



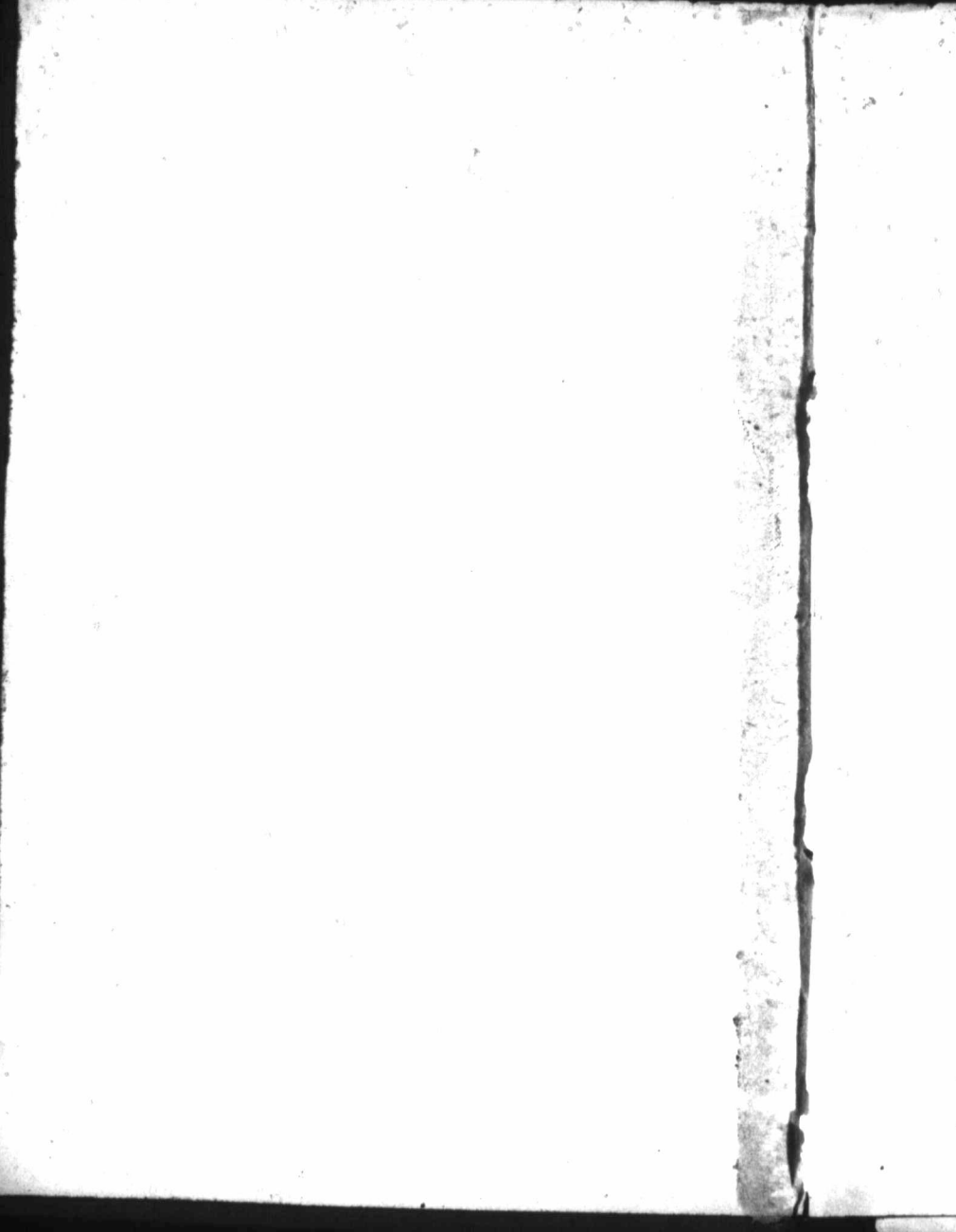
THE  
CROWNING  
TEST.



RAYSON.

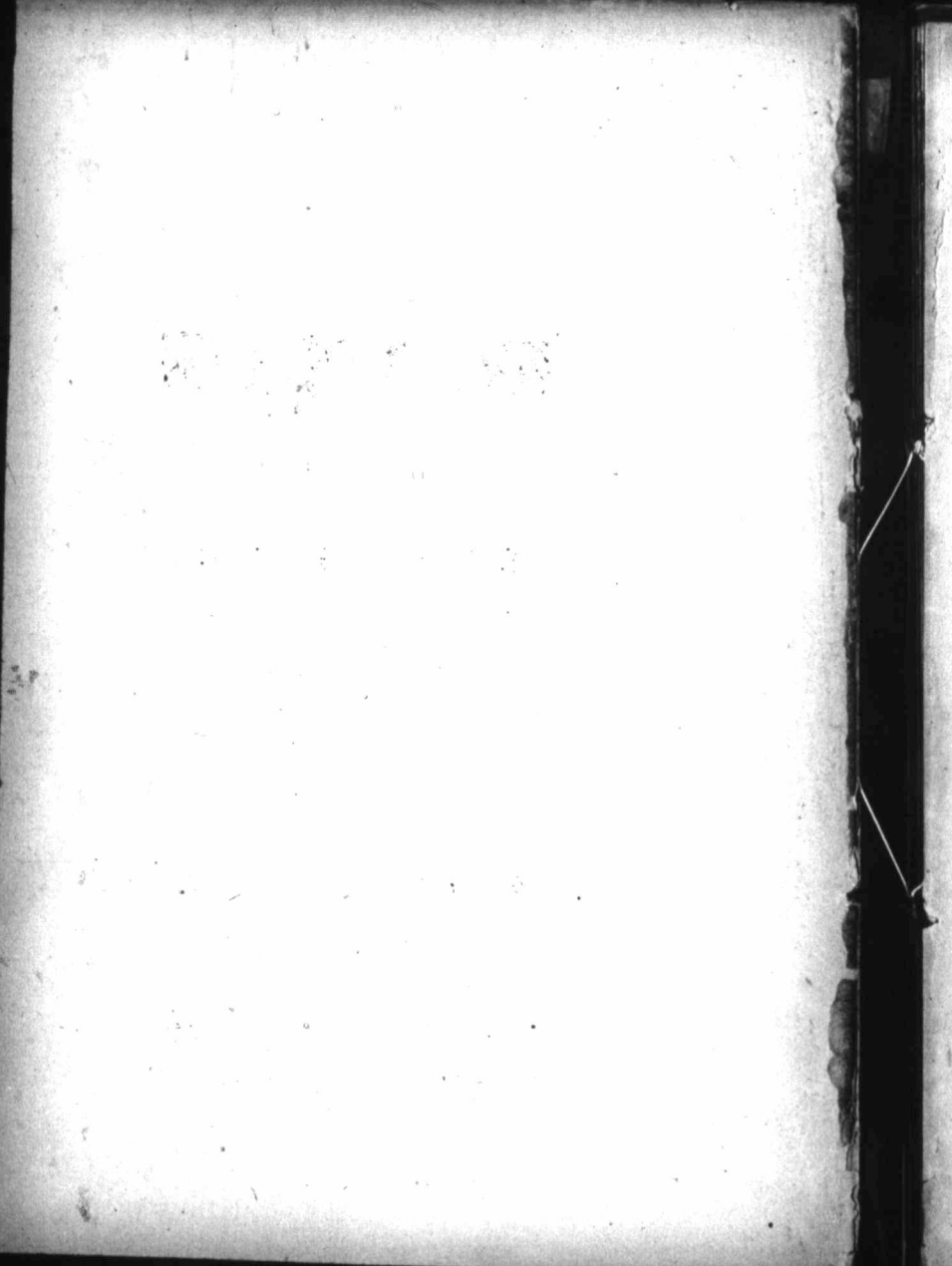


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T H E  
C R O W N I N G  
T E S T .

A D R A M A .

BY

*George Arthur Hammond.*

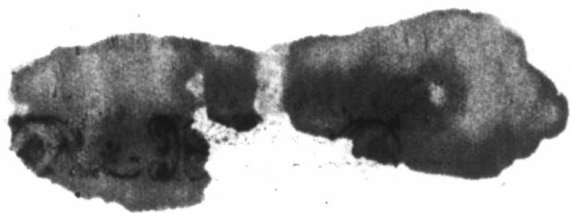


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LAHSTOQ RUSTIC PRESS.

KINGSCLEAR, N. B. CANADA.

1901





*THE CROWNING TEST.*

A Drama

IN TWELVE SCENES,

The Persons.

ABRAHAM the Patriarch. SARAH Wife of P,  
ISAAC, Son and Heir. Seloma, maid servant  
Caleb a servant. Semis do,  
Heman, do. Keturah, do.  
Eliezer of Damascus, Steward, etc.  
Valter and Zebester, Philosophers  
Ombi, a Wizzard.

Invisible Persons.

Nakach the Dragon,

ADAM and EVE.

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In the following DRAWING is presented holding in perfect secrecy the command of God concerning Isaac. No family consultation was held, This is clearly shown by the question asked by Isaac, as they walked to the mountain Isaac with the wood, his Father with the knife and the fire. — *Genesis 22-7-*

“Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

The old Dragon of Eden, is presumed to be actively engaged, to circumvent, hector and harass, incites presentiment and opposition in Sarah. Meets with repulse and defeat. — The triumph is transcendent. Abraham stands confirmed, The Father of the Faithful and the Heir of the World,

*Kingsclear N.B*

*.Dec. 6. 1907*



## THE CROWNING TEST.

A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

*B E E R—S H E B A.*

*Many Tents: vast herds and flocks  
guarded or in folds.*

**T I M E:** EARLY MORNING.

*Abraham. coming from his tent.*

**M O R N I N G** leads up its splendors, the  
clear Star,

That heralds it, mounts now above the hills.

Caleb! — Heman! — *Calling.*

Is the dawn not gray?

I bade ye to attend me at this hour.

*Enter Caleb and Heman.*

Sire, we are here.

*Abraham.* Both? —yes—'tis well.

THE CROWNING TEST.

But Isaac—has he risen ?

*Isaac, coming from his tent,*

Behold me, Father.

*Abraham.*

My pride my Isaac, true and dutiful :  
Of Princely Promises Inheritor.

Be worthy worthy of them, my dear son.

*Isaac*

Thy God who gave me to thee, make me worthy  
My honored Father. I await thy pleasure.

*Abraham.*

We go a three days' journey. There to offer  
Upon a mountain top which God will show me,  
A sacrifice obedient to God's will.  
Caleb, you cleaved the wood ?

*Caleb.*

I did, my lord.

