 His joys, no increase swell the angelic ranks;
 Except creative power renew its work,
 And rear new sons from nothing: not from us.
 To man beneath us in all else, is given
 This honor nearest God's prerogative!
 To procreate, man must be animal,
 And male and female. Thus the lowest means
 Lead to the highest ends and man descends
 To share the flesh, that he may parent be
 Of progeny immortal. Thus shall flow
 An ever widening stream, as ages roll,
 Of good on earth and glory to its God.

His thought fecund, exhaustless, never needs
 Repeat itself: Unfathomable depths
 Of power and wisdom yet remain unseen

Gabriel.

If angels sinned, then man could sin yet more.
 This lesson dread but wholesome, learned we, Prince,
 From Satan's fate, for he was pure and wise,
 In habit stable, in propensions right
 To utmost height of finite rectitude

But duty's claims, renewed through endless lift,
 Grow infinite: and so may overmatch
 All finite strength and watch. To none but God'
 Belongs impossibility of sin.

While our obedience lasts, our state is blessed:
 God's justice this ensures. But we are His,
 Work of His hands; our being is His gift,
 And all our powers. By natural tie of right
 We owe Him all our utmost strength can do,
 And when we fail He owes us naught but wrath,
 Sin must bring guilt, and by essential right
 Immutable in God must guilt bring death.

Thus then we stood; without a present pain,
 Yet ever insecure; from blame exempt,
 Yet not invested with the heritage
 Inalienable; servants, not yet sons,
 What guarantee against some final lapse
 And fatal doom? Our own stability,
 Our upright will, and watchful vigilance.
 But these were fallible; the stake immense!
 Then came the Eternal Lord, with overtures
 Of love and grace. By equal rule of right,
 Fixed as His throne, must duty fully done,
 Earn blessedness. With generous love our Lord
 Restricts our trial, by defined bounds,
 And thus our peril limits; endless else,
 And haunting us through everlasting years.
 Our finite task fulfilled, our trial ends.
 Such was our dispensation new; by men
 Called covenant of works, so wise, so fair,
 So gracious. Blessed was the hour we heard
 Our Father's voice proclaim our task complete:
 Well done ye faithful servants, enter on

Your free reward; not servants now, but sons,
 To serve in love secure from sin and fall;
 Omniscience watching for us; strength divine
 Upholding us; the infinitude of God
 Our bulwark 'gainst our weakness and our foes.
 Yet are we free with liberty like God's,
 Who sovereign, can not sin, because His will,
 Changeless and absolute, the right prefers
 With choice immutable and wise as free.
 No sluggards we! With eager joy we fly
 To do our Father's will, with jealous care;
 Watchful of sin, fearless because we know
 He watcheth for us.

Michael.

Well hast thou described
 Our blessed lot, my brother, and God's way
 Which brought us to it. Such the ways of God
 To Adam, needful for his native state
 More than for ours. In him two avenues
 Made way for error, finitude of mind,
 And appetites of flesh. Why clothed He then
 The spirit fashioned like himself in flesh
 At cost of such a risk? To reach an end
 More wise, more good. Man must corporeal be,
 That he may parent be of countless sons,
 An ever spreading race. By parentage,
 This race is one, connected by the tie
 Of simple origin; its head the sire,
 Who gave them being, and transfused to all
 Their common essence. Hence his race in him
 Probation makes to win eternal bliss,
 Or lose it. Adam, fountain of his race,

Self tainted and condemned by willful deed,
 Conveys to all his seed the deadly germs
 Of sin and guilt; in stead of that pure strain
 God-given for himself, as for his race.
 But, what more generous pact could heaven propose,
 Involving less of risk or lighter terms;
 Except the man be lifted to a God,
 Incapable of fault, no purchase wrought,
 Of merit tendered for so grand reward?
 Such gift was not for us, was it for man?
 It none benefits, save His eternal Son,
 Of consubstantial essence, very God.
 Servants must serve: Yet was man's service made
 Easy and brief, and bounded by one life,
 Under a righteous rule as kind as just.
 One risk should end the risk of all man kind,
 That risk be met by him best panoplied
 With holy will, a reason adult wise,
 Instructed by Omniscience, fortified
 By daily commerce with his father God:
 While ends most glorious, won by his emprise,
 Inspired him for his task, inflaming high
 Every desire a holy soul may feel,
 Love of his race, desire for heavenly good,
 And zeal for God. Let him but win the crown,
 The Father's pledge made it perpetual;
 Each son of all his countless progeny
 A king forever, earth and endless heaven.
 Such God's proposal! Man self ruined, dies.

Adiel.

Thou hast explained this ancient tragedy
 O Chief, and cleared the ways of God therein.

This midnight vigil, brethren, doth recall
 By contract black, that watch in Paradise
 On Adam's nuptial eve. To night we stand
 On this accursed hill whose dust has drunk
 The blood of murder done by evil men
 On their Creator, stooping from the skies
 In generous love to heal their deadly woes.
 There lie between, four thousand woeful years
 Of human crime, and all devouring death.

Then earth lay beauteous in her prime unstained
 By sin, or tears or blood. Adam, her lord
 Reviewed his heritage with grateful joy,
 And met his lovely bride, heavens richest gift.

Then were we set to guard their nuptial bed,
 While seraphs sang their hymeneal lay
 In liquid notes so high, so clear, they seemed
 Soft echo's from the watching stars above.

Sleep, holy spouses, sleep
 Fold in chaste embrace.
 Your angel warders keep
 Their watch with measured pace
 And sleepless eyes, around your flowery bed.
 No peril shall assail
 The couch of your repose
 Until the morn unveil
 Her tints of flame and rose
 And silent stars retreat, by Venus led.

No Cyprian goddess yours
 Born of the frothy foam
 Where stormy Neptune roars
 With fickle heart to roam;
 And love's pure flame to foul with brutish lust;

But Vestal, who doth light
 Her nuptial torch above
 From heavenly altar bright
 With God's own fire of love
 And to one troth doth cleave with changeless trust.

She links her golden chain
 Between two spirits chaste,
 Not to be loosed again
 While soul and being last;
 Though rounded limbs decay, and sense grow dull.
 The tie she binds on earth
 Around these forms of clay
 Out lasts their spirits birth
 To realms of endless day,
 Where human hearts of angels joys are full.

Sleep, saintly lovers, sleep
 And dream of that fair race,
 While we your vigils keep,
 Which born of your embrace
 With other selves your happy world shall fill.
 No moping owl shall hoot
 Or noxious vapor chill;
 No star malignant shoot
 To blight with omen ill
 Your rest secure, or break your slumbers still.

So rest ye blessed pair,
 Beneath your Father's wing,
 Until the morning fair
 New waking pleasures bring
 Of labors joint by mutual love made light,

Let prayers begin your days
 And tranquil evenings end
 With grateful hymns of praise
 Until your Lord shall send
 The eternal Sabbath day that hath no night.

So sang the heavenly choir, all the while our hearts
 In sympathetic gladness echoed back
 Their benediction. Sweet to us to see
 O man, thy wedded joys, though strange to us.
 We know them not, nor care to know their taste.
 They fit thy nature; ours is higher tuned,
 To nobler chords of bliss. Then strive to rise
 From thine to ours, when these corporeal frames
 Be sublimate by love divine to fit
 Your spirits use alone.

Gabriel.

Brother right well
 Hast thou recalled that golden age of earth.
 Remember ye, how, midst that nuptial watch
 We saw the specter grim, foreshadowing
 Disastrous change? Beguiling then as now,
 The lagging hours, with converse high of God
 And his last creature man and covenant
 By one probation to exalt his race
 In him to sonship: suddenly we knew
 By deadly chill, or inward shuddering sense,
 Some power malignant near. Deep silence fell:
 Each to his neighbor whispered; comrade, hist!
 When lo! 'Twas Satan's voice! What did he there?
 Why spoke he thus his secret purposes,
 His cautious guile betraying? Restless hate,

Spurning his icy prison, made him dare,
 Adventurous flight, across the void to pass,
 Revisiting his old inheritances.

He saw the ruin his guilt had wrought repaired,
 And earth adorned with beauty passing far
 Her pristine state: With Adam and his spouse
 Installed successors to his heritage,
 "Supplanters vile:" his jealous blindness cries,
 "These upstart things, half spirit yet half beast,
 "Jehovah's worthless pets, usurp my home
 "And dwell in bliss unearned, ineffable,
 "While I, Archangel, victim of his wrath
 "Capricious, pine in yonder frozen hell,
 "My present doom, forecasting fiercer woes,
 "Sole outlook of my immortality."

Thus Satan, while despair and envious rage
 O'er leaped the checks of cunning, and impelled
 Rash utterance, betraying his design
 To unsuspected ears. He learned, alas
 From our discourse. the Father's plan of love.

His malice saw the chance for his revenge
 With hellish insight. God, as just as good
 Must hold the scale of law with level hand.
 If life is duty's wage; then death is sin's:
 And that same covenant which knits the life
 Of Adam's countless seed with his, would work
 By his default, death for his progeny.
 Here then saw Satan opportunity
 To glut his hate immense, though bottomless
 As hell! To thwart the gracious purposes
 Of love, eternal, by one secret blow,
 And wreak on man a vengeance keen as death,

Long as eternity. In future days,
 A human despot taught in Satan's school,
 Shall crave that all his realm might have one head,
 That so a single stroke could slay them all.

This giant crime shall Satan now exceed,
 As Ocean's drops out count the fountains' spray
 His earlier feat, one angel to seduce,
 Mammon or Moloch was a vengeance tame.
 Now by one act, the innumerable race
 Of blessed men will he to devils change.
 Is Adam firmer in the right than he
 In his estate of primal innocence?
 Adam hath flesh, and flesh may spirit tempt.
 He spirit was; no teacher of deceit
 Was there in all his world to lead astray.
 Adam shall tempter have, subtle, intent:
 Yea, that fair Eve, so chaste, submissive and coy,
 His weaker self, yet next his inmost soul,
 By her Own charms and his idolatry,
 May be unwitting partner to his task.
 Such the fell purpose which appalled our fears.
 But since full knowledge guides the prudent act,
 I sent thee, Ithiel to search the ground,
 What thou didst find declare.

Ithiel.

With stealthy tread
 I Pierced the leafy wall which fenced the bower
 Of hymen. Prone on earth the tempter leaned,
 Like some coiled snake intending mortal stroke.
 At sight of me he reared his lofty shape
 Like mountain pine, storm bent, and thunder riven,
 Reft of its verdant robe, bare and forlorn.

The flesh of youth immortal glowed no more
 Upon that visage grand, but grand in ruin.
 Grizzled and weary are usurped its place.
 Infinite woe, despair, and desperate pride
 Glared from his eyes, so steadfast, stern and calm;
 Which once in conscious purity could brook
 The lightning of Gods look, and best reflect
 Its tempered glory. Hatred fathomless,
 Shone in his scowl, greedy of vast revenge,
 And baffled rage conscious of impotence,
 Remorseful, yet resolved on hopeless war.
 "How darest thou" he threatened abject slave
 "Of yonder tyrant God, to dog my steps?
 "Caitiff, be gone, but leave thy sacred pledge
 He'r to divulge my presence to thy mates.
 "Or to thy Maker lest I smite thee through
 "With this my spear baptized in Tophet's fire,
 "Whose touch is death." He spoke as he advanced
 With brandished weapons cutting circles red
 Which hissed like jagged lightning, sulphurous fumes
 Exhaling o'er my head. Reply I gave
 In voice sedate: "No terror can beset
 "O Satan, duty's path which innocence
 "Need dread. The eternal Son I serve, will shield,
 "Or else will heal my head e'en from thy stroke."
 The awful name sufficed. His brandished spear
 Still threatened. But his wavering furtive glance,
 Stealing askance, betrayed the creeping dread.
 He dropped his arm; half turned, then slunk away,
 His face reverted, casting back a scowl
 Black with defeated spite and cowered rage.

Gabriel.

Horror and anxious dread possessed our souls
 At Ithiel's report. What thought can gauge
 This cruel, giant crime? His vantage ground
 The murderer sees, with devilish insight clear,
 And he is old, and wise in wicked arts,
 While man is young. Ten myriad ruined souls
 Attest the traitors fatal skill. Will man
 Alone escape? Will he his covenant keep
 With steadfast fealty? Propitious all,
 To righteous victory, which God in love
 And wisdom could provide to fence him round:
 Man's upright will, his happy solitude,
 From all associates free; the glorious prize
 By right obedience won, or forfeit dire.
 But angles fell, so weaker man may fall

Can naught be done, averting Satan's a plot?
 This watch, we said, is our appointed task,
 And strict compliance is our proper part.

This our conclusion. When the dawn appears,
 Our brother Adiel, who once before
 Returned, sole messenger, unterrified,
 Of Satan's earliest treason, shall report
 In heaven, this new incursion at the dawn,
 Which terminates our task, while we renew
 Our vigils with redoubled diligence
 In swift and ceaseless rounds; so Satan gain
 No harmful access to the holy pair.

Adiel.

I went on rapid wing, and to the Son
 Made due report. My faithful servant know,
 The Three in One well pleased, approve thy Zeal

With this reflection of the Father's love.
 And therefore doubt not but this pitying care
 For man in you a bounded stream, in us
 A flood immense, infolds our earth born son.
 Nor hath the foes' incursion 'scaped our eyes
 Omniscient: yea before time was, or man,
 Angels or worlds. By one eternal thought
 We see the earliest and the last events
 Of everlasting years, with a view
 Clear as the instant fact, foreseeing all,
 Forgetting none. In Satan's present work
 God's ear his first adventurous thought perceived
 His balanced doubt, his hate, his fierce resolve.
 The all seeing eye beheld him plume his wings
 For flight across the rayless empty space,
 His monstrous shape invade the radiant air
 Which wraps the earth, like as a lowering cloud,
 Impelled by fiercest winds, obscures the sun
 And blackens all the plain; so did the fiend
 Sail on athwart the sun lit hemisphere,
 To seek his victims in the midnight gloom
 Antipodal, congenial to his crime.

"This also know: Satanic guile will prove
 "Too deep for man to fathom. He will yield,
 "And yielding fall, For such is God's decree,
 "Permissive, not effective of the sin
 "Yet is not sin preferred, but over-ruled
 "For grander ends, far reaching infinite,
 "Of good to creatures, fruitfulest of praise
 "To Father, Son and Spirit. Unto which
 "All sins of man and devils freely done,
 "Shall bend, co-working by our Providence,

"To yield from evil good. So Shall God's ways
 "Appear all holy: sin as vain as foul.
 "Why did creative wisdom, spirits make,
 "Above the sentient beasts, adorned with gifts
 "Of reason, conscience, and immortal life?
 "That they might know superior joys, and pay
 "More glorious revenue of praise to God.
 "By Godlike deed, intelligent and free,
 "The will compelled, no merit can acquire,
 "Or joy of conscious, righteous blessedness.
 "Its works disclose but the compeller's mind:
 "No more like acts of matter, moved by force
 "It knows not, or of brutes by instinct blind,
 "Impelled to ends unconscious, unforeseen.
 "Then God must make man free, with power to choose
 "The right self moved, but capable of wrong.
 "But may not God Omnipotent persuade
 "Without compulsion, souls which He hath made,
 "And keep them firm, yet free, in duty's path?
 "Such is the grace which holds the spirits elect,
 "By love's sweet traction to their happy spheres
 "Of holiness. This grace might God have given
 "To man, to angels, yea to all the worlds,
 "So cavils hell, and so will cavil men
 "In future days. So sin had been shut out
 "From all, by guardianship Omnipotent;
 "And with it misery. So had there been .
 "A blessed universe as free as blest.
 "For this, what lacked, except the will divine?
 "And this bespeaks Him neither wise nor good,
 "If sovereign. For if good, the mighty woes
 "Fore seen, had moved Him to prevent the sin.
 "So insolvent the charge, befitting ill

"The guilty, sole procurers of their loss!
 "For they at least, can plead no grievance here!
 "That they were free to do the thing they chose.
 "After forewarning full, and not constrained.
 "To choose the part they hate. Restraining grace
 "Should have pursued them, hedging up their way
 "From every evil choice? That grace they spurned,
 "And spurn it still, as bondage most abhorred!
 "This then, is our offending. What they hate
 "Was not imposed, the thing they love allowed!
 "Such cavil were enough to justify
 "The Father's heaviest judgments. Reasons good,
 "Deep hidden in unfathomable mines
 "Of wisdom, which archangels can not sound,
 "Nor comprehend, if published for their view,
 "Direct God's purpose. Stint of boundless love
 "There can not be; for whence all creature's good
 "In all the world, save from the exhaustless spring
 "Of love creative? Future years shall show
 "Of than heaven higher, bright above
 "The midday sun, God's love is infinite.
 "Then be it yours with humble faith to trust
 "And wait the unfolding of the Father's will.
 "Meanwhile, from every enemy let man
 "Be guarded, save himself. Renew your watch,
 "Remembering what your foe."

