

THE  
OLD ENGLISH  
*EXODUS*

TEXT, TRANSLATION, AND  
COMMENTARY

BY

J. R. R. TOLKIEN



EDITED BY

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THIS work is based on full notes for a series of lectures delivered to a specialist class in the 1930s and 1940s; the notes were retouched in the following decade. It was never intended as an edition, although the lecturer scrupulously drew up an edited text as the basis of his commentary. It is an interpretation of the poem, designed to reconstruct the original (as far as that is possible), and to place it in the context of Old English poetry.

I have abbreviated the commentary systematically. Tolkien himself left the work unfinished, with such variants as may be selected at need. It should be remembered that these lectures were never prepared for formal delivery; they represent rather the discourse of a teacher among a small group of pupils, expressing his understanding of the text in the circumstances of that time. It is impossible to re-create this situation; the attempt could only be tedious and confusing. So diffuse comments and some basic instruction have been reduced: such as observations on phonology and morphology, which are now succinctly presented in standard works (as, for instance, Campbell's *Old English Grammar*). Also, I have excluded palaeographical description that is by now irrelevant or mistaken. What remains is essential to the argument, although it may seem old-fashioned. Tolkien's strictures on the editorial practices of Blackburn and Sedgefield are likewise unnecessary, since their only purpose was to remove obstacles that do not now exist. Tolkien would have used the editions of E. B. Irving (1953; corrections and additions 1972, 1974) and P. J. Lucas (1977) if they had been available. The second of these acknowledges the influence of Tolkien's lectures, and adopts two of his emendations.

I have retained Tolkien's transposition of lines 93-107, 108-24 (following Gollancz, 1927), although there is no way of explaining such a displacement in the present state of our knowledge. This rearrangement is an essential part of his understanding of the poem; and the clarification it offers has

not been equalled by editors who keep strictly to the conventions of modern scholarship.

It should be clear that I have not aimed to preserve material of purely historic interest. Tolkien deserves better than this, for he showed his pupils that the prime purpose of edition and commentary is to free the text from obscurity. If I had not regarded his work as valid here and now, I should not have undertaken the task of editing it. Any necessary observations of my own are enclosed in square brackets. In six instances I have added a brief note to clarify or supplement a point. The bibliography consists principally of those authorities on which Tolkien based his text; the editions of Irving and Lucas are included because I have occasion to refer to them once or twice.

I am deeply grateful to the Trustees of the Tolkien Estate for the opportunity they have given me to edit this material, and for the confidence they have shown in my judgement. The staff of Oxford University Press have guided me through the many difficulties that arose, and shown unfailing helpfulness. Above all, I salute the memory of an inspiring teacher.

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## TEXT

- Hwæt we feor and neah gefrigen habbað  
ofer middangeard Moyses domas  
wrætlico wordriht wera cneorissum—  
in uprodor eadigra gehwam  
5 æfter bealuside bote lifes,  
lifigendra gehwam langsumne ræd—  
hæledum secgan: gehyre se ðe wille!  
þone on westenne weroda Drihten,  
soðfæst Cyning, mid his sylfes miht  
10 gewyrðode, and him wundra fela  
ece Alwalda in æht forgeaf.  
He wæs leof Gode leoda aldor,  
horsc and hreðergleaw herges wisa,  
from folctoga. Faraones cyn,  
15 Godes andsacan, gyrdwite band.  
Ðær him gesealde sigora Waldend  
modgum magoræswan his maga feorh,  
onwist eðles Abrahames sunum.  
Heah wæs þæt handlean, and him hold Frêa  
20 gesealde wæpna geweald wið wraðra gryre;  
ofercom mid þy campe cneomaga fela,  
feonda folcrist. Ða wæs forma sið  
þæt hine weroda God wordum nægde,  
þær he him gesægde soðwundra fela,  
25 hu þas woruld worhte witig Drihten,  
eorðan ymbhwyrft and uprodor  
gesette sigerice, and his sylfes naman,  
ðone ylða bearn ær ne cuðon,  
frod fædera cyn, þeah hie fela wiston.

Readings suggested independently by Tolkien are denoted *T*.

1 *P. 143 begins* HWÆT WE FEOR 7 NEAH *with ornamental H* hab-  
bað] habað *MS* 3 wrætlico] wræclico *MS* 8 weroda] werode *MS*  
14 from *Kluge*] from *MS* 15 andascan] -saca *MS* 17 magor-  
æswan] -wum *MS* 22 feonda *written twice MS* 28 ylða]  
-o *MS*

- 30 Hæfde he þa geswiðed soðum cræftum  
 and gewurðodne werodes aldor,  
 Faraones feond, on forðwegas,  
 þa wæs ungeara ealdum witum  
 deaðe gedrecced drihtfolca mæst—  
 35 hordwearda hryre heaf wæs geniwad,  
 swæfon seledreamas since berofene;  
 hæfde mansceaða æt middere niht  
 frecne gefylled frumbearna gehwylc,  
 abrocene burhweardas. Bana wide scrað,  
 40 lað leodhata. Land drysmode  
 deadra hræwum. Dugoð forð gewat—  
 wop wæs wide, worulddreama lyt;  
 wæron hleahtorsmiðum handa belocene;  
 alyfed laðsið leode gretan—  
 45 folc ferende. Feond wæs bereafod.  
 Hergas onheldon—heof þider becom—  
 druron deofolgyld. Dæg wæs mære  
 ofer middangeard þa seo mengeo for;  
 swa þæs facen dreah fela missera  
 50 ealdwerigra Egypta folc,  
 þæs þe hie wideferð wyrnan þohton  
 Moyses magum, gif hie Metod lete,  
 on langne lust leofes siðes.  
 Fyrd wæs gefysed; from se ðe lædde,  
 55 modig magoræswa, mægburh heora.  
 Oferfor he mid þy folce fæstenna worn,  
 land and leodweard laðra manna,  
 enge anpaðas, uncuð gelad,  
 oð þæt hie on guðmyrce gearwe bæron.  
 60 Wæron land heora lyfthelme bepeaht,  
 mearchofu morheald. Moyses ofer þa

30 *P.* 144 *begins* 33 ungeara] ingere *MS* 34 gedrecced]  
 gedrenced *MS*; renced in larger later hand over erasure 37 mansceaða]  
 -an *MS* 38 gehwylc *T.*] fela *MS* 40 drysmode *Sedge-*  
*field*] dryrmyde *MS* 45 *P.* 145 *begins* feond *Thorpe*]  
 freond *MS* 46 onheldon *T.*] on helle *MS* heof *T.*] heofon *MS*  
 49 facen *T.*] fæsten *MS* 50 ealdwerigra *Sievers*<sup>2</sup>] -werige *MS*  
 55 magoræswa *Thorpe*] mago ræwa *MS* 56 fæstenna *Sievers*<sup>2</sup>]  
 -ena *MS*

- felamodigra fyrde gelædde.  
 Heht þa ymb twa niht tīrfæste hæleð,  
 siððan hie feondum oðfaren hæfdon,  
 65 ymbwicigean werodes bearhtme  
 mid ælfære Æthanes byrig,  
 mægnes mæste, mearclandum on.  
 Nearwe geneðdon on norðwegas;  
 wiston him be suðan Sigelwarena land,  
 70 Forbærned beorh-hleoðu, brune leode  
 hatum heofoncolum. Þær halig God  
 wið færbryne folc gescylde,  
 bælc oferbrædde byrnende heofon,  
 halgan nette hatwendne lyft.  
 75 Hæfde wederwolcen widum fæðmum  
 eorðan and uprodor æfre gedæled,  
 lædde leodwerod; ligfyr adranc  
 hate heofontorht. Hæleð wafedon  
 drihta gedrymost. Dægsceldes hleo  
 80 wand ofer wolcnum; hæfde witig God  
 sunnan siðfæt segle ofertolden,  
 swa þa mæstrapas men ne cuðon,  
 ne ða seglrode geseon meahton  
 eorðbuende ealle cræfte,  
 85 hu afæstnod wæs feldhusa mæst.  
 Siððan He mid wuldre geweorðode  
 þeodenholde, þa wæs þridde wic  
 folce to frofre. Fyrd eall geseah  
 hu þær hlifedon halige seglas,  
 90 lyftwundor leoht; leode ongeton,  
 dugod Israhela, þæt þær Drihten cwom,  
 92 weroda Wældend, wicsteal metan.

62 felamodigra T.] fela meoringa MS  
 and space for large init. cap. tīrfæste Bouterwek<sup>2</sup>] -ne MS  
 ære] ælf ere MS Æthanes] h *superscript* MS  
 don Dietrich] genyddon MS  
 MS 69 Sigelwarena T.] sigelwara  
 70 beorhhleoðu Thorpe] burh- MS; cf. 132, 222  
 T.] efne MS 76 æfre  
 Thorpe] swegle MS 79 dægsceldes] -scealdes MS  
 81 segle  
 87 þridde] -a MS 92 wældend T.]  
 drihten MS

- 108 Æfenna gehwam oðer wundor  
 syllic æfter sunnan setlrade bebead  
 110 ofer leodwerum lige scinan,  
 byrnende beam. Blace stodon  
 ofer sceotendum scire leoman.  
 Scinon scyldhreoðan. Sceado swiðredon.  
 Neowle nihtscuwan neah ne mihton  
 115 heolstor ahydan. Heofoncandel barn.  
 Niwe nihtweard nyde sceolde  
 wician ofer weredum, þy læs him westengryre,  
 har hæðstapa, holmegum wederum  
 on færclamme ferhð getwæfde.  
 120 Hæfde foregenga fyrene loccas,  
 blace beamas; bælegsān hweop  
 in þam hereþreate hatan lige  
 þæt he on westenne werod forbærnde,  
 124 nymðe hie modhwate Moyses hyrde.  
 93 Him beforan foran fyr and wolcen  
 in beorhtrodor, beamas twegen,  
 95 þara æghwæðer efngedælde  
 heahþegnunga haliges gastes,  
 deormodra sið, dagum and nihtum.  
 Ða ic on morgen gefrægn modes rofan  
 hebban herebyman hludan stefnum,  
 100 wuldres woman. Werod eall aras,  
 modigra mægen, swa him Moyses bebead,  
 mære magoræswa, Metodes folce.  
 Fus fyrdgetrum forð gesawon  
 lifes latþeow lyftweg metan.  
 105 Segl siðe weold; sæmen æfter  
 foron flodwege. Folc wæs on salum,  
 107 hlud herges cyrm. Heofonbeacen astah;  
 125 scean scir werod, scyldas lixton.

108 æfenna] -ena MS      109 bebead T.] beheold MS      113 sceado  
 Thorpe] sceado MS      118 har hæðstapa Rieger] har hæð MS      119 on  
 færclamme; on ferclamme Kluge] ofer clamme MS      getwæfde  
 Thorpe] getwæf MS      121 bælegsān; bel- Blackburn] bell/egsan MS  
 96 P. 147 begins      105 segl Bouterwek<sup>2</sup>] swegl MS      107 P. 148  
 begins with LUD and space for large init. cap., h in margin      herges] heriges  
 MS, with i expuncted

- Gesawon randwigan rihte stræte,  
 segn ofer sweotum, oð þæt sæfæsten  
 landes æt ende leodmægne forstod,  
 fus on forðweg. Fyrdwic aras.
- 130 wyrpton hie werige—wiste genægdon  
 modige meteþegnas—hyra mægen betton;  
 bræddon æfter beorgum, siððan byme sang,  
 flotan feldhusum. Ða wæs feorðe wic,  
 randwigena ræst, be þan Readan Sæ.
- 135 Ðær on fyrd hyra færsPELL becwom,  
 oht inlende. Egsan stodan,  
 wælgryre weroda. Wræcmon gebad  
 laðne lastweard, se ðe him lange ær  
 edelleasum onnied gescaf,
- 140 wean witum fæst—wære ne gymdon,  
 ðeah þe se yldra cyning ær ge<sealde>...

\* \* \*

- Ða wearð yrfeweard ingefolces  
 manna æfter maðmum, þæt he swa miceles geðah.  
 Ealles þæs forgeton. Siððan grame wurdon
- 145 Egypta cyn ymb andwige,  
 ða heo heora mægwinum morðor fremedon;  
 wroht berenodon, wære fræton,  
 wæron heaðowylmas heortan getenge,  
 mihtmod wera. Manum treowum
- 150 woldon hie þæt feorhlean facne gylðan,  
 þætte hie þæt dægweorc dreore gebohte  
 Moyses leode, þær him mihtig God  
 on ðam spildside spede forgefe.  
 Ða him eorla mod ortrywe wearð,
- 155 siððan hie gesawon of suðwegum  
 fyrd Faraonis forð on gangan,  
 157 eorforholt wegan, eored lixan,

127 sweotum] -on MS      128 leodmægne *Thorpe*] leo/mægne MS  
 131 betton *Mürkens*] beton MS      141 gesealde *Blackburn (note)*] ge  
 MS, at end of writing space      142 P. 149 begins with A and space for  
 large init. cap. ingefolces T.] -folca MS      145 andwige; antwige  
*Blackburn (note)*] an twig. ða MS      146 heo heora T.] he heo his MS  
 151 hie *Grein*] he MS      157 eorforholt *Sedgefield*] ofer holt MS

- 160 þufas þunian, þeodmearce tredan.  
 158 Garas trymedon. Guð hwearfode.  
 159 Blicon bordhreoðan; byman sungon.  
 161 On hwæl . . .  
 Hreopon herefugolas, hildegrædig  
 deawigfeðera, ofer drihtneum,  
 wonn wælceasega; wulfas sungon  
 165 atol æfenleod ætes on wenan,  
 carleasan deor cwyldrof beodan  
 on laðra last leodmægnes fyll.  
 Hreopon mearcweardas middum nihtum;  
 fleah fæge gæst—folc wæs gehnæged!  
 170 Hwilum of þam werode wlance þegnas  
 mæton milpaðas meara bogum.  
 Him þær sigecyning wið þone segn foran  
 manna þengel mearcpreate rad,  
 guðweard gumena grimhelm gespeon  
 175 cyning cinberge—cumbol lixton—  
 wiges on wenum, wæhlhencan sceoc;  
 het his hereciste healdan georne  
 fæst fyrdgetrum. Freond on segon  
 laðum eagan landmanna cyme.  
 180 Ymb hine <wæpn> wægon wigend unforhte,  
 hare heoruwulfas hilde gretton  
 þurstige þræcwiges, þeodenholde.  
 Hæfde him alesene leoda dugeðe  
 tireadigra twa þusendo—  
 185 þæt wæron cyningas and cneowmagas  
 on þæt ealde riht ædelum deore.

160 rearranged first thus Grein (note) 161 no gap in MS  
 162 hreopon *Bouterwek*] hwreopon MS, 2nd o above a expuncted hilde-  
 grædig T.] -ige MS 163 deawigfeðera T.] -feðere MS 164 P. 151  
 begins; P. 150 blank 167 fyll *Bouterwek*²] ful MS 168 middum]  
 2nd d *suprascript* MS 169 gæst T.] gast MS gehnæged *Bouter-*  
*wek*²] gehæged MS 172 sigecyning Grein] segncyning MS  
 176 wæhlhencan *Bouterwek*] hwæl hlencan MS 178 fyrdgetrum  
 given as MS until Wülker, who prints it as emend.] syrd getrum MS on  
 segon T.; onsegon *Dietrich*] onsigon MS 180 wæpn; *BTS* inserts  
 wæpen before wægon] lacking in MS 181 heoruwulfas *Kluge*] heora  
 wulfas MS 183 alesene *Kluge*] alesen MS 186 ealde *Kluge*]  
 eade MS

- Forðon anra gehwile ut alædde  
 wæpnedcynnes wigan æghwilecne  
 þara þe he on þam fyrste findan mihte;  
 190 wæron ingemen ealle ætgædere  
 cyninges on cordre. Cuð oft gebead  
 horn on heape to hwæs hægstealdmen,  
 guðþreat gumena, gearwe bæron.  
 Swa þær eorþ werod ec on læddon,  
 195 læð æfter lædum, leodmægnes worn;  
 þusendmælum þider wæron fuse.  
 Hæfdon hie gemynted mægenheapum  
 to þam ærdæge Israhela cynn  
 billum abreotan on hyra broðorgyld.  
 200 For þon wæs in wicum wop up ahafen,  
 atol æfenleoð—egesan stodon;  
 weredon wælnet; þa se woma cwom,  
 flugon frecne spell; feond wæs anmod,  
 werud wæs wigblac—oð þæt wlance forsceaf  
 205 mihtig engel se ða menigeo beheold,  
 þæt þær gelaðe mid him leng ne mihton  
 geseon tosomne; sið wæs gedæled.  
 Hæfde nydfara nihtlangne fyrst,  
 þeah þe him on healfa gehwam hettend seomodon,  
 210 mægen oððe merestream. Nahton maran hwyrft,  
 wæron orwenan edelrihtes;  
 sæton æfter beorgum in blacum reafum  
 wean on wenum. Wæccende bad  
 eall seo sibgedriht somod ætgædere  
 215 maran mægenes, oð Moyses bebead  
 eorlas on uhttid ærnum bemum  
 folc somnigean, frecan arisan,  
 habban heora hlencan, hycgan on ellen,  
 beran beorht searo, beacnum cigean  
 220 sweot sande near. Snelle gemundon  
 weardas wigleoð, werod wæs gefysed.  
 Brudon ofer beorgum (byman gehyrdon)

191 cyninges *Bouterwek*<sup>2</sup>] -as *MS* gebead *Grein*] gebad *MS* 194 ec  
 on *T.*] ecan *MS* 197 *P.* 153 *begins*; *P.* 152 *blank* mægenheapum;  
 þam m. *Cosijn*<sup>2</sup>] to þam m. *MS* 208 *P.* 154 *begins* 216 bemum  
*Thorpe*] benum *MS* 222 beorgum *Grein*] burgum *MS*

- flotan feldhusum; fyrd wæs on ofste.  
 Siððan hie getealdon wið þam teonhete  
 225 on þam forðherge feðan twelfe  
 mode rofra—mægen wæs onhrered;  
 wæs on anra gehwam æðelan cynnes  
 alesen under lindum leoda dugeðe  
 on folcgetæl fiftig cista;  
 230 hæfde cista gehwile cudes werodes  
 garberendra guðfremmendra  
 tyn hund geteled tireadigra.  
 Þæt wæs wiglic werod. Wace ne gretton  
 in þæt rincgetæl ræswan herges,  
 235 þa þe for geoguðe gyt ne mihton  
 under bordhreoðan breostnet wera  
 wið flane feond folmum werigean,  
 ne him bealubenne gebiden hæfdon  
 ofer linde lærig licwunde spor  
 240 gylpplegan gares; gamele ne moston  
 hare heaðorincas, hilde onþeon,  
 gif him modheapum mægen swiðrade—  
 ac hie be wæstmum wigend curon,  
 hu in leodscipe læstan wolde  
 245 mod mid aran, eac þan mægenes cræft,  
 〈gretan æt guðe〉 garbeames feng.  
 Þa wæs handrofra here ætgædere  
 fus on forðwegas. Fana uppe rad,  
 beacna beorhtost. Bidon ealle þa gen  
 250 hwonne siðboda sæstreamum neah  
 leoht ofer lindum lyftedoras bræc.  
 Ahleop þa for hæleðum hildecalla,  
 bald bodhata bord up ahof,  
 heht þa folctogan fyrde gestillan,  
 255 þenden modiges meðel monige gehyrdon.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 226 rofra <i>Bouterwek</i> <sup>2</sup> ] rofa <i>MS</i> | 233 wace <i>Grein</i> ] wac <i>MS</i>  |
| 239 spor <i>Grein</i> ] swor <i>MS</i>                   | 241 <i>P.</i> 155 <i>begins with</i> onþeon                                  |
| 243 wigend; wigende <i>Mürkens</i> ] wig <i>MS</i>       | 246 gretan æt guðe <i>suppl.</i>   |
| <i>T.</i> before garbeames feng] <i>no gap in MS</i>     | 248 fus on forðwegas   |
| <i>Kluge</i> ] fus forðwegas <i>MS</i>                   | uppe rad <i>T.</i> ; up gerad <i>Sievers</i> <sup>2</sup> ] up rad <i>MS</i> |
| 249 beacna <i>Cosijn</i> <sup>2</sup> ] beama <i>MS</i>  | bidon <i>Grein</i> ] buton <i>MS</i>   |
| <i>begins with</i> AHleop, <i>large cap. A</i>           | 252 <i>P.</i> 156  |
| hata <i>MS</i>   | 253 bodhata <i>Bouterwek</i> <sup>2</sup> ] beo/                             |

- Wolde reordigean rices hyrde  
 ofer hereciste halgan stefne.  
 Werodes wisa wurðmyndum spræc:  
 'Ne beoð ge þy forhtran þeah þe Faraon brohte  
 260 sweordwigendra side hergas,  
 eorla unrim! Him eallum wile  
 mihtig Drihten þurh mine hand  
 to dæge þissum dædlean gyfan,  
 þæt hie lifigende leng ne moton  
 265 ægnian mid yrmðum Israhela cyn.  
 Ne willað eow ondrædan deade feðan,  
 fæge ferhðlocan—fyrst is æt ende  
 lænes lifes. Eow is lar Godes  
 abroden of breostum. Ic con beteran ræd:  
 270 þæt ge gewurðien wuldres aldor,  
 and eow Liffreân lissa bidden,  
 sigora gesynto, þær ge siðien.  
 Þis is se ecea Abrahames God,  
 frumsceafta frea, se ðas fyrd wereð  
 275 modig and mægenrof mid miclan hand.'  
 Hof ða for hergum hlude stefne  
 lifigendra leod, þa he to leofum spræc:  
 'Hwæt! ge nu eagum on lociað,  
 folca leofost, færwundra sum,  
 280 nu ic sylfa sloh and þeos swiðre hand  
 grene tane garsecges deop.  
 Yð up færeð, ofstum wyrceð  
 wæter wealfæsten! wegas syndon dryge,  
 haswe herestræta, holm gerymed,  
 285 ealde staðolas þa ic ær ne gefrægn  
 ofer middangeard men geferan,  
 fage feldas þa forð heonon  
 in ecnesse yðe þeahton,  
 sælde sægrundas. Sund wind fornam,

269 ic con *Cosijn*] ic on *MS*      275 mid miclan *T.*] mid þære m. *MS*  
 276 *P.* 157 begins      277 leod *Bouterwek*<sup>2</sup>] þeod *MS*      leofum *T.*] leodum *MS*  
 278 on lociað *Bright*<sup>2</sup>] to on lociað *MS*      280 nu *T.*] hu *MS*  
 281 tane *Bouterwek*<sup>2</sup>] tacne *MS*      283 wæter wealfæsten *Thorpe*] w. 7 w. *MS*      288 ecnesse *Sedgefield*; ecnysse *Kluge*] ece *MS*  
 289 sund wind *Cosijn*<sup>2</sup>] suðwind *MS*

- 290 bæðweges blæst; brim wæs areafod,  
 sand sæcir span. Ic wat soð gere  
 þæt eow mihtig God miltse gecyðde,  
 eorlas ærglade! Ofest is selost  
 þæt ge of feonda fæðme weorðen,  
 295 nu se agendfrea up arærde  
 reade streamas in randgebeorh.  
 Syndon þa foreweallas fægre gesteppe,  
 wrætlicu wægfaru, oð wolcna hrof.  
 Æfter þam wordum werod eall aras,  
 300 modigra mægen; mere stille bad.  
 Hofon herecyste hwite linde,  
 segnas on sande. Sæweall astah,  
 uplang gestod wið Israhelum  
 andægne fyrst. Wæs se eorla gedriht  
 305 anes modes . . .  
 fæstum fæðmum freoðowære heold.  
 Nalles hie gehyrwdon haliges lare,  
 siððan leofes leoþ læste near  
 308+ <læstan ongunnon leoda duguðe>,  
 sweg swiðrode and sanges bland.  
 310 Þa þæt feorðe cyn fyrrest eode,  
 wod on wægstream wigan on heape  
 ofer grenne grund; Iudisc feða  
 an onette uncuð gelad  
 for his mægwinum. Swa him mihtig God  
 315 þæs dægweorces deop lean forgeald;  
 siððan him gesælde sigorworca hreð,  
 þæt he ealdordom agan sceolde  
 ofer cynericu, cneowmaga blæd.  
 Hæfdon him to segne þa hie on sund stigon  
 320 ofer bordhreodan beacen aræred  
 in þam garheape, gyldenne leon,  
 drihtfolca mæst, deora cenost.  
 Be þam herewisan hynðo ne woldon

290 brim *Thorpe*] bring *MS*; wæs *T.*] is *MS* 295 agendfrea  
*Bouterwek*<sup>2</sup>] agend *MS* 305 hie ece drihten *suppl. Grein*<sup>2</sup>] no gap in  
*MS* 308+ læstan ongunnon leoda duguðe *suppl. T.*; see *Com-*  
*mentary* 313 an onette *Sedgefield*] an on orette *MS* 319 *P.* 160  
*begins with large cap. H*; *P.* 159 blank 321 leon *Thorpe*] leor *MS*

