

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **John Milton**

**- poems -**

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## **John Milton (1608-1674)**

Son of a music composer, Milton was educated at St Paul's School and Christ's College, Cambridge. He began writing poetry at university, where he gained the nickname of "the Lady of Christ's" which he attributed to "a certain niceness of nature". On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, composed the Christmas of the year in which he received his first degree, marked the abandoning of his previous frivolous style. From then on Milton sought to instruct his audience in a style later considered "Miltonic". His central moral belief is in individual responsibility: only when one is allowed choice can one become a moral being.

After Lycidas in 1637, Milton wrote only a few minor poems until twenty years later when he began Paradise Lost. During this period he travelled in Italy, meeting Galileo amongst others. He was also increasingly involved in campaigning for civil, religious and domestic liberties, which prompted his publication of various pamphlets, including his notorious defences of divorce. In the mid 1640s he became aware of his deteriorating vision, which would leave him completely blind by 1652.

In 1649 Milton was employed as Latin Secretary to the Council of State, and was helped in his duties by the poet Marvell. After the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, his publication of the republican The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth in the same year resulted in his arrest, at which Marvell intervened on his behalf. Perhaps not surprisingly, Milton chose this time to return to poetry; his late poems being composed in his head and dictated to his daughters, two nephews and various paid and unpaid helpers.

## **An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet W. Shakespeare**

What needs my Shakespeare for his honored bones  
The labor of an age in piled stones?  
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid  
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?  
Dear son of Memory, great heir of Fame,  
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thy self a livelong monument.  
For whilst, to th' shame of slow-endeavoring art,  
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book  
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,  
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,  
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving,  
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie  
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

John Milton

## An Epitaph On The Marchioness Of Winchester

This rich Marble doth enterr  
The honour'd Wife of Winchester,  
A Vicounts daughter, an Earls heir,  
Besides what her vertues fair  
Added to her noble birth,  
More then she could own from Earth.  
Summers three times eight save one  
She had told, alas too soon,  
After so short time of breath,  
To house with darknes, and with death.  
Yet had the number of her days  
Bin as compleat as was her praise,  
Nature and fate had had no strife  
In giving limit to her life.  
Her high birth, and her graces sweet,  
Quickly found a lover meet;  
The Virgin quire for her request  
The God that sits at marriage feast;  
He at their invoking came  
But with a scarce-wel-lighted flame;  
And in his Garland as he stood,  
Ye might discern a Cipress bud.  
Once had the early Matrons run  
To greet her of a lovely son,  
And now with second hope she goes,  
And calls Lucina to her throws;  
But whether by mischance or blame  
Atropos for Lucina came;  
And with remorsles cruelty,  
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree:  
The haples Babe before his birth  
Had burial, yet not laid in earth,  
And the languisht Mothers Womb  
Was not long a living Tomb.  
So have I seen som tender slip  
Sav'd with care from Winters nip,  
The pride of her carnation train,  
Pluck't up by som unheedy swain,  
Who onely thought to crop the flowr  
New shot up from vernall showr;  
But the fair blossom hangs the head  
Side-ways as on a dying bed,  
And those Pearls of dew she wears,  
Prove to be presaging tears  
Which the sad morn had let fall  
On her hast'ning funerall.  
Gentle Lady may thy grave  
Peace and quiet ever have;  
After this thy travail sore  
Sweet rest sease thee evermore,  
That to give the world encrease,  
Shortned hast thy own lives lease;



Here besides the sorrowing  
That thy noble House doth bring,  
Here be tears of perfect moan  
Weept for thee in Helicon,  
And som Flowers, and som Bays,  
For thy Hears to strew the ways,  
Sent thee from the banks of Came,  
Devoted to thy vertuous name;  
Whilst thou bright Saint high sit'st in glory,  
Next her much like to thee in story,  
That fair Syrian Shepherdess,  
Who after yeers of barrennes,  
The highly favour'd Joseph bore  
To him that serv'd for her before,  
And at her next birth much like thee,  
Through pangs fled to felicity,  
Far within the boosom bright  
of blazing Majesty and Light,  
There with thee, new welcom Saint,  
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,  
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,  
No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

John Milton

## Another On The Same

Here lieth one who did most truly prove,  
That he could never die while he could move,  
So hung his destiny never to rot  
While he might still jogg on, and keep his trot,  
Made of sphear-metal, never to decay  
Untill his revolution was at stay.  
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime  
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:  
And like an Engin mov'd with wheel and waight,  
His principles being ceast, he ended strait.  
Rest that gives all men life, gave him his death,  
And too much breathing put him out of breath;  
Nor were it contradiction to affirm  
Too long vacation hastned on his term.  
Meerly to drive the time away he sickn'd,  
Fainted, and died, nor would with Ale be quickn'd;  
Nay, quoth he, on his swooning bed out-stretch'd,  
If I may not carry, sure Ile ne're be fetch'd,  
But vow though the cross Doctors all stood hearers,  
For one Carrier put down to make six bearers.  
Ease was his chief disease, and to judge right,  
He di'd for heavines that his Cart went light,  
His leasure told him that his time was com,  
And lack of load, made his life burdensom  
That even to his last breath (ther be that say't)  
As he were prest to death, he cry'd more waight;  
But had his doings lasted as they were,  
He had bin an immortall Carrier.  
Obedient to the Moon he spent his date  
In cours reciprocal, and had his fate  
Linkt to the mutual flowing of the Seas,  
Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase:  
His Letters are deliver'd all and gon,  
Onely remains this superscription.

John Milton

## Arcades

Part of an entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Darby at Harefield, by som Noble persons of her Family, who appear on the Scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of State with this Song.

### I. SONG.

Look Nymphs, and Shepherds look,  
What sudden blaze of majesty  
Is that which we from hence descry  
Too divine to be mistook:  
This this is she  
To whom our vows and wishes bend,  
Heer our solemn search hath end.

Fame that her high worth to raise,  
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,  
We may justly now accuse  
Of detraction from her praise,  
Less then half we find exprest,  
Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark what radiant state she spreads,  
In circle round her shining throne,  
Shooting her beams like silver threds,  
This this is she alone,  
Sitting like a Goddess bright,  
In the center of her light.  
Might she the wise Latona be,  
Or the towred Cybele,  
Mother of a hunderd gods;  
Juno dare's not give her odds;  
Who had thought this clime had held  
A deity so unparalel'd?

As they com forward, the genius of the Wood appears, and turning toward them, speaks.

GEN. Stay gentle Swains, for though in this disguise,  
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes,  
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung  
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,  
Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluse,  
Stole under Seas to meet his Arethuse;  
And ye the breathing Roses of the Wood,  
Fair silver-buskind Nymphs as great and good,  
I know this quest of yours, and free intent  
Was all in honour and devotion ment  
To the great Mistres of yon princely shrine,  
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,  
And with all helpful service will comply  
To further this nights glad solemnity;

And lead ye where ye may more neer behold  
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;  
Which I full oft amidst these shades alone  
Have sate to wonder at, and gaze upon:  
For know by lot from Jove I am the powr  
Of this fair wood, and live in Oak'n bowr,  
To nurse the Saplings tall, and curl the grove  
With Ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.  
And all my Plants I save from nightly ill,  
Of noisom winds, and blasting vapours chill.  
And from the Boughs brush off the evil dew,  
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blew,  
Or what the cross dire-looking Planet smites,  
Or hurtfull Worm with canker'd venom bites.  
When Eev'ning gray doth rise, I fetch my round  
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground,  
And early ere the odorous breath of morn  
Awakes the slumbring leaves, or tasseld horn  
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,  
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout  
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless,  
But els in deep of night when drowsines  
Hath lockt up mortal sense, then listen I  
To the celestial Sirens harmony,  
That sit upon the nine enfolded Sphears,  
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,  
And turn the Adamantine spindle round,  
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.  
Such sweet compulsion doth in musick ly,  
To lull the daughters of Necessity,  
And keep unsteddy Nature to her law,  
And the low world in measur'd motion draw  
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear  
Of human mould with grosse unpurged ear;  
And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze  
The peerles height of her immortal praise,  
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,  
If my inferior hand or voice could hit  
Inimitable sounds, yet as we go,  
What ere the skill of lesser gods can show,  
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,  
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;  
Where ye may all that are of noble stemm  
Approach, and kiss her sacred vestures hemm.

## 2. SONG.

O're the smooth enameld green  
Where no print of step hath been,  
Follow me as I sing,  
And touch the warbled string.

Under the shady roof  
Of branching Elm Star-proof,  
Follow me,  
I will bring you where she sits  
Clad in splendor as befits  
Her deity.  
Such a rural Queen  
All Arcadia hath not seen.

### 3. SONG.

Nymphs and Shepherds dance no more  
By sandy Ladons Lillied banks.  
On old Lycaeus or Cyllene hoar,  
Trip no more in twilight ranks,  
Though Erynanth your loss deplore,  
A better soyl shall give ye thanks.  
From the stony Maenalus,  
Bring your Flocks, and live with us,  
Here ye shall have greater grace,  
To serve the Lady of this place.  
Though Syrinx your Pans Mistres were,  
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.  
Such a rural Queen  
All Arcadia hath not seen.

Note: 22 hunderd] Milton's own spelling here is hundred. But in the Errata to Paradise Lost (i. 760) he corrects hundred to hunderd.

John Milton

## At a Solemn Music

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'n's joy,  
Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse,  
Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ  
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce,  
And to our high-rais'd fantasy present  
That undisturbed Song of pure concent,  
Ay sung before that saphire-colour'd throne  
To Him that sits thereon  
With Sainly shout and solemn Jubilee,  
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row  
Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow,  
And the Cherubic host in thousand choirs  
Touch their immortal Harps of golden wires,  
With those just Spirits that wear victorious Palms,  
Hymns devout and holy Psalms  
Singing everlastingly;  
That we on Earth with undiscording voice  
May rightly answer that melodious noise;  
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin  
Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din  
Broke the fair music that all creatures made  
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd  
In first obedience, and their state of good.  
And keep in tune with Heav'n, till God ere long  
To His celestial consort us unite,  
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

John Milton

## At a Solemn Musick

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'ns joy,  
Sphear-born harmonious Sisters, Voice, and Vers,  
Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ  
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce,  
And to our high-rais'd phantasie present,  
That undisturbed Song of pure content,  
Ay sung before the saphire-colour'd throne  
To him that sits theron  
With Saintly shout, and solemn Jubily,  
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row  
Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow,  
And the Cherubick host in thousand quires  
Touch their immortal Harps of golden wires,  
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Singing everlastingly;  
That we on Earth with undiscording voice  
May rightly answer that melodious noise;  
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin  
Jarr'd against natures chime, and with harsh din  
Broke the fair musick that all creatures made  
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd  
In perfect Diapason, whilst they stood  
In first obedience, and their state of good.  
O may we soon again renew that Song,  
And keep in tune with Heav'n, till God ere long  
To his celestial consort us unite,  
To live with him, and sing in endles morn of light.

John Milton

## **At A Vacation Exercise In The Colledge, Part Latin, Part English. The Latin Speeches Ended, The Eng**

Hail native Language, that by sinews weak  
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,  
And mad'st imperfect words with childish tripps,  
Half unpronounc't, slide through my infant-lipps,  
Driving dum silence from the portal dore,  
Where he had mutely sate two years before:  
Here I salute thee and thy pardon ask,  
That now I use thee in my latter task:  
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,  
I know my tongue but little Grace can do thee:  
Thou needst not be ambitious to be first,  
Believe me I have thither packt the worst:  
And, if it happen as I did forecast,  
The daintest dishes shall be serv'd up last.  
I pray thee then deny me not thy aide  
For this same small neglect that I have made:  
But haste thee strait to do me once a Pleasure,  
And from thy wardrope bring thy chiefest treasure;  
Not those new fangled toys, and trimming slight  
Which takes our late fantasticks with delight,  
But cull those richest Robes, and gay'st attire  
Which deepest Spirits, and choicest Wits desire:  
I have some naked thoughts that rove about  
And loudly knock to have their passage out;  
And wearie of their place do only stay  
Till thou hast deck't them in thy best aray;  
That so they may without suspect or fears  
Fly swiftly to this fair Assembly's ears;  
Yet I had rather if I were to chuse,  
Thy service in some graver subject use,  
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round  
Before thou cloath my fancy in fit sound:  
Such where the deep transported mind may scare  
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heav'ns dore  
Look in, and see each blissful Deitie  
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,  
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings  
To th'touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings  
Immortal Nectar to her Kingly Sire:  
Then passing through the Spherse of watchful fire,  
And mistie Regions of wide air next under,  
And hills of Snow and lofts of piled Thunder,  
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,  
In Heav'ns defiance mustering all his waves;  
Then sing of secret things that came to pass  
When Beldam Nature in her cradle was;  
And last of Kings and Queens and Hero's old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn Songs at King Alcinous feast,  
While sad Ulisses soul and all the rest  
Are held with his melodious harmonie  
In willing chains and sweet captivitie.



But fie my wandring Muse how thou dost stray!  
Expectance calls thee now another way,  
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent  
To keep in compass of thy Predicament:  
Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,  
That to the next I may resign my Roome

Then Ens is represented as Father of the Predicaments his ten  
Sons, whereof the Eldest stood for Substance with his Canons,  
which Ens thus speaking, explains.

Good luck befriend thee Son; for at thy birth  
The Faery Ladies daunc't upon the hearth;  
Thy drowsie Nurse hath sworn she did them spie  
Come tripping to the Room where thou didst lie;  
And sweetly singing round about thy Bed  
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping Head.  
She heard them give thee this, that thou should'st still  
From eyes of mortals walk invisible,  
Yet there is something that doth force my fear,  
For once it was my dismal hap to hear  
A Sybil old, bow-bent with crooked age,  
That far events full wisely could presage,  
And in Times long and dark Prospective Glass  
Fore-saw what future dayes should bring to pass,  
Your Son, said she, (nor can you it prevent)  
Shall subject be to many an Accident.  
O're all his Brethren he shall Reign as King,  
Yet every one shall make him underling,  
And those that cannot live from him asunder  
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under,  
In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,  
Yet being above them, he shall be below them;  
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,  
Yet on his Brothers shall depend for Cloathing.  
To find a Foe it shall not be his hap,  
And peace shall lull him in her flowry lap;  
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his dore  
Devouring war shall never cease to roare;  
Yea it shall be his natural property  
To harbour those that are at enmity.  
What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not  
Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?

The next Quantity and Quality, spake in Prose, then Relation  
was call'd by his Name.

Rivers arise; whether thou be the Son,  
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulphie Dun,  
Or Trent, who like some earth-born Giant spreads  
His thirty Armes along the indented Meads,  
Or sullen Mole that runneth underneath,

Or Severn swift, guilty of Maidens death,  
Or Rockie Avon, or of Sedgie Lee,  
Or Coaly Tine, or antient hallowed Dee,  
Or Humber loud that keeps the Scythians Name,  
Or Medway smooth, or Royal Towred Thame.

John Milton

## **At A Vacation Exercise In The Colledge, Part Latin, Part English. The Latin Speeches Ended, The English Thus Began**

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Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,  
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Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,  
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Thou needst not be ambitious to be first,  
Believe me I have thither packt the worst:  
And, if it happen as I did forecast,  
The daintest dishes shall be serv'd up last.  
I pray thee then deny me not thy aide  
For this same small neglect that I have made:  
But haste thee strait to do me once a Pleasure,  
And from thy wardrope bring thy chiefest treasure;  
Not those new fangled toys, and trimming slight  
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But cull those richest Robes, and gay'st attire  
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I have some naked thoughts that rove about  
And loudly knock to have their passage out;  
And wearie of their place do only stay  
Till thou hast deck't them in thy best aray;  
That so they may without suspect or fears  
Fly swiftly to this fair Assembly's ears;  
Yet I had rather if I were to chuse,  
Thy service in some graver subject use,  
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round  
Before thou cloath my fancy in fit sound:  
Such where the deep transported mind may scare  
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heav'ns dore  
Look in, and see each blissful Deitie  
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,  
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings  
To th'touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings  
Immortal Nectar to her Kingly Sire:  
Then passing through the Spherse of watchful fire,  
And mistie Regions of wide air next under,  
And hills of Snow and lofts of piled Thunder,  
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,  
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Or Coaly Tine, or antient hallowed Dee,  
Or Humber loud that keeps the Scythians Name,  
Or Medway smooth, or Royal Towred Thame.

John Milton

## At A Vatican Exercise (excerpt)

The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began  
Hail native language, that by sinews weak  
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,  
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,  
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant lips,  
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,  
Where he had mutely sate two years before:  
Here I salute thee and thy pardon ask,  
That now I use thee in my latter task:  
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,  
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:  
Thou needst not be ambitious to be first,  
Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst:  
And, if it happen as I did forecast,  
The daintest dishes shall be serv'd up last.  
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid  
For this same small neglect that I have made:  
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,  
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure;  
Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight  
Which takes our late fantastics with delight,  
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire  
Which deepest spirits, and choicest wits desire.  
I have some naked thoughts that rove about  
And loudly knock to have their passage out;  
And weary of their place do only stay  
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;  
That so they may without suspect or fears  
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears.  
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,  
Thy service in some graver subject use,  
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,  
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:  
Such where the deep transported mind may soar  
Above the wheeling poles, and at heav'n's door  
Look in, and see each blissful deity  
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,  
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings  
To th'touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings  
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire;  
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,  
And misty regions of wide air next under,  
And hills of snow and lofts of piled thunder,  
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,  
In heav'n's defiance mustering all his waves;  
Then sing of secret things that came to pass  
When beldam Nature in her cradle was;  
And last of kings and queens and heroes old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,  
While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest  
Are held with his melodious harmony

In willing chains and sweet captivity.

John Milton

## Comus

A MASQUE PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634, BEFORE  
THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

The Persons

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYRSIS.  
COMUS, with his Crew.  
The LADY.  
FIRST BROTHER.  
SECOND BROTHER.  
SABRINA, the Nymph.

The Chief Persons which presented were:--

The Lord Brackley;  
Mr. Thomas Egerton, his Brother;  
The Lady Alice Egerton.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.  
The ATTENDANT SPIRIT descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court  
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes  
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered  
In regions mild of calm and serene air,  
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot  
Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,  
Confined and pestered in this pinfold here,  
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,  
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,  
After this mortal change, to her true servants  
Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.  
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire  
To lay their just hands on that golden key  
That opes the palace of eternity.

To such my errand is; and, but for such,  
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds  
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.  
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway  
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,  
Took in by lot, 'twixt high and nether Jove,  
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles  
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay  
The unadorned bosom of the deep;  
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,  
By course commits to several government,  
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns  
And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,  
The greatest and the best of all the main,



He quarters to his blue-haired deities;  
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun  
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power  
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide  
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:  
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,  
Are coming to attend their father's state,  
And new-intrusted sceptre. But their way  
Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,  
The nodding horror of whose shady brows  
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;  
And here their tender age might suffer peril,  
But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,  
I was despatched for their defence and guard:  
And listen why; for I will tell you now  
What never yet was heard in tale or song,  
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape  
Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine,  
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,  
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,  
On Circe's island fell. (Who knows not Circe,  
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup  
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,  
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)  
This Nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,  
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,  
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son  
Much like his father, but his mother more,  
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named:  
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,  
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,  
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,  
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbowered,  
Excels his mother at her mighty art;  
Offering to every weary traveller  
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,  
To quench the drouth of Phoebus; which as they taste  
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),  
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,  
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed  
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,  
Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,  
All other parts remaining as they were.  
And they, so perfect is their misery,  
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,  
But boast themselves more comely than before,  
And all their friends and native home forget,  
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.  
Therefore, when any favoured of high Jove  
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,  
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star

I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,  
As now I do. But first I must put off  
These my sky-ropes, spun out of Iris' woof,  
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain  
That to the service of this house belongs,  
Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,  
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,  
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith  
And in this office of his mountain watch  
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid  
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread  
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

COMUS enters, with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other: with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistening.  
They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

COMUS. The star that bids the shepherd fold  
Now the top of heaven doth hold;  
And the gilded car of day  
His glowing axle doth allay  
In the steep Atlantic stream;  
And the slope sun his upward beam  
Shoots against the dusky pole,  
Pacing toward the other goal  
Of his chamber in the east.  
Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast,  
Midnight shout and revelry,  
Tipsy dance and jollity.  
Braid your locks with rosy twine,  
Dropping odours, dropping wine.  
Rigour now is gone to bed;  
And Advice with scrupulous head,  
Strict Age, and sour Severity,  
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.  
We, that are of purer fire,  
Imitate the starry quire,  
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,  
Lead in swift round the months and years.  
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,  
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;  
And on the tawny sands and shelves  
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.  
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,  
The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,  
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:

What hath night to do with sleep?  
Night hath better sweets to prove;  
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.  
Come, let us our rights begin;  
'T is only daylight that makes sin,  
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.  
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,  
Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame  
Of midnight torches burns! mysterious dame,  
That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb  
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,  
And makes one blot of all the air!  
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,  
Wherein thou ridest with Hecat', and befriend  
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end  
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,  
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,  
The nice Morn on the Indian steep,  
From her cabined loop-hole peep,  
And to the tell-tale Sun descry  
Our concealed solemnity.  
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground  
In a light fantastic round.

#### The Measure.

Break off, break off! I feel the different pace  
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.  
Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees;  
Our number may affright. Some virgin sure  
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)  
Benighted in these woods! Now to my charms,  
And to my wily trains: I shall ere long  
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed  
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl  
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,  
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,  
And give it false presentments, lest the place  
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,  
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;  
Which must not be, for that's against my course.  
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,  
And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,  
Baited with reasons not unplausible,  
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,  
And hug him into snares. When once her eye  
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,  
I shall appear some harmless villager  
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.  
But here she comes; I fairly step aside,  
And hearken, if I may her business hear.

The LADY enters.

LADY. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,  
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound  
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,  
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe  
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,  
When, for their teeming flocks and granges full,  
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,  
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth  
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence  
Of such late wassailers; yet, oh! where else  
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet  
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?  
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out  
With this long way, resolving here to lodge  
Under the spreading favour of these pines,  
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket-side  
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit  
As the kind hospitable woods provide.  
They left me then when the grey-hooded Even,  
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,  
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phoebus' wain.  
But where they are, and why they came not back,  
Is now the labour of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest  
They had engaged their wandering steps too far;  
And envious darkness, ere they could return,  
Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,  
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,  
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars  
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps  
With everlasting oil to give due light  
To the misled and lonely traveller?  
This is the place, as well as I may guess,  
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth  
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;  
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.  
What might this be? A thousand fantasies  
Begin to throng into my memory,  
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,  
And airy tongues that syllable men's names  
On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.  
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound  
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended  
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.  
O, welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,  
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,  
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!  
I see ye visibly, and now believe  
That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill  
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,  
Would send a glistening guardian, if need were,

To keep my life and honour unassailed. . . .  
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud  
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?  
I did not err: there does a sable cloud  
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,  
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.  
I cannot hallo to my brothers, but  
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest  
I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits  
Prompt me, and they perhaps are not far off.

Song.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen  
    Within thy airy shell  
    By slow Meander's margent green,  
And in the violet-embroidered vale  
    Where the love-lorn nightingale  
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:  
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair  
    That likest thy Narcissus are?  
    O, if thou have  
    Hid them in some flowery cave,  
    Tell me but where,  
    Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the Sphere!  
    So may'st thou be translated to the skies,  
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies!

COMUS. Can any mortal mixture of earth  
Us mould  
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?  
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,  
And with these raptures moves the vocal air  
To testify his hidden residence.  
How sweetly did they float upon the wings  
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,  
At every fall smoothing the raven down  
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard  
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,  
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,  
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,  
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul,  
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,  
And chid her barking waves into attention,  
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause.  
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,  
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;  
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,  
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,  
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,  
And she shall be my queen. O Hail, foreign wonder!  
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,

Unless the goddess that in rural shrine  
Dwell'st here with Pan or Sylvan, by blest song  
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog  
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

LADY. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise  
That is addressed to unattending ears.  
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift  
How to regain my severed company,  
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo  
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

COMUS: What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

LADY. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

COMUS. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

LADY. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

COMUS. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

LADY. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

COMUS. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

LADY. They were but twain, and purposed quick return.

COMUS. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

LADY. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

COMUS. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

LADY. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

COMUS. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

LADY. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips.

COMUS. Two such I saw, what time the laboured ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came,  
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.  
I saw them under a green mantling vine,  
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,  
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;  
Their port was more than human, as they stood.

I took it for a faery vision  
Of some gay creatures of the element,  
That in the colours of the rainbow live,  
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,  
And, as I passed, I worshiped. If those you seek,  
It were a journey like the path to Heaven  
To help you find them.

LADY. Gentle villager,

What readiest way would bring me to that place?

COMUS. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

LADY. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,

In such a scant allowance of star-light,  
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,  
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.

COMUS. I know each lane, and every alley green,  
Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,  
And every bosky bourn from side to side,  
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;  
And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged,  
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know  
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark

From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise,  
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low  
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe  
Till further quest.

LADY. Shepherd, I take thy word,  
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,  
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,  
With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls  
And courts of princes, where it first was named,  
And yet is most pretended. In a place  
Less warranted than this, or less secure,  
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.  
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial  
To my proportioned strength! Shepherd, lead on.

The TWO BROTHERS.

ELD. BRO. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,  
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,  
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,  
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here  
In double night of darkness and of shades;  
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up  
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,  
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole  
Of some clay habitation, visit us  
With thy long levelled rule of streaming light,  
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,  
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

SEC. BRO. Or, if our eyes  
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear  
The folded flocks, penned in their wattled cotes,  
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,  
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock  
Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,  
'T would be some solace yet, some little cheering,  
In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.  
But, oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!  
Where may she wander now, whither betake her  
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles  
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,  
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm  
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears.  
What if in wild amazement and affright,  
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp  
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat!

ELD. BRO. Peace, brother: be not over-exquisite  
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;  
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,  
What need a man forestall his date of grief,  
And run to meet what he would most avoid?  
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,

How bitter is such self-delusion!  
 I do not think my sister so to seek,  
 Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,  
 And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,  
 As that the single want of light and noise  
 (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)  
 Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,  
 And put them into misbecoming plight.  
 Virtue could see to do what Virtue would  
 By her own radiant light, though sun and moon  
 Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self  
 Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,  
 Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,  
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,  
 That, in the various bustle of resort,  
 Were all to-ruffled, and sometimes impaired.  
 He that has light within his own clear breast  
 May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:  
 But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts  
 Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;  
 Himself is his own dungeon.

SEC. BRO.

'Tis most true

That musing meditation most affects  
 The pensive secrecy of desert cell,  
 Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,  
 And sits as safe as in a senate house  
 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,  
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,  
 Or do his grey hairs any violence?  
 But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree  
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard  
 Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye  
 To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,  
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.  
 You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps  
 Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,  
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope  
 Danger will wink on Opportunity,  
 And let a single helpless maiden pass  
 Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.  
 Of night or loneliness it recks me not;  
 I fear the dread events that dog them both,  
 Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person  
 Of our unowned sister.

ELD. BRO.

I do not, brother,

Infer as if I thought my sister's state  
 Secure without all doubt or controversy;  
 Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear  
 Does arbitrate the event, my nature is  
 That I incline to hope rather than fear,  
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.  
 My sister is not so defenceless left





Lets ill defilement to the inward parts,  
The soul grows clotted by contagion,  
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite loose  
The divine property of her first being.  
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp  
Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,  
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,  
As loth to leave the body that it loved,  
And linked itself by carnal sensuality  
To a degenerate and degraded state.

SEC. BRO. How charming is divine Philosophy!  
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,  
But musical as is Apollo's lute,  
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,  
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Eld. Bro. List!  
list! I hear  
Some far-off hallo break the silent air.

SEC. BRO. Methought so too; what should it be?  
ELD. BRO. For  
certain.

Either some one, like us, night-foundered here,  
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,  
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.  
SEC. BRO. Heaven keep my sister! Again, again, and near!  
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

ELD. BRO. I'll hallo!  
If he be friendly, he comes well: if not,  
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT, habited like a shepherd.