*Heman.*

My lord, behold the ass, saddled and ready,  
As you commanded. Also our supplies  
Of bread and dried fruits

*Caleb.* Here, my lord, behold

The fuel bound with cords, also the knife  
Sharpened and keen, prepared to slay the lamb  
Of the burnt offering. See also here

THE CROWNING TEST.

A skin of water.

*Isaac.*

Now, with your approval,  
My honored father, I will take the skin  
Of water on my shoulder.

*Abraham.*

Do, my son,  
Then each will have his load. *Unexpectedly*  
*Sarah comes from her tent* O my Beloved,  
Joy of my life, my gentle one, my Sarah.  
Nay—why thus risen so early?

*Sarah.*

Should I slumber,  
When my dear husband with no kingly escort,  
Is starting on a journey? When some days  
Must pass before he cheers me with his presence  
Isaac my son—but why enrobed?

*Abraham.*

My Princess,  
Isaac goes with us.

*Sarah.*

Surely not, my lord.  
What is the need of it—it is most unwise.

THE CROWNING TEST.

My Isaac is not going.

*Abraham.* Nay, dear Sarah.

*Sarah*

My lord, he must not go, Lay off that robe,  
My son, and stay with me. The tho't appals me  
Should ill befall him! O I do entreat,  
Let Isaac stay with me. You go, my lord,  
With only two attendants. You forget  
That there are envious and skulking bands.  
Little are you prepared for an assault,  
My dearest husband. O expose not Isaac,  
But take more men, Isaac is safe with me,  
And make yourself secure from a surprise.  
Now will you not?

*Abraham.* My dearest, Isaac goes.

*Sarah*

Should ill befall him?

*Abraham.* But my Sarah. God  
Will surely keep the lad and safe return him.  
Are not God's promises inviolate?  
And Isaac is our Heir.

*Sarah.*—to Isaac, My joy my mirth,  
Come and embrace me—if it must be so.  
Come and bestow me a whole bank of kisses,  
Richer than roses—darling—darling Isaac.



THE CROWNING TEST.

How can I part with thee for six long days.  
Will they be days—such heavy ones—no sunlight  
No star in heaven, until my boy returns.

*Isaac.*

My fondest mother—ever lovelier  
Than all thy maidens—just a six day trip,  
Only a three day's journey. Although sad  
To leave my best of mothers, 'twill be pleasant  
Midst the outlying pasture lands. And fitting  
Each day will dip. Dear mother, thy are birds  
With wings that dive and flutter and fly off.  
Each taking in its bill a worm or seed  
Home to its brood high up the splintered crag.  
So our desires are broods unfedged and hungry,  
And every day wings past with seed or fruit,  
And drops it in the nest Soon, my proud Princeess  
Your son will be a traveller and recount  
Incidents and adventures. Then, my mother,  
My dearest mother then will quite forget  
And pardon a short absence. Then 'twill prove  
A real relish. Then profuse delight  
Will arm your son in your esteem with manhood.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Yes coat of mail and helmet and habergeon.  
And sword that flits and flings the fiery sun  
In mimic flaws. What say you now, sweet mother?  
Absence will give such prestige, prowess—hark.  
Twill be such zest to tell you!—Bless me now.—

*Sarah.*

My God, go with my darling. No—come back.  
Give me one kiss—nay, hundreds—Bless my son,  
God bless my Isaac. God return him safely.

*Abraham.*

My wife my princess, at this early hour  
We leave our wide encampments for a little :  
Abandon all to God. His love high walls us.

*Sarah.*

My dearest lord. Be careful of my Isaac.

*The Patriarch, mounted with the two  
servants and Isaac, each loded, move off.*

*Sarah, waiting*

Slowly the simple cavalcade moves on.  
Through the gray distance I am watching them.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Mongst all his servants, why thus take but two?  
When as a King he rules in this great Camp,  
And hundreds would delight to honor him  
With proud display, comporting his estate?  
But he, my leige, goes mounted on an ass.  
Isaac, a prince superb in form and port,  
Profuse in buoyance of prime youth and vigor,  
Goes with a waterskin thrown o'er his shoulder.  
And the two servants— Caleb with supplies,  
Heman with wood to lift the offering  
In grateful fumes, acceptable to God.  
Now must I cheer the hours as best I may.  
Though every moment busy with my maids,  
There will be room for some intrusive musings.  
My guardsmen will be weak to quell the raids  
Of foes that vault and feast within my tent.

*Enter invisibly Nakach the Dragon.*

*Ex!loquy.*

Must I admit? the counterpoise is lacking.  
My past traditions with the Race Adamic,  
My sly hostility to all that's good,  
My inspiration of all lurking evil,  
The labor of my life to work but mischief—  
Even to this hour accords me scarce a tithe

THE CROWNING TEST.

Of what I would accomplish and still aim at,  
And yet it shall be. A perverted nature  
In them thro' me, is much as one would have it.  
Still there are obstacles With all my craft  
Not Abraham yet is caught. Still he makes head  
And spurns my art mature. Could he be snared,  
That would upset substantial theories,  
And Providence would seem not quite secure.  
Now forth we fare with tact most scrupulous.  
With skill so subtle and so closely hooded,  
He shall imagine 'tis the yeast and scum  
Of his own heart. Superb—and true as steel,  
He hesitates not to do any thing  
That God imposes on him. I will whisper,  
Will countercheck unbalance or impugn  
A confidence more steady than the hills.  
It is my office—absolutely chosen—  
To harass and perplex God's favorites.  
And trip them—if unguarded—when I may.

Now off, to quiz the emphatic Patriarch.

THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama.

SCENE II.

EARLY MORNING.

*On the way.*

*Abraham.*

THE sun not yet has risen on our journey,  
And the cool wings of night, still slowly flying  
Pass from the East away.

*Isaac.* My honored Father,  
Sit you at ease with comfort? Are the saddle  
And the caparison quite to your mind?  
Heman and I were careful: but implaced them  
By torch light, ere the day star had arisen.  
We were solicitous of your approval  
Throughout the preparations. Are they pleasing?

*Abraham.*

They are, my son. Your care and diligence,  
Are filial, and are honorable to both.  
Caleb as well. Perhaps the waterskin  
May prove too heavy for you, in the glare  
And fervor of the noontide.

*Isaac.*

No, dear Father.

---

THE CROWNING TEST.

'Tis a mere nothing. Unlike other bur'ens,  
It will grow lighter as we journey on.

*Caleb.*

Yes, we may ease it for you now and then.

*Haman.*

At every halting, Isaac, while our loads  
Will still grow heavier, till at evensong  
We lay them off to dream and to repose.

*Isaac.*

But do you find them heavy? If indeed  
You do, I'll swap with either of you, boys.  
Come, take my load, and give me yours—yes  
either, *Caleb.*  
No—neither of us will—you'r just too tender.  
Carry your waterbag—that's load enough.

*Isaac.*

Tender or weak, I'm match for both of you.  
We'll have a tussle when we camp to night.  
What say you? *Caleb.*

Good, we'll toss you like a kid.  
We are experts and challenge the whole camp  
Either to vault or wrestle. Does that scare you?

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Isaac.*

Don't burst with pride—there are such things  
as bubbles. *Caleb.*

You'll find us bubbles at the camp to night.

*Isaac, putting off his waterskin.*

Just try it here, lay off your packs and try it.

Caleb, come on, trip me and tumble me.

*They clinch wrestling. Heman.*

Isaac, he has you! there—no—Caleb sprawls!

Yes, fairly done. ha ha! Isaac is supple.

No baby as we dreamt.

*Caleb.* Try him yourself,

Tackle him if you dare, and laugh at me.

*Heman engages with Isaac: a brisk tussle. Caleb.*

There's stuff in both. Isaac—good—good—almost—

Trip him, yes trip—ah-ha, a tie a tie.

Quit, quit—your Father,—look he turns his head.

Sees us and may reprove. We are remiss.

*Isaac.*

Yes, we are lagging—there, behold my Father

Is halting for us. Run—who now will lead.

*Running they come to him. Abraham.*

Young men, now let us quietly proceed.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Find you those packs too much ?

*All.* Our packs are nothing.

*hey go on.* *Abraham.*

With the two servants Isaac walks in front.

And now in meditation I will ponder,

And summon up the past for brief review.

A wonderful procession of events :

A history unexampled and unique,

Has given my life a character and tone

Unnoticed, and concealed from other men.

Yesterday—terrible the consternation—

God called to me and said ; Take now thy son,

Thine only Isaac whom thou lov'st, and get thee

Unto Moriah. And there offer him

For a burnt offering upon a mountain

Which I will tell thee of. Speechless I sank—

I fell upon my face before my Maker.—

—How irreversible the dread decree.—

And now I journey forth to do God's bidding.

*Enter Nakach. invisibly, personating.*

[ Thus I steal slyly to his ear, to veil

The pitfalls of the heart, and raise the phantoms

Which beckon men to peril.]—O how dreadful—

Awful the thought—surely it must not be ! ]



THE CROWNING TEST.

*Abraham.*

Whence is this perturbation? Have we here  
The specious serpent that deceived our mother,  
Secreted cunningly, and whispering?

*Nakach.*

—[Now let me personate him to the life.] —  
Tis but my own sad heart that sighs a language.  
Why did I not tell Sarah my strange purpose?  
Did I do well, do right? was it not weakness  
To shut out from her sight the awful drama?  
Knowing *he* must be sacrificed, even there,  
I promised *her* that he would safe return.  
Will that be possible?

*Abraham.* Off! base suggestions,  
God's word is paramount. I hold no colloquy  
With flesh and blood, nor with my own heart even  
I will obey God—speechlessly will trust him.  
His love constrains me, his right arm sustains,  
Whatever God commands, that will I do.

*Nakach, personating.*

But am I very sure the voice was God's?  
Prophets have made mistakes. Hallucination  
Sometimes besets the circumspect, and leaves  
The footmark of a terrible disaster.

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Abraham.*

Hence, tho'ts that tarnish the pure rays of heaven.  
God's voice I know the inimitable voice,  
The thrilling voice of the All-Perfect One.  
Obey that voice? 'tis life! God's holy will,  
Stands my transcendent law. God's purposes  
Are mysteries, with which I meddle not.

*Nakach.*

But yet, with all our faith and bravery,  
We dare not give the dear wife of our bosom,  
One hint of our dread purpose. But must hide it  
To ward off opposition. This perhaps  
Was politic—was wise—but was it noble?  
And just to her? What shall exonerate?