So spoke the Word.

I winged my rapid flight back to our ward
 And told the will and prophecy of God.

Gabriel,

We saw the sad fulfillment but too soon,
 Our nightly watch for man might none elude;

But cunning set on fire of hell, too keen
 For creatures wisdom, sought expedients new,
 Black night, we knew, the fiend had fittest deemed
 For blacker deed. But now, audacious grown,
 He chose the day. With coward skill he aimed
 Against the weaker prize his covert shaft.
 The woman, guileless, soft, of easier faith,
 Would yield to guile so flattering and fair.
 Ambitious then to prove the cherished power,
 To woman dearest, of her suasive charms
 On him whose love she prized all else above:
 She swayed at last the man, with honeyed words,
 And wreathed smiles, and feigned reproaches, armed
 With tearful plea. To say her nay would speak
 Decaying love, and blame unbearable.
 Befooled, but not deceived, resisting long,
 Conscience he pleaded, and divine command
 And then betrayed. So God's best gift he made
 Pretext of his rebellion, fatal cause
 Of shame, remorse, and guilt and bitter woe.
 A lesson then we learned, wholesome but stern,
 (One, purpose end of God's permissive plan)
 How sin is bred, death born, in sinless souls.

Mere thought of natural good doth not bring guilt
 For thought is spirits own prerogative,
 So made by Him who fashioned them to bear
 The image of His own intelligence.
 A source of pleasure seen in thought, suggests
 The pictured concept possession's joy,
 Sin not yet born. For God doth not forbid
 Desire of good, to those whom he hath made
 Feeling and active: this the righteous rule;
 We may desire, but not desire amiss.

The wish must not o'er leap the righteous bound,
 Even in thought: 'tis there the poisoned seed
 Of sin is sown; its fatal harvest death.
 Desire, forgetful of the limit Just,
 Might frailty plead, neglectful must be sin!

But man is finite: memory may sleep,
 Attention flag in him, the vagrant wish
 Be Father to the doubting thought, and question raise
 Since "God is love" hath he prohibited
 This good to man so sweet? Thus doubt is born
 And weighs its erring wish against the clear
 "Thus saith the Lord." Then riseth unbelief,
 Self will usurps the throne, and man revolts.
 All this alas! the cunning tempter knew,
 Taught by his own apostasy too well!
 He tried his deadly skill. The man he found
 Able to stand, of falling capable.
 He listened, lusted, doubted, and transgressed,
 Beguiled, yet free and conscious of his deed.
 Had man been brute, he could have stood content
 With his transgressions: since the nobler state
 Was his of spirit, moral, rational,
 Knowing to love the right, the wrong to hate,
 Content with self was gone; abhorring self,
 He could but know himself abhorred of God.

What verdict can Omniscient holiness
 Return, save man 's against himself, more stern
 As God is greater? Fear and causeless hate,
 Reciprocal to God's displeasure just,
 Usurp the place of love. Now dreads he Him,
 And shuns, self-sundered from the primal source
 Of holiness; and hating Him hates good;
 For God is good, no less in hating sin

Than loving right. So man estranged from God
 Began the sure descent whose end is death.

What boots it though his first departure seemed
 To creature's view but small? The vital hold
 On God and right once lost, the downward thrust
 Or light or heavy, must repeat itself,
 Unchecked, until the swift momentum hurls
 The erring soul to death. Gregarious sins
 Come trooping to their home, in growing throngs,
 To fill the heart, and shut out all the good.

Michael.

Thus breeds disease of soul, children, behold!
 Twice have we seen the seed, the fatal growth,
 The harvest dire, in devils and in men.
 This learn: That blessedness unchangeable
 In mortal safe, from sin and woe secure,
 And selfsustained, belongs to God alone.
 He, who is uncreated, immutable,
 Of wisdom infinite, fixed in the right,
 Eternal, necessary, absolute,
 He only hath the life and can bestow.
 They ever live, whom lie in love elects,
 And keeps by ties of grace as strong as sweet,
 Which knowledge, will and purpose ever right
 Infuses, working lives of righteousness.
 As free as steadfast. He, the central sun
 Of light and blessing, we the planets bound
 By His almighty love in orbits due;
 Else wandering stars, be error self propelled
 To outer darkness and the frosts of death.
 The skies show countless suns, controlling each
 Its shining train: The spirits of all worlds

One sun of light and glory must obey,
 Jehovah, All in All. The Father's self
 First spring of deity hath been our guide,
 Immediate, personal. The day is near
 Which to all brings dispensation new.
 The Word, incarnate, whose corporeal part
 We guard this night, endwed with glorious life,
 Ascends the Father's throne, meet recompense
 For Calvary, and reigns deputed Head
 Of all the worlds, of angels, as of men.
 For us He shed no sacrificial blood,
 Nor bare our nature: But His death for men
 Reveals to us no less, divinest love
 With holiness and truth, to prove our God
 Most worthy of our everlasting trust.
 For He who manifests in brightest beams
 The Father's hidden glories, best may wear
 The universal crown. Nor lose we aught
 Of love in power divine, to guide and keep
 Our endless life; since all the Father dwells
 In him incorporate.

· Return we now

To that disastrous day of Adam's sin
 We saw him as the Judge's sovereign word
 Dragged him reluctant from his secret lair,
 Him who before had flown with eager joy
 To meet his heavenly friend. Now shame and fear
 With black despair, distort his face and bow
 His cowering frame, which could before confront
 The skies, erect in conscience innocence.
 The woman, fair no longer, shuddering clasped
 The husband's arm, half spurned and half endured;

Her face close hidden by her wretched arms,
 And tangled tresses, while each drooping limb
 Spoke abject misery. Forever gone,
 With loss of holiness, the sweet accord
 Of perfect love and faith: With sin arose
 Mistrust, and mutual doubt, reproaches sour
 And new born shame. Once clad in lucent robes
 Of spiritual love and purity, their forms
 Needed no coarser raiment. Vehicles
 Henceforth of sin and death, each limb suggests
 The earth from which it came, and kinship vile
 Now nearer drawn to beasts and appetite,
 Each shrinks from each abashed, in this agreed;
 Some covering to invent: How poor, how mean,
 Their best resource, those leafy tunics frail,
 Shriveled and tattered, worthless to conceal,
 Fit only to accentuate their shame.

Thus stood they, speechless, to receive their meed,
 Awful but just; he wrapped in desperate gloom,
 But she, dissolved in tearful floods. Out casts
 From that dishonored home, from all delights
 Of ceaseless spring and sunshine, balmy airs
 And generous fruits, sufficing every want,
 Unearned by sweet spontaneous, toiless tasks,
 Forth came they, led to meet a frowning sky,
 With fickle wintry blasts, and scorching heats;
 To strive with ravenous beasts, but now their slaves
 Willing and sportive; from the grudging fields,
 Sin cursed, to wring, by grinding toil, the food
 Which should a joyless life sustain; to wait
 The final doom of death and dust to dust.
 O doom as vague as dread! When falls its stroke?
 What unimagined horrors arm its edge?

No man had tried them, nor could teach men how
 To bear their weight; or if unbearable,
 No date was fixed to give even respite short:
 To day, tomorrow, might the Monster spring
 From any covert, so shall life be fear
 Perpetual: So shall life prolonged but prove
 A lengthened fear. And then, as though to bar
 Return to life and hope, Jehovah set
 As guardian of the gate, the Cherubim,
 The mystic emblem of His state, Between,
 Flamed the Shekinah, soaring to the sky,
 An awful sword, whose fiery edge for bade
 The approach of guilt with threat of deadly stroke.
 Thus crouched the woeful pair. O piteous sight!
 Twixt them and their lost home Almighty wrath;
 In front a world inhospitable, bleak,
 And life, a darkening road, to blackest night.
 Shall pity dare to question God's award,
 As heavier than the guilt? Such tempting thought
 Came knocking at the door: but wiser faith
 Repelled the treacherous doubt. Praised be our Lord:
 His wondrous ways to man, our wavering minds
 Soon cleared, and taught our contrite hearts to know
 His mercy, as His justice, passing ours,
 Higher than heaven above the nether earth.
 For lo! Before the burning Cherubim,
 An altar built for prayer by God's command,
 Where man was taught, not cowering now, but cheered
 By dawning hope, to pour the cleansing blood
 Of Victims substitute: And holy fire
 From the Shekinah kindled, sent its clouds
 Of incense grateful to the answering heavens.
 What nobler victim, fit to expiate

Man's guilt, foreshadowed here? The answer came
 In Eve's evangel merciful: Thy seed
 Shall crush the dragons head, and thus avenge
 Thy sore defeat, a human sacrifice
 For human guilt, who conquers by his death,
 Yet more than man, divinely procreate,
 Then Son of God and son of earth in one.
 Justice divine, forbade to break the law
 Of death for sin: But mercy more divine,
 Hath found such sacrifice, than worlds more dear,
 For guilty man's escape. Now Lord we fall
 Prostrate, adoring, contrite, while we own
 Thy goodness infinite, beyond the grasp
 Of our poor thought..

Gabriel.

Thou dost recall in brief,
 O Prince, these ancient scenes and what they taught,
 Divine benevolence we know as vast
 As all His nature, moving all His works,
 Creative, providential, fountain head
 Of every native good to all the worlds.
 As God is love: so, a consuming fire!
 This learned we, even at Eden's gate, the place
 Where mercy sweet, its first disclosure had.
 Jehovah's inner being, spirit pure,
 August and dread, no creature may be hold
 With sight direct and live: no thing of sense
 Can picture. Hence the attempt prohibited
 By sternest mandate, both to us and men.
 One essence known to sense imponderous,
 Consuming, keen, resistless, flame, informed
 With light, befits to signalize to sense

The present God, himself invisible.
 E'en as the blinding light at noon, that stood
 On Sinai's peak, effaced the midday sun,
 And told Jehovah there: this flaming sword,
 Guarding the tree of life, bespoke a God
 In Justice fearful.

We His image bear
 Of truth and right, inwrought by His own hand.
 We judge by intuition intimate,
 And necessary happiness the meed
 To virtue due, as misery to sin.
 Can God requite the righteous with His wrath?
 Or crime with blessing? Dares one urge the plea
 Of sovereign option? His prerogative
 To choose injustice, if He please, and make
 Wrong righteous by caprice Omnipotent?
 The thought blasphemes: A sovereign He, supreme,
 Yet holy, changeless; therefore freely bound
 To right and truth eternal; not with bands
 Wrought by another will, but His own love
 Of truth and right, more absolute than fate.
 But what is wrong? The opposite of right!
 One central light of righteous reason, then,
 Single, and not diverse, appraisers both.
 Its Judgment one not two. If bliss the meed
 Of service right, then pain the due Of sin:
 Each bound to each, by equal bond of right.
 Can God, who must maintain the one, dissolve
 The other bond, of strength identical?
 Then can His goodness to the guilty reach,
 And take the form of mercy? What reply
 Came from the past? In ancient time we saw
 The star men call "Lost Pleiad" vanish out

From midst its sisters fair, to shine no more.

The eternal Son, our teacher, showed the cause:
 The sin with which its dwellers stained its soil.
 Once and again we saw some errant star
 Shoot from its sphere, its silver radiance turned
 To lurid fire and smoke: then disappear.
 What this catastrophe? Befouled by sin,
 Of God forsaken, wrecked by inward force
 Anarchic, they were shattered and exist
 In blackened fragments, (meteors termed by man)
 The vagrant rubbish of exploded globes,
 Cumbering empty space.

Then Satan sinned
 With all his hosts: Inexorable doom
 Swift followed the offence, eternal, fixed
 Forbidding hope, and even the earthly scene
 Of angel's guilt, was smitten by such wrath
 As whelmed in chaos all its beauteous state.
 This then the question, which with hard suspense
 Perplexed our souls: Is death for sin the law,
 Inevitable.

Eden's gate replied!
 For when the weekly round the Sabbath brought,
 Behold! The Word again commune with man;
 Instructing him to rear his simple shrine
 Of stones unhewn, to slay the gentle lamb,
 And crown the fuel with the bleeding flesh:
 In meek confession, to the victim slain,
 Transferring his offense. He with his spouse
 Kneels the altar's base: when answering fire
 From the Shekinah, lit the bloody pile,
 And sent, the offering in flame and smoke.
 We stood amazed, and questioned; how can this

Man's deadly forfeit expiate, and pay
 The debt of Justice? Heaven its answer gave!
 The gates expand, and from the glory stoops
 The paraclete descending like a dove
 On gentle wing, and hovering o'er the pair
 He whispers words of peace. Then hand in hand
 They seek their holy cot, not cowering now
 (O blessed change!) with fear and black remorse
 Like Galilean lake, late tempest torn,
 Which smoothed, yet throbbing, with a softer pain
 Reflects in smiles, the evening rays that pierce
 Retreating clouds, these human faces, greet
 The opened heavens with looks of contrite peace.
 Yes mercy meets truth, and righteousness
 May kiss with peace, in our Jehovah's rule,
 Our Zerah, swift of wing, was sent to bear
 The tidings glad to all the heavenly Choirs.
 Then rose the anthem first, which late we heard
 In Bethlehem, and waked the farthest spheres
 To high responses: "Glory be to God
 On high, good will to men and peace on earth."

Michael.

Yea mercy dwells in God, but not at cost
 Of strictest Justice. Sinners may be spared,
 But never sin. Impartial right forbids,
 And changeless truth, demanding penal dues.
 Foundations these, of God's most holy throne
 But how shall sin meet death, Yet sinners live?
 The question none could solve, but love divine,
 By sovereign wisdom guided; this His way;
 Fit substitute must pay the debt of guilt,
 The altar this proclaimed to Adam's eyes.

Still sin demands a death, a death is paid,
Which buys his life and so restores the boon,
Now mercy's own to give. But whose the life
Of price so rich, as may the forfeit pay?
Not blood of soulless beasts, nor reasoning men.
Both were too mean. The slaughtered lamb can be
But type to teach the sinner's faith to look
To truer sacrifice and richer blood,
But whose? And whence? The woman's seed! Then man,
Yet more than man. Can faith a promise grasp
So undefined? Enough that God proclaimed
The precious pledge. 'Twas his, not man's to find
Sufficient substitute: man's to receive,
And trust. Chief glory this and richest boon
Of such redemption, trait of fullest grace,
That not the debtor, but the offended God
Provides the priceless ransom, and bestows
That gift, as freely as the purchased grace.
Shall we subject the pledge to human wit?
God spoke it, that sufficed! 'Twas His to clear
In His own time and way His grand design.
There shineth then God's best prerogative:
From evil good to bring. By angel's sin
And man's to teach the world his higher ways
Of justice crowned of grace, unseen before.
To preach His justice, yonder lifeless world
To rebel angels' prison of despair,
Illumines the night with frozen beams, as fair
And false as Satan's guile. This earth the home
Of human sin, yet green and bright,
Sun lit with vital ray of life and warmth,
And decked with corn and fruits, its dweller's shows
The prisoners of hope. And mercy sings

In each returning morn, and bounteous gift.

E'er long the time arrived which taught of sin,
 Another lesson: how its virus flows
 Persistent, by descent from sire to son.
 To Eve, a son was born; event unknown
 In heaven! A spirit new, immortal, springs
 To being, personal, by strange effect
 Of power creative, joined to creatures acts:
 In mode in explicable. Work of God,
 Yet nature, progeny of men, of race
 The same inheriting the essence whole,
 Body and spirit, from his earthly sire:
 And with them heritage of sin and guilt.

