

## GOD'S RESPONSE

I prayed today, as oft I do,  
for them and theirs . . . for yours and you,  
and asked the Lord to spare the rod:  
“*Oh, be not hard upon them, God!*”

The silence, so serene and still,  
was broken by a feathered trill,  
sung by a beak that soon took wing  
to elsewhere perch and solo sing.

My gaze, attracted by its flight,  
Soon fixed upon a fluffy sight.  
A cloudy, fluctuating face  
was playing tricks in sky-blue space.

I watched a misty bundle dance  
into a wispy toddler's stance,  
but wind reshaped it to a teen  
then honed it to the present scene.

As that rehearsal gathered tears  
of joy and pain from former years,  
within my grieving heart I heard  
the Father's firm, responsive word.

“I suffer still the risk I took  
in writing *free will* in My book.  
Though Love allows no other way,  
yet Light controls the final say.

“I chose the best My will could do:  
Truth's now enfleshed as one of you,  
immortally ordained to be  
Life's Way for setting sinners free.

“Against the demon lies that blind  
their minds from light you hope they'll find,  
continue—while there's life—to pray,  
and do it faithfully each day.

“But when deciders shun to see,  
in birds or clouds, the heart of Me,  
or flat refuse My prophet's voice,  
they rarely make My Son their choice.

“You think *you* want to spare them this—  
sin's wayward plight of missing bliss?  
My child, that's far more *My* desire!  
I'd rescue them from Satan's fire!

“I'll never—no, not once— forget  
doom's dark despair and hell's regret!  
One thought alone sustains My peace:  
Love's best was done for their release.”

A crimson sunset dressed the sky,  
when God concluded His reply. . . .  
I, then, my former prayer re-spun,  
as Jesus taught: “*Thy will be done.*”

— David L. Hatton, 10/25/2019