- be him lifigendum lange þolian,  
 325 þonne hie to guðe garwudu rædon,  
 ðeoda ænigre. Þracu wæs on ore,  
 heard handplega, hægstæld modig,  
 wæpna wælslihtes, wigend unforht,  
 bilswaðu blodig, beadumægnes ræs,  
 330 grimhelma gegrind, þær Iudas for.  
 Æfter þære fyrde flota modgade,  
 Rubenes sunu; randas bæron  
 sæwicingas ofer sealtne mersc,  
 manna menio; micel angetrum  
 335 eode unforht. He his ealdordom  
 synnum aswefede, þæt he siðor for  
 on leofes last. Him on leodsceare  
 frumbearnas riht freobroðor oðþah,  
 ead and æðelo: he wæs gearu swa-þeah.  
 340 <For> þær him æfter folca þryðum  
 sunu Simeones—sweotum comon  
 þridde þeodmægen; þufas wundon  
 ofer garfare—guðcyste onþrang  
 deawigsceaftan. Dægwoma becwom  
 345 ofer garsecge, Godes beacna sum,  
 morgen meretorht. Mægen forð gewat.  
 Þa þær folcmægen for æfter oðrum  
 (isernhergum an wisode  
 mægenþrymmum mæst—þy he mære wearð)  
 350 folc æfter folcum on forðwegas  
 cynn æfter cynne; cuðe æghwile  
 mægburga riht, swa him Moises bead,  
 eorla æðelo. Him wæs an fæder:  
 leof leodfruma landriht gepah  
 355 frod on ferhðe, freomagum leof;  
 cende cneowsibbe cenra manna

326 þracu *Grein*] þraca *MS*327 modig *T.*] modige *MS*329 blodig *Sievers*<sup>2</sup>] blodige *MS*334 manna *Sievers*<sup>2</sup>] man *MS*340 for þær him æfter *T.*; for þær æfter him *Mürkens*] þær æfter him *MS*,  
*no gap* 344 deawigsceaftan *T.*] deawig sceaftum *MS* 345 garsecge*Graz*] gar secges *MS*346 meretorht *Kluge*] mære- *MS*350 *P.* 160ends on forðwegas folc æfter, *P.* 161 *begins* wolcnum folcum *Thorpe*]  
 wolcnum *MS*; *order emend. T.*

- heahfædera sum, halige þeode,  
 Israhela cyn onriht Godes,  
 swa þæt orþancum ealde reccað,  
 360 þa þe mægburge mæst gefrunon  
 frumcyn feora, fæderæðelo gehwæs.  
 Niwe flodas Noe oferlað,  
 þrymfæst þeoden, mid his þrim sunum,  
 þone deopestan drencefloda  
 365 þara ðe gewurde on woruldrice.  
 Hæfde him on hreðre halige treowa;  
 for þon he gelædde ofer lagustreamas  
 mæðmhorda mæst, mine gefræge:  
 on feorhgebeorh foldan hæfde  
 370 eallum eorðcynne ece lafe,  
 frumcneow gehwæs, fæder and moder  
 tuddorteondra geteled rime  
 mislecrá ma þonne men cunnon,  
 snottor sæleoda. Eac þon sæda gehwile  
 375 on bearm scipes beornas feredon  
 þara þe under heofonum hæleð bryttigað.  
 Swa þæt wise men wordum secgað  
 þæt from Noe nigoda wære  
 fæder Abrahames on folctale.  
 380 Þæt is se Abraham se him engla God  
 naman niwan asceop, eac þon neah and feor  
 halige heapas in gehyld bebead,  
 werþeoda geweald. He on wræce lifde.  
 Siððan he gelædde leofost feora  
 385 Haliges hæsum; heahlond stigon  
 sibgemagas on Seone beorh.  
 Wære hie þær fundon; wuldor gesawon,  
 halige heahtreowe, swa hæleð gefrunon.  
 Þær eft se snottra sunu Dawides,  
 390 wuldorfæst cyning, witgan larum  
 getimbrede tempel Dryhtne,

364 drencefloda *Graz*] dren floda *MS* 368 gefræge *Thorpe*] fr  
 fræge *MS* 371 gehwæs *Juniuſ and edd.*] gehæs *MS* 373 ma  
*ſuppl. Grein (note)* 384 gelædde] altered from gelifde in *MS*  
 386 *P. 162 begins* 391 drihtne *Graz*] gode *MS*

- alh haligne, eorðcýninga  
 se wisesta on woruldrice,  
 hehst and haligost, hæleðum gefrægost,  
 395 mæst and mærost þa þe manna bearn,  
 fira æfter foldan, folmum geworhte.  
 To þam meðelstede magan gelædde  
 Abraham Isaac—adfyr onbran,  
 fus ferhðbana; no þy fægra wæs—  
 400 wolde þone lastweard lige gesyllan,  
 in bælblyse beorna selost,  
 his swæsne sunu to sigetibre,  
 angan ofer eorðan yrfelafe,  
 feores frofre. Ða he swa forð gebad,  
 405 leodum to lare, langsumne hiht.  
 He þæt gecyðde, þa he þone cniht genam  
 fæste mid folmum, folccuð geteag  
 ealde lafe (ecg grymetode),  
 þæt he him lifdagas leofran ne wisse  
 410 þonne he hyrde heofoncýninge.  
 Se eorl up aræmde, wolde slea eaferan sinne  
 unweaxenne, ecgum reodan,  
 magan mid mece, gif hine Metod lete.  
 Ne wolde him beorht Fæder bearn æt niman,  
 415 halig tiber, ac mid handa befeng.  
 Þa him styran cwom stefn of heofonum,  
 wuldres hleoðor, word æfter spræc.  
 'Ne sleh þu, Abraham, þin agen bearn,  
 sunu mid sweorde! Soð is gecyðed,  
 420 nu þin cunnode Cýning alwihta,  
 þæt þu wið Waldende wære heolde,  
 fæste treowe, seo þe freoda sceal  
 in lifdagum lengest weorðan  
 awa to aldre unswiciendo.  
 425 Hu þearf mannes sunu maran treowe?  
 Ne behwyrfan mæg heofon and eorðe

392 alh *Bouterwek*] alhn *MS*      394 hehst] heahst *MS*      399 fus  
*Klaeber* (1904)] fyrst *MS*      405 lare *Bouterwek*] lafe *MS*      411 se  
 eorl up aræmde *order corr. T.*      412 ecgum *Thorpe*] eagam *MS*  
 414 æt niman *Sievers*²] ætniman *MS*      418 *P.* 163 *begins*      421 wal-  
 dende *T.*] waldend *MS*      422 freoda *T.*; freode *Graz*] freoðo *MS*

- his wuldres word, widdre and siddre  
 þonne befæðman mæge foldan sceatas,  
 eorðan ymbhwyrft and uprodor,  
 430 garsecges gin and þeos geomre lyft.  
 He að swereð, engla ðeoden,  
 wyrda Waldend ond wereda God  
 soðfæst sigora, þurh his sylfes lif,  
 þæt þines cynnes and cneowmaga  
 435 randwiggendra rim ne cunnon  
 ylde ofer eorðan ealle cræfte  
 to gesecgenne soðum wordum,  
 nymðe hwylc þæs snottor in sefan weorðe  
 þæt he ana mæge ealle geriman  
 440 stanas on eorðan, steorran on heofonum,  
 sæbeorga sand, sealte yða;  
 ac hie gesittað, be sām tweonum  
 oð Egipta ingeþeode,  
 land Cananea, leode þine,  
 445 freobearn fæder, folca selost . . .'

\* \* \*

- Folc wæs afæred; flodegsa becwom  
 gastas geomre. Geofon deaðe hweop.  
 Wæron beorhhliðu blode bestemed;  
 holm heolfre spaw, hream wæs on yðum,  
 450 wæter wæpna ful; wælmist astah.  
 Wæron Egipte eft oncyrde,  
 flugon forhtende; fær ongeton,  
 woldon herebleaðe hamas findan;  
 gylp wearð gnornra. Him ongen genap  
 455 atol yða gewearc, ne ðær ænig becwom  
 herges to hame, ac behindan beleac  
 wyrd mid wæge. Ðær ær wegas lagon  
 mere modgode; mægen wæs adrenced.

427 widdre and siddre T.] widdra 7 siddra MS; id over incomplete  
 erasure, r still visible beside d 428 sceatas Dietrich] sceattas MS  
 431 he Thorpe] ne MS 436 ylde Grein] yldo MS 441 sand  
 Thorpe] sund MS 443 egipta] egipte MS; ingeþeode Grein]  
 incaðeode MS 446 P. 166 begins; P. 164 is blank; a leaf is then cut  
 out; P. 165 is blank

- Streamas stodon. Storm up gewat  
 460 heah to heofonum, herewopa mæst;  
 laðe cyrmdon (lyft up geswearc)  
 fægum stefnum. Flod blod gewod.  
 Randbyrig wæron rofene; rodor swipode  
 meredeaða mæst; modige swulton  
 465 cyningas on cordre. Cyre swiðrode  
 wæges æt ende. Wigbord scinon.  
 Heah ofer hæledum holmweall astah,  
 merestream modig; mægen wæs on cwealme  
 fæste gefeterod, forðganges nep,  
 470 searwum asæled. Sand basenodon  
 witodre wyrde, hwonne wadema stream,  
 sincalda sæ, sealtum yðum,  
 æflastum gewuna ece staðulas  
 nacud nydboda neosan come,  
 475 fah fedegast, se ðe feondum geneop.  
 Wæs se hæwene lyft heolfre geblanden;  
 brim berstende blodegesan hweop  
 sæmanna siðe, oð þæt soð Metod  
 þurh Moyses hand mod gerymde.  
 480 Wide wæðde, wælfæðmum sweep;  
 flod famgode. Fæge crungon.  
 Lagu land gefeol. Lyft wæs onhrered.  
 Wicon weallfæsten; wægas burston,  
 multon meretorras. Þa se mihtiga sloh  
 485 mid halige hand, heofonrices Weard;  
 werge beornas, wlance peode  
 ne mihton forhabban helpendra wað,  
 merestreames mod; ac he manegum gesceod  
 gyllende gryre. Garsecg wedde:  
 490 up ateah, on sleap. Egesan stodon;  
 weollon wælbenna. Wiðertrod gefeol  
 heah of heofonum handweorc Godes

462 stefnum *Sedgefield*] stæfnum *MS*      466 wæges *Grein*] sæs *MS*  
 470 asæled *Junius and edd.*] æ- *MS*      basenodon *T.*; basnodon *Dietrich*]  
 barenodon *MS*      471 wyrde *Dietrich*] fyrde *MS*      478 siðe *T.*]  
 sið *MS*      479 *P. 167 begins with* hand      486 werge beornas  
*Holthausen (G-K, 782)]* werbearnas *MS*      487 wað *T.*] pað *MS*  
 491 Wiðertrod; wiþertrod *Sisam, MNL xxxii (1917), 48]* wit rod *MS*

- famigbosma; flod wearde sloh  
 unhleowan wæg alde mece,  
 495 þæt þy deaðdrepe drihte swæfon,  
 synfullra sweot. Sawlum lunnon  
 fæste befarene flodblac here,  
 siððan hie on bosum <genom> brim yrringa  
 modwæga mæst—mægen eall gedreas—,  
 500 deaþe gedrencte dugod Egypta,  
 Faraon mid his folcum. He onfond hraðe,  
 siððan <geofon> gestah, Godes andsaca,  
 þæt wæs mihtigra mereflodes Weard,  
 wolde heorufæðmum hilde gesceadan  
 505 yrre and egesfull. Egyptum wearð  
 þæs dægweorces deop lean gesceod,  
 for ðam þæs heriges ham eft ne com  
 ealles unrimes ænig to lafe,  
 þætte sið heora seggan moste,  
 510 bodigean æfter burgum bealospella mæst,  
 hordwearda hryre hæleða cwenum,  
 ac þa mægenþreatas meredeað geswealh,  
 <spilde> spelbodan, se ðe sped nahte;  
 ageat gylp wera. Hie wið God wunnon.  
 515 Ðanon Israhelum ece rædas  
 on merehwearfe Moyses sægde,  
 heahþungen wer, halige spræce  
 deop ærende; dægweorc ne mað.  
 Swa gyt werðeode on gewritum findað  
 520 doma gehwilcne þara ðe him Drihten bebead  
 on þam siðfate, soðum wordum.  
 Gif onlucan wile lifes wealhstod  
 beorht in breostum, banhuses weard,  
 ginfæstan god gastes cægum,

494 wæge T.] wæg MS      498 on bosum genom brim T.] on bogum  
 brun MS      yrringa *Sedgefield*] yppinge MS      499 modwæga *Grein*]  
 modewæga MS      500 deaþe gedrencte *Sedgefield*] ða þegedrecte MS  
 501 onfond *Thorpe*] onfeond MS      502 geofon *suppl. T.*      504 heoruf-  
 æðmum *Kluge*] huru fæðmum MS      508 unrimes T.; ungerimdes  
*Bouterwek*²] ungrundes MS      509 heora *Thorpe*] heoro MS  
 510 P. 169 begins; P. 168 is blank      513 spilde *suppl. Grein*      nahte  
 T.] ahte MS      516 moyses *Thorpe*] moyse MS      518 ne mað T.]  
 nemnað MS      524 ginfæstan *Grein*²] -en MS      cægum] -on MS

- 525 run bið gerecenod, ræd forð ganged:  
 hafað wislicu word on fæðme,  
 wile meagollice modum tæcan,  
 þæt we gesne ne syn Godes þeodscipes,  
 Metodes miltsa. He us ma onlyhð,  
 530 nu us boceras beteran secgað  
 lengran lifwynna. Þis is læne dream,  
 wommum awyrded, wreccum alyfed,  
 earmra anbid: eðellease  
 þysne gystsele gihðum healdað,  
 535 murnað on mode, manhus witon  
 fæst under foldan, þær bið fyr and wyrm,  
 open ece scræf yfela gehwylces.  
 Swa nu regnþeofas rice dælað,  
 yldo oððe ærdeað—eftwyrð cymed,  
 540 mægenþrymma mæst, ofer middangeard,  
 dæg dædum fah; Drihten sylfa  
 on ðam meðelstede manegum demed,  
 þonne he soðfæstra sawla lædeð,  
 eadige gastas, on uprodor,  
 545 þær <bið> leoht and lif, eac þon lissa blæd;  
 dugod on dreame Drihten herigeað,  
 weroda Wuldorcyning, to widan feore.  
 Swa reordode ræde gemyndig  
 manna mildost mihtum swiðed  
 550 hludan stefne. Here stille bad  
 witodes willan, wundor ongeton,  
 modiges muðhæl; he to manegum spræc.  
 ‘Micel is þeos menigeo; Mægenwisa trum,  
 fullæsta mæst, se þas fare lædeð.  
 555 Hafað us on Cananea cyn gelyfed  
 burh and beagas, brade rice;  
 wile nu gelæstan þæt He lange gehet  
 mid aðsware, engla Drihten,  
 in fyrndagum fæderencynne,

525 ganged *Mürkens*] gæð *MS*      532 awyrded *Dietrich*] awyrged  
*MS*      534 healdað *Grein*] -eð *MS*      537 gehwylces *Junius and*  
*edd.*] gehylces *MS*      539 cymed *Thorpe*] cymð *MS*      543 *P.* 169  
 soðfæs/tra *P.* 170      545 bið *suppl. T*; so *Irving* (*edn.* 1953)      555 us  
 on *Bouterwek*<sup>2</sup>] ufon *MS*      559 fæderencynne *T.*] fæderyn- *MS*

- 560 gif ge gehealdað halige lare,  
 þæt ge feonda gehwone forð ofergangað  
 gesittað sigerice be sām tweonum  
 beorselas beorna—bið eower blæd micell  
 Æfter þam wordum werod wæs on salum,  
 565 sungon sigebyman—segnas stodon—  
 fægerne sweg. Folc wæs on lande;  
 hæfde wuldres beam werud gelæded,  
 halige heapas, on hild Godes.  
 Life gefegon, þa hie oðlæded hæfdon  
 570 feorh of feonda dome, þeah ðe hie hit frecne geneðdon,  
 weras under wætera hrofas—gesawon hie þær weallas  
 standan;  
 ealle him brimu blodige þuhton þurh þa heora  
 beadosearo wægon.  
 Hreðdon hildespelle, siððan hie þam holme wiðforon;  
 hofon herepreatas hlude stefne;  
 575 for þam dægweorce Drihten heredon.  
 weras wuldres sang, wif on <gunnon>  
 oðrum <wordum> . . .  
 folcsweota mæst, fyrdleoð galan  
 aclum stefnum, eallwundra fela:  
 580 þa wæs eaðfynde Afrisc meowle  
 on geofones staðe golde geweorðod.  
 Handa hofon halswurðunge,  
 bliðe wæron, bote gesawon,  
 heddon herereafes—hæft wæs onsæled!  
 585 Ongunnon sælafe segnum dælan  
 on yðlafe, ealde madmas,  
 reaf and randas; heom on riht sceodon  
 gold and godweb, Iosepes gestreon,  
 wera wuldorgesteald—werigend lagon  
 590 on deaðstede, drihtfolca mæst.

566 on *om. T.*] on fægerne *MS*      569 gefegon *Dietrich*] gefeon *MS*  
 573 holme *suppl. T.*; herge *suppl. Grein*      575 dægweorce *T.*] dæd-  
*MS*      576 *P. 171 begins with wif*      576-8 *rearr. T., with gunnon*  
*and wordum supplied*      587 heom *Grein*] heo *MS*      sceodon *Thorpe*]  
*sceo MS*      590 mæst *Junius and edd.*] mæ followed by erasure *MS*

## NOTE TO TRANSLATION

Although the author's translation was progressively altered and emended, it does not everywhere accord with changes in the text and interpretations given in the commentary. Translation from the commentary has therefore been incorporated for the following lines: 202-4, 233, 246, 266, 308-8+, 491-4, 550-1, 576-9.

## TRANSLATION

Lo! We have heard how near and far over middle-earth  
Moses declared his ordinances to men, uttering in words  
wondrous laws to the races of mankind—to all the blessed  
healing of their life's care in heaven on high after the perilous  
5 journey, to all the living enduring counsel: let him hearken  
who will!

This man did the Lord of Hosts, true King, by his own  
might honour in the wilderness, and to him did the Eternal  
and Omnipotent grant power over many miracles. He was  
10 dear unto God, prince of his people, a leader of the host, sage  
and wise of heart, valiant captain of his folk. Pharaoh's race,  
the enemies of God, he constrained with the plagues of his  
rod. There the Lord of Victories gave into the hands of that  
chieftain high-hearted the lives of his kinsmen, and habita-  
15 tion in the land of their fathers for the sons of Abraham.  
Glorious was that gift: the Lord in His graciousness to him  
vouchsafed victory in arms against the terror of their foes; in  
that warfare he overcame many men of high lineage and the  
inheritance of their enemies.

20 It was in that first time when the God of Hosts spoke in  
words to him that He declared to Moses many marvellous  
truths, telling how He in His kingly wisdom had fashioned  
this world and in power and glory established the orb of Earth  
and the high Heaven; and revealing His own name, which the  
25 children of Men ere that had known not, not even the wise  
generation of the fathers, though great was their knowledge.  
Thereafter He strengthened with righteous powers the  
captain of the host, Pharaoh's enemy, and exalted him upon  
the march from Egypt. At that time still newly was the  
30 greatest of proud peoples smitten mortally with the plagues  
of old. At the fall of their princes lamentation was renewed,  
mirth was hushed in the halls bereft of treasure. The fell  
destroyer had at midnight with cruel stroke laid low every

first-born child and crushed the lords of cities: far and wide  
the Slayer ranged grievously afflicting the people. The land 35  
was dark with corpses of the dead. Forth marched the host!—  
wailing was on every side, little the merriment of men; palsied  
were the hands of the makers of mirth. It was allowed that  
people to enter upon their begrudged journey—a nation on  
the march. The Fiend was robbed. The fanes toppled. 40  
Lamentation entered there. The idols of the devil were  
thrown down. Renowned throughout the world was the day  
when that multitude set out; albeit the folk of Egypt, accursed  
of old, had wrought thus treacherously for many a year, in  
that they purposed to deny for ever, had God permitted them, 45  
to Moses' kin, to their unceasing longing, that desired march.

Eager was the army to go; high the heart of him who led  
their kindred, the chieftain young and bold. With that folk he  
marched past many a fastness, many a land and habitation  
of unfriendly men, filing down narrow paths and ways 50  
unsearched, until they bore their arms against the warlike  
people on the marches. Their lands were canopied with a  
cloudy veil, border-dwellings builded upon the moorward  
slopes; through which Moses led the army of men most  
valiant. Then when two nights were past since they had 55  
escaped their foes he bade the men triumphant to set their  
camp in clamorous company, with their invading host and  
power most mighty, about Etham's cities upon the border-  
lands. Perforce they had adventured into the northern  
regions, knowing that to their southward lay the Sundwellers' 60  
land, hill-slopes scorched and folk grown swart under the hot  
furnace of the skies. There had the Holy God shielded the  
people from the deadly flame, and over the blazing firmament  
had spread a weft divine across the torrid sky: a windborne  
cloud with outstretched arms had ever divided earth and 65  
heaven above, going before the companies of men. Glowing  
bright with heat on high it absorbed the fiery flames. Men  
gazed upon it, a host most jubilant. Their protecting shield by  
day, it passed across the skies. God in His wisdom had drawn  
a sail as a tent over the paths of the sun, in such wise that the 70  
ropes of the mast men perceived not, and the sailyards none  
could see who dwell on earth, nor with all their skill know how  
that great pavilion was made fast.

Since He had exalted in glory the people loyal to their  
75 Lord, now was made the third encampment for the comfort  
of the folk; all that host there saw how the holy sails towered  
up a shining wonder in the air; the people, the chosen men of  
Israel, perceived that there was come the Lord, the Lord of  
Hosts, to measure out their camp. (108-19) Each evening  
80 another marvel strange, after the sun had sunk to rest, He  
commanded to shine with fire above the hosts, a burning  
pillar. Gleaming above the bowmen there stood forth shining  
radiances. Flashed the serried shields. The shadows faded.  
Nigh to that light their hiding-places might not conceal the  
85 deep glooms of night below. The torch of Heaven blazed.  
A new watchman of the night must of duty encamp above  
their companies, lest the terror of the waste stalking grey over  
the moors with tempests from the sea should in its sudden  
clutches rob them of their lives. (120-4) Fiery locks that  
90 vanguard bore and gleaming rays of light; with hot fire and  
blazing terror he made threat against that embattled array  
that he would in the wilderness burn to nought their host,  
unless with hearts of courage they hearkened to the words of  
Moses. (93-107) Before them went fire and a cloud in the  
95 bright firmament, two pillars that each in turn did equally  
divide the high service of the Holy Spirit, waiting upon the  
journey of those bold-hearted men by day and by night.  
Then, have I heard, that in the morning men of valiant heart  
lifted up the loud voices of the trumps of war, in clangour  
100 glorious. All the host arose, a mighty array of gallant men, as  
Moses, renowned captain, bade them, the people of the Lord.  
The marshalled host pressing ever on saw their guide to  
salvation measuring onward its path across the sky. As a sail  
it governed their journey; the seamen followed, treading the  
105 ways unto the ocean.