Still can we see the peaceful Sabbath morn
 When the first mother brought her first born babe,
 Before the smoking altar, dearest gift
 Of earth, now to the giver consecrate.
 Softer than Eden's was the grace that shone
 On her meek face, not radiant now nor bright
 With rosy triumph; tamed by recent pain,
 But beaming with the new found mother's love,
 And Joy unutterable, tender, deep.
 Best love that fallen man from Eden brought
 And nearest heaven's unselfish, pure. She sings
 In tones, how sweet, how soft, most fit to rise
 And mingle with the Seraphs', earthen raise,
 Thus ran the mother's hymn in contrite strains:
 "Father divine, what state is mine
 "How proud and yet how dread
 "By my sharp pain this soul to gain
 "Of power creative bred?

"My infant child, these eyes so mild,

“Have I informed with light
 “Which must shine on, when time is gone
 “And suns are quenched in night.”

“O Father say, shall their sweet ray
 “Reflect the heavenly light
 “Or baleful blaze amidst the haze
 “Of sins eternal blight?”

“For woe is me, that I should be
 “The channel to bring in,
 “To this sweet soul the deathly dole
 “Of his own parents’ sin!

“Lord let thy grace the stain efface
 From soul of me and mine,
 Now are we both by sacred troth
 And blood atoning thine.”

The name her love selected, bespoke her hope.
 Cain, the man God given! “This is he
 My promised seed, who shall my woe retrieve,
 Avenging on the proud Deceiver’s head
 My shame and loss. His mother’s breasts shall feed,
 A mother’s care shall train these stalwart limbs,
 A mother’s faith inspire the mighty soul
 Which shall the high emprise attain.” Poor heart!
 Well was it for thy morning’s joy thou hadst
 Scant prescience then; for other plan was seen,
 Most needful, best in God’s all seeing eyes,
 And holy love. A thousand years to Him
 One day appears; one day a thousand years.
 The worlds must see and know the curse of sin

Its deadly seeds have space to spring and bear
 Their horrent crop, through tragic centuries
 Of woes and crimes and death, e'er the full time
 Shall come. The man divine the truer seed
 Of woman rose, and fought the holy war,
 And conquered hell and death. Tomorrow's dawn
 Shall see the triumph. Eve's first born must show
 By God's permissive will to what may grow
 The evil germs and Cain stood forth, the name
 For blackest crime.

Too soon the parents saw
 The evil heritage, self will and pride
 Deform his growth. He bowed his supple knee
 Before his father's shrine: his breast bent not
 But sought the earth in each untamed desire.

Another soul was born, whose infant grace
 should draw a brother's love and sheltering care.
 Abel the gentle, Vanity! so named
 By woeful mother, taught too soon, too clear,
 How vain her joy from earth born seed.
 The elder, arrogant in birth right power,
 His brother mild oppressed, with tyrant rule,
 In meek forgiveness born nor heeded much
 His mother's plea, or father's grave rebuke.

At length the weekly round a Sabbath bro't
 Blest day of rest for man from week day toils,
 And holy worship. Abel taught of God,
 Prepares the stated lamb which Cain derides,
 With reasons, proud but vain, where faith alone
 Could guide. Dost think the father finds delight
 In bootless tortures of his creatures dumb
 And reasonless as innocent? Loves He
 The fumes of reeking blood? Or is He pleased

To see the flame consume the quivering flesh?
 Is stench of filthy smoke an incense sweet
 To heavenly nostrils? Here behold a gift
 Appropriate, rational, by taste approved!
 These wheaten spears bending with wealth of corn,
 This coronal of rose and lily dyed
 With glories borrowed from the sunset clouds:
 These purple clusters from the nodding vine,
 Their ruddy globes with garnered sunbeams rich.
 Such offerings become the grateful heart
 Of man, and fatherhood of God, too sweet
 To curse a wayward child, or vengeance claim,
 For wayward deeds. Thus Cain, in reason proud,
 First father of will worshippers.

Then thus

In meek reply spoke Abel: "Brother nay;
 Since God is sovereign, and our lives by sin
 Forfeit to Him: Not ours but His to judge
 What recompense to law, what tasks to Him
 Are due. All wise, all just, all good is He,
 Our spirits weak and dimmed by clouds of sin.
 His precepts to obey, His promises
 To trust, with simple faith nor question why;
 This is our beat our sole philosophy."
 Thus Cain: "Thou pretest much of humble faith
 And word divine declare. Be it so! Well,
 Let each his offering rank in order due,
 Then let the fire decide, or heavenly voice."

Then Cain upreared his altar, richly decked
 With arts of man's device and ranged his gift,
 While Abel, on his rustic shrine adorned
 With sanction of his God alone, arranged
 The ordered wood and bleeding sacrifices.

Then Abel, prone, besought the favoring sign,
 While Cain, erect, spread forth self-righteous hands,
 Like scene we witnessed late in yonder fane,
 When publican and Pharisee approached
 The mercy seat. To each like answer came.
 To Cain the heavens were silent; voice or flame,
 Or sign was not; but cold and dint repulse.

His gift spoke naught of sin, nor honor due
 Eternal justice, nor of penitence.
 But lo! while Abel knelt, the awful sword
 Bowed down its flaming point and touched his pile
 With living fire. Up soared the cleansing flame,
 And cloudy pillar. From the opening sky
 Messiah looked, and spoke the healing words:
 "Thy sins are blotted out, thy faith hath saved."
 With lowering scowl, Cain saw and skulked away,
 His heart with gall of envious hate embued.
 Now Satan found his dwelling garnished, swept,
 And entered in, With cunning fraud, he taught
 The guilty heart to seek its cause of grief
 In Abel, not itself: sweeter to pride
 This change, than honest self reproof. Thus grew
 Envy to hate, and hate to fell revenge.
 Out to a silent vale, where Abel fed
 His fleecy charge, he dogged his brother's steps,
 And by a coward stroke he laid him dead.

Then first saw man the ghastly face of death,
 Their doom appointed, in its horror learned
 To dread the sin, its source, more than death.

Salathiel.

While men stood gazing on the double curse,
 A brother's mangled corpse, and Cain's remorse,

Than death more tragic; heaven with joy beheld
 A wonder new, a soul redeemed from sin;
 A spirit pure, not like the Seraphim
 Yet not unlike; not one of us, yet fit.
 For our communion, since the beauteous light
 Of holiness adorned him, bright as ours:
 But yet with meekness tempered, and the shade
 Of deadly grief escaped. And while we ceased
 Our matin chant, to gaze with loving eyes,
 Upon the heavenly air there stole a voice
 Gentle, and soft as ours were strong, and sang
 An anthem new and strange, we could not sing,
 Yet welcome as our own in heaven. It told
 Of guilt redeemed by blood, and sin forgiven:
 And praise for richer love than angels shared.
 "Worthy the Lamb for He is slain for me!"
 The rapturous burden rang. Our colder strains
 Could echo only half the burning theme.
 Ere long another voice to Abel's joined,
 A duel concert made, soon multiplied
 To many voice'd hymns. There numbers grew
 Till now they match our legions, and their praise
 With equal volume fills the heavenly Courts:
 Distinct yet kindred as they sang the song
 Of Moses and the Lamb. Earth poorer left,
 By each redeemed soul, enriches heaven,
 Adding new trophies, of the love immense,
 And faithfulness, which make the angels bless.

Michael.

Yea brothers, as that double stream rolled on
 Of sin, and of mankind, a ceaseless flow
 Of ransomed souls, for forty centuries,

Hath heaven enriched, at first a single drop
 A slender rill, a swollen current fed
 By generous rains of grace now shrunk
 By pinching droughts. Yet shall this blessed stream
 Become a mighty flood, when Christ shall burst
 These bands of death, and mount His promised throne.

A shadow dark pursues the shining face
 Of earth forever, in her ceaseless rounds.
 And so against this heavenward stream there flows
 Dread counterpart, the constant tide of death.
 For Adam could but propagate himself,
 His fallen image in his fallen sons:
 How can the streams above their fountains rise?

The justice which condemned the father's sin,
 Can not the sinful sons condone. So toil
 And vanity, and death, the father's doom,
 His progeny must follow: fatal stream
 As widely flowing as the spreading race.
 But not in wrath alone this penance falls,
 Mercy directs its strokes; that man, forewarned,
 Might shun the paths of death; and foretaste sharp
 Of bitter fruits of sin might stay their hands
 Before the poison works its final woe.

So doth the Father fence the paths of sin
 With warning graves, where death, dread preacher, stands
 Most wise, most eloquent: and cries "Beware!"
 Thus shall His righteous rule acquitted stand,
 Though rebels, self destroyed, refuse his voice,
 As kind as just. And man's perversity,
 May fearful caution give to all the worlds,
 How dire is sin, wresting the creatures will:
 Stronger than reason, stronger than the fear
 Of death and wrath Almighty. So the race,

Like, Cain, the first earth born, still spurns the check
Or sweet or stern, which love or justice rears,
And held its downward way from unbelief,
To evil lusts, to blood, and foul desires.
Vain was the law, the promise, vain the sight
Of Cherubim, Shekinah, awful guards,
Barring the way of life, and open graves,
Perpetual monitors: and vain the pleas
Of holy sires, Enoch, Methuselah,
And Noah, sent of God. Yea, vain the flood:
To extirpate the taint! This mighty wrath
O'erwhelmed the race, and earth, which they defiled
In common ruin: Yet the curse survived;
The scanty remnant it was ours to guard
Twelve, weary moons, the while their dreary home,
Their prison, yet their refuge, aimless drove
O'er watery wastes, the sport of every wind.
These winds 'twas ours to temper, and restrain
The rage of Satan fretting them to storms:
And guide the helmless bark, to destined rest.
We saw the reverend hire, care worn and pale
With fearful vigils and with wrestling prayers
Release His trembling charge, alone of men
To repossess a dead and silent world,
Where all was strange. Now mountains, roared aloft
Their granite peaks, where once was smiling plains
And silent seas usurped the mountains place.
No wreck remained to mark the place where Eden bloomed;
Gone were the Cherubim, the flaming sword,
The hoary altar, reared by Adam's hands;
Where through the centuries, repentant men,
Had met their pardoning God, and seen their pledge
Of Justice pacified and heaven restored.

No sign remained except the painted bow
 As unsubstantial as the fleeting cloud,
 Its fickle seat, to pledge God's covenant
 And promise peace. Upon the reeking slime
 The cerement of the buried world, up rose
 Another altar, work of Noah's hands:
 Again the victim died, the flowing blood
 And cleansing flame, Justice and mercy spoke.

Amid this world of death, and by this blood
 And altar fire, the trembling remnant swore
 New vows of holy fear and hate of sin.

How long did these endure? Before their sire
 Laid down his hoary head to final rest,
 His seed began to stray. The in born stain
 Bred with their numbers, working filial scorn,
 Idolatries, and pride and carnal lusts.
 The holy shrine before lost Eden's gate,
 Men's meeting place, by God ordained, was gone.
 Their pride will rear another, consecrate
 Not to their Lord, but to their power and wealth,
 That round this center, threatening the skies.
 Their race shall grow to God, defying might.
 Vain fools! One lightest touch of power divine,
 Confounds their wisdom, making each to each
 An alien, babbling in an unknown tongue
 And scattering wide their tribes. Each fragment bore
 Where'er its wanderings led, the evil germs
 Which, soon forgetting God, with ferment swift
 Wrought all iniquities. Some less hebetate,
 Replaced Jehovah by his nobler works,
 Sun moon and stars: His brighter types of power,
 Yet false; since they, material, local, dead,
 If splendid, yet belie His essence true,

Eternal, uncreated, immense, all-wise,
 Of spiritual being, holy, Just and good.
 The grosser hordes to fouler deeps descend.
 Ransacking earth and sea, and air to find,
 In demon, beast, and reptile, stock or stone,
 Objects so vile as might incarnate lusts
 As vile as theirs. And these their recompense.
 In blacker shame and crimes more brutal found,
 Like what they worshipped, Lo! the world today
 Is heathen! Heathen most where shines the light
 Of boasted arts and letters: putrid most,
 Where glitters most their phosphorescent slime.

Nor deem my brethren, man has sunk so low
 For lack of constant witnesses. Truth, despised
 And lost, hath God with frequent hand restored.
 These heavens his glory show to every eye,
 Perpetual preachers. Every earthly work
 His power eternal and His God head speaks.
 Nor hath some message more imperative,
 August, direct from God, been wanting long,
 By holy seer, avouched by miracle,
 Or mighty sign, to reassert His truth.
 The man of Ur, Abram the friend of God,
 Melchizedek, and Sarah's saintly son
 Amid the gathering darkness shook the torch
 Of heavenly truth. Jacob, supplanter base,
 Now penitent and cleansed, Prince with God,
 Taught his unwilling hosts, where'er he pitched
 His wandering tent in Amoritish lands,
 By altar fires, and Sabbath cult, to know
 The God they were forgetting. Famine sent
 The same exemplar, down to Pharaoh's land,
 And then by awful signs, rebuked the hosts

Of Egypt's bestial Gods. Then Moses spoke,
 Mightiest of prophets, and the Rod of God
 Led forth the world resounding Exodus
 Through parted seas, deserts, and cloven floods,
 While Sinai's thunders gave to Israel first,
 through them to all the tribes of men, the Law
 Republished from the throne. Then Israel,
 Charged with the oracles of God, was set
 Midway the nations, the focus of all eyes,
 The beacon light of South, and East, and North
 And from His holy mount His fame went forth
 Where ever commerce sent her swift winged ships,
 Or caravans, or sages search the lore
 Of other lands, or vagrant rumor blew
 Her noisy trump. And loudest on her blast
 There sounded ever some new prophets words,
 By God attested with almighty deeds.

Did righteous chastisement for Israel's sins
 Disperse them captive through the Gentile lands?
 They bore their holy book and Sabbath rites
 To every tribe; and if by holy lives
 They taught not men the right, God's judgment stern
 Upon His chosen, yet proclaimed His fear.

Did God permit the Chaldean despot's rage
 To oppress the nations? This His wise design:
 That' Babel's Monarch, twice constrained by God,
 Should publish to a subject world, His name,
 From Dura plain. And then, in chastened age,
 The mighty monarch humbled by the strokes
 Of God's several hand, was witness made
 To our Jehovah: Proclamation made
 Through every province of His mighty realm.

Our faith commended to a waiting world,
 From His imperial throne. The hardy Mede
 Usurped the mighty realm, and swelled its bounds
 By other kingdoms. This was but to make
 The open way for Daniel's rule:
 To make the lions witness for this God,
 And regal mandates spread through all the world
 The truth so soon forgotten; God is one,
 His name Jehovah, Israel His Church.
 Did "Macedonia's madman" grasp the world?
 God brought this issue; that a second tongue
 Should hold God's written word, the common speech
 Of all men's learning, vehicle of thought
 Most flexible and nice, to every age.

But sin could show a yet more deadly power.
 Did it so taint the universal race
 That God was fain to fence a chosen seed
 From all the world as guardian of His law
 And worship, taught by His own awful voice
 Mid our attendant hosts? Did He recall
 From heaven the Cherubim and holy fire;
 And give them back, most sacred trust, to grace,
 Their sanctuary? Did a ceaseless line
 Of prophets warn? And did Jehovah strive
 By blessings and by judgments, to restrain
 His children's wayward hearts? They also broke
 Through every band, or soft, or terrible,
 To foul idolatries, and blackest sins,
 Out doing pagan crimes. Or did he lash
 Their sons from idols, by severer stripes?
 Yet would they wrest his law with cunning gloss
 Its spirit cast away, and substitute

The hollow forms and rites of man's device.

And such is sin! Disease so deep and dire!
 The eating cancer of immortal souls
 Incurable, save by Omnipotence.
 Oh Brothers, watch and pray. Boast not but lean
 (Where only safety dwells) on grace divine.
 And such the wretched fruit of all men's arts,
 And policies and laws. Triumphant sin
 Engulfs them all, leaving but shame and death.
 The fullness of the time hath surely come!
 Earth calls for her Messiah, by her woes
 And blank, despair. And blest be God, He comes!

Gabriel.

Our chief, with caution wise, portrays the course
 Of human sin, a panorama black.
 As from the night springs dawn, so brightest shines
 Our Father's glory, from these crimes of man.