That hallo I should know. What are you? speak.  
Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.  
SPIR. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again.  
SEC. BRO. O brother, Tt is my father's Shepherd, sure.  
ELD. BRO. Thyrsis! whose artful strains have of delayed

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,  
And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale.  
How camest thou here, good swain? Hath any ram  
Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,  
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?  
How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?

SPIR. O my loved master's heir, and his next joy,  
I came not here on such a trivial toy  
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth  
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth  
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought  
To this my errand, and the care it brought.  
But, oh ! my virgin Lady, where is she?  
How chance she is not in your company?

ELD. BRO. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame

Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

SPIR. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

ELD. BRO. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prithee briefly shew.

SPIR. I'll tell ye. 'T is not vain or fabulous  
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)  
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,  
Storied of old in high immortal verse  
Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles,  
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;  
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood,  
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,  
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,  
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,  
And here to every thirsty wanderer  
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,  
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison  
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,  
And the inglorious likeness of a beast  
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage  
Charactered in the face. This have I learnt  
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts  
That brow this bottom glade; whence night by night  
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl  
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,  
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate  
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.  
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells  
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense  
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.  
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks  
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb  
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,  
I sat me down to watch upon a bank  
With ivy canopied, and interwove  
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,  
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,  
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,  
Till fancy had her fill. But ere a close  
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,  
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;  
At which I ceased, and listened them awhile,  
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence  
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds  
That draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep.  
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound  
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,  
And stole upon the air, that even Silence  
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might  
Deny her nature, and be never more,  
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,

And took in strains that might create a soul  
Under the ribs of Death. But, oh! ere long  
Too well I did perceive it was the voice  
Of my most honoured Lady, your dear sister.  
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear;  
And RO poor hapless nightingale," thought I,  
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!"  
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,  
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,  
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place  
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise  
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met  
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,  
The aidless innocent lady, his wished prey;  
Who gently asked if he had seen such two,  
Supposing him some neighbour villager.  
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed  
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung  
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;  
But further know I not.

SEC. BRO. O night and shades,  
How are ye joined with hell in triple knot  
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,  
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence  
You gave me, brother?

ELD. BRO. Yes, and keep it still;  
Lean on it safely; not a period  
Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats  
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power  
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:  
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,  
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;  
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm  
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.  
But evil on itself shall back recoil,  
And mix no more with goodness, when at last,  
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,  
It shall be in eternal restless change  
Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,  
The pillared firmament is rottenness,  
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on!  
Against the opposing will and arm of heaven  
May never this just sword be lifted up;  
But, for that damned magician, let him be girt  
With all the griesly legions that troop  
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,  
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms  
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,  
And force him to return his purchase back,  
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,  
Cursed as his life.

SPIR. Alas! good venturous youth,

I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;  
But here thy sword can do thee little stead.  
Far other arms and other weapons must  
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.  
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,  
And crumble all thy sinews.

ELD. BRO. Why, prithee,  
Shepherd,  
How durst thou then thyself approach so near  
As to make this relation?

SPIR. Care and utmost  
shifts

How to secure the Lady from surprisal  
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,  
Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled  
In every virtuous plant and healing herb  
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray.  
He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;  
Which when I did, he on the tender grass  
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,  
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,  
And show me simples of a thousand names,  
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.  
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,  
But of divine effect, he culled me out.  
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,  
But in another country, as he said,  
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:  
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain  
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;  
And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly  
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.  
He called it Haemony, and gave it me,  
And bade me keep it as of sovran use  
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,  
Or ghastly Furies' apparition.  
I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,  
Till now that this extremity compelled.  
But now I find it true; for by this means  
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,  
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,  
And yet came off. If you have this about you  
(As I will give you when we go), you may  
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;  
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood  
And brandished blade rush on him: break his glass,  
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;  
But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew  
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,  
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,  
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

ELD. BRO. Thyrsis, lead on apace; I'll follow thee;

And some good angel bear a shield before us!

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair; to whom he offers his glass; which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

COMUS. Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,  
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,  
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,  
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

LADY. Fool, do not boast.  
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind  
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind  
Thou hast immanacled while Heaven sees good.

COMUS. Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?  
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates  
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures  
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,  
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns  
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.  
And first behold this cordial julep here,  
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,  
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.  
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone  
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena  
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,  
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.  
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,  
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent  
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?  
But you invert the covenants of her trust,  
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,  
With that which you received on other terms,  
Scorning the unexempt condition  
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,  
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,  
That have been tired all day without repast,  
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,  
This will restore all soon.

LADY. 'T will not, false  
traitor!  
'T will not restore the truth and honesty  
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.  
Was this the cottage and the safe abode  
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,  
These oughly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!  
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!  
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence  
With vizored falsehood and base forgery?

And would'st thou seek again to trap me here  
With liquorish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?  
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,  
I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None  
But such as are good men can give good things;  
And that which is not good is not delicious  
To a well-governed and wise appetite.

COMUS. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears  
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,  
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,  
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!  
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth  
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,  
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,  
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,  
But all to please and sate the curious taste?  
And set to work millions of spinning worms,  
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,  
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might  
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins  
She hatched the all-worshipped ore and precious gems,  
To store her children with. If all the world  
Should, in a pet of temperance, feed on pulse,  
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,  
The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,  
Not half his riches known and yet despised;  
And we should serve him as a grudging master,  
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,  
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,  
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,  
And strangled with her waste fertility:  
The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes,  
The herds would over-multitude their lords;  
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds  
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,  
And so bestud with stars, that they below  
Would grow inured to light, and come at last  
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.  
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened  
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.  
Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,  
But must be current; and the good thereof  
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,  
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself.  
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose  
It withers on the stalk with languished head.  
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown  
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,  
Where most may wonder at the workmanship.  
It is for homely features to keep home;  
They had their name thence: coarse complexions  
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply

The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.  
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,  
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?  
There was another meaning in these gifts;  
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.

LADY. I had not thought to have unlocked my lips  
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler  
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,  
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.  
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments  
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.  
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,  
As if she would her children should be riotous  
With her abundance. She, good cateress,  
Means her provision only to the good,  
That live according to her sober laws,  
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.  
If every just man that now pines with want  
Had but a moderate and beseeming share  
Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury  
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,  
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed  
In unsuperfluous even proportion,  
And she no whit encumbered with her store;  
And then the Giver would be better thanked,  
His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony  
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,  
But with besotted base ingratitude  
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on  
Or have I said enow? To him that dares  
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words  
Against the sun-clad power of chastity  
Fain would I something say;--yet to what end?  
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend  
The sublime notion and high mystery  
That must be uttered to unfold the sage  
And serious doctrine of Virginity;  
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know  
More happiness than this thy present lot.  
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,  
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;  
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.  
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth  
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits  
To such a flame of sacred vehemence  
That dumb things would be moved to sympathise,  
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,  
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,  
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

COMUS. She fables not. I feel that I do fear  
Her words set off by some superior power;  
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew



Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove  
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus  
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,  
And try her yet more strongly.--Come, no more !  
This is mere moral babble, and direct  
Against the canon laws of our foundation.  
I must not suffer this; yet 't is but the lees  
And settlings of a melancholy blood.  
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this  
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight  
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of  
his  
hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of  
resistance, but are all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.

SPIR . What! have you let the false enchanter scape?  
O ye mistook; ye should have snatched his wand,  
And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,  
And backward mutters of dissevering power,  
We cannot free the Lady that sits here  
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.  
Yet stay: be not disturbed; now I bethink me,  
Some other means I have which may be used,  
Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt,  
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,  
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream:  
Sabrina is her name: a virgin pure;  
Whilom she was the daughter of Lochrine,  
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.  
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit  
Of her enraged stepdame, Guendolen,  
Commended her fair innocence to the flood  
That stayed her flight with his cross-flowing course.  
The water-nymphs, that in the bottom played,  
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,  
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;  
Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,  
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe  
In nectared lavers strewed with asphodil,  
And through the porch and inlet of each sense  
Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she revived,  
And underwent a quick immortal change,  
Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains  
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve  
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,  
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs  
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,  
Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals:  
For which the shepherds, at their festivals,

Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,  
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream  
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.  
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock  
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,  
If she be right invoked in warbled song;  
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift  
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,  
In hard-besetting need. This will I try,  
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

### SONG.

Sabrina fair,  
    Listen where thou art sitting  
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,  
    In twisted braids of lilies knitting  
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;  
    Listen for dear honour's sake,  
Goddess of the silver lake,  
    Listen and save!

Listen, and appear to us,  
In name of great Oceanus.  
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,  
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;  
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,  
And the Carpathian wizard's hook;  
By scaly Triton's winding shell,  
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;  
By Leucothea's lovely hands,  
And her son that rules the strands;  
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,  
And the songs of Sirens sweet;  
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,  
And fair Ligea's golden comb,  
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks  
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;  
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance  
Upon thy streams with wily glance;  
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head  
From thy coral-paven bed,  
And bridle in thy headlong wave,  
Till thou our summons answered have.  
    Listen and save!

SABRINA rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,  
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,  
    My sliding chariot stays,

Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen  
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,  
    That in the channel strays;  
Whilst from off the waters fleet  
Thus I set my printless feet  
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,  
    That bends not as I tread.  
Gentle swain, at thy request  
    I am here!

    SPIR. Goddess dear,  
We implore thy powerful hand  
To undo the charmed band  
Of true virgin here distressed  
Through the force and through the wile  
Of unblessed enchanter vile.

    SABR. Shepherd, 't is my office best  
To help ensnared chastity.  
Brightest Lady, look on me.  
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast  
Drops that from my fountain pure  
I have kept of precious cure;  
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,  
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:  
Next this marble venomed seat,  
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,  
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.  
Now the spell hath lost his hold;  
And I must haste ere morning hour  
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her seat.

    SPIR. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,  
Sprung of old Anchises' line,  
May thy brimmed waves for this  
Their full tribute never miss  
From a thousand petty rills,  
That tumble down the snowy hills:  
Summer drouth or singed air  
Never scorch thy tresses fair,  
Nor wet October's torrent flood  
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;  
May thy billows roll ashore  
The beryl and the golden ore;  
May thy lofty head be crowned  
With many a tower and terrace round,  
And here and there thy banks Upon  
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.  
    Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,  
Let us fly this cursed place,  
Lest the sorcerer us entice

With some other new device.  
Not a waste or needless sound  
Till we come to holier ground.  
I shall be your faithful guide  
Through this gloomy covert wide;  
And not many furlongs thence  
Is your Father's residence,  
Where this night are met in state  
Many a friend to gratulate  
His wished presence, and beside  
All the swains that there abide  
With jigs and rural dance resort.  
We shall catch them at their sport,  
And our sudden coming there  
Will double all their mirth and cheer.  
Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,  
But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town, and the President's Castle: then come in Country Dancers; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, with the two BROTHERS and the LADY.

#### SONG.

SPIR. Back, shepherds, back! Enough your play  
Till next sun-shine holiday.  
Here be, without duck or nod,  
Other trippings to be trod  
Of lighter toes, and such court guise  
As Mercury did first devise  
With the mincing Dryades  
On the lawns and on the leas.

The second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord and Lady bright,  
I have brought ye new delight.  
Here behold so goodly grown  
Three fair branches of your own.  
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,  
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,  
And sent them here through hard assays  
With a crown of deathless praise,  
To triumph in victorious dance  
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

The dances ended, the SPIRIT epiloguizes.

SPIR. To the ocean now I fly,  
And those happy climes that lie  
Where day never shuts his eye,  
Up in the broad fields of the sky.

There I suck the liquid air,  
All amidst the gardens fair  
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three  
That sing about the golden tree.  
Along the crisped shades and bowers  
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;  
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours  
Thither all their bounties bring.  
There eternal Summer dwells;  
And west winds with musky wing  
About the cedarn alleys fling  
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.  
Iris there with humid bow  
Waters the odorous banks, that blow  
Flowers of more mingled hue  
Than her purpled scarf can shew,  
And drenches with Elysian dew  
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)  
Beds of hyacinth and roses,  
Where young Adonis oft reposes,  
Waxing well of his deep wound,  
In slumber soft, and on the ground  
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.  
But far above, in spangled sheen,  
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced  
Holds his dear Psyche, sweet entranced  
After her wandering labours long,  
Till free consent the gods among  
Make her his eternal bride,  
And from her fair unspotted side  
Two blissful twins are to be born,  
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly done:  
I can fly, or I can run,  
Quickly to the green earth's end,  
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,  
And from thence can soar as soon  
To the corners of the moon.  
Mortals, that would follow me,  
Love virtue; she alone is free.  
She can teach ye how to climb  
Higher than the sphery chime;  
Or, if Virtue feeble were,  
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

John Milton

## Comus (excerpts)

SONG1-

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph that liv'st unseen

-

Within thy airy shell

-

By slow Meander's margent green,

-

And in the violet-imbroider'd vale

-

Where the love-lorn nightingale

-

Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:

-

Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair

-

That likest thy Narcissus are?

-

O if thou have

-

Hid them in some flow'ry cave,

-

Tell me but where

-

Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the Sphere,

-

So mayst thou be translated to the skies,

-

And give resounding grace to all heav'ns harmonies.

SONG

-

Sabrina fair

-

Listen where thou art sitting

-

Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,

-

In twisted braids of lilies knitting

-

The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;

-

Listen for dear honour's sake,

-

Goddess of the silver lake,

-

Listen and save.

-

Listen and appear to us

-

In name of great Oceanus,

-

By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,

-

And Tethys' grave majestic pace;

-

By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,

-

And the Carpathian wizard's hook;

-

By scaly Triton's winding shell,

-

And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;

-

By Leucothea's lovely hands,

-

And her son that rules the strands;

-

By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,

-

And the songs of Sirens sweet;

-

By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,

-

And fair Ligea's golden comb,

-

Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks

-

Sleeking her soft alluring locks;

-

By all the nymphs that nightly dance

-

Upon thy streams with wily glance,

-

Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head

-

From thy coral-pav'n bed,

-

And bridle in thy headlong wave,

-



Till thou our summons answer'd have.

-

Listen and save.

SABRINA RISES, ATTENDED BY WATER-NYMPHS, AND SINGS

-

By the rushy-fringed bank,

-

Where grows the willow and the osier dank,

-

My sliding chariot stays,

-

Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen

-

Of turkis blue, and em'rald green

-

That in the channel strays,

-

Whilst from off the waters fleet

-

Thus I set my printless feet

-

O'er the cowslip's velvet head,

-

That bends not as I tread;

-

Gentle swain at thy request

-

I am here.

John Milton

### From 'Arcades'

O'RE the smooth enameld green  
Where no print of step hath been,  
Follow me as I sing,  
And touch the warbled string.  
Under the shady roof  
Of branching Elm Star-proof,  
Follow me,  
I will bring you where she sits  
Clad in splendor as befits  
Her deity.  
Such a rural Queen  
All Arcadia hath not seen.

### 313. From 'Comus'

i

THE Star that bids the Shepherd fold,  
Now the top of Heav'n doth hold,  
And the gilded Car of Day,  
His glowing Axle doth allay  
In the steep Atlantick stream,  
And the slope Sun his upward beam  
Shoots against the dusky Pole,  
Pacing toward the other gole  
Of his Chamber in the East.  
Mean while welcom Joy, and Feast,  
Midnight shout, and revelry,  
Tipsie dance, and Jollity.  
Braid your Locks with rosie Twine  
Dropping odours, dropping Wine.  
Rigor now is gon to bed,  
And Advice with scrupulous head,  
Strict Age, and sowre Severity,  
With their grave Saws in slumber ly.  
We that are of purer fire  
Imitate the Starry Quire,  
Who in their nightly watchfull Sphears,  
Lead in swift round the Months and Years.  
The Sounds, and Seas with all their finny drove  
Now to the Moon in wavering Morrice move,  
And on the Tawny Sands and Shelves,  
Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves;  
By dimpled Brook, and Fountain brim,  
The Wood-Nymphs deckt with Daisies trim,  
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:  
What hath night to do with sleep?  
Night hath better sweets to prove,  
Venus now wakes, and wak'ns Love....  
Com, knit hands, and beat the ground,  
In a light fantastick round.

John Milton. 1608-1674

314. From' Comus'  
ii. Echo

SWEET Echo, sweetest Nymph that liv'st unseen  
Within thy airy shell  
By slow Meander's margent green,  
And in the violet imbroider'd vale  
Where the love-lorn Nightingale  
Nightly to thee her sad Song mourneth well.  
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle Pair  
That likest thy Narcissus are?  
O if thou have  
Hid them in som flowry Cave,  
Tell me but where  
Sweet Queen of Parly, Daughter of the Sphear!  
So maist thou be translated to the skies,  
And give resounding grace to all Heav'ns Harmonies!

John Milton. 1608-1674

315. From' Comus'  
iii. Sabrina

The Spirit sings: SABRINA fair  
Listen where thou art sitting  
Under the glassie, cool, translucent wave,  
In twisted braids of Lillies knitting  
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair,  
Listen for dear honour's sake,  
Goddess of the silver lake,  
Listen and save!

Listen and appear to us,  
In name of great Oceanus,  
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,  
And Tethys grave majestick pace,  
By hoary Nereus wrinckled look,  
And the Carpathian wisards hook,  
By scaly Tritons winding shell,  
And old sooth-saying Glaucus spell,  
By Leucothea's lovely hands,  
And her son that rules the strands,  
By Thetis tinsel-slipper'd feet,  
And the Songs of Sirens sweet,  
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,  
And fair Ligea's golden comb,  
Wherwith she sits on diamond rocks  
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,  
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance  
Upon thy streams with wily glance,  
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosie head

From thy coral-pav'n bed,  
And bridle in thy headlong wave,  
Till thou our summons answered have.  
    Listen and save!

Sabrina replies: By the rushy-fringed bank,  
Where grows the Willow and the Osier dank,  
    My sliding Chariot stays,  
Thick set with Agat, and the azurn sheen  
Of Turkis blew, and Emrauld green  
    That in the channell strays,  
Whilst from off the waters fleet  
Thus I set my printless feet  
O're the Cowslips Velvet head,  
    That bends not as I tread,  
Gentle swain at thy request  
    I am here.

John Milton. 1608-1674

316. From 'Comus'

iv

The Spirit epiloguizes: TO the Ocean now I fly,  
And those happy climes that ly  
Where day never shuts his eye,  
Up in the broad fields of the sky:  
There I suck the liquid ayr  
All amidst the Gardens fair  
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three  
That sing about the golden tree:  
Along the crisped shades and bowres  
Revels the spruce and jocond Spring,  
The Graces, and the rosie-boosom'd Howres,  
Thither all their bounties bring,  
That there eternal Summer dwels,  
And West winds, with musky wing  
About the cedar'n alleys fling  
Nard, and Cassia's balmy smels.  
Iris there with humid bow,  
Waters the odorous banks that blow  
Flowers of more mingled hew  
Than her purfl'd scarf can shew,  
And drenches with Elysian dew  
(List mortals, if your ears be true)  
Beds of Hyacinth, and roses  
Where young Adonis oft reposes,  
Waxing well of his deep wound  
In slumber soft, and on the ground  
Sadly sits th' Assyrian Queen;  
But far above in spangled sheen  
Celestial Cupid her fam'd son advanc't,

Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc't  
After her wandring labours long,  
Till free consent the gods among  
Make her his eternal Bride,  
And from her fair unspotted side  
Two blissful twins are to be born,  
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly don,  
I can fly, or I can run  
Quickly to the green earths end,  
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend,  
And from thence can soar as soon  
To the corners of the Moon.

Mortals that would follow me,  
Love vertue, she alone is free.  
She can teach ye how to clime  
Higher then the Spheary chime;  
Or if Vertue feeble were,  
Heav'n it self would stoop to her.

YET once more, O ye Laurels, and once more  
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never-sear,  
I com to pluck your Berries harsh and crude,  
And with forc'd fingers rude,  
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.  
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,  
Compels me to disturb your season due:  
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime  
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:  
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.  
He must not flote upon his watry bear  
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,  
Without the meed of som melodious tear.

Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well,  
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,  
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.  
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,  
So may som gentle Muse  
With lucky words favour my destin'd Urn,  
And as he passes turn,  
And bid fair peace be to my sable shrowd.  
For we were nurst upon the self-same hill,  
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.

Together both, ere the high Lawns appear'd  
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,  
We drove a field, and both together heard  
What time the Gray-fly winds her sultry horn,  
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,  
Oft till the Star that rose, at Ev'ning, bright  
Toward Heav'ns descent had slop'd his westering wheel.  
Mean while the Rural ditties were not mute,

Temper'd to th'Oaten Flute;  
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with clov'n heel,  
From the glad sound would not be absent long,  
And old Damaetas lov'd to hear our song.

But O the heavy change, now thou art gon,  
Now thou art gon, and never must return!  
Thee Shepherd, thee the Woods, and desert Caves,  
With wilde Thyme and the gadding Vine o'regrown,  
And all their echoes mourn.

The Willows, and the Hazle Copses green,  
Shall now no more be seen,  
Fanning their joyous Leaves to thy soft layes.  
As killing as the Canker to the Rose,  
Or Taint-worm to the weanling Herds that graze,  
Or Frost to Flowers, that their gay wardrop wear,  
When first the White thorn blows;  
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to Shepherds ear.

Where were ye Nymphs when the remorseless deep  
Clos'd o're the head of your lov'd Lycidas?

For neither were ye playing on the steep,  
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids ly,  
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream:  
Ay me, I fondly dream!  
Had ye bin there--for what could that have don?  
What could the Muse her self that Orpheus bore,  
The Muse her self, for her enchanting son  
Whom Universal nature did lament,  
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,  
His goary visage down the stream was sent,  
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore.

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care  
To tend the homely slighted Shepherds trade,  
And strictly meditate the thankles Muse,  
Were it not better don as others use,  
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,  
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?  
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
(That last infirmity of Noble mind)  
To scorn delights, and live laborious dayes;  
But the fair Guerdon when we hope to find,  
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,  
Comes the blind Fury with th'abhorred shears,  
And slits the thin spun life. But not the praise,  
Phoebus repli'd, and touch'd my trembling ears;  
Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
Nor in the glistening foil  
Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,  
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,  
And perfet witnes of all judging Jove;  
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,  
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd floud,  
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocall reeds,  
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood:  
 But now my Oate proceeds,  
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea  
 That came in Neptune's plea,  
 He ask'd the Waves, and ask'd the Fellon winds,  
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?  
 And question'd every gust of rugged wings  
 That blows from off each beaked Promontory,  
 They knew not of his story,  
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,  
 That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,  
 The Ayr was calm, and on the level brine,  
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.  
 It was that fatall and perfidious Bark  
 Built in th'eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,  
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend Sire, went footing slow,  
 His Mantle hairy, and his Bonnet sedge,  
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge  
 Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.  
 Ah; Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?  
 Last came, and last did go,  
 The Pilot of the Galilean lake,  
 Two massy Keyes he bore of metals twain,  
 (The Golden opes, the Iron shuts amain)  
 He shook his Miter'd locks, and stern bespake,  
 How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,  
 Anow of such as for their bellies sake,  
 Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?  
 Of other care they little reck'ning make,  
 Then how to scramble at the shearers feast,  
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest.  
 Blind mouthes! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
 A Sheep-hook, or have learn'd ought els the least  
 That to the faithfull Herdmans art belongs!  
 What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;  
 And when they list, their lean and flashy songs  
 Grate on their scrannel Pipes of wretched straw,  
 The hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed,  
 But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,  
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:  
 Besides what the grim Woolf with privy paw  
 Daily devours apace, and nothing sed,  
 But that two-handed engine at the door,  
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return Alpheus, the dread voice is past,  
 That shrunk thy streams; Return Sicilian Muse,  
 And call the Vales, and bid them hither cast  
 Their Bels, and Flourets of a thousand hues.  
 Ye valleys low where the milde whispers use,



Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,  
 On whose fresh lap the swart Star sparely looks,  
 Throw hither all your quaint enameld eyes,  
 That on the green terf suck the honied showres,  
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowres.  
 Bring the rathe Primrose that forsaken dies.  
 The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Gessamine,  
 The white Pink, and the Pansie freakt with jeat,  
 The glowing Violet.  
 The Musk-rose, and the well attir'd Woodbine.  
 With Cowslips wan that hang the pensive hed,  
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears:  
 Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,  
 And Daffadillies fill their cups with tears,  
 To strew the Laureat Herse where Lycid lies.  
 For so to interpose a little ease,  
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.  
 Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding Seas  
 Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurld,  
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,  
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide  
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;  
 Or whether thou to our moist vows deny'd,  
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,  
 Where the great vision of the guarded Mount  
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;  
 Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth.  
 And, O ye Dolphins, waft the haples youth.  
 Weep no more, woful Shepherds weep no more,  
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,  
 Sunk though he be beneath the watry floar,  
 So sinks the day-star in the Ocean bed,  
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled Ore,  
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:  
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,  
 Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves  
 Where other groves, and other streams along,  
 With Nectar pure his oozy Lock's he laves,  
 And hears the unexpressive nuptiall Song,  
 In the blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love.  
 There entertain him all the Saints above,  
 In solemn troops, and sweet Societies  
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,  
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.  
 Now Lycidas the Shepherds weep no more;  
 Hence forth thou art the Genius of the shore,  
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good  
 To all that wander in that perilous flood.  
 Thus sang the uncouth Swain to th'Okes and rills,  
 While the still morn went out with Sandals gray,  
 He touch'd the tender stops of various Quills,

With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay:  
And now the Sun had stretch'd out all the hills,  
And now was dropt into the Western bay;  
At last he rose, and twitch'd his Mantle blew:  
To morrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new.

John Milton

## From 'Samson Agonistes' i

OH how comely it is and how reviving  
To the Spirits of just men long opprest!  
When God into the hands of thir deliverer  
Puts invincible might  
To quell the mighty of the Earth, th' oppressour,  
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men  
Hardy and industrious to support  
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue  
The righteous and all such as honour Truth;  
He all thir Ammunition  
And feats of War defeats  
With plain Heroic magnitude of mind  
And celestial vigour arm'd,  
Thir Armories and Magazines contemns,  
Renders them useless, while  
With winged expedition  
Swift as the lightning glance he executes  
His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd  
Lose thir defence distracted and amaz'd.

ALL is best, though we oft doubt,  
What th' unsearchable dispose  
Of highest wisdom brings about,  
And ever best found in the close.  
Oft he seems to hide his face,  
But unexpectedly returns  
And to his faithful Champion hath in place  
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns  
And all that band them to resist  
His uncontrollable intent.  
His servants he with new acquist  
Of true experience from this great event  
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,  
And calm of mind all passion spent.

O FOR some honest lover's ghost,  
Some kind unbodied post  
Sent from the shades below!  
I strangely long to know  
Whether the noble chaplets wear  
Those that their mistress' scorn did bear  
Or those that were used kindly.

For whatso'er they tell us here  
To make those sufferings dear,  
'Twill there, I fear, be found  
That to the being crown'd  
T' have loved alone will not suffice,  
Unless we also have been wise  
And have our loves enjoy'd.

What posture can we think him in

That, here unloved, again  
Departs, and 's thither gone  
Where each sits by his own?  
Or how can that Elysium be  
Where I my mistress still must see  
Circl'd in other's arms?

For there the judges all are just,  
And Sophonisba must  
Be his whom she held dear,  
Not his who loved her here.  
The sweet Philoclea, since she died,  
Lies by her Pirocles his side,  
Not by Amphialus.

Some bays, perchance, or myrtle bough  
For difference crowns the brow  
Of those kind souls that were  
The noble martyrs here:  
And if that be the only odds  
(As who can tell?), ye kinder gods,  
Give me the woman here!

John Milton

## How Soon Hath Time

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,  
Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth year!  
My hasting days fly on with full career,  
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.  
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,  
That I to manhood am arrived so near,  
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,  
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.  
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,  
It shall be still in strictest measure even  
To that same lot, however mean or high,  
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;  
All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.

John Milton

## Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity

IT was the Winter wilde,  
While the Heav'n-born-childe,  
    All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;  
Nature in aw to him  
Had doff't her gawdy trim,  
    With her great Master so to sympathize:  
It was no season then for her  
To wanton with the Sun her lusty Paramour.

Only with speeches fair  
She woo's the gentle Air  
    To hide her guilty front with innocent Snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinfull blame,  
    The Saintly Vail of Maiden white to throw,  
Confounded, that her Makers eyes  
Should look so neer upon her foul deformities.