Blissful was that people; loud the clamour of the army.  
Their sign in heaven rose. (125) The bright host shone, their  
shields flashed. There those warriors, grasping their targes,  
saw a path made straight, and a banner above their companies  
110 going eagerly forward on the road, until the fastness of the sea  
at the land's end forbade the passage of their mighty host.  
There their ordered camp arose, and the weary refreshed  
themselves—gallant servitors approached them with vic-

tuals—they repaired their strength. There about the slopes of the shore, when the trumpet sounded, those seafarers spread 115 their pavilions upon the field. Then was the fourth camp, the resting of warriors beside their shields, upon the Red Sea's shore. There upon their host dread tidings fell, the pursuit of the dwellers in the land. Terrors were upon them, the fear of those cruel hosts. The exile awaited the fell pursuer, the 120 Egyptian that had long before decreed to him bondage far from the land of his fathers, now doomed to bitter punishments for those wrongs—their covenant they had not heeded, though their elder king had earlier sworn . . . (lacuna)

Then Pharaoh became the heir of the people of his land, in 125 consequence of the gifts of exchange men had made, so that he increased greatly. All this they forgot. Now the Egyptian race grew wroth concerning the rebellion, when they (the Israelites) had wrought death upon their dear kinsmen; they devised a cruel return, they ate their words of promise. The 130 rage of war surged about their hearts, the mighty wrath of men. With troth untrue they were minded treacherously to repay the gift of life, so that the people of Moses should in blood expiate the work of that day, had the mighty God granted them success upon their journey of destruction. 135

Now were the hearts of men without hope, when they saw from the southward ways the army of Pharaoh marching on, their crests like a forest moving, their cavalry shining, their banners towering, marching on over the borders of the realm. They arrayed the ranks of their spears; war was abroad; the 140 serried shields were gleaming, the trumpets sang. On the sea chill were the waves. The carrion-birds screamed, greedy in battle—the dewy-feathered (eagle) above the doomed bodies of the host, and the dark picker of the slain. The wolves sang their dread evensong in expectation of their meat; beasts 145 unpitying grown bold at the dying of day they waited upon the heels of those hated foes for the slaughter of many men. The outposts cried aloud in the midmost hours of night. The doomed exile turned to flee. The people of Israel was in despair. At whiles forth from the host proud knights rode 150 measuring the miles of the road with their steeds' strong limbs; there before his standard rode their victorious king, a prince of men with a marching company, king and lord

of men of battle; his vizored helm and beaver he fastened  
155 on—how the banners gleamed!—bethinking him of war, his  
warrior's coat of mail he shook; the chosen companies of his  
army he bade heedfully hold fast their ordered ranks. With  
eyes of hatred there the friends beheld the coming of the men  
of Egypt. About Pharaoh fearless warriors bore their gear,  
160 like grey and deadly wolves they drew nigh to battle, thirsting  
for the press of war, loyal unto their king. Two thousands had  
he chosen of the princes of his chivalry peerless in renown—  
kings were they and kinsmen of the throne, according to the  
ancient laws of that realm, nobles of high lineage. Wherefore  
165 had each one of these led out to war every warrior of male race  
such as in that space he might furnish forth; there were all the  
men of his household gathered together in the company of the  
king. Oft did the familiar sound of the horn amid the host give  
signal to what point the soldiers and the embattled ranks of  
170 men should march in their array. Thus led they on their  
mighty host of swarthy men, foeman after foeman, the multi-  
tude of that people's power; in thousands upon thousands  
they marched thither bent on war. Their purpose it was with  
that assembled might at the first light of day to destroy with  
175 swords the race of Israel in vengeance for their brethren.  
Wherefore in the camp was a cry upraised, a grim song at  
eve—lo! terrors threatened them; deadly toils cut off escape;  
when that great rumour came, to and fro flew tidings dire; in  
high mood was the foe, the host was pale with fear of their  
180 onset—until the mighty angel that guarded the multitude  
thrust aside the Egyptians in their pride, so that no longer  
could the opposed foes observe each other; their ways were  
sundered. Thus respite one night long the fugitive had, albeit  
on every side enemies hung threatening him, or power of  
185 Egypt or the streaming sea. Room to turn they had no more,  
no hope was left them of their rightful fatherland; about the  
slopes of the shore they sat in raiment dark, awaiting woe.  
Unsleeping there all that concourse of one race awaited the  
onset of the mightier power, until at the grey hour of dawn  
190 Moses bade men with brazen trumpets summon the people,  
call up the warriors to arise and put on their mail, turn their  
minds to valour, bearing their bright harness; bade with  
signals assemble the companies yet nigher the shore. The

chieftains bold heeded the loud call to war, and host was stirred. The seafarers over the slopes, obeying the trumpet, struck their pavilions upon the field; their army was in haste. Then they numbered in the van, their defence against the evil that pursued, twelve battalions of dauntless hearts—their might was set in motion—in each of these were chosen under arms of the power of the people fifty companies of the men of proven valour of that noble race; each company of that renowned host contained ten numbered hundreds of men with spears and trained to war, warriors of fame. A warlike host was that. There the captains of the army summoned no weakling into the fighting force, such as for their youth not yet might amid the serried shields with hands defend the mail upon their manly breasts against the hostile foe, nor yet had suffered the pain of wound that passed the shield's defence or known body's hurt, the scar of the gallant play of spears; and the old, too, men gone grey in war, might not in that battle avail, if their strength among the valiant companies had waned. Nay, rather the warriors they chose by body's power, so that in the ranks of Israel they should with honour fulfil the valour of their hearts, and their mighty strength be addressed to grasping the spear in war. Then was all the army of those men unflinching from the strokes of battle gathered together eager for the advance. The banner rode on high, brightest of emblems. Yet still all men waited until the herald of their journey shining above their shields nigh to the flowing of the sea passed into the courts of the sky. Thereupon there leapt forth before the hosts a crier, a herald bold of voice, and upraised his shield, commanding the captains to still the ranks while the speech of their proud prince should be heard by many. The ruler of their might purposed to speak words with voice inspired amid the assembled companies. Nobly he spoke, the leader of that host: 'Be ye not by this made more afraid, though Pharaoh have brought against you armies vast, a countless multitude of men! To all of these will the mighty Lord this day by my hand deliver the guerdon of their deeds, that no longer may they live to possess in unhappy thralldom the race of Israel. Ye will not fear battalions already dead and bodies doomed to die—the space is at an end of their swift-passing life. The word of God is taken from your hearts.

Counsel better do I know: that ye should honour the Prince of  
235 Glory and pray to the Lord of Life for His comfort, salvation,  
and victory, as ye take your road. Lo! it is the everlasting God  
of Abraham, the Master of Creation, that defendeth this host  
with mighty hand; in Him is courage, power, and valour.’  
240 Then before the hosts the captain of the living people up-  
raised his voice aloud, as he spake unto the dear folk. ‘Behold!  
people most dear, now with your eyes you look upon a  
wondrous marvel, how I and this my right hand have smitten  
the deep of ocean with a green wand. The wave mounts on  
high, in haste the water builds a bulwark like a wall! The ways  
245 are grown dry, grey are the marching roads, the towering  
waters are laid open, and their old foundations which never  
have I heard tell that men before upon this earth below did  
overpass, wide spaces of many hues that from now to the be-  
ginning of things the waves through endless ages hid, the  
250 imprisoned bottoms of the sea. The wind blowing over the  
ocean-ways has taken away the floods, the deeps have been  
stripped, the sea turned back has spurned the sand. Yea,  
verily, I know that the mighty God has revealed His mercy  
unto you, men most joyful! In haste it were best that ye  
255 should get you from the clutches of your foes, now that our  
Lord and Master hath lifted on high the red sea-streams as a  
protection upon either side. The outer walls are builded high  
and fair even unto the roof of the clouds, a marvellous passage  
of the waves.’

260 Upon these words all the host arose, a mighty concourse of  
valiant men. Still stood the sea. There the companies uplifted  
their white shields and their ensigns upon the sands. The wall  
of the sea mounted high, and sheer up it stood a whole day’s  
space beside the men of Israel. Of one mind was that array of  
265 men . . . With steadfast arms outstretched it kept its promise  
of protection. In no wise did they despise the bidding of their  
holy leader; when close behind their beloved prince brave  
men began to act upon his words, all clamour ceased and the  
confusion of voices. Then was the fourth tribe the first to  
270 advance; they strode into the flowing waves, ranks of warriors  
over the green sea-bottom; the host of Judah alone at the head  
hastened over the unfamiliar paths before his kinsmen.  
Wherefore did God vouchsafe to him a high reward for his

deeds that day; thereafter there came to him the glory of  
victorious deeds, that of right he should possess the prince-  
dom over many kingdoms and pride of place among his kin. 275

As an ensign before them, when they strode into the sea,  
above their serried shields they had upraised their emblem  
amid the thronging spears, a golden lion—mightiest of  
marshalled folk and beast most fearless; by which token their 280  
captains, when they had upraised their shafted spears for  
battle, while life lasted not long would suffer shame from the  
hands of any among the peoples. Fierce valour was in their  
van, grim the strokes of their hands, each young man  
dauntless in the deadly field of arms, each warrior without 285  
fear, bloody the swath their long swords made, mighty the  
onset of their battle, loud the shivering of vizor and helms,  
where Judah came. Behind the host the heart of the seafarer,  
Reuben's son, was filled with valour; their shields those  
rovers bore over the salt seaward lands, a multitude of men, 290  
a mighty and ordered host they marched as one, fearing  
nought. His place pre-eminent had Reuben destroyed by sin,  
so that he marched later, following his brother's feet. His  
firstborn right, birth and heritage, had his fair brother taken  
in his stead in the ordering of the people; and yet bold too was 295  
he. Behind him marched in mighty troops the son of Simeon,  
the third division on that day—in companies they came, their  
standards moved above the passing of the spears—pressing  
ever on with wartried companies whose shafts the morning  
touched with dew. The rumour of day came there over the 300  
deeps, God's beacon-fire, morning bright upon the sea. Forth  
went the power of Israel. There each mighty division of the  
people followed the other—to those iron-clad armies one  
among them greatest in glorious power showed the path, and  
grew renowned thereby—one people after another upon their 305  
forward way, tribe on tribe. Each knew the rights his lineage  
bestowed, even as Moses had proclaimed, the birthrights of  
all those noble men. One forefather had they all: dear prince  
of his people, wise of heart he had received land and privileges  
(of God), beloved among his kin; offspring had he begotten 310  
that patriarch of old, a holy race of valiant men, the people  
of Israel the lawful children of God, even as with wisdom  
do men of old relate who deepest studied the history of the

tribes and the generations of men, and the ancestry of each . . .

315 The new-come floods Noah did traverse, a glorious prince,  
with his three sons, the most profound of all overwhelming  
floods that should ever come to pass within the realm of earth.  
In his heart he kept the holy covenant with God; wherefore  
he steered over streams of the sea the greatest of hoarded  
320 treasures of which I have heard men tell; for the preservation  
of the life of earth he bore with him an everlasting legacy for  
all the races of the world, the first ancestor of each, the father  
and the mother of all such as bring forth young, a host of  
various kind in number due, greater than men do know the  
325 tale of; a wise man of the sea was he. Yea more, each kind of  
seed did men bring into the bosom of the ship that men upon  
earth make use of. This then do wise men relate, that from  
Noe the father of Abraham was the ninth in the count of  
generations. That is the Abra(ha)m for whom the God of  
330 Angels appointed a new name, and moreover entrusted to his  
protection the hosts of God's people far and near and to him  
gave the command over the tribes of men. In exile he lived.  
Thereafter at the command of the Holy One he led forth the  
dearest of living things; the high places they ascended, father  
335 and son together, and the mount of Sion. There did a  
covenant await them—they perceived the glory of God, His  
high and holy promises, as men have heard.

In that same place, in later days did the wise son of David,  
king most glorious, at the bidding of the seer build a temple  
340 unto God; a holy fane did he, wisest of all earthly kings in the  
world's realms, set there, loftiest, holiest, most famed among  
men, mightiest, most glorious of all things that the children of  
men or the folk of earth have built with hands.

To that appointed place did he lead his kinsman, Abraham  
345 Isaac his son—the pyre blazed up, eager destroyer of life;  
no whit the nearer to death was (the victim)—purposing to  
deliver his heir unto the flame and to give his most beloved  
child unto the blazing pile, offering his sweet son as a peerless  
sacrifice, who was his only treasure and possession upon  
350 earth, the comfort of his days. Therefore he after lived to know  
enduring joy, as an example unto men. This did he show forth  
plainly, when he, renowned among all folk, grasped the boy  
grimly with his hands, and drew forth the ancient sword of his

fathers—the sharp edge cried for blood—that he counted not  
his very life dearer than obedience to the King of Heaven. Up 355  
rose he, purposing to slay his own child, not yet come to  
manhood, to spill his kinsman's blood with the sharp sword's  
blade, had God so suffered him.

But the glorious Father would not receive from him his  
child, a holy sacrifice, but seized him by the hand. Thereupon 360  
a voice came from Heaven bidding him stay, a sound divine,  
and thereafter spake these words: 'Slay not, Abraham, thine  
own child and son with the sword! The truth is revealed, now  
that the Lord of all Things hath made trial of thee, that thou 365  
wouldst keep with the Almighty faith and steadfast troth—  
which shall be through thy life's days the longest-lasting of  
comfort, for ever unfailing. What need hath any son of man of  
greater covenant? Neither Heaven nor Earth can contain  
within their spheres the glory of His words which are spread 370  
further and wider than the regions of the earth extend, the  
circle of the world, and the heavens on high, the gulf of Ocean,  
and this weeping air. An oath he sweareth, King of Angels,  
Lord of all that cometh to pass, God of Hosts; unfailing in  
victory, by His own life and being, that men on earth for all  
their skill shall not be able to tell in true words the number of 375  
thy kin and of thy posterity of warriors, unless some man shall  
become thus wise in heart that he alone may count all the  
stones on earth, the stars in heaven, the sands on the sea's  
piled beaches, and the salt waves—nay, they shall dwell in the  
land of Canaan between the two seas, as far as the peoples that 380  
inhabit Egypt, thine own folk, the free children of one father,  
most blessed of peoples.

(lacuna)

The host was filled with fear; the terror of waters fell upon  
souls accursed. The sea loudly threatened death; the rocky  
cliffs were drenched with blood; the deep foamed with gore; 385  
cries were amid the waves; the water was filled with weapons;  
a deadly mist arose. Back were the Egyptians thrown; they  
fled in fear. The sudden peril they perceived, and faint in war  
they wished to seek their homes—less joyous was their boast.  
Against them lowered dark the awful surging of the seas, and 390  
there came never one of that army home, but behind fate with

waters shut them in. There where paths before had lain the ocean raged, the mighty host was drowned. The flowing seas were reared. A roaring uprose high unto the heavens, the  
395 greatest of battle-cries. The hated people wailed with voices doomed—dark grew the air above; the flood was driven with blood. Rent were the ramparts; the sky lashed down the direst of drowning deaths. They perished in their pride, kings in company. Their will was frustrate at the very waters' end.  
400 There gleamed the shields of war. High above the warriors lowered the wall of the deep, the ocean flowing in wrath; the mighty host was in destruction fettered fast, failing of its landing, snared and trapped.

The sands had awaited the hour of fate decreed when the  
405 flowing torrents, sea everlasting-cold, that was tamed to turn aside, should with salt waves come back to see its eternal foundations, inhuman threatener of woe, a moving spirit dire that overwhelmed those foes. The blue air was blent with gore. The bursting waters threatened the passage of those  
410 men amid the sea, until the true God by Moses' hand gave room unto its wrath. Wide then it ranged, sweeping with deadly arms outflung. Foaming was the flood. Doomed men went down. Sea fell back upon the ground. The sky was shaken. The embattled walls gave way; the billows burst; the  
415 towers of the sea crumbled.

When the Mighty One with holy hand, Guardian of Heaven's realm, smote the men accursed, the peoples proud might not restrain the onrush of those allies, the fury of the streams of the sea; nay, many it destroyed, shrieking, horrible.  
420 Mad was the deep. Up it climbed, on them it slithered down. Terrors menaced them. Deadly wounds were flowing. Down from heaven upon the retreat fell the high work of the hand of God; with front of foam the flood struck their guard, smote them shelterless as with a sword, so that with that death-blow  
425 the regiments died, the hosts of the sinful. They lost their lives inescapably hemmed-in, the gleaming army in the midst of the sea, when into its bosom in wrath the water took them, greatest of angry waves—all the mighty host perished—and drowned in death the flower of the Egyptians, Pharaoh with  
430 his folk. Swiftly did God's adversary find, when ocean mounted o'er him, that mightier was the Lord of the floods

of the sea, that He purposed, terrible in His ire, with fell  
embrace to set an end to war. Unto the Egyptians for the  
deeds of that day was decreed a payment dread, for of that  
army innumerable home came never one surviving man who 435  
might recount their hap, nor tell from town to town those  
greatest of tidings dire, the fall of the lords of wealth, unto the  
queens of men. Nay, those mighty regiments death swallowed  
in the sea, destroyed the bearer of tidings who had not the  
fortune (to escape), and poured to waste the vaunts of men. 440  
They had warred with God!

Thereupon eternal counsels upon the shores of the sea to  
Israel Moses the noble spake, with holy speech, their high  
errand telling. The deeds of that day he did not in silence  
keep. Even so shall the peoples of men still in scriptures find 445  
each solemn word that God announced to him upon the  
journey with words of truth. If the interpreter of lifegiving  
knowledge bright-burning in the breast, the ruler of the  
body's house, will with spiritual keys unlock the lavish good  
there stored, then the secrets (of the writing) will be explained, 450  
forth shall counsel come. Words of wisdom it embraceth, and  
earnestly will teach our hearts, that we be not destitute of  
divine instruction and of the mercies of God; Who to us  
vouchsafeth yet more, now that learned men tell us of a better  
and a more lasting life of joy. A fading mirth is this, and 455  
cursed with evils, permitted to wanderers, a waiting time of  
unhappy men. Exiles from home, in mourning they possess  
this hall of passing guests, lamenting in their hearts; they  
know the house of torment established under earth, where be  
fire and snake, an open everlasting tomb of all evil things. 460  
Thus now the arch-thieves, old age or untimely death, divide  
the realm; but a destined hour shall after come, and the  
greatest power and glory above the earth, a day of wrath upon  
men's deeds. The Lord himself in that place of meeting shall  
judge many a man. Then shall He lead the souls of the just, 465  
the spirits blest, into the heavens above, where shall be light  
and life, yea, abounding joys; His court in bliss shall praise  
the Lord, the glorious King of Hosts for ever.

Thus spake he with loud voice mindful of wise words, man  
most gracious, with power strengthened. The host silent and 470  
still waited on the destined purpose; they observed the

marvellous event, and noted the (hope of) salvation from their valiant leader's mouth. To many there he spake. 'Great is this multitude; trusty the Leader of the host, a succour  
475 most mighty He that this march doth guide! He hath vouchsafed to us in the land of Canaan town, and gold, and kingdom broad. Now He will accomplish that which He long ago did promise with sworn oath, He, the Lord of Angels, in days of yore unto our fathers' race, if ye will but keep His holy  
480 bidding, that ye shall go ever forth in triumph over every foe, shall possess in victory the halls of men's revelry between the two seas. Great shall your fortune be!'

After these words the host rejoiced; the victorious trumpets sang a music fair; the banners were upraised. The folk  
485 was come to land. The pillar of glory had led the host and holy companies into God's protection. In their salvation they rejoiced, since they had led forth their lives from the dominion of their foes, though dangerously had they hazarded them under the waters' eaves. There had they seen as it were walls  
490 upstanding, blood-red had seemed to them the seas through which they bore their battle-harness. With tale of war-triumph they celebrated, for they had escaped (out of the deep). The armed companies uplifted voices loud; for that day's deeds the Lord they praised. The men began to sing a  
495 song of glory, and on their part the women too . . . , greatest of folk arrayed in troops; a warlike hymn with voices awed, many a marvel great. Then was Hebrew maid plain to see upon the ocean's shore adorned with gold. In hand they lifted (many a) necklace. Glad they were; their salvation they  
500 beheld. They took possession of the spoils of war. He that was captive was set free!

Then the leavings of the sea upon the waves' end they did apportion to the bannered companies, ancient treasures, shields and armour. Rightly to their lot fell gold and precious  
505 stuff, the treasure that was Joseph's, the glorious possessions of men. Their wearers in that place of death lay low; greatest of hosts arrayed . . .

# COMMENTARY

## *Introduction*

The poem to which we give the title *Exodus* has long deservedly been esteemed as a spirited piece of writing, in which a greater harmony between the ancient English style and the biblical subject-matter has been achieved than is usual. This is not due alone to the greater suitability of the warlike matter to the heroic and traditional style, for the poet (grievously as our preserved version misrepresents him) has shown a narrative skill in the use of his material, and (still more important) a conception of his material which transcends a mere tale of victory. It is at once an historical poem about events of extreme importance, an account of the preservation of the chosen people and the fulfilment of the promises made to Abraham; and it is an allegory of the soul, or of the Church of militant souls, marching under the hand of God, pursued by the powers of darkness, until it attains to the promised land of Heaven.

The poem is preserved in one manuscript only, in a dislocated and mutilated form, serving as an item in a sort of album or collection of biblical and religious verse; collected it would seem only at a time when good copies were no longer available. MS Junius 11 once belonged to the celebrated Archbishop Ussher, and it was used by William Somner in the compilation of his Anglo-Saxon dictionary; Ussher afterwards gave it to the scholar Franciscus Junius. Junius ultimately presented it to the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

The hand of part I of the MS, to which *Exodus* belongs, is dated x/xi, and the whole of this part was written by one man. The intention, at least while he was at work, was to make an 'edition-de-luxe'. This first part is illustrated with drawings, occupying much costly space, or has spaces left for drawings never completed. It is written with care—as far as calligraphy goes: it abounds in omissions, and in blunders over common words, many of which can hardly be excused even on the plea that they were already present in the copy.

Part I is offered to us as one sequence: *Genesis, Exodus, Daniel*. It is marked out in sections numbered i–lv. Only twenty-eight of these numbers are actually entered, and five more would have fallen on leaves now missing; but all section-openings now present are marked by ornamental initials or large capitals, or (at *Exodus* 63, 107, and 142) by spaces left for large capitals. These section-divisions derive from the scribe, not the poets; for in *Exodus* one

of them comes within an unbroken narrative passage (63), another in the middle of a sentence (107). The sequence is clearly composite, a collection of fragments, or an arrangement of material originally distinct in authorship and treatment. This composite character is best illustrated by *Genesis*, with its famous interpolation (in a different style and metre) on the fall of Satan and the temptation of man (*Gen* 235–851). The state of *Genesis* should put us on our guard when we come to *Exodus*. We cannot expect a poem originally composed for such a series; nor yet a poem as its author made it, considering the passage of time and the process of adapting to a collection. Here the critic has a larger latitude than usual. The *Beowulf* manuscript (Cotton Vitellius A. xv) is as free from these complexities as it is from such costly elaboration. If the text of *Beowulf* is full of the minor accidental errors, it is as a whole a remarkable record, whose general fidelity, even when its scribes clearly were at sea, bears close examination. Here the emender must proceed with caution. But the scribe of MS Junius 11 part I was a different person. If he frequently preserves (in a fair hand) the unintelligible, he was quite capable of doctoring. He is not to be trusted.

It may reasonably be supposed that the author of *Exodus* belonged to the active time of Old English verse, not to the period of antiquarian reverence. Cædmon's name long held the field; and it remains incontestable that Bede's description of what Cædmon sang is as good a description of the contents of MS Junius 11 as one could wish for—except that it covers far more ground. But Cædmon was illiterate, and in *Genesis* the sacred text is followed closely, even servilely. None of this work can directly represent the moving poetry of the inspired peasant, which so deeply stirred his generation. Yet some of it evidently originated far back, not far from Cædmon's day, preserving the school or fashion of Cædmonian composition, and something of its spirit.

When we seek the relation of *Exodus* to other surviving Old English verse, no certain conclusions are possible. Similarities between *Exodus* and *Beowulf* have been explained by the author's use of *Beowulf*. But the reverse may be assumed, and has been (e.g. Klaeber, *Beowulf* (1928), p. cxiv; more doubtfully in the edition of 1936, p. cxi). The truth is, of course, that these similarities prove neither. Where they are not due simply to the common language and idiom in which two compared texts are written, their import is mistaken by those who conceive of authorship in ancient England as the same thing as it is today. There was a traditional style, vocabulary, and phraseology, much less modified by the individual: a fund of expressions for a multitude of things and situations, that

were not felt any the worse for being traditional. Upon this fund, not only of words but of phrases, authors who had never seen, or rather never heard one another's work might draw in common and draw alike. They would not hesitate to do so—to breathe the common air of fine speech and solemn utterance was no more plagiarism than to use the formulae of everyday courtesy.

*Andreas* is the most favourable example in the field of Old English verse for the investigation of parallels: because certain passages found in *Beowulf*, in their natural atmosphere and context, occur also in *Andreas*, where they have an air (greater or less) of being dragged in. But it would have to be shown that the imitated words would have been natural only in *Beowulf*, and not in any other heroic poems that the author of *Andreas* could have known. This stricture applies *a fortiori* to any supposed relationship between *Exodus* and *Beowulf*. The most striking parallels are:

*Exod* 58 *enge anpadas uncud gelad*; so *Beow* 1408.

*Exod* 200 *for þon wæs in wicum wop up ahafen | atol æfenleoð*; *Beow* 128-9  
*þa wæs æfter wiste wop up ahafen | micel morgensweg.*

*Exod* 214 *eal seo sibgedriht somod ætgædere*; *Beow* 387 *seon sibbegedriht samod ætgædere*, 729 *swefan* —.

*Exod* 475 *nacud nydboda*; *Beow* 2273 *nacod niðdraca* (see commentary *ad loc.*).

The first and last of these are perhaps of the sort that are in *Beowulf* natural, in *Exodus* forced. But these parallels show no more than that the heroic style preceded religious verse, which was an adaptation of a manner and a language devised originally rather for poems like *Beowulf* than for poems like those of MS Junius 11.

We have then in *Exodus* an originally independent poem, preserved now only in one manuscript, where it appears as part of an Old Testament series. Like *Genesis*, it opens with an ornamental initial followed by a whole line in majuscule. No other sectional divisions are treated in this way.

On the major questions of form, arrangement, and length we have little to go upon. When confronted with internal difficulties, we can only guess whether the original poem has been curtailed, adapted, accidentally dislocated, interpolated and expanded deliberately, or patched with alien material where chance damage left a gap. Something more definite than (i) inferiority, alleged or demonstrated, of a passage in the main mass of a poem; or (ii) supposed differences of style or vocabulary; or (iii) differences of metrical usage or metrical skill must be shown, before we begin to believe in interpolation. It must be remembered that poets seldom keep to one level; that passages where inspiration leaves them are apt to be bad from all

points of view at once; that the theme itself may be responsible for their boredom in some places and their failure.

It cannot be seriously doubted that *Exodus* is for some reason disjointed and incomplete. The poem ends in the middle of a word, although we need not suppose that much is lost: with the safe passage of the Israelites, the overthrow of the foes and the triumph of the faithful on the further shore, the allegorical conception already suggested was complete. Nor can it be doubted that some disarrangement has taken place between *Exodus* 86-108, though precisely what has happened may be debated. Other difficulties in the text are due rather to accidents that have happened to the manuscript itself since it was written.

### *Treatment of the manuscript*

It is futile to preserve forms which are supposed to have linguistic (dialect or period) significance: because the object of the edition is not linguistic, and we are concerned with the *identity* of the word only; no linguistic investigator should use any edited text for gathering statistics; while most of these forms preserved by editors are paleographical in origin, or vitiated as linguistic evidence by suspicion of such an origin. Nearly all of the 'dialectal' forms preserved, for instance, in Klaeber's *Beowulf* text, and classified and commented upon in his introduction, break down entirely under examination. The remainder can safely be relegated to the apparatus.

Forms such as these should not be admitted to the text:

1 habað (*haplography*); werode *corr.* -a; 28 ylðo *corr.* -a; 40 ðrysmýde *corr.* drysmode (*note*); 56 fæstena *corr.* -enna; 108 æfena *corr.* -enna; 463 stæfnum *corr.* stefnum; 509 heoro *corr.* heora; 524 cægon *corr.* -um.

