

# The Elene of Cynewulf eBook

## The Elene of Cynewulf by Cynewulf

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# Page 1

## Title: The Elene of Cynewulf

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## YALE STUDIES IN ENGLISH

ALBERT S. COOK, EDITOR

XXI

THE

ELENE OF CYNEWULF

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE

BY

LUCIUS HUDSON HOLT

PORTER FELLOW IN ENGLISH IN YALE UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1904



[Facsimile]

## PREFACE

This translation was made from the edition of the *Elene* issued by Charles W. Kent in 1889 (Ginn & Co., Boston). His text is 'that of Zupitza's second edition, carefully compared with Wuelker's edition and Zupitza's third edition, in which the results of Napier's collation are contained.'

The aim of this translation is to give an accurate and readable modern English prose rendering of the Old English poetry. The translation of Richard Francis Weymouth, entitled *A Literal Translation of Cynewulf's Elene*, has been at hand, but I owe it practically nothing in this work. While I trust that my rendering has not departed so far from the text that it will be valueless to the student, yet at places it will be found that I have to some extent expanded or contracted the literal translation in the hope of benefiting the modern English version.

My thanks are due to Dr. Robert K. Root and Dr. Chauncey B. Tinker of Yale University, and to Dr. Charles H. Whitman of Lehigh University, for examining part of the work in manuscript, and to Dr. Albert S. Cook of Yale University for a careful reading of the proof.

*Lucius Hudson Holt.*

*New Haven,*  
January 1, 1904.

## ELENE

1. The emperor Constantine.



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There had passed in the turn of years, as men mark the tale of time, two hundred and thirty and three winters over the world since the Lord God, the Glory of kings and Light of the faithful, was born on earth in human guise; and it was the sixth 5 year of the reign of Constantine since he was raised in the realm of the Romans to lead their army, a prince of battles. He was a bulwark to his people, 10 valiant with the shield, and gracious to his heroes; and the prince's realm waxed great beneath the heavens. He was a just king, a war-lord of men. God strengthened him with majesty and might till 15 he became a joy to many men throughout the world, an avenger for his people when he raised aloft his spear against their foes.

### *2. The war with the barbarians.*

And battle was brought on him, the tumult of strife. The people of the Huns and famous Goths 20 gathered a host together; and the Franks and Hugas marched forth, men fierce in fight and ripe for war. The spears and woven mail-coats glittered, as with shouts and clash of shields they lifted up on high the standard of battle. Openly 25 the fighters gathered all together, and the throng marched forth. The wolf in the wood howled his war-song, and hid not his secret hopes of carnage; and at the rear of the foe the dewy-feathered eagle 30 shrieked his note on high.

A mighty host hastened to war through the cities, gleaned from all the men the Hunnish king could summon from the near-lying towns. A vast army sallied forth—bands of picked horsemen strengthened 35 the force of the foot-soldiers—until within a foreign land upon the bank of the Danube these stout-souled brandishers of the spear pitched their camp near the water's flow, amid the tumult of the army. They longed to overrun the realm of the 40 Romans, and lay it waste with their hordes.

Then were the dwellers in the cities aware of the Huns' coming. And the emperor straightway bade summon with the greatest speed by dispatch of the arrow his heroes to war against the foes; bade lead out to battle the warriors beneath the heavens. 45 Their hearts inspired by victory, the Roman heroes were soon girt with weapons for the fight, though they had a lesser host for battle than circled about the proud king of the Huns. Then the shields 50 rang, the wood of war clashed; the king with the host, his army, marched forth to strife, and over their heads the raven wailed, dark, and thirsting for the slaughter. The army was moving—trumpeters leaped, heralds shouted commands, and horses stamped the earth. Hastily the multitude enranged 55 itself for strife.

But the king was fear-smitten, awed with terror, as he looked upon the hostile host, the army of the Huns and Goths, that upon the river's bank at the boundary of the Roman realm was massing its 60 strength, an uncounted multitude. The king of the Romans suffered bitter grief of soul, and hoped not for his kingdom because of his small host; he had too few warriors, trusty thanes, to encounter the overnight of brave men in battle.

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### 3. *The dream.*

The army encamped near at hand beside the river, nobles about their prince, for the space of a single night after they first beheld the course of their foes. Then unto the emperor himself in his sleep, as he 70 slumbered among his retinue, was disclosed the marvel of a dream, shown unto him with soul uplifted in the hope of victory. Him thought there appeared before him in the form of a man a certain warrior, radiant, resplendent, brilliant, more glorious than he ever beheld 'neath the heavens, before or since. Then, dight with his 75 boar-crested helmet, he started up from slumber, and straightway the messenger, a bright herald of glory, spake unto him and called him by his name, while the veil of night parted asunder: 'O Constantine, the King of angels, Wielder of fates and Lord of hosts, hath commanded to offer thee a 80 covenant. Fear thou not, though foreign peoples threaten thee with terror and bitter strife. Look to heaven, unto the Lord of glory. There shalt thou find aid and the token of victory.' 85

He was soon ready at the holy one's behest; he opened wide the secret places of his heart; he gazed on high, as the messenger, faithful weaver of peace, had bidden him. Over the roof of clouds he saw the beauteous tree of glory, gleaming with treasure and decked with gold—and the gems shone 90 brightly. The shining tree was inscribed with letters of brilliance and light: 'By this sign thou shalt overcome the foe in the dread peril; by this thou shalt stay the hated host.'

Then the light vanished, ascended up on high, 95 and together with it the messenger, unto the throng of the pure ones. And the king, the leader of men, was the blither and the freer from grief in his heart by reason of that fair vision.

### 4. *The battle.*

Then Constantine, bulwark of heroes and giver of gifts, battle-prince of armies and glorious king, 100 bade fashion with greatest haste a token like unto that sign he had seen, which had been disclosed before him in the heavens, the cross of Christ. And at dawn, with the first gleam of day, he bade 105 rouse the warriors and make ready for the stress of fight, lift up the emblem of battle, take the holy tree before them, and bear the sign of God into the press of their foes.

The trumpets rang loud at the army's front. 110 The raven rejoiced at the move; the dewy-feathered eagle scanned the march, the strife of battle-heated men; and the wolf, fellow of the forest, raised his song. Rife was the dread terror of battle.

Then there was the clash of shields and the shock of men, the bitter hand-to-hand struggle and the 115 slaughter of hosts, when once they had passed within an arrow's flight. On the fated folk dire enemies hurled a shower of darts, and with might of arm sent their spears, biting battle-adders, over the yellow shields into the midst of their foes. But with 120 courage undaunted the other host advanced; from time to time they

surged forward, broke the rampart of shields, thrust their swords between, and sternly kept their way.



