O gracious God, in spite of all our sin,
Despite the darkness of bedevilled hearts,
We beg you now to beam your light within.
Bind up our wounds, pour ointment on our smarts
And melt, with heavenly warmth, our frozen hearts.
Rise, Righteous Sun, with healing in your wings!
Defeat the Prince of Darkness, who departs
When light shines forth from Christ, the King of kings,
And Eden’s land, in all its pristine glory, sings.

KEITH BARRETT

THEODICY

LOVE in the Deity stretches conceptions of men:
Love seems not love which permits our full measure of hate.
Promise of justice in ages beyond seems too late.
Where is God’s love when the wretched are wretched again?
Holiness absolute stands far removed from our ken:
Either its brightness so alien it seems to frustrate,
Blindingly brilliant; or else its rich glories abate,
Fading in mist as the distance is too much to mend.
One place remains where this love and this holiness meet,
Mingling in poetic measures with no verbal dross:
Symbol of holiness pure, justice without defeat,
Coupled with unbounded love – is the stark, ugly cross.
Lord God of hosts! In the worship surrounding your throne
Questions once clam’ring give place to hushed homage alone.

D.A. CARSON