



Pearl of Great Price: A Literary Translation of the Middle English Pearl

David Gould

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The Middle English poem *Pearl* is an elegy on the death of a child, written to provide consolation for the loss of a loved one through instruction in Christian theology. The mourning father's faith in God has been shaken by his daughter's death. Having fainted away on his daughter's grave, he is transported in a dream vision to an earthy paradise where he sees his daughter across a stream, transfigured and clothed in garments set with pearls. She explains to him her exalted status as a bride of Christ and shows him a vision of the New Jerusalem. Ravished with his vision, he attempts to cross the stream to join his Pearl, only to be woken from his dream of paradise. This translation of the poem is accompanied by a preface on the translation, a reproduction of the poem in its original orthography, a transcription of the manuscript, a glossary, and instructions on how to read the manuscript hand.

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