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Then was the standard, the token, raised before the armies, and they chanted the victors' song. Over the field of battle gleamed spears and helmets 125 of gold. The pagan host was conquered; in merciless strife they fell. As the king of the Romans, dauntless in battle, bade raise that holy tree, the peoples of the Huns straight fled away, and their warriors were scattered far and wide. Some 130 perished in the fight, some saved themselves hardly on the march, some, with life half-ebbed, fled to fastnesses and nursed their strength behind barren rocks, some seized the land near the Danube, and 135 some were finally drowned in the river's current. Then was the army of valiant heroes rejoiced, and from break of day until eve they followed hard upon the foreign foe, while the spears flew, biting 140 battle-adders. The horde of hated shield-bearers was lessened; but few of the army of Huns returned thence home again.

Then was manifest from that day's deed that the King Almighty gave unto Constantine victory, 145 glorious honor, and a realm beneath the heavens, through his holy rood. And he, renowned in battle, a bulwark of armies, returned thence home again when the war was decided, exulting in his spoil. Famed in the fight, a defense for heroes, the 150 king came with a throng of thanes to visit his cities and stud his shield with jewels.

### 5. *The assembly.*

Then the Lord of men straight summoned the wisest to council, those who had pondered the craft of wisdom in writings of old and held nobly to 155 the rede of scholars. And the prince of the people, victory-inspired king, asked through the vast assembly if there were any man there could tell and declare unto him truly who the god was, giver of good 160 gifts, 'whose sign this was which appeared unto me so bright, the most gleaming of tokens, saved my people, and gave unto me glory and war-speed against my foes through the holy tree.' 165

But no one of them could give him any answer in return, nor knew they full well what to say about the victor-tree. Then spake the wisest before the multitudes, and said that it was a sign from the King 170 of heaven, and of that there could be no doubt.

### 6. *The conversion of Constantine.*

But they who had learned the truth, who were taught through baptism, were joyful in soul, and their hearts were light that they might declare before 175 the emperor the grace of the gospel: how the Saviour of souls, revered in threefold majesty, was born; how God's own Son was hung upon the cross in bitter agony before the multitudes; how He freed 180 the children of men and souls of the careworn from the snares of devils, and gave unto them grace through the very thing that had been disclosed to his own sight as a sign of victory against



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the onrush of foes; and how on the third day the Glory 185 of men and Lord of all mankind rose from the tomb and from death, and ascended into heaven. Men wise in the mystic things of the Spirit thus said unto the victory-inspired monarch as they had 190 learned from Silvester. And at their hands the prince of the people received baptism, and held to the faith according to the will of the Lord from that time forth throughout the length of his days.

Then was the giver of gifts content, the king stern in battle; a new joy was come into his heart. 195 The Lord of the kingdom of heaven was his greatest solace and his highest hope. Through the grace of the Spirit he began zealously to show forth the law of the Lord both day and night, and this ruler of men devoted himself, far-famed and weariless, 200 unto the service of God. Then the prince, bulwark of peoples, brave in battle and bold with the spear, found in the books of God with the aid of his teachers that country where, amid the shouts of multitudes, the Ruler of the heavens was crucified upon 205 the cross through sinful hate; even as the ancient enemy with lying craft led astray the people, deceived the race of the Jews, until they crucified God himself, the Lord of hosts; wherefore they shall 210 suffer a direful curse in misery through a long-enduring life.

### *7. The journey of Elene.*

Then was the laud of Christ in the heart of the emperor, and he was ever mindful of that glorious tree. And he bade his mother fare unto the Jews upon a journey with a throng of people, and zealously 215 with her band of heroes to seek where the holy tree of glory, the rood of the King, was hid beneath the earth.

Nor would Elene slight such a journey, nor be 220 heedless of the word of the prince her son; but the woman was soon ready for the welcome way, as the bulwark of heroes and mail-clad warriors had bidden her. And thereupon throngs of nobles 225 made ready for the voyage over the ocean. The ships stood ready by the shores of the sea, bound ocean-coursers resting on the deep.

And the journey of the queen was plainly manifest when she sought the swell of the ocean with 230 her company; many a noble stood there, near to the water's edge, and from time to time crowds of men pressed across the way.

Then they loaded the ships with battle-dress, shields and spears; mail-clad warriors and men and 235 women embarked thereon. And they let the steep ocean-speeders course over the foamy deep; often the hull bore the shock of the billows on the ocean-way, and the sea raised her song. Never heard 240 I before nor since of woman leading a fairer force upon the paths of the ocean, the streams of the deep. There one might see, if he beheld that voyage, ships cleave the watery way and haste beneath swelling 245 sails,

sea-coursers leap, and wave-floaters speed ahead. The proud warriors were glad; the queen rejoiced in the journey.



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When the ring-prowed ships had reached their harbor in the land of the Greeks over the fastness 250 of flood, they left their vessels, their olden water-homes, lashed by the sea, bound with anchors, to await upon the surging deep the fate of the men, when the warrior queen with her band of heroes 255 should again seek the eastern ways. Many a woven corselet, trusty sword, and glittering battle-sark, many a helmet and glorious boar-crest, were there to be seen among the warriors. The spearmen, 260 heroes about their queen, were eager for the march. The brave fighters, heralds of the emperor, warriors clad in armor, went forth rejoicing into the land of the Greeks. Many a gold-set jewel, the gift of their prince, was to be seen there among the company. 265

But the blessed Elene, zealous and earnest of purpose, was mindful of her lord's will that over fields of battle she should seek the land of the Jews with her trusty band of shield-bearers, her company of 270 spearmen; and so it befell within a little space thereafter that the multitude of men, heroes famed in war and chieftains of spear-renown, entered into the city of Jerusalem in a vast throng with the noble queen. 275

### 8. *The councils of the Jews.*

Then she bade summon the wisest of the dwellers in the cities among the Jews, far and wide, each man of them, to come unto a council for deliberation, those who knew how to expound justly and fully the hidden things of God. And there was 280 gathered together from far ways no small multitude of those who could expound the law of Moses. They were in number three thousand men, chosen 285 for teaching.

