

Creation

Frumſceaf

CAEDMON (fl. c. 657–684)

translated by THEODORE LEINBAUGH

Now we ought to praise the Guardian of the heavenly kingdom,
the might of the Creator and the thought of his mind,
the works of the Father of Glory. For every wondrous thing,
He, the Eternal Lord, set up a beginning.
For the children of earth He designed
heaven as a roof, He who is the Holy Creator.
Then Mankind's Guardian, Eternal Lord,
afterwards made middle-earth;
the Almighty Ruler made the earth for men.

metrical translation by ADAM F MCCUNE:

Hail the King of heaven's height!
The Maker's might and mind and thought
All beginnings built and wrought.

The wonder-working Father of Worth
Early shaped for sons of earth
The roof of heaven, hung with light.

Mankind's Keeper made the land,
The fields for folk whose Father's hand
Made all the earth by matchless might.

Old English text: Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson. *A Guide to Old English*. 8th edition. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Original Old English:

Nū wē sculon herigean heofonrīces Weard,
Meotodes meahte ond his mōdgebanc,
weorc Wuldorfæder, swā hē wundra gihwæs,
ēce Drihten, ōr onstealde.
Hē ærest sceōp eorðan bearnum
heofon tō hrōfe, hālig Scyppend.
þā middangeard monncynnes Weard,
ēce Drihten, æfter tēode
fīrum foldan, Frēa ælmihtig.