*Abraham.*

Even to the speechless yearnings of my heart,  
I did not tell it. But unquestioning  
Submitted life, and the more precious life  
Of my dear Isaac to our Maker's will.  
He made us, he is sole proprietor.  
Is merciful, inscrutable and just. —  
Whence come they, whence those whispers  
which possess me?

*Nakach*

Need we inquire? 'tis but our own pierced heart,

THE CROWNING TEST.

But why came we—a king in our own right—  
Without a following? With only two  
Young servants to attend our princely son?  
When rich and great, when God has prosper'd us  
With flocks and herds and troops of stalwert men.  
Why not come forth with a grand equipage;  
With bray of trumpets and with clarions high,  
Come forth and celebrate with honors due.  
The rite the sacrifice which God commands?  
Lo the vain worshipers of Molech, even,  
Would scorn in secrecy to sacrifice  
Their dearest off-spring. But with clangors due  
With trumpets, drums and shouts exhilarant,  
With witness of a crowd of worshipers,  
Bear off the glory of their offering.

Abraham,

Nakach! thou serpent of the peaceful Garden,  
Hence, posturer! and trouble me no more.

*Isaac, returning.*

My Father, was the science of the heavens,  
The knowledge of its motions and its laws,  
Brought down from the philosophers primeval,  
Those men before the Flood?

Abraham.

My son it was.

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Isaac.*

And were the earth and heavens and all the stars  
Created in six days—made out of nothing  
Nothing whatever ?

*Abraham* 'Tis most certain, Isaac.  
But we will take up this perhaps tomorrow.

*Nakoch*

My pleading disconcerts his Majesty :  
Go !'s six days work ? squarely oppose I to רוצה  
Mere common sense convinces men that *Something*  
Never was made of *Nothing* : that stark Nature,  
Handling Eternal Substances in vapour,  
Built up creation in the old forever,  
Myriads of ages—we are grand providers—  
But who so silly to believe, that God  
Supposing that there is one—many doubt it—  
Can work a miracle, or do any thing  
Out of the long established course of nature.  
On this the highly cultured quite converge.  
We claim persistence for the things that be.

THE CROWNING TEST.

---

A Drama

SCENE III.

AFTERNOON.

THE GREAT ENCAMPMENT.

*Sarah in her tent—calling*

SEMIS—Semis!—how often may I call you?

Ah, are you here? kindly be more attentive.

I want Seloma—brisk away and tell her—

A truce to all apologies—be spry.

Indeed I am too lenient, quite too tender.

A slave and servant to them all am I:

The passing and the penalty of greatness!

Meekness enforced, and servitude detailed,

In all its thousand and ten thousand cares:

These are the perquisite of authority.

And who will thank me?

*Seloma smiling enters quickly.*

Flushed, yes, almost panting,

Fresh as a dew dript flower. On you, Seloma,

Opinion is not lost. But many others

Are frivolous, slack or slow.

*Seloma.*

My Mistress

THE CROWNING TEST.

What real joy to merit your approval.

*Sarah*

Come near me, sit beside me, bring your tunic,  
The shades that you are using.

*Seloma*                      These, dear Lady ?

*Sarah*

Yes, the gay colors—blended very nicely.  
Your taste is rare Selom. Preserve the pattern.  
I formed it when a babe was Ishmael,  
To decorate the drapery that covered  
The prattler's couch. Alas, some sad tho'ts sit  
Sullenly in the tent of those fled days.  
Seloma, I have found you prompt and careful  
Affectionate and thoughtful. And select you  
To sit beside me while embroidering  
This robe for my dear Isaac. Being somewhat  
Under the shadow of a passing cloud,  
And needing one to talk with me, and listen  
To rambling thoughts and vague imaginings,  
And moods that vary.

*Seloma.*                      The occasion laughs !

Now shall those petals live in sunlight golden,  
Stamens and pistils nod in fragrant beauty !  
But there—those blossoms all inimitable,  
Shame my sad lack of skill.

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Sarah.* My dear Seloma,  
That is not so, you simply undervalue  
Your power in nice selection. What is richer  
Than the spontaneous impulses of taste?  
As with a flourish, latent properties  
Assert their true existence, and come forth  
Plumed with another joy.

*Seloma.* My kindest Lady—  
But may one venture?

*Sarah.* Yes one may, Seloma,  
But shall be answered frankly before asking.  
Something went somewhat counter to my wish.  
My sky is darkened by this showering cloud,  
But the transcendent Bow of God is there.  
My lord, the mighty Sheikh, is absent, Loma,  
And with him the young Prince my darling son.  
My earnest prayer prevailed not with his father  
To leave him home. Seloma, when you marry,  
However kind and loving be your husband—  
Hope that he may be both, for you deserve it—  
He will not always stoop to please you, Loma,  
There will be some annoyance oftentimes,  
And you must make the best of it like me,  
Who have the wisest and the best of husbands.  
Seloma, shall we talk: will you be audience:

THE CROWNING TEST.

Just a meek listener : do you like to lis'en ?  
You may ask questions, yes, would have you ask,  
And often to.

*Seloma.* Dear Lady, a pleased listener !  
But which shall wear the wreath, delight or honor  
The wreath of your approval !

*Sarah.* Both, Seloma  
Of by-past scenes, now may we take some note.  
In Ur of the Chaldæans, in the City,  
Amidst the seanning searching Race of Akkad,  
Stone edifices, works of famous builders.  
And boasted models of incisive art.  
City of toils and learning of our fathers.——  
Seloma, you have heard of the great Temple,  
As children, where we bowed to the false Moon-god  
Stupid with adoration.

*Seloma.* Were there none  
To testify the Great God whom we adore,  
With all their wisdom, none ?

*Sarah.* There was not one,  
Not even one. The Invisible Deity,  
Creator sole. Wisdom perceived Him not,  
Endued creation claimed essential vigor,  
And self evolvment. Thus dethroning God,



THE CROWNING TEST.

For graven images, the supplement  
Of the sad hankering of the evil heart.

*Seloma.*

Our great Sheikh left them, he discerned the folly  
Of worshipping those inlaid lifeless gods,  
Which cannot aid in trouble ?

*Sarah.*

Dear Seloma,

God called my Husband. God appeared to him.  
God bade him leave the City of his Fathers,  
Forsake its strong attachments and delights,  
Leave his fixt dwelling and sojourn in tents,  
Moving from place to place. A few years later,  
Midst a great famine which devoured the land,  
We pitched our tents to'rds Egypt. In precaution  
Resolved as brother and sister to be known.  
Lest one should kill my husband, and bear off  
His sister spouse to thrall and wretchedness.  
Terah our father slept.

*Seloma.*

Often 'tis said

That Terah is your father, and again,  
Only your father-in-law ?

*Sarah.*

But he was both.

Children of Terah equally were we.  
Abram was Terah's offspring first, and after,  
I was his daughter by another wife.

THE CROWNING TEST.

By marriage, I was Terah's daughter-in-law.  
Abraham is both my brother and my husband.  
You comprehend ?

*Seloma.* And of these two relations,  
You are the curators. Without falsity,  
May set up either aspect.

*Sarah.* Dear Seloma,  
Just let me merely say—but not in boast,  
I then was noted for some personal charms.  
Perhaps 'twas so.

*Seloma.* A marvel of beauty, Madam.  
The verdict of our people—and no wonder,  
For you retain a glory above women.  
Even Keturah, now our prettiest maid,  
Is homely in comparison.

*Sarah.* Pardon me,  
You are distasteful—flattery is my scorn.  
Did you desire to make me blush ?

*Seloma,* Dear Lady,  
Oh, had I half the beauty you disclaim—  
Proud of it ? yes ! and now, who wouldn't be ?  
But me—how sad—so plain !

*Sarah.* But yet attractive:  
Some qualities are more beautiful than beauty,  
Yes, lovelier than boasted loveliness.

THE CROWNING TEST.

They are transformatory, magical.  
They make the homeliest supremely charming.  
The mind, the heart, these are the Home of beauty  
And yours, dear girl, are clearly of that type.  
But now no more of this. As I have said,  
We pitch our tents in Mitsraim's fruitful vale,  
Midst its profusion, its gigantic piles,  
Proud palaces and grandeur and display.  
Midst bare idolatries of many forms,  
Lore, sciences and mysteries occult.  
Enchantments, sorceries and cunning priests.  
There in the valley of the Nile we fed,  
Before us the vast Monument of stone.  
Permitted——though not welcomed.  
*Loma.*                                No pre-emption,  
By feeding first in those fat pastures?  
*Sarah,*                                                None.  
We could not be the first. The teeming vale,  
Was ample, and no crowding. But connected  
By impact from that blazing Pyramid  
Those polished marbles mounting block on block  
Matchless in skill and climbing high in heaven—  
There lingered something, a low whispered echo,  
Of king, some shepherd King mysterious.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Who entered and subdued and held all Egypt.  
No blood was shed no seething turbulence,  
But Mitsraim crouched submissive at his feet.  
He scorned their gods fast shut the idol shrines.  
And by an influence no one comprehended,  
Sent the whole kingdom down into the quarries.  
And with prodigious toil and matchless science,  
Built and equipt the mighty Monument  
He then withdrew, taking his troops.

*Loma.*

A conqueror,

Relinquishing his conquest ! But what next,  
What then became of him ?

*Sarah.*

His history

Ends in this single clue : That he drew off.  
With all his men eastward from that campaign.  
And built a city. Nothing more is known.  
The legend seems improbable.

*Loma.*

But yet,

The liltle that we taste scarce cools our lips,  
We thirst for a deep full delicious draught. —  
Remembrance waits upon me with some flowe  
A boquet gathered by our favorite Isaac,  
Presented to Keturah and to me.  
As we — Eliezer !—he is coming in.

THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama.

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SCENE IV

SARAH'S TENT.

*Enter bowing, Eliezer of Damascus.*

PRINCESS, two stringers crave an audience.

Master being absent, pardon me

For this intrusion.

*Sarah.* Who may they be, Eliezer,  
And whence, and why, in absence of our Chief,  
Apply for audience ?

*Eliezer.* Volter and Zebester.  
Such are the names, they claim to be Chaldaean.  
An Evolutionist and Paleologist.  
Zebester is the paleologist.  
Both men of eminence and in request,  
As lecturers and teachers—so they state.

*Sarah.*  
What is an Evolutionist, Eliezer ?

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Eliezer.*

Madam, a man who claims that every thing  
Sprang out from pristine atoms, which evolved,  
Filicitously every thing we see :  
Earth, heaven, the stars, the plants, the animals.

*Sarah*

Eliezer, that is quite enough—absurd !  
Admit them—we will hear the other man.