Then the well-beloved woman spake unto the men of the Hebrews in these words:— 'This have I learned well by the mystic sayings of prophets in the books of God, that in days of yore ye were 290 dear unto the King of glory, loved of the Lord and strong in his service. And lo! ye of this knowledge unwisely and perversely cast Him forth when ye cursed Him who thought to loose you from your curse, your torture of fire, your servile bondage, 295 through the might of His glory. Foully ye spat upon the face of Him who by his noble spittle wrought anew the light of your eyes, the cure of 300 your blindness, and saved you oft from the unclean spirits of devils. Ye doomed Him to death who among a multitude of men roused from death itself unto their former life a number of your own race. 305 Ye blind of soul, thus have ye confounded false with sooth, light with darkness, hate with reverence, and have woven a crime from your evil thoughts. Therefore doth this curse weigh you down in your sin—ye judged that pure Power, and until this day 310 ye have lived with clouded thoughts in heresy. Go ye now quickly, and think upon the men most sage in wisdom and skilled in speech, who, versed in the knowledge of your law, hold it foremost in their 315 hearts, and who may declare unto me truly and devise an answer for each token whereof I may ask them.'



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Then, sorely grieved and saddened, and burdened 320 with fear, the men wise in law went apart, and earnestly sought the deepest mystic words wherewith they might answer the queen whatsoever she asked of them, whether of good or of bad. And they 325 found among their number a thousand of exceeding wisdom, who most fully knew the traditions of old among the Jews. In a great crowd they hastened to where, upon a royal throne in majesty, the kinswoman 330 of the emperor waited, a stately queen of battle adorned with gold. And Elene spake before the folk:—'Hearken, ye wise of soul, unto a holy mystery, the word and the wisdom. Lo! ye had the teaching of prophets how the Prince of life and Lord 335 of might should be born in the likeness of a child. Of him sang Moses, leader of the Israelites, and spake this word:—"Unto you is born a child of wondrous might in mystery, for his mother conceived 340 him not through the love of man." Of him king David, father of Solomon, ruler of men, a prophet with the wisdom of age, chanted a psalm and spake this word:—"In times afore I beheld the 345 God of creation, the Lord of victories. He was before my sight upon my right hand, the King of might and Prince of majesty. Thence will I never turn my eyes more unto life." Likewise again 350 Isaiah the prophet, deeply moved by the Spirit of God, spake concerning you before the multitudes in these words: "I raised up sons and I begat children, and unto them I gave possessions, and holy balm for their souls; but they scorned me, loathed me 355 with their hate, and they had no forethought, no skill of wisdom. Even the wretched oxen, which man doth each day drive and beat, know their well-wisher, and in their revenge for wrong hate not their friend who giveth them fodder. But never 360 would the men of the Israelites take knowledge of me, though I wrought many wonders for them throughout my life in the world." Lo! this have we learned in holy books, that God the Creator gave unto you spotless glory and wealth of power, 365 and said unto Moses how ye should hearken unto the King of heaven, and follow His teaching. But ye soon became weary of this, and withstood that righteous one; ye scorned the pure Maker of all, the Lord of lords, and pursued error against the 370 law of God. Now go ye quickly and find once more those who know best by wisdom's craft the ancient scriptures, your righteous law, that with 375 depth of soul they may give me answer.'



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Then a throng of the proud leaders, saddened in heart, went forth as the queen had bidden them, and found five hundred wise men of their own race who held learning in their memory, most wisdom 380 in their mind. And again within a little space the lords of the city were summoned unto the hall. And the queen, looking upon them all, spake unto them 385 in these words:—'Oft have ye wrought foolish deeds, ye wretched in misfortune, and scorned the Scriptures, the lore of your fathers, but never worse than now when ye have refused the cure of your blindness, and withstood the truth and the right—that 390 the Son of the Mighty One, the only-begotten Ruler and King of kings, was born in Bethlehem. Though ye knew the law, the words of the prophets, yet because of your sin ye have not been willing to confess the truth.' 395

And with one accord they answered:—'Lo! we have learned the Hebrew law that from the ark of God our fathers knew in days of yore; but we know not in sooth wherefore, O lady, thou hast become thus angry with us. We know not the sin 400 that we have wrought in this province, the wrong we have ever done to thee.'

Then Elene spake before the people openly, before the multitudes this woman spake aloud:—'Go ye 405 now quickly, and seek far and near those who have the power of wisdom and the most skill of thought among you, that they may show forth to me without reserve whatsoever I ask of them.' 410

And they went forth from the council as the mighty queen, strong in her cities, had bidden them, and earnestly pondered, sad of heart, and sought shrewdly what that sin might be that they had 415 wrought in the province against the emperor, wherewith the queen reproached them.

### 9. *The speech of Judas.*

And there spake before the people one learned in ancient writings and wise of speech (his name was Judas):—'I know well that she wishes to ask concerning 420 that victor-tree whereon suffered the Lord of hosts, God's own Son, guiltless of all evil, Him whom, unspotted with any sin, our fathers in days 425 of yore hung upon the high cross through hate—fearful was that thought! Now is there great need that we steadfastly fortify our minds not to betray that murder, nor declare where the holy tree was hid after the stress of strife, lest thereby the wise 430 writings of old be cast aside, and the lore of our fathers forsaken. For if this shall be known, it will not be long that the race of the Israelites and the faith of the Jews shall hold sway over the world. 435 Thus once my father's father, prophet with the wisdom of age and far-famed in victory—his name was Zaccheus—gave like counsel unto my father and spake this word, which in after times he himself told to his son, as he turned



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him from the world:—"If in 440 the days of thy life it happen that thou hear sage men ask of the holy tree and stir up strife concerning the rood of victory whereon the true King was crucified, Lord of heaven and Child of all 445 peace, then do thou, my dear son, ere death snatch thee off, quickly declare that never shall the people of the Hebrews, taking wise counsel together, hold sway and rule over men, but the glory and kingdom 450 shall endure of those who, filled with gladness from age to age, revere and love the crucified King."

'Then I boldly gave answer unto my father, the 455 aged counselor:—"How came it to pass in the kingdom of the world that with wrathful intent our fathers laid hands on the Holy One to put him to death, if they had knowledge that he was Christ, 460 the King upon the cross, true Son of the Creator, and Saviour of souls?"

'And my parent gave answer unto me, wisely my father spake:—"Recognize, O youth, the surpassing power of God, the name of the Saviour which may not be expressed by any man. No man on 465 earth can search it out. Never would I visit the council which this people held, but I ever kept myself aloof from their sin, nor wrought shame 470 unto my soul in any way. Many times I earnestly withstood the unrighteous act when the wise men sat in council, and sought in their heart how they might crucify the Son of the Creator, the Bulwark 475 of men and Lord of all, of angels and of mortals, the most noble of heroes."