But he her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyd Peace,  
    She crown'd with Olive green, came softly sliding  
Down through the turning sphear  
His ready Harbinger,  
    With Turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,  
And waving wide her mirtle wand,  
She strikes a universall Peace through Sea and Land.

No War, or Battails sound  
Was heard the World around,  
    The idle spear and shield were high up hung;  
The hooked Chariot stood  
Unstain'd with hostile blood,  
    The Trumpet spake not to the armed throng,  
And Kings sate still with awfull eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peacefull was the night  
Wherin the Prince of light  
    His raign of peace upon the earth began:  
The Windes with wonder whist,  
Smoothly the waters kist,  
    Whispering new joyes to the milde Ocean,  
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While Birds of Calm sit brooding on the charmeed wave.

The Stars with deep amaze  
Stand fixt in stedfast gaze,  
    Bending one way their pretious influence,  
And will not take their flight,  
For all the morning light,  
    Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;  
But in their glimmering Orbs did glow,

Untill their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom  
Had given day her room,  
The Sun himself with-held his wonted speed,  
And hid his head for shame,  
As his inferiour flame,  
The new enlightn'd world no more should need;  
He saw a greater Sun appear  
Then his bright Throne, or burning Axletree could bear.

The Shepherds on the Lawn,  
Or ere the point of dawn,  
Sate simply chatting in a rustick row;  
Full little thought they than,  
That the mighty Pan  
Was kindly com to live with them below;  
Perhaps their loves, or els their sheep,  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busie keep.

When such musick sweet  
Their hearts and ears did greet,  
As never was by mortall finger strook,  
Divinely-warbled voice  
Answering the stringed noise,  
As all their souls in blisfull rapture took  
The Air such pleasure loth to lose,  
With thousand echo's still prolongs each heav'nly close.

Nature that heard such sound  
Beneath the hollow round  
Of Cynthia's seat, the Airy region thrilling,  
Now was almost won  
To think her part was don,  
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;  
She knew such harmony alone  
Could hold all Heav'n and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight  
A Globe of circular light,  
That with long beams the shame-fac't night array'd,  
The helmed Cherubim  
And sworded Seraphim,  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displaid,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes to Heav'ns new-born Heir.

Such musick (as 'tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
While the Creator Great  
His constellations set,

And the well-ballanc't world on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out ye Crystall sphears,  
Once bless our human ears,  
    (If ye have power to touch our senses so)  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;  
    And let the Base of Heav'ns deep Organ blow  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort to th'Angelike symphony.

For if such holy Song  
Enwrap our fancy long,  
    Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,  
And speckl'd vanity  
Will sicken soon and die,  
    And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould,  
And Hell it self will pass away,  
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea Truth, and Justice then  
Will down return to men,  
    Th'enameld Arras of the Rain-bow wearing,  
And Mercy set between,  
Thron'd in Celestiall sheen,  
    With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering,  
And Heav'n as at som festivall,  
Will open wide the Gates of her high Palace Hall.

But wisest Fate sayes no,  
This must not yet be so,  
    The Babe lies yet in smiling Infancy,  
That on the bitter cross  
Must redeem our loss;  
    So both himself and us to glorifie:  
Yet first to those ychain'd in sleep,  
The wakefull trump of doom must thunder through the deep,

With such a horrid clang  
As on mount Sinai rang  
    While the red fire, and smouldring clouds out brake:  
The aged Earth agast  
With terrour of that blast,  
    Shall from the surface to the center shake;  
When at the worlds last session,  
The dreadfull Judge in middle Air shall spread his throne.

And then at last our bliss  
Full and perfect is,  
    But now begins; for from this happy day



Th'old Dragon under ground  
In straiter limits bound,  
Not half so far casts his usurped sway,  
And wrath to see his Kingdom fail,  
Swindges the scaly Horrour of his fouled tail.

The Oracles are dumm,  
No voice or hideous humm  
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.  
Apollo from his shrine  
Can no more divine,  
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,  
Inspire's the pale-ey'd Priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o're,  
And the resounding shore,  
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;  
From haunted spring, and dale  
Edg'd with poplar pale,  
The parting Genius is with sighing sent,  
With flowre-inwov'n tresses torn  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated Earth,  
And on the holy Hearth,  
The Lars, and Lemures moan with midnight plaint,  
In Urns, and Altars round,  
A drear, and dying sound  
Affrights the Flamins at their service quaint;  
And the chill Marble seems to sweat,  
While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat

Peor, and Baalim,  
Forsake their Temples dim,  
With that twise-batter'd god of Palestine,  
And mooned Ashtaroth,  
Heav'ns Queen and Mother both,  
Now sits not girt with Tapers holy shine,  
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,  
In vain the Tyrian Maids their wounded Thamuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch fled,  
Hath left in shadows dred,  
His burning Idol all of blackest hue,  
In vain with Cymbals ring,  
They call the grisly king,  
In dismall dance about the furnace blue;  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis and Orus, and the Dog Anubis hast.

Nor is Osiris seen

In Memphian Grove, or Green,  
Trampling the unshowr'd Grasse with lowings loud:  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest,  
Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud,  
In vain with Timbrel'd Anthems dark  
The sable-stoled Sorcerers bear his worshipt Ark.

He feels from Juda's Land  
The dredded Infants hand,  
The rayes of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
Nor all the gods beside,  
Longer dare abide,  
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
Our Babe to shew his Godhead true,  
Can in his swadling bands controul the damned crew.

So when the Sun in bed,  
Curtain'd with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an Orient wave,  
The flocking shadows pale,  
Troop to th'infernall jail,  
Each fetter'd Ghost slips to his severall grave,  
And the yellow-skirted Fayes,  
Fly after the Night-steeds, leaving their Moon-lov'd maze.

But see the Virgin blest,  
Hath laid her Babe to rest.  
Time is our tedious Song should here have ending,  
Heav'ns youngest teemed Star,  
Hath fixt her polisht Car,  
Her sleeping Lord with Handmaid Lamp attending:  
And all about the Courtly Stable,  
Bright-harnest Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton

## II Penseroso

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,  
.....The brood of Folly without father bred!  
How little you bested  
.....Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!  
Dwell in some idle brain,  
.....And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,  
As thick and numberless  
.....As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,  
Or likest hovering dreams,  
.....The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.  
But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!  
Hail, divinest Melancholy!  
Whose saintly visage is too bright  
To hit the sense of human sight,  
And therefore to our weaker view  
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;  
Black, but such as in esteem  
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,  
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove  
To set her beauty's praise above  
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.  
Yet thou art higher far descended:  
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore  
To solitary Saturn bore;  
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign  
Such mixture was not held a stain.  
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades  
He met her, and in secret shades  
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,  
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.  
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, steadfast, and demure,  
All in a robe of darkest grain,  
Flowing with majestic train,  
And sable stole of cypress lawn  
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.  
Come; but keep thy wonted state,  
With even step, and musing gait,  
And looks commercing with the skies,  
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:  
There, held in holy passion still,  
Forget thyself to marble, till  
With a sad leaden downward cast  
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.  
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,  
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,  
And hears the Muses in a ring  
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;  
And add to these retired Leisure,  
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;  
But, first and chiefest, with thee bring

Him that yon soars on golden wing,  
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,  
The Cherub Contemplation;  
And the mute Silence hist along,  
'Less Philomel will deign a song,  
In her sweetest saddest plight,  
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,  
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke  
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.  
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy!  
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among  
I woo, to hear thy even-song;  
And, missing thee, I walk unseen  
On the dry smooth-shaven green,  
To behold the wandering moon,  
Riding near her highest noon,  
Like one that had been led astray  
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,  
And oft, as if her head she bowed,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.  
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,  
I hear the far-off curfew sound,  
Over some wide-watered shore,  
Swinging slow with sullen roar;  
Or, if the air will not permit,  
Some still removed place will fit,  
Where glowing embers through the room  
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,  
Far from all resort of mirth,  
Save the cricket on the hearth,  
Or the bellman's drowsy charm  
To bless the doors from nightly harm.  
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,  
Be seen in some high lonely tower,  
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,  
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere  
The spirit of Plato, to unfold  
What worlds or what vast regions hold  
The immortal mind that hath forsook  
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;  
And of those demons that are found  
In fire, air, flood, or underground,  
Whose power hath a true consent  
With planet or with element.  
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy  
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,  
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,  
Or the tale of Troy divine,  
Or what (though rare) of later age  
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.  
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power

Might raise Musaeus from his bower;  
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing  
Such notes as, warbled to the string,  
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,  
And made Hell grant what love did seek;  
Or call up him that left half-told  
The story of Cambuscan bold,  
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,  
And who had Canace to wife,  
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,  
And of the wondrous horse of brass  
On which the Tartar king did ride;  
And if aught else great bards beside  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,  
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,  
Of forests, and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear.  
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,  
Till civil-suited Morn appear,  
Not tricked and frownced, as she was wont  
With the Attic boy to hunt,  
But kerchieft in a comely cloud  
While rocking winds are piping loud,  
Or ushered with a shower still,  
When the gust hath blown his fill,  
Ending on the rustling leaves,  
With minute-drops from off the eaves.  
And, when the sun begins to fling  
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring  
To arched walks of twilight groves,  
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,  
Of pine, or monumental oak,  
Where the rude axe with heaved stroke  
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,  
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.  
There, in close covert, by some brook,  
Where no profaner eye may look,  
Hide me from day's garish eye,  
While the bee with honeyed thigh,  
That at her flowery work doth sing,  
And the waters murmuring,  
With such consort as they keep,  
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.  
And let some strange mysterious dream  
Wave at his wings, in airy stream  
Of lively portraiture displayed,  
Softly on my eyelids laid;  
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe  
Above, about, or underneath,  
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,  
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.  
But let my due feet never fail

To walk the studious cloister's pale,  
And love the high embowed roof,  
With antique pillars massy proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light.  
There let the pealing organ blow,  
To the full-voiced quire below,  
In service high and anthems clear,  
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.  
And may at last my weary age  
Find out the peaceful hermitage,  
The hairy gown and mossy cell,  
Where I may sit and rightly spell  
Of every star that heaven doth shew,  
And every herb that sips the dew,  
Till old experience do attain  
To something like prophetic strain.  
These pleasures, Melancholy, give;  
And I with thee will choose to live.

John Milton

## L'Allegro

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,  
.....Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born  
In Stygian cave forlorn  
.....'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights  
unholy!  
Find out some uncouth cell,  
.....Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,  
And the night-raven sings;  
.....There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,  
As ragged as thy locks,  
.....In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.  
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,  
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,  
And by men heart-easing Mirth;  
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,  
With two sister Graces more,  
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:  
Or whether (as some sager sing)  
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,  
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,  
As he met her once a-Maying,  
There, on beds of violets blue,  
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,  
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,  
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.  
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest, and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,  
Nods and becks and wreathed smiles  
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,  
And love to live in dimple sleek;  
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides.  
Come, and trip it, as you go,  
On the light fantastic toe;  
And in thy right hand lead with thee  
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;  
And, if I give thee honour due,  
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,  
To live with her, and live with thee,  
In unreproved pleasures free:  
To hear the lark begin his flight,  
And, singing, startle the dull night,  
From his watch-tower in the skies,  
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;  
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,  
And at my window bid good-morrow,  
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,  
Or the twisted eglantine;  
While the cock, with lively din,  
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,

And to the stack, or the barn-door,  
 Stoutly struts his dames before:  
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn  
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,  
 From the side of some hoar hill,  
 Through the high wood echoing shrill:  
 Sometime walking, not unseen,  
 By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,  
 Right against the eastern gate  
 Where the great Sun begins his state,  
 Robed in flames and amber light,  
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;  
 While the ploughman, near at hand,  
 Whistles o'er the furrowed land,  
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,  
 And the mower whets his scythe,  
 And every shepherd tells his tale  
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.  
 Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,  
 Whilst the landskip round it measures:  
 Russet lawns, and fallows grey,  
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray;  
 Mountains on whose barren breast  
 The labouring clouds do often rest;  
 Meadows trim, with daisies pied;  
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;  
 Towers and battlements it sees  
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,  
 Where perhaps some beauty lies,  
 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.  
 Hard by a cottage chimney smokes  
 From betwixt two aged oaks,  
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met  
 Are at their savoury dinner set  
 Of herbs and other country messes,  
 Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;  
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,  
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;  
 Or, if the earlier season lead,  
 To the tanned haycock in the mead.  
 Sometimes, with secure delight,  
 The upland hamlets will invite,  
 When the merry bells ring round,  
 And the jocund rebecks sound  
 To many a youth and many a maid  
 Dancing in the chequered shade,  
 And young and old come forth to play  
 On a sunshine holiday,  
 Till the livelong daylight fail:  
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,  
 With stories told of many a feat,  
 How Faery Mab the junkets eat.



She was pinched and pulled, she said;  
And he, by Friar's lantern led,  
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat  
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,  
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn  
That ten day-labourers could not end;  
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,  
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,  
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,  
And crop-full out of doors he flings,  
Ere the first cock his matin rings.  
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,  
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.  
Towered cities please us then,  
And the busy hum of men,  
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,  
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold  
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
Rain influence, and judge the prize  
Of wit or arms, while both contend  
To win her grace whom all commend.  
There let Hymen oft appear  
In saffron robe, with taper clear,  
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,  
With mask and antique pageantry;  
Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream.  
Then to the well-trod stage anon,  
If Jonson's learned sock be on,  
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,  
Warble his native wood-notes wild.  
And ever, against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,  
Married to immortal verse,  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,  
In notes with many a winding bout  
Of linked sweetness long drawn out  
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running,  
Untwisting all the chains that tie  
The hidden soul of harmony;  
That Orpheus' self may heave his head  
From golden slumber on a bed  
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear  
Such strains as would have won the ear  
Of Pluto to have quite set free  
His half-regained Eurydice.  
These delights if thou canst give,  
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

John Milton

## Light

HAIL holy light, ofspring of Heav'n first-born,  
Or of th' Eternal Coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproach'd light  
Dwelt from Eternitie, dwelt then in thee,  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
Whose Fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.  
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
Escap't the Stygian Pool, though long detain'd  
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
Through utter and through middle darkness borne  
With other notes than to th' Orphean Lyre  
I sung of Chaos and Eternal Night,  
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down  
The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital Lamp; but thou  
Revisit'st not these eyes, that rowle in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veild. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
Clear Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee Sion and the flowrie Brooks beneath  
That wash thy hallowd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
Those other two equal'd with me in Fate,  
So were I equal'd with them in renown.  
Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,  
And Tiresias and Phineus Prophets old.  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful Bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal Note. Thus with the Year  
Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the chearful waies of men  
Cut off, and for the Book of knowledg fair  
Presented with a Universal blanc  
Of Natures works to mee expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
So much the rather thou Celestial light  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

John Milton

## Lycidas

In this Monody the author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and, by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their height.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,  
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,  
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,  
And with forced fingers rude  
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.  
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear  
Compels me to disturb your season due;  
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,  
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.  
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.  
He must not float upon his watery bier  
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,  
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well  
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;  
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.  
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:  
So may some gentle Muse  
With lucky words favour my destined urn,  
And as he passes turn,  
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,  
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;  
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared  
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,  
We drove a-field, and both together heard  
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,  
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,  
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright  
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.  
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;  
Tempered to the oaten flute,  
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel  
From the glad sound would not be absent long;  
And old Damoetas loved to hear our song.

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,  
Now thou art gone and never must return!  
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,  
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,  
And all their echoes, mourn.  
The willows, and the hazel copses green,  
Shall now no more be seen  
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.  
As killing as the canker to the rose,

Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,  
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,  
 When first the white-thorn blows;  
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.  
     Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep  
 Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?  
 For neither were ye playing on the steep  
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,  
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.  
 Ay me! I fondly dream  
 RHad ye been there, S . . . for what could that have done?  
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,  
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,  
 Whom universal nature did lament,  
 When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,  
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,  
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?  
     Alas! what boots it with uncessant care  
 To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,  
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?  
 Were it not better done, as others use,  
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,  
 Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?  
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)  
 To scorn delights and live laborious days;  
 But, the fair guerdon when we hope to find,  
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,  
 Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,  
 And slits the thin-spun life. RBut not the praise,"  
 Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears:  
 RFame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
 Nor in the glistening foil  
 Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,  
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes  
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;  
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,  
 Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."  
     O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,  
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,  
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood.  
 But now my oat proceeds,  
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea,  
 That came in Neptune's plea.  
 He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,  
 What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?  
 And questioned every gust of rugged wings  
 That blows from off each beaked promontory.  
 They knew not of his story;  
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,  
 That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:

The air was calm, and on the level brine  
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.  
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,  
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,  
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,  
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,  
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge  
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.  
Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, Rmy dearest pledge?"  
Last came, and last did go,  
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;  
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain.  
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).  
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:--  
RHow well could I have spared for thee, young swain,  
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,  
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!  
Of other care they little reckoning make  
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,  
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.  
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least  
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!  
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped:  
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs  
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;  
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,  
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,  
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;  
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw  
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.  
But that two-handed engine at the door  
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past  
That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse,  
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast  
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.  
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use  
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,  
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,  
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,  
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,  
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.  
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,  
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,  
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,  
The glowing violet,  
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,  
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,  
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;  
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,

And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,  
 To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.  
 For so, to interpose a little ease,  
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,  
 Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas  
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;  
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,  
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide  
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;  
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,  
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,  
 Where the great Vision of the guarded mount  
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.  
 Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:  
 And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.  
     Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,  
 For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,  
 Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.  
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,  
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore  
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:  
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,  
 Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,  
 Where, other groves and other streams along,  
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,  
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,  
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.  
 There entertain him all the Saints above,  
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,  
 That Sing, and singing in their glory move,  
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.  
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;  
 Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,  
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good  
 To all that wander in that perilous flood.  
     Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,  
 While the still morn went out with sandals grey:  
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,  
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:  
 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,  
 And now was dropt into the western bay.  
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:  
 Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

John Milton

## **Methought I Saw My Late Espoused Saint**

Methought I saw my late espoused Saint  
Brought to me like Alcestus from the grave,  
Who Jove's great Son to her glad Husband gave,  
Rescu'd from death by force though pale and faint.  
Mine as whom washt from spot of child-bed taint  
Purification in the old Law did save,  
And such as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in Heav'n without restraint,  
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:  
Her face was veil'd, yet to my fancied sight  
Love, sweetness, goodness in her person shin'd  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.  
But O as to embrace me she inclin'd  
I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night.

John Milton



## **On His Blindness**

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

## On His Deceased Wife

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused Saint  
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,  
Whom Joves great Son to her glad Husband gave,  
Rescu'd from death by force though pale and faint.  
Mine as whom washt from spot of child-bed taint,  
Purification in the old Law did save,  
And such, as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,  
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:  
Her face was vail'd, yet to my fancied sight,  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.  
But O as to embrace me she enclin'd  
I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night.

John Milton

## On Shakespear

What needs my Shakespear for his honour'd Bones,  
The labour of an age in piled Stones,  
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid  
Under a Star-ypointing Pyramid?  
Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame,  
What need'st thou such weak witnes of thy name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thy self a live-long Monument.  
For whilst toth' shame of slow-endeavouring art,  
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each heart  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalu'd Book,  
Those Delphick lines with deep impression took  
Then thou our fancy of it self bereaving,  
Dost make us Marble with too much conceaving;  
And so Sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie,  
That Kings for such a Tomb would wish to die.

John Milton

## On The Death Of A Fair Infant Dying Of A Cough

I

O fairest flower no sooner blown but blasted,  
Soft silken Primrose fading timeleslie,  
Summers chief honour if thou hadst outlasted  
Bleak winters force that made thy blossome drie;  
For he being amorous on that lovely die  
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss  
But kill'd alas, and then bewayl'd his fatal bliss.

II

For since grim Aquilo his charioter  
By boistrous rape th' Athenian damsel got,  
He thought it toucht his Deitie full neer,  
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,  
Thereby to wipe away th' infamous blot,  
Of long-uncoupled bed, and childless eld,  
Which 'mongst the wanton gods a foul reproach was held.

III

So mounting up in ycie-pearled carr,  
Through middle empire of the freezing aire  
He wanderd long, till thee he spy'd from farr,  
There ended was his quest, there ceast his care  
Down he descended from his Snow-soft chaire,  
But all unwares with his cold-kind embrace  
Unhous'd thy Virgin Soul from her fair hiding place.

IV

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;  
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand  
Whilome did slay his dearly-loved mate  
Young Hyacinth born on Eurotas' strand,  
Young Hyacinth the pride of Spartan land;  
But then transform'd him to a purple flower  
Alack that so to change thee winter had no power.

V

Yet can I not perswade me thou art dead  
Or that thy coase corrupts in earths dark wombe,  
Or that thy beauties lie in wormie bed,  
Hid from the world in a low delved tombe;  
Could Heav'n for pittie thee so strictly doom?  
O no! for something in thy face did shine  
Above mortalitie that shew'd thou wast divine.

VI

Resolve me then oh Soul most surely blest  
(If so it be that thou these complaints dost hear)  
Tell me bright Spirit where e're thou hoverest  
Whether above that high first-moving Spheare  
Or in the Elisian fields (if such there were.)  
Oh say me true if thou wert mortal wight  
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight.

VII

Wert thou some Starr which from the ruin'd rooffe  
Of shak't Olympus by mischance didst fall;  
Which carefull Jove in natures true behoofe  
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?  
Or did of late earths Sonnes besiege the wall  
Of sheenie Heav'n, and thou some goddess fled  
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head

VIII

Or wert thou that just Maid who once before  
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth  
And cam'st again to visit us once more?  
Or wert thou that sweet smiling Youth!  
Or that c[r]own'd Matron sage white-robed Truth?  
Or any other of that heav'nly brood  
Let down in cloudie throne to do the world some good.

Note: 53 Or wert thou] Or wert thou Mercy -- conjectured by  
John Heskin Ch. Ch. Oxon. from Ode on Nativity, st. 15.

IX

Or wert thou of the golden-winged boast,  
Who having clad thy self in humane weed,  
To earth from thy praefixed seat didst poast,  
And after short abode flie back with speed,  
As if to shew what creatures Heav'n doth breed,  
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire  
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heav'n aspire.

X

But oh why didst thou not stay here below  
To bless us with thy heav'n-lov'd innocence,  
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe  
To turn Swift-rushing black perdition hence,  
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,  
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart  
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

XI

Then thou the mother of so sweet a child  
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,  
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;  
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,  
And render him with patience what he lent;  
This if thou do he will an off-spring give,  
That till the worlds last-end shall make thy name to live.

John Milton

## **On The Lord Gen. Fairfax At The Seige Of Colchester**

Fairfax, whose name in armes through Europe rings  
Filling each mouth with envy, or with praise,  
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze,  
And rumors loud, that daunt remotest kings,  
Thy firm unshak'n vertue ever brings  
Victory home, though new rebellions raise  
Their Hydra heads, & the fals North displaies  
Her brok'n league, to impe their serpent wings,  
O yet a nobler task awaites thy hand;  
Yet what can Warr, but endless warr still breed,  
Till Truth, & Right from Violence be freed,  
And Public Faith cleard from the shamefull brand  
Of Public Fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed  
While Avarice, & Rapine share the land.

John Milton

## On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

I

This is the month, and this the happy morn,  
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,  
Of wedded maid and Virgin Mother born,  
Our great redemption from above did bring;  
For so the holy sages once did sing,  
That he our deadly forfeit should release,  
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,  
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,  
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table  
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,  
He laid aside, and, here with us to be,  
Forsook the Courts of everlasting Day,  
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III

Say, Heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein  
Afford a present to the Infant God?  
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,  
To welcome him to this his new abode,  
Now while the heaven, by the Sun's team untrod,  
Hath took no print of the approaching light,  
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV

See how from far upon the Eastern road  
The star-led Wisards haste with odours sweet!  
Oh! run; prevent them with thy humble ode,  
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;  
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,  
And join thy voice unto the Angel Quire,  
From out his secret altar touched with hallowed fire.

The Hymn

I

It was the winter wild,  
While the heaven-born child  
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;  
Nature, in awe to him,  
Had doffed her gaudy trim,  
With her great Master so to sympathize:  
It was no season then for her  
To wanton with the Sun, her lusty Paramour.



## II

Only with speeches fair  
She woos the gentle air  
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinful blame,  
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;  
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes  
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

## III

But he, her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace:  
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding  
Down through the turning sphere,  
His ready Harbinger,  
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;  
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,  
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

## IV

No war, or battail's sound,  
Was heard the world around;  
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;  
The hooked chariot stood,  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;  
And Kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

## V

But peaceful was the night  
Wherein the Prince of Light  
His reign of peace upon the earth began.  
The winds, with wonder whist,  
Smoothly the waters kissed,  
Whispering new joys to the mild Ocean,  
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

## VI

The stars, with deep amaze,  
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,  
Bending one way their precious influence,  
And will not take their flight,  
For all the morning light,  
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;

But in their glimmering orbs did glow,  
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII

And, though the shady gloom  
Had given day her room,  
The Sun himself withheld his wonted speed,  
And hid his head of shame,  
As his inferior flame  
The new-enlightened world no more should need:  
He saw a greater Sun appear  
Than his bright Throne or burning axletree could bear.

VIII

The Shepherds on the lawn,  
Or ere the point of dawn,  
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;  
Full little thought they than  
That the mighty Pan  
Was kindly come to live with them below:  
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX

When such music sweet  
Their hearts and ears did greet  
As never was by mortal finger strook,  
Divinely-warbled voice  
Answering the stringèd noise,  
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:  
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,  
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

X

Nature, that heard such sound  
Beneath the hollow round  
Of Cynthia's seat the airy Region thrilling,  
Now was almost won  
To think her part was done,  
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling:  
She knew such harmony alone  
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

XI

At last surrounds their sight  
A globe of circular light,  
That with long beams the shamefaced Night arrayed;

The helmèd Cherubim  
And sworded Seraphim  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's newborn Heir.

XII

Such music (as 'tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,  
While the Creator great  
His constellations set,  
And the well-balanced World on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!  
Once bless our human ears,  
If ye have power to touch our senses so;  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;  
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort of the angelic symphony.

XIV

For, if such holy song  
Enwrap our fancy long,  
Time will run back and fetch the Age of Gold;  
And speckled Vanity  
Will sicken soon and die,  
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;  
And Hell itself will pass away,  
And leave her dolorous mansions of the peering day.

XV

Yes, Truth and Justice then  
Will down return to men,  
The enamelled arras of the rainbow wearing;  
And Mercy set between,  
Throned in celestial sheen,  
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;  
And Heaven, as at some festival,  
Will open wide the gates of her high palace-hall.

XVI

But wisest Fate says No,  
This must not yet be so;  
The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy  
That on the bitter cross  
Must redeem our loss,  
So both himself and us to glorify:  
Yet first, to those chained in sleep,  
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep,

#### XVII

With such a horrid clang  
As on Mount Sinai rang,  
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:  
The aged Earth, aghast  
With terror of that blast,  
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,  
When, at the world's last session,  
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

#### XVIII

And then at last our bliss  
Full and perfect is,  
But now begins; for from this happy day  
The Old Dragon under ground,  
In straiter limits bound,  
Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway,  
And, wroth to see his Kingdom fail,  
Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

#### XIX

The Oracles are dumb;  
No voice or hideous hum  
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.  
Apollo from his shrine  
Can no more divine,  
Will hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
No nightly trance, or breathèd spell,  
Inspires the pale-eyed Priest from the prophetic cell.

#### XX

The lonely mountains o'er,  
And the resounding shore,  
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;  
Edgèd with poplar pale,  
From haunted spring, and dale  
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;  
With flower-inwoven tresses torn  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI

In consecrated earth,  
And on the holy hearth,  
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;  
In urns, and altars round,  
A drear and dying sound  
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;  
And the chill marble seems to sweat,  
While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

XXII

Peor and Baälim  
Forsake their temples dim,  
With that twice-battered god of Palestine;  
And moonèd Ashtaroth,  
Heaven's Queen and Mother both,  
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:  
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn;  
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

XXIII

And sullen Moloch, fled,  
Hath left in shadows dread  
His burning idol all of blackest hue;  
In vain with cymbals' ring  
They call the grisly king,  
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV

Nor is Osiris seen  
In Memphian grove or green,  
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest;  
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;  
In vain, with timbreled anthems dark,  
The sable-stolèd Sorcerers bear his worshiped ark.