*Enter Volter, Zebester.*

Lo, slaves we bow, most high and noble Princess.  
In absence of the great Sheikh Abraham,,  
We crave the honor of an audience.

*Sarah.*

Who are you, and why visit this Encampment ?

*Zebester.*

I am an archeologist from Ur.  
By name Zebester, earnest in research.  
Have caught some whispers of the former ages.  
Have found and read the startling lore that flashed  
Before the o'erwhelming of the awful Flood.  
There Science died. Your slaves, high Princess.

*Sarah.*

From a plunged world ! Recovered do you say ?

THE CROWNING TEST.

Have you retrieved it through some stray report,  
Or fervid humor of an active brain?  
What are its salient qualities or marvel?

*Zebester.*

Princess, I ask a hearing—will display,  
Before a gathering of this great Encampment,  
Themes lost and expositions quite forgotten.  
I have unearthed some treatises profound,  
Under a city buried and destroyed.  
Once seat of science, gloriously equipped.  
With all that learning and transcendent skill,  
Hope to achieve or ever may attain.  
And I have rescued themes of deep research,  
By a famed man, a great astronomer,  
And scientist of marvellous attainments.  
He for six hundred years was first and famous.  
I have unearthed a great repository,  
Of tablets, where mysterious things are written,  
And scientific instruments described.  
And potent arts, inventions and discoveries.  
There found we cylinders and circular plates  
That used to laugh and talk—incredible  
Though it appear—etched curiously all,  
Now dead and silent to the sharpest ear.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Through the great sheaf of mighty energies,  
He could transmit his spectre and his voice  
Leagues, leagues, and see his intimates respond.  
Lamp of his laboratory was a Stone,  
Resplendent, cool, and wasteless in its light.  
Thus his researches, his incessant toil,  
Produced a mastery phenomenal.  
Trajected tokens through the earth and air,  
Decyphered the deep questions of the stars,  
And with laborious computations struggled.  
Investigated vast phenomena,  
Space, and all impulses imperative,  
And light the many coiled, and complex lightning.

*Sarah.*

You have discovered pre-deluvial marvels,  
Or rather some account of them. No question,  
Things similar are traditional—a tax  
On our credulity—but not outside  
Of that perfection which Almighty God  
Accomplished in the plethora of His works.  
Did this man honor the Great God of Adam? ]

*Zebester.*

With all his wisdom he was atheistic.  
He said that myriads on myriads



THE CROWNING TEST.

Of ages, had rolled up by natural law  
All things and every thing. And set aside  
Adam and God.

*Sarah.* My answer, Gentlemen :  
Till the return of Abraham the Sheikh,  
You have no public hearing — So farewell.

*They go. Enter a Boy.*

That other man—the evolutionist,  
Iched for an opportunity to speak,  
He told a group of us, of boys and girls,  
That origin of species was no fudge.  
That : p n t : niety was ev ry thing.  
Development, the innate law of matter,  
Was preached by all the bones of all the ages.  
That Abraham's God was n ither proved nor  
needed. *Sarah.*

*Seloma,* oh how pitiable, to see  
The fondness of the stupid heart for lies,  
The imaginations that set God aside.  
Alas, a culture very old indeed !

*Seloma*

An interruption—just a variagation,

*Sarah.*

We'll call it that, Yee, treat it as a blast

THE CROWNING TEST.

That scatters the dead leaves of poisoned minds,  
And whirls them on. Seloma, have you thought  
Of the wild waste and havoc, which distrust,  
And lack of fealty to God most High,  
Makes in the world ? Perhaps you never have.  
Let us go back and find the fragrant wreath  
That Isaac gave you.

*Seloma.* Well, my noble Princess,  
A bunch of lovely flowers—the aroma  
Of a kind token and a friendly word,  
Sometimes are precious. Merely an incident.  
So you were entertained in Pharaoh's court,  
Merged in the pride of Egypt and its glory ?

*Sarah.*

Strangers, oh we were interviewed, enquiry  
Conjecture and surmise were on the wing,  
Flitting with myths of some prolific brain.  
Some eight days afterwards a troop arrived  
With flags with music with an equipage,  
Entreating of my Brother his fair Sister,  
Just as a guest to visit Pharaoh's Court.

*Seloma.*

Our King perceived their craft and policy.  
Did he demur ? did you refuse to go !

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Sarah.*

Yes, madness only! With unmov'd content,  
Bide he the heralds welcome, and desired me  
Accept the Royal honor.

*Seloma.*

So you went—

Beauty—such loveliness, tempting, no wonder,  
Lust eager and resistless. And you went?  
It was not optional?

*Sarah.*

Indeed, Seloma

No choice was left me. If they had suspected  
That I was Abraham's wife, he had been slain  
By ruthless murderers who know not God. —  
Expedient needless, and some lack of trust,  
For God has guarded us most tenderly.

*Seloma.*

Then you were introduced amidst the flower  
The glowing loveliness of Egypt's beauties.  
How did you fare, my Princess—ah, how could you!

*Sarah.*

Seloma, you may laugh and not believe me,  
But I assure you Pharaoh stood in awe.  
He toyed with his fair damsels with all freedom,  
But towards me his courtesies were chaste,

THE CROWNING TEST.

As something sacred, which he dare not touch,  
But must propitiate by acts most reverent.  
Yet I was in his power—but no I was not,  
For God was with me, kept me most secure,

*Seloma,*

Lodged and immersed in sumptuous palaces,  
Caught in the splendors of proud Mitsraim ;  
Feasted with guarded beauties of his harem.  
Forth have you come, unsoiled, triumphantly !

*Enter Keturah, Presenting fruits with flowers.*

Princess, this trivial tribute—honor me.—  
What you desired is done.

*Sarah.* Yes, dear Keturah.

Thoughtful—how fragrant ! You will stay with us  
Join in the social confab we are having.  
First we retire and dine. Fruits and sweet flowers  
Embellishments divine, rich zests of God.

*Keturah.*

Under those myrtles bent with odorous flowers.  
With flitting birds, gay notes and dancing lights

*Sarah*

You have been provident, Keturah, thank you.  
Just there, sweet girls, superb we chat and dine.

THE CROWNING TEST.

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A Drama

SCENE V.

AFTERNOON.

THE GREAT ENCAMPMENT.

*Under the Myrtles.*

*Sarah, Seloma, Keturah.*

*Sarah*

THUS, by the love of Abraham's God supplic'  
With fruits delicious, with such lavish grace,  
Too languid is the music of our praise.

*Keturah.*

As one invited to a feast, by feasters,  
Late in the hour—just at the final course :  
The richest luxuries must then regale him,  
Not the substantial viands. A like guest—  
One who, my Princess, must remain quiescent,  
The bypast relishes untasted.

*Sarah*

*Merely,*

To light, as by a moon, with fitful gleams,

THE CROWNING TEST.

Dropping between fantastic clouds slow sailing,  
One aim was ours, Keturah, to compel  
Absence to be less irksome. So we smote  
Time with a rod, and saw the past awake,  
Muffled in cloud. Roused for a benison.  
You know that I have been in Pharaoh's court.

*Keturah.*

With his gay beauties, and came out unsmirched !  
Now we would like to ask, how happened it  
That by some signal voluntary act,  
You were released, yes honorably restored.

*Sarah.*

Emphasized by a shower of royal favor !  
JEHOYAH plagued them, and the priests avowed  
The holding of the wandering prophet's wife,  
To be the ground of the Great King's displeasure  
We were appeased with gold and choice apparel,  
With slaves both male and female, and much else  
A trespass offering, made in recognition  
Of the High King, dread Owner ! who disburses  
According to His pleasure. With due pomp,  
The right of kings, as Nobles we went forth.  
And God called off their plagues.

*Seloma.*

One fair attendant

Waited upon you in the palace, Madam,  
Remaining yours ?

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Sarah.* Three were my maids. But Hagar  
Was most familiar. As a tire-woman,  
Choris excelled. Lotus was exquisite  
In taste for the display of personal charms.  
These three attendants served me in the palace,  
And followed me from Egypt.

*Keturah.* It is said,  
That Hagar was quite pretty at that time.

*Sarah.*  
Hagar was then in person fresh and comely.  
She proved to be the rod for my impatience.  
For when—though Isaac God had promised us,  
After I waited until hope seemed hopeless,  
I thought that Abraham's God perhaps intended  
That I should only be the foster-mother  
Of the Seed promised. And I pressed my husband  
To take unto his bosom that fair Hagar.  
Ah, I have rued my folly. I had found her  
Loving and dutiful to me, nor dreamed  
That any thing but gratitude and love  
Ever could follow my most gracious act.

*Keturah.*  
What! kindest Lady, was she not most grateful  
For the distinguished honor you conferred?

*Sarah.*  
Grateful and loving? far, how far, far from it!

THE CROWNING TEST.

Keturah, she was changed into an empress,  
And I was the doomed slave to prop her glory.  
Yes, scorned and spurned! Ah—she had got  
my Husband!

She had accomplished what I failed to do.  
Abraham was hers! and me? I was a beggar.  
That moment changed to ill and bitterness  
The love I bore, the honor I conferred.  
I used her harshly, she deserved it richly.  
I taught her to her sorrow, I convinced her,  
That she was still a slave, and not an empress  
My slave, my servant—and at length she fled.

*Seloma.*

Ingratitude, alas, how very shameful.

*Keturah.*

Some are doomed halt, by being fortunate.  
The dream of triumph overbalanced her.  
Ah could such glory be conferred on me,  
How humble and how loving would you find me.

*Sarah.*

Perhaps, Keturah, but the opportunity  
Will not occur.

*Seloma.* After the discipline,

Came coy, or with amending humbleness?



THE CROWNING TEST.

And love appeasing ?

*Sarah.* She returned quite meek,  
Her wings trailing and her feathers fallen.  
And after that she durst not put on airs.

*Keturah.*

It was she that bore your Ishmael, your first.

*Sarah.*

My Son by Abraham—as then I called him.  
I loved the Boy although his freaky nature  
Seemed all unlike my Husband's. There was yet  
Some foreign element that interposed,  
Some half Egyptian, which I did not relish.

*Seloma.*

He is not with us now : came that by chance ?  
Perhaps dear Lady, I am too inquisitive.  
But I am asking questions, as you bade me ?

*Sarah.*

Yes, and to while away the lonely hours,  
Till my dear Husband and my Son return,  
Is why I called you and am talking with you.  
Years passed on quietly, with little change,  
Till the great feast to celebrate the weaning  
Of Isaac my own Son. The gathered Bands  
Of our encampment, and invited chiefs

THE CROWNING TEST.