"But these foolish and wretched men could not bring death upon Him as they weened, nor beset Him about with agony, though He, the victorious Son of God, for a little while yielded up His ghost upon 480 the cross. Then the King of the heavens, the Glory of all glory, was raised from off the rood, and abode three nights in the tomb, within the place of darkness; and upon the third day He arose living, Light 485 of all light and Lord of angels, and revealed himself unto His followers, the true Prince of victory, resplendent in glory. Then after a little space, Stephen, thy brother, received the bath of baptism, 490 the faith of joy, and for the love of the Lord he was stoned. Yet he gave not evil for evil, but in patient suffering made intercession for his ancient foes, and prayed the King of glory that He would not lay to their charge this evil deed, that they 495 deprived of life a man innocent and free from guile through hate and the teachings of Saul.

"And this Saul in enmity was dooming many a follower of Christ to torture and death, yet the 500 Lord showed mercy unto him so that he became a solace for many men. And in after times the God of creation, Redeemer of men, changed his name, and he was called Saint Paul, and of the teachers of 505 the law no one of all those, or man or woman born into the world, was ever better than he beneath the span of the heavens, even though upon the hill he bade crush Stephen, thy brother, with stones. 510



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"Now thou canst understand, my dear son, how merciful is the Lord of all, if we straightway purge ourselves of our evil deeds and cease again from the unrighteous act, though many times we transgress 515 against Him, and wound Him with our sins. Wherefore I, in sooth, and in after times my dear father, believed that the God of all glory, Giver of life, suffered' bitter agony for the surpassing need 520 of mankind. And now I counsel thee in secret, my dear son, that thou never offer scorn, nor blasphemy, nor wrathful opposition to the Son of God. Then 525 shalt thou deserve that unto thee be granted eternal life in heaven, the best reward of victory."

'Thus in days of yore, while I was still a youth, my father instructed me, and taught me with these true words, a man wise in sorrow—Simon was his 530 name. And now that ye know my heart and mind, ye perceive clearly what ye had best declare if the queen ask us concerning that tree.' 535

And the wisest spake together before the assembly in these words:—'Never heard we any other man save now thee declare thus among this people concerning 540 such a hidden thing. Act as thou thinkest, O thou wise in the lore of old, if thou art questioned among the multitude, for there is need of wisdom, of artful words, and the learning of a seer, that shall give answer to this noble woman before such a 545 throng met together.'

Then words increased: men thought, reflected, and pondered on either side, some this way and some that. And there came a band of thanes to the assembly; and heralds, messengers of Caesar, 550 trumpeted:—'O ye counselors, the queen doth summon you unto the royal hall, that ye may show forth rightly the judgments of your synod. Ye have need of prudence in the council, of wisdom in mind.' And they, the leaders of the people, grieved 555 in soul, were ready as they were summoned by the bitter edict, and went unto the palace to show forth the power of craft.

Then the queen spake unto the Hebrews and asked them, their hearts sorely burdened, how once the 560 prophets, holy men, sang in the world concerning the Son of God; and where the Lord suffered, true Son of the Creator, for the love of souls. But they were obdurate and mute as stones, nor would they 565 show forth the true secret, nor in the hardness of their hearts would they give any answer to what she sought of them, but, set in purpose, they withstood each word that she asked, and said that never 570 in their lives had they heard, before nor since, one whit of any such thing.

Then Elene spake and answered them in anger:—'I shall say unto you truly, and never in your life will this be false, that if ye who stand before me 575 persist long in this falsehood with lying craft, ye shall be burned upon the hill in the hottest fury of fire, and leaping flames shall consume your flesh, so that for you this lie shall be changed into utter destruction. 580 Nor can ye prove those words which now in your guile ye cover up under the cloak of evil. Ye cannot hide the deed, nor conceal its mystic power.'



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### 10. *Elene and Judas.*

Then were they in the fear of death, of the funeral-pyre, and the end of life; and there they 585 thrust forth one of exceeding wisdom in the lore of old, whose name was Judas, sprung from noble lineage; and they gave him up unto the queen, and called him a man of wondrous learning: 'He can show forth to thee the truth, unlock the secret of the fates, expound the just law from the beginning 590 even to the end, according as thou dost ask him. He is of noble race in the world, wise in speech, the son of a prophet, outspoken in council. And it is his nature to have sage answers and wisdom of soul. He shall show forth to thee before 595 the multitude with his great power the gift of wisdom, even as thy heart desireth.'

Then she let each man seek his own home in peace, and took Judas alone as hostage. And she earnestly 600 bade him tell the truth concerning the cross, which had been long buried in a secret place. Then Elene, the glorious queen, drew him aside by himself, and thus spake to the lonely man:—'Two ways 650 are ready for thee, either life or death, whichsoever thou shalt please to choose. Declare quickly now which one thou wilt accept.'

And Judas made answer unto her—nor could he rid himself of sorrow and turn away the wrath of his ruler, but he was in the power of the queen—: 610 'How shall it be with him who treadeth the moor in a desert, weary, without food, and tortured with hunger, if before his eyes a loaf and a stone together seem hard and soft, and he knoweth them not apart, but taketh the stone to ward off his 615 hunger, and marketh not the loaf, turneth to want and forsaketh the food, refuseth the better when he hath the choice of both?'

Then openly before the people the blessed Elene gave him answer:—'If thou wouldst have thy life 620 in the world and a home with the angels in the kingdom of heaven, the reward of victory in the sky, tell me straightway where the holy rood of the King of glory lieth under the earth, which ye 625 have hid now for a while from men because of the unrighteous murder.'

Judas answered, and his heart was heavy within him; there was grief in his soul, and woe either way, whether thus he forsook the joy of the 630 heavenly realm and this present kingdom beneath the skies, or disclosed the rood:—'How can I reveal that which came to pass so long ago in the course of years? Two hundred or more in number are now vanished away—I know not the sum of 635 them, and I cannot declare the event. Many of wisdom, of virtue, and of learning, who were before our time, are told among the dead. In days long after was I born, and in my childhood, and in my youth. I may not discover in my heart that which 640 I know not, and which came to pass so long ago.'



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Then Elene bespake him in answer:—'Whence cometh it that ye bear in mind so many things, every wondrous deed, such as those which the Trojans 645 wrought in battle? That far-famed war of old was further in the course of years than this holy event, and yet ye know that fully, how to declare at once the number of all that were slain 650 there, and of the spearmen who fell in death beneath their shields. Ye set forth in writing the tombs beneath the rocky cliffs, and likewise the places and the tale of years.'