XXV

He feels from Juda's land  
The dreaded Infant's hand;  
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
Nor all the gods beside  
Longer dare abide,

Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,  
Can in his swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

XXVI

So, when the Sun in bed,  
Curtained with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,  
The flocking shadows pale  
Troop to the infernal jail,  
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,  
And the yellow-skirted Fays  
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

XXVII

But see! the Virgin blest  
Hath laid her Babe to rest,  
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:  
Heaven's youngest-teemèd star  
Hath fixed her polished car,  
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;  
And all about the courtly stable  
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton

## On The Morning Of Christs Nativity

I

This is the Month, and this the happy morn  
Wherin the Son of Heav'ns eternal King,  
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,  
Our great redemption from above did bring;  
For so the holy sages once did sing,  
That he our deadly forfeit should release,  
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,  
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,  
Wherwith he wont at Heav'ns high Council-Table,  
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,  
He laid aside; and here with us to be,  
Forsook the Courts of everlasting Day,  
And chose with us a darksome House of mortal Clay.

III

Say Heav'nly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein  
Afford a present to the Infant God?  
Hast thou no vers, no hymn, or solemn strain,  
To welcom him to this his new abode,  
Now while the Heav'n by the Suns team untrod,  
Hath took no print of the approaching light,  
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV

See how from far upon the Eastern rode  
The Star-led Wisards haste with odours sweet,  
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,  
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;  
Have thou the honour first, thy Lord to greet,  
And joyn thy voice unto the Angel Quire,  
From out his secret Altar toucht with hallow'd fire.

John Milton

## **On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament**

Because you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,  
And with stiff vows renounced his Liturgy,  
To seize the widowed whore Plurality,  
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorred,  
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword  
To force our consciences that Christ set free,  
And ride us with a Classic Hierarchy,  
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rutherford?  
Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,  
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul  
Must now be named and printed heretics  
By shallow Edwards and Scotch What-d'ye-call!  
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,  
Your plots and packing, worse than those of Trent,  
That so the Parliament  
May with their wholesome and preventive shears  
Clip your phylacteries, though baulk your ears,  
And succour our just fears,  
When they shall read this clearly in your charge:  
New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.

John Milton



**On the Religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thomson, my Christian Friend,  
Deceased Dec. 16, 1646**

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,  
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,  
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load  
Of death, called life, which us from life doth sever.  
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,  
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;  
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,  
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.  
Love led them on; and Faith, who knew them best  
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams  
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,  
And speak the truth of thee on glorious themes  
Before the Judge; who henceforth bid thee rest,  
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

John Milton

## On the Same

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs  
By the known rules of ancient liberty,  
When straight a barbarous noise environs me  
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs;  
As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs  
Railed at Latona's twin-born progeny,  
Which after held the Sun and Moon in fee.  
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs,  
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,  
And still revolt when Truth would set them free.  
Licence they mean when they cry Liberty;  
For who loves that must first be wise and good:  
But from that mark how far they rove we see,  
For all this waste of wealth and loss of blood.

John Milton

## On the University Carrier

Who sickened in the time of his Vacancy, being forbid to go to London by reason of the Plague.

Here lies old Hobson. Death hath broke his girt,  
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;  
Or else, the ways being foul, twenty to one  
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.  
'T was such a shifter that, if truth were known,  
Death was half glad when he had got him down;  
For he had any time this ten years full  
Dodged with him betwixt Cambridge and The Bull.  
And surely Death could never have prevailed,  
Had not his weekly course of carriage failed;  
But lately, finding him so long at home,  
And thinking now his journey's end was come,  
And that he had ta'en up his latest Inn,  
In the kind office of a Chamberlin  
Showed him his room where he must lodge that night,  
Pulled off his boots, and took away the light.  
If any ask for him, it shall be said,  
"Hobson has supped, and 's newly gone to bed."

John Milton

**On The University Carrier Who Sickn'd In The Time Of His Vacancy, Being  
Forbid To Go To London, By R**

Here lies old Hobson, Death hath broke his girt,  
And here alas, hath laid him in the dirt,  
Or els the ways being foul, twenty to one,  
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.  
'Twas such a shifter, that if truth were known,  
Death was half glad when he had got him down;  
For he had any time this ten yeers full,  
Dodg'd with him, betwixt Cambridge and the Bull.  
And surely, Death could never have prevail'd,  
Had not his weekly cours of carriage fail'd;  
But lately finding him so long at home,  
And thinking now his journeys end was come,  
And that he had tane up his latest Inne,  
In the kind office of a Chamberlin  
Shew'd him his room where he must lodge that night,  
Pull'd off his Boots, and took away the light:  
If any ask for him, it shall be sed,  
Hobson has supt, and 's newly gon to bed.

John Milton

**On The University Carrier Who Sickn'd In The Time Of His Vacancy, Being  
Forbid To Go To London, By Reason Of The Plague**

Here lies old Hobson, Death hath broke his girt,  
And here alas, hath laid him in the dirt,  
Or els the ways being foul, twenty to one,  
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.  
'Twas such a shifter, that if truth were known,  
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Pull'd off his Boots, and took away the light:  
If any ask for him, it shall be sed,  
Hobson has supt, and 's newly gon to bed.

John Milton

## On Time

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race,  
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,  
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;  
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,  
Which is no more than what is false and vain,  
And merely mortal dross;  
So little is our loss,  
So little is thy gain.  
For when as each thing bad thou hast intombed,  
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,  
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss  
With an individual kiss,  
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood;  
When every thing that is sincerely good  
And perfectly divine,  
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine  
About the supreme throne  
Of Him, t' whose happy-making sight alone  
When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall climb,  
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,  
Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,  
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost

### Book I

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,  
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That, to the height of this great argument,  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.  
Say first--for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,  
Nor the deep tract of Hell--say first what cause  
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,  
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress his will  
For one restraint, lords of the World besides.  
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?  
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,  
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host  
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring  
To set himself in glory above his peers,  
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,  
If he opposed, and with ambitious aim  
Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,  
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In adamant chains and penal fire,  
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night  
 To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,  
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,  
 Confounded, though immortal. But his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,  
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,  
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.  
 At once, as far as Angels ken, he views  
 The dismal situation waste and wild.  
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,  
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
 No light; but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all, but torture without end  
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.  
 Such place Eternal Justice has prepared  
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordained  
 In utter darkness, and their portion set,  
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven  
 As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.  
 Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and named  
 Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,  
 And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:--  
 "If thou beest he--but O how fallen! how changed  
 From him who, in the happy realms of light  
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
 Myriads, though bright!--if he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise  
 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined  
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest  
 From what height fallen: so much the stronger proved  
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,  
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,  
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contentions brought along  
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,



That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,  
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?  
 All is not lost--the unconquerable will,  
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome?  
 That glory never shall his wrath or might  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power  
 Who, from the terror of this arm, so late  
 Doubted his empire--that were low indeed;  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,  
 And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;  
 Since, through experience of this great event,  
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,  
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain,  
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;  
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:--

"O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers  
 That led th' embattled Seraphim to war  
 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds  
 Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,  
 And put to proof his high supremacy,  
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,  
 Too well I see and rue the dire event  
 That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,  
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host  
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
 As far as Gods and heavenly Essences  
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns,  
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.  
 But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now  
 Of force believe almighty, since no less  
 Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)  
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,  
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,  
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
 By right of war, whate'er his business be,  
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,  
 Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep?  
 What can it the avail though yet we feel

Strength undiminished, or eternal being  
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied:--

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,  
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure--  
To do aught good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil;  
Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
But see! the angry Victor hath recalled  
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,  
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid  
The fiery surge that from the precipice  
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,  
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn  
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,  
The seat of desolation, void of light,  
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend  
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;  
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;  
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,  
Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,  
How overcome this dire calamity,  
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,  
If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,  
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes  
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides  
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,  
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,  
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den  
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast  
Leviathan, which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream.  
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,  
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,  
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,

With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,  
Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.  
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,  
Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence  
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will  
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
That with reiterated crimes he might  
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
Evil to others, and enraged might see  
How all his malice served but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn  
On Man by him seduced, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool  
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames  
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled  
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.  
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,  
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land  
He lights--if it were land that ever burned  
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,  
And such appeared in hue as when the force  
Of subterranean wind transmits a hill  
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side  
Of thundering Etna, whose combustible  
And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,  
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,  
And leave a singed bottom all involved  
With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole  
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;  
Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood  
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,  
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat  
That we must change for Heaven?--this mournful gloom  
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he  
Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: farthest from him is best  
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme  
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,  
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,  
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
Receive thy new possessor--one who brings  
A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.  
What matter where, if I be still the same,  
And what I should be, all but less than he

Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:  
Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,  
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:  
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.  
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,  
Th' associates and co-partners of our loss,  
Lie thus astonished on th' oblivious pool,  
And call them not to share with us their part  
In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub  
Thus answered:--"Leader of those armies bright  
Which, but th' Omnipotent, none could have foiled!  
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
Of hope in fears and dangers--heard so oft  
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults  
Their surest signal--they will soon resume  
New courage and revive, though now they lie  
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,  
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;  
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height!"

He scare had ceased when the superior Fiend  
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,  
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,  
Behind him cast. The broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.  
His spear--to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
Of some great admiral, were but a wand--  
He walked with, to support uneasy steps  
Over the burning marl, not like those steps  
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.  
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach  
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called  
His legions--Angel Forms, who lay entranced  
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge  
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed  
Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld

From the safe shore their floating carcasses  
And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,  
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,  
Under amazement of their hideous change.  
He called so loud that all the hollow deep  
Of Hell resounded:--"Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven--once yours; now lost,  
If such astonishment as this can seize  
Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place  
After the toil of battle to repose  
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find  
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds  
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood  
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon  
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
Th' advantage, and, descending, tread us down  
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?  
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"

They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed  
Innumerable. As when the potent rod  
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,  
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud  
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,  
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear  
Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
Their course, in even balance down they light  
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:  
A multitude like which the populous North  
Poured never from her frozen loins to pass  
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.  
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,  
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood  
Their great Commander--godlike Shapes, and Forms  
Excelling human; princely Dignities;  
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,  
Though on their names in Heavenly records now

Be no memorial, blotted out and rased  
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.  
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve  
Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,  
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,  
By falsities and lies the greatest part  
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake  
God their Creator, and th' invisible  
Glory of him that made them to transform  
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned  
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
And devils to adore for deities:

Then were they known to men by various names,  
And various idols through the heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,  
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,  
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth  
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof?

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell  
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix  
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,  
Their altars by his altar, gods adored  
Among the nations round, and durst abide  
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned  
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed  
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,  
Abominations; and with cursed things  
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,  
And with their darkness durst affront his light.  
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;  
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,  
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire  
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
Worshipped in Rabba and her watery plain,  
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His temple right against the temple of God  
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.  
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
From Aroar to Nebo and the wild  
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
And Horonaim, Seon's real, beyond  
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,  
And Eleale to th' Asphaltic Pool:  
Peor his other name, when he enticed  
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,

To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged  
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,  
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts  
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth--those male,  
 These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,  
 Not tried or manacled with joint or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,  
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes,  
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.  
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left  
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low  
 Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called  
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built  
 By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,  
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell  
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,  
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock  
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood  
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale  
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred proch  
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,  
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries  
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark  
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,  
 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,  
 Where he fell flat and shamed his worshippers:  
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man  
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high  
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,

And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
 Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat  
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks  
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.  
 He also against the house of God was bold:  
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king--  
 Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
 God's altar to disparage and displace  
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods  
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared  
 A crew who, under names of old renown--  
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train--  
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused  
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek  
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape  
 Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed  
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king  
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,  
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox--  
 Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed  
 From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke  
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.  
 Belial came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd  
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood  
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he  
 In temples and at altars, when the priest  
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled  
 With lust and violence the house of God?  
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,  
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,  
 And injury and outrage; and, when night  
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night  
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might:  
 The rest were long to tell; though far renowned  
 Th' Ionian gods--of Javan's issue held  
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,  
 Their boasted parents;--Titan, Heaven's first-born,  
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized  
 By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,  
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;  
 So Jove usurping reigned. These, first in Crete  
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top  
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,  
 Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,



Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old  
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,  
And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared  
Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief  
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast  
Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised  
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.  
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared  
His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed  
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
Th' imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:  
At which the universal host up-sent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,  
With orient colours waving: with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move  
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders--such as raised  
To height of noblest temper heroes old  
Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase  
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
Breathing united force with fixed thought,  
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed  
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now  
Advanced in view they stand--a horrid front  
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,  
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief  
Had to impose. He through the armed files  
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse  
The whole battalion views--their order due,

Their visages and stature as of gods;  
Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,  
Glories: for never, since created Man,  
Met such embodied force as, named with these,  
Could merit more than that small infantry  
Warred on by cranes--though all the giant brood  
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined  
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds  
In fable or romance of Uther's son,  
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,  
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,  
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore  
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed  
Their dread Commander. He, above the rest  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost  
All her original brightness, nor appeared  
Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess  
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen  
Looks through the horizontal misty air  
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone  
Above them all th' Archangel: but his face  
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows  
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride  
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold  
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned  
For ever now to have their lot in pain--  
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced  
Of Heaven, and from eteranl splendours flung  
For his revolt--yet faithful how they stood,  
Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire  
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,  
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,  
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared  
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend  
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round  
With all his peers: attention held them mute.  
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,  
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last  
Words interwove with sighs found out their way:--

"O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers  
 Matchless, but with th' Almight!--and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,  
 As this place testifies, and this dire change,  
 Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,  
 Forseeing or presaging, from the depth  
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared  
 How such united force of gods, how such  
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,  
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?  
 For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,  
 If counsels different, or danger shunned  
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
 Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure  
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
 Consent or custom, and his regal state  
 Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed--  
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,  
 So as not either to provoke, or dread  
 New war provoked: our better part remains  
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,  
 What force effected not; that he no less  
 At length from us may find, who overcomes  
 By force hath overcome but half his foe.  
 Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife  
 There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long  
 Intended to create, and therein plant  
 A generation whom his choice regard  
 Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.  
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps  
 Our first eruption--thither, or elsewhere;  
 For this infernal pit shall never hold  
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th' Abyss  
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
 Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;  
 For who can think submission? War, then, war  
 Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew  
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
 Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged  
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms  
 Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,  
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top  
 Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
 Shone with a glossy scurf--undoubted sign  
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,

The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,  
A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands  
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,  
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,  
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on--  
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell  
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts  
Were always downward bent, admiring more  
The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,  
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed  
In vision beatific. By him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands  
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth  
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,  
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire  
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those  
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell  
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,  
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame  
And strength, and art, are easily outdone  
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
What in an age they, with incessant toil  
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.  
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,  
That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude  
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,  
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.  
A third as soon had formed within the ground  
A various mould, and from the boiling cells  
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;  
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,  
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.  
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge  
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound  
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet--  
Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
With golden architrave; nor did there want  
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;  
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon  
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine  
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat  
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile  
Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,  
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide  
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth

And level pavement: from the arched roof,  
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row  
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed  
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light  
As from a sky. The hasty multitude  
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,  
And some the architect. His hand was known  
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,  
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,  
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders bright.  
Nor was his name unheard or unadored  
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell  
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn  
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
A summer's day, and with the setting sun  
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,  
On Lemnos, th' Aegaeon isle. Thus they relate,  
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now  
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape  
By all his engines, but was headlong sent,  
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged Heralds, by command  
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony  
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim  
A solemn council forthwith to be held  
At Pandemonium, the high capital  
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called  
From every band and squared regiment  
By place or choice the worthiest: they anon  
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came  
Attended. All access was thronged; the gates  
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall  
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold  
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair  
Defied the best of Paynim chivalry  
To mortal combat, or career with lance),  
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,  
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees  
In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,  
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive  
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer  
Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd  
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,  
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed

In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,  
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room  
Throng numberless--like that pygmean race  
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,  
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side  
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon  
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth  
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance  
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;  
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,  
Though without number still, amidst the hall  
Of that infernal court. But far within,  
And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
In close recess and secret conclave sat,  
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,  
Frequent and full. After short silence then,  
And summons read, the great consult began.

## Book II

High on a throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wealth or Ormus and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised  
To that bad eminence; and, from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success untaught,  
His proud imaginations thus displayed:--  
"Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven!--  
For, since no deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,  
I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent  
Celestial Virtues rising will appear  
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate!--  
Me though just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,  
Did first create your leader--next, free choice  
With what besides in council or in fight  
Hath been achieved of merit--yet this loss,  
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more  
Established in a safe, unenvied throne,  
Yielded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw

Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? Where there is, then, no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From faction: for none sure will claim in Hell  
Precedence; none whose portion is so small  
Of present pain that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more! With this advantage, then,  
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,  
More than can be in Heaven, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper than prosperity  
Could have assured us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open war or covert guile,  
We now debate. Who can advise may speak."

He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,  
Stood up--the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deemed  
Equal in strength, and rather than be less  
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,  
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake:--

"My sentence is for open war. Of wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those  
Contrive who need, or when they need; not now.  
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest--  
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait  
The signal to ascend--sit lingering here,  
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place  
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,  
The prison of his ryranny who reigns  
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,  
Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once  
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,  
Turning our tortures into horrid arms  
Against the Torturer; when, to meet the noise  
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear  
Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angels, and his throne itself  
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,  
His own invented torments. But perhaps  
The way seems difficult, and steep to scale  
With upright wing against a higher foe!  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,  
That in our porper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat; descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,

When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
 Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,  
 With what compulsion and laborious flight  
 We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy, then;  
 Th' event is feared! Should we again provoke  
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find  
 To our destruction, if there be in Hell  
 Fear to be worse destroyed! What can be worse  
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned  
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe!  
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
 Must exercise us without hope of end  
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge  
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour,  
 Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus,  
 We should be quite abolished, and expire.  
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense  
 His utmost ire? which, to the height enraged,  
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
 To nothing this essential--happier far  
 Than miserable to have eternal being!--  
 Or, if our substance be indeed divine,  
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst  
 On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
 Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,  
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,  
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:  
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."

He ended frowning, and his look denounced  
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous  
 To less than gods. On th' other side up rose  
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane.  
 A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed  
 For dignity composed, and high exploit.  
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue  
 Dropped manna, and could make the worse appear  
 The better reason, to perplex and dash  
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low--

To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds  
 Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,  
 And with persuasive accent thus began:--

"I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
 As not behind in hate, if what was urged  
 Main reason to persuade immediate war  
 Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success;  
 When he who most excels in fact of arms,  
 In what he counsels and in what excels  
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
 And utter dissolution, as the scope  
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
 First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled



With armed watch, that render all access  
Impregnable: oft on the bodering Deep  
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing  
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,  
Scorning surprise. Or, could we break our way  
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise  
With blackest insurrection to confound  
Heaven's purest light, yet our great Enemy,  
All incorruptible, would on his throne  
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould,  
Incapable of stain, would soon expel  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,  
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope  
Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage;  
And that must end us; that must be our cure--  
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,  
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated Night,  
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe  
Can give it, or will ever? How he can  
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
Belike through impotence or unaware,  
To give his enemies their wish, and end  
Them in his anger whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? 'Wherefore cease we, then?'  
Say they who counsel war; 'we are decreed,  
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
What can we suffer worse?' Is this, then, worst--  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?  
What when we fled amain, pursued and struck  
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought  
The Deep to shelter us? This Hell then seemed  
A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay  
Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse.  
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,  
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,  
And plunge us in the flames; or from above  
Should intermitted vengeance arm again  
His red right hand to plague us? What if all  
Her stores were opened, and this firmament  
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall  
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,  
Designing or exhorting glorious war,  
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled,  
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey

Or racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk  
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains,  
 There to converse with everlasting groans,  
 Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
 Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.  
 War, therefore, open or concealed, alike  
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile  
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
 Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's height  
 All these our motions vain sees and derides,  
 Not more almighty to resist our might  
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.  
 Shall we, then, live thus vile--the race of Heaven  
 Thus trampled, thus expelled, to suffer here  
 Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,  
 By my advice; since fate inevitable  
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,  
 The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,  
 Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust  
 That so ordains. This was at first resolved,  
 If we were wise, against so great a foe  
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
 I laugh when those who at the spear are bold  
 And venturous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear  
 What yet they know must follow--to endure  
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
 The sentence of their Conqueror. This is now  
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
 Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit  
 His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,  
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied  
 With what is punished; whence these raging fires  
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.  
 Our purer essence then will overcome  
 Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;  
 Or, changed at length, and to the place conformed  
 In temper and in nature, will receive  
 Familiar the fierce heat; and, void of pain,  
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;  
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight  
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change  
 Worth waiting--since our present lot appears  
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe."

Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,  
 Counsell'd ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,  
 Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:--

"Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven  
 We war, if war be best, or to regain  
 Our own right lost. Him to unthroned we then  
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield  
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.

The former, vain to hope, argues as vain  
 The latter; for what place can be for us  
 Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme  
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent  
 And publish grace to all, on promise made  
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we  
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
 Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne  
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
 Forced hallelujahs, while he lordly sits  
 Our envied sovereign, and his altar breathes  
 Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,  
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task  
 In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome  
 Eternity so spent in worship paid  
 To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,  
 By force impossible, by leave obtained  
 Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state  
 Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek  
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own  
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,  
 Free and to none accountable, preferring  
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke  
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear  
 Then most conspicuous when great things of small,  
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,  
 We can create, and in what place so'er  
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain  
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world  
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire  
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,  
 And with the majesty of darkness round  
 Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar.  
 Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!  
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light  
 Imitate when we please? This desert soil  
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;  
 Nor want we skill or art from whence to raise  
 Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?  
 Our torments also may, in length of time,  
 Become our elements, these piercing fires  
 As soft as now severe, our temper changed  
 Into their temper; which must needs remove  
 The sensible of pain. All things invite  
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state  
 Of order, how in safety best we may  
 Compose our present evils, with regard  
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
 All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."  
 He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled  
 Th' assembly as when hollow rocks retain

The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance  
 Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay  
 After the tempest. Such applause was heard  
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,  
 Advising peace: for such another field  
 They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear  
 Of thunder and the sword of Michael  
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
 To found this nether empire, which might rise,  
 By policy and long process of time,  
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.  
 Which when Beelzebub perceived--than whom,  
 Satan except, none higher sat--with grave  
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed  
 A pillar of state. Deep on his front engraven  
 Deliberation sat, and public care;  
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,  
 Majestic, though in ruin. Sage he stood  
 With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear  
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look  
 Drew audience and attention still as night  
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:--  
 "Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,  
 Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now  
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called  
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
 Inclines--here to continue, and build up here  
 A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,  
 And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed  
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt  
 From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league  
 Banded against his throne, but to remain  
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,  
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserved  
 His captive multitude. For he, to be sure,  
 In height or depth, still first and last will reign  
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part  
 By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule  
 Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.  
 What sit we then projecting peace and war?  
 War hath determined us and foiled with loss  
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none  
 Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given  
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,  
 And stripes and arbitrary punishment  
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
 But, to our power, hostility and hate,  
 Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,

Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least  
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice  
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?  
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
 With dangerous expedition to invade  
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,  
 Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place  
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven  
 Err not)--another World, the happy seat  
 Of some new race, called Man, about this time  
 To be created like to us, though less  
 In power and excellence, but favoured more  
 Of him who rules above; so was his will  
 Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath  
 That shook Heaven's whole circumference confirmed.  
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould  
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power  
 And where their weakness: how attempted best,  
 By force of subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,  
 And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure  
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,  
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left  
 To their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,  
 Some advantageous act may be achieved  
 By sudden onset--either with Hell-fire  
 To waste his whole creation, or possess  
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,  
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,  
 Seduce them to our party, that their God  
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand  
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass  
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise  
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,  
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
 Their frail original, and faded bliss--  
 Faded so soon! Advise if this be worth  
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
 Hatching vain empires." Thus beelzebub  
 Pleaded his devilish counsel--first devised  
 By Satan, and in part proposed: for whence,  
 But from the author of all ill, could spring  
 So deep a malice, to confound the race  
 Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
 The great Creator? But their spite still serves  
 His glory to augment. The bold design  
 Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
 Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent  
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:--

"Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,  
Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye are,  
Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep  
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,  
Nearer our ancient seat--perhaps in view  
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms,  
And opportune excursion, we may chance  
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone  
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,  
Secure, and at the brightening orient beam  
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,  
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,  
Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send  
In search of this new World? whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet  
The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,  
Upborne with indefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy Isle? What strength, what art, can then  
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe,  
Through the strict senteries and stations thick  
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
All circumspection: and we now no less  
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send  
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared  
To second, or oppose, or undertake  
The perilous attempt. But all sat mute,  
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each  
In other's countenance read his own dismay,  
Astonished. None among the choice and prime  
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found  
So hardy as to proffer or accept,  
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till, at last,  
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised  
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride  
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:--

"O Progeny of Heaven! Empyreal Thrones!  
With reason hath deep silence and demur  
Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the way  
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.  
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,  
Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,  
Barred over us, prohibit all egress.  
These passed, if any pass, the void profound  
Of unessential Night receives him next,  
Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being  
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.

If thence he scape, into whatever world,  
 Or unknown region, what remains him less  
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?  
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,  
 And this imperial sovereignty, adorned  
 With splendour, armed with power, if aught proposed  
 And judged of public moment in the shape  
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter  
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,  
 Refusing to accept as great a share  
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due  
 Of hazard more as he above the rest  
 High honoured sits? Go, therefore, mighty Powers,  
 Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home,  
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
 The present misery, and render Hell  
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm  
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain  
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch  
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad  
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
 Deliverance for us all. This enterprise  
 None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose  
 The Monarch, and prevented all reply;  
 Prudent lest, from his resolution raised,  
 Others among the chief might offer now,  
 Certain to be refused, what erst they feared,  
 And, so refused, might in opinion stand  
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
 Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.  
 Their rising all at once was as the sound  
 Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend  
 With awful reverence prone, and as a God  
 Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.  
 Nor failed they to express how much they praised  
 That for the general safety he despised  
 His own: for neither do the Spirits damned  
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast  
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,  
 Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.  
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark  
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:  
 As, when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds  
 Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread  
 Heaven's cheerful face, the louring element  
 Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow or shower,  
 If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,  
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,

The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.  
 O shame to men! Devil with devil damned  
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree  
 Of creatures rational, though under hope  
 Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,  
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife  
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars  
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:  
 As if (which might induce us to accord)  
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,  
 That day and night for his destruction wait!  
 The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth  
 In order came the grand infernal Peers:  
 Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seemed  
 Alone th' antagonist of Heaven, nor less  
 Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,  
 And god-like imitated state: him round  
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed  
 With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.  
 Then of their session ended they bid cry  
 With trumpet's regal sound the great result:  
 Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,  
 By herald's voice explained; the hollow Abyss  
 Heard far adn wide, and all the host of Hell  
 With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.  
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised  
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers  
 Disband; and, wandering, each his several way  
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
 Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find  
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
 The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.  
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,  
 Upon the wing or in swift race contend,  
 As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;  
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal  
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form:  
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears  
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush  
 To battle in the clouds; before each van  
 Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears,  
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms  
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.  
 Others, with vast Typhoean rage, more fell,  
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air  
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar:--  
 As when Alcides, from Oechalia crowned  
 With conquest, felt th' envenomed robe, and tore  
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,  
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw



Into th' Euboic sea. Others, more mild,  
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
 With notes angelical to many a harp  
 Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall  
 By doom of battle, and complain that Fate  
 Free Virtue should enthral to Force or Chance.  
 Their song was partial; but the harmony  
 (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)  
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet  
 (For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense)  
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,  
 In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high  
 Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate--  
 Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
 And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.  
 Of good and evil much they argued then,  
 Of happiness and final misery,  
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame:  
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!--  
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm  
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast  
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,  
 On bold adventure to discover wide  
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps  
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend  
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks  
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge  
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams--  
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;  
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;  
 Cocytus, named of lamentation loud  
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton,  
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
 Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,  
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls  
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks  
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets--  
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent  
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms  
 Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land  
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems  
 Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,  
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog  
 Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,  
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air  
 Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire.  
 Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,  
 At certain revolutions all the damned

Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change  
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,  
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice  
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
 Immovable, infixed, and frozen round  
 Periods of time,--thence hurried back to fire.  
 They ferry over this Lethean sound  
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,  
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose  
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
 All in one moment, and so near the brink;  
 But Fate withstands, and, to oppose th' attempt,  
 Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards  
 The ford, and of itself the water flies  
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on  
 In confused march forlorn, th' adventurous bands,  
 With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,  
 Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found  
 No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale  
 They passed, and many a region dolorous,  
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery alp,  
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death--  
 A universe of death, which God by curse  
 Created evil, for evil only good;  
 Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,  
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
 Obominable, inutterable, and worse  
 Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,  
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.  
 Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,  
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,  
 Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell  
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes  
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;  
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars  
 Up to the fiery concave towering high.  
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried  
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring  
 Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood,  
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,  
 Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed  
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear  
 Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,  
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,  
 Three iron, three of adamant rock,  
 Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,  
 Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat  
 On either side a formidable Shape.

