

Selections From *The Black Christ*

O yes, long, long ago our Lord was crucified,
They put Him on a cross and there He died,
But His ever living spirit has never gone—
His body well, but His soul lives on and on.
He loved His God and He loved humanity,
From Him we get our Christianity,
But it might have been quite otherwise....
He might have been lost in the endless skies,
He might have sat upon an unseen throne,
So far away, that He became the Unknown;
For one day He received a delegation
Of kings and nobles from almost every nation
Who said to Him: "Christ, You are our Lord,
We've come to give You a suitable reward,
To make you the mightiest King, give you a Throne
Where You will rule, yet not be all alone,
We'll help you when your burdens are too great,
We are best fitted for affairs of state.
Just think of it—you'll be King of Kings
Not have to bother about the little things."
And one of them (whose face was rather sinister)
Said: "I'm willing to become Your own Prime Minister,
You sit and rest while I issue your degrees,
I'll send your messages across the many seas,
I'll send my legates into every land,
And soon you'll have the whole world to command.
Praise be to Thee, O mighty Lord of Lords,
For you we'll draw our scimitars and swords,
We'll fight the heathen, show them God's great Might,
We'll lead the ignorant toward the Light—
You just sit there and rest, we'll worship Thee,
We'll rule the whole world and then you'll see
Earth and skies bow before your crown.
The high and low, the upper and the down
Will shout Your name, uphold your fame,
This we shall do, proudly proclaim."
The Son of God sits on His throne,
Claiming the universe as His own.
So they overlooked the resurrection,
Like an epidemic with dire infection
The Sermons of Jesus were then forgotten
And though they called Him the only begotten,
Surmounted this with newly made creeds
And let their words surpass their deeds.
So centuries pass and while years rolled on
With Jesus supposedly up on his throne,

He let them think He was only up there,
When really He is every where,
He let them issue their decrees,
Bow not with their hearts, only with their knees,
While He was walking here on the ground,
Serving humanity all around
Not revealing Whom He really was,
Never telling them the truth because
The self-enthronement of wicked men
Had enveloped his teachings again and again,
And He would only be crucified,
So He thought it would be best to hide
Himself under every sort of human disguise,
And as the rulers had closed their eyes
Upon His Omnipresent, Encompassing Love,
They thought He was still up on his throne above.

Now the stone which all men reject can be
The altar for His divinity,
And the poor people, whom others think the least
Fitted for Him, are the first at His feast,
And what He said always will be true,
No matter what others may say or do,
And there is no room in His resurrection
For any kind of prejudicial rejection.
So He came all the way to Africa, to me,
And said: "Prepare your work for eternity,
I wish to sit on My throne again,
I want you to help me, down among men,
If you do this, I shall again arise,
Resume my scepter over the skies,
Reveal the secrets of Paradise,
And awaken these souls with sleeping eyes."
And thus it was, that it came to be,
Even as He came down to Me,
Blessed me, taught me His truth and then
Told me to impart this Truth to men—
Not, of course as philosophy,
Not just as mental gymnastics; He
Was the Love in all hearts, and Love
Can do what the mind is not capable of.
Nor will I tire you with my exhortation,
My life has become its own explanation.

A

Yes, there's a white man's heaven
With Peter at the Gate,

Where people may go after death
To learn their future fate.

They carry their burdens up there,
Meet Peter at the door,
Who shakes his heads at their riches
And asks: "What for? What for?"

Is this a place for smugglers?
A treasury for loot?
If this is all you have to bring
We'll trample you under foot.

So the door to the white men's heaven
Is open only just a bit
And none of those folks can enter in
Until the saint allows it.

But there's a black man's heaven
Where the door is open wide,
No guardian stands before it,
For all can come inside.

There people dance in utter joy,
Music is mixed with laughter,
Man there is bliss without alloy,
For ever, yes, for ever after.

B

I have been to churches (they would not let me in)
Although the sign upon them says: "No one is free from sin,
Come, pray and be for given,
Forgiveness is for the whole world,
Forgiveness leads to heaven."

