

This leads us back to the one great life which was lived as man should live and which was a revelation of the Father, because he came from him and abode with him. In these lines there is a strong exhortation to man to do the will of God, that in a life of righteousness the kingdom of Heaven may appear among men.

This God acts as Providence to all. No sheep upon the mountain side exposed to the driving sleet or raging storm but he knows. The rain and snow and sunshine are his. He says to one "go" and he goes, to the other "come" and he comes. He is the general of Earth's battlefields and as shepherd of his people he "slumbers not nor sleeps."

Side by side with this Providence, but not superior to Him, is the arch enemy of God and the opponent of the human race. Burns' devil is a personal one, who is thoroughly competent to fill his position, his chief characteristics being meanness and deceit. As there is something grand about Milton's Satan in some of his attitudes, so there is something about Burns' devil which is almost loveable. Burns himself could not hate him, but seemed to pity him. He found men who were baser than the Prince of Darkness—but here also man reveals the power of the evil one through his misdeeds, and it is only through man that the Devil is known.

Like many of the other poets Burns saw Heaven as a place of rest, where the weary, toiling soul finds its ingle nook, sheltered from the storm and succoured from the pursuing foe.

"My child thou art gone to the home of thy rest,
Where suffering no longer can harm ye,
Where the songs of the good, where the hymns of the blest,
Through an endless existence shall charm thee."

It is also a place of real worth.

"The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blamed,
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be saved or damned."