2-7. Interpretation of these lines depends on recognition of the construction. The key is the idiomatic use of infinitive without expressed subject, *secgan* depending on *gefrigen habbað*; 4-6 gives a parenthetical description of *domas* and *wordriht*, the objects of *secgan*. The idea expressed is that the Commandments are the road to Heaven for those who keep them (as the blessed have done) and still the guide for those in the world. Translate: 'We throughout the world have learnt (from Scripture) how the ordinances of Moses were declared unto men, his wondrous laws uttered in words to the world of men—to all the blessed a betterment of life after their journey of torment, to all the living enduring counsel.' In *bealusid* we have the key to the poem: it is not only the troublous passage through life, but the journey of the Israelites to the Promised Land, a symbol of that weary passage.

3. There are a number of passages in OE verse where *wraclic* appears to have a sense similar to, or identical with *wrætlíc* 'wonderful, rare,

marvellous.' Such uses depend almost indubitably on error; confusion of the similar letters *c* and *t*, or interchange between words of the same outline. It remains remarkable nonetheless that all occurrences of *wræclīc* in verse (15 ×, of which 11 are in *PPs*), except *Gen* 37, have the sense of *wrætlic*. For this reason, most editors keep *wræclīco* and translate *wrætlico*.

14. *freom*: this cannot be 'a variant form of *from*' (Krapp). It could be a contaminate error, by association with *freo* and the rarer adjective *freme*; or a separate word, for which little evidence exists. The form occurs also in *Gen* 2973, *freom on fultum*, and twice in the translation of Bede (ed. J. Schipper, *Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa* iv (1899)): *freomlices* Ca., *from-* B. (I. iii, Schipper, p. 15); *freom* O., *fram* Ca., B. (IV. ii, Schipper, p. 348). But a stem \**frew-*/*freu-* is hard to trace, although the infixed nasal could be explained.

15. A full stop is required at *band*; 12-15 describes Moses (most renowned for the plagues with which he smote the Egyptians); *þær* refers back to *on westenne* (not to the plagues incidentally mentioned), where God made his promise to bring the Israelites to Canaan. The plagues are naturally mentioned, however, because on this occasion of God's first speech with Moses, he foretells that this will be necessary to obtain the release of the Israelites.

17. *magoræswan*: the MS *-ræswum* is, like *andsaca* 15, an error in weak-noun inflexion. The assimilation of endings is a frequent cause of error in inflected languages, and abundantly evidenced in OE. There is here an additional source of error in *sunum*, which would suggest dative plural to the inattentive, combined with the form *modgum*, ambiguous in number.

22. *folcricht*: occurs also in *Beow* 2608, where it seems to indicate legal share of the common land, inherited estate. Here it may mean 'inherited lands, national possessions (in land)'. The passage is based on Exod. iii. 17.

28. *ylðo*: here and in 437 we require gen. pl. *ylða* of the poetic *ylde* 'mortal men'. In both places it is due to sheer error, either a careless association with OE *ylðo* 'age', or ignorance of poetic vocabulary; and it should be corrected. There is no evidence for any *ylðo* sbv. 'mankind'.

30. *geswīðed*: note indeclinable use of pp. with *hæfde*, followed in the next line (where the participle is further removed from the auxiliary) by a declined form. The sense is not 'perfect', but merely a periphrastic vague 'past'.

33. *ungeara*: MS *ingere*. The correction of *in-* to *un-* is not difficult. Klaeber suggested *ungere* 'not long before'. Sedgefield improved this to *ungera*; and, since *ingere* is corrupt anyway, the WS form *ungeara* may be restored, for this is what the scribe would have written if he had recognized the word or been more careful.

*ealdum*: has the time-point of author and audience. 'At that time the greatest of nations had but newly been mortally afflicted with the plagues now long ago.'

34. *gedrenced*: the MS has *ged* followed by an erasure, and on it a later hand has written *renced*. The evident motive of the emendation is a verbal connection with the drowning of Egypt, the main theme of the poem. If we reject *gedrenced* as proceeding from the author, guesses at what he did write are limited; e.g. *gedemed* (Groth), *gedrecced* (Cosijn). The latter is the best suggestion, although it requires an analogical wk. pret. instead of *gedre(a)ht*.

36. *swæfon seledreamas since berofene*: a fine and bold expression in which grammatically *berofene* goes with *seledreamas*, which stands, of course, for men making merry in a king's or chieftain's hall. Such men are robbed of treasure by the general mourning. *Hryre* must be interpreted as instrumental dative.

37. *mānsceaða* (nom.) must be read; 'the fell destroyer'. A key is Ps. lxxvii. 49 (dealing with the plagues) *misit immissiones per angelos malos*; 51 *et percussit omnem primogenitum in terra Aegypti*.

38. *frumbearna fela*: probably we have here unmetrical substitution of a synonym (cf. *god* for *metod* 414). *Fela* is also wrong scripturally; *frumbearna gehwylc* occurs in *PPs* 77, 51.

40. *dryrmyde*: retention of the second *y* is a weak concession to pusillanimous custom; it should be printed *drysmede*. The second *r* is clearly suspect and probably an error for *s*. We have then the choice of either *prysman* (related to *þrosm* 'vapour'), in verse only *aprysmed* (of the sun) 'darkened' *Cr* 1133, in prose *prysman* 'choke, stifle'; or *drysmian*, *Beow* 1375, otherwise unknown. Contextually, this passage (*lyft drysmað, roderas reotað*) could mean 'grew gloomy, dark', but 'dripped, let fall moisture' is possible. In both cases, etymological connection with *dreosan* is probable. The *Beowulf* parallel has it. Occurrence of the rare word in both poems (though corrupted in the less accurate MS) may be added to the list of similarities between them; though certainly only as evidence of their common use of archaic vocabulary, which by chance we know only through them.

41. Editors are too shy of breaking up OE verse into short sharp sentences. We are here being given a rapid survey of the events that led up to the Israelite departure. The sudden interpolation of *dugoð forð gewat* is typical of the OE method of relating concurrent events, here the departure of the Israelites and the lamentation of Egypt.

43. *hleahtorsmiðum*: the Germanicizing of the atmosphere should be recognized. A picture is evoked of the harpers striking their harps, and their hands then falling idle.

44. According to OE idiom *leode* must be dative, and *laðsið* object of *gretan*; *alyfed (wæs)* is impersonal. The sense of *gretan* is rare: 'approach, accost', here 'address themselves to'; the nearest parallel is in 181.

46-7. Some (Kock 1918, Bright) have rightly doubted that *hergas* is pl. of *here*. The only alternative is to take it as 'heathen fanes'. This is supported

strongly by *deofolgyld*; cf. especially *se halga herigeas preade, deofolgyld todraf ond gedwolan fylde*, *An* 1687. In this case, *on helle* cannot mean 'hellish'; *fan* is too local a word. It will be observed that the copyist(s) have invented *heofon*, which is nonsensical, from some similar-looking word (*heaf* or dialectal *heof*). It seems probable that *on helle* is a similar corruption; and the whole opposition hell/heaven in this line a scribal fiction. In that case the original text may have run *hergas onheldon heof pider becom*. Blackburn appositely quotes from the ME *Genesis and Exodus* 3195-8: *quane he geden Egipt fro | it wurde erdedine, and fellen ðo | fele chirches and ideles mide | miracle it was ðat god ðor dide*. The source of the elaboration is probably to be sought, as suggested by Bright, in Num. xxxiii.4: 'For the Egyptians buried all their first-born, which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also the Lord executed judgements.' Emendation to *heofung* is metrically impossible; the error could as well have proceeded from *heof* = *hēaf* (as in 35).

49-50. In this difficult passage the real crux is not *swa*, but *fæsten*. The subject of *dreah* must be *folc*, unless our text is corrupt beyond restoration. The sense of *swa* is probably 'even so', or virtually 'though', as in 82 (see G-K, *swa* 10). But *dreah fæsten* is almost certainly corrupt. The source of the corruption may be sought in *þæs*: by repetitive error, of which this MS presents many examples, a word *f . . . n* has received *æs* (cf. especially *lifde . . . gelifde* 383-4, correctly emended in the MS to *gelædde*). The word is probably *facen*; cf. *facne* 150. The sense 'agere' for *dreogan* is abundantly evidenced. *þæs* is antecedent to *þæs þe* 51.

53. *on langne lust*: this must be an adverbial expression, since the genitive object of *wyrnan* is *sīdes*. We seem obliged then to interpret 'to their long-enduring, unceasing desire'—i.e. the denial caused enduring longing to the Israelites. Cf. the use of *on* with *willan*, *þanc*, *unþanc* 'to (someone's) desire, pleasure, displeasure'.

This is the end of the Exordium. The exodus has begun, and the Israelites are on the march. Here, and not at 63, a section-division would have been in place.

57. *land ond leodweard*: emendation to *leodgeard* is rash, for this expression occurs also in *Gen* 1180, 1196, beside *land ond leodgeard*, *Gen* 229, 1773. *Leodweard* applies always to place, not person; o also *eordweard ðone*, *Beow* 2334. The word certainly means 'rule of people, lordship', but the gender is m.; for which possibly *geard*, *leodgeard* may be responsible.

58. This line certainly comes in more naturally in *Beow* 1408; but this does not prove direct borrowing, only imperfect adaptation of English/Germanic atmosphere to biblical narrative. The *Gudmyrce*, dwelling in a dark and misty land, are also borrowed from Northern descriptive ideas.

59-62. It is clear that these lines refer to some point in the march before the pitching of camp in Etham. Actually all the passage 56-62 is probably a representation of Exod. xiii.18, 'But God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up

harnessed out of the land of Egypt', combined, it may be, with vague geographical notions not derived direct from Scripture. The appearance of the *Sigelware* (Ethiopians) in 69, and the connection made between the heat of their land and the cloud of the Lord, warn us at once that a full explanation of these lines will not be found in the Old Testament.

59. *Guðmyrce*: these are evidently intended as inhabitants of the undefined wilderness on the borders of Egypt towards the Red Sea. The most likely interpretation is 'warlike borderers'. *Myrce* was current in England as the name of the people of Mercia, but its relation to *mearc* 'border' was doubtless apprehended.

61. *mearchofu*: 'dwellings on the borders'. Since the construction naturally associates these dwellings with the land of the *Guðmyrce*, the *mearc*- supports the interpretation of *myre* as 'borderers'. In *morheald*, *-heald* means 'sloping towards', as in *sudheald* (ON *sudrhaltr*). The sense would be 'sloping down to the desert wastes'. This is not unreasonable, if we take these lines as closely connected with *viam deserti quae est juxta Mare Rubrum* Exod. xiii. 18. It cannot be called over-bold for the poet of *Exodus* to say 'border-dwellings moorward-sloping', if he meant in full and in prose 'dwellings upon the borders (of Egypt) on fells that sloped down towards the waste'.

61b-2. [There are three drafts of the commentary on these lines, differing in emphasis and expression. Much of the discussion on current emendations of *fela* and *meoringa* is now obsolete. Tolkien's final judgement on this passage is summed up in the words 'corruption, possibly far-reaching, is clearly present and no entirely satisfactory solution is possible'. I give a selection of the more interesting points.] *fela meoringa*: *meoringa* is undoubtedly corrupt; there is no possibility of interpreting it as it stands from extant OE or Germanic material. If *fela* is accepted as genuine, the combination represents a noun or adjective; *fela* never qualifies an adverb. Before a noun, *fela* is normally enclitic, and it is very rare for *fela* in this combination to bear sole stave in a-verse. I find 5 examples of *fela* alliterating with its noun in a-verse (*Beow* 164, 2266; *Dan* 15; *Desc* 49; *Prp* 67). It bears sole stave in 4 cases in a-verse, 17 in b-verse. Two of the former are from late poems (*PPs* 77.43, *Doom* 158). The others are formulas of time-reckoning: *fela wintra*, *Deor* 38, *fela þusenda*, *Cr & Sat* 400; this special usage accounts for 5 examples in b-verse: e.g. *fela missera*, *Beow* 153, 2620; *Ea* 49. No such formula is suitable in this context. *Fela* as intensive prefix in adjectival compounds is free from this objection. Eleven different adjectives so compounded are recorded in verse; 8 of these do not alliterate on *f*. The only one suitable to this passage is *felamodig*. *Beow* 1637, 1888. We may regard the original as possessing *feola*, which by repetitive error could lend its vowel to the succeeding syllable *m . . . r*, producing an unreal *meor-* which would remain after the intelligible *feola* had been West-Saxonized. The corruption was not necessarily a single or a simple process.

63. *ymb twa niht*: the Germanic expression for 'after two full days'. The words certainly suggest that our poet in his itinerary included two camps

before Etham, and no less forcibly suggest that for the purposes of his narrative the first two stages were run quickly together, treated as mere preliminaries to the more important later events.

65. *ymbwicingean*: there is no reason to suppose that this verb could be construed with the dative. All the compounds in verse which reveal their construction take accusative of the thing or person surrounded (14 verbs exclusive of *ymbwicingian*); *byrig* must therefore be taken as accusative plural.

66. *ælfere*: a 'bad' form, which should be emended to *æl* (prefix) + *fære* dat. sg. of *faru* 'expedition, marching army'. The scribe made a false division between *ælf* and *ere* at the beginning of the next line, which suggests that he did not recognize the word. There were two Germanic prefixes of similar form which might by phonetic processes become identical in OE, and in any case were similar enough to be scribally confused, when both were obsolescent: (i) *\*ala-* 'all, whole, entirely', (ii) *\*alja-/ali-* 'other', hence 'alien'. (i) > OE *æl-* which early began to be replaced by adj. *eal*, but survives in *ælbeorht*, *-ceald*, *-cræftig*, *-meahtig*, *-tæwe*. (ii) > OE *ele-*, *el-*: e.g. *elhygd*, *-land*, *-reord*, *-peod*, *-peodig* (*ælfiedig*), *ælwih*. There is no good evidence of (i) before nouns in OE (as in Goth. *ala-brunsts*). For decision in the case of *mid ælfere* we must rely on the interpretation of *ælfylce*. The sense of *wið ælfylcum*, *Beow* 2371 is almost certainly 'against alien invading hosts'; *on ælfylce*, *El* 36 is probably 'in alien (non-Roman) territory'. On this evidence, *mid ælfere* is likely to mean 'with an alien (invading) host'. A better emendation would be *elfære*.

*Æthanes byrig*: the Vulgate has *castrametati sunt in Etham in extremis finibus solitudinis* Exod. xiii.20. There is no reason observable why the poem should not have *Etham*, or why the Ethiopians should be mentioned. But the matter becomes clearer if we turn to Ps. lxxiv.14-15, which refers to the deliverance from Egypt: *Tu confregisti capita draconis: dedisti eum escam populis Æthiopum. Tu dirupisti fontes et torrentes: tu siccasti fluvios Ethan. The Paris Psalter* has *Sigelhearwum* and on *Æthane* for these names. (The Vulgate distinguishes between *Etham* and *Ethan*, which is in fact a Hebrew word meaning 'strength': RV Ps. lxxiv.15 has 'rivers of strength'.) The poet identified *Ethan* of Ps. lxxiv with *Etham* of Exod. xiii.20, in spite of any geographical details. But the identification can already be seen in Ambrose's *De XLII Mansionibus Filiorum Israel Tractatus* (quoted by Gollancz, p. lxxxiii): *Etham nobis sonat fortitudo*. A further point: so far was the poet from bothering about the meanings of Hebrew names that he accepted the Vulgate version, which turned a Hebrew word into a proper name, although this meaning was known to scholars.

68. *nearwe genyddon*: there is no good evidence of *\*nearu* f. 'angustia', as Napier suggested. The verb is therefore intransitive, not *geneddun* 'forced', but *geneðdun* 'dared to go, adventured' (as suggested by Dietrich and accepted by Grein, though later abandoned); the West-Saxonizing scribe has misinterpreted the form. It is here qualified by the phrase *on norðwegas*, in 570 by *frecne* adv.; cf. also Gregory's *Dialogues* (ed. Hecht, 18.10) *pæt he to swyðe ne nypde v.l. dyrstlæhte*. So *nearwe* is probably an adverb. In verse

it can be used of pressure, compulsion, or urgency on the part of the subject; cf. *nearwe*, *El* 1157 of a searching inquiry. 'Urgently' is probably the sense here, and the sentence beginning *wiston* gives the reason for the urgency.

69. *Sigelwara land*: this E-type pattern is not paralleled in good OE verse. The form *Sigelwaras* occurs only in verse (apart from *Sigelwara* in the entry for St. Matthew in the *Old English Martyrology*, ed. G. Herzfeld, 172): *Sigelwearas*, *PPs* 71.9; *-wara*, *PPs* 86.3; *-warum*, *Ap* 64 [all in a-verse, types C or D]. In prose, the universal form is *Sigel-*, *Silhearwas*; this occurs once in poetry, *Sighearwum*, *PPs* 73.13 [again in a-verse, type D\*]. *Sigelhearwas* is probably the older form (possibly of native and semi-mythological origin), *Sigelwaras* being an alteration and rationalization. In either form, it is the normal term for Ethiopians; the Latin form is rarely retained. It can be compared with *neorxnawang* for *paradisus*, which is likewise of unknown etymology see *MÆ* i (1932), 183-96; iii (1934), 95-111. The actual source of this passage is unknown. It shows a blend of the ancient idea about the baking of the Ethiopians' faces, together with suggestions arising from a comparison of Ps. lxxiii.14-16 with Exod. xiii.20-2. The proximity of this torrid region is also made the explanation of the northward turning of the march of the Israelites. Here, we must read *Sigelwarena*, or else restore *Sigelhearw(en)a*.

70. *burkhleoðu*: this should be emended to *beorh-*, as first suggested by Thorpe. The word is correctly written in 448; the error recurs in 222.

73. *bælc*: *æ* before *lc* suggests that a non-WS form has been preserved because a scribe could not transpose it. A poetic formula occurs in *Gen* 54: *he him bælc forbigde*, and so too *Jud* 267 *bælc forbiged*; this means 'swelling pride, arrogance', cf. *Rid* 81.1 *belcedsweora* 'puff-necked'. The cloud could conceivably be described as a swelling mass. Alternatively, the *\*balk-* stem (referring to wood or beams) is possible. The only recorded representative is *balca*, some kind of wooden frame for torture. A mutated derivative of this stem could give a sense 'canopy, roof-like superstructure' suitable to the context.

76. *efne*: probably an alteration of *efre* = *æfre*, partly by association with *gedælan*; cf. *nefne* miswritten *næfre*, *Beow* 250, and with *æ* for *e*, *næfne*, *Beow* 1353. 'Equally divided' is here nonsense.

79. *gedrymost*: the Anglian form *gedreme* 'jubilant' occurs in *PPs* 149.5.

*dægscealdes*: emend to *-sceldes*. The form can be regarded as a contaminant of *scead* / *sceld*; for *sceld* would not be familiar to the scribe (he writes *scyld* 113, 125), whereas *scead* is a WS form.

81-5. *swegle*: certainly an error for *segle* (so Thorpe). The poet uses 'sail' with fine effect here, and clever later elaboration. *Segl* is apt as describing the texture of something woven (*nette* 74) which a cloud may imaginatively be thought to possess; its whiteness shining with sunlight (78) and yet absorbing the sun's heat; and also its *onward motion*, directing the march. In 105 we perceive a further element in the conception—the combined

influence of ancient native poetry with its gallant sea-rovers, and the imminence of the passage of the Red Sea, is filling the poet's mind with old sea-language, until he can actually call the Israelites *sæmen*. Yet an ingenious change is made at 85: the army halts, a camp is prepared; and the cloud becomes a *pavilion*. That is with a single stroke; while the texture, and the colour and light are preserved, the march is arrested. *Feldhusa mæst* is used not recklessly, or in an aimless search for variation, but to mark the halt. The artistry of the language here should affect our judgement of the apparent confusions in the passage beginning 93 ff.

86-7. *siððan* . . . *þa*: *þa* is a frequent correlative to *siððan*, and we should expect *siððan* . . . *to frofre* to be connected. But *syððan* usually introduces a verb following the main clause, not preceding it. The order *Ða wæs* . . . *syððan* + subject of clause occurs e.g. in *Beow* 980-2, 1306-8, 2472-4, 2957-60.

87. *þridða wic*: emend *þridde*, cf. 133 *feorðe wic*. The error is probably due to partial alteration of *þridde* > *þriddan*, because *wic* was normally used in the plural (sometimes with singular sense, as *castra*).

91-2. The agency of God himself is not seen in Exod. xiii.21 *castrametati sunt in Etham*; but it is indicated in Deut. i.32-3 *et nec sic quidem credidistis Domino Deo vestro qui processit vos in via et metatus est locum in quo tentoria figure deberetis* . . . (the words of Moses).

93 ff. Here we have to consider a vexed point in the criticism of *Exodus*. The narrative becomes confused, indeed unintelligible. The credit of perceiving the confusion and divining its cause belongs to Napier. But the transposition proposed by Gollancz (pp. lxx and lxxxii) is superior to Napier's. Both assume that the passage 108-24 stands in the wrong position, having been shifted by one of the accidents of transmission. Gollancz transposes as follows: after 92—

108-24 (17 lines)

93-107 (15 lines)

125 ff.

The technical question of how the displacement occurred has been mixed with the purely critical examination of the text. The answer to the technical question is unlikely to be decisively given: the range of possibilities is wide, and we are operating in the unknown. But we can be certain of the fact of displacement. (It is perhaps worth noting that *Him* 93 has a somewhat large initial *h*. A similar large *h* occurs in 120 [these are among the 20 small capitals in the text, noted by Gollancz and confirmed by P. J. Lucas, p. 19]. Then at 107 we have a section-division, and space for an initial, in the middle of a sentence. It is plain that these arrangements do not descend from the author.

85-92, 108-24, 93-107. We have had a full description of the 'pillar' of cloud. Now it is halted like a great pavilion over them (85). They can see its sails (tent-wings) hovering motionless (*hlifedon* 89) above them, shining still in the sun. But it is the end of the day (camping-time 92). And so we

proceed naturally to evening (*æfenna gehwam* 108). As soon as the sun has sunk, a new wonder appears: a burning column (111). Its function is to give them light, to drive off all dangers (116-17)—that is, the poet conceives of it as a divine watchfire—and also (an original touch) to enforce discipline, a divine sentinel. Having described the two ‘pillars’ in proper sequence and at the time of their first manifestation, the poet adds that these ever preceded them in their march (93-7). So ends the third camp. In 98-107, 125-9 we have a description of the following morning, the fourth day of marching: the summoning and marshalling of the host, the arising of the cloud which is their standard and guide (107); and the fourth halt, made necessary by the barrier of the sea (128) which prevented further advance. This narrative adheres to the sequence of Exod. xii.37, xiii.20-2, xiv.1, 2 (and Num. xxxiii.5-7); but it supplements the bare words of these passages with suggestions drawn from various sources: passages from Deuteronomy and the Psalms, a little easily obtained ‘learning’ about Ethiopians and their skins, and above all a vivid and pictorial imagination, familiar with this island and English traditions. From this last source we get the mists (60); the warlike trappings and vocabulary; the signals for pitching and striking camp (132, 222); the idea of watchfires in the wilderness. At only one point is a straightforward sequence interrupted, at 93-7 which on this arrangement must apply to the future marches. This simply repeats the apparently general reference of the basic passage in Exod. xiii.20-2, where the cloud and fire are first mentioned. But the breaking of sequence is nothing as compared to the situation if the MS order is retained, for then two pillars (94) will be mentioned before the second has been yet described—and then as a *fresh wonder* (108) and a *new* nightwatchman (116), appearing on the *fourth* day contrary to scriptural narrative.

109. *æfter sunnan settrade*: it might be thought that *wundor* could be subject of *behealdan* in the sense ‘occupy’; it appeared in that part of the sky. But *settrad* is hardly a possible object, for (like *setlgang*) it is a noun of action. It is important to note that *rad* does not normally mean ‘road’, but the action of riding or travelling. *Streamrad* = *alveus* in early glossaries might argue for an exceptional use; but in OE verse this compound means ‘voyage’. The ‘kenning-compounds’ *hronrad*, *swonrad*, etc. mean ‘sea’; not as ‘whale-road’ but ‘whale-riding’, by the special ellipsis whereby the ‘kenning’ suggests ‘(fields) where the whale rides like a horse on land’. In fact, *æfter sunnan settrade* is a formula that cannot be dismembered. It is a poetic variant of the prose expression *æfter sunnan setlgange* (so *ASC D* s.a. 744, and the prose version of Gen. xxviii.11). Therefore we cannot emend away this expression to provide a subject *sunne* for *beheold*. The real difficulty is that *behealdan* is never construed with an infinitive in OE; this is natural enough in view of the verb’s origin and sense-development. To retain *beheald* we should be driven to further emendation: *lige sciman 7 liges sciman*. Since *beheold* is the central difficulty, it is better to assume that this word is corrupt. I propose *bebead*, carrying on from the subject *drihten* in the preceding sentence (92). The antecedent form could be *bebeod*, which in the inverted order of this sentence would have no apparent meaning;

whereas *wundor*, the leading word in the context, suggests *beheold* in the sense 'observed, gazed at'.

111. *byrnende beam*: this must be accusative, but there is no need to emend. The masc. acc. of the pres. p. occurs frequently as *-ende*; cf. *cnihtwesende*, *Beow* 372.

113. *scyldhreodan*: 'phalanx, closed ranks of men with shields touching'; the word is actually glossed 'testudo' three times. A sense 'shield' is not attested by *under bordhreodan* 236; for the phrase describes a man standing in the closed ranks of the 'shield-wall'; cf. *Ælfric's Grammar*, *under piccum scildtruman = densa testudine*.

118. *har hæð*: Rieger's emendation *hæðstapa* should be accepted. This compound (unlike *hæðbroga*) does occur, in *Beow* 1368 and in *Fates* 13. The terror of the waste described in wolvis language helps to elucidate the next line.