The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,  
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold,  
 Voluminous and vast--a serpent armed  
 With mortal sting. About her middle round  
 A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked  
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung  
 A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,  
 If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,  
 And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled  
 Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these  
 Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts  
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;  
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called  
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,  
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon  
 Eclipses at their charms. The other Shape--  
 If shape it might be called that shape had none  
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;  
 Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,  
 For each seemed either--black it stood as Night,  
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
 And shook a dreadful dart: what seemed his head  
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.  
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat  
 The monster moving onward came as fast  
 With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.  
 Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admired--  
 Admired, not feared (God and his Son except,  
 Created thing naught valued he nor shunned),  
 And with disdainful look thus first began:--  
 "Whence and what art thou, execrable Shape,  
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way  
 To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,  
 That be assured, without leave asked of thee.  
 Retire; or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,  
 Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."  
 To whom the Goblin, full of wrath, replied:--  
 "Art thou that traitor Angel? art thou he,  
 Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then  
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms  
 Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,  
 Conjured against the Highest--for which both thou  
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemned  
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain?  
 And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven  
 Hell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,  
 Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,  
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,  
 False fugitive; and to thy speed add wings,  
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue

Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart  
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,  
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold,  
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,  
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood  
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,  
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge  
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair  
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head  
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands  
No second stroke intend; and such a frown  
Each cast at th' other as when two black clouds,  
With heaven's artillery fraught, came rattling on  
Over the Caspian,--then stand front to front  
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow  
To join their dark encounter in mid-air.  
So frowned the mighty combatants that Hell  
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;  
For never but once more was wither like  
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds  
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat  
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,  
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.

"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,  
"Against thy only son? What fury, O son,  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart  
Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom?  
For him who sits above, and laughs the while  
At thee, ordained his drudge to execute  
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids--  
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest  
Forbore: then these to her Satan returned:--

"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,  
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
What it intends, till first I know of thee  
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,  
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st  
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son.  
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable than him and thee."

T' whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied:--  
"Hast thou forgot me, then; and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul?--once deemed so fair  
In Heaven, when at th' assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined  
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain  
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes and dizzy swum

In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,  
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,  
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,  
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized  
All th' host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid  
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign  
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,  
I pleased, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse--thee chiefly, who, full oft  
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,  
Becam'st enamoured; and such joy thou took'st  
With me in secret that my womb conceived  
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,  
And fields were fought in Heaven: wherein remained  
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe  
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout  
Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,  
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down  
Into this Deep; and in the general fall  
I also: at which time this powerful key  
Into my hands was given, with charge to keep  
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat  
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,  
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,  
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.  
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,  
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,  
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain  
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
Transformed: but he my inbred enemy  
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,  
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out Death!  
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed  
From all her caves, and back resounded Death!  
I fled; but he pursued (though more, it seems,  
Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifter far,  
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,  
And, in embraces forcible and foul  
Engendering with me, of that rape begot  
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry  
Surround me, as thou saw'st--hourly conceived  
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
To me; for, when they list, into the womb  
That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw  
My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth  
Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,  
That rest or intermission none I find.  
Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
Grim Death, my son and foe, who set them on,  
And me, his parent, would full soon devour

For want of other prey, but that he knows  
His end with mine involved, and knows that I  
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,  
Whenever that shall be: so Fate pronounced.  
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun  
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,  
Through tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,  
Save he who reigns above, none can resist."  
She finished; and the subtle Fiend his lore  
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth:--

"Dear daughter--since thou claim'st me for thy sire,  
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge  
Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys  
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change  
Befallen us unforeseen, unthought-of--know,  
I come no enemy, but to set free  
From out this dark and dismal house of pain  
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host  
Of Spirits that, in our just pretences armed,  
Fell with us from on high. From them I go  
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all  
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread  
Th' unfounded Deep, and through the void immense  
To search, with wandering quest, a place foretold  
Should be--and, by concurring signs, ere now  
Created vast and round--a place of bliss  
In the purlieu of Heaven; and therein placed  
A race of upstart creatures, to supply  
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,  
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,  
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught  
Than this more secret, now designed, I haste  
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,  
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death  
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed  
With odours. There ye shall be fed and filled  
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."

He ceased; for both seemed highly pleased, and Death  
Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear  
His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw  
Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced  
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:--

"The key of this infernal Pit, by due  
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,  
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
These adamant gates; against all force  
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.  
But what owe I to his commands above,  
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down

Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,  
 To sit in hateful office here confined,  
 Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly born--  
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,  
 With terrors and with clamours compassed round  
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?  
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou  
 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey  
 But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me soon  
 To that new world of light and bliss, among  
 The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign  
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,  
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
 And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,  
 Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,  
 Which, but herself, not all the Stygian Powers  
 Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns  
 Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar  
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease  
 Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,  
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,  
 Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
 Of Erebus. She opened; but to shut  
 Excelled her power: the gates wide open stood,  
 That with extended wings a bannered host,  
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through  
 With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;  
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth  
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.  
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear  
 The secrets of the hoary Deep--a dark  
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,  
 Without dimension; where length, breadth, and height,  
 And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night  
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
 For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,  
 Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring  
 Their embryon atoms: they around the flag  
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,  
 Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,  
 Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands  
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,  
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise  
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere  
 He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,  
 And by decision more embroils the fray  
 By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,

Chance governs all. Into this wild Abyss,  
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,  
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,  
 But all these in their pregnant causes mixed  
 Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,  
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
 His dark materials to create more worlds--  
 Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend  
 Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,  
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith  
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed  
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare  
 Great things with small) than when Bellona storms  
 With all her battering engines, bent to rase  
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame  
 Of Heaven were falling, and these elements  
 In mutiny had from her axle torn  
 The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans  
 He spread for flight, and, in the surging smoke  
 Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,  
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides  
 Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets  
 A vast vacuity. All unawares,  
 Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he drops  
 Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour  
 Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,  
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,  
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him  
 As many miles aloft. That fury stayed--  
 Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,  
 Nor good dry land--nigh foundered, on he fares,  
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.  
 As when a gryphon through the wilderness  
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,  
 Pursues the Arimaspan, who by stealth  
 Had from his wakeful custody purloined  
 The guarded gold; so eagerly the Fiend  
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,  
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.  
 At length a universal hubbub wild  
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,  
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear  
 With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies  
 Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power  
 Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies  
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne  
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread  
 Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned



Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his reign; and by them stood  
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name  
Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,  
And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,  
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan, turning boldly, thus:--"Ye Powers  
And Spirtis of this nethermost Abyss,  
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy  
With purpose to explore or to disturb  
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint  
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way  
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,  
Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek,  
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds  
Confine with Heaven; or, if some other place,  
From your dominion won, th' Ethereal King  
Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
I travel this profound. Direct my course:  
Directed, no mean recompense it brings  
To your behoof, if I that region lost,  
All usurpation thence expelled, reduce  
To her original darkness and your sway  
(Which is my present journey), and once more  
Erect the standard there of ancient Night.  
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge!"

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,  
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,  
Answered: "I know thee, stranger, who thou art-- \*\*\*  
That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.  
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host  
Fled not in silence through the frightened Deep,  
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates  
Poured out by millions her victorious bands,  
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here  
Keep residence; if all I can will serve  
That little which is left so to defend,  
Encroached on still through our intestine broils  
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first, Hell,  
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;  
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world  
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain  
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell!  
If that way be your walk, you have not far;  
So much the nearer danger. Go, and speed;  
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."

He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,  
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacrity and force renewed  
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,

Into the wild expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting elements, on all sides round  
Environed, wins his way; harder beset  
And more endangered than when Argo passed  
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks,  
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned  
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steered.  
So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;  
But, he once passed, soon after, when Man fell,  
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,  
Following his track (such was the will of Heaven)  
Paved after him a broad and beaten way  
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf  
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,  
From Hell continued, reaching th' utmost orb  
Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse  
With easy intercourse pass to and fro  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins  
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,  
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,  
With tumult less and with less hostile din;  
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,  
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds  
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold  
Far off th' empyreal Heaven, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermined square or round,  
With opal towers and battlements adorned  
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;  
And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,  
This pendent World, in bigness as a star  
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.  
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

### Book III

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven firstborn,  
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproached light

Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee  
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,  
 Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,  
 Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest \*\*\*  
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
 Won from the void and formless infinite.  
 Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd  
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,  
 With other notes than to the Orphean lyre  
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;  
 Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,  
 Though hard and rare: Thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,  
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more  
 Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt,  
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,  
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,  
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,  
 Thy sovran command, that Man should find grace;  
 Blind Thamyris, and blind Maeonides,  
 And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:  
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year  
 Seasons return; but not to me returns  
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
 Presented with a universal blank  
 Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,  
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light,  
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
 Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.  
 Now had the Almighty Father from above,

From the pure empyrean where he sits  
High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye  
His own works and their works at once to view:  
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven  
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd  
Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
The radiant image of his glory sat,  
His only son; on earth he first beheld  
Our two first parents, yet the only two  
Of mankind in the happy garden plac'd  
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,  
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd  
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there  
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night  
In the dun air sublime, and ready now  
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,  
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd  
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,  
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.  
Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,  
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.  
Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage  
Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds  
Prescrib'd no bars of Hell, nor all the chains  
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss  
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems  
On desperate revenge, that shall redound  
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,  
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way  
Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,  
Directly towards the new created world,  
And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay  
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,  
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,  
And easily transgress the sole command,  
Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall  
He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?  
Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of me  
All he could have; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all the ethereal Powers  
And Spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,  
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,  
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?  
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When will and reason (reason also is choice)

Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,  
 Not me? they therefore, as to right belong'd,  
 So were created, nor can justly accuse  
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,  
 As if predestination over-rul'd  
 Their will dispos'd by absolute decree  
 Or high foreknowledge they themselves decreed  
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,  
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.  
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,  
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,  
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all  
 Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so  
 I form'd them free: and free they must remain,  
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change  
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
 Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.  
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,  
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd  
 By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
 The other none: In mercy and justice both,  
 Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;  
 But Mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.  
 Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd  
 All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect  
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.  
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone  
 Substantially express'd; and in his face  
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,  
 Love without end, and without measure grace,  
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.  
 O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd  
 Thy sovran command, that Man should find grace;  
 , that Man should find grace;  
 For which both Heaven and earth shall high extol  
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound  
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne  
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.  
 For should Man finally be lost, should Man,  
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,  
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd  
 With his own folly? that be from thee far,  
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge  
 Of all things made, and judgest only right.  
 Or shall the Adversary thus obtain  
 His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfill  
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,  
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,

Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell  
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,  
 By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself  
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake  
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?  
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both  
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.  
 To whom the great Creator thus replied.  
 O son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,  
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone.  
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,  
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all  
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed;  
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will;  
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me  
 Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew  
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit; and enthrall'd  
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;  
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand  
 On even ground against his mortal foe;  
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail  
 His fallen condition is, and to me owe  
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.  
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,  
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:  
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd  
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes  
 The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace  
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,  
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts  
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.  
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,  
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,  
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.  
 And I will place within them as a guide,  
 My umpire Conscience; whom if they will hear,  
 Light after light, well us'd, they shall attain,  
 And to the end, persisting, safe arrive.  
 This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,  
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;  
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,  
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;  
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.  
 But yet all is not done; Man disobeying,  
 Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins  
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven,  
 Affecting God-head, and, so losing all,  
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,  
 But to destruction sacred and devote,  
 He, with his whole posterity, must die,  
 Die he or justice must; unless for him  
 Some other able, and as willing, pay

The rigid satisfaction, death for death.  
 Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?  
 Which of you will be mortal, to redeem  
 Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?  
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?  
 And silence was in Heaven: \$ on Man's behalf  
 He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire stood mute,  
 Patron or intercessour none appear'd,  
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw  
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.  
 And now without redemption all mankind  
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell  
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,  
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.  
 Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;  
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,  
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,  
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all  
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?  
 Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid  
 Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost;  
 Atonement for himself, or offering meet,  
 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring;  
 Behold me then: me for him, life for life  
 I offer: on me let thine anger fall;  
 Account me Man; I for his sake will leave  
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee  
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die  
 Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.  
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long  
 Lie vanquished. Thou hast given me to possess  
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live;  
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,  
 All that of me can die, yet, that debt paid,  
 \$ thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave  
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul  
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;  
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue  
 My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil.  
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop  
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed;  
 I through the ample air in triumph high  
 Shall lead Hell captive maugre Hell, and show  
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight  
 Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
 While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes;  
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave;  
 Then, with the multitude of my redeemed,  
 Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,  
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured

And reconcilment: wrath shall be no more  
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.  
His words here ended; but his meek aspect  
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love  
To mortal men, above which only shone  
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice  
Glad to be offered, he attends the will  
Of his great Father. Admiration seized  
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,  
Wondering; but soon th' Almighty thus replied.  
O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace  
Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou  
My sole complacence! Well thou know'st how dear  
To me are all my works; nor Man the least,  
Though last created, that for him I spare  
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,  
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.

Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,  
Their nature also to thy nature join;  
And be thyself Man among men on Earth,  
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,  
By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room  
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.  
As in him perish all men, so in thee,  
As from a second root, shall be restored  
As many as are restored, without thee none.  
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,  
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce  
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,  
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee  
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,  
Shall satisfy for Man, be judged and die,  
And dying rise, and rising with him raise  
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.  
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,  
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,  
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate  
So easily destroyed, and still destroys  
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.  
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume  
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.  
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss  
Equal to God, and equally enjoying  
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save  
A world from utter loss, and hast been found  
By merit more than birthright Son of God,  
Found worthiest to be so by being good,  
Far more than great or high; because in thee  
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;  
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt



With thee thy manhood also to this throne:  
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign  
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,  
 Anointed universal King; all power  
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume  
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,  
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce:  
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide  
 In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.  
 When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,  
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send  
 The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim  
 Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds,  
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead  
 Of all past ages, to the general doom  
 Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.  
 Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge  
 Bad Men and Angels; they, arraigned, shall sink  
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,  
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while  
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
 New Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,  
 And, after all their tribulations long,  
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
 With joy and peace triumphing, and fair truth.  
 Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,  
 For regal scepter then no more shall need,  
 God shall be all in all. But, all ye Gods,  
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies;  
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me.  
 No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all  
 The multitude of Angels, with a shout  
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung  
 With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled  
 The eternal regions: Lowly reverent  
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground  
 With solemn adoration down they cast  
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;  
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once  
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,  
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence  
 To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,  
 And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,  
 And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven  
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;  
 With these that never fade the Spirits elect  
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;  
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright  
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.  
 Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took,

Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side  
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet  
Of charming symphony they introduce  
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;  
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join  
Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.  
Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,  
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,  
Eternal King; the Author of all being,  
Fountain of light, thyself invisible  
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest  
The full blaze of thy beams, and, through a cloud  
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,  
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,  
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim  
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.  
Thee next they sang of all creation first,  
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,  
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud  
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,  
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee  
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides,  
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
He Heaven of Heavens and all the Powers therein  
By thee created; and by thee threw down  
The aspiring Dominations: Thou that day  
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,  
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook  
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks  
Thou drovest of warring Angels disarrayed.  
Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim  
Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,  
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,  
Not so on Man: Him through their malice fallen,  
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom  
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:  
No sooner did thy dear and only Son  
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man  
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,  
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife  
Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,  
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat  
Second to thee, offered himself to die  
For Man's offence. O unexampled love,  
Love no where to be found less than Divine!  
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of Men! Thy name  
Shall be the copious matter of my song  
Henceforth, and never shall my heart thy praise  
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.  
Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,  
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.

Mean while upon the firm opacous globe  
Of this round world, whose first convex divides  
The luminous inferiour orbs, enclosed  
From Chaos, and the inroad of Darkness old,  
Satan alighted walks: A globe far off  
It seemed, now seems a boundless continent  
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night  
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms  
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;  
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,  
Though distant far, some small reflection gains  
Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud:  
Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious field.  
As when a vultur on Imaus bred,  
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey  
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,  
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs  
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
But in his way lights on the barren plains  
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:  
So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend  
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey;  
Alone, for other creature in this place,  
Living or lifeless, to be found was none;  
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth  
Up hither like aerial vapours flew  
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin  
With vanity had filled the works of men:  
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things  
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,  
Or happiness in this or the other life;  
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits  
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,  
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find  
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;  
All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,  
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,  
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
Till final dissolution, wander here;  
Not in the neighbouring moon as some have dreamed;  
Those argent fields more likely habitants,  
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold  
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.  
Hither of ill-joined sons and daughters born  
First from the ancient world those giants came  
With many a vain exploit, though then renowned:  
The builders next of Babel on the plain  
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design,  
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:  
Others came single; he, who, to be deemed

A God, leaped fondly into Aetna flames,  
 Empedocles; and he, who, to enjoy  
 Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,  
 Cleombrotus; and many more too long,  
 Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars  
 White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.  
 Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek  
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven;  
 And they, who to be sure of Paradise,  
 Dying, put on the weeds of Dominick,  
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;  
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,  
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs  
 The trepidation talked, and that first moved;  
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems  
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot  
 Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo  
 A violent cross wind from either coast  
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry  
 Into the devious air: Then might ye see  
 Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost  
 And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,  
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,  
 The sport of winds: All these, upwhirled aloft,  
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off  
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since called  
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown  
 Long after; now unpeopled, and untrod.  
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he passed,  
 And long he wandered, till at last a gleam  
 Of dawning light turned thither-ward in haste  
 His travelled steps: far distant he descries  
 Ascending by degrees magnificent  
 Up to the wall of Heaven a structure high;  
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared  
 The work as of a kingly palace-gate,  
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold  
 Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems  
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth  
 By model, or by shading pencil, drawn.  
 These stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw  
 Angels ascending and descending, bands  
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled  
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz  
 Dreaming by night under the open sky  
 And waking cried, This is the gate of Heaven.  
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood  
 There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes  
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed  
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon  
 Who after came from earth, failing arrived  
 Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake

Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.  
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare  
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate  
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:  
 Direct against which opened from beneath,  
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,  
 A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,  
 Wider by far than that of after-times  
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,  
 Over the Promised Land to God so dear;  
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,  
 On high behests his angels to and fro  
 Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard  
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,  
 To Beersaba, where the Holy Land  
 Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;  
 So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were set  
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.  
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,  
 That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,  
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view  
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,  
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone  
 All might, and lost by break of cheerful dawn  
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,  
 Which to his eye discovers unaware  
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land  
 First seen, or some renowned metropolis  
 With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned,  
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:  
 Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,  
 The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,  
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.  
 Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood  
 So high above the circling canopy  
 Of night's extended shade,) from eastern point  
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears  
 Andromeda far off Atlantick seas  
 Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole  
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause  
 Down right into the world's first region throws  
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease  
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way  
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone  
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds;  
 Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,  
 Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,  
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,  
 Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there  
 He staid not to inquire: Above them all  
 The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,  
 Allured his eye; thither his course he bends

Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,  
 By center, or eccentric, hard to tell,  
 Or longitude,) where the great luminary  
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,  
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,  
 Dispenses light from far; they, as they move  
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute  
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp  
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turned  
 By his magnetick beam, that gently warms  
 The universe, and to each inward part  
 With gentle penetration, though unseen,  
 Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;  
 So wonderously was set his station bright.  
 There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps  
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb  
 Through his glazed optick tube yet never saw.  
 The place he found beyond expression bright,  
 Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;  
 Not all parts like, but all alike informed  
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;  
 If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;  
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,  
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone  
 In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides  
 Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,  
 That stone, or like to that which here below  
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,  
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind  
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound  
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,  
 Drained through a limbeck to his native form.  
 What wonder then if fields and regions here  
 Breathe forth Elixir pure, and rivers run  
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch  
 The arch-chemick sun, so far from us remote,  
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed,  
 Here in the dark so many precious things  
 Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?  
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
 Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;  
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,  
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon  
 Culminate from the equator, as they now  
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,  
 No where so clear, sharpened his visual ray  
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon  
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,  
 The same whom John saw also in the sun:  
 His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;  
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar

Circled his head, nor less his locks behind  
 Illustrious on his shoulders fledg with wings  
 Lay waving round; on some great charge employed  
 He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.  
 Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope  
 To find who might direct his wandering flight  
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,  
 His journey's end and our beginning woe.  
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
 Which else might work him danger or delay:  
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb  
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned:  
 Under a coronet his flowing hair  
 In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore  
 Of many a coloured plume, sprinkled with gold;  
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.  
 He drew not nigh unheard; the Angel bright,  
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,  
 Admonished by his ear, and straight was known  
 The Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seven  
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,  
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes  
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to the Earth  
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,  
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.  
 Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that stand  
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,  
 The first art wont his great authentick will  
 Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,  
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend;  
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree  
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye  
 To visit oft this new creation round;  
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know  
 All these his wonderous works, but chiefly Man,  
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom  
 All these his works so wonderous he ordained,  
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim  
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell  
 In which of all these shining orbs hath Man  
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,  
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;  
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze  
 Or open admiration him behold,  
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowed  
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured;  
 That both in him and all things, as is meet,  
 The universal Maker we may praise;  
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes

To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,  
 Created this new happy race of Men  
 To serve him better: Wise are all his ways.  
 So spake the false dissembler unperceived;  
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern  
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth:  
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill  
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguiled  
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held  
 The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;  
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,  
 In his uprightness, answer thus returned.  
 Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know  
 The works of God, thereby to glorify  
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess  
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither  
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,  
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,  
 Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:  
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance always with delight;  
 But what created mind can comprehend  
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite  
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?  
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,  
 This world's material mould, came to a heap:  
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar  
 Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;  
 Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,  
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:  
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then  
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;  
 And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven  
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
 That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars  
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
 Each had his place appointed, each his course;  
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.  
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side  
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;  
 That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light  
 His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,  
 Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon  
 So call that opposite fair star) her aid  
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round  
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heaven,



With borrowed light her countenance triform  
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the Earth,  
And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
That spot, to which I point, is Paradise,  
Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.  
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.  
Thus said, he turned; and Satan, bowing low,  
As to superiour Spirits is wont in Heaven,  
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,  
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,  
Down from the ecliptick, sped with hoped success,  
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel;  
Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

#### Book IV

O, for that warning voice, which he, who saw  
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
Came furious down to be revenged on men,  
Woe to the inhabitants on earth! that now,  
While time was, our first parents had been warned  
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,  
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: For now  
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,  
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,  
To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss  
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:  
Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold  
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,  
Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth  
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,  
And like a devilish engine back recoils  
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract  
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir  
The Hell within him; for within him Hell  
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell  
One step, no more than from himself, can fly  
By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair,  
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory  
Of what he was, what is, and what must be  
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.  
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view  
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;  
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun,  
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:  
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.  
O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,  
Lookest from thy sole dominion like the God

Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars  
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,  
Of Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;  
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down  
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King:  
Ah, wherefore! he deserved no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.  
What could be less than to afford him praise,  
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,  
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,  
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
I scorned subjection, and thought one step higher  
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
The debt immense of endless gratitude,  
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,  
Forgetful what from him I still received,  
And understood not that a grateful mind  
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
Indebted and discharged; what burden then  
O, had his powerful destiny ordained  
Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood  
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised  
Ambition! Yet why not some other Power  
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,  
Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great  
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
Or from without, to all temptations armed.  
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?  
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,  
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,  
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will  
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
Me miserable! which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?  
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
O, then, at last relent: Is there no place  
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?  
None left but by submission; and that word  
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced  
With other promises and other vaunts  
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue

The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know  
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,  
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,  
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.  
 With diadem and scepter high advanced,  
 The lower still I fall, only supreme  
 In misery: Such joy ambition finds.  
 But say I could repent, and could obtain,  
 By act of grace, my former state; how soon  
 Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay  
 What feigned submission swore? Ease would recant  
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.  
 For never can true reconcilment grow,  
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse  
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear  
 Short intermission bought with double smart.  
 This knows my Punisher; therefore as far  
 From granting he, as I from begging, peace;  
 All hope excluded thus, behold, in stead  
 Mankind created, and for him this world.  
 So farewell, hope; and with hope farewell, fear;  
 Farewell, remorse! all good to me is lost;  
 Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least  
 Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,  
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;  
 As Man ere long, and this new world, shall know.  
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face  
 Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;  
 Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed  
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.  
 For heavenly minds from such distempers foul  
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,  
 Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,  
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first  
 That practised falsehood under saintly show,  
 Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:  
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive  
 Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down  
 The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount  
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall  
 Spirit of happy sort; his gestures fierce  
 He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,  
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.  
 So on he fares, and to the border comes  
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,  
 As with a rural mound, the champaign head  
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
 Access denied; and overhead upgrew  
 Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,

A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend,  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
The verdurous wall of Paradise upsprung;

Which to our general sire gave prospect large  
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.  
And higher than that wall a circling row  
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,  
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,  
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed:  
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams  
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,  
When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed  
That landskip: And of pure now purer air  
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires  
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive  
All sadness but despair: Now gentle gales,  
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense  
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who fail  
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
Mozambick, off at sea north-east winds blow  
Sabeian odours from the spicy shore  
Of Araby the blest; with such delay  
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league  
Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:  
So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend,  
Who came their bane; though with them better pleased  
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume  
That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse  
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent  
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.  
Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill  
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;  
But further way found none, so thick entwined,  
As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
All path of man or beast that passed that way.  
One gate there only was, and that looked east  
On the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,  
Due entrance he disdained; and, in contempt,  
At one flight bound high over-leaped all bound  
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:  
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash  
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,

Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,  
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:  
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;  
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.  
 Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,  
 The middle tree and highest there that grew,  
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life  
 Thereby regained, but sat devising death  
 To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought  
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used  
 For prospect, what well used had been the pledge  
 Of immortality. So little knows  
 Any, but God alone, to value right  
 The good before him, but perverts best things  
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.  
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views,  
 To all delight of human sense exposed,  
 In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,  
 A Heaven on Earth: For blissful Paradise  
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east  
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line  
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers  
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
 Of where the sons of Eden long before  
 Dwelt in Telassar: In this pleasant soil  
 His far more pleasant garden God ordained;  
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow  
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,  
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit  
 Of vegetable gold; and next to life,  
 Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,  
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.  
 Southward through Eden went a river large,  
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
 Passed underneath ingulfed; for God had thrown  
 That mountain as his garden-mould high raised  
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins  
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,  
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
 Watered the garden; thence united fell  
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,  
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,  
 And now, divided into four main streams,  
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm  
 And country, whereof here needs no account;  
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,  
 How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,  
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
 With mazy errour under pendant shades  
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed  
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art

In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,  
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote  
The open field, and where the unpierced shade  
Imbrowned the noontide bowers: Thus was this place  
A happy rural seat of various view;  
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,  
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,  
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,  
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:  
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,  
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap  
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,  
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:  
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall  
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,  
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned  
Her crystal mirrour holds, unite their streams.  
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,  
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field  
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis  
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain  
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove  
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired  
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise  
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle  
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,  
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,  
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son  
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;  
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,  
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed  
True Paradise under the Ethiop line  
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,  
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend  
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind  
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange  
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
Godlike erect, with native honour clad  
In naked majesty seemed lords of all:  
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,