When angels fell, this solemn question rose:
 Can ought reverse the doom of willful guilt?
 The devil's fate pronounced the stern reply.
 A Judge immutable, a changeless law,
 Brook no reversal. Spirits self estranged
 From God and good, can never wish to seek
 The grace they only hate. Then man, self-led
 Rejecting God, choosing the sin He hates,
 "No hope of mercy has:" Thou, Ithiel
 Recall that surprise, so sweet so glad,
 We found, when Abel, first of ransomed men,
 His entrance won to heaven. Nearer the throne
 We saw, (what he omitted) Abel's soul
 By Adiel, his earthly guardian led.

The sinner prostrate fell before his Judge
 No merit pleading, owning naught but guilt.
 We watched with pitying wonder; will a judge
 Infallible, all righteous, contradict
 His sentence justly found? Will goodness spurn
 The woeful supplicant? Then on his side
 Uprose (strange advocate)! the Eternal Word,
 Pleading the secret covenant, ordained
 For men's redemption e'er the worlds were made.
 He promise made of richer recompense
 For human guilt, than human death could pay.
 He pardon begged. The Father smiled assent
 And at that smile, as when the risen sun
 Succeeds Aurora's blush, more gladsome light
 Flashed o'er the heavenly courts. There at, our choirs
 Can tune our harps afresh: but Silent struck,
 By Abel's lowlier strain, we listening Stood,
 To learn his wondrous song,

In clearer light,
 The mystery of Three in One we saw,
 Long known in heaven, in essence one, yet three
 In person, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
 How shall the God, the Word, such mercy feel,
 For guilty men, whom God the Judge, abhors?
 How shall the son, the sinners' substitute
 Such love conceive, where His own wrath should burn
 As doth the Father's, prompting doom condign?
 Shall there be schism in the Triune one?
 This paradox, the threefold unity,
 Makes possible. The substance infinite
 Immense, inscrutable by creature minds;
 Of manifold subsistence capable
 Beyond imagining of angels thoughts,

Infolds inseparable, yet distinct,
 The sacred Three. Not nominal their parts,
 But true, eternal, permanent. So each
 With each concurs, by acts reciprocal
 And common counsels, to their several shares
 In one design. Even thou, exalted chief,
 Our Michael; thou dost but apprehend,
 Not comprehend this truth. The creatures span
 May compass finite things, but not include
 The infinite. The human foot can touch
 The oceans brink, the human eye can see
 No further shore; And by its vastness know
 The sea most real, present, substantive,
 Beyond all lesser floods, But neither eye
 Nor though of man may search its vast abyss,
 Or know what wondrous life, or priceless gems
 Its caves unfathomed hide. We see God's works,
 Perceive their plans, and bright beginnings track
 Of lines of thought divine, which gave them form
 And powers real, pulsing in their acts:
 But whence these powers come, and whither lead
 Those lines of light, our wisest can not find,
 Shall God be smaller than His smallest work?
 Can we, to whom His works are mysteries,
 His' being's deeper secrets comprehend?
 No parallel illustrates this abyss
 Of being, whether sought from star or sun,
 Or man, or angel, or their thought or will.

None may with God compare. His noblest work
 A spirit rational, His image bears,
 But as the dew drop, tiny orb, which hangs
 At dawn upon the trembling spray, reflects
 In lines minute and scant, the lofty sphere

And glories of the sky. He dwells apart
 Unique. To His subsistence naught is like.
 Vain all imaginings, comparisons.
 To, help the creatures thought to climb
 To pathless heights. All explanation fails.
 But here the sacred Three in One are seen
 No barren mystery. From it depends
 Redemption's wondrous chain. This, unexplained,
 Explains all providence, and shows our God,
 Consummate, all sufficient to himself
 As to His universal kingdom's well.

Salathiel.

Brethren, four thousand years our eyes have watched.
 This slow unfolding of redemption's plan,
 By prophets hinted in deep oracles.
 Which they could not interpret. First we heard
 What time the Lord expelled the guilty pair
 From Paradise, the promise spoken, dark,
 But full of meaning; that the woman's seed
 Should bruise the serpents head; one ray of hope
 Lighting what else had been despairing night.
 But what this seed? To man not Eve belonged
 Paternity. Shall Adam have no share
 In this strange progeny? Then can he share
 The righteous conquest and deliverance?
 She who was first in sin, must share the taint
 Of sin's disease: How shall she not convey
 To this her seed, the fatal heritage?
 When man was strong in righteousness, he fell
 Before the Dragon's wiles; when man is weak,
 Fearful and vile, despoiled of heavenly arms,
 How shall he crush his mighty conqueror?

The answer passed our wisdom; God must be
 His own interpreter. One blessed truth,
 And one alone we learned; that man's defeat
 Shall be retrieved, and Satan's crime avenged.
 By whom, or how, or when, we saw not yet,
 But farther light with ransomed Abel came.
 Behold! the Daysman is the eternal son!
 O glorious plan; But with the glory rose
 New wonder. Him we hear engage to pay
 Full recompense for Guilt. Its price is death?
 How shall the Godhead die? But He is God!
 The altar victim and avenging flame
 We saw at Eden's gate, and down the years
 Have seen, where'er sinners, pardon sought,
 The culprits hands imposed upon the heads
 Of harmless lambs, the human guilt transferred.
 The answering stroke of death, the truth made clear
 That pardon comes not by law's disgrace
 But through vicarious payment of its dues.
 Who is that victim? Abel's advocate?
 Amazing thought, can sufferings assail
 Omnipotence and changeless blessedness?
 Can love so vast, for hateful enemies
 Find place, even in infinitude itself?
 Or can the stroke of Justice reach the life
 Of him who is to all life's fountain head?

Michael.

Well hast thou painted, Brother, our suspense:
 No finite wisdom, could the answer give.
 'Twas ours to wait and trust, through ages long,
 Each faintest doubt forbid, assured that God
 Would make His secret plain. No easy task

Of patient faith, and filial confidence.
 So holds the heavenly state of equal worth
 And prime necessity, this humble grace,
 By which the ransomed sinner lives below.
 The coming morn shall bring our full reward,
 When our incarnate Lord shall burst the bonds
 Of death for sinners borne: and all the worlds
 Shall read the secret, hidden from of old.

Gabriel.

Yes Chief, now four and thirty years ago
 As men count time, our God began to unroll
 To my adoring eye, this deep design.
 Mine was the task, thou knowest, to convey
 Her charge to one, daughter of Eve elect
 To be the mother of the promised seed.
 For now get we the keys which might unlock
 The mystery: Messiah, Prophet, Priest
 And king supreme, the angel of God's face,
 The bleeding Lamb, the almighty Prince of peace,
 Should be both man and God in natures two
 In person one; His human nature born
 Of human virgin; the divine, unborn
 Of earthly source, Eternal progeny
 Of God the Father, by mysterious birth:
 He to himself subsumes the human part
 In union personal, dissolved no more.

Thou knowest, Chief, my mission, strange to find
 The chosen virgin in the humblest home
 Of Galilee despised, in Nazareth,
 On craggy shoulder set, of stony ridge,
 From fertile plains detached; and there to seek

A maiden peasant born, of lowliest state,
 Although of David's line. Had creatures thought
 Election made for this high ministry
 Their herald had the proudest palace sought
 And for the mother found an Empress-queen,
 The flower of all united Dynasties
 Of earthly realms. And all their thronging hosts
 Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greek,
 Egyptian, Roman, and from farthest India
 And Scythian wilds, had called barbaric hordes
 To wage the mighty war, which should enthrone
 Messiah King of nations. On that throne
 Had blazed the wealth of Ophir, and the spoils
 Of far Tarshish, with the priceless gems
 Of Chalcedon and Sardis. Satan thus,
 When he essayed to tempt the Christ, misjudged.
 If from, the mountain top the coming king
 Beholds all kingdoms, with their glories spread
 Before His feet, to be His own by gift
 Of their usurping despot, Christ must see
 That here and here alone, the powers are found
 To win the royal prize. But to our God
 The creature's wisdom is but foolishness.
 He chose the weakest things to bring to naught
 The might of earth. His kingdom spiritual
 Needeth no earthly arms. By truth and love
 The Prince of Peace must all His triumphs Win.
 Thus to the lowliest of the lowly Nazareth
 My mission bore. The shepherd maids at morn
 To pasture led their flocks: the smallest hers.

She turned aside, as was her wont, to pay
 Her morning orisons, a bosky grove
 Her simple shrine, the walls the leafy boughs,

Its dome the sky. In peasant garb she knelt
 Fronting the morning light with face as pure,
 As chaste and trustful as an infants smile:
 And whispered praise and prayer for needed grace
 Her humble tasks to do, as in God's sights,
 Pleading as merit, Israel's promised hope.
 Thus spoke I; "Hail! of woman thou most blest,"
 She heard, and as the luster of my raiment flashed
 Above the sunlight, fear, amazement, awe
 Her features blanched, while I my message said.
 "Daughter of David, hail! chosen of God
 "To bear the conquering Seed, so long desired:
 "To be the second mother of mankind.
 "A greater Eve whose first born, unlike hers,
 "Shall save, not slay; the greater Joshua,
 "Delivered from sin, who, David's throne
 "Exalted high, shall fill for evermore."
 She trembling answered: "What this greeting strange?
 "How can this be to me, a virgin poor?"
 "No mortal husband shall thine honor share,
 "Thy spouse the Holy Ghost, whose power supreme,
 Creative, shall His holy nature form
 "Within thee, (tainted else, with human sin.)"
 Astonished, sore, she heard in pale affright,
 Then blushed with virgin shame. Then saw I dawn
 Upon her face submissive, the light of faith
 And contrite trust. Prone of the sward she cried:
 "Behold, thy handmaid Lord! Be it to me
 "According to thy will." And thus it was
 From sinful mother, came the sinless Son.
 From human birth, the Son of God begot.
 She with her sinning sisters knelt to him,
 Her bosom bore, and from His sovereign hand

Pardon received, the suppliant of His grace.

Michael.

Yea Gabriel, thou dost describe aright
 The sacred secret: What the woman's seed?
 To deep for angels' minds; for sinful man's
 Yet more, inscrutable. Our task has been
 Through these long centuries, to minister
 To men elect, who share the rescue pledged
 In Satan's promised fall. On all alike
 The mystery weighed; as we in sympathy
 Sustained its lesser burden. Abram thus
 Wondered, while he believed, what time the Lord
 In awful vision ratified His vow
 On Hebron's darkened plain, that in his Seed
 Should every tribe of all the earth be blessed.
 What meaneth this? The race that from his loins
 Should spring? Does it foretell a nations' task
 To rule by arms or arts, and so confer
 On peoples subject, peace and righteous laws?
 Or spoke the Lord of one; some greater Son,
 Of all his race supreme, whose single arm
 Should their deliverance bring? The sire must wait
 For distant future years, and other voice
 Of Seer inspired, to read the promise right.
 With docile trust the Patriarch must grasp
 The covenant unexplained: This only clear;
 The Lord who speaks, is faithful. Such the faith
 Which justified his soul and made his grace,
 Exemplar fit for all the justified.

So, on that day, august, when Sinai's peak
 Mid cloud and flame became Messiah's throne,

'Twas mine to rank our circling legions round,
 A royal guard. We saw Him give His laws
 To Israel's Chief, ordaining holy rites
 Perpetual, of daily smoking fires,
 And sprinkled blood. The universal rule
 Was fixed; by sacrifice alone may man
 With guilt oppressed; dare to approach the throne;
 One lesson clear revealing; only blood
 Could buy remission. Whose the blood so rich
 As may the awful forfeit pay? Not that
 Of lambs, or bullocks dumb; this is too cheap,
 Whence comes the sacrifice of nobler name
 And richer blood, which can the ransom pay?
 The only answer that which Abram spoke,
 Unknowing, yet believing, as he climbed
 Moriah's steep, his soul with anguish wrung:
 Jehovah will provide the sacrifice,
 Enough for docile faith.

But down the line
 Of future prophets, points of light awoke,
 First dim, then brighter, signaling the dawn
 Of fuller day. From David's royal blood
 Should rise the greater king. Isaiah's lips,
 We saw by Seraphs' touched with living fire.

Thence forth he chants his lyric, strange and high;
 The lowly child foretelling, virgin born
 Yet wondrous titles owning, "Counselor,
 The mighty God, Father of endless days
 And Prince of Peace." In sadder strains he sang
 Of Israel's Prince divine, despised, contemned,
 Rejected of His own, a royal priest,
 Himself, the victim of His sacrifice.
 Dishonored, slain, yet conquering by defeat;

Who dying, killeth death; triumphing King,
 With everlasting glories recompensed
 For woes unspeakable. Thus, Gabriel,
 We saw on mission sent to Babylon,
 To Judah's captive Seer, that thou to him
 The epoch might tell, of old ordained,
 To end the long delay, Messiah crown,
 And consummate the sacrifice, and buy
 For all the saints, eternal righteousness.
 That God inspired the words, the prophet knew,
 But knew not all their meaning. Mighty woes
 They spoke, and mightier glories following,
 But how, they knew not, this the study deep
 Which long their souls engaged, and now absorbs
 Their holy thoughts, as from their happy seats
 They watch this lower scene. With eager heart,
 We share their vigils. Soon the dawn will bring
 To them, to us, the blest solution full.

Gabriel.

Another question doth perplex my thought.
 "'Tis not by whom the pardon shall be brought,
 But rather this: Is sin remissible?
 Can guilt be severed from its penalty,
 By any power? Or is the fatal tie
 Immutable as He who placed it there?
 In our debates, this question hath been raised.
 The law of death for sin, we heard, and saw
 Its stern effect on Satan and his hosts,
 For whom no pardon waits. Gainst man we saw
 The same decree enforced: as all have sinned
 So death hath passed on all. But though escaped
 Of all the teeming generations born.

Justice and truth in God, opposing stand,
 If changeless they in God, the doom they speak
 Must changeless stand.

Salathiel.

Thus angels, who from near
 Behold the awful Judge. But we have heard
 The glozing talk of men; in love with sin,
 Who cheat their souls with after arguments.
 "God saith that He is love, His nature whole
 "In thus expressed. Goodness the orb complete,
 "Of His perfections, filling all the disc,
 "No segment partial, of His essence mixed,
 "And yielding larger space to attributes
 "Of justice and of wrath. These naught but shapes
 "Which love assumes, when wisdom politic
 "For man's own benefit must fain disguise
 "Its face with look severe, by which to warn
 "Its children from their harm. So, penalty
 "Is naught but kindness masked; as when disease
 "Threatens the tender mothers' charge, in love
 "She pressed to their lips the nauseous draft.
 No pain, save that remedial, can proceed
 From God's benignant hand."

"Let nature speak"

They cry! "The radiant sky and smiling earth
 "Combine their genial wealth of dew and rain,
 "Of light and warmth, of seed and flower and fruits
 "For man's behalf. God made the earth and sky,
 "Made them for children whom He sinful knew.
 "Their sin does not His righteous wrath provoke.
 "Does sin incur dumb nature's penalty?"

“She gives the remedy of native ills
 “In herb and fruit medicinal, which speak
 “A discipline of mercy, not of wrath.”

“Behold a mother’s heart informed with love
 “Nearest to that of heaven: reflection blest
 “Of the eternal father’s: She can see
 “Her offspring’s sin and chasten, but in love;
 “To save and not destroy. Can creatures be
 “Better than He who taught them all their love?

“The finite man can work but finite guilt.
 “If vengeance endless, then the aggregate
 “Of penal woe immense! Will righteous wrath
 “Forgetting due proportion, measure out
 “A vengeance infinite for puny sins?”
 Such Prince, the cunning plea we overhear
 From men of sin enamoured, full of self,
 Blind to the rights of God. They deem themselves
 The philanthropic, mild and merciful:
 God’s faithful heralds, harsh, malignant, full
 Of pride and hate. And thus they echo back
 Old Satan’s lie: “Ye shall not surely die.”
 Which their first parents cheated and bro’t in
 This death and all their children’s’ misery.

Michael.