Then Judas answered—he suffered bitter grief:—'We 655 are mindful of that war from very need, my dear lady, and we set forth in writing the fierce strife and the deeds of the nations, but never have we heard this declared unto men from the mouth 660 of any save here and now.'

And the noble queen gave him answer:—'Too mightily dost thou withstand the truth and the right concerning the tree of life, insomuch as thou spakest 665 verily of the rood of victory before thine own people but a little time ago, and now dost turn to falsehood.'

Judas again spake unto her, and said that he uttered those words in sorrow and exceeding doubt, that he had weened bitter hardship for himself.

Quickly the kinswoman of Caesar answered him:—'Lo! we have heard it declared unto men from 670 the holy book that the noble Child of the King, the Son of God, was crucified on Calvary. Thou shalt reveal thy knowledge perfectly concerning the field where this place Calvary is, according to the teaching 675 of the Scriptures, ere death and utter destruction snatch thee away for thy sins, that I may thereafter cleanse the cross to be a solace for men, according to the will of Christ. Thus shall the Holy God, the Lord Almighty, Glory-giver of hosts and Helper 680 of souls, fulfill for me my desire and my inmost longing.'

But with stubborn heart Judas answered her:—'I know not the place, nor aught of the field, nor know I the event.'

Then Elene spake with wrath in her heart:—'I 685 swear by the Son of the Creator, by the crucified God, that thou shalt be starved to death before the people of thine own race, save thou forsake this falsehood and fully declare unto me the truth.' 690

Then she bade men take him alive, and throw him, guilty as he was, into a dried-up well—nor did her subjects hesitate. And there, joyless and famished, weighed down with chains, was he to abide in his grief for the space of seven nights. And upon the seventh day, weakened by sorrow, weary, 695 and without food—his strength was broken—he began to call aloud:—'I beseech you by the God of the heavens that ye release me from this misery, 700 for I am brought low by the pangs of starvation. Joyfully will I show forth the holy tree—no longer can I hide it now by reason of my hunger. This durance is too fearful, this need too great, and this torture too bitter day by day. No longer can I

705 endure to suffer, and conceal my knowledge concerning the tree of life, though before I was filled with folly, and confess the truth too late.'



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### 11. *The finding of the crosses.*

When she who there held sway over the heroes understood the changed bearing of the man, she 710 straightway bade release him from his prison, his dungeon, his narrow cell. Then quickly they did so, and took him out of the pit with care, as the queen had bidden them. And they resolutely 715 took their way to that place upon the hill where the Lord was crucified on the cross, the Son of God and Prince of the heavenly realm. Weakened by hunger, he knew not yet clearly where through 720 the wiles of the devil the holy rood lay hid beneath the earth, nor where it rested in its tomb, safe in a secret place, long hidden from men.

After a little while he lifted up his voice with unwonted power and spake in Hebrew:—'O Lord 725 Jesus, thou who dost possess the power of judgment, thou who didst form the heaven and the earth and the sea, the broad expanse of waters, and all created things, by the might of thy glory; thou who didst measure out with thine own hands all the sphere of 730 this earth and of the firmament above; thou who dost sit in person, the King of victories, over the most glorious angel-kind; thou who in a mantle of light dost fare through space in surpassing majesty, the nature of man cannot rise in the flesh 735 from the earth-tainted ways unto the bright throng of the pure, the heralds of glory. Thou didst form that host, holy and heavenly, and didst ordain it unto thy service. Six of their number are called 740 by name in joy without end, and they are clothed about with six wings; they are adorned, and gleam brightly. And there are four of their number ever in flight that perform the service of glory 745 before the sight of the eternal Judge, and they continually sing in holiness with clear voices the laud of the King of heaven, fairest of songs, and they chant these words in pure tones—their name is 750 cherubim:—  
"Holy is the holy God of the archangels, the Lord of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of His majesty, and all His exceeding might is marked with His glory." And there are two among their number in the heavens, the victorious race, 755 whereon man bestoweth the name of seraphim. With flaming sword they are to keep sacred the field of Paradise and the tree of life. And fast in their grasp the drawn sword, sharp of edge, quivers, trembles, and changes its hue. For thou dost rule, 760 O Lord God, eternally, and thou didst hurl thy sin-stained foes, the workers of iniquity, from the heavens, and the unhappy host fell to the dark abodes, into the pains of hell. There now they suffer 765 the agony of death in a sea of fire, encompassed about with darkness, in the embrace of the dragon. He withstood thy kingly rule, and therefore in misery, abhorred, the vilest



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of the vile, shall he suffer and endure the servile yoke. He cannot there 770 neglect thy commandment; he is fettered in torture, bound in agony, the author of all sin. If it be thy will, O King of angels, that He who was on the cross, and was born of Mary into the world in the 775 form of a child, the Lord of the heavenly host, shall rule—and were He not thy Son, free from guile, never could He have wrought such a multitude of true miracles day after day in the world; 780 nor wouldst thou, O Lord of the peoples, so gloriously have raised Him from the dead before the nations, were He not thy Son in glory by that holy maid—then do thou, O Father of angels, now show forth thy sign. Even as thou didst hearken unto 785 the words of that holy seer, Moses, in prayer, when thou, O God of power, didst reveal unto the noble man in due time the bones of Joseph beneath the mountain-side, so would I, O God of hosts, if it be thy will, beseech thee in the name of that fair being 790 that thou, Creator of souls, wilt disclose unto me this treasure-house that long has been hidden from men. Do thou now, O Prince of life, let rise up beneath the span of the heavens from this smiling 795 field a misty smoke. Then shall I trust in thee better, and the more firmly establish my soul in undoubting joy upon the crucified Christ, that He is truly the Saviour of souls, eternal, omnipotent, and King of the Israelites, and that He shall rule 800 for ever in glory without end the everlasting dwellings in the heavens.'

Then from that place a mist rose up beneath the skies, like unto smoke. Thereupon was the soul of the man exalted, and he clapped his hands unto 805 the heavens, wise and blessed. And Judas spake, sage in thought:—'Now have I truly perceived in the hardness of my heart that thou art the Saviour of the world. Thanksgiving without end be thine, 810 O God of might, who sittest in majesty, that unto me in my misery and my sin thou dost uncover the secrets of the fates by thy glory. Now I would pray thee, O Son of God, Giver of gifts to men, inasmuch as I know thou art revealed and born the 815 Glory of all kings, that thou never more be mindful of my guilt, O my Creator, which I have wrought not a few times against thee. Let me, O God of power, dwell with holy joy among the number of 820 the kingdom in that fair city where my brother is exalted in glory, for he, Stephen, held covenant with thee, even though he was stoned. He hath the reward of the fight, joy unceasing, and the wonders 825 that he wrought are set forth in books.'