121. *hweop*: *hwōpan* is a verb peculiar to Gothic and OE. In origin it is probably onomatopoeic; but as is usual with such words it is not created in the void, but formed by suggestions from other words; in this case *wōpjan* (*wēpan*), *hrōpjan* (*hrōpan*). Its original sense would thus be 'shout aloud'. The Gothic sense 'boast' shows a natural semantic change. In OE the sense is 'threaten', usually, as here, with a connotation of noise.

124. *Moyses*: since *hyran* in the sense 'obey' takes the dative, we should have *Moyse*; but usage in biblical and classical names was not rigidly fixed.

93. *Him*: repeats, after a definite pause in the narrative, *hie* 124.

94. *beamas*: *beam* represents *columna* 'pillar' of Exod. xiii.21-2. The sense 'beam of light' is not found in OE except in a context and with qualifiers that make it clear; e.g. *blace beamas* 121, *fyrene loccas* 120. The sense 'light-ray' was probably nothing more than a particular application of *beam* 'tree, pillar'. Cf. the development of Lat. *radius* 'pole, spoke; ray of light', Ger. *Strahl* (OE *stræl* 'arrow'), Eng. 'shaft of light'.

95. *efngedælde*: the sense of *gedælan* is here not 'separate one thing from another distinct thing' but 'divide into portions'. The compound then means 'shared as companions'; cf. *efnprobian* 'share in suffering, have compassion'.

104. *lifes latþeow*: the expression 'guide to Life (Salvation)' is found also of God in *El* 520, 898. To fully understand it here it is necessary to remember that *Exodus* throughout treats the escape of Israel as at once a historical narrative and a symbol of the soul's journey to the promised land of Salvation. Even so, the repetition *lifes/lifweg* is open to criticism. *Lifweg metan* seems to me weak, since all that it means is contained in *lifes latþeow*. An original *lyftweg* could have been mistakenly written *lifweg* under the influence of *lifes*. *Lyftweg* is more forcible; the host of Israel looks up and sees the divine guide to Salvation already ascending the sky.

105-6. *swegl siðe weold*: the emendation *segl* is obviously right. A similar error occurred in *swege* 81 (under the influence of *sumnan*) for *segle*. Here the error is more explicable if *lyftweg* preceded. *Segl* is apt here. Not only does it indicate that the cloud is in motion again, but it introduces, in conjunction with *sæmen* and *flodwege*, the idea that this march was to end by the sea. *Flodweg* normally means 'path over the sea' (*Seaf* 52), but the sense here, 'path towards the sea', is no more strained than in *medostigge*, *Beow* 924 'paths towards the mead (hall)'. For the construction with instrumental (or locative) dative, cf. *El* 215 *feran flodwege* (MS *fold*-).

106-7, 125-6. Here we have a passage of short sentences after the OE descriptive style: *Folc wæs on salum; hlud herges cyrm. Heofonbeacen astah. Scean scir werod. Scyldas lixton. Gesawon . . .* (a longer sentence). Compare the closely similar arrangement in *Beow* 1159-62a, followed (1162b) by a long sentence.

107. *heofonbeacen astah*: the reference is almost certainly to the cloud. At the same time, the statements *scean scir werod* etc. do show that full day had appeared; this is a stage beyond the trumpet-calls at dawn (98 ff.).

127. *segn*: either masc. or n. in OE. In *Beowulf* it is n. in 2767, 2776, 2958, masc. in 47, 1021. Here it is n., since *fus* agrees.

130. *genægdon*: (*ge*)*nægan* (usually assumed to be connected with *nēah*) probably originally had a neutral sense: if the etymology is correct, 'approach', hence, 'accost, address'. But it was obsolescent and poetical, and apart from the formula *wordum* (*ge*)*nægan* was usually associated with the unrelated *gehnægan* 'humiliate, afflict', and so appears only in a hostile sense 'assail' (*genægan* was even spelt with *hn*; so *Beow* 2206, 2916). This passage seems to be a solitary example of its older use.

130-1. The 'repairing of strength' is clearly the action of the eaters, parallel to *weyrpton hie*. We have an intercalated independent sentence, the usual way in OE poetic narrative of representing two different actions going on at the same time. An extreme example is 155-60.

132. *bræddon . . . feldhusum*: *brædan* is not one of the words we should expect to have the dative, for it is properly a causative, 'open out, expand'; it is nowhere else so construed (cf. *Epist. Alex.*, *ure geteld bræddon*). The syntax is probably due to the usage of *bregdan* as in the closely parallel passage 222-3.

*beorgum*: *beorg* is not only 'mountain', but also 'pile, heap, mound'. As such it was applied to the banks, cliffs, and sloping lands of the shore; cf. *sebeorga sand* 442.

133. *flotan*: this is typical of the allusive and connotative diction of OE verse. A good poet would use a word not literally applicable, both to colour the passage with emotions aroused by words drawn from different matter, and in circumstances which gave the word some point—here the encampment on the shores, and the imminence of the crossing. Such uses are only possible at the end of the development of a native tradition.

136. *oht*: the word occurs elsewhere only in *Gen* 84 (where the precise meaning is not clear) and *Beow* 2957 *æht*, a scribal form for \**oht* 'pursuit'. The preservation of the word in correct form and clear original sense is one of the notable archaisms of this poem.

*egsan stodon*: the usual full construction is seen in *Beow* 783, and in most complete form *Dan* 524. But here we have no word expressing the source or the recipient; *stodon* is simply 'was imminent' (so too 491, and *W* 113).

139. *ƿonnied*: another of the archaic words preserved in *Exodus*; the cognate of ON *ánauð* 'constraint, bondage'. The original spelling could be *onneid*, cf. *Bede's Death Song* (MS St. Gall 254) *neidfæra*.

140. *wean witum fæst*: the reference is to the plagues (so *witum* 33), from which the Egyptians are quite naturally regarded as still suffering. *Fæstne* would be correct, agreeing with *lastweard*, but a nominative by attraction to the intervening relative clause is quite reasonable. For genitive *wean* (punishment for) cf. *Gen.* 2693.

141-2. Two leaves have been lost in the middle of the gathering, and it is difficult to decide what is missing. A short summary of the more important points that might be fitted in between these lines, considering what is said in Scripture, would run something like this: 'They heeded not their compact although the older king had' . . . made a treaty, granting the land of Goshen to Joseph's kindred, for them to dwell in it in peace and plenty (*Gen.* xlv.16-20, xlvii.3-6). For the king loved Joseph. He had made him his chief *ealdorman*. In seven years of plenty, he gathered corn 'as the sand of the sea', and stored it (*Gen.* xli.46). In time of famine he sold corn for the money, cattle, and lands of all the inhabitants, 'so the land became Pharaoh's'; and he saved the lives of the people (*Gen.* xlvii.13-26). Then Joseph died and all his generation. The children of Israel multiplied, 'and the land was filled with them'. A new king arose 'which knew not Joseph' (*Exod.* i.8), though he inherited all the wealth gained by Joseph for Pharaoh. Then the Egyptians forgot all this, and became hostile, fearing that the Hebrews would join their enemies in war (*Exod.* i.10).

Much less may have been said. Clearly, no mention was made of later events after the beginning of the oppression by Pharaoh. The poet has made this retrospective pause to mark the passage of time between the first rumour of the pursuit by the Egyptians and their visible approach. He seems to have used this opportunity to stress the double treachery of Egypt to Israel: they broke the original promises of 'the elder king', enslaving the Hebrews and not allowing them to depart; then at last, forced by the slaying of the first-born, they allowed the Hebrews to leave, but suddenly revoked the permission by an unexpected attack—just as they came to the barrier of the sea, and could not escape. At 144, the author is making haste to get back to that situation, having the whole course of events in his mind, from the coming of Joseph to Egypt to the trapping of the Hebrews by the sea. But, as in his exordium (1-54), the event most prominent in his thought is the death of the first-born, which was the setting of the exodus, of the *mære dæg* (47) when at last Israel was set free. To that event *dægweorc* 151 refers

(cf. 199). It is thus most likely to be the key to the interpretation of the corrupt and obscure *an twig* 145.

142. ‡*ingefolca*: this word contains the prefix *in-* (in its frequent sense 'belonging to the household, home, or native land'). It is seen in ‡*ingemen* 190 and in the corrupt *incadeode* 443. With *ingefolc*, cf. *inhere* 'home forces' as against *uthere* 'enemy forces'. As it stands, it must mean 'peoples of the land (of Egypt)'. The author elsewhere regards the Egyptians as one people, and the plural is probably an error for *ingefolces*, under the influence of the following *manna*.

143. *æfter*: must here be temporal, 'after, in consequence of'; and therefore *maðm* must have its full sense of 'gift, especially a gift of exchange'. Cf. *Maxims I* 154-5 *maðum* (*sceal*) *opres weorð*; *gold sceal mon gifan*: that is, it must refer to the money, lands, and herds given in exchange for corn.

145. *ymb an twig*: this half-line is metrically defective. It must originally have been Type B or C: *an—wig* or *antwig-*. The only word closely resembling the corrupt *an twig* and showing a possible sense is seen in *andwiges heard*, *Guð* 176; here ‡*andwig* should mean 'hostile resistance'. But *ymb andwige* is impossible, because *ymb* is always construed with the accusative. It is just possible that we have a n. -*ja-* stem \**wige*, as in ON *einviði* 'single combat' beside *viði* 'resistance, battle'. *Andwige* could then refer to the rebellion of Israel (Exod. iv.29) and the ensuing plagues, leading to the death of the first-born; *ymb* will be used in the temporal sense 'after' (so 63). Notice that *ymb* cannot be used with *gram* to indicate a cause of wrath; the sense 'concerning' always points to the object of attention, not the cause.

146. *ða heo heo*: I suggest *ða heo heora*; *heo*<sup>1</sup> is m. pl., as in 587. *Cyn* is sg., but it is usually treated as a collective and takes a plural verb, as here *grame wurdon*; I think therefore that *heo*<sup>2</sup> is an error for *heora*, referring to *cyn*, and is probably a mistaken addition in this confusion of number. Translate: 'when they (the Israelites) had inflicted death upon their (the Egyptians') dear kinsmen'.

147. *wrōht*: (related to *wrēgan*) probably in origin meant 'accusation' or counter-accusation; but it had plainly come to mean a cruel act of revenge (cf. *Beow* 2473).

149. ‡*mihtmod*: 'mighty wrath', is isolated, but it is likely to be genuine. The first element is probably adj. *meaht* [as in *Ph* 377, *Cr* 868], which should not show mutated forms; but since *meaht-* was mostly replaced by *miht-* in IWS, *mihtmod* might contain a false transposition of older *maeht-*, *meht-*. The combination of adj. + qualified noun might be an ancient syntactic feature; cf. *ealdfeond*, *heahbeorg*, etc. in verse.

150. ‡*feorhlean*: *lean* means primarily 'a recompense for a benefit'; the benefit repaid is normally expressed as a genitive, as in *pæs dægweorces* . . . *lean* 507, but occasionally in a compound, as in *dædlean* 263. The *feorhlean* refers to the acts of Joseph in saving the Egyptians from famine, and the exodus is regarded as a long-delayed act of gratitude.

151. *he*: clearly an error for *hi/hie*, induced by the apparently sg. *gebohte*, which is archaic pret. subj. pl.; so 124, 244, 365, 396.

157. *oferholt*: the leading sense of *holt* was 'growing wood, thicket'. So in compounds: e.g. *æscholt* 'thicket of ashen spears', *garholt*, *Beow* 1834, which is not 'spear-shaft', for *Beowulf* was promising to bring an army. *Ofer-* could refer to the tips of raised spears; but it is probably an error for *eofor-*. A *holt* was the right place to look for boars (*eofor sceal on holte*, *Maxims II* 19); but the boars in this thicket were boar-crests, and the forest was moving.

158. *guð hwearfode*: *guð* is half-personified, since frequentative *hwearfian* means 'turn and turn again, go to and fro'; cf. *Fins* 34 *hræfen wandrode*.

160. *peod mearc tredan*: acc. *peode* would not scan. Therefore *peodmearc* must be a compound: they saw 'a tramping of the people's borderlands', i.e. Egyptians marching on the confines of their own country.

158-60. The Egyptian army is being described in 156-60. I feel as certain as one can in such matters that *puſas . . . tredan* 160 is displaced and should follow *lixan* 157 (so Grein, Kluge). We then get a sequence perfectly in style: the staccato but still connected *gesawon . . . wegan . . . lixan . . . þunian . . . tredan*. Then the series of 158-9, showing that the Egyptian army is getting nearer, and their signals can be heard. Then suddenly (161 ff.) the ominous signs of death.

161. *on hwæl. hwreoþon*: almost a whole line has been dropped. Blackburn was the first to see that the omission was between *hwæl* and *hwreoþon*; the cause was most likely inattention, since *hwreoþon* is an impossible form showing the influence of *hwæl*. We cannot now recapture what is lost, but Blackburn makes a good suggestion: *on hwæl <mere hreo wæron yða>*.

162. The *herefugolas* accompanying the wolf as picker of the slain were traditionally the raven and the eagle. The old poets usually took any opportunity that occurred for bringing in this, originally, grim piece of realism, which had however become patterned and conventionalized (long before any text that we have now was first composed). It had deep roots, being connected with the beliefs and symbols of pagan cults; especially the dark and necromantic associations of Woden/Óðinn (with Óðinn as *hangaguð*, cf. *Beow* 2444-9). In full battle-pieces, the raven, wolf, and eagle occur. This passage has some features found elsewhere, and some peculiar ones. *Deawigfeðera* is applied to the eagle in *Gen* 1984; cf. also *urigfeðera* in the battle-pieces *El* 29, *Ƴud* 210, and in *Seaf* 24-5. *Wonn* is applied to the raven in *Gen* 1983, *Beow* 3024, *El* 53, *Ƴud* 206. With the phrase *cetes on wenan* cf. *Gen* 1985. *Singan* is applied to the wolf in *wulf song ahof*, *El* 112; cf. also *fyrðleoð agol wulf on wealde*, *El* 27-8. Neither *hræfn* nor *earn* are named here. An archaic term †*drihtneas* is used for the corpses on the field of battle; *nē* is an old word (Goth. *naus*, *nawi-*, ON *nár*) found occasionally as the first element of compounds, and possibly in *orcnas*, *Beow* 112. There is a 'kenning' *wælceasega* for raven. Principal attention is paid to the wolf, which is described as †*cwyldrof* 166, a term usually misinterpreted.

I propose to read *hildegrædig deawigfeðera* = eagle, and *wonn wælceasega* (-*cesga*) = raven; these two specify the *herefugolas*. The influence of this plural term (combined with scribal ignorance) would account for the plurals -*grædige* and -*feðere*.

164. ‡*wælceasega*: no doubt derived from a genuine 'kenning'. The original form is not accurately preserved or correctly modernized; \**cēsig/cēsga* shows the stem seen in *cies* adj. 'dainty about food'. Thus, 'one that habitually picks over the wæl'. The word and form are not the same as the ancient battle-term *wælcyrige* = ON *valkyrja* (though probably made in knowledge and imitation of it). In this word -*ig*- is not adjectival, but derived from [j] preserved after [r]: i.e. a feminine agental noun \**walakuzjō(n)* 'picker or chooser of the slain'. The word was probably very ancient, though it is found only in OE and ON. It derived partly from the actual carrion-birds of battle, transformed in mythological imagination; partly from the necromantic practices of the female followers of Odinic magicians. In OE the word is used to gloss *Bellona*, or *Erinys*, or another of the Furies; in Wulfstan's *Sermo ad Anglos* it occurs in a context suggesting more degraded practices.

166. ‡*cwyldrof*: probably does not contain *cwyld* (found only in OE) 'perdition, death', which is related to *cwelan* 'die' and carries a passive sense. A cognate of ON *kveld* 'evening, last light' survived in OE, although it was obsolescent: so *cwyldtid* 'evening', *cwyldseten* 'setting in of night', *cwyldrede*, -*hrepe* 'bat'. This seems to be an echo of a dark pagan word which consorts well with *drihtneum* and *wælceasega*.

*beodan*: since the metre requires a short root-syllable, this should be *bidon*; cf. *VP abiodun*, *Beow* 3169 *riodan* 'they rode'. *Bidan* 'await' is most often construed with genitive object, but there are clear cases of the accusative. However, *budon* 'announced' would also fit.

167. *ful*: must be emended to *fyll/fiell* 'slaughter'. An archaic spelling *fael(l)* could conceivably be confused with *fall* or *full*.

169. *fleah fæge gast*: Blackburn was right in viewing *gast* as an alteration of *giest/gæst* 'stranger'; the word is in any case representative singular. Confusion of *gæst/gāst* with *gest/giest/gyst* is found only in verse texts, in the course of transposing West Midland forms into IWS. It is partly explained by the frequency of West Midland *e* = WS *æ*. Thus *gæst* is the form for 'stranger' in *Beow* 1800, 1893; so too the more archaic sense 'hostile alien' (applied to the dragon) appears as *gæst* in *Beow* 2312, 2670, 2699. Meaning must also have played a part; the sense '(hostile) alien' was probably obsolete when our late copies of verse texts were made. Also, contact between the senses 'visitant' and 'spectre' is evident in the examples quoted from *Beowulf*.

*fæge*: the sense 'afraid' suits this context, since the Israelites were not doomed to die. This meaning certainly occurs in the phrase *forht and fæge*. It should be read in *Wand* 68 *ne to forht ne to fægen* (for many of the textual errors in this poem consist of omitting *n* or inserting it wrongly); the *ne to* phrases here are litotes for 'not at all'.

*fleah*: in OE verse the simple past tense was much used for continuous, uncompleted or inceptive action. The sense here is 'turned to flee'.

*gehaeged*: since the metre requires  $\bar{\text{u}}$ , this cannot be connected with the 'hedge' word. Bouterwek's *gehnæged* is clearly right; the sense is 'dejected' i.e. 'robbed of valour'.

172. *segncyning*: gives no good sense, and the repetition of *segn* is peculiarly pointless. At the same time, *sigecyning* would give very dubious metre. I think *sige-* has been altered by anticipation of *segn*; but also that *-cyning* has been substituted for its synonym *-dryhten*. Cf. 92, where *drihten* has probably been substituted for *waldend*.

*wið þone segn foran*: note the archaic word-order.

173. *‡mearcþreat*: the comitative use of the instrumental dative. The *þreat* is called a *mearcþreat* because it was then on the borders of Egypt.

174-5. *grimhelm gespeon . . . cinberge*: 'he clasped the masked helm with the chin-guard', i.e. he drew down his vizor and fastened it to the chin-guard. This is more precise than most references to armour in OE poetry; *cinbeorg* occurs here only in verse, and in an unaltered Anglian form. The action is a sign that battle was near.

176. *on wenum*: so 213, and *on wenan* 165; both probably *wena* 'expectation' rather than *wen* f. (*on wene* sg. does not occur in verse).

*hwælhlenca*: evidently an error for *wæl-*, as in *‡wælnet* 202; cf. *wæhlhencan* n. pl. *El* 24, *‡hlencan* acc. pl. 218.

*sceoc*: 'he shook down his coat of mail'; the long hauberk would ruckle up in riding, and needed to be shaken down before battle was joined. Cf. *syrca* *hrysedon*, *Beow* 226, where (*pace* Klæber) the Geats shook out their mail-shirts as they disembarked (*hrysia* is a transitive verb).

178. *freond on sigon*: exemplifies the principle that dialectal or archaic forms are most likely to slip through in connection with an error. If the copyist had recognized *sēgon* he would have changed it to WS *sāwon*. There is no such verb as *onseon* in OE; *on* here is an adverb, as in 278; cf. *weas on sawon*, *Beow* 1650.

180. *wegan*: not intransitive in OE. This fact, combined with imperfect metre, indicates that an object has been omitted; it would refer to weapons or armour (cf. 157, 574). *Wæpn* is the probable word, for it would help to explain the jump to *wægon*.

*wigend unforhte*: so also 328b. The scansion of this half-line would be solved by reading *wīgan*; but the substitution is unlikely, because *wīga* is the rarer word. However, it is possible that *wigend* existed beside *wīgend*. The old short (aorist) grade *\*wīg-* is known to have coexisted with the full grade *\*wīh-/wīg-* in this verb: usually it became *\*wegan* in Gmc.; so ON *vega*, OE *gewegan* *Beow* 2400, *bewegen* and *forwegen*, *BMald* 183, 228. An infinitive *wigan* occurs in verse only in *Beow* 2509 and *BMald* 126, both of which could have a short stem. Thus an old word *\*wigands* 'fighter' could become partly assimilated to the infinitive *wigan*, while *wigend* survived in a few set phrases.

181. *hare þeoruwulfas*: to appreciate this concise and forceful expression, we should recognize that *har* was associated both with armour (especially the *byrne*); and that wolves were associated with warriors, especially with attacking or pursuing enemies.

183. *alesen*: the rhythm with delayed rising stress (A3) is frequently used in paragraph-openings, especially in the form with 'have' + p. part. *Hæfde him alesen* does not scan, but probably only the inflexional -e has been omitted: *alesene* agrees with *dugede* (acc. rather than gen.), or possibly with *pusendo*.

185. *þæt wæron: wæron*, because *pusendo* is pl.; *þæt* is 'all these, what we have been describing', for n. sg. in such cases is normal OE idiom.

184-9. The figure 2,000 does not derive from Scripture. According to Exod. xiv.7 Pharaoh took 'six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains (*duces*) over every one of them'. On this basis, the poet could form a picture of the king (*gudweard gumena*) with his own picked troops; and of the captains each bringing with him a personal following. Since Scripture gives no definite account of the Egyptian organization, the poet probably assumed that it would be similar to that of Israel. Certainly a parallelism between the two troops is conveyed in verbal echoes: Egypt, *herescite* 177, *alesen(e) leoda dugede tireadigra twa pusendo* 183-4, *æðelum deore* 186; Israel, *cysta gehwile* 230, *æðelan cynnes alesen under lindum leoda dugede* 227-8, *tireadigra* 232. The total of the Israelite force is given as 603,550 (Num. i.46), as 600,000 (Exod. xii.37). The organization was tribal, and depended on blood-right. Thus Moses, the supreme commander, had in his personal following twelve chieftains, each chief by right of lineage and commander of a host. Thus each captain could be regarded as a *cynig* at the head of his *cynn*; all were related, in direct line of descent from Jacob. This organization of the Israelite army is reflected in *cyningas ond cneowmagas*. The number of Pharaoh's host had in fact been calculated and was a piece of traditional lore, reproduced in the fragment *Pharaoh* of the *Exeter Book*. The text (incomplete through damage to the MS) reads: "'Tell me what was the number of the whole host of Pharaoh's army, when they in their enmity set out in pursuit of God's people.'" "I do not know it at all, but I think this: that there was reckoned in number of chariots six hundred . . . of armed men; all that the wave . . . destroyed etc.'" The 600 chariots are derived from Exod. xiv.6-7; but it is clear that this was regarded only as the number of Pharaoh's personal host, and the total was vaster. Frankly, I do not understand the reason for *twa pusendo*.

186. *on þæt eade riht*: there is no such adjective as *ead* in OE. It is supposed to occur in *ic þe ead mæg . . . or gecyðan, Jul* 352-3. But in the context this seems to be an error for *ic þe eade mæg*; cf. *ead* for *eade* in *Gen* 2058. Kluge was right to emend to *ealde*. For the term, cf. *Beow* 2330; *eald* means almost 'historical/Scriptural' in *ealdum witum* 33 and *ealdwerige* 50.

190-1. *þingemen*: *in-gemann* belongs to a large group of words in which the prefix means 'belonging to a household (see below on *incaþeode* 444) or native land'; see on *ingefolca* 142.

*cyningas* is best explained as an error for *cyninges*, influenced by *-as* above; though confusion of *-es/-as* is not infrequent in verse texts. All the household troops were in the king's escort.

191. *cuð*: here probably 'familiar'; the horn gave recognized signals. No doubt the *herebyman* 99 were blowing a recognized reveille. Again, a single trumpeter gave the signal for tent-pitching (132) and 'another signal for striking tents (222).

*gebad*: plainly an error for *gebead*; cf. *Ph* 497 *æriste . . . beodeð brego engla byman stefne*.

194. *eorp*: 'dark, swarthy'. Quite apart from Latin learning, the northern peoples knew by rumour of the dark Mediterranean faces, as of the Nubian blackness of the *Sigelhearwan* further south.

194 f. *ecan læddon*: the subject of *læddon* is probably the Egyptians in general; *ecan* has given trouble. There is no reason in the narrative for *eacan* 'reinforcements', and the apposition to *eorp werod* would be awkward. If we read *ec on læddon*, *swa* will refer forward: 'so, next'. We have had the royal household troops, the great captains and feudal lords, now we have the main mass of the army, the *leodmægnes worn*: 'next there were led forth also the swarthy companies etc.'. By this reading, *on* is a stressed adverb, *ec* (*eac*) an unstressed particle; for this treatment of *eac*, cf. *Beow* 388a, *Cri* 1152b, 1163b.

197-8. Something is wrong with the repeated *to þam*. Elsewhere *ærdæge* is always used with *mid* or *samod*. But *to ærdæge* is a possible variation on *to morgne*, as in *An* 220-1, *mid ærdæge, emne to morgene*. Once this phrase was modernized to *to þam ærdæge*, it could influence the preceding comitative dative *þam mægenheapum*.

