

The Great Forerunner of the Morn

Neale

1. The great forerunner of the morn,
the herald of the Word, is born;
and faithful hearts shall never fail
with thanks and praise his light to hail.
2. With heav'nly message Gabriel came,
that John should be that herald's name,
and with prophetic utt'rance told
his actions great and manifold.
3. Though not yet born, John gave aright
his witness to the coming Light;
and Christ, the Sun of all the earth,
fulfilled that witness at his birth.
4. Of woman born shall never be
a greater prophet than was he,
whose mighty deeds exalt his fame
to greater than a prophet's name.
5. All praise to God the Father be,
all praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whom with the Spirit we adore
for ever and for evermore.

Inspiration: Luke 1: 5-25, 39-45; "Praecursor altus luminis"; attr. to St. Bede the Venerable, 673-735.
Lyrics: 88.88; John M. Neale, 1818-1866, in "The Hymnal Noted", 1852.