Then, glad and zealous, he digged in the earth under the sod for the tree of glory until he uncovered and came upon three crosses together in a mournful home, hid twenty feet below, concealed 830 in their dark grave beneath the steep cliff, and covered over with sand, even as in days of yore the 835 host of the sinful, the race of the Jews, had clothed them over with earth. They stirred up hatred against the Son of God, as they would not have done had they not hearkened to the teachings of the prince of evil.



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And his soul was gladdened with great joy, and 840 his heart strengthened by that holy tree, and his spirit exalted within him as he beheld the holy sign in the earth. With his hands he seized upon the wondrous tree of glory, and in the midst of the people raised it aloft from its earthy grave. Then 845 strangers and heroes entered into the town.

### 12. *The miracle of the true cross.*

Thereupon the glad and zealous man set forth the three trees of victory before Elene in open view. 850 The queen rejoiced in her heart at the deed, and asked on which of those trees the Son of the King, Giver of joy to men, was crucified: 'Lo! we heard it declared from the holy book that two suffered with Him, and He Himself was the third on the 855 cross. All the heavens grew dark in that woful hour. Say, if thou knowest, on which of these trees the Lord of angels and Prince of glory suffered.'

But Judas could not declare unto her fully concerning 860 that tree of victory, on which the Saviour, the conquering Son of God, was hung, for he wist it not assuredly. Then he bade set the crosses with tumult in the midst of the fair city, there to abide 865 until the King Almighty should show forth a miracle before the people through that tree of glory. With souls uplifted in their victory, they sat themselves down about the rood, and with earnest thought raised their voices in song until the ninth hour, when they had new joy, gloriously gained. 870 For many came there, no small multitude, and among the press of men close by on a bier they brought one who was dead, a young man, lifeless; and it was the ninth hour.

And there was the heart of Judas gladdened with 875 great joy. He bade them set down upon the earth him whose soul had fled, the body forsaken of life, the dead man, and he himself, wise and earnest revealer of truth, raised up in his arms two of those 880 crosses over the lifeless frame. But the body, fast on its couch, was dead as before. The limbs were cold, enwrapped with their dire fate. Then the third, the holy one, was raised aloft. The body 855 waited until the rood, the cross of the King of heaven, the true sign of victory, was laid upon the man; then he straightway rose up, restored in spirit, both body and soul together. And there was great 890 laud raised among the people; they revered the Father, and honored the true Son of the King in their speech. To Him be glory and thanksgiving without end from all creatures.

### 13. *Judas and the devil.*



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Then, as ever should be, was the miracle which 895 the Lord of hosts, Giver of life, had wrought for the salvation of mankind, impressed upon the minds of the people. But there the fiend, the devil from hell, dire monster mindful of evil, sinning with his 900 lies, rose up into the air, flying, and spake thus:—'Lo! what man is this who doth again in the ancient enmity destroy my following, swell the olden hatred, and waste my possessions? Continual 905 strife is this. No longer may the souls of them that work evil dwell among my possessions, since now a stranger hath come, whom I counted fast in his sins, and hath robbed me of my every right 910 and of all my wealth. This is not a just deed. The Saviour, who was raised up in Nazareth, hath done me many an evil, acts of deep hatred. As he grew up from childhood, he ever turned to himself 915 my possessions, nor now can any justice succeed [against him]. His kingdom is broad over the world, while my teaching is weakened beneath the heavens. I dare not despise this cross with scoffing laugh. Lo! the Saviour hath again shut me into 920 my narrow home, smitten with woe. Once I was filled with joy by a Judas: but now, again by a Judas, am I humbled, bereft of possessions, abhorred, and friendless. But I know how to discover 925 again by my sin a way of return hereafter from the home of the damned. I shall incite against thee another king who shall persecute thee, and shall forsake thy teaching and follow my ways of 930 evil; then will he cast thee into the darkest and worst of terrors, that thou, racked with pain, mayst vehemently renounce the crucified King, whom thou didst formerly obey.'

Then the wise Judas, daring hero in strife, 935 answered him (the Holy Spirit was granted unto him with strength, a love hot as fire, a knowledge welling up through the learning of a warrior); and he spake this word, filled with wisdom:—'Thou needst not so mightily, ever mindful of evil, renew 940 sorrow and enkindle strife, O sinful prince of murder, inasmuch as the mighty King, who hath awakened with His word many of the dead, doth thrust thee into the nether depths, thou worker of iniquity, 945 into the abyss of torture, bereft of joy. Know thou full clearly that thou in folly didst forsake the brightest of lights and the love of the Lord and that glorious faith, and that thou hast since dwelt in a 950 bath of fire, burdened with tortures and seared with flame, and that there, with hatred in thy soul, thou shalt ever suffer woe and misery without end.'



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Elene heard how the foe and the friend struggled together, the glorious and the foul on opposite sides, 955 the sinful and the blessed. And she was the gladder in heart as she heard that the hellish enemy, the Prince of evil, was vanquished; she marveled at the wisdom of the man, how in so little time he was so filled with faith, and how he who had 960 ever been so ignorant was imbued with knowledge. And she thanked God, the King of glory, that through the Son of God the joy of both these things was come unto her—on the one hand at the sight 965 of the tree of victory, and on the other at this faith which she so clearly understood as a glorious gift in the breast of this man.

### 14. *The embassy to Constantine.*

Then was the fair news of the morning manifest among the nation, spread far throughout the people, to the vexation of many who would keep secret the 970 law of the Lord. It was heralded through the cities, as far as the sea embosoms the land, through every town, that the rood of Christ, buried of yore in the earth, had been found, best emblem of victory of them that were raised aloft before or since, holy 975 beneath the heavens. Unto the Jews, men of misfortune, it was a most bitter grief and most hated of fates that they could change neither it nor the joy of the Christians in the world. Then the queen 980 bade messengers from her noble company make them ready with haste, for they were to seek the lord of the Romans over the deep sea, and declare unto that warrior in person the best of glad tidings—how the tree of victory, that had been hidden a long 985 time before to grieve the holy ones, the Christian people, had been discovered and found in the earth through the grace of the Creator.