(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,) Whence true authority in men; though both Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed; For contemplation he and valour formed; For softness she and sweet attractive grace; He for God only, she for God in him: His fair large front and eye sublime declared Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks Round from his parted forelock manly hung Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad: She, as a veil, down to the slender waist Her unadorned golden tresses wore Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied Subjection, but required with gentle sway, And by her yielded, by him best received, Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay. Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed; Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame Of nature's works, honour dishonourable, Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure, And banished from man's life his happiest life, Simplicity and spotless innocence! So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill: So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair, That ever since in love's embraces met; Adam the goodliest man of men since born His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve. Under a tuft of shade that on a green Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side They sat them down; and, after no more toil Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell, Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers: The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream; Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league, Alone as they. About them frisking played All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase In wood or wilderness, forest or den; Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards, Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,

To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed  
 His kith and kin; close the serpent sly,  
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine  
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile  
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass  
 Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,  
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,  
 Declined, was hasting now with prone career  
 To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale  
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:  
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,  
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad.  
 O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!  
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced  
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,  
 Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright  
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue  
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace  
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.  
 Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh  
 Your change approaches, when all these delights  
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;  
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;  
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured  
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven  
 Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe  
 As now is entered; yet no purposed foe  
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
 Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,  
 And mutual amity, so strait, so close,  
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me  
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,  
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such  
 Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,  
 Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold,  
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,  
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,  
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive  
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place,  
 Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge  
 On you who wrong me not for him who wronged.  
 And should I at your harmless innocence  
 Melt, as I do, yet publick reason just,  
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,  
 By conquering this new world, compels me now  
 To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.  
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,  
 The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.  
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree  
 Down he alights among the sportful herd  
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,



Now other, as their shape served best his end  
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,  
 To mark what of their state he more might learn,  
 By word or action marked. About them round  
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;  
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied  
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
 Straight couches close, then, rising, changes oft  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
 Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,  
 Griped in each paw: when, Adam first of men  
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,  
 Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.  
 Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,  
 Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power  
 That made us, and for us this ample world,  
 Be infinitely good, and of his good  
 As liberal and free as infinite;  
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here  
 In all this happiness, who at his hand  
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform  
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires  
 From us no other service than to keep  
 This one, this easy charge, of all the trees  
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit  
 So various, not to taste that only tree  
 Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;  
 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,  
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowest  
 God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,  
 The only sign of our obedience left,  
 Among so many signs of power and rule  
 Conferred upon us, and dominion given  
 Over all other creatures that possess  
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard  
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy  
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
 Unlimited of manifold delights:  
 But let us ever praise him, and extol  
 His bounty, following our delightful task,  
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,  
 Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.  
 To whom thus Eve replied. O thou for whom  
 And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy flesh,  
 And without whom am to no end, my guide  
 And head! what thou hast said is just and right.  
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,  
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy  
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
 Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou  
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.  
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep

I first awaked, and found myself reposed  
 Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where  
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread  
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved  
 Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went  
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down  
 On the green bank, to look into the clear  
 Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite  
 A shape within the watery gleam appeared,  
 Bending to look on me: I started back,  
 It started back; but pleased I soon returned,  
 Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathy and love: There I had fixed  
 Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,  
 Had not a voice thus warned me; 'What thou seest,  
 'What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;  
 'With thee it came and goes: but follow me,  
 'And I will bring thee where no shadow stays  
 'Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he  
 'Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy  
 'Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear  
 'Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called  
 'Mother of human race.' What could I do,  
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,  
 Under a platane; yet methought less fair,  
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
 Than that smooth watery image: Back I turned;  
 Thou following cryedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve;  
 'Whom flyest thou? whom thou flyest, of him thou art,  
 'His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
 'Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,  
 'Substantial life, to have thee by my side  
 'Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
 'Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 'My other half:' With that thy gentle hand  
 Seised mine: I yielded; and from that time see  
 How beauty is excelled by manly grace,  
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.  
 So spake our general mother, and with eyes  
 Of conjugal attraction unreproved,  
 And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned  
 On our first father; half her swelling breast  
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold  
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight  
 Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,  
 Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter  
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds  
 That shed Mayflowers; and pressed her matron lip

With kisses pure: Aside the Devil turned  
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign  
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained.  
Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,  
Imparadised in one another's arms,  
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill  
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,  
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
Among our other torments not the least,  
Still unfulfilled with pain of longing pines.  
Yet let me not forget what I have gained  
From their own mouths: All is not theirs, it seems;  
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,  
Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidden  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?  
Can it be death? And do they only stand  
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,  
The proof of their obedience and their faith?  
O fair foundation laid whereon to build  
Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds  
With more desire to know, and to reject  
Envious commands, invented with design  
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt  
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,  
They taste and die: What likelier can ensue  
But first with narrow search I must walk round  
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;  
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet  
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain side,  
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw  
What further would be learned. Live while ye may,  
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed!  
So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,  
But with sly circumspection, and began  
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam  
Mean while in utmost longitude, where Heaven  
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun  
Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
Against the eastern gate of Paradise  
Levelled his evening rays: It was a rock  
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,  
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent  
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;  
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung  
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.  
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,  
Chief of the angelick guards, awaiting night;  
About him exercised heroick games  
The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand  
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,

Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even  
 On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star  
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired  
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner  
 From what point of his compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds: He thus began in haste.  
 Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given  
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place  
 No evil thing approach or enter in.  
 This day at highth of noon came to my sphere  
 A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know  
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,  
 God's latest image: I described his way  
 Bent all on speed, and marked his aery gait;  
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
 Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks  
 Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:  
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
 Lost sight of him: One of the banished crew,  
 I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise  
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find.  
 To whom the winged warrior thus returned.  
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst,  
 See far and wide: In at this gate none pass  
 The vigilance here placed, but such as come  
 Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour  
 No creature thence: If Spirit of other sort,  
 So minded, have o'er-leaped these earthly bounds  
 On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude  
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.  
 But if within the circuit of these walks,  
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
 Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know.  
 So promised he; and Uriel to his charge  
 Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised  
 Bore him slope downward to the sun now fallen  
 Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,  
 Incredible how swift, had thither rolled  
 Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,  
 By shorter flight to the east, had left him there  
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold  
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.  
 Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;  
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
 Silence was pleased: Now glowed the firmament  
 With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led

The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.  
When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Consort, the hour  
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,  
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set  
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men  
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,  
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines  
Our eye-lids: Other creatures all day long  
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;  
Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;  
While other animals unactive range,  
And of their doings God takes no account.  
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east  
With first approach of light, we must be risen,  
And at our pleasant labour, to reform  
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,  
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,  
That mock our scant manuring, and require  
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:  
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,  
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,  
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;  
Mean while, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.  
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned  
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst  
Unargued I obey: So God ordains;  
God is thy law, thou mine: To know no more  
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.  
With thee conversing I forget all time;  
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.  
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,  
When first on this delightful land he spreads  
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,  
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,  
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,  
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:  
But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends  
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun  
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,  
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,  
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.  
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom

This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?  
 To whom our general ancestor replied.  
 Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve,  
 These have their course to finish round the earth,  
 By morrow evening, and from land to land  
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,  
 Ministring light prepared, they set and rise;  
 Lest total Darkness should by night regain  
 Her old possession, and extinguish life  
 In Nature and all things; which these soft fires  
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat  
 Of various influence foment and warm,  
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down  
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow  
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive  
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.  
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,  
 Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,  
 That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:  
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
 Both day and night: How often from the steep  
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard  
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
 Sole, or responsive each to others note,  
 Singing their great Creator? oft in bands  
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,  
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds  
 In full harmonick number joined, their songs  
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.  
 Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed  
 On to their blissful bower: it was a place  
 Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed  
 All things to Man's delightful use; the roof  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,  
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,  
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,  
 Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaick; underfoot the violet,  
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
 Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone  
 Of costliest emblem: Other creature here,  
 Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,  
 Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower  
 More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,  
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph  
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,  
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,

Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed;  
And heavenly quires the hymenaeal sung,  
What day the genial Angel to our sire  
Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,  
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods  
Endowed with all their gifts, and O! too like  
In sad event, when to the unwiser son  
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared  
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged  
On him who had stole Jove's authentick fire.  
Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,  
Both turned, and under open sky adored  
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,  
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,  
And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,  
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,  
Which we, in our appointed work employed,  
Have finished, happy in our mutual help  
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss  
Ordained by thee; and this delicious place  
For us too large, where thy abundance wants  
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
But thou hast promised from us two a race  
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.  
This said unanimous, and other rites  
Observing none, but adoration pure  
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower  
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off  
These troublesome disguises which we wear,  
Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,  
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
Mysterious of connubial love refused:  
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk  
Of purity, and place, and innocence,  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.  
Our Maker bids encrease; who bids abstain  
But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?  
Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source  
Of human offspring, sole propriety  
In Paradise of all things common else!  
By thee adulterous Lust was driven from men  
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee  
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.  
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,  
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,  
Perpetual fountain of domestick sweets,  
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,

Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.  
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights  
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile  
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,  
 Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,  
 Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,  
 Or serenate, which the starved lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.  
 These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,  
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof  
 Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,  
 Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek  
 No happier state, and know to know no more.  
 Now had night measured with her shadowy cone  
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,  
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim,  
 Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed  
 To their night watches in warlike parade;  
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.  
 Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south  
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;  
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,  
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.  
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called  
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.  
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed  
 Search through this garden, leave unsearched no nook;  
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,  
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.  
 This evening from the sun's decline arrived,  
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped  
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:  
 Such, where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.  
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,  
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct  
 In search of whom they sought: Him there they found  
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,  
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
 Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;  
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise  
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise  
 At least distempered, discontented thoughts,  
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
 Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.  
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear  
 Touched lightly; for no falshood can endure  
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
 Of force to its own likeness: Up he starts



Discovered and surprised. As when a spark  
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid  
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store  
 Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,  
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;  
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.  
 Back stept those two fair Angels, half amazed  
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;  
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.  
 Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell  
 Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,  
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,  
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?  
 Know ye not then said Satan, filled with scorn,  
 Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate  
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:  
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,  
 The lowest of your throng; or, if ye know,  
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin  
 Your message, like to end as much in vain?  
 To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.  
 Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,  
 Or undiminished brightness to be known,  
 As when thou stoodest in Heaven upright and pure;  
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,  
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now  
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.  
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account  
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep  
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.  
 So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,  
 Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
 Invincible: Abashed the Devil stood,  
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined  
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observed  
 His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed  
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,  
 Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,  
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,  
 Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,  
 Will save us trial what the least can do  
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.  
 The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;  
 But, like a proud steed reined, went haughty on,  
 Champing his iron curb: To strive or fly  
 He held it vain; awe from above had quelled  
 His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh  
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards  
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,  
 A waiting next command. To whom their Chief,  
 Gabriel, from the front thus called aloud.

O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet  
 Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern  
 Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;  
 And with them comes a third of regal port,  
 But faded splendour wan; who by his gait  
 And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,  
 Not likely to part hence without contest;  
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.  
 He scarce had ended, when those two approached,  
 And brief related whom they brought, where found,  
 How busied, in what form and posture couched.  
 To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.  
 Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed  
 To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge  
 Of others, who approve not to transgress  
 By thy example, but have power and right  
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
 Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those  
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss!  
 To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.  
 Gabriel? thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,  
 And such I held thee; but this question asked  
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain!  
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,  
 Though thither doomed! Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt  
 And boldly venture to whatever place  
 Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change  
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense  
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;  
 To thee no reason, who knowest only good,  
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object  
 His will who bounds us! Let him surer bar  
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay  
 In that dark durance: Thus much what was asked.  
 The rest is true, they found me where they say;  
 But that implies not violence or harm.  
 Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,  
 Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.  
 O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise  
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,  
 And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,  
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither  
 Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;  
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain  
 However, and to 'scape his punishment!  
 So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,  
 Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight  
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain  
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.  
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee

Came not all hell broke loose? or thou than they  
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous Chief!  
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged  
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.  
 To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern.  
 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,  
 Insulting Angel! well thou knowest I stood  
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid  
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,  
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.  
 But still thy words at random, as before,  
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves  
 From hard assays and ill successes past  
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all  
 Through ways of danger by himself untried:  
 I, therefore, I alone first undertook  
 To wing the desolate abyss, and spy  
 This new created world, whereof in Hell  
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find  
 Better abode, and my afflicted Powers  
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air;  
 Though for possession put to try once more  
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;  
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord  
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,  
 And practised distances to cringe, not fight,  
 To whom the warriour Angel soon replied.  
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first  
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,  
 Argues no leader but a liar traced,  
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head.  
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve  
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?  
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servily adored  
 Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope  
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
 But mark what I arreed thee now, Avant;  
 Fly neither whence thou fledst! If from this hour  
 Within these hallowed limits thou appear,  
 Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,  
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn  
 The facile gates of Hell too slightly barred.  
 So threatened he; but Satan to no threats  
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied.  
 Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,

Proud limitary Cherub! but ere then  
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King  
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,  
 Us'd to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels  
 In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved.  
 While thus he spake, the angelick squadron bright  
 Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns  
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round  
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field  
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,  
 Left on the threshing floor his hopeless sheaves  
 Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,  
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:  
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest  
 Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp  
 What seemed both spear and shield: Now dreadful deeds  
 Might have ensued, nor only Paradise  
 In this commotion, but the starry cope  
 Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements  
 At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn  
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon  
 The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,  
 Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen  
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,  
 Wherein all things created first he weighed,  
 The pendulous round earth with balanced air  
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
 Battles and realms: In these he put two weights,  
 The sequel each of parting and of fight:  
 The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam,  
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.  
 Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest mine;  
 Neither our own, but given: What folly then  
 To boast what arms can do? since thine no more  
 Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now  
 To trample thee as mire: For proof look up,  
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign;  
 Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,  
 If thou resist. The Fiend looked up, and knew  
 His mounted scale aloft: Nor more; but fled  
 Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

## Book V

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime

Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,  
 When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep  
 Was airy-light, from pure digestion bred,  
 And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound  
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
 Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song  
 Of birds on every bough; so much the more  
 His wonder was to find unawakened Eve  
 With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,  
 As through unquiet rest: He, on his side  
 Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love  
 Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld  
 Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,  
 Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice  
 Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
 Her hand soft touching, whispered thus. Awake,  
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,  
 Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!  
 Awake: The morning shines, and the fresh field  
 Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
 Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,  
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,  
 How nature paints her colours, how the bee  
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.  
 Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye  
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.  
 O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,  
 My glory, my perfection! glad I see  
 Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night  
 (Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,  
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,  
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,  
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind  
 Knew never till this irksome night: Methought,  
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk  
 With gentle voice; I thought it thine: It said,  
 'Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
 'The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
 'To the night-warbling bird, that now awake  
 'Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns  
 'Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light  
 'Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,  
 'If none regard; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,  
 'Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?  
 'In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
 'Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.'  
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;  
 To find thee I directed then my walk;  
 And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways  
 That brought me on a sudden to the tree  
 Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,  
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day:

And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood  
 One shaped and winged like one of those from Heaven  
 By us oft seen; his dewy locks distilled  
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;  
 And 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,  
 'Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,  
 'Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despised?  
 'Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
 'Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
 'Longer thy offered good; why else set here?  
 This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm  
 He plucked, he tasted; me damp horror chilled  
 At such bold words vouched with a deed so bold:  
 But he thus, overjoyed; 'O fruit divine,  
 'Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,  
 'Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit  
 'For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:  
 'And why not Gods of Men; since good, the more  
 'Communicated, more abundant grows,  
 'The author not impaired, but honoured more?  
 'Here, happy creature, fair angelick Eve!  
 'Partake thou also; happy though thou art,  
 'Happier thou mayest be, worthier canst not be:  
 'Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods  
 'Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confined,  
 'But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes  
 'Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see  
 'What life the Gods live there, and such live thou!'

So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,  
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part  
 Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell  
 So quickened appetite, that I, methought,  
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds  
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld  
 The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide  
 And various: Wondering at my flight and change  
 To this high exaltation; suddenly  
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,  
 And fell asleep; but O, how glad I waked  
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night  
 Related, and thus Adam answered sad.  
 Best image of myself, and dearer half,  
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
 Affects me equally; nor can I like  
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;  
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,  
 Created pure. But know that in the soul  
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve  
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next  
 Her office holds; of all external things  
 Which the five watchful senses represent,  
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes,

Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames  
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call  
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
 Into her private cell, when nature rests.  
 Oft in her absence mimick Fancy wakes  
 To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,  
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;  
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.  
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find  
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,  
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
 Evil into the mind of God or Man  
 May come and go, so unreprieved, and leave  
 No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope  
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,  
 Waking thou never will consent to do.  
 Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks,  
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene,  
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;  
 And let us to our fresh employments rise  
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers  
 That open now their choisest bosomed smells,  
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store.  
 So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheered;  
 But silently a gentle tear let fall  
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;  
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,  
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell  
 Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse  
 And pious awe, that feared to have offended.  
 So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.  
 But first, from under shady arborous roof  
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight  
 Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce up-risen,  
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,  
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,  
 Discovering in wide landskip all the east  
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,  
 Lowly they bowed adoring, and began  
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid  
 In various style; for neither various style  
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung  
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence  
 Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,  
 More tuneable than needed lute or harp  
 To add more sweetness; and they thus began.  
 These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,  
 Almighty! Thine this universal frame,  
 Thus wonderous fair; Thyself how wonderous then!  
 Unspeakable, who sitst above these heavens  
 To us invisible, or dimly seen

In these thy lowest works; yet these declare  
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.  
 Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,  
 Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs  
 And choral symphonies, day without night,  
 Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven  
 On Earth join all ye Creatures to extol  
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.  
 Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,  
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crownest the smiling morn  
 With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,  
 While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.  
 Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,  
 Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climbest,  
 And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fallest.  
 Moon, that now meetest the orient sun, now flyest,  
 With the fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies;  
 And ye five other wandering Fires, that move  
 In mystick dance not without song, resound  
 His praise, who out of darkness called up light.  
 Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth  
 Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run  
 Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix  
 And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change  
 Vary to our great Maker still new praise.  
 Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise  
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,  
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
 In honour to the world's great Author rise;  
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,  
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,  
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
 His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,  
 Breathe soft or loud; and, wave your tops, ye Pines,  
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.  
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,  
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
 Join voices, all ye living Souls: Ye Birds,  
 That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,  
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.  
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk  
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;  
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,  
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,  
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.  
 Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still  
 To give us only good; and if the night  
 Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,  
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark!  
 So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts



Firm peace recovered soon, and wanted calm.  
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,  
 Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row  
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reached too far  
 Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check  
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine  
 To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines  
 Her marriageable arms, and with him brings  
 Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn  
 His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld  
 With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called  
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned  
 To travel with Tobias, and secured  
 His marriage with the seventimes-wedded maid.  
 Raphael, said he, thou hearest what stir on Earth  
 Satan, from Hell 'scaped through the darksome gulf,  
 Hath raised in Paradise; and how disturbed  
 This night the human pair; how he designs  
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.  
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend  
 Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade  
 Thou findest him from the heat of noon retired,  
 To respite his day-labour with repast,  
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,  
 As may advise him of his happy state,  
 Happiness in his power left free to will,  
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,  
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware  
 He swerve not, too secure: Tell him withal  
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,  
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now  
 The fall of others from like state of bliss;  
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;  
 But by deceit and lies: This let him know,  
 Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend  
 Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned.  
 So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfilled  
 All justice: Nor delayed the winged Saint  
 After his charge received; but from among  
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood  
 Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up springing light,  
 Flew through the midst of Heaven; the angelick quires,  
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
 Through all the empyreal road; till, at the gate  
 Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide  
 On golden hinges turning, as by work  
 Divine the sovran Architect had framed.  
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
 Star interposed, however small he sees,  
 Not unconformed to other shining globes,  
 Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned  
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass

Of Galileo, less assured, observes  
 Imagined lands and regions in the moon:  
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades  
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens  
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky  
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing  
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan  
 Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar  
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems  
 A phoenix, gazed by all as that sole bird,  
 When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's  
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.  
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise  
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns  
 A Seraph winged: Six wings he wore, to shade  
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad  
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast  
 With regal ornament; the middle pair  
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold  
 And colours dipt in Heaven; the third his feet  
 Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,  
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,  
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled  
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands  
 Of Angels under watch; and to his state,  
 And to his message high, in honour rise;  
 For on some message high they guessed him bound.  
 Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come  
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,  
 And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;  
 A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here  
 Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will  
 Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,  
 Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.  
 Him through the spicy forest onward come  
 Adam discerned, as in the door he sat  
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun  
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm  
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:  
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepared  
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please  
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
 Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,  
 Berry or grape: To whom thus Adam called.  
 Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold  
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape  
 Comes this way moving; seems another morn  
 Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from Heaven  
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe  
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,

And, what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour  
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive  
 Our heavenly stranger: Well we may afford  
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow  
 From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies  
 Her fertile growth, and by disburthening grows  
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.  
 To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallowed mould,  
 Of God inspired! small store will serve, where store,  
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;  
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains  
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:  
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,  
 Each plant and juciest gourd, will pluck such choice  
 To entertain our Angel-guest, as he  
 Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth  
 God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.  
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste  
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent  
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,  
 What order, so contrived as not to mix  
 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring  
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;  
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk  
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields  
 In India East or West, or middle shore  
 In Pontus or the Punick coast, or where  
 Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat  
 Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,  
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board  
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape  
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths  
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed  
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold  
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground  
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.  
 Mean while our primitive great sire, to meet  
 His God-like guest, walks forth, without more train  
 Accompanied than with his own complete  
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,  
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits  
 On princes, when their rich retinue long  
 Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,  
 Dazzles the croud, and sets them all agape.  
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,  
 Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,  
 As to a superiour nature bowing low,  
 Thus said. Native of Heaven, for other place  
 None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain;  
 Since, by descending from the thrones above,  
 Those happy places thou hast deigned a while  
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us

Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess  
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower  
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears  
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline.  
 Whom thus the angelick Virtue answered mild.  
 Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such  
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,  
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,  
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower  
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,  
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge  
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled,  
 With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells; but Eve,  
 Undecked save with herself, more lovely fair  
 Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feigned  
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,  
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil  
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm  
 Altered her cheek. On whom the Angel Hail  
 Bestowed, the holy salutation used  
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.  
 Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb  
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,  
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God  
 Have heaped this table!--Raised of grassy turf  
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,  
 And on her ample square from side to side  
 All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here  
 Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;  
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began  
 Our author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste  
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom  
 All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,  
 To us for food and for delight hath caused  
 The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps  
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,  
 That one celestial Father gives to all.  
 To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives  
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to Man in part  
 Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found  
 No ingrateful food: And food alike those pure  
 Intelligential substances require,  
 As doth your rational; and both contain  
 Within them every lower faculty  
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,  
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
 For know, whatever was created, needs  
 To be sustained and fed: Of elements  
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,  
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires

Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;  
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged  
 Vapours not yet into her substance turned.  
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale  
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.  
 The sun that light imparts to all, receives  
 From all his alimantal recompence  
 In humid exhalations, and at even  
 Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees  
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines  
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn  
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground  
 Covered with pearly grain: Yet God hath here  
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,  
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste  
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,  
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly  
 The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss  
 Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch  
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat  
 To transubstantiate: What redounds, transpires  
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire  
 Of sooty coal the empirick alchemist  
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,  
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,  
 As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve  
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups  
 With pleasant liquours crowned: O innocence  
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been  
 Enamoured at that sight; but in those hearts  
 Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy  
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell.  
 Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,  
 Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose  
 In Adam, not to let the occasion pass  
 Given him by this great conference to know  
 Of things above his world, and of their being  
 Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw  
 Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,  
 Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far  
 Exceeded human; and his wary speech  
 Thus to the empyreal minister he framed.  
 Inhabitant with God, now know I well  
 Thy favour, in this honour done to Man;  
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed  
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,  
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
 At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare  
 To whom the winged Hierarch replied.  
 O Adam, One Almighty is, from whom

All things proceed, and up to him return,  
 If not depraved from good, created all  
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
 Endued with various forms, various degrees  
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;  
 But more refined, more spiritous, and pure,  
 As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending  
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,  
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root  
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower  
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,  
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,  
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,  
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul  
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
 Discursive, or intuitive; discourse  
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,  
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.  
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good  
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you  
 To proper substance. Time may come, when Men  
 With Angels may participate, and find  
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;  
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
 Improved by tract of time, and, winged, ascend  
 Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,  
 Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;  
 If ye be found obedient, and retain  
 Unalterably firm his love entire,  
 Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy  
 Your fill what happiness this happy state  
 Can comprehend, incapable of more.  
 To whom the patriarch of mankind replied.  
 O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,  
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set  
 From center to circumference; whereon,  
 In contemplation of created things,  
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,  
 What meant that caution joined, If ye be found  
 Obedient? Can we want obedience then  
 To him, or possibly his love desert,  
 Who formed us from the dust and placed us here  
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss  
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?  
 To whom the Angel. Son of Heaven and Earth,  
 Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God;  
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,

That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.  
 This was that caution given thee; be advised.  
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;  
 And good he made thee, but to persevere  
 He left it in thy power; ordained thy will  
 By nature free, not over-ruled by fate  
 Inextricable, or strict necessity:  
 Our voluntary service he requires,  
 Not our necessitated; such with him  
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how  
 Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve  
 Willing or no, who will but what they must  
 By destiny, and can no other choose?  
 Myself, and all the angelick host, that stand  
 In sight of God, enthroned, our happy state  
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;  
 On other surety none: Freely we serve,  
 Because we freely love, as in our will  
 To love or not; in this we stand or fall:  
 And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,  
 And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall  
 From what high state of bliss, into what woe!  
 To whom our great progenitor. Thy words  
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear,  
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when  
 Cherubick songs by night from neighbouring hills  
 Aereal musick send: Nor knew I not  
 To be both will and deed created free;  
 Yet that we never shall forget to love  
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command  
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
 Assured me, and still assure: Though what thou tellest  
 Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me move,  
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,  
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,  
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;  
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun  
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins  
 His other half in the great zone of Heaven.  
 Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,  
 After short pause assenting, thus began.  
 High matter thou enjoimest me, O prime of men,  
 Sad task and hard: For how shall I relate  
 To human sense the invisible exploits  
 Of warring Spirits? how, without remorse,  
 The ruin of so many glorious once  
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold  
 The secrets of another world, perhaps  
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good  
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach  
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,  
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,

As may express them best; though what if Earth  
 Be but a shadow of Heaven, and things therein  
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?  
 As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild  
 Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where Earth now rests  
 Upon her center poised; when on a day  
 (For time, though in eternity, applied  
 To motion, measures all things durable  
 By present, past, and future,) on such day  
 As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host  
 Of Angels by imperial summons called,  
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne  
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heaven, appeared  
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:  
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,  
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear  
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve  
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;  
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblazed  
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs  
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,  
 Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,  
 By whom in bliss imbosomed sat the Son,  
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top  
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.  
 Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light,  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.  
 This day I have begot whom I declare  
 My only Son, and on this holy hill  
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint;  
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow  
 All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord:  
 Under his great vice-gerent reign abide  
 United, as one individual soul,  
 For ever happy: Him who disobeys,  
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,  
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls  
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulfed, his place  
 Ordained without redemption, without end.  
 So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words  
 All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all.  
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent  
 In song and dance about the sacred hill;  
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere  
 Of planets, and of fixed, in all her wheels  
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,  
 Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular  
 Then most, when most irregular they seem;  
 And in their motions harmony divine



So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear  
 Listens delighted. Evening now approached,  
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,  
 We ours for change delectable, not need;)

Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn  
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,  
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled  
 With Angels food, and rubied nectar flows  
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,  
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.  
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,  
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure  
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds  
 Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered  
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.

Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhaled  
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade  
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed  
 To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there  
 In darker veil,) and roseat dews disposed  
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;  
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far  
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,  
 (Such are the courts of God) the angelick throng,  
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend  
 By living streams among the trees of life,  
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,  
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept  
 Fanned with cool winds; save those, who, in their course,  
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne  
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked  
 Satan; so call him now, his former name  
 Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,  
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in power,  
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught  
 With envy against the Son of God, that day  
 Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed  
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear  
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.  
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,  
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour  
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved  
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave  
 Unworshipt, unobeyed, the throne supreme,  
 Contemptuous; and his next subordinate  
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.  
 Sleepest thou, Companion dear? What sleep can close  
 Thy eye-lids? and rememberest what decree  
 Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips  
 Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts  
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;

Both waking we were one; how then can now  
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;  
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise  
 In us who serve, new counsels to debate  
 What doubtful may ensue: More in this place  
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou  
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;  
 Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night  
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,  
 And all who under me their banners wave,  
 Homeward, with flying march, where we possess  
 The quarters of the north; there to prepare  
 Fit entertainment to receive our King,  
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,  
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies  
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.  
 So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infused  
 Bad influence into the unwary breast  
 Of his associate: He together calls,  
 Or several one by one, the regent Powers,  
 Under him Regent; tells, as he was taught,  
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,  
 Now ere dim night had disincumbered Heaven,  
 The great hierarchal standard was to move;  
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between  
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound  
 Or taint integrity: But all obeyed  
 The wonted signal, and superiour voice  
 Of their great Potentate; for great indeed  
 His name, and high was his degree in Heaven;  
 His countenance, as the morning-star that guides  
 The starry flock, allured them, and with lies  
 Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.  
 Mean while the Eternal eye, whose sight discerns  
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,  
 And from within the golden lamps that burn  
 Nightly before him, saw without their light  
 Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread  
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes  
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;  
 And, smiling, to his only Son thus said.  
 Son, thou in whom my glory I behold  
 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,  
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure  
 Of our Omnipotence, and with what arms  
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim  
 Of deity or empire: Such a foe  
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne  
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;  
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try  
 In battle, what our power is, or our right.  
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw

With speed what force is left, and all employ  
In our defence; lest unawares we lose  
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.  
To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear,  
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,  
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes  
Justly hast in derision, and, secure,  
Laughst at their vain designs and tumults vain,  
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate  
Illustrates, when they see all regal power  
Given me to quell their pride, and in event  
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue  
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.  
So spake the Son; but Satan, with his Powers,  
Far was advanced on winged speed; an host  
Innumerable as the stars of night,  
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun  
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.  
Regions they passed, the mighty regencies  
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,  
In their triple degrees; regions to which  
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more  
Than what this garden is to all the earth,  
And all the sea, from one entire globose  
Stretched into longitude; which having passed,  
At length into the limits of the north  
They came; and Satan to his royal seat  
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount  
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;  
The palace of great Lucifer, (so call  
That structure in the dialect of men  
Interpreted,) which not long after, he  
Affecting all equality with God,  
In imitation of that mount whereon  
Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,  
The Mountain of the Congregation called;  
For thither he assembled all his train,  
Pretending so commanded to consult  
About the great reception of their King,  
Thither to come, and with calumnious art  
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.  
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
If these magnifick titles yet remain  
Not merely titular, since by decree  
Another now hath to himself engrossed  
All power, and us eclipsed under the name  
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste  
Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,  
This only to consult how we may best,  
With what may be devised of honours new,  
Receive him coming to receive from us

Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!  
 Too much to one! but double how endured,  
 To one, and to his image now proclaimed?  
 But what if better counsels might erect  
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?  
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend  
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust  
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves  
 Natives and sons of Heaven possessed before  
 By none; and if not equal all, yet free,  
 Equally free; for orders and degrees  
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.  
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume  
 Monarchy over such as live by right  
 His equals, if in power and splendour less,  
 In freedom equal? or can introduce  
 Law and edict on us, who without law  
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,  
 And look for adoration, to the abuse  
 Of those imperial titles, which assert  
 Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.  
 Thus far his bold discourse without controul  
 Had audience; when among the Seraphim  
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored  
 The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,  
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe  
 The current of his fury thus opposed.  
 O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!  
 Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven  
 Expected, least of all from thee, Ingrate,  
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.  
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn  
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,  
 That to his only Son, by right endued  
 With regal scepter, every soul in Heaven  
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due  
 Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou sayest,  
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,  
 And equal over equals to let reign,  
 One over all with unsucceeded power.  
 Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute  
 With him the points of liberty, who made  
 Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heaven  
 Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?  
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,  
 And of our good and of our dignity  
 How provident he is; how far from thought  
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt  
 Our happy state, under one head more near  
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,  
 That equal over equals monarch reign:  
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,

Or all angelick nature joined in one,  
 Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,  
 As by his Word, the Mighty Father made  
 All things, even thee; and all the Spirits of Heaven  
 By him created in their bright degrees,  
 Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,  
 Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured,  
 But more illustrious made; since he the head  
 One of our number thus reduced becomes;  
 His laws our laws; all honour to him done  
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,  
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease  
 The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,  
 While pardon may be found in time besought.  
 So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal  
 None seconded, as out of season judged,  
 Or singular and rash: Whereat rejoiced  
 The Apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied.  
 That we were formed then sayest thou? and the work  
 Of secondary hands, by task transferred  
 From Father to his Son? strange point and new!  
 Doctrine which we would know whence learned: who saw  
 When this creation was? rememberest thou  
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
 We know no time when we were not as now;  
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised  
 By our own quickening power, when fatal course  
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature  
 Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.  
 Our puissance is our own; our own right hand  
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try  
 Who is our equal: Then thou shalt behold  
 Whether by supplication we intend  
 Address, and to begirt the almighty throne  
 Beseeking or besieging. This report,  
 These tidings carry to the anointed King;  
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.  
 He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,  
 Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause  
 Through the infinite host; nor less for that  
 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone  
 Encompassed round with foes, thus answered bold.  
 O alienate from God, O Spirit accursed,  
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall  
 Determined, and thy hapless crew involved  
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread  
 Both of thy crime and punishment: Henceforth  
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke  
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws  
 Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees  
 Against thee are gone forth without recall;

That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,  
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break  
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;  
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly  
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath  
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,  
Distinguish not: For soon expect to feel  
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.  
Then who created thee lamenting learn,  
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.  
So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
Among the faithless, faithful only he;  
Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified,  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;  
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought  
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,  
Though single. From amidst them forth he passed,  
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained  
Superiour, nor of violence feared aught;  
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned  
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed.

## Book VI

All night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,  
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till Morn,  
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave  
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven  
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;  
Light issues forth, and at the other door  
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour  
To veil the Heaven, though darkness there might well  
Seem twilight here: And now went forth the Morn  
Such as in highest Heaven arrayed in gold  
Empyrean; from before her vanished Night,  
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain  
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,  
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:  
War he perceived, war in procinct; and found  
Already known what he for news had thought  
To have reported: Gladly then he mixed  
Among those friendly Powers, who him received  
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,  
That of so many myriads fallen, yet one

Returned not lost. On to the sacred hill  
 They led him high applauded, and present  
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,  
 From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.  
 Servant of God. Well done; well hast thou fought  
 The better fight, who single hast maintained  
 Against revolted multitudes the cause  
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;  
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne  
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear  
 Than violence; for this was all thy care  
 To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds  
 Judged thee perverse: The easier conquest now  
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,  
 Than scorned thou didst depart; and to subdue  
 By force, who reason for their law refuse,  
 Right reason for their law, and for their King  
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.  
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,  
 And thou, in military prowess next,  
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons  
 Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,  
 By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,  
 Equal in number to that Godless crew  
 Rebellious: Them with fire and hostile arms  
 Fearless assault; and, to the brow of Heaven  
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,  
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf  
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide  
 His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.  
 So spake the Sovran Voice, and clouds began  
 To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll  
 In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign  
 Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud  
 Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:  
 At which command the Powers militant,  
 That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined  
 Of union irresistible, moved on  
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
 Of instrumental harmony, that breathed  
 Heroick ardour to adventurous deeds  
 Under their God-like leaders, in the cause  
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
 Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides  
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground  
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore  
 Their nimble tread; as when the total kind  
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,  
 Came summoned over Eden to receive  
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract

Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide,  
 Tenfold the length of this terrene: At last,  
 Far in the horizon to the north appeared  
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched  
 In battailous aspect, and nearer view  
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields  
 Various, with boastful argument portrayed,  
 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on  
 With furious expedition; for they weened  
 That self-same day, by fight or by surprise,  
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne  
 To set the Envier of his state, the proud  
 Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain  
 In the mid way: Though strange to us it seemed  
 At first, that Angel should with Angel war,  
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet  
 So oft in festivals of joy and love  
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,  
 Hymning the Eternal Father: But the shout  
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound  
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.  
 High in the midst, exalted as a God,  
 The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,  
 Idol of majesty divine, enclosed  
 With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields;  
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now  
 "twixt host and host but narrow space was left,  
 A dreadful interval, and front to front  
 Presented stood in terrible array  
 Of hideous length: Before the cloudy van,  
 On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,  
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,  
 Came towering, armed in adamant and gold;  
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood  
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,  
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.  
 O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest  
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty  
 Remain not: Wherefore should not strength and might  
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove  
 Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?  
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,  
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried  
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,  
 That he, who in debate of truth hath won,  
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike  
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,  
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so  
 Most reason is that reason overcome.  
 So pondering, and from his armed peers  
 Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met



His daring foe, at this prevention more  
Incensed, and thus securely him defied.  
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reached  
The highth of thy aspiring unopposed,  
The throne of God unguarded, and his side  
Abandoned, at the terrour of thy power  
Or potent tongue: Fool! not to think how vain  
Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;  
Who out of smallest things could, without end,  
Have raised incessant armies to defeat  
Thy folly; or with solitary hand  
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,  
Unaided, could have finished thee, and whelmed  
Thy legions under darkness: But thou seest  
All are not of thy train; there be, who faith  
Prefer, and piety to God, though then  
To thee not visible, when I alone  
Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent  
From all: My sect thou seest; now learn too late  
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.  
Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,  
Thus answered. Ill for thee, but in wished hour  
Of my revenge, first sought for, thou returnest  
From flight, seditious Angel! to receive  
Thy merited reward, the first assay  
Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,  
Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose  
A third part of the Gods, in synod met  
Their deities to assert; who, while they feel  
Vigour divine within them, can allow  
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest  
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win  
From me some plume, that thy success may show  
Destruction to the rest: This pause between,  
(Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know,  
At first I thought that Liberty and Heaven  
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now  
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
Ministring Spirits, trained up in feast and song!  
Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,  
Servility with freedom to contend,  
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.  
To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied.  
Apostate! still thou erreest, nor end wilt find  
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:  
Unjustly thou depravest it with the name  
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,  
Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,  
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels  
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled  
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,

Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;  
 Yet lewdly darest our ministring upbraid.  
 Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve  
 In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine  
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;  
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect: Mean while  
 From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,  
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.  
 So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,  
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell  
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,  
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,  
 Such ruin intercept: Ten paces huge  
 He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee  
 His massy spear upstaid; as if on earth  
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,  
 Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,  
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seised  
 The rebel Thrones, but greater rage, to see  
 Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and shout,  
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire  
 Of battle: Whereat Michael bid sound  
 The Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven  
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung  
 Hosanna to the Highest: Nor stood at gaze  
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined  
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,  
 And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now  
 Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed  
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels  
 Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
 And flying vaulted either host with fire.  
 So under fiery cope together rushed  
 Both battles main, with ruinous assault  
 And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven  
 Resounded; and had Earth been then, all Earth  
 Had to her center shook. What wonder? when  
 Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought  
 On either side, the least of whom could wield  
 These elements, and arm him with the force  
 Of all their regions: How much more of power  
 Army against army numberless to raise  
 Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,  
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat;  
 Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent,  
 From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled  
 And limited their might; though numbered such  
 As each divided legion might have seemed  
 A numerous host; in strength each armed hand  
 A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed

Each warrior single as in chief, expert  
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway  
Of battle, open when, and when to close  
The ridges of grim war: No thought of flight,  
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed  
That argued fear; each on himself relied,  
As only in his arm the moment lay  
Of victory: Deeds of eternal fame  
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread  
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground  
A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,  
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then  
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale  
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day  
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms  
No equal, ranging through the dire attack  
Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length  
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled  
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway  
Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down  
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand  
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb  
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,  
A vast circumference. At his approach  
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil  
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end  
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued  
Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown  
And visage all inflamed first thus began.  
Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,  
Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest  
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself,  
And thy adherents: How hast thou disturbed  
Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought  
Misery, uncreated till the crime  
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled  
Thy malice into thousands, once upright  
And faithful, now proved false! But think not here  
To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out  
From all her confines. Heaven, the seat of bliss,  
Brooks not the works of violence and war.  
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,  
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell;  
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,  
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,  
Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God,  
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.  
So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus  
The Adversary. Nor think thou with wind  
Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds  
Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these

To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise  
Unvanquished, easier to transact with me  
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats  
To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end  
The strife which thou callest evil, but we style  
The strife of glory; which we mean to win,  
Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell  
Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,  
If not to reign: Mean while thy utmost force,  
And join him named Almighty to thy aid,  
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.  
They ended parle, and both addressed for fight  
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things  
Likened on earth conspicuous, that may lift  
Human imagination to such highth  
Of Godlike power? for likest Gods they seemed,  
Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,  
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.  
Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air  
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields  
Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood  
In horror: From each hand with speed retired,  
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelick throng,  
And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth  
Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,  
Among the constellations war were sprung,  
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign  
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky  
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.  
Together both with next to almighty arm  
Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aimed  
That might determine, and not need repeat,  
As not of power at once; nor odds appeared  
In might or swift prevention: But the sword  
Of Michael from the armoury of God  
Was given him tempered so, that neither keen  
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met  
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor staid,  
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared  
All his right side: Then Satan first knew pain,  
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore  
The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
Passed through him: But the ethereal substance closed,  
Not long divisible; and from the gash  
A stream of necturous humour issuing flowed  
Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,  
And all his armour stained, ere while so bright.  
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run  
By Angels many and strong, who interposed

Defence, while others bore him on their shields  
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired  
 From off the files of war: There they him laid  
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,  
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride  
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath  
 His confidence to equal God in power.  
 Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that live throughout  
 Vital in every part, not as frail man  
 In entrails, heart of head, liver or reins,  
 Cannot but by annihilating die;  
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound  
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:  
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,  
 All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,  
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size  
 Assume, as?kikes them best, condense or rare.  
 Mean while in other parts like deeds deserved  
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,  
 And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array  
 Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,  
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound  
 Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven  
 Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon  
 Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms  
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing  
 Uriel, and Raphael, his vaunting foe,  
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed,  
 Vanquished Adramelech, and Asmadai,  
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods  
 Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,  
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.  
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow  
 Ariel, and Arioeh, and the violence  
 Of Ramiel scorched and blasted, overthrew.  
 I might relate of thousands, and their names  
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect  
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,  
 Seek not the praise of men: The other sort,  
 In might though wonderous and in acts of war,  
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom  
 Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,  
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.  
 For strength from truth divided, and from just,  
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise  
 And ignominy; yet to glory aspires  
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:  
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.  
 And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,  
 With many an inroad gored; deformed rout  
 Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground

With shivered armour strown, and on a heap  
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,  
 And fiery-foaming steeds; what stood, recoiled  
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanick host  
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,  
 Then first with fear surprised, and sense of pain,  
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought  
 By sin of disobedience; till that hour  
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.  
 Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,  
 In cubick phalanx firm, advanced entire,  
 Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;  
 Such high advantages their innocence  
 Gave them above their foes; not to have sinned,  
 Not to have disobeyed; in fight they stood  
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained  
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved,  
 Now Night her course began, and, over Heaven  
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,  
 And silence on the odious din of war:  
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,  
 Victor and vanquished: On the foughten field  
 Michael and his Angels prevalent  
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,  
 Cherubick waving fires: On the other part,  
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared,  
 Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,  
 His potentates to council called by night;  
 And in the midst thus undismayed began.  
 O now in danger tried, now known in arms  
 Not to be overpowered, Companions dear,  
 Found worthy not of liberty alone,  
 Too mean pretence! but what we more affect,  
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;  
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight,  
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)  
 What Heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send  
 Against us from about his throne, and judged  
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
 But proves not so: Then fallible, it seems,  
 Of future we may deem him, though till now  
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly armed,  
 Some disadvantage we endured and pain,  
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned;  
 Since now we find this our empyreal form  
 Incapable of mortal injury,  
 Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,  
 Soon closing, and by native vigour healed.  
 Of evil then so small as easy think  
 The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,  
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes,

Or equal what between us made the odds,  
 In nature none: If other hidden cause  
 Left them superiour, while we can preserve  
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,  
 Due search and consultation will disclose.  
 He sat; and in the assembly next upstood  
 Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;  
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,  
 Sore toiled, his riven arms to havock hewn,  
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake.  
 Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
 Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard  
 For Gods, and too unequal work we find,  
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,  
 Against unpained, impassive; from which evil  
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails  
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain  
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands  
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well  
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,  
 But live content, which is the calmest life:  
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst  
 Of evils, and, excessive, overturns  
 All patience. He, who therefore can invent  
 With what more forcible we may offend  
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm  
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves  
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.  
 Whereto with look composed Satan replied.  
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright  
 Believest so main to our success, I bring.  
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface  
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,  
 This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned  
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems, and gold;  
 Whose eye so superficially surveys  
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow  
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,  
 Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touched  
 With Heaven's ray, and tempered, they shoot forth  
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?  
 These in their dark nativity the deep  
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;  
 Which, into hollow engines, long and round,  
 Thick rammed, at the other bore with touch of fire  
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth  
 From far, with thundering noise, among our foes  
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash  
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands  
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed  
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.  
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,

Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;  
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined  
Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.  
He ended, and his words their drooping cheer  
Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.  
The invention all admired, and each, how he  
To be the inventer missed; so easy it seemed  
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought  
Impossible: Yet, haply, of thy race  
In future days, if malice should abound,  
Some one intent on mischief, or inspired  
With devilish machination, might devise  
Like instrument to plague the sons of men  
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.  
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;  
None arguing stood; innumerable hands  
Were ready; in a moment up they turned  
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath  
The originals of nature in their crude  
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam  
They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,  
Concocted and adusted they reduced  
To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:  
Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth  
Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,  
Whereof to found their engines and their balls  
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed  
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.  
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,  
Secret they finished, and in order set,  
With silent circumspection, unespied.  
Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appeared,  
Up rose the victor-Angels, and to arms  
The matin trumpet sung: In arms they stood  
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,  
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills  
Look round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,  
Each quarter to descry the distant foe,  
Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,  
In motion or in halt: Him soon they met  
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow  
But firm battalion; back with speediest sail  
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,  
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried.  
Arm, Warriours, arm for fight; the foe at hand,  
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit  
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud  
He comes, and settled in his face I see  
Sad resolution, and secure: Let each  
His adamantine coat gird well, and each  
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,  
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,



If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,  
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.  
 So warned he them, aware themselves, and soon  
 In order, quit of all impediment;  
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,  
 And onward moved embattled: When behold!  
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe  
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube  
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled  
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,  
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
 A while; but suddenly at head appeared  
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.  
 Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;  
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek  
 Peace and composure, and with open breast  
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like  
 Our overture; and turn not back perverse:  
 But that I doubt; however witness, Heaven!  
 Heaven, witness thou anon! while we discharge  
 Freely our part: ye, who appointed stand  
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch  
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear!  
 So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce  
 Had ended; when to right and left the front  
 Divided, and to either flank retired:  
 Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,  
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid  
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed,  
 Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,  
 With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled,)  
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths  
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,  
 Portending hollow truce: At each behind  
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed  
 Stood waving tipt with fire; while we, suspense,  
 Collected stood within our thoughts amused,  
 Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds  
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied  
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,  
 But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,  
 From those deep-throated engines belched, whose roar  
 Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,  
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul  
 Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail  
 Of iron globes; which, on the victor host  
 Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,  
 That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,  
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell  
 By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel rolled;  
 The sooner for their arms; unarmed, they might  
 Have easily, as Spirits, evaded swift

By quick contraction or remove; but now  
 Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;  
 Nor served it to relax their serried files.  
 What should they do? if on they rushed, repulse  
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow  
 Doubled, would render them yet more despised,  
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view  
 Stood ranked of Seraphim another row,  
 In posture to displode their second tire  
 Of thunder: Back defeated to return  
 They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,  
 And to his mates thus in derision called.  
 O Friends! why come not on these victors proud  
 Ere while they fierce were coming; and when we,  
 To entertain them fair with open front  
 And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms  
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,  
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seemed  
 Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps  
 For joy of offered peace: But I suppose,  
 If our proposals once again were heard,  
 We should compel them to a quick result.  
 To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood.  
 Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
 Of hard contents, and full of force urged home;  
 Such as we might perceive amused them all,  
 And stumbled many: Who receives them right,  
 Had need from head to foot well understand;  
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,  
 They show us when our foes walk not upright.  
 So they among themselves in pleasant vein  
 Stood scoffing, hightened in their thoughts beyond  
 All doubt of victory: Eternal Might  
 To match with their inventions they presumed  
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,  
 And all his host derided, while they stood  
 A while in trouble: But they stood not long;  
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms  
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.  
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,  
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!)  
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills  
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heaven  
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)  
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;  
 From their foundations loosening to and fro,  
 They plucked the seated hills, with all their load,  
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops  
 Up-lifting bore them in their hands: Amaze,  
 Be sure, and terrour, seized the rebel host,  
 When coming towards them so dread they saw

The bottom of the mountains upward turned;  
 Till on those cursed engines' triple-row  
 They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence  
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep;  
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads  
 Main promontories flung, which in the air  
 Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed;  
 Their armour helped their harm, crushed in and bruised  
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain  
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;  
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind  
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,  
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.  
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms  
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore:  
 So hills amid the air encountered hills,  
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire;  
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;  
 Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game  
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped  
 Upon confusion rose: And now all Heaven  
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread;  
 Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits  
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,  
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised:  
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,  
 To honour his anointed Son avenged  
 Upon his enemies, and to declare  
 All power on him transferred: Whence to his Son,  
 The Assessour of his throne, he thus began.  
 Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,  
 Son, in whose face invisible is beheld  
 Visibly, what by Deity I am;  
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,  
 Second Omnipotence! two days are past,  
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,  
 Since Michael and his Powers went forth to tame  
 These disobedient: Sore hath been their fight,  
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;  
 For to themselves I left them; and thou knowest,  
 Equal in their creation they were formed,  
 Save what sin hath impaired; which yet hath wrought  
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;  
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last  
 Endless, and no solution will be found:  
 War wearied hath performed what war can do,  
 And to disordered rage let loose the reins  
 With mountains, as with weapons, armed; which makes  
 Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.  
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;  
 For thee I have ordained it; and thus far

Have suffered, that the glory may be thine  
 Of ending this great war, since none but Thou  
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace  
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know  
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;  
 And, this perverse commotion governed thus,  
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir  
 Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King  
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.  
 Go then, Thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might;  
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels  
 That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,  
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms  
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;  
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out  
 From all Heaven's bounds into the utter deep:  
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise  
 God, and Messiah his anointed King.  
 He said, and on his Son with rays direct  
 Shone full; he all his Father full expressed  
 Ineffably into his face received;  
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake.  
 O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,  
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st  
 To glorify thy Son, I always thee,  
 As is most just: This I my glory account,  
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
 That thou, in me well pleased, declarest thy will  
 Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.  
 Scepter and power, thy giving, I assume,  
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end  
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee  
 For ever; and in me all whom thou lovest:  
 But whom thou hatest, I hate, and can put on  
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,  
 Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled;  
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,  
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm;  
 That from thy just obedience could revolt,  
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.  
 Then shall thy Saints unmixed, and from the impure  
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,  
 Unfeigned Halleluiahs to thee sing,  
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.  
 So said, he, o'er his scepter bowing, rose  
 From the right hand of Glory where he sat;  
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,  
 Dawning through Heaven. Forth rushed with whirlwind sound  
 The chariot of Paternal Deity,  
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,  
 Itself instinct with Spirit, but convoyed

By four Cherubick shapes; four faces each  
Had wonderous; as with stars, their bodies all  
And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels  
Of beryl, and careering fires between;  
Over their heads a crystal firmament,  
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure  
Amber, and colours of the showery arch.  
He, in celestial panoply all armed  
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,  
Ascended; at his right hand Victory  
Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow  
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored;  
And from about him fierce effusion rolled  
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:  
Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,  
He onward came; far off his coming shone;  
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)  
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen;  
He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime  
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,  
Illustrious far and wide; but by his own  
First seen: Them unexpected joy surprised,  
When the great ensign of Messiah blazed  
Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven;  
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced  
His army, circumfused on either wing,  
Under their Head imbodyed all in one.  
Before him Power Divine his way prepared;  
At his command the uprooted hills retired  
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went  
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,  
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.  
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,  
And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,  
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.  
In heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?  
But to convince the proud what signs avail,  
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?  
They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,  
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight  
Took envy; and, aspiring to his highth,  
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud  
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail  
Against God and Messiah, or to fall  
In universal ruin last; and now  
To final battle drew, disdainning flight,  
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
To all his host on either hand thus spake.  
Stand still in bright array, ye Saints; here stand,  
Ye Angels armed; this day from battle rest:  
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God  
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;

And as ye have received, so have ye done,  
 Invincibly: But of this cursed crew  
 The punishment to other hand belongs;  
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:  
 Number to this day's work is not ordained,  
 Nor multitude; stand only, and behold  
 God's indignation on these godless poured  
 By me; not you, but me, they have despised,  
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,  
 Because the Father, to whom in Heaven s'preme  
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,  
 Hath honoured me, according to his will.  
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned;  
 That they may have their wish, to try with me  
 In battle which the stronger proves; they all,  
 Or I alone against them; since by strength  
 They measure all, of other excellence  
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;  
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.  
 So spake the Son, and into terrour changed  
 His countenance too severe to be beheld,  
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.  
 At once the Four spread out their starry wings  
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs  
 Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound  
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.  
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,  
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels  
 The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,  
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon  
 Among them he arrived; in his right hand  
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent  
 Before him, such as in their souls infixed  
 Plagues: They, astonished, all resistance lost,  
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:  
 O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode  
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,  
 That wished the mountains now might be again  
 Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.  
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four  
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels  
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;  
 One Spirit in them ruled; and every eye  
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire  
 Among the accursed, that withered all their strength,  
 And of their wonted vigour left them drained,  
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.  
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked  
 His thunder in mid volley; for he meant  
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:  
 The overthrown he raised, and as a herd

Of goats or timorous flock together thronged  
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued  
With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds  
And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,  
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed  
Into the wasteful deep: The monstrous sight  
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse  
Urged them behind: Headlong themselves they threw  
Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath  
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.  
Hell heard the unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled  
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep  
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.  
Nine days they fell: Confounded Chaos roared,  
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall  
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout  
Incumbered him with ruin: Hell at last  
Yawning received them whole, and on them closed;  
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire  
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.  
Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired  
Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.  
Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,  
Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:  
To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,  
With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,  
Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright,  
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,  
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,  
Worthiest to reign: He, celebrated, rode  
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts  
And temple of his Mighty Father throned  
On high; who into glory him received,  
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.  
Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on Earth,  
At thy request, and that thou mayest beware  
By what is past, to thee I have revealed  
What might have else to human race been hid;  
The discord which befel, and war in Heaven  
Among the angelick Powers, and the deep fall  
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled  
With Satan; he who envies now thy state,  
Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
Thee also from obedience, that, with him  
Bereaved of happiness, thou mayest partake  
His punishment, eternal misery;  
Which would be all his solace and revenge,  
As a despite done against the Most High,  
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.  
But listen not to his temptations, warn

Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,  
By terrible example, the reward  
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

## Book VII

Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name  
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine  
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,  
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!  
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou  
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwellest; but, heavenly-born,  
Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,  
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased  
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee  
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,  
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down  
Return me to my native element:  
Lest from this flying steed unreined, (as once  
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,)  
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,  
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.  
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound  
Within the visible diurnal sphere;  
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged  
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,  
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;  
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,  
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou  
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or when morn  
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.  
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance  
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race  
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears  
To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned  
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend  
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:  
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.  
Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphael,  
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarned  
Adam, by dire example, to beware