202. *weredon wælnet*: the verb is ambiguous. *Werian*<sup>1</sup> properly means 'to clothe, wrap', with instrumental of the thing used. This sense is then syntactically excluded. *Werian*<sup>2</sup> is 'to defend, ward off', with accusative of the thing protected or repelled; *werian*, *bewerian* can also mean 'to prohibit, restrain, hinder' [in *PPs* and prose texts, especially the translation of Bede]. What then is the subject? The Israelites cannot be said to 'defend their mail-shirts' by comparison with 236-7, *breostnet . . . folnum werigean*; for these lines describe the action of warriors in battle. Here there is sudden surprise and a wail of alarm. † *Wælnet* must therefore be subject, as *egesan* is of *stodon*. It need not mean 'mail-shirts', in spite of *wæhlencan* 176, *breostnet* 236, and *herenet*, *hringnet*, and *searonet* in *Beowulf*. *Searonet*, *An* 64 and *searonettum*, *An* 945 refer to the restraints by which Matthew is bound in prison. These uses are more natural and functional, since *nett* is a device for catching and holding. The *-net* compounds in *Beowulf* (and *Ex* 236) are more fanciful and pictorial, showing a hyperbolic craft-analogy, which is explicit in *byrne . . . searonet seowed*, *Beow* 405-6. It seems that in † *wælnet*, *net* has its functional sense: the Israelites were caught in 'deadly toils'. But can *weredon* then mean 'hindered'? No case is expressed; but these staccato phrases are elliptical and their construction is not complete

(*stodon* is not accompanied by indication of source or recipient). *Weredon* may well be corrupt, since *wælnet* interpreted as *byrne* would suggest clothing. If so, the alternative is *wyrgan* 'choke, strangle' (OHG *wurgen*), which appears only in the gloss *wyrgeþ: strangulat*. Note the parallel passages 136-7, 491-2; in all three cases *egesan stodon* is accompanied by a *wæl*-compound.

203. *anmod*: *ān-* is proved by the variant *onmod*, *An* 54, *Guð* 717, *Finsb* 12. Also by its derivative *anmedla* 'high spirit, presumptuous pride'.

204. ‡*wigblac*: *blāc* is usually applied to fire and light; this sense would be merely pictorial, with no contextual contrast. But *blac* can indicate pallor, especially in its derivatives *blacung*, *blacian*, and *blæco*. It is used of the pallor of death, or approaching death: cf. *Jud* 278, *Beow* 2488; the ME *Sawles Warde* [ed. R. M. Wilson, Leeds Monographs iii (1938), 63-4] *his leor deaðlich ond blac*. The Israelites were at this point still unmarshalled, disorganized, and despairing (Exod. xiv.10 *timuerunt valde*). Notice the antiphonal passage when the Egyptians are the *floodblac here*, 497.

*wlance forsceaf*: the meaning of ‡*forscufan* is not entirely clear. The sense 'thrust apart' cannot be altogether dismissed, and in that case *wlance* would apply to both the armies 'in proud array'. But the interpretation of *wigblac* is against this. The more probable sense is 'thrust off, repel', taking *wlance* of the Egyptians; cf. *wlance peode* 486.

206-7. The reciprocal relation is sufficiently expressed by *gelaðe* 'paired in enmity, reciprocally hostile'. But for *mid him* in reciprocal expressions, cf. *Beow* 2948, *An* 1049, 1053-5.

207. *sīð wæs gedæled*: a final disconnected concluding phrase was often used in OE verse to close a paragraph. There is now a respite, from nightfall to daybreak. Nothing more will be heard of the Egyptians for some time. The poet is going to occupy the interval with an account of the organization of Israel and the way it escaped from bondage; also, he will recapitulate the title of Israel to the Promised Land, beginning with the escape of the family of Noah from the greatest of all floods.

210. *hwyrft*: literally 'turning', here 'change of direction'. *Mara* has not its commonest sense 'greater', but 'more, further'; hence 'they had no further (room/chance for) turning', there was no way of escape left.

212. *in blacum reafum*: not here 'bright' with reference to the glitter of metal. This is *eal seo sibgedriht*, the whole people of Israel. Even the fighting-men would not wear armour all night; indeed, they were summoned at dawn to put on their armour (216-19). Metre also requires *blācum*, since an opening weak syllable was carefully avoided in Type A in the b-line. Precisely what the poet intended is not clear, unless it was a sombre colour-symbol to go with *wean on wenum*.

216. *benum*: obviously an error for *bemum*; again, a non-WS form has caused the transcriber to make a mistake. There is no mention of trumpets in Scripture at this point, and the poet is probably drawing on native

tradition. But Num. x.1-10 contains detailed regulations for the use of trumpet-signals; these trumpets were to be made of silver.

218. Cf. *Finsb.* 11 *habbað eowre handa* (usually emended *linda*), *hicgeað on ellen*; also *BMald* 4.

220-1. *snelle*: pl. adj., agreeing with *weardas*; these may be sentinels, but *weard* is so frequently used of a governor or man in charge that the meaning is probably 'officers'.

222. *byman*: probably acc. sg., since *byme* 132 gave the corresponding signal for pitching tents.

224 ff. These arrangements and calculations do not of course come from the Book of Exodus, nor directly from any part of Scripture. They depend largely on the accounts of the numbering of Israel in Num. i and xxvi. Num. i gives the figures of each of the twelve divisions in effective fighting men, with the names of their twelve captains. The total was 603,550 (Num. i.46), agreeing closely enough with the figure of Exod. xii.37 'about 600,000 on foot'.

225. †*fordherge*: 'van' is not quite accurate, since this is not the forward part of the *here*, but the *here* that went ahead. *Feda* 'company of men on the march' has no precise numerical significance; in native contexts it was applied to quite small bands. It is chosen here for the great tribal divisions, probably because they were on foot (Exod. xii.37).

229. *cista*: also of no clear numerical significance. It is a speciality of this poet's. *Cist* as a simplex occurs only in this poem (229, 230); so too the compounds †*guðcyst* 343, †*hercist* 177, 257, -*cyst* 301. Elsewhere there is only *eoredcyst* 'troop of cavalry' *Pan* 52, *Ph* 325, *Brun* 21, *El* 36. Since the feminine gender is clear, I believe this *cist/cyst* to be merely a special use of *cyst* f. 'choice, the best part of anything' (not so Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (1934), s.v. *ciest*).

226. *mode rofa*: clearly genitive plural is required, as in 231, 232, 247. Instrumental dative can be used to show the source or location of a quality (cf. 'strong in courage'), though genitive as in *modes rofan* 98 is much more frequent; cf. *mode rof*, *An* 625, 984.

230. *cuð*: probably 'well-known, famous in history'; but it could be 'akin', since in some uses it develops towards 'familiar, friendly'.

233-4. *gretton in*: since it is clear that we are dealing with admission into the *rinc-getal*, Grein-Köhler is probably right in glossing *gretan* as 'summon'; this nonce-usage is a branch of the meaning 'hail, accost'. The scriptural basis is Num. i.3.

236. *bordhreoðan*: 'phalanx, serried rank' rather than 'shield'; see note above on *scyldhreoða* 113, and cf. *bordhreoðan* 189, and especially 320, where the sense must be 'ranks'. *Under* is the correct idiomatic term for standing in a *scyldtruma*; it is also used of anybody or anything inside a closed space, as *under burglocan*, etc.

237. *flane*: *flah* occurs twice elsewhere in verse, and in the EE Glossary, *flach*: *infestus*; it was apparently influenced by the rhyming word *fah*, and there is an evident association between perfidy and hostility. Probable cognates are ON *flár* 'treacherous' and OHG *flēhan* 'adulari, blandiri'. A verb *ulē*- 'speak false' < OE \**flǣ(a)n* survives in ME (AB language of *Hali Meïðhad*, *S. Katherine*). In the same area, OE *flah* may have survived; the variants in *Sawles Warde* 157 (Wilson) *fah* *blisse* R. T., *false*—B. suggest a reading *flah*.

239. *ofer linde lærig*: 'passing the *lærig* of the shield'. *Lærig* occurs only here and in *BMald* 284 *bordes lærig*. These two occurrences illustrate the fragmentary nature of our knowledge of the heroic alliterative tradition; but also their witness, so widely separated in time, is practically decisive on the form, *lærig*. In my opinion, it can be derived from Lat. *lōrica*, through late British or early Welsh (before AD 700). *Lorica* is formed from *lōrum* 'thong', and meant a cuirass of plaited leather thongs; but it was already in classical Latin applied to various other protections: a breastwork, parapet, fence or hedge, or any outer protective covering. The sense 'protective border' would fit the two verse passages and could also apply to the only other occurrence, the Aldhelm gloss *ambiuntur*: *syn emblærgide*, referring to borders of sleeves (A. S. Napier, *Anecdota Oxoniensia* (1900), 8.377). But the phonology of this borrowing has seemed too difficult, for the Welsh form is *llurig*. Yet *llurig* is a semi-learned form, with [ō] of *lōrica* restored at some stage; cf. *Dunawt* > *Dōnātus*. The normal development in popular and colloquial Latin would have been *lorica* > Brit. *lorig*. Unrounding of pretonic [o] > [a] can be postulated in some cases: e.g. Lat. *corrīgia* > mid Welsh *carrei* 'thong'. Brit. \**larig* would produce (either before i-affection, or at an early stage of this change) a suitable base for *lærig*; cf. *latīna* > OE *læden*. This view differs entirely from that of M. Förster, *Keltisches Wortgut im Englischen* (1921), p. 171.

*licwunde swor*: there is little doubt that *swor* is an error for *spor*; cf. *purh wæpnas spor*, *Jul* 623, *lætad* <*wæpnas*> *spor*, *iren ecgheard ea* <1> *dorgeard sceoran*, *An* 1180 (the emendation is confirmed by metre and alliteration). But in these two examples the phrase means 'weapon'; *licwunde spor* refers to wounds. An original image 'mark/trace of a weapon' became on the one hand a cliché, applied to the agent. Here, *spor* retains its sense, which is merely specialized by *licwunde*, thus 'body-wound mark'; the causal genitive *gylpplegan gares* follows in elaborated form.

243. *wig curon*: *wig*- needs completion, and could be emended *wigend*; for the metre cf. *Beow* 1457b [Pope's *Catalogue A* 98, six examples]. This fits better than a compound, since the choice concerns individuals, not groups.

244. *læstan*: should be transitive, with *mod* as object. The sense 'fulfil, make effective' is attested for (ge)*læstan*. *Wolde* is then another example of pret. pl. subj. without ending (cf. 124, 151, etc.).

245-6. Evidently a half-line is missing, either before or after *garbeames feng*; *eac þon* may simply add a detail without change of construction (so 381, 545), or it may be followed by a new subject (so 374). I now prefer the

former, taking *eac þon mægnes cræft* as parallel with what precedes. The next statement then has the plural subject carried over from *læstan wolde*. Read *gretan* (or *gretten*) *æt guðe garbeames feng*. I take *garbeames feng* to mean 'act of grasping/handling the spear-shaft'. For this range of sense in *gretan*, cf. *Beow* 1065, 2108 (of handling a harp), also *hilde gretton* 181.

281. *fus*: can be construed with genitive in *siðes fus*, but is not so found with *forðweg*, which is always preceded by *on/in*. The obvious emendation is *fus on forðwegas*; cf. *fus on forðweg* 129, also *Guð* 801, 945.

*Fana* is generally assumed to refer to one of the pillars. But a *fana* is a flag or ensign, that flaps in the wind; cf. *MetB* 1.10. It accords with the verb *ridan*, which can be used to describe motion to and fro of something attached; cf. *ridan on gealgan* in *Beow* 2445 and *Fates* 33; *on ancre rad*, *Beow* 1883. It seems more probable that the poet is describing the scene largely in terms of contemporary military custom, with horn-signals and standards. As soon as the marshalling is finished, the banner is raised, to indicate that the host is ready for battle. *Fana up rad* does not scan. The emendation *gerad* is not acceptable, for *geridan* is normally transitive, and is so in the only occurrence in verse, *Beow* 2928. Read *uppe* 'on high'.

249. *beama beorhtost*: if *fana* means 'banner', *beama* must be emended to *beacna*; cf. *Beow* 2776-7, *segn . . . beacna beorhtost*.

*buton*: generally taken to be an error for *bidon*. Again there is failure to recognize a dialect form, probably *biudon*.

250. *hwonne*: has the idiomatic sense 'until'; cf. 471-4 *hwonne . . . come*. The construction is the same as that of *oð* (*þæt*): with indicative of achieved event (so 59, 204, 215); with subjunctive of event still in the future at the time thought of. I have not found another case of *hwonne* + indicative in verse: and *bræce* is here metrically impossible. The syntax is of some critical importance. For if the army waited until the *siðboda* did actually appear, it must have appeared before Moses sent out his *hildecalla*.

‡*siðboda*: *boda* means 'announcer, herald'; cf. ‡*nydboda* 474, *spelboda* 513. This then is the herald to announce the time for the march. It is not necessarily the Pillar of Cloud. *Lyftedoras* is probably 'borders of the sky', i.e. the horizon; *eodor* means both 'fence (protection)' and 'fenced enclosure, a court'. The phrase should therefore mean 'broke through the fences of the sky', i.e. rose over the horizon into the open sky. Cf. ON *sólar jadarr* 'the court of the sun' = heavens. These words are only strictly applicable to something bright appearing above the horizon.

[Tolkien's argument that *siðboda . . . lyftedoras bræc* refers to sunrise is expanded in an excursus on the Pillars. The argument is unconvincing; he does not quite convince himself that 250-1 is an anticipation of the sunrise clearly described in 344-6. But some interesting points are made about the appearances of the Pillars and the terms used to describe them.]

The words of Scripture suggest, without making explicit, that the 'pillar' was a kind of moving column or tower in which the Lord himself was present; that it was always there before the Israelite host, and that it had two forms: a cloud by day, at night shining like fire (Exod. xiii.21-2). When

the Egyptians overtook Israel at the fourth camp, the 'pillar' changed positions, and went behind the Israelites to protect them; it gave both darkness and light, and prevented the armies seeing each other (Exod. xiv. 19-20). After that we hear no more of the 'pillar' as a guide; but it is said that the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud (Exod. xiv. 24).

In accordance with these passages, the poet represents *columna* by *beam*: *beamas twegen* 93-4, *byrnende beam* 111 (note that *fyrenne beam* is used in *PPs* 104.34, translating *expandit nubem in protectionem eorum et ignem ut luceret eis per noctem*). He says nothing of either pillar at the fourth camp, when an angel separates the hosts, 204-5. He never mentions the presence of God in Cloud or Fire. This is in keeping with his general treatment, in which God is seen only through the words and deeds of Moses. He regards the *beamas* as emblems of God's protection and guidance; they performed his will (*heahþegnunga haliges gastes* 96) and were actually controlled by an angel. But the poet attributes functions to the pillars not mentioned in the narrative of Exodus. The Cloud is a protection against the sun, and against the fierce heat of Africa. One reason for this is the association between Ethan and the people of Ethiopia in Ps. lxxiii. 14, 15 (see note on 66). Another can be seen in Ps. civ. 34 cited above. The Fire is represented (without scriptural authority) as guarding the camp and suppressing rebellion.

The poet describes these 'pillars' in terms that have little to do with columns. The Cloud is *wederwolcen* 75, *wolcen* 93; it is a net, a sail, a tent 74-85; perhaps, *siðboda* 250; finally, *wuldres beam* 567. The Fire is *byrnende beam* 111; it is a *foregenga* with *fyrene loccas*, *blace beamas* 120-1. The confusion here is compounded by naming it *heofonbeacen* 115; for this is a normal poetic term for the sun. The poet always thinks of the Cloud together with the sun: it absorbs the sun's heat, *ligfyr adranc* 77; and itself gives light, *heofontorht* 78, *lyftwundor leoht* 90. I do not think that *heofonbeacen astah* 107 refers to the Cloud. By the rearrangement of 93-107, this phrase refers to sunrise, and is followed by *scean scir werod*, *scyldas lixton* 125. The Cloud is present, *lifes latþeow*, *segl* 104-5; but it is not the signal for rising and starting.

252-98. Our poet has chosen to construct a passage which is mostly a harangue by Moses. It is based on the exhortation of Moses when the Egyptian pursuit became known (Exod. xiv. 13, 14) and the following words of God to Moses (Exod. xiv. 15-18), and a brief narrative verse (Exod. xiv. 21). He seems to have done this partly because he deliberately represents Moses as the hero of the Exodus and the Crossing—though he has at all points the aid of God, and acknowledges this. It is also part of the way the scriptural narrative shaped itself in his mind.

252. †*hildecalla*: evidently a military herald. The stem otherwise occurs in OE only in *ceallian*, *BMald* 91. I think there can be no doubt that *c(e)allian* was part of the OE verse vocabulary, even if it had fallen out of ordinary colloquial use (but cognates exist not only in ON, but also in OHG and MLG). Preservation in traditional verse-language of a word widely used in

another dialect or related language is a frequent event in linguistic history: e.g. ON *gamall*, the normal word for 'old', OE *gamol* in verse only, mostly in *Beowulf*; *hrið* 'storm', common in ON, in OE only in *Wand* 102.

253. *beohata*: one of the scribal falsehoods of this MS (like *dryrmyde* 40, *meoringa* 62). *Bôdhata* (Bouterwek) still seems the best guess; *boda* exists as simplex, beside more usual *gebod*. The formation of compounds with agent-nouns of the weak declension was very common in OE; it can hardly be called 'obscure' (Krapp, 1931). The sense would be 'announcer of orders/messages'. This is the man sent by Moses to call for silence; he lifts up his shield as a sign that he has a message.

255. *gehyrdon*: for *-en* subj., since *penden* introduces a clause of wish or purpose.

275. *ofer*: frequently used of the direction of the voice. The implication of *reordigean ofer* is that the voice should reach the furthest rank.

264. *moton*: for *-en* subj., since an unrealized future is referred to.

265. *ægnian*: probably *ægnian*, variant of *āgnian*. The form does occur: in the Rushworth gloss to Luke xii.44 *ængað* (*sic*), and *æгнаð* in the Hatton MS of CP 334. 13 (v.l. *agnað*); cf. Goth *aiginon*. The sense is probably 'possess, lord it over'; cf. *agendfrea* 'master (of a slave)'.<sup>1</sup>

266. *ne willað*: I doubt now whether this is imperative; it seems rather to go with *wile* 261. Moses is being prophetic, and ironic: 'To them all God today by my hand will give their deserts . . . You will not be afraid of dead troops . . .'.<sup>2</sup>

269. *ic on*: Cosijn's (1895) emendation *ic con* is obviously right. *Cunnan ræd* 'to have a plan or policy' is an idiom that survives in ME. *Unnan* always governs the genitive, and its sense 'yield, give up willingly' is quite unsuitable.

275. *þære*: is not needed, and accus. *hand* shows that it is a false addition. In Anglian and so usually in verse *mid* takes accusative, but in WS usually instrumental/dative. Here there is an aside by the narrator, to mark the sudden change in tone and force of Moses' utterance. The poet has delayed the actual miracle of the dividing of the waters for this moment. The OE tenses do not make for clarity in such situations; but the perfect tense is expressed by *sloh* 280, *fornam* 289, etc.

277. *lifigendra þeod*: in the context, this must be Moses (especially in view of *for hergum*), therefore *þeod* is an error. It could arise from confusion between *†leod* m. 'prince'; *†þeoden* m. 'prince, king'; *leod* f. and *þeod* f. 'people, nation'. Probably *þeod* represents an incomplete alteration from *leod* to *þeoden*; which will not scan. If we read *leod* here, it will be necessary to alter *leodum* to *leofum*.

278. *eagum to*: it is best to omit *to* (so Bright). Separated *on* placed before the verb is quite sufficient; for a similar context, cf. 178-9.

280. *hu ic sylfa sloh*: virtually present, 'I have struck'. To define the time-reference of the simple past tense, *ær* is frequently used to indicate pluperfect. It might be expected that *nu* would be used to define the perfect, and this does occur quite often in verse: e.g. *Beow* 430, 2799, 3020; *Finsb* 21; *Cri* 83; *El* 1170; *Gen* 730; *Cr & S* 109, 391; *Ex* 295, 421. *Nu* used as a conjunction is frequent in correlative constructions: e.g. *Beow* 430. It seems almost certain that we should emend to *nu*, correlating with *nu* 278. For corruption of *nu* to *hu* in a correlative construction (in present tense) cf. *Ap* 88-91.

281. *grene tacne*: *grene* reveals that *tacne* is an error for *tane*. The poet may have been aware that *virga* (Exod. xiv. 16) properly meant a green shoot or fresh-cut rod. *Tan* is also suitable because of its native magical associations: it was used in sortilege, cf. the gloss *tanhlytā*: 'diviner'.

283. *wæter ond wealfæsten*: *ond* should be omitted as an error caused by misunderstanding; for *wæter* is clearly parallel to *yð* (representative singular). *Wealfæsten* occurs again in 483, and in *Gen* 1058, describing the first of all walled cities.

284. *haswe*: the dun, dusty colour of well-trodden roads is meant. *Herestræt* = *herepæð*, the ordinary word for a military road, high-road. The long dry passage ran between the ominous ramparts out to sea, like a trampled dusty military road.

*gerymed*: to make a thing *rum* is to make it open, unrestricted, free of obstacles. 'The sea is laid open to you, the old foundations' is in effect 'the old bottoms of the sea are laid open to passage.'

287-8. *forð heonon . . . þeah-ton*: the whole passage *þa ic ær* 285—*sæcir span* 291 will have to be treated as a narrative interpolation within the speech, unless *forð heonon* can be explained. The words in 287-8 cannot well be altered, except for *in ece*; Kluge was right to read in *ec<nyss>e*, though *ec<ness>e* is better. The explanation must therefore lie in something other than textual corruption. The situation is exceptional: a poet is attempting to combine narrative (based on Scripture) with a feigned speech. After the statement that no human foot had before trodden the *ealde staðolas*, *fage feldas* it might be expected that a narrator would explain why; because (in the past time referred to) they had always been deep under the waves. This would involve a backward, rather than a forward, prospect of eternity. Although eternity is normally represented as a forward prospect, the direction depends on the point of view. This poet is often bold, even strained in his use of language. He seems to be using the fixed expression *forð heonon* 'reckoning on from now' in the sense 'from now back into eternity'.

289. *sælde sægrundas*: resumption of *ealde staðolas*, *fage feldas*. *Sælan* means 'to tie', and is elsewhere used of anchors, bonds, fetters, etc. The sense 'imprisoned' is passable, but is made to fit the context. Otherwise we must emend, and assume intrusion of the vowel of a neighbouring word. If *æ* is caught from *sægrundas*, *side* for *sælde* is a possible suggestion (so Cosijn<sup>2</sup>).

*suðwind fornam: sund wind fornam* (Cosijn<sup>2</sup>) is clearly right, and is reasonably related to Exod. xiv.21 *abstulit illud* (sc. *mare*) *Dominus flante vento vehementi et urente*. *Bæðweges blæst*, in apposition, is equivalent to 'blowing over the sea'.

290. *bring is areafod: brim wæs* gives the most plausible emendation, since the presence of *wyn* offers some explanation of the corruption.

291. *span*: I do not believe in *spau* = *spaw*. Spewing does not suit the context, which differs entirely from *holm heolfre spaw* 449 (where *spewan* has dative of the object, as usual). The picture here is of waters reared and moveless, like walls with their feet on the sand; and *sand* is the dry sea-floor (*vertit in siccum*). It seems therefore that *span* is either *spinnan* III (BTS), similar in sense to *spornan/spurnan*; or an error for *sparn/spearn* 'trod, set foot on', cf. *sondlond gespearn*, *Guð* 1334.

*sæcir*: an odd but not impossible spelling for *sæcyrr*|-*cierr*, non-WS -*cerr*. *Wipercyrr*, *El* 925 apparently means 'turning-back, way back'. The use of *sæcerr* 'turning-back of the sea' to mean 'turned-back sea, rearing sea' is not too bold for this poet. The phrase may of course be quite corrupt.

293. *ærglade*: the nearest parallel is *ærgod* 5 × in *Beowulf*, applied 2 × to a sword, 3 × to *æpeling*. The sense is fairly certainly 'of ancient worth, long ago proved good'. *Glæd* meant originally 'bright'. This sense still occurs in several places in OE verse; but its normal development was 'bright of mood, merry', weakening to 'cheerful, good-tempered, gracious' (this development was shared by ON). Another natural development would be 'splendid, glorious'. This sense is rare, hardly ever applied to persons; but it seems the most likely interpretation of *glæde Scyldingas*, *Beow* 58. On this interpretation, Moses is reproaching the Israelites for lack of faith. Of old God showed them his mercy, and they were glorious; so they should accept this miracle as a sign of his favour.

296. *randgebeorh*: 'marginal protection', i.e. a rampart along the borders of the road. See note on *randbyrig* 463.

305. The end of this line is lost, by another of the tiresome omissions of this MS. It contained the subject of *heold*, probably the sea (*fæðmas* 504 is used of the sea). Kluge's *swylce him yða weall* is the best and most idiomatic of the proposed fillings.

308-9. Here the central difficulty is *læste near*. In relation to this are the certainties that *leofes leop* must refer to Moses' speech, whereas *sweg* and *sances bland* must refer to the clamour of the host. To make all three the subject of *swiðrode* is stylistically improbable. It seems that a verb connected with *leofes leop* is missing; something has probably been omitted after *near*. *Læst* is usually taken to be a noun of action to the verb *læstan*, here meaning 'performance'; but there seems to be no good evidence for such a word. *Læstan* is itself derived from *læst/last* 'track, footprint' and hence 'position behind' of a follower or supporter. The sense 'closer behind' is entirely satisfactory, but it requires assumption of an omission. The comparative *near* conveys a sense of motion; cf. *ferede . . . oðle nior*, *Gen*

2089-91, *near ætgongan*, *Az* 183. Thus it is correct with a word meaning 'footsteps' but not with any word meaning 'performance'. If after *near* we supply *læstan ongunnon leoda duguðe*, there is reason for the abnormal *læst* and a partial explanation of the lacuna. For these reasons, I think the poet wrote something of this sort: 'They did not indeed condemn the exhortation of the holy one; when brave men close behind him began to carry out the beloved leader's speech, all clamour ceased and the confusion of voices.'