Alas, their wish is father to their thought.
 Their guileful plea, like Satan’s sayest thou
 Salathiel! Nay ‘tis the same, and taught
 By that Deceiver. Thence your measure take
 Of his abyss of guile. His own despair
 Refutes his words, the while his mouth

Asserts them. Sin hath slain his guilty soul
 With everlasting death, he knoweth well
 In every doleful thought, even while he saith
 Sin can not kill! The rather should he cry:
 "Behold in me, the contradiction dire
 Omen of guilty hope." The God of love
 Can not destroy His child, but only scourge
 For His amendment, with strokes of love?

He was his child, of creatures earliest born,
 Save one and beat beloved. Him God destroys
 With death eternal! Only strokes of love,
 Remedial can descend from Father's hands?
 What remedy in full despair, or balm
 For wounds of sin, in fires of desperate hate?
 His is no pain medicinal. It kills,
 Not heals. It vengeance means, not pardoning love.

Does Nature always smile? And doth she naught,
 But, from her skirts shed luscious fruits
 And balmy airs, her petted sons to bless?
 Poor, silly men forget her sterner moods;
 Her tempest's rage, o'erwhelming their abodes
 In sudden wreck, and dashing navies proud
 To swift destruction; winters pinching grip,
 And arid wastes, parched by scorching suns
 If smiling, temperate plains God's pledge
 To sinning dwellers, what the lesson told
 By Arctic continents, ice ribbed and vast
 Whose nights are months, whose days are ghastly, gleam
 Sufficing only to reveal the reign
 Of frozen death? These surely, wrath reveal
 More loudly than the summer vales bespeak
 The Makers blessing. "Earth was made for men?"

For Holy man, new-made! which Satan's sin
 Had into chaos cursed; its ancient form!
 And now for sins of men, 'tis cursed anew,
 With partial blight. Why doth a remnant smile
 With mixed uncertain charms? Because the Christ
 Whom unbelief discards, will cleanse its guilt
 With blood divine, and respite buy for men.
 Yet Nature's remedies but heal in part:
 The curse o'er spreads, hath she a sovereign balm
 For leprosy? For palsy? Sin hath bred
 In mortal veins the taints no healing herb
 Of Arabia the blest, or spicy Indy
 May expurgate. There is no cure for death!
 And death irremediable, absolute,
 Claims all at last; this death, the doom of sin.
 This then, the final fact: are respites given?
 Is sickness stayed; sin's penalties retrieved
 By penitent reform? A little while!
 Then exit guilty man, in death's dread clutch.
 The grim executor of wrath drags out
 The guilty souls, last seen at dungeon door.
 Then all is silent! Mortals hear no more
 From nature's voice. What sign of pardon here?
 Respite short, is all the promise,
 Yielding, too soon, to the recurrent doom,

Our "God is love," "He is consuming fire;"
 And "God is light," Three equal postulates
 Each valid, stand express in holy writ.

Shall one so teach as to expunge the rest?
 Which one: shall God be kindness only, blind
 Inequitable? Or shall wrath alone
 Be His whole essence, merciless and mad?

Or is He cold intelligence, devoid
 Of heart, of love, to various merit dead?
 Not mine the impious thoughts! Let us beware
 Nor dare exalt the one, degrade the rest
 Of equal attributes, essential all.
 Not by extinction of all principles
 Save one, His unity of will subsists;
 But by the harmony of all; and most,
 By holiness, consummate of the whole.
 Justice and judgment are foundations chief
 Of our Jehovah's throne! all creatures' joy.
 Our God is love; all glory to his name!
 But love is two fold; Which supreme in God?
 The love of simple kindness, satisfied
 With mere enjoyment in its objects loved?
 If this is all of love in God, He sinks
 From end to means, from Lord to minister.
 No longer sovereign Ruler, wise and just,
 But parent soft and weak his children's sport.
 There is another love, (and this is God's)
 In virtue which delights, admires the right"
 And joys to give to merit its reward.
 This nobler love inclusive of the first,
 Guiding its blinder impulses, is God's.
 Is righteousness most lovely? Who gainsays,
 Himself declares unrighteous. Then to love,
 With warmth supreme the good, is best in God.
 Then He must hate the evil! As the East
 Implies the West, the North contrasts South,
 So love of goodness must involve the hate
 Of ill, its opposite. Not two, but one
 The blest perfection, central, equal, poised,
 Directing both the hatred and the love.

Who feels the one feels both, who does not hate
 Unrighteousness is dead to virtues claim.
 What is this bond which ties reward and worth?
 Caprice, or wanton choice, at will revoked?
 Or obligation fixed by Reason's voice?
 Ye caviling men decide! Should God refuse
 To holy deeds the promised recompense
 Or pay the good with evil; highest heaven
 Would hear your clamor! Justice you would plead;
 And rightfully; The covenanted tie
 Of worth and welfare, stands impregnable;
 In God's perfection necessary, fixed,
 Changeless as He. Once let that bond be broke,
 God is dishonored, justice quits the throne,
 Farewell to faith and hope. The dismal pall
 Of doubt and fear makes midnight o'er the worlds.
 Almighty power by justice fell restrained
 Would hold all destinies, no virtues safe,
 No crime held back by retribution sure.
 Wherein is such a rule less terrible,
 Than brute, mechanic force, earthquake or storm?
 The storm is blind? Therefore may smite the just?
 And therefore too, may strike in empty space,
 But if unprincipled omnipotence
 Rule all, omniscience may but guide its stroke,
 With surer aim to crush the good. 'Tis right,
 Not force, which rules the world, praised be the Lord.
 But wrong is opposite of right, and so,
 Hatred of wrong the needful complement
 Of love for good. One tie immovable
 Involves them both. Therefore the just decree
 Of death for sin must stand inviolate
 Beside His pledge of life for holiness

Else truth and justice fall; foundations sole
Of God's eternal throne.

Ithiel.

We this perceive
O Teacher, creatures, who the law transgress
And know themselves imperiled by their guilt
Grow blind at once to God's superior rights.
Is it that selfishness, and guilty fear
Usurping Reason's place, so warp their thoughts,
That they invert creations ends and set
The last for first, man in the seat of God?
To their impunity they all would wrest;
God's rights must truckle, that they may 'scape
The pains which they deserve! Would they explain
Wherefore the God of love and sovereign will
Doth on the creatures of his hand inflict
The penalties they feel? The interests
Of creatures, not creator, must supply
The cause and source. Only that souls diseased
By sins infection, may be medicined,
And rescued thus from pain. Or wholesome fear
Aroused by threats, like beacon lights set up
Along the paths of sin, may cry: "Beware!"
So guarding careless souls for their behoove;
The sinners good, sole aim! Truly thou saidst:
If this the whole, or chief, in God's design,
Then Man is virtual God: Jehovah serves;
Willing and splendid servitor indeed,
But still subordinate. These thoughts suffice
If God is love, wise and omnipotent,
And all His ends are kindness, He must choose
The softest remedy for sins disease.

And this not pain, but grace! Almighty power
 Can warm, and purify most wayward souls
 By sovereign touch of influence spiritual,
 And keep in paths of perfect right and bliss.
 Else were no heaven possible for us,
 For ransomed men! For these no pangs endure,
 'Tis grace, not pain, which leads our feet from ways
 Of sin to safety. Yet the souls elect
 Are kept secure forever. Mother's love,
 They say, will force upon her ailing child
 The healing drug. But could her potent word
 Speak health into its veins, without a pang,
 Would love prefer the bitter, drastic, draught.
 But is God blind? Can He not count results?
 All mortals drink the cup of penal woe;
 How few are healed? Uncertain is the cure;
 In hell, most impotent! But grace is sure;
 Its work as painless as omnipotent.

Why doth the Lord prefer the cure which stings
 Yet fails, to that which sweetly surely heals?

Michael.

Thy question, Brother, ends the vain debate.
 Blind men of faith bereft, by self engrossed,
 Know not our God. Themselves they rate so large
 As fit to be the end supreme of all!
 We know them insects, mites, beside their Lord,
 For we have seen Him with unveiled eyes
 In heavenly light. And while angelic minds
 His glory compass but in little part,
 Leaving unknown, expansive, infinite
 Of being and of glory past our ken;

We see His majesty so high, so vast,
 Creations mighty whole is dwarfed and mean,
 When measured with its God. We know proud man
 Set 'gainst the glory of Jehovah's face,
 Would shrink and shrivel as a forest leaf
 Set in the burning disk of yonder sun.
 He source of all, giver of all their power,
 Proprietor of all in right complete,
 Is worthiest end; since all for Him were made,
 Not He for them. Eternal ages rolled
 Uncounted, while the worlds were not; and He
 Sufficient to himself, abode alone.
 Then only in himself were found the springs
 Of all His will. Unchangeable, He stands
 Through His eternity. What first He was,
 That He abides today and evermore,
 In thought and purpose. What His actions prompt
 Today, the same remains with that which moved
 His sovereign will, when other agent none,
 Or object was in all immensity,
 To think or choose, or to elicit choice.
 As then both from and for Himself He chose,
 So doth He now; His glory His chief end.

But what this glory! Not the selfish joy
 Of lusts resistless, sated at the cost
 Of others miseries and welfare just.
 His glory this: the satisfaction due
 Of all His attributes, imbalance just:
 Of boundless love, as of his righteousness,
 Of goodness, as of wisdom, truth and power.
 They foully err, who separate these ends,
 His glory personal: the creature's good;

And set them opposite, as though the one
 Could gain but by the others injury.
 The interests stand not rival but conjunct.
 God is the source of all; the creatures find
 Their blessedness in Him, not in the strife
 Of selfish wills opposed; but harmony
 Of ours to Gods. When we His glory serve,
 We gain our good supreme. Would he display
 His brightest honor? This His creatures bliss
 Doth beat proclaim. Their good His glory speaks,
 His glory sure foundation for their good.
 Since God is Love, the kingdom which reflects
 His love, His highest honor must reflect;
 Where shineth most that love? Where holiness
 And happiness completed union make.

But since the bond of guilt and penalty
 Is fixed as God's perfection, this alone
 Remains for question: May the sinner find
 Remission, while the sin receives its due
 Of fatal vengeance? This the problem hard!
 Too deep for angels' wit and angels' rights.
 Our thoughts can find no means: authority
 Is none in us, to touch the sovereign rights
 Of law divine. This only way appears:
 Infinite thought may find the substitute,
 And sovereign right accept; that so the guilt
 May have vicarious payment, guilty man
 His doom escape.

Adiel.

Most wise the thought, O Chief,
 But where shall equal substitute be found,

To bear the mighty lead of human sin?
 These thoughts perplex: He must himself possess
 A perfect righteousness, who payment makes
 For other's guilt. The sinful advocate
 Provokes, does not propitiate the wrath
 To every sinner due. He can not pay
 Another's debt, who penalty exhausts
 His total powers and being. Bankrupt left
 By his own sins, he can no surety be.
 But if the just one dies to save the vile,
 Though justice gain her dues, benevolence
 Sees no advantage: what in one is gained
 Is in the other lost; no less remains
 Of sin and woe. The servant who would pay
 His fellow's must offer of his own,
 Not of the master's wealth, for ransom-price,
 Else is he thief and not deliverer!
 What creature owns himself? Not thou, O chief;
 Archangel as thou art; thy being whole,
 And utmost service are possession clear
 Of thy Creator, subject to His will.

Then where in creature ranks, shall he be found
 With right invested to lay down his life
 And to resume at will? To God alone
 The uncreated sovereign, it belongs.

Dares our presumptuous thought to soar so, high?
 And seek amidst the awful Triune Three
 The only ransom meet? And yet unmeet!
 They can not die! But death alone can pay
 Sin's forfeit. Only by the free consent
 Of him who pays, could justice claim her debt
 The righteous Judge could never wrest the life
 Purchased by duty done from subject soul

Against his will. Else were the covenant
 Of death for sin, life for obedience,
 Deceitful found? But who would freely choose
 A curse so foul, so dire? Could I? Could you my Brethren?

My Brethren

Bid farewell to life and hope
 Electing endless woe and fell despair
 Forever more, that guilty men might live?
 You shudder and recoil. Who then remains,
 We trembling ask? Will God the Maker die
 For man, the creatures' sin? Audacious thought!
 Will Majesty divine, descend so low
 To, rescue men so vile? Here ends our quest,
 Must hope end here? And is the cost too dear
 Of man's redemption?

Michael.

Yes no hope is left,
 Save in the incarnate mystery; the birth
 Of God In human flesh, as Gabriel told.
 The Godman all requirements fulfil,
 His dual nature every question solve.
 Conceived in holiness, and sinless born,
 By birth the heir of all things, needing naught
 Of service, His adoption to secure,
 Perfect in life, He dies the very death
 Denounced 'gainst human sin: And thus presents
 Not for Himself, but men, the payment full
 Of all the laws demands. Lord of himself
 By right divine, with option free and full,
 He pays the mighty price; and thus no wrong
 Is wrought His right of innocence wit

What He so freely gives, with sovereign right,
 Surely the Judge may take, without offence
 To justice. Satisfaction full is made
 For broken law. The very penalty
 Due for transgression, death corporeal
 And spiritual is paid: paid with a life
 Of worth more infinite, than all the souls
 Made forfeit by their guilt, in earth and heaven,
 Because the life of God, author of life,
 Proprietor, whose holiness outcries
 All creatures' worth conjoined; as yonder sun
 Out shines the glow worm's spark,
 Whose being over weighs all natures realms,
 As ocean doth the drops, the transient cloud
 Hath borrowed from his store. Let every groan
 Of every angel damned, and every soul
 Of teeming earth, wrung by eternal pains
 From all hells multitudes, through endless years,
 Combine to raise one threnody of woe;
 These slighter recompense for sin would make
 Than that one cry, the dying God gave forth,
 From yonder cursed cross. It rent the earth,
 And turned the sun to blackness, burst the tombs
 And death led captive. God can never, die?
 Most true! Yet yonder murderous throng
 The Prince of life did slay. The man could die
 In whom the Godhead dwelt incorporate,
 And personal! Investing thus his deeds
 And penal woes with worth and Power divine.
 O glorious thought! Death can not hold his God;
 One brief eclipse of life he freely bears,
 (One death of God sufficing to redeem
 All from eternal death) then spurns the chains

Triumphing e'er the grave, and life resumes:
 Enriched with fuller glories of His grieves.
 Here is no loss of better life for worse,
 But perfect gain, the risen Christ restored
 With ransomed hosts, once lost, whose bliss shall swell
 His glory higher than His primal state.
 O depth and breadth, and height, of God's design,
 Surpassing creature's thought. O love immense,
 (Exceeding love of angels;) which could stoop
 To bear the cursed lead of sinners' woe,
 Whence we, with shuddering awe, recoiled! Hail then
 Thou rising Christ; in thee shall shine
 All brightest rays of wisdom, love and power,
 The Father's glorious crown, to endless years.

Salathiel.

The approaching morn shall hail Him King of death.
 The heavenly hosts, who found their proudest joy
 In heralding His earthly birth shall sing
 With prouder raptures, coronation hymns,
 To heaven's enthroned king. He will arise:
 Not with that visage marred by toil and strife
 Which last we saw Him wear, but clad in light.
 The Godhead's glory shall irradiate
 His human form, as on the sacred mount,
 When Moses and Elijah left their seats
 In heaven, conveyed by us, to meet their Lord
 In Galilee. As then His raiment shone
 With light unbearable; His visage like the sun
 In his meridian strength; so shall our King
 Hereafter walk this earth, which late he trod
 In grief, and watered with His bloody sweat.
 In glories terrible. And may not we

His train compose? Our presence erst unseen
By mortal eyes, by His reflected rays
Revealed to men? Me thinks prophetic hopes
May tell us His approaching triumphs near.
May not tomorrow see His kingdom come?
And Satan, foul usurper, from his seat,
Hurled like a thunder bolt to nether deeps?
The while the cowering wretches prostrate fall,
Who lately jeered His woes, and wait the stroke
Their guilty conscience knows their rightful due?
The king shall mount the temple gates and set
His gracious throne above the mercy seat,
And our hosannas shake the solid pile,
With symphonies, more mighty than the chants
Of Seraphim, Isaiah trembling heard.
Who then will doubt? Who ask in insolence;
“Art thou the Christ?” Before the open grave,
The quaking earth, the darkened sun, the beams
Of light insufferable, which shall crown
Messiah’s head and our angelic pomps,
Most stubborn unbelief shall fall and die.
One day may see a nation born from sin,
And Zion made the city of her King,
And loyalty sincere, and contrite faith.

