

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

THE SLAVE  
SINGING AT MIDNIGHT

Loud he sang the psalm of David!  
He, a Negro and enslaved,  
Sang of Israel's victory,  
Sang of Zion, bright and free.

Paul and Silas, in their prison,  
Sang of Christ, the Lord arisen,  
And an earthquake's arm of might  
Broke their dungeon-gates at night.

In that hour, when night is calmest,  
Sang he from the Hebrew Psalmist,  
In a voice so sweet and clear  
That I could not choose but hear,

Songs of triumph, and ascriptions,  
Such as reached the swart Egyptians,  
When upon the Red Sea coast  
Perished Pharaoh and his host.

And the voice of his devotion  
Filled my soul with strange emotion;  
For its tones by turns were glad,  
Sweetly solemn, wildly sad.

But, alas! What holy angel  
Brings the Slave this glad evangel?  
And what earthquake's arm of might  
Breaks his dungeon-gates at night?