309. *sances bland*: the collocation with *sweg* seems to show that *sanges* is meant. The error is probably not phonetic, but casual; part of the confusion in an illegible or carelessly copied passage. *Sang* need not refer to any formal song, and (as used of the cries of beasts, sound of horns, etc.) means here 'upraised voices'. *Bland* only occurs elsewhere in the compound *windblond*, *Beow* 3146. Emendation to *blan(n)* is at first sight attractive, for *blinnan* takes the genitive. But there is no suitable subject, and although *blinnan* can be intransitive, it is not used impersonally.

310. *þæt feorðe cyn*: Judah was fourth in birth-order of the sons of Jacob (Gen. xxxv.23). The first, Reuben, was deposed because of his sin (Gen. xlix.3), and Judah's primacy is mentioned (Gen. xlix.9, 10). The traditional reason for this placing is that Judah was ultimately the most important in the history of Salvation.

312. *grenne grund*: *grene* was alliteratively linked with *grund*; cf. *An.* 776. For a figurative use, see *grene stræte*, *Cr & Sat* 286.

313. *an onorette*: a verb is required, and it is likely to be *onettan*. Though the construction is rather unusual, I think we have here *on* separated from the noun it governs (*uncuð gelad*); *an* represents the stressed form of the displaced preposition, *on* is reduplication.

315. *deop*: frequent in the sense 'profound, grave, solemn'; again in 506, and *deop ærende* 518.

318. *cneowmaga blæd*: 'the glory (chief ornament) of his kinsmen'. The *cynericu* refers to the realms to be gained by the Children of Israel.

319. *hæfdon him*: the lack of expressed subject is good OE, if we treat 310-30 as an unbroken whole. The sectional division (xlvi) is here again unsuitable.

323. *be þam*: idiomatic for 'by which sign or token'; cf. *BMald* 9. *Herewisa* occurs only here and *Beow* 3020 (of Beowulf himself). It could refer to the lion-standard (so Cosijn<sup>2</sup>); but the use of *be* would not be natural. So *herewisan* means the captains of the army; read *be þam (þæt) . . . wolden (-on for -en/-e subj.)* 'in token that the captains would not . . . '.

324. *be him lifigendum*: 'as long as life was theirs'; cf. *Beow* 2665.

326. *þraca*: plainly an error for *þracu*.

327. *hægsteald modig*: *hagu-|hægsteald* is an ancient word meaning unmarried man, one still in the service of a superior. It was not originally

a consonant stem (cf. ON runic *hagustaldaz*); the expected plural *hæg-stealdas* occurs in *Finsb* 40. But possibly it also developed a consonantal declension, by the influence of words in the same area of meaning: *hælep*, and especially participial nouns such as *wigend*. The two occurrences of g. pl. *hægstealdra* in verse (*Gen* 1862, *Beow* 1889) support this view, which would imply n. acc. pl. *hægsteald*. Alternatively, *hægsteald*, *wigend* 328 and *bilswaðu* 329 could all be representative singular, with scribal alteration of the adjectives.

328. *wæpna wælslihtes*: depends on *modig*.

329. *bilswaðu*: *swaðu* f. is far commoner than *swæð* m., which does not otherwise occur in compounds; *bilswaðu blodig* is thus a probable emendation.

333. *sæwicingas*: one of the earliest examples of OE *wicing* 'sea-rover'. The form shows that it was a native word, cognate with ON *vikingr*. *Wicingas* occurs as a tribal name in *Wids* 47, and again in a similar North Sea context with *Wen*<*d*>*lum ond Wærnum*, *Wids* 59.

334. *angetrum*: probably *ān-*, though it is not clear whether the sense is 'united' or 'singular, distinguished'. For *ān* 'unique, pre-eminently distinguished', cf. *an foran ealdgestreona*, *Beow* 1458 and *þæt wæs an cyning*, *Beow* 1885.

338. *oðþah*: *þāh* has replaced the correct preterite *þēah*, non-WS *þāh*. Since *þicgan* had developed a pret. *þigde* in IWS, the old poetic form could be confused with the variants *þāh/þēah* to the preterite of *þēon* 'thrive'.

339. *gearu*: since the alliteration is vocalic, this must be an alteration of a similar-looking adjective. Dietrich suggested *\*earu*, cognate with ON *qrr/qrv-* 'swift, ready, liberal', OS *aru* 'ready', Gmc. *\*arwa-*. Some of the ancient words of OE verse-tradition occur only once; cf. *hos*, *Beow* 924, *hrið*, *Wand* 102, *alh*, *Exod* 392.

340. An alliterating word has fallen out, a verb agreeing with *sunu* sg. Read *for þær æfter him*, or better, *for þær him æfter*. *Comon* then goes with *þeodmægen*, which is plural in sense.

341-3. *sweotum comon . . . garfare*: all this should be taken as a parenthesis, making *sunu* subject of *onþrang*.

344. *deawig sceaftum*: to be read as a compound, 'with spears bedewed', showing an archaic practice of joining uninflected adjective to its noun; cf. *ealdhlaforðes*, *Beow* 2778, *ealdgestreona*, *Beow* 1458, *under heahrodore*, *Gen* 151. *Deawig* alludes to the night-damp associated with the chill early light, and so prepares for the vision of the rising sun.

346. *mære torht*: emend *meretorht* 'sea-bright, bright above the sea'. The collocation occurs in *MetB* 13.61; cf. also *meresmylta wic*, *MetB* 21.12 'place in a calm sea'.

*mægen forð gewat*: a concluding phrase. The poet next constructs a link with what he has in mind to tell of the ancestry of Israel, and the foundation of their right to the Promised Land.

348. *an*: in view of *þy he mære wearð*, this can only be Moses or Judah = the tribe of Judah. Judah is almost certainly the meaning: and though this may seem repetitive, and unnecessary, after 314-18, that is no argument against it. This poet is repetitive, and often loops back again to something already said. The approach of Egypt and the fear of the Israelites is first described in 156 ff. After a now defective interlude, it is described at a slightly later point 168 ff.; and lastly at 202 ff. The position at 314-18 is that no one has yet ventured on the *uncuð gelad*. It was the tribe of Judah that did so. But in 347 ff. the picture has shifted. Judah is now far ahead on the road; Reuben and Simeon are also on the way; the sun has risen, and quickly host after host is marching away.

350. *æfter wolcnum*: this has no meaning without emendation. *Æfter wolcne* is possible, if we imagine that the Cloud was still before the host. If the phrase is parallel to *cynn æfter cynne*, idiom demands *æfter oðrum* or *æfter folce*. It may be best to transpose the half-lines, and read *folc æfter folcum on forðwegas*.

351 ff. *cynn æfter cynne*: an ingenious link to matter that the poet thinks important, even though the modern reader may not. Each *cynn* knew its rights and privileges and place; these they derived from their common father Abraham (cf. Gen. xv.18). Allusions to the high lineage of the Israelites have been put in before (18, 273-4). Now in the hour of supreme miracle and final escape the matter of Noah, Abraham, and the Promise is inserted. The liturgical origin of this excursus seems to have been overlooked. [Tolkien remarks, in discussing the structure of the poem, 'if this has been noted before, I have missed it'. Yet he had probably seen (and forgotten) the article of J. W. Bright, 'The relation of the Cædmonian *Exodus* to the Liturgy', *MLN* xxvii (April 1912), 97-103. Later critics neglected this article, because of its slightly excessive claims.] A series of scriptural passages had been drawn up as *prophetiae*, special illustrations for the instruction of catechumens about to receive baptism. It was retained in full in the Roman Liturgy of Holy Saturday until the reform of 1953. There were twelve such Prophecies; the content of Prophecies ii and iii are the basis of *Exod* 362-446, except that the matter of Prophecy ii has been reduced. Prophecy i was the account of Creation (Gen. i-ii.3). Prophecy ii covered the history of Noah, from the building of the Ark to the first sacrifice (Gen. v.32-viii.21). Prophecy iii recounted the temptation of Abraham, the release of Isaac, and the Promise (Gen. xxii. 1-19). Prophecy iv contained the drowning of the Egyptians (*Exod.* xiv.24, 31 and xv.1-3). Prophecies ii to iv thus represent the sequence in our poem: Noah-Abraham and Isaac; the drowning of the Egyptians is being described when the text resumes after a lacuna between 445 and 446. Abbreviation of the matter of Prophecy ii is understandable, because this poet is interested in Noah only as the beginning of a family and a land-title. It is also understandable that the subject of the Passover is not treated in the poem, for this narrative (*Exod.* xii.1-11) is placed as Prophecy ix.

352. *mægburga*: probably means Israel as a group of kindreds, since the *riht* that Moses had declared to them was common to all the Chosen People.

*Bead* refers to the reaffirmation of the Promise, made by Moses as emissary of God (Exod. iv.8, 17; xiii.5). The Israelites needed this reminder of their destiny, which lay elsewhere, as a reason for departing from Egypt.

353. *æðelo*: implies the possession both of 'nobility' and of inherited rights.

354. *leodfruma*: 'head of the people' (in a genealogical sense). This is the meaning of the word in *Gen* 1246, 2334; *Beow* 31 (of the founder Scyld).

358. *onriht*: adjective, 'rightful, legitimate'; so *An* 120. The Israelites were the 'true/legitimate' people of God.

359. *orþancum*: the basic sense is 'thinking things out'. Abstract nouns in the dative plural are often used adverbially, so the sense here is 'wisely'.

360. *mægburge*: families considered historically, hence 'genealogies'; *gefrunon* 'enquired into, studied the history of'.

362. *Niwe flodas* . . . : this is the beginning of a historical account. It is extremely abrupt, and we could fairly assume that a line or two has been dropped. But there is no question of interpolation here; the sequence of thought is clear, merely the joint seems stylistically defective. *Niwe* probably means 'renewed', referring to the fact that God first separated the Seas and the Upper Waters from the Land; but he repented of this creation, and released the waters (Gen. vii.11), and so reproduced the ancient Chaos for a while.

364. *dren floda*: metre requires the emendation (Graz, 1894) *drencefloda*, which is demonstrated by *Gen* 1398. The formation is probably verbal, \**drankin-*. These nouns were sparingly preserved, and as independent words had usually the form *-en*; so *edwenden*, *-scerwen*.

373. *mismicelra*: this word does not occur, and the prefix *mis-* in OE retains the sense 'varying from normal, various' only in *mislic* (as in Goth. *missaleiks* and in other Germanic languages); all other uses show the semantic development 'aberrant, wrong'. Yet a comparative is needed to precede *þonne*. The formula *geteled rime(s)* elsewhere qualifies a numeral. No numeral is possible here, but *ma* would serve; cf. *El* 634, *twa hund oððe ma geteled rime*. An emendation *mislecra ma* would fill both requirements.

374. *sæleoda*: an interesting preservation of a West Midland form (so too *An* 500); cf. *beodan* 166.

374-6. *sæda gehwilt*: Noah was told to take food on board, but not seed (Gen. vi.21). The notion of preserving the grains cultivated by men is added to Scripture. For *bryttian* means 'scatter' as well as 'distribute, share out'; the sense 'enjoy' usually assigned here is not appropriate, for it applies only to the person who distributes gifts (as in the typical passage *Dan* 671).

379. *Abrahames*: the name is always written *Abraham* in verse, although the metre usually requires it to be dissyllabic and scanned like *Hroðgar/-es/-e*. The syncope was natural in OE conditions, but a few trisyllabic forms were retained: e.g. *Ða Abraham*, *Gen* 1873, *Abraham þa*, *Gen* 1805, *Abrahame*, *Gen* 1785a. It is noteworthy that in the next line the author used the longer form on purpose: *þæt is se Ábràham* (Type C, although it could have been mistaken for A3).

380. *se him*: probably an alteration of normal *þe him*. Although it may not be original, *se him* is likely to be a genuine variety of relative connection: for *se/seo* as relative but agreeing with the antecedent, see *Gen* 2119, *Maxims I* 37-8.

381. *naman niwan*: so *Gen.* xvii.5. The OE *Genesis* curiously omits all reference to the change of name.

383. *on wræce*: the word could be *wracu* f. 'vengeance, punishment, affliction' or *wrac* m. or n. 'exile, banishment', as in *Deor* 1, *Dan* 568 and compounds. The sense of the former is not appropriate here, but the latter could give the meaning 'in a strange land'; cf. *Gen.* xii.1, xvii.3.

384. *gelædde*: corrected in the MS from *gelifde* (repeated from the preceding line).

*on seone beorh*: the form is caused by modernization of *io* to *eo*. The mount in question was Moriah, interpreted as *terra visionis* in *Gen.* xxii.2. It appears that students of Scripture associated Sion with their native *siene/syn* f. 'sight, vision'; cf. *Syne beorh*, *Cri* 875, 899. But other passages of Scripture would support the identification of Sion/Zion with Jerusalem.

390. *witgan larum*: Gad, the seer of David, told him to make an altar on the threshing-floor of Ornan (1 Chron. xxi.18). On this site David commanded Solomon to build the Temple (1 Chron. xxii.6-19, 2 Chron. iii.1).

392. *alhn*: this impossible form is clearly an error for *alh* 'sacred enclosure'. It occurs here and in the still further corrupted *heah haligne*, *PPs* 78.1; also in (e)*alhstede*, *Dan* 673, 689, *ealhstedas*, *An* 1642.

398-9. Clearly there is an interjection in the manner of OE verse: —*adfyronbran, fyrstferhðbana*—while *no þy fægra wæs* belongs to Isaac preceding, 'he was not any the nearer to death for that' i.e. because of the upblaze of fire. The mention of the kindling of the pyre shows that the poet had a strange idea of the manner of sacrifice, shared by the poet of *Genesis*. In *Gen.* xxii.9, Abraham bound his son and laid him on the wood, preparing to slay him before he kindled the offering. But in *Gen* 2902-6 Isaac is placed on the burning pyre before he is slain: *Ongan þa ad hladan, æled weccan and gefeterode fet and honda/bearne sinum, and þa on bæl ahof/Isaac geongne, and þa ædre gegrap/sweord be gehiltum* . . . We can therefore assume that the fire was thought of as one of the means of death, *ferhðbana*. *Fyrst* would mean 'foremost' (in order, rank, but not time). Here it is no doubt a corruption, and a probable cause is the preceding *-fyr*. The best suggestion is *fus* (Klaeber, *Archiv* cxiii (1904), 146-9). *Fus* means 'eager to go', not 'eager' = 'greedy'. But fire is naturally eager to escape and become wildfire; also it is especially associated with *fæge* in OE verse.

402. *sigetibre*: as in the variant form *sigortifre*, *Jul* 255; the first element means 'mastery', not the derived sense 'victory'. *Sige* retained the meaning 'mastery, control' in ritual and magic: cf. *sigegaldor* pl., 'incantations', *sigewif* 'females with magic power', and *sigecraeft* 'magic' in Layamon's

*Brut. Tiber* with *b* is an archaism:  $5 \times$  in *Genesis*,  $2 \times$  in *Exodus*. In other verse it is spelt with *f*  $4 \times$ . The archaic spelling seems to indicate that the word was no longer current.

404. *ða he swa forð gebad*: 'and so it was that thenceforth he experienced . . .'. *Hiht* here means joy, not hope.

405. *leodum to lafe*: clearly for *lare*, through the influence of *yrfelafe* and the similarity of *f* and *r*; Abraham's action was an encouraging example.

408. *ecg*: not a mere repetition, for it refers to the drawn blade. *Grymetian* is applied to persons gnashing their teeth, to animals, and to the sea. It does not primarily describe a noise, but produces an emotional effect of menace.

409. *lifdagas . . . wisse*: a variant of the usual impersonal *him leofran ne wæren*. *Wisse* used with predicative accusative has the sense 'regarded, felt'; cf. *witan ege* 'to feel fear'. The *lifdagas* are Abraham's, as the text stands: i.e. this is an elaboration of 'life itself was not dearer than obedience'.

410. *þonne*: here governs a noun-clause expressing the thing compared to *lifdagas*; cf. *An* 1088–90.

411. *up aræmde se eorl, wolde slea eaferan sinne*: this would make a tolerable hypermetric verse, with rearrangement of the first half to *se eorl up aræmde*.

412. *eagum reodan*: *eagum* is clearly an error for *ecgum*, which is often used in the plural because most varieties of sword were two-edged. *Reodan* infin. 'to redden' is supported by ON *rjóða* and occurs elsewhere: *deaðwong rudon*, *An* 1003; *onhread*, *Gen* 2932 is probably for *onread*; cf. *Corpus Glossary* 1129 *onreod*: *imbuit*.

413. *god*: clearly substituted for an alliterating synonym. The scansion of *lēte* (—) requires preceding — or —, obviously *metod*.

416. *styrān cwom*: the infinitive expresses concomitant action, as usually with verbs of motion; 'a voice came bidding him stay'.

418–45. God is throughout referred to in the third person, although no Angel or messenger has been mentioned. This passage combines two speeches of the Angel (*Gen.* xxii.11–18), and the intervening matter—the discovery of the ram, and the sacrifice—is entirely omitted. The poet was mainly interested in the Promise and the title to the land of Canaan.

421. *waldend*: emend to *waldende*. Though the participial agent-nouns usually have an endingless dative, *waldend* has *-e* in OE verse; so *Beow* 2329b.

422. *freoðo*: the form shows confusion of two distinct words which are nearly synonymous: *friod*/*frēod* f. 'love, friendship, goodwill' and *friðu* (*friðu*/*o*, *freoðu*/*o*) m. 'peace, protection, security'. Both occur in verse only. Additionally there is *frið* m., synonymous with *friðu*, representing a variant of this u-declension noun transferred to the normal masculine declension. Here the metre requires a long stem, and idiomatically it must

be genitive plural governed by *lengest*. *Freoðo* is thus an error for *freoda*; 'which shall prove for you, while your life lasts, the longest-enduring friendship'.

426. *behwylfan*: 'to cover with a vault' is strictly applicable to *heofon*. Possibly *on eorðan* was altered because the cliché *heofon ond eorðe* was expected.

427. *widdra* and *siddra*: these forms must be wrong, since no masculine noun is concerned. *Widdran/siddran* would agree with *word* pl. But *widdre/siddre* is no very rash emendation, giving the comparative adverbs.

430. *gin*: from the same base as *gīnan*, *gīnian*, *gānian* 'yawn, open wide, gape'; 'gulf' seems the best equivalent here. *Geomor* is a term suitable to the clouds of northern tradition, not very apt here.

431. *ne*: error for *he*, as *hu* for *nu* 280.

435. *cunnon*: probably stands for *cunnen* subj. 'will be able', since *nympe* . . . *weorðe* is in effect future of *nympe sie* 'unless someone proves so wise'.

436. *ylðo*: for *ylde* 'men'. The nominative plural is very rare, and the word occurs most often in the g. pl. *ylða*.

441. *sund*: clearly an error for *sand*. The source is Gen. xxii.17, *sicut stellas caeli, et velut arenam quae est in littore maris*; the idea of numbering comes from Gen. xv.5, *suspice caelum, et numera stellas si potes* . . . *sic erit semen tuum*.

442 ff. *be sæm tweonum*: an ancient formula, probably devised originally with reference to the 'Cimbric peninsula', modern Denmark. In *Beowulf* it is used 3 ×, each time referring to the ancient North: cf. especially *be sæm tweonum* . . . *on Scedenigge* 1685-6. The formula of course implied 'in the known world'. Here the poet seems to use the phrase with a particular geographical reference. The bounds of the Promised Land are given in Exod. xxiii.31, *ponam autem terminos tuos a Mari Rubro usque ad Mare Palestinorum*; Gen. xv.18, *a fluvio Aegypti usque ad fluvium magnum Euphraten*, which is rendered with expansion in Gen 2204-15; Gen. xvii.8, *omnem terram Chanaan*; cf. also Ps. lxxii.8, (*in Salamonem*) *et dominabitur a mari usque ad mare*, rendered *be sæm tweonum*, PPs 71.8.

443. *egipte*: probably an error for *egipta* g. pl.; cf. *werode* 8. Names of lands are generally so expressed in OE. *Incaðeode* is morphologically impossible; there can be no serious doubt that the true reading is *Egipta ingeþeode*; cf. PPs 112. 4, *ofer ealle ingeþeode: super omnes gentes*. Similarly, *ingefolc* 142, *ingemen* 190.

Excursus on the lacuna: at this point the MS has two blank sides (pp. 164, 165). Between them a leaf has been excised. The text resumes on p. 166, headed by the section number *xlviiii*. These divisions of course do not derive from the poet; but the omission of one here certainly suggests that something once written by the scribe is lost. Section *xlvi* covers pp. 160-3

(128 verse lines). Section xlviii is missing, and more may have been lost than can be deduced from the present state of the MS. It is possible that the exemplar used by this scribe was defective, and that he left space which he hoped later to be able to fill. The end of the poem is clearly defective; p. 171 has only 9½ lines, and the writing ends in the middle of a word.

As to the content: the narrative is broken off as Israel marched away over the sea-paths (l. 351, corresponding roughly to Exod. xiv.22). Here the poet slides with skill into a brief link-passage, introducing the ideas of descent and of land-title. The entry of Noah (362) is sudden, but it is probably to be explained by the order of the Prophecies (see above, on 351 ff.). After Noah (Prophecy ii) and the Temptation of Abraham (Prophecy iii), we can expect the matter of Prophecy iv in the lacuna. This Prophecy contains Exod. xiv.24-xv.1: the narrative basis of the rest of the poem, which ends with section xlviii. When the text resumes on p. 166 (l. 446), the narrative is more or less in the middle of Exod. xiv.25, describing the panic of the Egyptians.

At l. 445 the poet successfully concludes a well-arranged example of the OE rhetorical style. The whole speech of the 'divine voice', 418-45, is very well constructed. It shows indeed the over-emphasis and purely verbal enrichment which is part of this style. Alliterative verse was a difficult medium; it is not easy to work in simple terms like 'stars' and 'sand' without expansion. After this conclusion, the poet could return to his main narrative theme. At 446, he is describing a scene of vast and terrible confusion. Now for 57 lines he gives way to excess. There are fine evocative phrases, but most is a confusion of emphasis without climax. It is even hard to make out that two processes are concerned: the disabling of the Egyptian chariots and the ensuing panic (Exod. xiv.24-5), and the moment when Moses released the seas (Exod. xiv.27). The poet in fact anticipates the climax before it is reached (see below on 455-8). Difficulties in interpreting Scripture may explain some elements in the poet's treatment of this scene; but they do not alter the actual faults in the ordering and expression of his account.

448. *hwæop*: *hwopan* seems to imply sound as well as menace (see on 121). The poet is evidently heightening the picture by representing the Sea as a raging monster only precariously restrained; cf. 458, 474, 477 (again *hwæop*), 489.

*beorhhlidu*: *beorg* is used of sea-shores, even when not particularly steep or rocky. The term can hardly be applied to the water-walls, not even by our poet in his frenzy. We must suppose that he imagines the water already closed behind the Israelites, with the swirl flinging up the blood of the Egyptians, slain in the wreck of their chariots, upon the west shore. *Besteman* occurs 8 × in verse, 7 × with *blode*.

449. *heolfre spaw*: the use of instrumental rather than accusative of direct object, especially with verbs meaning to wield or cast, was probably a feature of ancient Germanic syntax (it was normal in ON prose). It survived in OE chiefly in verse, where it was already perhaps obsolescent: (*ge*)*bregdan* in the sense 'draw, pull suddenly' is more often followed by accusative than

by dative/instrumental in *Beowulf*; though in most cases the instrumental could be replaced without metrical obstacle.

450. *wælmist*: *mist* is the *steam* of *bestemed*. The spray of the angry sea filled the air, but it was red with blood.

451-4. Represents Exod. xiv.25, *Dixerunt ergo Ægyptii: fugiamus Israelum; Dominus enim pugnat pro eis contra nos*.

452. *forhtigende*: since this is unmetrical, the original probably had *forhtende*. The alternation in this class of verbs between *-ende* after long stem and *-iende* after short stem was probably not a simple phonetic development. The athematic type of participle was preserved where the long form would be clumsy; a number of these short participial forms are still found in *VPs*. The *-iend* form was ultimately generalized in the West Midland dialect, as ME shows.

454. *gylp wearð gnornra*: characteristic oxymoron.

455. *atol*: specifically applied to monsters (so *Beowulf* 7×) and hostile inhuman things; it is used of the sea in *Beow* 848.

455b-8. *ne ðær ænig . . . wæs adrenced*: here is the poet's greatest blunder; unable to hold back for the climactic crash (463-6), he states the outcome in the midst of the process. Reflections on the fate of the Egyptians recur in the proper place, 508-14.

456. *beleac*: the verb is transitive, so *hie* has probably been dropped after *ac*.

457-8. For the rising of the angry sea, cf. the *Canticle* of Exod. xv: *congregatae sunt aquae, stetit unda fluens* 8; *flavit spiritus tuus, et operuit eos mare* 10.

459. *streamas stodon*: this connects in meaning with 454b-455a (before the unfortunate anticipation of the outcome). An inceptive sense 'mounted' is possible, though 'stood there threatening' is more in accordance with OE usage.

*storm*: in spite of the context, this does not refer to wind or tempest. It means 'a great shout'; cf. *storm upp aras . . . cyrm unlytel*, *An* 1236, and *styrman* 'shout'. The basic sense 'disturbance' developed the separate meanings 'clamour' and 'tumultuous weather'.