Through the amazed earth, His fame shall fly
On rumor’s swiftest wings; to Afric’s sands,
The frozen North and Sinim’s furthest coast.
Or rather let the king on us confer
This noblest task, as heralds of His cross,
To teach His gospel to the tribes of earth
And mediate redemption by His blood.
Then would we joyful fly, as swift and wide
As sunbeams which the king of day shoots forth,

When from his orient couch he rears his head,
The daily type of our ascending God.

No cavils could our message contradict,
Attested by supernal majesty.
Our witness should assert the verities
Of heaven and hell, unseen by mortal eyes,
And dim to human sense; for we have seen
And seeing know their dread reality.

One age shall see all rulers bow beneath
Messiah's throne, all nations own Him Lord.

For when the scepter of His love shall raise
The guilty soul from abject fear to hope,
Mercy will conquer all. Each stubborn heart
Which harder grew beneath the strokes of wrath,
Will melt before the gentle warmth of love.

But never love so generous, so rich
Did woo an alienated heart, as this
Of Christ for men. For who can know its depth,
Its height, its breadth, its length which angels thoughts
Can never grasp, nor angels tongues express.

Measure this love by its eternal source:
He boundless, all sufficient to himself,
No creature needing for His perfect bliss;
No loss receiving from His creature's fall:
Or able to replace self-ruined man
By one creative word, and fill the chasm
By their perdition made with nobler sons,
More multitudinous, more worth his grace.

Or by its objects let us gage this love.
Poor puny men with God compared as speaks
Upon the mighty balances, wherein
He weighs the worlds, in all dimensions small
Beneath compare, save in their giant guilt.

For we must set that awful holiness,
Which sees uncleanness in the azure sky,
Against the blackest sin of foulest traits,
To estimate redeeming love aright.
Amazing love, to die for what it loathes,
And what it needs not! There is pity pure,
Unselfish, infinite. But by its cost,
We measure best a gift. Redemption's price
For worthless man, was not the shining ore
Of gold, or precious gems, or thought or work
Of mind and power divine. For these are cheap
To God's resources. Dearer was the cost
The gift supreme, His best beloved's life!
His blood in death most dire and cruel shed.
Say, Brother angels, ye who know the love
The Father bears His Son, as infinite
As His divine perfections, ye who saw
His agonies, and heard His bitter cry;
"My God, my God wherefore forsakest thou
Thy dying son?" What impulse must have moved
Almost omnipotent the Father's heart,
To hearken and to rescue? What forbade
A Father's pitying heart to grant the pleas
Let Christ escape the cross and man his doom,
Justice unsatisfied? The law forbids,
Let Christ escape and perish guilty man?
His love forbids! The rather let the Son
Drink to its dregs His bitter cup of woe.
Justice and mercy meet where Jesus dies;
How dear to God the justice which demands
Such sacrifice so costly to His love!
How measureless the love, which pays the price
For souls so vile? This love will we unfold

To sinful men as they shall prostrate lie
 Before Messiah's glory: This will melt
 Each stony heart, with power all conquering.

Ithiel.

Not mine, O Brother, to depreciate
 The Father's mercy, blessed as profound.
 But justice also reigns, and claims its rights,
 These limits must impose on mercy's flow,
 Somewhere, remote it may be, past the reach
 Of guilty man's deserts by Intervals
 As infinite as God, Mercy must stop,
 That limit past; else justice perishes,
 Forever: Sin, not right, abides supreme
 In final triumph, righteousness dethroned!
 If ever sin can grow to height so foul
 That mercy's self recoils, and joins the cry,
 Of awful justice, these who slew their Lord
 Repaying heavenly love with hellish spite,
 Have passed the fatal borne. 'Gainst Mercy's self
 They aim their murderous crime. Thenceforth for them
 Can naught remain but wrath for their own hand
 Their only Advocate and hope hath slain.
 Next fiery vengeance follows on their deed
 Tremendous as their guilt. The Father's wrath,
 Nerved by His very love, insulted, scorned,
 To fury, vast assize Messiah's wrath,
 Must smite this city Into sudden ruin,
 Such righteous vengeance shall inaugurate
 The resurrection glories of the Son.
 I long, I dread, to see the morning dawn,
 My heart in awful expectation stands
 Twixt horror and delight, to witness woes

So terrible, and blessings so profuse.

Michael.

Thy thought Is righteous; blessed Ithiel;
 That mercy must have bounds; Thou knowest not,
 As yet, the riches of the Father's grace,
 And purchase of Messiah's sacrifice.
 Now God, to glorify the Son, will stretch
 His pardoning love beyond an angel's thought,
 Once more it shall embrace His murderers.
 For He will show this blood divine so rich,
 No guilt can stain so deep its cleansing power
 May not prevail. This comfort contrite souls
 Shall never lack. As their remorse shall raise
 Their sins to mountain's height, this sea of love
 Shall fathomless appear, so covering all.
 Hast thou forgotten, Ithiel, that prayer
 For those who slew Him, uttered mid death's throes,
 "Father forgive; they know not what they do."
 And when the heralds of His love receive
 Their blessed charge, then shall we hear it speak:
 "Beginning at Jerusalem, proclaim
 To all the earth, forgiveness by my blood."
 So first the stream of pardoning love shall flow
 To this abhorred ground which drank His blood!
 His bitterest foes shall taste the overtures
 Of mercy first. This the divine response
 To cruel hate that clamored for His blood!
 For He had said: "I came not to destroy,
 But save." In other hands the dreadful charge
 Of vengeance will be placed; the doom will come
 By Pagan hands, remorseless as their own.
 When they reject their risen Lord, as once

They spurned Him dying, then their cup of guilt,
Not full before, shall crown its top most brim.
The wrath they challenged falls, and floods of woe
Such an the Earth hath never seen, shall sweep
Yen city proud from off its shuddering face.

But first must mercy do its perfect work;
Not by angelic ministers, as thou,
Salathiel, wouldst choose. Our God doth work
His deep designs, not by such instruments
An we deem fittest. He doth choose the weak
The mighty to confound, and foolish things
To shame the wise, and what no being hath
To bring things of most substantial power
To their own nothingness. The glory thus
Is all his own. Not our angelic bands,
But mortal sinners saved, shall bear His cross
As heralds to their race. Have we not seen
That not the richer grade of earth he chose
To witness of His mighty words and deeds,
But men Of simple faith and sons of toil,
Taught by His spirit; not by earthly lore,
And deemest thou, a Seraph's glorious form
Unveiled to mortal sense, or witness brought
Direct from worlds invisible, or tales
Of heavenly bliss, or torments of the lost,
Would conquer sinful hearts? They will not heed
The voice of conscience nor the mighty words
Of prophets, sent of God, self-evidenced
In their own truth, nor mightier miracles,
Attesting them: What can our presence do?
Our splendor might affright, as lightning's bolt,
Or rending earth, or tempest's rage dismay,
But can not cleanse the souls diseased by sins.

We heard our Lord portray the rich man damned,
 How he In torments prayed that one might go
 To upper earth, to warn his brethren there,
 Eye witness of the horrors he endured
 The unearthly messenger, he deemed, would move
 Those hearts of unbelief to shun his woe.
 What said the heavenly Wisdom? They who spurn
 The prophet's words and Moses' would refuse
 The ghastly messenger from death's domain.

Most pious is thy wish, Salathiel,
 To be a messenger of grace to men:
 Wish prompted by the love for sinful souls,
 And zeal for God. No nobler work could task
 An angel's power. Nor needst thou to grieve,
 That lowlier, human hands this honor takes.
 An equal work for man's behoove is ours.
 All we are ministers, the Lord hath said,
 To them whom Christ hath made salvation's heirs.
 Round them the warfare spiritual is waged,
 In double spheres, the one by human sense
 And knowledge seen; the other with the powers
 Invisible and principalities
 Of Satan's realm. In one redeemed men
 Are leaders of the sacramental hosts,
 By God commissioned. How shall men contend
 With foes unseen? These are our foemen; here
 Our fittest war for man, to meet the strokes
 Seen by our keener vision, unforeseen
 By mortal sense; and known, too late, by wounds
 Which they have left. Thick fly the poisoned shafts
 From demon cohorts, viewless as the wind.
 Without our shields, man in this contest falls,
 More surely than in Eden Adam fell.

Here is our ministry, to guard the springs
 Of thought in pardoned men: To calm the heats
 Of appetite, by Satan's sparks inflamed;
 By gentle touch, unfelt in consciousness
 Timely and suasive, to direct our wards
 To paths of righteousness. As grows the host
 Of Christians militant, this nobler task
 Will all our powers engage. Another charge
 More high and sweet remains, to fill our hands.
 We are the guides who lead the blood washed souls
 Released from mortal bonds to that abode,
 Where they await the resurrection morn.
 Without their pilotage, how should they sail
 Through seas of space immense, or whither steer?
 How find the home unknown? How face the forms
 Of might and terror, peopling that abyss?
 Sweet is our loving task, to watch unseen,
 By dying beds, to loose the silver cord,
 And while survivors wail, with loving smiles
 To cheer the wearied spirit, which we lead,
 With joyous hymns to his Redeemer's arms.
 Apostles, prophets, elders, here below
 Shall till the gospel seed 'mid toil and pain;
 Our happier work to shout the harvest home;
 And as the sheaves increase, to see our task
 Tax all our busy ranks to joyful haste.

Thou lookest, Brother, that the coming morn
 Shall see Messiah don His glorious state,
 And crown divine, that honor shall be His.
 Yea He shall walk this earth in glory clad,
 Like to that light ineffable, which shone
 In transient flash, upon the sacred mount;

And we shall form His train. For forty days,
 His lowlier work prolonged, requires the dress
 Of this more humble state. He will invite
 Yea, will command, a waiting world to trust
 To Him their hope, their souls, their priceless all.
 What warranty shall ground this mighty claim?
 His resurrection; conquest over death
 Dread conqueror of all. But does He rise?
 His chosen twelve must be His witnesses.
 Then they must know by recognition sure,
 Their living Lord. And therefore must He wear
 His old, familiar aspect, features, voice.
 They saw Him once transfigured; awful fear
 Confounded all their sense. As men entranced,
 They stood amazed, nor could to doubting men
 Convincing witness bear, if idle dream
 Or sober verity, they did relate.

Me thinks, Salathiel, thou hast in mind
 The Master's words: If I be lifted up,
 Then will I draw to me all sinful men:
 Thou deemest that redeeming love so deep,
 So generous, forgiveness so divine,
 Must melt all enmities, attract all hearts?
 That naught is needed but lift His cross,
 And show this love before the Nation's eyes,
 To draw them penitent in joyful throngs,
 To Jesus' feet? So should all conquering love
 All hearts subdue, but thou wilt see it fail.
 An yet thou hast not learned the deadly power
 Of inborn sin. More than disease, 'tis death!
 Have we not seen its stubbornness untamed
 By direst judgments, all devouring floods,

And Sodom's fires, and Egypt's tenfold plagues?
 These hearts that shake not at the awful wrath
 And terrors of a God; will they relent
 Before the pleadings of His tender love?
 The rock that shakes not at the tempests' blast,
 And is not riven by the thunder bolt
 Melts not beneath the showers. Life must come
 Where death now reigns, before the heart responds.
 A deeper lesson, Brethren, we must learn
 Of God's redeeming plan and sinners' ruin.
 It brought a two fold curse; of broken law
 And inward death in sin, relentless, both,
 Until Omnipotence shall work release.
 The Son the first retrieves by sacrifice,
 The second doth the Spirit's power require,
 By quickening grace to new create the dead.
 Thus doth the mighty task of man's release
 From guilt and death, engage the Triune God.
 Each person hath his part. The Spirit's work
 Essential as the Son's. Did He not pay
 For man the ransom price, and purchase grace,
 Stern Justice must restrain the Spirit's hand.
 Did He not life inspire, no palsied arm
 Of ruined man would move to take the boon.
 When Christ invites, and God the Spirit draws,
 Then will dead sinners flock to Zion's gates.

Gabriel.

Great Teacher thou dost judge aright of men
 Taught by woeful past, and insight high
 Of prophecy, to read the coming age.

As Israel's Seers foreshadowed mercy's plan
 By type and promise; as the concept grew

To clearer form of David's royal Son,
 Deliverer, by love and sacrifice,
 From sin's dominion, not by martial force
 From pagan civil yoke: so louder grew
 The voice of cavil. Sin's perversity
 Refused what most it needed. Such shall be
 In coming days ungrateful man's response.
 With prophet's eye, I see his laboring mind
 Exhaust its skill objections to invent,
 Or wrest with glosses vain the priceless truth,
 Which he should hail with reverential joy.
 As though the wondrous plan, of pity born,
 Product of love and wisdom infinite,
 Which seeks their rescue from eternal woes,
 And heritage of bliss ineffable,
 At cost so dear to God, Messiah's blood,
 An insult were, or burning injury.
 With jealous heat, they carp and criticize.
 As though in love with death, they toil to block
 With cunning obstacle, God's way of life.
 As though despair were sweet, they strive to, prove
 The only ray of hope which lights their doom,
 Is darkness. Shall their God, in kindness shed
 On some, the beams of learning, skill and arts,
 And high philosophy, and open up
 To their astonished eyes, His matchless skill
 In nature's secrets, closed to duller sights?
 This earthly science, handmaid to her Lord,
 Who should with humble hand her torch uplift
 To light the pathway to His brighter throne.
 Will they debauch, her Master to disown.
 Thus shall we see them bore the darksome earth
 And sound old Ocean's depths, and scan the stars,

And search the ancient stores of history,
 For sophistries with which to impugn His word.
 Their guilty wish is father to their thought.
 Behold the power of sin! Its fires inflame
 The carnal lusts; its deadly fumes obscure
 Fair reason's torch with pride, and selfish will,
 And hence these swarms of error have their birth.
 How wearisome the catalogue? How vain!

Thus some eject the incarnate mystery,
 How God may dwell in man, the natures two,
 The person one, inseparably joined,
 Yet each unchanged, unmixed, no human tho't
 May comprehend. And so to reason's eye
 It is incredible. Thus proudly they!
 Yet every truth believed out runs the grasp
 Of finite thought, in source or consequence.
 Each creature's knowledge is a narrow disk,
 By truth illumined. Its circumference
 On every part is near. Beyond that line
 Illimitable night and darkness reign.
 Hence every line of light within that verge
 Must need's emerge from mystery, and plunge
 Into the farther edge of mystery.
 The proof is absolute; escape is none,
 Except the radiant circle have no bound.
 Move its circumference through space immense
 To distance infinite; and only then
 The lines of light may cease to spring from night
 And terminate in night. To God alone
 Belongs such knowledge limitless, immense.
 One intellect in all this universe
 May comprehension claim of all the truths
 Which it must needs believe: and that is God's!

Least of all creatures may the angels boast
 This claim because our larger knowledge spreads
 To wider spheres than man's, so longer lines
 Mark our circumference of knowledge full.
 The points are multiplied where lines of light
 Cross this circumference and lose their way
 Outer darkness. Wisest creatures see
 Most mysteries, the dullest fools see few,
 Because their pauper wisdom stops too short
 To recognize the doubt, which bounds our tho't
 Hence, Brethren, let us solemn warning take
 As knowledge grows, temptation grows to pride.
 As light expands, new doubts to pique that pride
 Loom up, unseen before. So humble faith,
 Patient and meek, must rule our spirits here
 More firmly than redeemed men's below.
 There wisdom dwells with meek humility;
 Here more; because a loftier state is ours.
 He who must comprehend, or he believe,
 Can nothing know. Yet these are they who boast
 Superior knowledge, scorning humble faith!
 They talk of life in plant, and beast and man,
 With learned skill: yet can not comprehend
 The vital force which builds the blade of grass!
 They see their limbs obey their spirit's will,
 But know not how. On natures' energies
 They count with certain trust, on them discourse
 In learned phrase: and yet can not define
 Whereof they talk. Where reason most might claim
 Her fullest knowledge, as of little things,
 Nearest her grasp, their willing minds admit
 All mysteries. But in the things of God.
 Immense, supreme, dark with excess of light,

Too high for angel's ken, there first they claim
Full comprehension, or refuse their trust.
What madness this of arrogance and sin?
They feel, they know by inmost consciousness,
Their spirits animate, their fleshly frames,
Their bodies corporate, material, dull,
Their spirits incorporeal, material, knowing, quick,
Of essence opposite. They also know
These opposites in union intimate
Combine to form one personality.
But God, the Spirit infinite, most full
Of all resources, who the union makes
Of spirit fine, and matter gross, in man,
Can not His spirit join to human soul,
Of essence like, in His own usage made.