But there's another temple
Where they don't ask you for your rank,
Your feelings or your ancestry,
Your social status or anything
No it's called: **The Blood Bank.**

C

"Gimme, gimme, gimme, O Lord."
In after-life they shall have their reward:
A bill.
Use, me, use me, use me, O lord,

I do not seek any other award
Than to do Thy will.

D.

I don't own my Savior,
I hope my Savior owns me,
Yet for my heart's dear Savior
I'd be nailed to the tree,
For on the tree I'd feel no pain,
Who crucifies, crucifies in vain,
The love of God is a mighty kiss
That keeps the lover forever in bliss.

E.

I'm going back to Africa, to Africa, to Africa,
I'm going back to Africa and it won't be for fun;
I'm not goin' to sit around and pray, sit and pray, sit and pray,
I won't wait for Judgment Day to see will God's will be done.
I shall follow the Scriptures to the letter,
To aid the oppressed and the debtor,
My house shall have only an open door
For the sick and sad and crowds of poor.
I'm going back to Africa, and it won't be for fun,
I'm going back to Africa to see God's will be done.

F.

Here you have loss and you have gain,
Here you have gladness and you have pain,
But after? There's noting but laughter.
Here you have sorrows and you have woes,
Here you have friends and you have foes,
But after? There's nothing but laughter.

G.

Come, my love, and fly with me
Off into eternity,
Eternity is found my love,
Wherever the heart is full of love.
If you have love and a sunny disposition here,
You will have love and a sunny disposition there,
And that's all I care.

H.

I've got no hard sermons for the sinners,
I've lullabies for the beginners,
I've explanations for the curious
And self-responses for the spurious.

God don't want your dollars, dimes and cents,
He wants your heart's free recompense,
He blesses and heals and gladly forgives,
Rejoice, my friends, for thus He lives.

I.

Why did Christ come down to bless me?
I only wish I knew.
He found me laughing beneath a tree
And said "You'll do, you'll do."

I did not know it was the Lord,
It was not like a vision,
But He calmly said: "I want your word,
Please come to a decision."

But before my mind made up its mind,
My heart opened its heart,
"I'm ready Lord, to help mankind,
I'm ready now to start."

His spark awakened my soul and then
He gave me His caressing,
And in an instant He arose again
Leaving behind His blessing.

Religion, not creeds shall rule the earth
In an endless resurrection,
Each of us shall have his rebirth,
Love is a grand infection.

J.

There's religion of faith, there's religion of love,
Religion of faith has failed,
But religion of love has not been tried,
So how can it be assailed?

If Christ be the way, the Truth, the Life
And the religion of man has failed,
Why don't we turn to Truth and Life
Which cannot be assailed?

K.

I am not a professor who writes a tome
While you have a terrible pain,
I only smile and say to you, "Come,
Love can heal, make you well again.

I will not make a grand excuse
About the sermon on the Mount,
I can stand before all men's abuse,
That Love and Truth may count.

O Mr. Billy Graham, whom really do you follow?
Before you next sing "Te Deum Gloria,"
If you will go down to Pretoria,
I'll know if your claims are true, or hollow.

O Mr. Bill Graham, did the Lord send you down,
Just to save the white man, and not the black or brown?
Mr. Billy Graham, I'm going to send you a bill—
For disguising a part of the Scriptures as the total of God's Will.

There's a "Church of the Open Door," just go in my tawny friend,
And partake of their communion and wait until I send
A messenger to the minister, telling him to rejoice,
And come and visit me in my church, the church of "The Still Small Voice."

I'm come to save you all my friends,
Salvation blots out all sin,
Even God is willing to make amends
For the color of grandfather's skin.

Love is a mighty force, my friends,
All can enter within,
For in my house no one attends
To the color of grandfather's skin.

Caiaphas led the prayers for peace,
And Herod shouted "Amen,"
Hatred's "huzzahs" were so loud,
Christ was hushed in the hearts of men.