And many nobles from surrounding fields,  
From centres and from cities of our friends :  
Swelled the proud scene. And regal was the day.  
With high rejoicing. But amidst the glory,  
Came Ishmael with a mob of Canaanites  
In garbs grotesque to mar the general joy,  
With jargon of vile noises.

*Seloma.* How ungrateful.  
How thoughtless, stupid,—insolence supreme.

*Keturah.*

Lacking in veneration and esteem  
For the great Sheikh, his Father !

*Sarah.* Yes unpardonable.  
'Twas envy, 'twas malevolence to me.  
Thus to repay my bounty ! After that,  
I drove the Woman and her Son away.  
Was he indeed to be an Heir with Isaac ?  
He the Slave-womans' Son ? Impossible !  
No—I prest Abraham to turn them off,  
Trough much against his will—and it was done.  
Seloma, my embroidery is finished,  
See : may I peep at yours, —look here, Keturah :  
—Eliezer of Damascus,—now before  
The curtain of my Tent—I must away.  
—He waits not.—Then, we gather up our work. ?

THE CROWNING TEST.

Keturah—ah, you brought no work along—  
Well too indistrious perhaps are we.—  
Just see the scheme Seloma has transfused.  
Note the delightful ministries of taste,  
Could you do that, Keturah?

*Keturah.* Not for me  
Bewitching fancy dreams. A simple girl,  
Earnest, content, and thankful to accept  
The good in my allotment, such you find me.  
No gem for boasting.

*Sarah.* It is well, Keturah.  
God has assigned to each a special province. —  
Smilingly here we have entwined the hours,  
Bound them with fragrant blossoms, joy and love  
And thus, with influences sweet and sacred,  
The interchange of thoughts, as friends; as sisters,  
Have past in brief review o'er many seasons,  
Have shed significance on startling legends  
Forming in sinking echoes from the past.  
—But see—five herdsmen waiting—let us go,

*Enter Nakach-*

Not yet—somewhat too strong the prickly hedge.  
Sarah's meek opposition? Shame, so feeble!  
Could I have pierced her with the awful fact,  
That Isaac shall be sacrificed—be burnt—

THE CROWNING TEST.

Ah, as a vanquished god, my chain perns its net.  
A god—but vanquished? Why do I recal,  
Just at this juncture an o'erwhelming dream.  
Am I not mighty—fallen but stupendous?  
Deep in the past, forth suddenly I burst,  
A monster glorious. How I came to be—  
That was the puzzle? Standing high above  
The mighty ones of God—and they not few,  
Was there amongst them any like to me?  
Nay, stunts and pigmies in comparison.  
Soon like a god I felt, and holy worship  
Grew tasteles, and I itched to be adored.  
To regions distant I withdrew, and reared  
Dazzling and dread the splendor of a god.  
Thither attracted, thousand thousands flocked  
Hailed me as god, bowed down and worshiped me  
Among them some of note embraced my claim.  
Thus I seduced them with exultant craft.  
And still in concord true, we firm remain .  
Pledged in disaster—though it end in bale.

THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama.

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SCENE VI

ON THE WAY.

*Abraham.*

VOLUMES of thought, like clouds in a rough  
day,

Roll in upon me—this an anxious hour.  
Oh, without effort calmly to repose  
On the kind Arm of sweet security!

The second of our journey—with the sun  
Of the near morrow springs our final test. —

And yet we must not reach the ancient record  
Of many of our forefathers. Those great men  
To whom, when by their towering stature measured  
Little and insignificant we seem.

Adam and Noah and our father Shem,  
Attained the honored wreath of many years.

But me—my days are in comparison,  
The whisper of an echo, ever fainter  
At every replication till quite gone.

THE CROWNING TEST.

The sturdy stamen of my strength remains,  
Though somewhat toned Although incipient  
The burst the thunder of stern purposes;  
The suppleness of limb the arrowy fleetness,  
Yes, eagerness that did outstrip the eagle,  
Are now not with me. Changed, not quite the same

*Enter Nakach invisibly.*

But Isaac, our dear Son—all these are his,  
Yes, every quality distinguishing  
The Race of Shem. What now his age--how old?  
Twenty years? he is more---say twenty five.  
A young man charged with fire and strong of limb  
And we conducting him these blind two days.  
Yes leading forth our Son bland and unwitting,  
To what? How old ourself?--a hundred?  
Yes, add to that the days of our dear Son,  
A young man, glorious, proud and resolute.  
Ah! may we bind him--dare we undertake?  
Should he resist are we then strong enough?  
Or fleet of foot to overtake, when he  
Flees from us?

*Abraham.* Arrows! cunning,, barbed, envenomed  
From the black pit of hell. They wound me not.

*Enter Isaac.*

Our shadows now are stretching out, my Father,  
Our servants are some distance in advance,

THE CROWNING TEST.

Now to be near my Father, I have left them.  
See, yonder an Encampment—fourteen tents,  
Perhaps there may be more—direct before us,  
A distance off. Shall we halt there to night?  
Are they not Canaanites?

*Abraham.* My Son I see them  
Rather they seem Egyptians.

*Isaac.* Will it matter?

*Abraham.*  
My Son, it will not. They will entertain us.  
Welcomed as we have welcomed them and others  
Such is the usage of our pastoral life.

*Isaac.*

In the mean while, as leisurely we move,  
May we not seek variety, and cheer?  
While the cool shadows of the evening lengthen,  
May I propound some puzzles to my Father,  
Some questions, some incipient researches,  
For kind adjudication or remark?  
Perhaps too tediously.

*Abraham.* Not so, my Son.  
It will relieve me of a cloud of musings,  
And sly invasions of a skulking foe,  
Charged with black arrows and with insolence,

THE CROWNING TEST.

Fury and craft lie panting at my feet.  
Lay now your waterbag behind my saddle,  
Its scanty store will need replenishing.  
Shortly it will be gloaming and we halt  
At the encampment coming into view.  
What is your wish ?

*Isaac.* My Father, in your absence  
My gentle mother sometimes entertained me,  
With histories and traditions of the past.  
They were but hints indeed, though sometimes more.  
Peculiar often and perhaps mysterious,  
But leading frequently to deep conjecture.  
Impressing me with dread and solemn awe,  
And moving questions that crave clearer light.

Tell me, my Father honored and revered  
Monarch in thine own right, by God anointed,  
How happened it that Ur of the Chaldeans,  
Saw you forsake its old familiar scenes,  
And gods of stone ?

*Abraham.* Only because God called me.  
It was his pleasure to make us his choice.  
God said to me : Go from thy home and kindred  
Go from thy Fathers' House. Hence to a Land  
That I will show thee. Go, and I will bless thee.



THE CROWNING TEST.

And make of thee a Nation Great. And thou  
Shalt be a blessing.

*Isaac.* Father, at that time,  
Were all the people blind, idolatrous ?  
All of them—were there none who feared the Lord ?

*Abraham.*  
They worshiped sun and moon and hosts of heaven  
Yes, beasts and birds and shapes of wood and stone  
The vile creations of our evil hearts.

*Isaac.*  
Dear Father, then to us how kind was God !  
Last eve, while camping with the Canaanites,  
Who entertained us with requiting zeal.  
Drawn by the popular cry, we heard those men,  
Called Volter and Zebester, on the roll  
Of pure philosophy. They claim to be  
Fresh from the famous city of our sires.  
Boasting a proud intention to enlighten, [thing,  
Rambling from theme to theme But touching no-  
Without some obscurcation by crude thoughts.  
Volter had closely studied the depression  
Of the dread desolate valley of the Jordan,  
Had catalogued it to a distant age  
In geologic time. Claimed that the Jordan

THE CROWNING TEST.

Never passed onward to the Sea of Suph,  
But ended always in that salt dead Lake.  
Then with a prism, in the sun's last rays,  
He illustrated the grand Bow of God.  
Said it was nothing new, but had been ever,  
Since the first straggling rudiments of light.  
Then he adverted to the stars, and claimed  
For them the cycles of unwritten ages.  
Educing natural proofs that they existed  
Myriads of years before the day of Adam.

*Abraham.*

My Son, inscrutability is sealed  
In every act of God The migtiest—least,  
Lapped in impenetrable glory rests.  
Thought cannot touch, nor boastful science gage.  
Yet vain imagination mocks the work  
With its fantastic structures. Pointing out  
Impossibilities.

*Isaac.*

But in that Roll  
Brought down to us from Adam, my dear Father,  
God made the earth the heavens of countless stars  
All in six days. But were they days just like  
Days we have now?

*Abraham.* That is most clear. For God

Rested the Seventh Day. And gave to us  
That day as a sweet rest. To memorize

THE CROWNING TEST.

The original celebration, Yes, my Son,  
That venerated Roll, the sacred Record,  
Bears on the truth of God to every age.  
But so ne believe it not, believe not God,  
Measuring their Maker by themselves.

*Isaac.* Dear Father,

Was that deep valley—now the sea of Sodom,  
A sea before that dread catastrophe?

*Abraham.*

Isaac, far from it! Midst that Plain, the Jordan  
Led its rich waters to the Sea of Suph.  
Men of the future, unto whom the past  
Will seem eternal, fixt and little changed,  
Kin to the lecturer of yestereve,  
Perhaps well think Lot's sea was always there,  
Yes the salt Lake for ever in its cradle.  
But the dread Judge with brimstone and with fire  
Burned the vile cities and destroyed the plain.  
Deep deep it sank. And streams that nourished it  
Held in the awful furnace swelled imprisoned.

*Isaac.*

Oh, Father, what a doom! Even that Plain,  
With all its glory ruined for the ages.  
Dear Father, and you pled with God.

*Abraham.*

My Son,

God graciously permitted me to plead.

THE CROWNING TEST.

He would have spared the Cities of the Plain.  
He granted each petition. But alas,  
Not even ten righteous could be found in all.  
Had t<sup>h</sup>ey been there, the Plain in all its glory,  
An Eden of the earth, would not have vanished.

*Isaac.*

Dear Father, when I lift my eyes to heaven,  
Survey the earth, trees rocks—yes every thing,  
A curious thought sometimes occurs to me :  
How came they here, could they be made of nothing  
Yes instantaneously—formed in a moment ?  
All beasts all birds, reptiles and insects many ?  
God's insects, a creation strange, amazing.  
Frail forms endowed with skill incredible.  
Wings that can match the lightning in swift stroke  
So feeble yet such might, so small so wise.  
Some, monsters terrible, but fast encaged  
By their minuteness. Then the mountains huge,  
The rocks, the naked spurs, the wide deep seas.  
Were these things made at once, so vast so many?  
Dear Father, to my mind there's mystery.  
And we see men who claim that myriad ages  
Have scarce sufficed to build these wonders high.

THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama

SCENE VII.

TOWARDS EVENING.

ON THE WAY.

ISAAC, the Lord our God alone is God.  
Is not the only living God JEHOVAH?  
All-puissant, all-glorious, eternal.  
Impossibilities attest his power.  
Go search the kingdom of that Voice which bids  
Systems arise from nought, and straight they come!  
Such is the mighty Lord of Lords we worship.  
Such is the matchless glory of his works.  
These are God's witnesses.

*Isaac.* But some, Dear Father,  
Reject the witness, and dishonor God  
By schemes that set aside his sovereign power,  
Making it needless.

*Abraham.* Listening to sly doubts,  
That set aside Gods truth, was our first sin.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Why do we toil Six days why rest the Seventh ?  
Why, my dear son, this sacred roll of days,  
Noted in all the days and years of earth,  
Down from the Garden of lost Paradise :  
Down through the Ark that rolls the living  
What does it signify? a monument, [vaters.  
A glad memorial—but of what, my Son ?

*Isaac.*

My Father, of the first six days of earth,  
And seventh of God's rest.

*Abraham.* In those Six Days,  
God built the countless multitudes of stars,  
Which constitute the vast appealing heavens.  
Yes, every atom of our star filled sphere.  
God spoke—they were created, each in place.  
At once—on that first evening in a twinkling.  
Yes, in the sight of hosts innumerable,  
His stately armies, sages rulers, powers.  
In scenes, repeated through six wondrous days,  
God furnished and completed them and us.  
He fixt the boundaries of all.

*Isaac.* My Father,  
With hearts poured out, with earnest supplication,  
With smoking sacrifice in adoration,  
We honor God and are accepted by him,

THE CROWNING TEST.

And yet, my dearest Father, there are times  
When God seems angry with us and afflicts.

*Abraham.*

Those the Lord loves he chastens And betimes  
Uses the rod. My Son will not escape.  
No, Isaac, as a chosen one beloved,  
The Lord will prove thee, as he has thy father,  
Prove with rebukes and stripes. Will purify thee  
As silver in a crucible of earth.  
Salvation is God's gift. His favourites  
Often are sharply handled.

*Isaac.*

My dear Father,

I know not—but it seems to me, that I  
Could bear without a murmur patiently,  
Whatever God imposed, if in my heart  
Feeling that he would strengthen me and save.

*Abraham.*

My Child beloved, the Son of my old age,  
Rich gift of God. I thank him for all this.  
And God will surely keep my Son, and make  
His destiny a glory. Bid the servants  
Prepare a halting underneath the shade  
Of the old trees which we are now approaching.

*Isaac goes forward to the servants.*

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Enter Nakach.*

My haunch of venison scorches on the spit.  
Bitter—unpalatable—must I fast ?  
No! my Philosophy—delicious viand,  
My special relish. — Yet, I oft, how oft,  
Have witnessed the creation of vast Systems.  
Some rose complete, others by final touches,  
Like this great Nebula. — But what, what of it ?  
Sharp men and clear, who only bow to Nature,  
Already take the field. I shall have Masters.  
Stars of the future, studious and alert,  
Will teach the innate potency of atoms,  
And entity of matter most minute.  
Shall clinch hypotheses of evolution,  
By the efficiency of theory.  
From rolling bands of fire and surging whirlpools  
Through myriad ages, all the Nebulæ  
Shall be constructed. Reasonable and plain.  
Profound—acceptable to good and bad.  
Soldans of my Philosophy, shall show  
Pickt men, mature, and skilful reasoners,  
Born to ransack the earth and sift the sky.



THE CROWNING TEST.

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SCENE VIII.

ENTERTAINED BY THE WAY.

THUS cooling shadows cheer our peaceful way  
This second eve. Beside us spread the tents  
Of some Egyptians.

*Haman* Will my Lord dismount?

*Enter an Envoy from the Camps.*

Renowned and mighty Sheikh, behold your slaves  
Content yourself, partake our humble fare.  
Dismount, and let your men lay off their loads,  
My Lord, and lead your athon to yon crib,  
And give him provender. May I conduct you  
To the tent royal.

*Abraham.* Thank you, thanks kind friends.  
We bless you for your swift and generous care.  
Behold my Son.

*Envoy.* Magnific Sire, we hail you,  
You the rich Hebrew King called Abraham,  
Likewise your Son, proud heir of many virtues.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Once and again, in your wide spreading Camps  
We shared a rich repast; yes bread and salt  
Together we have eaten. We remember  
Protection volunteered, and rights of others  
Carefully guarded.

*Abraham.* Simply—it was well.  
To rescue, to restore the spoil is just.  
Frequently we recall some passages  
Of our sojourn in Mitsraim. The glory  
Of the great Valley And the wondrous Nile.  
The blazing marvellous chief Pyramid,  
And splendors of the mighty Pharaoh linger,  
In pictures of the way, Albeit years  
Since then are gone, and not without adventure,  
Lodging mixt sentiments. But not bedimming,  
The recollection of the regal state  
With which we were escorted, when we struck  
Our tents, and thence departed, midst the favors  
Showered down upon us by Almighty God,  
Through your great People in that favored land.  
For Earth and Heaven are God's alone. He deals  
According to his pleasure and decree.

*Envoy.*

But why, my Lord, without a retinue?  
Why on a journey donning the disguise  
Of a mean traveller —pardon me— as if

THE CROWNING TEST.

The times had changed, grown stale, or were  
reversed?           *Abraham.*

My purpose is peculiar, and I serve  
Humbly my God. With awful reverence  
Fall down before him.

*Envoy.*           Truly it is meet,  
For God has greatly blest you, as we know.  
Humility is a merit even in kings.  
But yet, my Lord, the specimen are few.  
Pure self effacement is a trait quite rare.

*Enter a Messenger.*  
Son of the mighty Sheikh, behold, look yonder,  
That Tent conceals a Troop of grave Magicians,  
Possibly you may scorn to visit them.  
But mysteries are the atmosphere that hoods them  
Leagued with the unseen world. temerity  
Becomes their element. They enter deeply  
Within the vast vacuity of Sheol,  
Gathering a gleam of comfort overswept.  
They dive into the future. Spells and charms,  
And powers occult concur in their equipment.  
They can remand the phantoms of the dead,  
By their enchantments. Bid an unseen hand  
Inscribe with style, on an uncovered tablet,  
Replies occult, and subtle expositions.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Or otherwise make known by raps or movements  
Their secret compact with the sheiks of Sheol.

*Isaac.*

Friends, oft my Father has acquainted me  
With acts and shams of witchcraft he has seen.  
What feat will form the attraction of this hour ?

*Messenger.*

Omni will toss and climb a silken cord,  
Hitching it to the moon, and thence perform.

(*aleb. running.* [goes.

Like swarms of bees—see, see the canaanites !

*Another Messenger.*

The curtain rises—quick, or lose the sight  
Of the great wizard climbing through the clouds.

*Isaac.* [goes.

My Father, they are famous Memphisian Wizards,  
Of whom you have told me. Curiosity  
Incites me to behold the exhibition,  
If time permit and if my Sire approve.

*Abraham.*

Go, my dear Son, Heman and Caleb also.  
Acquaint yourselves with strategems and snares,  
Laid by the wily Fowler in the ways.  
But time speeds on—tomorrow we arrive—  
The dewy morning will salute and cheer us.

# THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama.

SCENE IX

THE THIRD DAY.

COOLNESS refreshing, on soft moving wings  
Fans us and bathes us with the choice perfumes  
Of many blossoms

*Isaac.* Gaily sing the birds  
All things are joyful, my dear Father, all things  
Respond in trust and thankfulness, but men.  
I have been thinking of the frantic pictures,  
Of the last evening.

*Abraham.* Were they such, my Child?

*Isaac.*

Dear Father, I will tell you. As we entered,  
Forth stepped a Conjuror with naked arms.  
He spoke, a lad came forward from the troop,  
Bringing a line, He caught the line and flung it,  
High-high it went, up-up and out of sight.  
Then the Magician jerked and tried the cord,  
And bade the lad go up — he hesitated,  
As if afraid to venture. He commanded,  
But now the lad refused At once he seized him,

THE CROWNING TEST.

At arms length flung him sprawling high in air.  
That cord he caught in his descent, and dextrally  
Hand over hand ascended it and climbed  
Entirely out of sight. Quickly we heard  
A rumpus in the sky. Loud angry talk,  
Seemingly in the clouds. Fiercely the Wizard  
Called to the lad and bid him to descend.  
He answered that he could not, for a monster  
Was holding him in its grasp. Struggles ensued  
With outcries, groans, like some one sore beset.  
Thereat the Wizard stamped and looked enraged,  
Threw off his robe, and caught the hanging cord,  
He mounted high and quickly disappeared.  
Then we heard savage shoutings in the clouds,  
And blows redoubled, as of pugilists.  
Just then a bleeding foot of the slain lad  
Fell on the platform, now an arm, a leg,  
And last the head torn from the mangled trunk.  
Then the blood dabbled Wizard followed down.  
He gathered up the limbs, the headless trunk,  
Then on the ghastly pile he laid the head.  
Then he outspread a dark cloth over all,  
Strange incantations muttering the while.  
Suddenly, as we looked the cloth sprang up,  
Outstept the boy folding it neath his arm.

THE CROWNING TEST.

And nothing seemed to have happened.

*Abraham.* Well, my Son,

What more concerning it?

*Isaac.* We left the circle.

Tarried no longer. We had seen the working  
Of an occult and overmastering power,  
One that was only evil,

*Abraham.* But, my Son,

Did you see clearly, did you hear distinctly  
The things you have described—yes, all of you?  
Caleb and Heman likewise?

*Isaac.* Yes, dear Father,

All of us, *Caleb.* Every one of us.

*Heman.* Yes, all the groups  
Who formed the audience.

*Abraham.* You were entertained  
With a strange tragedy, were its scene not real?

*Isaac.*

Dear Father, they were pictures marvellous  
In every quality of form and action,  
But wholly false, phantoms and only phantoms.

*Abraham.*

Such are the illusions of that lying Nakach,  
Whose subtlety audacity and power,  
Are curbed, have limits, tho' he roves at large.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Even permitted oft to search and try  
The Heritage of God. It was for t is,  
You went, that you might see and be convinced  
That there are mighty spirits, enemies  
Of God, and ever plotting for our hurt.