But if not God incarnate, what is Christ?
A holy man, they babble, taught of God,
Of prophets foremost, purest, wisest, best;
Teacher and pattern, messenger of peace
To all who, like Himself, seek virtue's path.
To heavenly minds, what froth of folly this?
Were he no more than holy man inspired,
Then how A World's Redeemer, rather than
Isaiah, David, Moses, Jeremiah?
Were Christ no more than man, then human strength
Goodness and wisdom only are engaged
For man's salvation. Must he trust his all
For loss or gain immense, remediless,
To hand so weak? Such hand betrayed it once,
When Adam stood its head. Adam the chief
Of God's terrestrial works, in likeness made
And image of his Maker, perfect type
Of all that man can be, of earthly mould.

Shall God another Adam captain make
 To wage this war 'gainst an archangel's might
 The abject victim 'gainst his conqueror?
 Then let the host thus led despair, not hope!
 His prophets called Him God; He owns the claim.
 Then He is either God, or worse than man,
 Impious and false! Not mine the blasphemy!
 Shall men entrust their souls to prophets false
 And Master who upon their falsehood thrives?

Angels who know Jehovah's attributes,
 And sin's disease, see all devices
 For man's redemption, save the wondrous plan
 Of God head and complete humanity
 Combined in union, stable, personal.

Here only all sufficing truth appears,
 Which magnifies the law and offers man
 A hope secure, on God's perfections placed.
 Mid these ingenuous follies I foresee
 One countless host asserting, in pretense,
 The God in human flesh. But not the Son,
 Only begotten, consubstantial God.
 The rather they will steal some pagan dream
 From ranting Greeks, of Chronas and his sons;
 And paint the Father with creative art
 From nothing, fashioning some primal soub,
 Creature, yet image of the Uncarnate!
 Older than thou, great Prince, although thou be
 The eldest of His works, more glorious
 Than thou, Archangel named. Such creature, joined
 To Deity, is their imagined Christ.
 But we, who see Jehovah's face unveiled
 Their folly know. For infinite the space

Between Jehovah and His noblest work.
 No power can lift the creature to the state
 And substance of his God, nor make him meet
 For acts divine. For sooner might we see
 An atom swell into a mighty world.
 What sorry cheat of thought deludes their minds?
 There stands a pigmy man beside the base
 Of some mighty Alp, and eyes its towering crest!
 To his weak eye it seems to pierce the sky:
 He dreams that were he mounted on its peak,
 His hand might almost grasp the lofty sun.
 But what the mile or two of space he gains
 Against the mighty distances which part
 That mountains peak, a puny wart upraised
 Upon this little earth, from yonder sun?
 So, from this human plain, the angel looks
 Taller than man; Archangels tower above
 Our lower ranks. But still, O Prince, thy God
 Exceeds thy grade by distance infinite .
 Beside it, all the space twixt thee and man
 Minute, infinitesimal appears.
 No act adoptive, no disputed rank
 May cross that chasm: he who is creature born
 Must creature still remain, servant, not Lord,
 Endowed with no autocracy to give
 His life, for lives to justice forfeited,
 Nor power to work, release for or ruined man.

Are others driven by the word express
 To own the very God, and very man,
 In their Messiah? Fated by the stress
 Of pride in vain philosophy to err
 And miss the truth, these shall corrupt the ties,

Which joins the natures twain. Some shall we hear
 Extenuate, the bond to friendship close,
 And growing with the virtuous cares and toil
 Of their copartnership, in mercy's work,
 Until the perfect man and loving God
 Shall mates become in harmony of wills
 Insoluble. But others will confound
 What these dissever. So the human part,
 Absorbed, extinguished in the God, is lost.
 And others, craving still some newer work
 Of folly's hand, will have the son of God
 Incorporate in man, and animal
 Of sense and appetite, but reasonless.
 What vanities are these unspeakable?
 They recognize in words, their death in sin
 And ruin, needing power omnipotent.
 The Christ they hail Redeemer! But they seek
 With tortured cunning how, they may expunge
 From His Messiahship, each vital trait,
 And make it futile. Proper Godhead lost,
 A creature's work remains, worthless and weak
 To merit life, or break the bonds of sin.
 Even like the helpless souls it feigns to help.
 Or proper manhood lost, whatever myth
 Of work divine remains, no help is there
 For guilty man, no ransom price to pay
 By human death, for human guiltiness:
 And no obedience due from man to buy
 For undeserving man, adoption's boon.
 Or do they dream a God Incorporate
 In man the animal, of reason void?
 No spirit rational, or human will
 With the divine conspiring, to the task,

Of man's release, by blood and righteousness.
 Then just as well might God the son assume
 Some shape of stronger beast, leviathan,
 Or lion, eagle, ox, in which to make
 His Avatar, as pagan follies teach,
 Impious as senseless! Why, Oh brothers, why
 Will men whom God recalls from heathen might
 By mighty Prophets' voices; whom to bless
 With Gospel light, the Son of God hath died,
 Strive to relapse, by multifarious toils,
 To fatal gloom? Are they in love with death?
 Thirsty to quaff the fiery wrath of hell,
 Their own salvation hating? Love of sin
 With pride and selfish will, deluge their souls
 Until a sterner teacher purge their eyes,
 And in their righteous doom, they see too late,
 (Alas! the woe:) the truth they hated there.
 Oh fearful law; yet holy as severe,
 Inevitable, while Jehovah reigns,
 As just as gracious: They who spurn his gifts
 Of light and good, blood-bought, in mercy sent,
 Shall there transmute, by their dread alchemy,
 From blessing to a curse, and aggregate,
 Their treasury of guilt, to vaster store,
 Even by the riches of the Father's love.

Adiel.

Thou dost not, Gabriel, exhaust the list
 Of men's perversities, profane and mad.
 For we have heard the Sadducean horde,
 Against their prophets other cavil urge
 Of which succeeding skeptics still will prate,
 (That Christ, can be no substitute for man),

Nor expiate his guilt by penal woes.
 Because no guilt can be transferred, no debt,
 To broken law be paid, except by him
 Who brake it. Hear their bold presumptuous plea:

 Since God is love, he can not will the pain
 Of creatures whom He loves, save for their good.
 So penalty is but remedial love,
 Not retribution. As the mother's love
 To her sick child, the bitter potion gives
 To heal and bless. To gain this loving end,
 He who is sick must drink; the healing draught
 Drunk another's lips, no health can work
 In the diseased frame. Justice forbids,
 They cry, to visit on the innocent,
 The guilt he did not earn by his own deed.
 Thus conscience speaks with voice intuitive:
 Thus Holy Writ! Vicarious penalty
 Is but barbaric vengeance, blind as fierce.
 How widely shall this glazing sophistry
 In garb of seeming justice clad, beguile?

Michael.

 Yea, multitudes will take the cunning dross
 To their undoing as the gold of truth:
 And most in after-ages, which will boast
 Most arrogantly, wisdom, learning, arts,
 And proud philosophy. They will not see
 That were their logic just, its only end
 Is fell despair for every sinning soul.
 Justice retributive, abides in God
 Eternal as His throne, immutable,
 His law denounces death condign for sin,
 The stable earth, the heavenly dome may fall,

Before this law in jot or tittle fail.
 Then he who proves the Savior can not pay
 The sinners debt, by His vicarious pains,
 Has also proved his own damnation sure,
 His sin unpardonable, Hell his lot.
 They say the God of love inflicts no pains,
 Save in benevolence, to those he smites.
 What then is Satan's? No hearing cure
 It ministers, where death eternal reign's.
 Had God no end in all His penal strokes
 But healing love, then wherefore doth he choose
 This endless bitter in his medicine?
 He is Omnipotent! Why doth he heal
 By cruel stripes, when one persuasive word
 Painless and sweet, might work the loving cure,
 And work it surely, where this surgery
 Of torturing anguish doth most often fail?

Nay, Brothers; God is Good; and He is just.
 Not policy but justice rules His worlds.
 He punishes, because of sin's deserts,
 He punishes to magnify His law,
 His perfect being's glorious effluence,
 More worthy end, than the impurity
 Of sinful worlds, though craved by selfish fear.

They who deny that Christ bore sinner's guilt.
 Must flout God's word, and shut their stubborn eyes
 To all His earthly providence. God saith
 That he doth visit on the wicked sons
 The wicked father's guilt. We read the law
 In each calamity by sin drawn down
 On house or tribe. Is this a wicked law
 By some All mighty, tyrant God imposed?

Or does mechanic fate, remorseless, blind,

Dispense hereditary woes to me?

Either surmise is black with dire despair!

But God forbids the magistrate to slay
 The righteous for the guilty? Servants they,
 God sovereign. Chiefly; creatures do not own
 Their life and being, these belong to God
 By right creature: Friends may not release
 Their fellow's debt with riches not their own;
 For this were theft, not righteous recompense.
 Nor could the Judge divine, from innocence
 Exact another's guilt, without consent
 Most free and willing. Far from us the thought!
 That our Jehovah can invade the rights
 Of lowliest creature! Justice, love forbid.
 Let man or angel show this title, earned,
 By due obedience, to immensity,
 And promised recompense; that claim shall stand
 Firm as God's judgment seat by covenant
 And every attribute divine sustained.
 But if reward to righteousness belongs
 By right inviolate, then it may give
 By option free, what is so much its own.
 He who accepts a gift can do no wrong
 By that acceptance to the give free!
 But vengeance is the Lord's. In this His right
 Supreme and personal, no partner shares
 'Gainst Him all sin is aimed, and His the charge
 His injured rights and honor to defend.

If now the God man freely gives a life,
 His own by act creative, owing naught
 To law or justice by its own offence,
 To pay man's debt of guilt, and God the Judge
 Supreme, omniscient, just, accept the gift,

If wrong is here, doth that wrong afflict?
 Not pardoned men; for theirs the boundless gain.
 Not Christ the substitute; for uncompelled
 By earth or heaven, by Godlike pity moved,
 He freely gave the life possession sole
 Of His divinity. Not God the Judge!
 Justice received a fuller recompense
 Than all the deaths of Adam's sons could pay.

Adiel.

Would it might be, Salathiel, thy hope,
 Of zeal and love begotten, might prevail.
 That now the glories of the risen Christ
 And sweet constraint of His redeeming love
 Will conquer every heart; and sin and death
 From earth expel. Such glorious victory
 Must be Messiah's! Draweth this triumph near?
 Or will Jehovah, in judicial wrath,
 Permit man's stubborn hatred to postpone
 Their own deliverance, and Satan's reign
 Of crime and death, prolong to distant years?
 The cavils which we hear, perverse and blind,
 I fear me much, betoken long delay.

Michael.

It grieves me sore to dash these loving hopes.
 Why was Messiah's coming so delayed
 For forty centuries? Why shall death reign
 For other dreary ages; while the price
 Of man's redemption is so richly paid
 In blood divine; festering woes deform
 The earth already ransomed, and the stream,
 Still broadening, flows into eternity,

Whose drops are souls, heirs of immortal woe?

Why stay Messiah's chariot wheels, the while
 The murderous usurper works his will
 To curse the world He purchased? Bow your heads,
 Ye angels! Bow in reverential awe!
 The answer is not ours: But ours to trust
 The wisdom, whose omniscience can embrace
 The scheme immense of linked means and ends,
 From old eternity to latest years,
 Of infinite futurity, and bind
 In harmony of plan, all interest
 Of all the worlds: and ours to trust the love,
 Exhaustless source of all creations bliss.

Among the cavilings perverse, which rise
 In guilty whispers, from the nether earth,
 Is one most dark, fullest of fell despair.
 If God be wise, foreseeing all results,
 Almighty sovereign, doing all His will
 With power resistless; then what he permits
 Or executes, must be His chosen Good.
 Then must all sin and misery be best
 To His free preference; which argues Him
 Evil and cruel! Or is this denied?
 Then is He neither mighty, wise, nor free:
 And so, no portion fit for deathless souls.

One refutation, absolute, we know,
 Which leaves superfluous all debate.
 For we have seen the price Jehovah paid.
 Self moved and free, to rescue puny man
 From sin and woe: price richer than all worlds,
 Man needless to His glory, loathsome made
 By his corruption, whose deserted place
 Amid His servants, one creative word

Might soon have filled, with nobler servitors.
 We, who have seen the heavenly glories crown
 The eternal son, and love inaffable
 The Father for his holiest Image bear.

We know that naught but goodness infinite
 And holiness had moved Him to the gift.
 Why doth the Lord permit what sovereign power
 And wisdom could prevent, we may not know:
 But this we know: No stint of love can be,
 Or holiness in Him who freely gives
 By love alone impelled, life infinite,
 And best beloved for His enemies.

What time the morning stars and sons of God
 Were joined to sing this renovated earth
 And man's creation: while the Holy Three
 Apart withdrew for counsel deep and high,
 Mine was the task to guard the flaming throne,
 Whereon they sat. Long hours I trod the base
 Whence mounted up the steps of pearl and gold,
 More pure and, lofty than the Alpine snows;
 While they rehearsed the ancient fixed decree
 And 'covenant for man's redemption made
 Commerce in effable of thought and will
 Threefold, yet one in holy harmony,
 They held, the which no word nor voice could speak,
 Nor angels ear construe. Then came the Son,
 Benignant Lord, to that inferior grade.
 On which I paced my patient round.
 He said, "thou faithful servant, eldest made
 By our creative hand, Thou merited
 To know our final plan, of old ordained
 For yonder orb the renovated earth.

This day we people it anew with souls
 Which, angel like, and yet, one little step
 Beneath your grade of being, occupy
 The chasm which hither to so high and deep
 Dissevered spirits rational from brutes.

The human angel shall a body have
 Erect and fair, that he may multiply
 His blessed kind. Endowed with holiness
 And freedom, bound like you, by covenant,
 Shall he begin his early course, to win
 The promised life of heaven, and thus like you
 To rise from innocence to righteousness,
 From blessings mutable, to title sure
 Of heavenly life, from servant into son:
 But he will fall, by the arch traitor duped.
 Such the first issue, by omniscience seen,
 And as far as seen, permitted not procured:
 Fruit solely of the creatures will and acts:
 permitted still in our decrees.
 For deeper ends, more worthy of our will.
 Ends whose whole compass wisdom infinite
 Alone can grasp; but parts by creatures seen
 Suffice to justify our ways to faith.
 E'en now the tempter plans, with cunning deep
 And hate immense, to wrest our novel gift,
 Strangest and noblest power on man bestowed,
 The power to multiply his race.
 In one he ruins all: and turns our gift
 From spring of ever widening life and good.
 To fount of sin and woe, endless and vast
 As his own malice.

Shall his victory stand?

Shall hell and hate and falsest foulest fraud
 Appear to thwart the purposes, in love,
 And power and wisdom fashioned by our thought?
 Shall this new world which we have made so fair,
 To be the ever teeming nursery
 Whence to replenish heaven with countless lives
 Of glory, lapse into the seed plot cursed
 For peopling hell? Shall man's imperial gifts
 Which angels share not, be the ceaseless spring
 Of streams of beings, spreading without end,
 Their every drop another ruined soul
 Which disemboge in oceans of despair?

Forbid it Lord, I cried! Too black the hate,
 Too deep the shame and woe, to blight this work
 With God's own wisdom, power and love instinct.
 Let not the traitor triumph. Break his plot
 And lock him in his righteous prison house.
 But now the starry spheres and all thy hosts
 Were singing natal hymns for the new earth,
 In joyous strains they sang our welcome song.
 As we received her bright and spotless, pure,
 From long eclipse, back to her sisterhood
 Of shining worlds, that circle round Thy throne.
 But now must earth her former orbit trace,
 Black vehicle of crime and death, to taint
 The skies with sulphurous fumes, with her sad train
 Of ruined sons, an ever lengthening stream
 Around thy throne? And all their doleful wards
 Forever mar the music of the spheres.
 Then still your strains of joy, ye heavenly choirs,
 To shuddering silence. Veil, ye sister orbs,
 Your faces pure: Avert your eys, the while

The dread procession passes to its doom.
 Forbid, Oh Lord, this woe. Redeem Thy works,
 This my ardent prayer. The word replied
 With majesty subdued and sad.