462b-468a. The passage is in characteristic excited style. The punctuation should go: *Flod blod gewod. Randbyrig . . . rofene. Rodor swipode . . . mast. Modige swulton . . . cordre. Cyre swidrode . . . ende. Wigbord scinon. Heah . . . astah, merestream modig.*

462. *Flod blod gewod*: the noisy exaggeration is a specimen in little of the faulty handling of this scene. Presumably *blod* is the subject. We need not increase the fault by translating *gewod* as 'pervaded', which would indeed have required an intolerable deal of gore. When the verb is transitive, it means simply 'enter into'.

463. *randbyrig*: occurs elsewhere only in *Jul* 19, *rondburgum weold*, where the relevance of the term is not clear. *Randgebeorh* 296 must also be connected. The Gmc. stem *rand-* gives a masculine noun except ON *rand* f. It had two senses: 'border, rim, margin, (marginal) strip'; and 'shield' or some part of a shield. Possibly two words of different origin have coalesced in form while retaining some divergent meanings; but convincing etymologies are not to be found. The sense 'shield' is confined to poetry in OE, where *rand* is one of the most frequent synonyms, and ON *rand* means 'shield' in poetry only [apart from a few prose idioms for 'to do battle']. The sense 'border etc.' was part of the ordinary vocabulary in Scandinavia, Holland, and Germany; we can assume this for OE also, for it appears in charters [see *English Place-Name Elements* by A. H. Smith (English Place-Name Society, vols. xxv, xxvi, 1956), vol. ii, s.v. *rand*], it occurs in ME poetry, and is widespread in modern dialects in such senses as 'border, selvedge, strip of cloth or leather, stripe, etc.'. This sense will explain *randbyrig* and *randgebeorh*; both represent a protection or bulwark (of water) on the margins of the dry road running between. (*Rondburh*, *Jul* 19 has no direct connection: it could be a variant of *scyldtruma* and so 'military force', or a misunderstood variant of *burh* 'stronghold'.) *Randbyrig wæron rofene* means literally 'the ramparts on either margin were broken'; this anticipates the climax of 483-4.

463-4. *meredeaða mæst*: as the text stands, this is grammatically the subject. It seems we must accept the queer strained language, or abandon *rodor* . . . *mæst* as incurably corrupt. The poet would be saying that after the bulwarks of water were broken 'the greatest of sea-deaths lashed the very sky' (i.e. the vast destroying sea flung high the spray of the fall). *Swīpode* is metrically inadequate; \**swīpode* would be better. There are traces of Gmc. *swīp-* in this group; cf. OS *farswīpan* 'drive, sweep away', and mod. Engl. 'swipe'.

465. *cyre swiðrode*: *cyre* 'free-will, choice, personal decision' could be interpreted in the sense 'all choice, or chance of doing anything, came to an end'; cf. ON *kostr* 'choice' used of an alternative course of action.

466. *sæs*: a normal prose synonym has been substituted for *wæges*. The original reading may have been *weoges*, with *e* interpreted as *ē* = *æ*.

*wigbord scinon* is an interjection, producing with economy a picture of the glint of many shields of drowning men in the dark waters.

469. †*nep*: this adjective evidently is the same as *nep-* in *nepflod*, gloss for a neap-tide: a tide which fails to come up to the shore, falls short. The etymology of OE *nēp*, mod. Engl. 'neap' is obscure. The stem cannot have mutation of [ō], since adjectives with a long mutated stem all show uninflected ending [-i] in W.Gmc.; *nēp* must therefore reflect Gmc. [ē], or more probably [ā/ǣ], WS *ǣ*.

470. *searwum asæled*: almost exactly 'cleverly caught'. *Searu* applies to anything skilfully contrived: nets, traps, war-gear, or ornaments. For instrumental plural in this sense, cf. *earmbeaga fela searwum gesæled*, *Beow* 2764.

*barenodon*: error for *bas(e)nodon*, by confusion of *r* and *s*; *basnian* is derived from *\*bāsn*, related to *bīdan* as *wrāsn* is to *wriðan*.

471. *fyrde*: error for *wyrde*. This sentence is a good example of *hwonne* used as indirect interrogative with the subjunctive.

473. ‡*æflastum*: *æf-* is the phonologically correct form of the stressed prefix which becomes *of* as unstressed preposition/prefix. *Of* tended to drive out *æf-*, which survived only in a few, mostly rare and archaic words. *Gewuna* is normally 'accustomed to'; but etymologically the earlier meaning was probably 'being contented to', and here it seems practically 'patient of'.

474. *nacud nyðboda*: another item of strained language. It recalls *nacod niðdraca* of *Beow* 2273. *Nacod* can be applied to drawn swords (*Beow* 539, 2585), and to things savage and inhuman, as to the dragon. *Nýd-* in all extant compounds is never the object of the verb implied but its cause or attendant circumstance; *nīð-* would be more appropriate: *niðboda*, 'threatener of bitter enmity'.

475. ‡*fedegast*: *fedegest* 'stranger that comes walking' occurs in *Beowulf* and *Elene*. The words *gast/gast* and *gast/giest/gyst* are much confused in MSS; but *gast* must be correct here.

475 ff. There are perplexing difficulties. The succession of three rhyming strong-verb forms *geneop*, *hweop*, *sweop* may well conceal some error by assimilation. ‡*Geneop* is apparently a verb of class 7, which should have [ō] or [ēa] in the present stem. Its contextual sense is 'seized/overwhelmed' or 'hedged in/oppressed' (a semantic range seen in *nierwan*). It could be related to *nep* 469, by a similar connection between 'cramped, limited' and 'confine, oppress'. But the form is hard to interpret, unless *\*genēp* (infin. *\*genēpan*) has been miswritten by influence of *eo* in the preceding word. *Feondum* datv. is unsuitable as object of a verb of this sort. Emendation to *gehneop* (connecting with ‡*ahneop* 'plucked', *Guð* 847) is to be rejected for the same reason, as well as inaptness of sense. As it stands, *sið* appears to be the object of *hweop*; but *hwopan* in all other occurrences takes the dative of the person threatened (shouted at), and the instrumental of the means or mode of threat. If *geneop* is a word of the semantic area assumed it should have a direct object in the accusative. Observing that *geneop* seems to have the dative object proper to *hweop*, and *hweop* the accusative to be expected after *geneop*, we might consider it possible that the scribe had changed their places. The interpretation would then run: 'until the naked border of hate should come back seeking its everlasting foundations, a hostile oncoming demon which roared (*hweop*) threats against its enemies. The blue air was mingled with a bloody spray; the wild sea, about to burst its bonds, with terror of slaughter stopped (*geneop*) the passage of the men through the sea . . . '.

479. *mod gerymde*: the sense 'let loose its fury' is particularly apt in the context. The only difficulty is that (*ge*)*ryman* is normally construed with accusative of the obstacle removed, and dative of the person for whom it is

done. It is possible to read *mode* here; and the verb can be used without direct object.

480. *wæðde*: 'ranged', as of a hunter or ravening beast. *Wæðan* occurs in prose, and three times more in verse; only in *MetB* does it retain the basic sense of hunting, *wæðan mid hundum* 19.15.

480-4. All in the same staccato style especially favoured for description of violent and exciting action. Such passages frequently slide off into a comparatively long sentence. So here, 484b-489; *þa* probably begins a new sentence, but it might be attached to what precedes.

486. *werbeamas*: must be more or less parallel to *wlance þeode*, object of *sloh*. It cannot be a kenning for 'man', since the identification (*wer*) must not be included in a periphrasis of this kind. It is metrically defective, and *werge beornas* (*G-K* 782) is a possible solution. *Werig* in its sense 'wretched and accursed' is very suitable; *ealdwerige* 50 is applied to the Egyptians (this meaning arises by coalescence of two separate words: *wērig* (OS *wōrig*), and *werge/werga* 'outlawed, accursed person'). This emendation is the least objectionable suggestion. We have seen before that this scribe was capable of writing down 'words' that he did not understand: *on bogum brun yppinge* 498 is a striking example. These old poems contained much that was crabbed, dark, and antiquated. The knowledge that might have detected obvious errors in the still available copies was lost, or fast fading.

487. *pað*: certainly an error. The spelling at once excites suspicion, for *peað* is, in verse at least, the invariable singular. Further, it is a physical word, and cannot be used for the act of moving. I suggest *wað*, a noun in OE only used in verse. [Tolkien does not discuss the grammatical difficulty of *wað* f. acc. sg. without *-e*; but according to Sievers-Brunner, § 252 anm. 2, the form without ending in these stems is found in datv. sg. and particularly acc. sg. in *L*, *Rit*, *R*<sup>2</sup>, and occasionally in *R*<sup>1</sup>.] This was an ancient word meaning 'hunting'. The sense is 'ranging abroad (especially in wild lands)' 9 ×; the exception is *MetB* 27.13, *egeslic hunta a bið on waðe* (of the Devil). *Helpendra* is odd. But if we retain the reading these must be the waves, regarded as allies of Israel, since they were released by Moses to complete the destruction of the retreating Egyptians.

491. *weollon waelbenna*: though *weallan* is etymologically related to *wiell(e)*/*wæll(e)*, the verb was mainly used of large heaving movements (of liquids), associated with heat and wrath; but *weallan up* was used of the rising of rivers. It thus might seem too large and violent a word to apply to wounds. But in this poem, in this place, the exaggeration is probably genuine.

*witrod*: clearly a corrupt or defectively-written word. *Widertrod* (Napier; see Sisam, *MLN* xxxii (1917), 48) is likely; cf. *gevat him Abraham ða . . . widertrod seon laðra manna*, *Gen* 2083-5, describing Abraham's assault on the rear of retreating forces (*Gen*. xiv.13-16). The waters fell down on the retreat of the Egyptians.

492. *handweorc Godes*: the dry road could be so regarded, and this must be the object of *gefeol*. But the release of the restrained waters is the immediate work of God, and reference to the sea is more likely.

493. *flod wearde sloh*: *flod* is subject, *wearde* must be (or conceal) a suitable object for the rising water to strike. If *wearde* is genuine, it would mean the rearguard of the Egyptians, or possibly the *cordor* about the king. Otherwise, *werod* is possible.

494. †*unhleowan wæg*: *hleow* means 'shelter' or 'protection'; (*ge*) *hleow* adj. means 'sheltered'. In one branch of meaning the sense 'warm (not exposed)' was developed; this especially in the adverb and derived verb. But a wave is not 'unsheltered', and this would be a roundabout way of saying that it was chill. The Egyptians are now unprotected, and in this context they are being struck by the *famigbosma flod* as with a sword. What then is *wæg*? It can be a verb, parallel to *sloh*. The cognate of ON *vega* would be \**wegan* 'slay'; this verb is traceable in *forwegen*, *BMald* 228, and in *gewegan*, *Beow* 2400 'fight' (reciprocal). It would be a product of coalescence between *wigan* (stem *wih-/wīh-*) 'fight, kill' and *wegan* (stem *weg-*) 'move'. If *wæg* is preterite of this verb, it would have the sense 'strike' rather than perfective 'slay'.

*alde*: this appears to be a 'Homeric' epithet for a sword. It is not contextually apt, apart from allusion to legendary excellence and sharpness.

498-9. *on bogum brun yppinge* is nonsense. *Brun* can readily be corrected to *brim*, and Sedgefield's suggestion *yrringa* should be accepted. *Modwæga* (Grein) *mæst* is the subject. The usual explanation of *on bogum* as *onbugon* supplies a verb; but this does not scan. The verb must then be missing (accidentally, or because it was illegible). I would emend *bogum* to *bosum*; an association between *brim* and *bosm* is seen in *of brimes bosme*, *An* 444. The missing verb should contain *g* and end in *m*; its sense should be 'seize, take'. *Genom* fits these requirements.

500. *ða þe gedrecte: deaþe gedrencte* (Sedgefield) should be accepted; cf. *deaðe gedrenced* 34. The subject is still *modwæga mæst*.

502. *siððan gestah*: an alliterating word is missing. *Grund* is possible; cf. *Exod. xv.5 descenderunt in profundum quasi lapis*. *Geofon* may be preferable (accounting for the corrupt *on feond* for *onfond*); it would be subject of *gestah*, 'when the sea mounted'.

504. *huru*: should not alliterate in preference to the following noun. *Heoru* was freely used in compounds, and *heorufæðmum* (Kluge) is a satisfactory emendation.

*hilde gesceadan*: cf. *El* 149 *hild wæs gesceaden* 'the battle was decided, effectively ended'. Lat. *decīdo* and Ger. *entscheiden* are semantically similar.

506. *deop*: 'solemn, grave'. Word-play is probably not intended, for the literal meaning of fixed expressions is easily forgotten.

508. *ungrundes*: an adjective \**ungrund* is morphologically unlikely; the correct form *ungrynde* in *RhP* 49 may mean 'bottomless', but this is not applicable to an army. Since in writing *grun* and *grim* are sometimes hard to distinguish, *ungerimdes* is a plausible emendation. This word will not fit the metre, but the older adjective *unrime* can be substituted.

513. Again a word is missing. The real difficulty is *se ðe sped ahte*; the *spelboda* did not in this case have success. The missing word may be *spilde* (Grein) 'destroyed'; for linking of *spild* and *sped*, cf. 153. Alternatively, *szwylce* would suffice.

514. *ageat*: nowhere else used quite like this. But 'poured away' is an intelligible and forceful expression. *Hie wið God wunnon* is a forcible concluding phrase; cf. *Beow* 113 (of the giants).

515. Here is a real division in the matter; *þanon* 'then, next (turning from that)'.

516. *merehwearfe*: *hwearf* 'shore' is appropriate, although it occurs only in prose.

518. *nemnað*: a plural verb is wrong here, and a present tense is totally out of place. The obvious reading is *dægweorc ne mað*; for the meiosis in *ne miðan*, cf. *El* 28, 1099 and *Guð* 1345. Moses 'did not keep silent about', i.e. he recalled in detail the things done that day.

519-47. The words *dægweorc ne mað* have no reference to any subsequent events (which are reserved for 554-64). In fact they represent or refer to the Canticle of Exod. xv. This however does not get rid of all the strange features of this passage. For the Canticle and the answering canticle of the women and Miriam is again referred to at the end of the poem as we have it, and it is there a song. Here Moses preaches a sermon.

The Canticle does not contain any *ece ræd* or exhortation, and is entirely occupied with praise of the Lord; except for Exod. xv. 14-18, which foretells the conquest of Canaan. Moses is nowhere represented as haranguing the Israelites on or near the shore of the Red Sea, or as drawing any moral from the events. He did of course often exhort or rebuke them in all the troublous years that followed. These exhortations were no doubt in the poet's mind. Thus he may regard his peculiar treatment of the end of his poem as a deliberate telescoping of Scripture. He wished to present a moral for his own people: to make his end answer his beginning. It is plain that he has in mind all the speeches of Moses, or of God through him, during the Wanderings.

It seems then that the poet deliberately and for dramatic effect represented Moses as making a speech on the shore, in the very hour of triumph, which is not recorded in Scripture. He represented the oration as including matter of universal moral and spiritual value; covering the idea that the events of the actual narrative have also a value for all ages, as exhibitions of God's mercy to Abraham's people who are the spiritual ancestors of all the faithful. However, it is my feeling that the passage 519-47 does not come from the original poet. But it was incorporated long before our late WS copy was made.

522-3. *lifes wealhstod* . . . *banhuses weard*: both refer to the soul. *Lifes* is used in the Biblical sense: what is vivifying and soul-nourishing; cf. *lifes word*, *Cri* 1392, *lifes snyttru*, *Guð* 163. The 'interpreter of life-giving knowledge'

refers to the intellective faculty of the soul. *Banhuses weard* is the conscience, governor of the whole incarnate person.

524. *ginfaesten*: represents either *ginfaeste* wk. n. acc. sg., or *-an* pl.

525. *run*: contains three separate notions: (i) secrecy or privacy, cf. *runian* 'whisper, mutter'; (ii) wise advice, based on exceptional knowledge, cf. *runwita*, *geruna* 'confidant, counsellor'; (iii) writing which must be interpreted by special knowledge, cf. *Maxims I* 138, *Dan* 740b. Here all three are present; written Scripture if read and interpreted will yield counsel not available to the ignorant.

527. *meagollice*: *meagl* adj. is found occasionally in verse, and appears to mean 'vigorous, earnest'. The word is peculiar to OE, and without certain etymological connections.

52. *peodscipes*: there are three different nouns of this form: (i) formed on *peod* 'people'; (ii) 'connection, association'; (iii) 'instruction, discipline, law'. Etymological and semantic connections between (ii) and (iii) are obscure. Here the meaning is evidently 'instruction (what is taught and decreed)'.

530. *boceras*: any learned men. Here the authors of the New Testament are primarily meant, though patristic writers are not excluded.

531. *lyftwynna*: evidently for *lifwynna* (cf. the reverse *lifweg* for *lyft*- 104). *Lyft* is nowhere used of heaven (in any case thought of as above the 'air'). This means that the New Testament promises enjoyment of a better and longer life than that on earth.

532. *womnum awyrgeð*: a vague phrase characteristic of the homiletic style, which occurs also in *Cri* 1561 (of the wicked at Doomsday). The central meaning of *wamm* appears to be 'stain', and hence 'blemish, defect; corruption; foul deed/word'. *Awyrgeð* is a derivative of *wearg* 'accursed, outlawed person'. Possibly it is an error for *awyrdeð* 'injured, destroyed'; cf. *wundum awyrdeð*, *Beow* 1113. Association of these two words is supported by *wæpnum awyrgeð*, *Rid* 20.17, where the emendation to *awyrdeð* has been suggested.

533. *anbid*: variant of *andbid* 'waiting time'; cf. *uð* 903-4 *næs seo stund latu earmra gæsta ne þæt onbid long*.

534. *gystsele*: continues the symbolism latent in *dream*. In this 'hall' man is not even at home to enjoy such mirth as there may be; he is a mere stranger far from his *edæl*. Since *edellease* pl. is fixed by metre, *healdeð* is an error for *-að*. *Giehðu* 'crying, lamentation' is probably from a stem *\*giuk-*, one of the many derivatives of *\*gu/geu/gau-* which gave words for cries of various kinds; OE *geac* is one.

538. *regnþeofas*: the old element *regn* < *\*regin* occurs only in this word and in *regnheard*, *Beow* 326; in both it is used as a mere intensitive. It is probably derived from the pl. of *\*ragin-* 'plan, order, decision': ON

*regin*, OS *ragino* (g. pl) *giscapu* denoting the gods, ruling powers of the world. The Gothic verb *raginōn* 'to rule' shows the basic sense 'order, arrange, settle', as in OE *regnian*, *bere(g)nian*.

539. †*eftwyrd*: *wyrd* basically meant 'happening', and so could be applied to the process of history, or one of its events, beyond human control. In christianized language it was used of the Flood *Ðæt is mære wyrd*, *Gen* 1399; and of the end of the world in *Blickling Homilies* 108. 32. *Eft* has two senses: (i) 'afterwards, next' (of sequence in time); (ii) 'backwards, again' (implying return, restoration, or reform). All compounds belong to (ii), where *eft* tended to replace the old prefix *ed-*: so *edlean/eftlean*, *edniwung/eftniwung*; *edsceaft*, *Dan* 112 (the new order after the end of the world) is especially relevant. So *eftwyrd* probably refers to the end of the world, the whole drama of which the Judgement was the final act.

540. *mægenþrymma mæst*: *þrymm* is loosely used of anything tremendous. Its connotations seem to include both sound and size; so here of a commotion accompanied by awe-inspiring sounds. *Ofer* + acc. is often used in a local sense 'over the extent of, upon'. Therefore the whole assembly for the Judgement is probably intended; angels, devils, and mankind.

541. *fah*: the sense is here active, 'inimical'. Doomsday is 'inimical to deeds' because all will then be scrutinized unmercifully.

545. A verb is missing, and it must be *bið*, which is used specifically in a consuetudinal or future sense.

548-52. *swa . . . spræc*: an extended introduction to an oration, enlarged by an interjection describing the audience. For the same pattern, on a smaller scale, cf. *Beow* 1698-9.

551 f. Is *witodes* a noun (or adjective used as such), or is it an adjective agreeing with *willan*? *Bidan* is followed by the genitive when it means 'expect, await something that has not yet happened', by accusative in the sense 'experience'. It is unlikely that it should have both constructions. If then *witodes* is an adjective, *willan* is the genitive object of *bad*; *mudhæl* will in that case be object of *ongeton*. If *witodes* is used as a noun parallel to *modiges*, then both *willan* and *mudhæl* ay be objects of *bad* 'attended to', and *wundor ongeton* is an interjection. Gmc. \**witod*-/*witop*- was a participial adjective frequently used as a noun, 'ordinance, decree'. If *witod* is here a noun, it must have personal reference, yet it is very unlikely to refer to Moses as appointed leader. Other uses make it far more likely that *wiod* is an adjective, and that *witod wille* means much the same as *witod wyrd* 471: the decree or will of Fate (God). The host 'waited on the destined purpose' of the marvellous event they perceived, and in explanation they received the *mudhæl* of their brave leader. *Mudhæl* is odd, but it bears the stamp of this poet's struggle for intensity through compression. In full, it refers to salvation proclaimed by the mouth of Moses, spokesman of God.

555. *on Cananea cyn*: *on* takes the accusative, because the journey thither is thought of, rather than the situation of the *burh*.

565-6. *segnas stodon on fægerne sweg*: *segnas stodon* is a parenthesis, *on* is produced by dittography, and *fægerne sweg* is object of *sungon*. *Fægerne* is metrically more probable than *fæg-*; according to Sievers, OE *fæger* shows the quantity *ā* in the older verse, wherever the metre is decisive. [For *fāger*, see Sievers-Brunner, *Altenglische Grammatik*, § 296 and anm. 2. The long stem is implicitly accepted by Pope and by Bliss for the collocation *fæger foldbold*, *Beow* 773, which occurs also in *DrR* 73; *Az* 119 has *fæger folde*].

568. *hild*: cf. *gehyld* 382. Both probably have *i/y* = WS *ie* for Angl. *ae* (cf. *VP gehæld*: *custodia* 8 ×).

569. *gefeon*: does not parse or scan. It is apparently based on misunderstanding of the Anglian pret. pl. *gefegon*.

573. *wiðforon*: †*wiðfaran* should have the sense 'escape from', parallel to *wiðferian* trans. 'rescue from'. An alliterating noun is missing after *þam*: *Herge* is usually supplied, but this is awkward, since *hereþreatas* (the Israelites) follows immediately. Some word referring to the sea would be preferable; *holme* would do, and *þam* is possibly a false addition.

†*hredðon*: synonymous with *hrēman* 'exult', formed from the same Gmc. stem *hrō-*. An independent noun \**hrōpi-* survives only in OE *hred*, besides *hrodor*, ON *hrōðr*; \**hrōma*-/*hrōmi-* appears in OS *hrom*, OHG *hruom*, but in OE only in the derivatives *hremig* adj., *hreman* vb.

575. †*dædweorc*: a tautologous compound, which is likely to be an error for *dægweorc*, as in 315, 506, 518.

576-90. Here are some difficulties of a familiar kind (due probably to defective textual tradition), before the poem comes to an abrupt end.

576-8. *weas . . . wif on oðrum*: this cannot mean 'the men on one side, the women on the other', referring to the choir of women in Exod. xv.20. OE idiom would require *oðer . . . oðer*, or the presence of some noun which *oðer* represented without repeating. There is further evidence that something is missing. The usual emendation of *galan* to *golon* produces a combination of noun + finite verb in the pattern - : - : ×, which is normally too heavy for the b-line; it has double alliteration in the a-line, e.g. *heaðoreaf heoldon*, *Beow* 401. An infinitive is more readily used in the second measure (especially one of the form - ×), completing a construction with *onginnan* or some other auxiliary: thus, (*ongan(n)* . . .) *hearmleod galan*, *An* 1127b, 1342b; (*ongunnon* . . .) *sorhleoð galan*, *DrR* 67b; (*scealt*) *fusleoð galan*, *Cri* 623b. A possible reconstruction of this passage would run: *weas wuldres sang, wif on (gunnon) oðrum (wordum), folcsweota mæst, fyrdleoð galan*. Note that *oðrum wordum* would not necessarily imply different words, but would be legitimate OE for 'corresponding words', or 'similar words in their turn'. Nevertheless, the corruption was probably more complex; the existing text can be regarded as an editorial effort to interpret a bad copy.

579. *acol*: a poetic word, which elsewhere means 'filled with fear'. It seems an unsuitable term, in spite of Exod. xiv.31 *timuitque populus Dominum*. It is difficult to see how a great host singing *hlude stefne*, and a concourse of

women with clashing cymbals, were showing fear and awe. *Acol* and *acolmod* are elsewhere applied only to persons; *aclum stefnum* perhaps preserves an archaic meaning. The etymological connections of *ācol* would support a meaning 'stirred, excited', and the sense 'troubled by fear' could be secondary. ON *eikinn* (poetic) 'vehement, wild' is used of fire, and the same word is applied in mod. Icel. to frenzied cattle. This branch of meaning would give 'delirious' rather than 'awed'.

580 ff. Although the poet treated his main source very freely, the confusion in these closing lines is suspicious. The gathering and distribution of booty is deduced from the statement of Exod. xiv.31, that the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead on the shore. Yet this fact is never actually expressed. *Þa væs eðfynde* is a natural opening for a short paragraph, yet the sentence ends abruptly in the next line. There is no expressed subject for *hofon* 582, which is here very awkward. It is difficult to resist the feeling that words have been corrupted, perhaps whole lines omitted. It seems as if the exemplar was in a poor state near the end of the poem.



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