*Isaac.*

Dear Father, as the roadway climbs his Ridge,  
Behold the prospect—see what hills lit up!  
Mountains how glorious—deeply soundly sleeping.  
Enchanted by the distancce. I shall have  
Such funds to entertain my gracious Princess,  
On my return. Could she be with us now,  
To be enraptured with these thrilling scenes,  
To feast with us—what bliss!

*Abraham.*            Though never here,  
Many a touching scene and view sublime,  
Hailed your devoted Mother.

*Isaac.*                Lo, how rich!  
What glory swims and crowns those lifting hills,  
Matchless they must be ever.

*Abraham.*            Yonder, Isaac,  
My eyes behold it—there—and not the loftiest,  
The mountain God appoints me. Further on  
We leave the beaten pathway and go up.



THE CROWNING TEST.

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SCENE X.

LEAVING FOR THE MOUNTAIN.

A LITTLE on, some few steps further only.  
By yonder rock let me alight.

*Isaac.*

Dear Father.

Permit me to assist you      But my Lord,  
Must we not need the athon and our servants ?  
Can we go forward even without our beast ?  
Surely you must not walk—the Mount so far.

*Abraham.*

My Son, we take no athon and no men,  
I yet am vigorous—We go alone,  
Only ourselves—no others. You, my servants,  
Heman and Caleb with the ass remain.  
We will go yonder, worship, and return  
To you again. Isaac my Son, bear thou  
The wood for the burnt offering. At once  
We will proceed. And in my hand I carry  
The fire the knife.

*Isaac.* We shall be some hours gone,

THE CROWNING TEST.

Boys, be attentive, a repast prepare.  
For my dear Father will require refreshments,  
After this tiresome walk.

*Both.* We will attend.

All shall be ready waiting your return.

*Abraham.* *Going along.*

My Son, God's judgments are unsearchable,  
His ways past finding out,

*Isaac.* My honored Father

You loiter not when God appoints the work.  
It is God's right, we worship him, he loves us,  
He gives us peace. Is it not so, dear Father?

*Abraham.*

Obedience is both love and gratitude.  
God's faithful servants he will crown with honor.

*Nakach.*

Have we appealed it?—are we yet so clear  
In this strange warrant of our confidence,  
That we in boast can tell our slaves and Sarah,  
That Isaac shall return? When we are now  
About to offer him in sacrifice,  
A bleeding victim; and consumed by fire?  
And dare not whisper it, even to the winds.  
Are we in truth composed and rational,  
And not the sport of dire hallucination?  
For can the Eternal, who forbids manslaughter,

THE CROWNING TEST.

His dread decree suspend? Will we not be  
At par with Molock's worshipers, who give  
Their children to the idol's burning arms,  
In their blind fury?

*Abraham.* Evil One, avaunt!

Off to thy pit!

*Isaac.* Now my dear Father, see,  
Here are the wood the fire the knife, but where—  
Where is the lamb?

*Abraham.* God will provide himself  
The lamb for a burnt offering, my Son.

*Nakach.*

Ah, have we said it! Does our heart not chide us  
For this sad speech? Are we not blindly leading  
Our fond Son to the altar, to be there  
Slaughtered and burnt to ashes?

*Abraham.* Reck'ess fiend,  
Vain is thy cunning, trust not to disarm  
The unflinching purpose, the supreme resolve  
To do that which Almighty God commands.  
Shall I withhold from Him the Child he lent me?  
'Twas his to lend, 'tis his to reassume.  
Even by his yearning father's loving hands.

*Nakach.*

But Isaac, young and nimble—will he stay  
For us to bind and slay him as a bullock?

THE CROWNING TEST.

Yes he will flee us nimbly as a fawn,  
And who will capture him, when we have left  
Our servants with the ass, and bade them wait  
For our return Quite problematical ?  
But if indeed we master him and set  
The life of our dear son, and fire consume him,  
Will he return with us as we have boasted ?

*Abraham.*

Cease Nakach, dragon of the sacred Garden,  
Isaac, the Son for whom my bowels yearn.  
Answer to many prayers—nought shall withhold,  
He must be slain by a fond parent's hand,  
Be offered up a burning sacrifice.

*Isaac.*

The way is somewhat rough. My dearest Father,  
May I not take the brand, sometimes the smoke  
Puffs up against your face ? Do let me take it,  
And save my honored Parent this annoyance.  
Let me, my Father.

*Abraham* No my Son, 'tis needless  
The fuel is quite enough. It harms me not.  
We leave the valley—here the ground ascends.  
We are beginning now to climb the mountain  
Which God has shown me.

*Isaac.* 'Tis not difficult,  
Thus far—but may grow more precipitous.

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Nakach.*

Forward they go—and all my art avails not.  
Yet boast I will, tho' for the nonce defeated  
In this last struggle with that Providence  
Which means to limit me. Let me review  
Some mighty feats and triumphs of my power.  
The howling desolations I have made.  
Mine was an advent of most rueful blasting.  
This new made globe when I arived, what was it?  
A gem of beauty forned by the Almighty.  
Onward it rolled, basking in generous sunlight  
That clad both poles with tropic fire and vigor.  
Such trees superb such plants such balmy flowers,  
Such peaceful creatures strangely exquisite,  
All grades all forms all sizes. At that time,  
Each other they devoured not. The sweet herb,  
The tender frond, were food for every craving.  
Silily I entered, and took note of all.  
Full in these splendors was a spacious garden.  
And a sequestered pair, the Man and Wife.  
These were the keystone of the monstrous arch,  
Supporting splendors inconceivable.  
This glorious Pair had immortality.  
Inferior creatnres filled their role, and painless  
Died—to repeat the miricle of life.

THE CROWNING TEST.

There a proud Dragon facinating find me,  
My henchman Death! With golden dreams I won  
I spoiled the choicest work of the Great King.  
Trailed it, in all its glory through the mire.  
Mark the triumphant sequel: the Almighty,  
Curst his fair Earth. Stern pain and ruin shriekd  
Frost smote the poles, ice mountains hid the glory  
Red quaked the land by tyranny subversed,  
Wickedness was the mode—my element!  
The world at last was drowned, and Noah only,  
With his seven mates were left to tell the tale.  
—But all this history I will have demolished,  
By scientists mature. No, not one scrap,  
But high authority shall have impugned.

*Isaac.*

Dear Father, steeper, rougher grows the hill,  
Getting more difficult—may I take your hand,  
These stones are treacherous and you may slip,  
As without staff you climb?

*Abraham.* My dearest Isaac,

You may—but yet my Son, no need of it.  
Why should we wonder that Methuselah,  
Noah and Shem were still in vigorous youth  
When treble their days to mine? God is the life  
And our allotment in His pleasure rests.

*THE CROWNING TEST.*

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A Drama

XI.

*ON THE HILL-TOP.*

TOWARDS EVENING.

THE FINAL SCENE.

ISAAC.

LO! from this Mountain top the view expands.  
Gilt most magnificent of God Almighty,  
To you and your descendants. Ours to be,  
But when, dear Father? Others now possess it,  
While we move oft, and not one crumb of soil  
Claim we as ours.

ABRAHAM. Isaac my son beloved,  
Heir of the jewelled promises of God,  
God's gifts to us, rule to the end of time,  
With full fruition in the later years.  
Others are tenants yet. God's plans are sealed.

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Isaac.*

Just a step further—oh how smoothe a knoll,  
As if a place prepared for sacrifice,  
Awaiting but the altar—as if chosen.  
Dear Father, is not this the spot?

*Abraham.*

It is,

My Son my darling, that which God has shown me  
We will arrange some stones, prepare the work.  
Lay off the wood, my Son, and let us build  
An Altar to the Lord, Those stones will serve,  
B g em m. Son — lay here ano her stone.  
Yes — that will do—oue more, and this completes.  
Now place the wood in order.

*Isaac*

My dear Father.

Behold the wood, the fire, the knife—but God  
Not yet has brought the lamb.

*Abraham.*

How shall I say it!——

Isaac the gladness of my heart—behold—  
Thyself the Lamb!

*Isaac.*

My Father! O my Father!

Must I be slain?—Surely not so, my Father!  
How can it be!

*Abraham.*

My Son, four days ago,

God called to me, and said: Take now thy Son,



THE CROWNING TEST.

Thine only Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee  
Unto Moriah. And there offer him  
For a burnt offering, upon a Mountain,  
Which I will tell thee of. This morning, lo,  
I lifted up my eyes and saw far off  
The place appointed. O, my Son! My Son!

*Isaac.*

My Father—my dear Father, shall I lift  
One finger to oppose God's holy will!  
He made me—I am his—his will be done.

*Abraham.*

*Falls on his son's neck and kisses him.*

My Son—my darling—darling Son—my Isaac.

*Isaac.*

Bind me, my Father, bind me, lay me down.  
Do as God bade thee.

*Binds him, embraces and lays him on the altar.*

*Abraham.*

O my dearest Child,  
Tho' thus I lay thee low, tho' thus I lift  
My arm to shed thy blood—and offer thee,  
The Lamb of a burnt offering—my Son,  
From thy burnt ashes, thou at once shalt rise.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Just as thou art this moment, God is able,  
No whit shall lack.

*The Angel of Jehovah calls out of Heaven.*

Abraham !    Abrnham !

*Abraham.*

Here am I,

*The Angel of Jehovah.*

Lay not thy hand upon the Lad,  
Nor do thou any thing to him.  
For now I know thou fearest God,  
Since thou hast not withheld  
Thy Son—thine only—from me.

*Abraham unbinds Isaac, and turning,  
beholds a ram in a thicket, caught by the horns.*

*Abraham.*

Behold, my Son, a ram caught in the thicket.

*Isaac.*

God has provided.

*Abraham.* And this Mound shall take  
Jehovah-jireh as its name forever.  
For God has here provided me a lamb,  
In place of Isaac.

