

PART OF THE CROWD

A pilgrim proclaiming God's warning
Delivered his message with zeal,
But many who gathered were shouting
To drown his rejected appeal.

The hateful horde blasted the prophet,
And many began to grab stones.
In less than a minute his body
Became a red heap of crushed bones.

The unified swell of their yelling
Resounded to Heaven and shook
The throne of the Lord who had sent him,
And He wrote their names in a book.

Soon, one from these brutally banded
Was brought by a stroke in the brain
To stand in the court of the Master
Whose pilgrim their hatred had slain.

“But I never threw a stone at him!”
“Then why was your cheering so loud?
For I heard it merge with his murder,
As you became part of the crowd.”

At once, in his mind he relived it:
The drama, the fervor, the thrill
That made him feel one with his neighbors
And right about wishing to kill.

“Shall I condemn you,” asked His Maker,
“To carry this bloodguilt alone,
When each had a hand in creating
A mob with a mind of its own?”

“The gang bears the blame for its evil—
The mass for its passion so proud.
Your souls shall be sentenced together,
For each gave his will to the crowd.”

When sinners or saints, by their folly,
Trade truth for the urge to belong,
They all must face judgment for blending
Their voice with the crimes of the throng.

— *David L. Hatton, 6/5/2014*