Oh son

Thy loving zeal divine acceptance meets,
 Nor shalt thou different find from thy desire
 Our purpose of redemption. But the cost,
 Thou knowest not. Not Satan's power alone
 Obstructs the restoration; but the rights
 Of holiness immutable, and law,
 And sovereign justice. Not by power alone
 But blood and dying love, and sacrifice,
 Repaying man's default, with price immense,
 Can rescue now be wrought. And none but I
 Can pay that price. This is the covenant
 Of old decreed; now ratified and fixed
 On yonder throne. A willing offering.
 I give and sacrifice a life, my own
 To keep or lose, a life derived from none
 And forfeit to no law. In human nature clothed
 When the accepted time appears, I come,
 To take man's place, to pay his penal debt
 To earn his promised crown, to conquer death
 By dying, and restore the fallen world.

The prophesied the eternal Word the cause
 Of this redemption through the ages long
 To this supremest hour, which ere this night
 In brief rehearsed. Then at his feet I fell
 With reverential awe and holy love.
 O depth, I said, of wisdom past the reach
 Of an archangel's thought, O height and length

And breadth of pardoning love! O holy law,
 And right inflexible, which claimed such price
 For pardon: though such love immense persuade
 As this redeeming plan we apprehend,
 We see now, vistas opening wide and high
 Into the God-head's essence infinite.
 Bright with his love and holiness too long
 For angels to explore: which his best works
 In natures shining realm, could not reveal.
 O Word most wise; Thou hast foretold to me
 How forty ages long must intervene
 Of human guilt and death, e'er thou appear
 To stay the stream of woe with thine own blood.
 We must not ask; Why wait the chariot wheels
 Of Thy redemption, thought these centuries
 Of weary woe? We know the love which gives
 A life divine, to ransom enemies,
 Forbids our questionings. Causeless delay
 Such love can never choose. Yet Lord, I ask
 With humble hope: when once thy price is paid
 And death subdued; shall not the victory come
 Complete and swift, and end the murderous reign?
 To which the Son, with aspect kind replied:
 Thy wish is pious, not of us the cause
 Which must delay its consummation full.
 Soon as the Lamb shall mount His blood bought throne
 His first command shall send his heralds forth
 To call the lands with offer free of life
 For every dying soul of man, no bar
 Twixt them and heaven. Not alone
 My saints shall plead. Our Holy Ghost shall add
 His power, by mighty signs and miracles
 An inwards strivings with the hearers souls,

My lowly heralds, weak in worldly eyes,
 In spirit mighty, shall o'er sea and land
 My gospel carry with such eager feet
 As though some angels mighty wings upbore
 This flag of peace. My servants shall behold
 Another miracle of tribes and thrones,
 And pagan priest, and proud philosopher
 And arms and policies, subdued to me
 By witness of my heralds poor and weak.
 With seeming reason, will my earlier saints
 Showing thy loving hope, learn to expect
 In that first age, my final victory,
 And earth's complete redemption. But not so
 Our deeper counsel. Still the world must learn
 Of sin's maligneth a fuller view.

The pride of fallen man, must chastening take
 By other centuries of shame and grief,
 By his own follies wrought, until the race
 Emptied of self and contrite, desperate,
 Of every succor from its own resource
 Of learning, arms, or arts, or cunning laws
 Or science triumphing o'er natures ills,
 Shall know its ruin hopeless, and receive
 My proffered help.

Thus spoke the Sun divine.
 As the past ages rolled, their history
 Read by the spirits light hath led my mind
 To his deep meaning. Now prophetic grown
 I can interpret: Future days are known
 By teachings of the past. Not till the world
 Yea more, the Church shall learn despair of self,
 And all its hope shall place in God Alone,
 Can full deliverance come. Hard lesson this,

Of its mistakes. At first, Christ's people taught
 By His true prophets, will descend with scorn
 The vain traditions of Rabinic scribes
 Yet will they turn in pride insane to build
 Anew the fabric, vainer than the old.
 Messiah will His humble heralds send
 As ministers, as servants to his saints:
 Apostate men, succeeding to their name,
 Usurping lordly state, as Gods on earth,
 With brutal rage will tyrannize and slay,
 When they should save their brothers. Did he set
 His sacramental emblems, water, wine
 And heavenly bread, as parables concrete
 To help the feeble faith of souls yet clogged
 In sense and flesh. So they and Christ will wrest
 The hopeless shadows, only fit to Guide
 To Christ's Almighty grace, and cleansing blood:
 And make them saviors. Back to heathen night
 Will men who claim His name and power lead
 A silly cheated world. Each vanity
 In stench explodes, and ruin, Stubborn man
 Will find new fables, doomed to equal fate.
 The twentieth age, with all its boastful claims
 Of science, art, and new philosophies,
 Will still be seen to plod the senseless round
 Trusting to letters, science, policies,
 To everything but Christ, Redeemer sole
 To save their world; which grows but more expert
 By each advance in ways Of crime and death.
 When ends this tragedy? That day, that hour,
 Are given to none to know, but Him whom power
 Omnipotent can overmatch the might
 Of, sin and hell. Be it ours to wait,

To serve and strive, at our Great Captain's will
 One day with Him is as a thousand years
 A thousand years one day. But He will Come,
 Not always, shall the traitor hold his prize;
 For Christ hath bought it with His priceless blood.
 The Father's pledge assures His recompense.
 The gospel word shall run and fill the earth,
 The Spirit's power, not in scanty drops,
 But generous floods descend; a single day
 Shall see a nation born from death to God.
 Then shall begin the blest Millennial years,
 Most blest, yet harbinger of grander bliss,
 When death and Satan chained, the earth recleansed
 By purifying fire, the quickened dead
 Arraigned for trial and the judgment past,
 Then shall Messiah reinstate His throne
 Of righteousness in His reconquered realm.

Man's paradise was once a narrow spot.
 For ages long obliterate and lost.
 All earth shall now be paradise. No more
 Shall salt and barren seas conceal his vales:
 And all shall teem with myriad happy throngs,
 Out numbering far the generations lost,
 That mass so huge, so woeful to our eyes.
 God gave to Adam's sons, the new built earth,
 Now learn ye worlds, not Satan's wily arts
 Nor human sin nor power, could e'er reverse
 His fixed decree, more gloriously fulfilled
 Than if no fall had been. Now earth is man's,
 Forever more secure from all assault,
 Possession purchased by our greater man
 Than Adam, God in human flesh enthroned.

Is this not worthy, Brothers, of our prince
 To reinstate His righteous throne amidst
 The very scene where traitorous war had raged,
 To cleanse its stains, and to repair its wastes,
 And make the fields of death revive and bloom
 With peace and joy divine.

This earth is small
 Amidst its sister planets: speck minute
 Among the myriad spheres of higher heaven.
 Vile is this little mound on which we stand,
 Defiled with dead men's bones. But God who proves
 His power and glory by His sovereign choice
 Of foolish agents to confound the wise,
 And smallest things to bring to naught the great,
 And things of naught to conquer those that are,
 Will make this little earth, this hillock mean,
 His is beacon light to all the world, to teach
 His highest glory to eternity.

His holiness and justice hence shall shine,
 Severe and awful, through eternal years,
 In clearer light than from old Sinai's top.
 His goodness beam in softer rays of love
 Than from earth's smiling fields or heavens delights.

Gabriel.

Great Chief, Our holy watch is near its end.
 Lo! See the ridge of Olivet
 That silvery hand of light: The dawn begins
 Which ends the reign of death o'er Jesus' flesh.
 Even While we look, the paler rays begin
 To change into Aurora's roseate hues.

Michael.

Gabriel, thou sayest right, the king of day,
 Will follow now, and flood the hills with light.
 With him the nobler Son of righteousness
 Draws near. His human soul, from his supernatural Couch
 Descends, swift as the beams from yonder a stars
 Which flee the coming day, to associate
 Again, the sacred corpse our precious charge
 By some mysterious awe, and solemn joy
 Which thrills my being, I perceive Him near.
 Our vigil ends. With converse reverent
 This night have we beguiled the waiting hours
 Now must we swift from speech to action pass.
 Up Holy Brethren up,! The King is here!
 See ye, beneath us in the little vale
 The martial guards, before the sepulchre;
 Their steady tramp forbids approach to all
 By full imperial power of mighty Rome.
 Poor vain automatons! I stretch my wand
 And at at the touch they drop, insensible
 As though by lightening smit. Salathiel
 And thou good Adiel, together go:
 Set your strong shoulders to that envious stone:
 Roll back its ponderous mass from yonder tomb
 And let the King of Glory enter in.

Then take your stations by the holy bier
 To witness of His rise. Ye angelsbow
 And veil your faces, with your modes wings,
 As ye prepare to raise the Seraphs hymn,
 The while the conqueror of death goes forth.
 Thou, waiting sun, after precedence due
 Given Thy Lord, thou mayest exalt thy face
 And pour thy floods of light, to make the day

Henceforth the chiefest of revolving weeks,
 Memorial of the Resurrection Morn.
 More glorious this, than that which ushered in
 Creations work, when first the light arose
 At Gods command; more hallowed than the seventh,
 His resting day from His perfected works.
 For now is finished Christ's redeeming task,
 Which founds a heavenly world, immoveable.
 And now is born the light which never sets
 And which irradiates, not land and seas
 And Moon and stars, but every living souls.
 The risen Lord now calls the day His own,
 Until it merge into the final rest
 Which it foreshadows.

Ithiel.

See, O Michael!

We worship not alone! Whilst thou didst speak
 I saw new splendors flash on yonder verge
 Of circling mountains, which no rising sun
 Or earthly forces (can) shed. They are the Wards
 Of heaven, the Cherabim and the Seraphim,
 And powers and principalities, and souls
 Of ransomed men, descending in their train
 To greet their rising God. Behold their ranks
 In shining circles as form! Yet other hosts,
 And others throng the sky, Their glittering lines
 Marshalled in ranks concentric, crowd the dome
 Of heaven, up to the zenith. Every face
 Is hither turned, ablaze with holy joy.
 They strike their harps, and lift their anthems high
 Their harmonies of son as high, and clear
 As music of the spheres; yet powerful

As many thunders, joined to oceans roar,
 Have struck yon marble shafts before the fane
 Upon Moriah's top. See how they shake
 And how the wave of praise hath rent the veil
 Before the Mercy seat; to close no more.

Shall we not bear our part with equal voice?

They sing:

All holy, holy, holy Lord
 Who was and art to come.
 Let earth and heaven with one accord
 The Almighty praise, by whom
 All worlds were builded to proclaim
 Thy pleasure, and exalt thy name.

Let all that dwell beneath the sky,
 Or swim the seas profound,
 And all the shining hosts on high
 Again the news resound
 Of Him, who sits upon the throne
 And rules the mighty worlds alone.

To Him, and to the Lamb ascribe
 Wisdom, and wealth and might.
 And on the earth let every tribe
 Join to proclaim their right
 To glory, blessing, honor fame
 And sing their everlasting name.

Michael.

The holy conclave now dissolves its ranks.
 The glittering banks depart to other tasks.
 Our vigils here are done. More worthy work

Than watching o'er an empty sepulchre
 Demands our willing hands. One service more
 At this blest place, when forty days are past,
 Will draw our presence. Here the risen God
 His earthly mission done; from yonder hill
 So often trodden by his weary feet
 Will to His Father Mount. We must be there
 Our sovereign to receive, and aid the band
 Which shouts Him to His throne.

Less splendid tasks,
 But not less blessed, now demands our care,
 To minister to me. Who shall be heirs
 Of this salvation. Soon the holy men,
 Apostles, Teachers, chosen of the Lord,
 Will preach this kingdom in Jerusalem,
 And over land and seas. The Spirits call
 Of power and grace, will gather multitudes
 Who must their leader follow to their rest,
 Through toilsome paths like His, and perils sore.

These are our charge. We hear him calling them to tread
 The paths of toil and pain Messiah trod,
 Through tribulation to heavenly rest
 Like unto His. The persecutor's fires
 With equal step will follow this advance
 Of gospel light. To guard and shield each saint
 From storm and pestilence and noxious airs,
 To watch beside each dying couch and martyrs stake,
 And guide their pilgrim spirits to their rest.
 They know not when their Lord has set for them
 His temporary Court, nor whither point
 The ways across the void ethereal wastes
 Which lead from earth up to that blest abode.
 What ghostly terrors my beset the path,

What flaming fiend or seraph rushing by
 With meteor speed, to tasks of wrath or love,
 These human spirits know not, nor could brook
 Their awful mien alone. Torn from their flesh
 Must they as orphaned paupers aimless rove,
 Finding no rest, nor home forevermore.
 We know the shining path; for we shall see
 The Lord traverse it. Ours shall be the task
 To lead these wanderers, to see their joy
 As Christ they meet, and shout His harvest home.
 Work scattered, ever growing, as shall grow
 The gospel seed: until it fill the earth;
 Work long drawn out, through ages of whose end
 No angel knows. But as our labors grow,
 So shall our blessedness.

Then comes the end.

Once more the King will rally all our hosts
 And you his servants muster forth your ranks
 To aid his final victory on earth.
 My trumpet blasts, which shook old Sinai's crags,
 Will sound once more, and shake the earth and sky,
 My call shall rouse the dead; your bands collect
 All tribes of earth, and Satan's groveling hosts
 Before the judgment throne. The Incarnate God
 Shall judge the worlds, and we, His sentence just,
 Shall execute. And so earth's drama ends,
 And now unto our king, unchangeable
 Eternal, holy, God the only wise,
 Be honor, Glory, praise, as heaven hath heard
 From endless years, and shall forever hear.

Apologia.

Forgive, ye Angels, this my bold attempt
 To tune my feeble harp up to the height
 Of your great lyric, and translate your song
 For mortal ears, For ye will not disdain
 These humble echoes of your nobles strains,
 Ye now our God is one, and one the work
 Of saving love we join to celebrate.
 Nearer my part than yours, in Christ's empire.
 It teacheth you His glories most supreme:
 It purchases my life, with blood divine.
 Ye look upon that face no mortal eye
 My see and live. But how can mortals praise
 Life angels, till they see Him as He is?
 Have we not seen the Son in light portrayed
 By holy writ which from your heaven descends?
 Who knows the Son His Father also knows,
 The God invisible.

Nor will ye scorn
 Our earthly songs; when heavenly choirs rejoice
 To sing with ransomed men, since Abel first
 Attuned His gentle harp amid your ranks
 To sing with you the story of the Lamb.
 For Lo! These many years their infant souls,
 Off spring of mine their tender voice combine
 With yours: while I, my weary pilgrimage
 In toils and tears, and blindness walk below.
 May I not join mine own, although I sing
 In darkness wrapped? For walls of stygian night
 (So God permits) hedged in my earthly path
 And shuts out sun and stars and pages fraught
 With high philosophy and epic thought
 And human visage love lit, and seas

And smiling lands, and mountains domes and skies.
 Nor shall the light to me return until
 That Sun I see no more, shall veil his face
 Before that purer glory which shall light
 The new Jerusalem. Shed by the Lamb
 And by our God upon his heavenly Court.
 Nor think it strange, ye kindly ministers,
 If to these sightless balls, seeking in vain
 The sunlight beam, some slender ray from heaven,
 Unseen before amid the garish light;
 Shall pierce, in mercy sent; or if the soul
 Left blank of images by sense impressed
 Shall see by faith, and vision spiritual
 The heavenly City, and the golden streets
 Where ye your worship pay. With every grief,
 The gulf grows narrower, which separates
 Your world from mine. My echo of your song
 Becomes more true to its original.
 And if it err, ye shall my teachers be
 When we together sing before the throne
 Correct my truant notes, and lead my strains
 To praises worthy of my King and yours.

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—Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