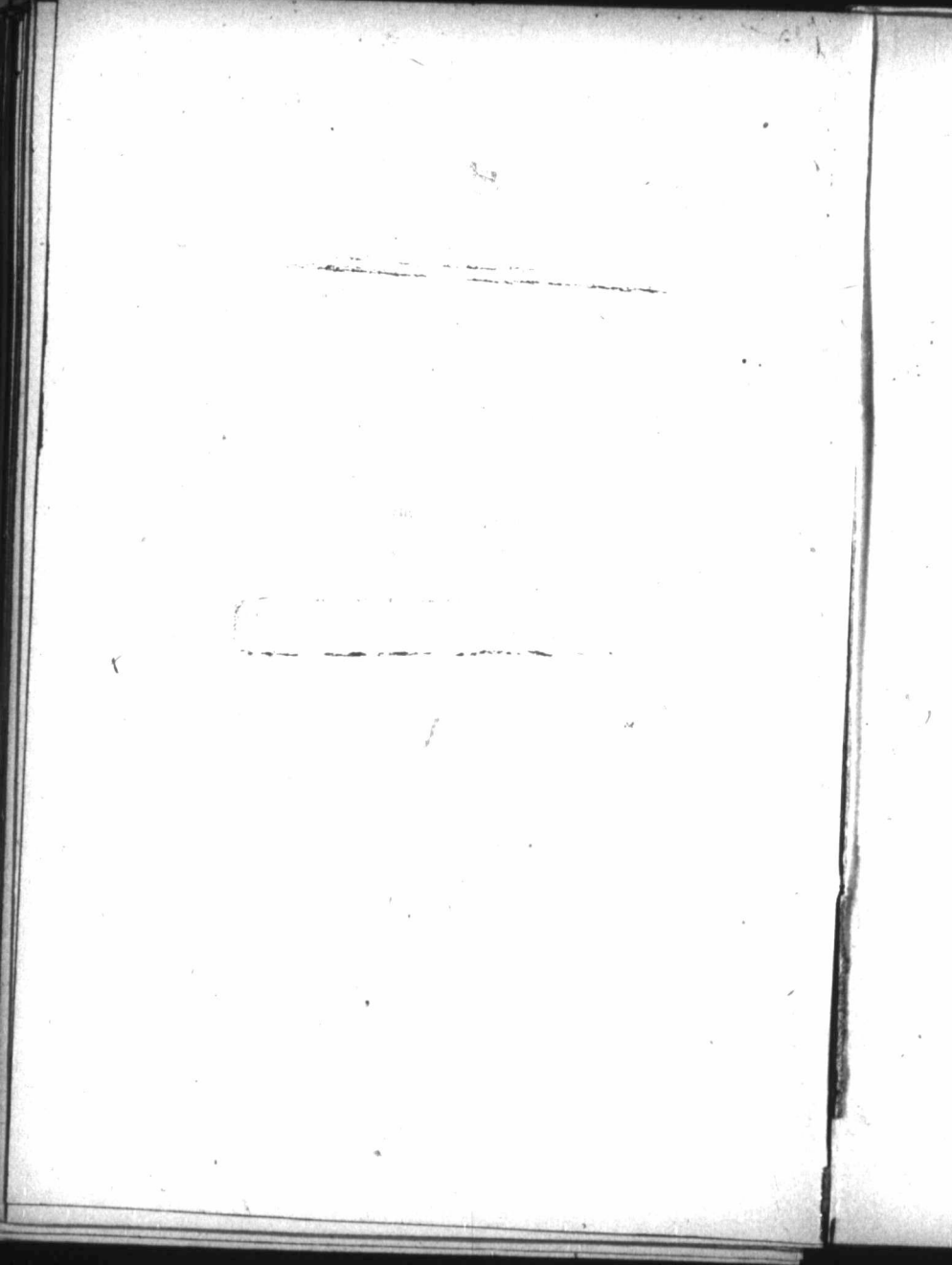
THE CROWNING TEST.

*The ram is burning on the altar.*

*The Angel of Jehovah calls again from Heaven.*

By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah,  
Because thou hast done this thing:  
Hast not withholden thy Son—thine only,  
That in blessing I will bless thee,  
And in multiplying,  
I will multiply thy Seed as the stars of heaven,  
And as the sand on the sea shore.  
And thy Seed  
Shall possess the Gate of his enemies.  
And in thy Seed  
Shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.  
Because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Oct. 30th 1901.



THE CROWNING TEST.

A Drama.

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SCENE XII

*Amongst Invisible Spectators.*

ADAM AND EVE

AN OFFSKIP.

*Adam.*

T H U S of our Sons has God made choice of some  
To be the witnesses of sovereign grace,  
To bear along the treasure of His Name,  
From age to age. Eva, we still are babes,  
Watching beside the vast and rippling sea,  
The ocean of God's grace. What have we seen?

*Eve.*

The timely substitution of a lamb,  
For Isaac's life.

*Adam.* Eva, a fitting shadow  
Of a great sacrifice some future day,  
On these same hills. Then there will be no rescue

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Eve.*

Adam, the SEED which God appointed me.,  
I thought was Cain, then I believed 'twas Seth.  
But yet that day is future and not near.  
And still the demigods of old repute,  
Which devastated earth before tho. Flood,  
Have crowds of worhipers. And on the hills,  
And wind swept mountains in their viewless halls  
Hold carnival, and cheat the fast-shut eyes  
Of wretched devotees. Must this continue ?  
See 'over earth their altars, and the priests  
That serve the idols, Must such things remain ?

*Adam,*

He comes—the blissful Seed ! Where lags  
the splendor  
Of The Great King ? Ah, has he stript himself !  
Hides He in flesh. assumes its lacks and terrors,  
To bring us life ? The High The Holy One !  
See, hopeless ills flee from His path, and health  
Exults around Him.

*Eve.* Adam, can it be,  
Goodness itself and infinite compassion  
Will toil unloved by one of Abraham's offspring ?

THE CROWNING TEST.

*Adam.*

Eva, a portion—rulers— will devote Him.  
Here on this hill he will lay down his life  
For all our Race. On Him our stripes are laid.  
The recreants will be scatered in long sorrow,  
To taste in wanderings sin's bitterness.

*Eva.*

Adam, alas for Abraham's multitudes,  
Seed like the stars. What has become of them,  
The Temple disappears—the Holy City.  
Down trodden by the heathen. Can it be  
That God has cast them off for wickedness,  
For none remain to cheer the desolate homes. ?

*Adam.*

Voices and heavenly harmonies salute me.  
Lo, fragrant offerings from grateful hearts.  
With works in earnest offices of love,  
Ascend before the Throne of the Most High.  
These from a People who are overrunning  
The spaces of the earth. Proud riding on  
The waves of the great seas. And with them, lo,  
A Coadjutor, one identical,  
Offshoot superb, a Power gigantic grown.  
Together they will dominate the earth,

THE CROWNING TEST.

And cleanse it with the besom of their might.  
And nothing shall resist them or deter.

*Eve.*

Adam, are these not perquisites of God,  
Bestowed on Abraham only—on his Race,  
Now who be they who hold these guarded gifts.  
The sworn inheritance of Abraham?

*Adam*

They deem themselves the chosen ones of Heaven  
Heathens and aliens once, but now approved,  
To fill the gap of Abraham's decadence.  
And figure as his spiritual sons.  
As if the KING could violate his oath !

*Eve.*

But Abraham's Seed is swallowed up, and only  
A remnant lives, to be a scoff and prey,  
Of rulers covetous and cruel men.

*Adam.*

See ! mighty multitudes engirt the globe,  
Bearing the blessings and the Word of Life,  
The light of God, from end to end of earth.  
Yet they are hidden—from the nations hidden,  
Who envy them, who dread, but know them not.



THE CROWNING TEST.

And neither do they know themselves. But claim  
Descent from Japheth, not the loins of Shem.  
A crisis comes, an awful battle field,  
When God will fight for them. And they will  
pass

Out of the shadow into glorious sunlight,  
The world will know them then : and they-  
themselves.

God's promised beautifiers of the earth.  
His Giant sent to liberate the slaves.  
To break each chain and lift all burdens off.

*Eve.*

Adam, a blissful day—and somewhat then,  
The crash of our sad fall will be forgotten.

*Adam.*

I see a City and a dazzling Temple.  
And the GREAT KING himself again is there.  
Over the earth he reigns. See, offerings smoke  
On the great Temple altar.

*Eve.*

How is this ?

Our offerings kept in view that signal day,  
When the great act of which they are the type,

THE CROWNING TEST.

Was in the future.

*Adam.* Eva, also these  
Will honor The Great King with awful rite;  
Will keep in memory his marvellous love,  
When he sold all, yes stript himself of all,  
Even of his life for us.

*Eve.* Adam, scoffs yet,  
That Dragon who beguiled us in the Garden,  
The wily serpent, who has built him towers  
On many hills; and viewless palaces  
Of mimic splendor—do you see him, Adam?

*Adam.*  
He must have been outcasted—all are gone.  
The splendor and the mimicry have vanished.  
But Eva, a great glory from the Temple  
Fills the whole earth. See, resurrected Martyrs  
In glorious companies, now come and go,  
Through all the earth.

*Eve.* They are exalted, perfect  
Lifted above us. Saints who have arisen  
From the lost dust of death, have come forth high  
With marvellous bodies, as we see in Enoch.  
Adam, will these glad companies be hidden,

THE CROWNING TEST. 1

Or gladly visible to all God's children?  
Yes, and familiar, friend commerce with friend?

*Adam.*

I see them, Eva—but they mingle not.  
Meddle not with activities of life.  
Its many offices have felt no shock  
Virtue and peace and love walk on together.  
Goodness is paramount, sin hides with shame.

*Eve.*

Adam, a sabbath rest most rich and golden  
When the grim bale that stalked before the flood  
Shall sink in shame and nevermore be seen.  
But why thus hidden from the saints on earth?

*Adam.*

The tangible and spiritual worlds,  
Long just in touch, must still distinct remain.  
No intercourse, restricted or familiar,  
No specious interspersion, can occur.  
Both being kingdoms under special laws:  
Fixt and unalterable will remain.

THE CROWNING TEST.

Behold! what joyous groups, see twos and threes,  
Freely they circulate—and angels with them.  
But imperceptible to natural sight.  
With songs and anthems which the tympanum  
Detects not. Glory that we strive for, holds  
No parly with the dreamy sighs of sloth.

*Eve.*

Adam, yet we remember to have heard  
While yet we toiled, sweet syllables in song,  
Yes from our loved, and even glimpses sometimes  
Of things beyond the earth. And will not they  
For whom those better things are in reserve?

*Adam.*

Could we, when in the flesh behold the sun?  
Could eyes of men endure the blinding light  
Of chiefs of the Great King—each one a sun?  
No, Eva, such will be concealed, or toned,  
In the enhancing golden years to come.

Amidst the marvels of those Thousand years—  
In glory excessive, veiled from fleshly eyes,  
Girt with celestial cohorts and enthroned—  
In Twelve proud Cities of the teeming earth,  
In Twelve rich Temples, Twelve Apostles sit,  
Judging the Twelve vast Tribes of ISRAEL.