Then was the soul of the king rejoiced at that 990 fair news, and his heart filled with gladness. And in the city there was no want of richly-clad questioners concerning what was come from afar. The greatest comfort in the world, a joyful soul, was 995 come unto him at those glad tidings which the messengers, leaders of the army, brought to him over the eastern ways, how the warriors with the glorious queen had made a prosperous voyage over the sea into the land of the Greeks. The emperor bade them prepare themselves again for the journey with 1000 the greatest haste. The warriors made no delay when once they heard the answer, the message of the prince. He bade them, heroes hardy of soul, give greeting to Elene, renowned in war, if they should survive the sea and make a prosperous 1005 voyage unto the holy city. And Constantine furthermore bade the messengers charge her to build a church there on the mountain-slope for the weal of them both, a temple of the Lord on Calvary for 1010 the joy of Christ and the solace of men, there where the holy rood was found, fairest of all trees the dwellers on earth have ever known. 1015



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### 15. *The building of the temple.*

And thus she did when her friends brought many a kind greeting over the fastness of waters from the west. Then the queen bade seek far and near those 1020 skilled in the arts, the best of those who could work most wondrously in the laying of stone upon stone, that they might raise a temple of God upon that place. As the Lord of spirits counseled her from the heavens, she bade deck out the rood with gold and with gems, adorn it most artfully with precious 1025 stones; then to seal it with locks in a casket of silver. There hath the rood of life, best tree of victory, dwelt since then, indestructible in its nobleness. There shall it be ever ready, a solace for 1030 the ill of any disease, affliction, or sorrow. Then straightway shall men find aid and divine grace through that holy form.

### 16. *The conversion of Judas.*

Then after a little space Judas received the bath of baptism, and, cleansed [of his sins], was true to 1035 Christ, dear to the Lord of life. His faith was steadfast in his heart when the Spirit of comfort had taken up his dwelling in the breast of the man, and had urged him unto repentance. He chose the better course, the gladness of glory, and forsook the 1040 worse, the way of the idolater, and cast aside his heresy, the law of unrighteousness. God, the eternal King, Creator, and Wielder of power, was gracious unto him.

Then he was baptized who many times had scorned the light; ...[1] his heart was inspired 1045 unto the better life; he was turned unto glory. Verily fate decreed that he should become thus filled with faith, thus dear unto God and beloved of Christ in the kingdom of the world. This was made manifest 1050 when Elene bade bring unto the holy city Eusebius, the bishop of Rome, exceeding wise amid the councils of men, to aid in her deliberation, and to ordain Judas into the priesthood at Jerusalem 1055 as bishop for the people in the cities, prudently chosen through the grace of the Spirit for the temple of God. And in later times upon a new occasion she wisely named him Cyriacus. Henceforth 1060 the name of the man was changed for the better throughout the cities—'The law of the Lord'.

[Footnote 1: A manuscript lacuna.]

### 17. *The finding of the nails.*

Then again was the mind of Elene concerned about that fair mystery with regard to the nails 1065 which pierced the feet and hands of the Saviour, wherewith the King of the heavens, the mighty Prince, was bound upon the cross. The queen of the Christians began to ask concerning them. She bade Cyriacus that he, through the might of the 1070 Holy Spirit, fulfil her desire still further regarding the wondrous mystery, and that he



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unlock the secret by his holy grace. And she spake this word unto the bishop—boldly she addressed him:—'O bulwark of heroes, thou didst rightly show forth unto me 1075 that noble tree, the cross of the heavenly King, whereon by heathen hands was crucified God's own Son, the Helper of souls, the Saviour of men. Now further the longing for knowledge doth make me mindful of the nails. I would thou shouldst find 1080 those that are hidden, buried deep in the earth and shrouded in darkness. Ever doth my heart mourn, sorrow in sadness, and rest not, until the Father Almighty, the Lord of hosts and Saviour of men, the Holy One from on high, shall fulfill unto me my 1085 desire through the finding of these nails. Now with all reverence do thou forthwith, O best of mediators, send up thy petition unto that glorious Being, unto the King of majesty. Do thou pray 1090 the Glory of men that He, Almighty King, show forth unto thee the treasure beneath the earth that still lieth hidden, secret and concealed from men.' Then the holy man, inspired in heart, the bishop of the people, made steadfast his soul, and joyfully 1095 went forth with a throng of men singing praises unto God. Zealously Cyriacus bowed his head upon Calvary, nor made he any secret of his thoughts, but through the might of the Holy Spirit he called upon 1100 God with all reverence, and prayed the Lord of angels to reveal the unknown mystery in his new trouble, where in that field he might earnestly seek out the nails.

Then the Father, the Spirit of comfort, there as 1105 they were watching, caused a sign in the form of fire to rise up where the precious nails were cunningly hid in the earth by the devices of men.

Forthwith there came a leaping flame brighter than 1110 the sun. The people beheld a miracle shown forth unto their queen, where, like unto the stars of heaven or gems set in gold, out of the darkness glittered the nails brightly, gleaming from their burial-place 1115 beneath the surface of the earth. The people rejoiced, the throng were glad of heart; and they said with one accord that the miracle was of God, although hitherto they had been long in heresy and turned from Christ, through the death-wielding power of the devil. Thus they spake:—'Now do 1120 we ourselves behold the sign of victory, the true miracle of God, whom we formerly withstood with falsehood. Now is the course of the mystery come into light and revealed. Wherefore may the God of the heavenly kingdom have glory in the highest.' 1125



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Then was the bishop of the people rejoiced anew, he who had turned with repentance through the Son of God. Awe-struck he took the nails, and bore them unto the revered queen. Cyriacus had 1130 fulfilled all the woman's wish, even as his noble mistress bade him. Then was there the sound of lamentation, and hot tears welling over their faces—yet not at all for sorrow; her tears fell over the nails. Wondrously was the desire of the queen fulfilled. 1135 With joyous faith she laid them upon her knees, and, rejoicing in her happiness, revered the gift that was brought unto her as a solace for her sadness. She gave thanks unto God, the Lord of victories, that now she knew the truth which had oft 1140 been foretold long before from the beginning of the world as a comfort for the nations. She was filled with the grace of wisdom, and the Holy Spirit of 1145 heaven held the dwelling of her body, and guarded her both heart and soul. Thus the almighty, victorious Son of God had care for her thereafter.

### 18. ELENE'S *disposal of the nails.*

Then she began zealously through the mysteries of the Holy Spirit to search out the truth and the way to glory. Verily the Lord of hosts, King 1150 Almighty, gave aid that the queen might win her wish in the world. From the beginning all the prophecy was chanted in times before by the seers of old, and thus it happened in every respect. 1155 Through the grace of the Holy Spirit the queen zealously began to search out with great care wherefor she might best and most fitly for the solace of men use the nails, and what was the will of the 1160 Lord. Then bade she bring at once unto a secret council an exceeding wise man, who, learned in mind, by his wise power knew fully the rede of sages; and she began to inquire of him what he 1165 deemed best to be done about this. And obediently she chose his advice.

Earnestly he answered her:—'It is fitting that thou hold in thy heart the word of the Lord, His holy mystery, O best of queens, and zealously 1170 fulfil the bidding of the king, now that God, Redeemer of men, hath given unto thee good speed for thy soul, and the skill of wisdom. Do thou bid that these nails be set upon the bridle, as a bit 1175 for the horse of the most noble among castle-ruling kings. It shall become famed to many throughout the world when he shall overcome each of his enemies thereby in the contest, as with brave hearts and brandished swords they seek the battle on either 1180 side, and strive for the mastery there, foe against foe. He shall have good speed in war, victory in battle, and peace everywhere, the calm following the strife, who holds the bridle before him upon a white 1185 steed when his trusty heroes, far-famed in the fight, bear shield and spear into the press of weapons. For any



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man shall this be a guard invincible against stress in war. Concerning it sang the prophet, wise in thought, his mind saw deeply 1190 the understanding of wisdom. These words he spake:—"It shall be known that the horse of a king is to be in the midst of brave heroes, decked with bit and bridle-rings. It shall be called a holy sign 1195 of God, and he shall be hardy and honored in war who guides the horse."

### 19. *Conclusion.*

Then straightway in the presence of the nobles Elene accomplished all. She bade deck the bridle of the prince, gift-giver of men, and unto her own son she sent the glorious present over the stream 1200 of the ocean as an offering. Then she bade assemble together in the town, in that holy city, those whom she knew as the best among the Jews, that race of heroes. And the queen began to teach the 1205 throng of her dear subjects that they should steadfastly hold to the love of the Lord, and maintain peace one with another, and that they should hearken 1210 unto the lore of the teacher, and the customs of the Christians, which Cyriacus, wise in the knowledge of books, should declare unto them. The bishopric was well established. Often there came to him from afar the lame, the halt, the weak, the 1215 maimed, the bleeding, the leprous, the blind, the poor, the sad in heart, and ever found they health and relief there at the hands of their bishop during all of their life. And again Elene gave unto him gifts of great worth when she was ready for the journey back to her own land, and when she bade 1220 all those who glorified God in that kingdom, both men and women, to honor in their thought with heart and strength that great day on which the holy rood was found, most wondrous tree of them that 1225 have grown up from the earth, laden with leaves. And, save for six nights ere the coming of summer on the kalends of May, the spring was gone. May hell's portal be closed and heaven's opened, may the 1230 eternal kingdom of the angels be revealed with joy unceasing, and may their part be assigned with Mary, to each man who keepeth in memory the most sacred festival of the cross beneath the heavens, 1235 which the almighty King over all protected with his arm! Finit.

### 20. *Epilogue.*

Old and ready for death by reason of this failing house, I thus have woven a web of words and wondrously have gathered it up; time and again have I pondered and sifted my thought in the prison of the night. I knew not fully the truth concerning 1240 the cross[1] until wisdom revealed a broader knowledge through its marvelous power o'er the thought of my heart. I was stained with deeds of evil, fettered in sins, torn by doubts, girt round with 1245 bitter needs, until the King of might wondrously granted learning unto me as a comfort for my old age;



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until he gave unto me his spotless grace, and imbued my heart with it, revealed it as glorious, in time broadened it, set free my body, unlocked my 1250 heart, and loosed the power of song, which joyfully and gladly I have used in the world. Not one time alone, but often had I thought upon the tree of glory, before I had the miracle revealed regarding the glorious tree, as in the course of events I found 1255 related in books and in writings concerning the sign of victory. Ever until that time was the man buffeted in the surge of sorrow, was he a weakly flaring torch (C)[2], although he had received treasures and appled gold in the mead-hall; wroth in heart 1260 (Y), he mourned; a companion to need (N), he suffered crushing grief and anxious care, although before him his horse (E) measured the miles and proudly ran, decked with gold. Hope (W) is waned, and joy through the course of years; youth 1265 is fled, and the pride of old. Once (U) was the splendor of youth(?); now after that allotted time are the days departed, are the pleasures of life dwindled away, as water (L) glideth, or the rushing floods. Wealth (F) is but a loan to each beneath 1270 the heavens; the beauties of the field vanish away beneath the clouds, most like unto the wind when it riseth loud before men, roameth amid the clouds, courseth along in wrath, and then on a sudden 1275 becometh still, close shut in its narrow prison, crushed by force.

[Footnote 1: Supplying  $r[=o]de$ .]

[Footnote 2: These letters are the runes which spell out Cynewulf's name.]

Thus shall all this world pass away, and in like manner devouring flame shall seize upon whoever was born into it, at that time when the Lord himself 'with a host of angels shall come 1280 unto judgment. There shall each man hear the doom on all his deeds from the mouth of the judge, and likewise shall pay the penalty for all the foolish words ever spoken by him, and all his overbold 1285 thoughts. Then shall the people divide into three parts for the embrace of the flame, every man who hath ever lived throughout the broad earth. Those who have clung fast to the truth shall be highest in the flame, the throng of the blessed, the 1290 host of them that yearn for glory, the multitude of the righteous, and thus may they endure and suffer more lightly without distress. He tempers for them all the glare of the flame as shall be most easy for them and most mild. The sinful men, those 1295 stained with evil, heroes sad of heart, shall be in the middle place, shrouded with smoke amid the hot surge of fire. The third part, accursed sinful foes, false haters of men, the host of the wicked, shall be in the depth of the surge, bound fast in flame by 1300 reason of their former deeds, in the gripe of the glowing coals. Nor shall they come thereafter from the place of punishment

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to the memory of God, King of glory, but they shall be cast forth, His wrath-stirring foes, from that fierce flame into the 1305 depths of hell. Unlike this shall it be with the other two parts: they may look upon the Prince of angels, the God of victories. They shall be refined and freed from their sins, like pure gold that is all 1310 cleansed from every alloy, refined and melted in the surge of the furnace's fire. Thus shall each of those men be separated and purified from all their guilt, their deep transgressions, by the fire of the judgment. And thereafter they may enjoy peace and 1315 eternal well-being. The Lord of angels shall be merciful and gracious unto them, inasmuch as they abhorred each sin, each work of guile, and called upon the Son of the Creator in their prayers. Wherefore now their forms shall shine like unto the angels, and they shall enjoy the heritage of the King 1320 of glory for ever and ever. Amen.