Apostasy, by what befel in Heaven  
To those apostates; lest the like befall  
In Paradise to Adam or his race,  
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,  
So easily obeyed amid the choice  
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,  
Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve,  
The story heard attentive, and was filled  
With admiration and deep muse, to hear  
Of things so high and strange; things, to their thought  
So unimaginable, as hate in Heaven,  
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,  
With such confusion: but the evil, soon  
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those  
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix  
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed  
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now  
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
What nearer might concern him, how this world  
Of Heaven and Earth conspicuous first began;  
When, and whereof created; for what cause;  
What within Eden, or without, was done  
Before his memory; as one whose drouth  
Yet scarce allayed still eyes the current stream,  
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,  
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest.  
Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,  
Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed,  
Divine interpreter! by favour sent  
Down from the empyrean, to forewarn  
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,  
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;  
For which to the infinitely Good we owe  
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment  
Receive, with solemn purpose to observe  
Immutably his sovran will, the end  
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed  
Gently, for our instruction, to impart  
Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned  
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemed,  
Deign to descend now lower, and relate  
What may no less perhaps avail us known,  
How first began this Heaven which we behold  
Distant so high, with moving fires adorned  
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills  
All space, the ambient air wide interfused  
Embracing round this floried Earth; what cause  
Moved the Creator, in his holy rest  
Through all eternity, so late to build  
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon  
Absolved; if unforbid thou mayest unfold

What we, not to explore the secrets ask  
 Of his eternal empire, but the more  
 To magnify his works, the more we know.  
 And the great light of day yet wants to run  
 Much of his race though steep; suspense in Heaven,  
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,  
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell  
 His generation, and the rising birth  
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:  
 Or if the star of evening and the moon  
 Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring,  
 Silence; and Sleep, listening to thee, will watch;  
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song  
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.  
 Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:  
 And thus the Godlike Angel answered mild.  
 This also thy request, with caution asked,  
 Obtain; though to recount almighty works  
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve  
 To glorify the Maker, and infer  
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
 Thy hearing; such commission from above  
 I have received, to answer thy desire  
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain  
 To ask; nor let thine own inventions hope  
 Things not revealed, which the invisible King,  
 Only Omniscient, hath suppressed in night;  
 To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:  
 Enough is left besides to search and know.  
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
 Her temperance over appetite, to know  
 In measure what the mind may well contain;  
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.  
 Know then, that, after Lucifer from Heaven  
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host  
 Of Angels, than that star the stars among,)  
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep  
 Into his place, and the great Son returned  
 Victorious with his Saints, the Omnipotent  
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld  
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.  
 At least our envious Foe hath failed, who thought  
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid  
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat  
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,  
 He trusted to have seised, and into fraud  
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more:  
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,  
 Their station; Heaven, yet populous, retains

Number sufficient to possess her realms  
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent  
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites:  
 But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm  
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,  
 My damage fondly deemed, I can repair  
 That detriment, if such it be to lose  
 Self-lost; and in a moment will create  
 Another world, out of one man a race  
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,  
 Not here; till, by degrees of merit raised,  
 They open to themselves at length the way  
 Up hither, under long obedience tried;  
 And Earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to Earth,  
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.  
 Mean while inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;  
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee  
 This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!  
 My overshadowing Spirit and Might with thee  
 I send along; ride forth, and bid the Deep  
 Within appointed bounds be Heaven and Earth;  
 Boundless the Deep, because I Am who fill  
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.  
 Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire,  
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free  
 To act or not, Necessity and Chance  
 Approach not me, and what I will is Fate.  
 So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake  
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.  
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift  
 Than time or motion, but to human ears  
 Cannot without process of speech be told,  
 So told as earthly notion can receive.  
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven,  
 When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;  
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good will  
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace;  
 Glory to Him, whose just avenging ire  
 Had driven out the ungodly from his sight  
 And the habitations of the just; to Him  
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained  
 Good out of evil to create; instead  
 Of Spirits malign, a better race to bring  
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse  
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.  
 So sang the Hierarchies: Mean while the Son  
 On his great expedition now appeared,  
 Girt with Omnipotence, with radiance crowned  
 Of Majesty Divine; sapience and love  
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.  
 About his chariot numberless were poured  
 Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones,

And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged  
 From the armoury of God; where stand of old  
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged  
 Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,  
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth  
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit lived,  
 Attendant on their Lord: Heaven opened wide  
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound  
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth  
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word  
 And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.  
 On heavenly ground they stood; and from the shore  
 They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss  
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,  
 Up from the bottom turned by furious winds  
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault  
 Heaven's highth, and with the center mix the pole.  
 Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace,  
 Said then the Omnifick Word; your discord end!  
 Nor staid; but, on the wings of Cherubim  
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode  
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;  
 For Chaos heard his voice: Him all his train  
 Followed in bright procession, to behold  
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.  
 Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand  
 He took the golden compasses, prepared  
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe  
 This universe, and all created things:  
 One foot he centered, and the other turned  
 Round through the vast profundity obscure;  
 And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,  
 This be thy just circumference, O World!  
 Thus God the Heaven created, thus the Earth,  
 Matter unformed and void: Darkness profound  
 Covered the abyss: but on the watery calm  
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,  
 And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth  
 Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purged  
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,  
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed  
 Like things to like; the rest to several place  
 Disparted, and between spun out the air;  
 And Earth self-balanced on her center hung.  
 Let there be light, said God; and forthwith Light  
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,  
 Sprung from the deep; and from her native east  
 To journey through the aery gloom began,  
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun  
 Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle  
 Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;  
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere

Divided: light the Day, and darkness Night,  
 He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:  
 Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung  
 By the celestial quires, when orient light  
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;  
 Birth-day of Heaven and Earth; with joy and shout  
 The hollow universal orb they filled,  
 And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised  
 God and his works; Creator him they sung,  
 Both when first evening was, and when first morn.  
 Again, God said, Let there be firmament  
 Amid the waters, and let it divide  
 The waters from the waters; and God made  
 The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,  
 Transparent, elemental air, diffused  
 In circuit to the uttermost convex  
 Of this great round; partition firm and sure,  
 The waters underneath from those above  
 Dividing: for as earth, so he the world  
 Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide  
 Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule  
 Of Chaos far removed; lest fierce extremes  
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:  
 And Heaven he named the Firmament: So even  
 And morning chorus sung the second day.  
 The Earth was formed, but in the womb as yet  
 Of waters, embryon immature involved,  
 Appeared not: over all the face of Earth  
 Main ocean flowed, not idle; but, with warm  
 Prolifick humour softening all her globe,  
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,  
 Satiated with genial moisture; when God said,  
 Be gathered now ye waters under Heaven  
 Into one place, and let dry land appear.  
 Immediately the mountains huge appear  
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave  
 Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:  
 So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low  
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,  
 Capacious bed of waters: Thither they  
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled,  
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:  
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,  
 For haste; such flight the great command impressed  
 On the swift floods: As armies at the call  
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)  
 Troop to their standard; so the watery throng,  
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,  
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,  
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;  
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide  
 With serpent error wandering, found their way,

And on the washy oose deep channels wore;  
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,  
 All but within those banks, where rivers now  
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.  
 The dry land, Earth; and the great receptacle  
 Of congregated waters, he called Seas:  
 And saw that it was good; and said, Let the Earth  
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,  
 And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,  
 Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth.  
 He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then  
 Desart and bare, unsightly, unadorned,  
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad  
 Her universal face with pleasant green;  
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered  
 Opening their various colours, and made gay  
 Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,  
 Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept  
 The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed  
 Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,  
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last  
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed  
 Their blossoms: With high woods the hills were crowned;  
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side;  
 With borders long the rivers: that Earth now  
 Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where Gods might dwell,  
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt  
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained  
 Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground  
 None was; but from the Earth a dewy mist  
 Went up, and watered all the ground, and each  
 Plant of the field; which, ere it was in the Earth,  
 God made, and every herb, before it grew  
 On the green stem: God saw that it was good:  
 So even and morn recorded the third day.  
 Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights  
 High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide  
 The day from night; and let them be for signs,  
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years;  
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain  
 Their office in the firmament of Heaven,  
 To give light on the Earth; and it was so.  
 And God made two great lights, great for their use  
 To Man, the greater to have rule by day,  
 The less by night, altern; and made the stars,  
 And set them in the firmament of Heaven  
 To illuminate the Earth, and rule the day  
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,  
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,  
 Surveying his great work, that it was good:  
 For of celestial bodies first the sun

A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,  
Though of ethereal mould: then formed the moon  
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,  
And sowed with stars the Heaven, thick as a field:  
Of light by far the greater part he took,  
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed  
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive  
And drink the liquid light; firm to retain  
Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.  
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,  
And hence the morning-planet gilds her horns;  
By tincture or reflection they augment  
Their small peculiar, though from human sight  
So far remote, with diminution seen,  
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,  
Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the gray  
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence: Less bright the moon,  
But opposite in levelled west was set,  
His mirrour, with full face borrowing her light  
From him; for other light she needed none  
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps  
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,  
Revolved on Heaven's great axle, and her reign  
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,  
With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared  
Spangling the hemisphere: Then first adorned  
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,  
Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day.  
And God said, Let the waters generate  
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:  
And let fowl fly above the Earth, with wings  
Displayed on the open firmament of Heaven.  
And God created the great whales, and each  
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously  
The waters generated by their kinds;  
And every bird of wing after his kind;  
And saw that it was good, and blessed them, saying.  
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,  
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;  
And let the fowl be multiplied, on the Earth.  
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,  
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals  
Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales,  
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft  
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,  
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves  
Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance,  
Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold;

Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food  
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal  
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk  
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,  
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretched like a promontory sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving land; and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.  
Mean while the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,  
Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon  
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclosed  
Their callow young; but feathered soon and fledge  
They summed their pens; and, soaring the air sublime,  
With clang despised the ground, under a cloud  
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork  
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:  
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise  
In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,  
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
Their aery caravan, high over seas  
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing  
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane  
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air  
Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes:  
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song  
Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings  
Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale  
Ceased warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:  
Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed  
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,  
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows  
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit  
The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower  
The mid aerial sky: Others on ground  
Walked firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds  
The silent hours, and the other whose gay train  
Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue  
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus  
With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,  
Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.  
The sixth, and of creation last, arose  
With evening harps and matin; when God said,  
Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the Earth,  
Each in their kind. The Earth obeyed, and straight  
Opening her fertile womb teemed at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,  
Limbed and full grown: Out of the ground up rose,  
As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons  
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;



Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked:  
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green:  
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks  
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.  
 The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared  
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free  
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,  
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,  
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole  
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw  
 In hillocks: The swift stag from under ground  
 Bore up his branching head: Scarce from his mould  
 Behemoth biggest born of earth upheaved  
 His vastness: Fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,  
 As plants: Ambiguous between sea and land  
 The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.  
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,  
 Insect or worm: those waved their limber fans  
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact  
 In all the liveries decked of summer's pride  
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:  
 These, as a line, their long dimension drew,  
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all  
 Minims of nature; some of serpent-kind,  
 Wonderous in length and corpulence, involved  
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept  
 The parsimonious emmet, provident  
 Of future; in small room large heart enclosed;  
 Pattern of just equality perhaps  
 Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes  
 Of commonalty: Swarming next appeared  
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone  
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells  
 With honey stored: The rest are numberless,  
 And thou their natures knowest, and gavest them names,  
 Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown  
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,  
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes  
 And hairy mane terrifick, though to thee  
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.  
 Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled  
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand  
 First wheeled their course: Earth in her rich attire  
 Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,  
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked,  
 Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained:  
 There wanted yet the master-work, the end  
 Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone  
 And brute as other creatures, but endued  
 With sanctity of reason, might erect  
 His stature, and upright with front serene  
 Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence

Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,  
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes  
Directed in devotion, to adore  
And worship God Supreme, who made him chief  
Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent  
Eternal Father (for where is not he  
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.  
Let us make now Man in our image, Man  
In our similitude, and let them rule  
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,  
Beast of the field, and over all the Earth,  
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.  
This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O Man,  
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed  
The breath of life; in his own image he  
Created thee, in the image of God  
Express; and thou becamest a living soul.  
Male he created thee; but thy consort  
Female, for race; then blessed mankind, and said,  
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth;  
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold  
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,  
And every living thing that moves on the Earth.  
Wherever thus created, for no place  
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou knowest,  
He brought thee into this delicious grove,  
This garden, planted with the trees of God,  
Delectable both to behold and taste;  
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food  
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the Earth yields,  
Variety without end; but of the tree,  
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,  
Thou mayest not; in the day thou eatest, thou diest;  
Death is the penalty imposed; beware,  
And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin  
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.  
Here finished he, and all that he had made  
Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;  
So even and morn accomplished the sixth day:  
Yet not till the Creator from his work  
Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,  
Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode;  
Thence to behold this new created world,  
The addition of his empire, how it showed  
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,  
Answering his great idea. Up he rode  
Followed with acclamation, and the sound  
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned  
Angelick harmonies: The earth, the air  
Resounded, (thou rememberest, for thou heardst,)  
The heavens and all the constellations rung,

The planets in their station listening stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung,  
Open, ye Heavens! your living doors; let in  
The great Creator from his work returned  
Magnificent, his six days work, a World;  
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign  
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,  
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse  
Thither will send his winged messengers  
On errands of supernal grace. So sung  
The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,  
That opened wide her blazing portals, led  
To God's eternal house direct the way;  
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold  
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,  
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,  
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest  
Powdered with stars. And now on Earth the seventh  
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun  
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,  
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount  
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne  
Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,  
The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down  
With his great Father; for he also went  
Invisible, yet staid, (such privilege  
Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordained,  
Author and End of all things; and, from work  
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh day,  
As resting on that day from all his work,  
But not in silence holy kept: the harp  
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe,  
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,  
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,  
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice  
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,  
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.  
Creation and the six days acts they sung:  
Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite  
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue  
Relate thee! Greater now in thy return  
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day  
Thy thunders magnified; but to create  
Is greater than created to destroy.  
Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound  
Thy empire! Easily the proud attempt  
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,  
Thou hast repelled; while impiously they thought  
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw  
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks  
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves

To manifest the more thy might: his evil  
Thou usest, and from thence createst more good.  
Witness this new-made world, another Heaven  
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view  
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;  
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars  
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world  
Of destined habitation; but thou knowest  
Their seasons: among these the seat of Men,  
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,  
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy Men,  
And sons of Men, whom God hath thus advanced!  
Created in his image, there to dwell  
And worship him; and in reward to rule  
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,  
And multiply a race of worshippers  
Holy and just: Thrice happy, if they know  
Their happiness, and persevere upright!  
So sung they, and the empyrean rung  
With halleluiahs: Thus was sabbath kept.  
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked  
How first this world and face of things began,  
And what before thy memory was done  
From the beginning; that posterity,  
Informed by thee, might know: If else thou seekest  
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.

## Book VIII

The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he a while  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;  
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied.  
What thanks sufficient, or what recompence  
Equal, have I to render thee, divine  
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed  
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed  
This friendly condescension to relate  
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard  
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,  
With glory attributed to the high  
Creator! Something yet of doubt remains,  
Which only thy solution can resolve.  
When I behold this goodly frame, this world,  
Of Heaven and Earth consisting; and compute  
Their magnitudes; this Earth, a spot, a grain,  
An atom, with the firmament compared  
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll  
Spaces incomprehensible, (for such

Their distance argues, and their swift return  
 Diurnal,) merely to officiate light  
 Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,  
 One day and night; in all her vast survey  
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,  
 How Nature wise and frugal could commit  
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
 So many nobler bodies to create,  
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,  
 For aught appears, and on their orbs impose  
 Such restless revolution day by day  
 Repeated; while the sedentary Earth,  
 That better might with far less compass move,  
 Served by more noble than herself, attains  
 Her end without least motion, and receives,  
 As tribute, such a sumless journey brought  
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.  
 So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed  
 Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve  
 Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,  
 With lowliness majestick from her seat,  
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,  
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,  
 To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,  
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,  
 And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.  
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
 Delighted, or not capable her ear  
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,  
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;  
 Her husband the relater she preferred  
 Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix  
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip  
 Not words alone pleased her. O! when meet now  
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?  
 With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went,  
 Not unattended; for on her, as Queen,  
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
 And from about her shot darts of desire  
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.  
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,  
 Benevolent and facile thus replied.  
 To ask or search, I blame thee not; for Heaven  
 Is as the book of God before thee set,  
 Wherein to read his wonderous works, and learn  
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:  
 This to attain, whether Heaven move or Earth,  
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest  
 From Man or Angel the great Architect

Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
 His secrets to be scanned by them who ought  
 Rather admire; or, if they list to try  
 Conjecture, he his fabrick of the Heavens  
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move  
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide  
 Hereafter; when they come to model Heaven  
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield  
 The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive  
 To save appearances; how gird the sphere  
 With centrick and eccentric scribbled o'er,  
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:  
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess,  
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest  
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve  
 The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,  
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
 The benefit: Consider first, that great  
 Or bright infers not excellence: the Earth  
 Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,  
 Nor glistening, may of solid good contain  
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines;  
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect,  
 But in the fruitful Earth; there first received,  
 His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.  
 Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries  
 Officious; but to thee, Earth's habitant.  
 And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak  
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built  
 So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;  
 That Man may know he dwells not in his own;  
 An edifice too large for him to fill,  
 Lodged in a small partition; and the rest  
 Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.  
 The swiftness of those circles attribute,  
 Though numberless, to his Omnipotence,  
 That to corporeal substances could add  
 Speed almost spiritual: Me thou thinkest not slow,  
 Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven  
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived  
 In Eden; distance inexpressible  
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,  
 Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show  
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;  
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem  
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.  
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,  
 Placed Heaven from Earth so far, that earthly sight,  
 If it presume, might err in things too high,  
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun  
 Be center to the world; and other stars,  
 By his attractive virtue and their own

Incited, dance about him various rounds?  
Their wandering course now high, now low, then hid,  
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,  
In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these  
The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,  
Insensibly three different motions move?  
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,  
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;  
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift  
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,  
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel  
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,  
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day  
Travelling east, and with her part averse  
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part  
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,  
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,  
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,  
Enlightening her by day, as she by night  
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,  
Fields and inhabitants: Her spots thou seest  
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce  
Fruits in her softened soil for some to eat  
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,  
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,  
Communicating male and female light;  
Which two great sexes animate the world,  
Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in Nature unpossessed  
By living soul, desart and desolate,  
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far  
Down to this habitable, which returns  
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.  
But whether thus these things, or whether not;  
But whether the sun, predominant in Heaven,  
Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;  
He from the east his flaming road begin;  
Or she from west her silent course advance,  
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps  
On her soft axle, while she paces even,  
And bears thee soft with the smooth hair along;  
Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;  
Leave them to God above; him serve, and fear!  
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,  
Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou  
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise  
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high  
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:  
Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;  
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there  
Live, in what state, condition, or degree;

Contented that thus far hath been revealed  
 Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven.  
 To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied.  
 How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure  
 Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene!  
 And, freed from intricacies, taught to live  
 The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts  
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which  
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,  
 And not molest us; unless we ourselves  
 Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.  
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove  
 Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;  
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,  
 That, not to know at large of things remote  
 From use, obscure and subtle; but, to know  
 That which before us lies in daily life,  
 Is the prime wisdom: What is more, is fume,  
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence:  
 And renders us, in things that most concern,  
 Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.  
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend  
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand  
 Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise  
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,  
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deigned.  
 Thee I have heard relating what was done  
 Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate  
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;  
 And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest  
 How subtly to detain thee I devise;  
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate;  
 Fond! were it not in hope of thy reply:  
 For, while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven;  
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
 Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst  
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour  
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,  
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine  
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.  
 To whom thus Raphael answered heavenly meek.  
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,  
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee  
 Abundantly his gifts hath also poured  
 Inward and outward both, his image fair:  
 Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace  
 Attends thee; and each word, each motion, forms;  
 Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth  
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire  
 Gladly into the ways of God with Man:  
 For God, we see, hath honoured thee, and set  
 On Man his equal love: Say therefore on;



For I that day was absent, as befel,  
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,  
 Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;  
 Squared in full legion (such command we had)  
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,  
 Or enemy, while God was in his work;  
 Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,  
 Destruction with creation might have mixed.  
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;  
 But us he sends upon his high behests  
 For state, as Sovran King; and to inure  
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut,  
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;  
 But long ere our approaching heard within  
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,  
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.  
 Glad we returned up to the coasts of light  
 Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in charge.  
 But thy relation now; for I attend,  
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine.  
 So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.  
 For Man to tell how human life began  
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew  
 Desire with thee still longer to converse  
 Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,  
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,  
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun  
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.  
 Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned,  
 And gazed a while the ample sky; till, raised  
 By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,  
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright  
 Stood on my feet: about me round I saw  
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,  
 And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,  
 Creatures that lived and moved, and walked, or flew;  
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled;  
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.  
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb  
 Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:  
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,  
 Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;  
 My tongue obeyed, and readily could name  
 Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light,  
 And thou enlightened Earth, so fresh and gay,  
 Ye Hills, and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plains,  
 And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,  
 Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?--  
 Not of myself;--by some great Maker then,  
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent:  
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,

From whom I have that thus I move and live,  
 And feel that I am happier than I know.--  
 While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,  
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld  
 This happy light; when, answer none returned,  
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,  
 Pensive I sat me down: There gentle sleep  
 First found me, and with soft oppression seised  
 My droused sense, untroubled, though I thought  
 I then was passing to my former state  
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:  
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,  
 Whose inward apparition gently moved  
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,  
 And lived: One came, methought, of shape divine,  
 And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,  
 'First Man, of men innumerable ordained  
 'First Father! called by thee, I come thy guide  
 'To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'  
 So saying, by the hand he took me raised,  
 And over fields and waters, as in air  
 Smooth-sliding without step, last led me up  
 A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,  
 A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees  
 Planted, with walks, and bowers; that what I saw  
 Of Earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree,  
 Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye  
 Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite  
 To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found  
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream  
 Had lively shadowed: Here had new begun  
 My wandering, had not he, who was my guide  
 Up hither, from among the trees appeared,  
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,  
 In adoration at his feet I fell  
 Submiss: He reared me, and 'Whom thou soughtest I am,'  
 Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest  
 'Above, or round about thee, or beneath.  
 'This Paradise I give thee, count it thine  
 'To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:  
 'Of every tree that in the garden grows  
 'Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:  
 'But of the tree whose operation brings  
 'Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set  
 'The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,  
 'Amid the garden by the tree of life,  
 'Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,  
 'And shun the bitter consequence: for know,  
 'The day thou eatest thereof, my sole command  
 'Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,  
 'From that day mortal; and this happy state  
 'Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world

'Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced  
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds  
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice  
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect  
 Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed.  
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth  
 'To thee and to thy race I give; as lords  
 'Possess it, and all things that therein live,  
 'Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and fowl.  
 'In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold  
 'After their kinds; I bring them to receive  
 'From thee their names, and pay thee fealty  
 'With low subjection; understand the same  
 'Of fish within their watery residence,  
 'Not hither summoned, since they cannot change  
 'Their element, to draw the thinner air.'  
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold  
 Approaching two and two; these cowering low  
 With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing.  
 I named them, as they passed, and understood  
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued  
 My sudden apprehension: But in these  
 I found not what methought I wanted still;  
 And to the heavenly Vision thus presumed.  
 O, by what name, for thou above all these,  
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,  
 Surpassest far my naming; how may I  
 Adore thee, Author of this universe,  
 And all this good to man? for whose well being  
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,  
 Thou hast provided all things: But with me  
 I see not who partakes. In solitude  
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone,  
 Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?  
 Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,  
 As with a smile more brightened, thus replied.  
 What callest thou solitude? Is not the Earth  
 With various living creatures, and the air  
 Replenished, and all these at thy command  
 To come and play before thee? Knowest thou not  
 Their language and their ways? They also know,  
 And reason not contemptibly: With these  
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.  
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seemed  
 So ordering: I, with leave of speech implored,  
 And humble deprecation, thus replied.  
 Let not my words offend thee, Heavenly Power;  
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak.  
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
 And these inferiour far beneath me set?  
 Among unequals what society  
 Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?

Which must be mutual, in proportion due  
 Given and received; but, in disparity  
 The one intense, the other still remiss,  
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove  
 Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak  
 Such as I seek, fit to participate  
 All rational delight: wherein the brute  
 Cannot be human consort: They rejoice  
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;  
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:  
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl  
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;  
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.  
 Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeas'd.  
 A nice and subtle happiness, I see,  
 Thou to thyself propos'st, in the choice  
 Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste  
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.  
 What thinkest thou then of me, and this my state?  
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd  
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone  
 From all eternity; for none I know  
 Second to me or like, equal much less.  
 How have I then with whom to hold converse,  
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those  
 To me inferiour, infinite descents  
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?  
 He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd. To attain  
 The highth and depth of thy eternal ways  
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!  
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee  
 Is no deficiency found: Not so is Man,  
 But in degree; the cause of his desire  
 By conversation with his like to help  
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou  
 Shouldst propagate, already Infinite;  
 And through all numbers absolute, though One:  
 But Man by number is to manifest  
 His single imperfection, and beget  
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,  
 In unity defective; which requires  
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.  
 Thou in thy secrecy although alone,  
 Best with thyself accompanied, seekest not  
 Social communication; yet, so pleas'd,  
 Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt  
 Of union or communion, deified:  
 I, by conversing, cannot these erect  
 From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.  
 Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom used  
 Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd  
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased;  
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,  
Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself;  
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,  
My image, not imparted to the brute;  
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee  
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;  
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spakest,  
Knew it not good for Man to be alone;  
And no such company as then thou sawest  
Intended thee; for trial only brought,  
To see how thou couldest judge of fit and meet:  
What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,  
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,  
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.  
He ended, or I heard no more; for now  
My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,  
Which it had long stood under, strained to the highth  
In that celestial colloquy sublime,  
As with an object that excels the sense  
Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair  
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called  
By Nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.  
Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell  
Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,  
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,  
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape  
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:  
Who stooping opened my left side, and took  
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,  
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,  
But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:  
The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;  
Under his forming hands a creature grew,  
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,  
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now  
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained  
And in her looks; which from that time infused  
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
And into all things from her air inspired  
The spirit of love and amorous delight.  
She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked  
To find her, or for ever to deplore  
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:  
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,  
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned  
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow  
To make her amiable: On she came,  
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,  
And guided by his voice; nor uninformed  
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:  
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,

In every gesture dignity and love.  
 I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud.  
 This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled  
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,  
 Giver of all things fair! but fairest this  
 Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see  
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself  
 Before me: Woman is her name; of Man  
 Extracted: for this cause he shall forego  
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;  
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.  
 She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,  
 Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,  
 Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,  
 That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,  
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retired,  
 The more desirable; or, to say all,  
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
 Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned:  
 I followed her; she what was honour knew,  
 And with obsequious majesty approved  
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower  
 I led her blushing like the morn: All Heaven,  
 And happy constellations, on that hour  
 Shed their selectest influence; the Earth  
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;  
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs  
 Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings  
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,  
 Disporting, till the amorous bird of night  
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening-star  
 On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.  
 Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought  
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss,  
 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find  
 In all things else delight indeed, but such  
 As, used or not, works in the mind no change,  
 Nor vehement desire; these delicacies  
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,  
 Walks, and the melody of birds: but here  
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
 Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else  
 Superiour and unmoved; here only weak  
 Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.  
 Or Nature failed in me, and left some part  
 Not proof enough such object to sustain;  
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps  
 More than enough; at least on her bestowed  
 Too much of ornament, in outward show  
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
 For well I understand in the prime end

Of Nature her the inferiour, in the mind  
And inward faculties, which most excel;  
In outward also her resembling less  
His image who made both, and less expressing  
The character of that dominion given  
O'er other creatures: Yet when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best:  
All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her  
Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shows;  
Authority and Reason on her wait,  
As one intended first, not after made  
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,  
Greatness of mind and Nobleness their seat  
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
About her, as a guard angelick placed.  
To whom the Angel with contracted brow.  
Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;  
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident  
Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou  
Dismiss not her, when most thou needest her nigh,  
By attributing overmuch to things  
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceivest.  
For, what admirest thou, what transports thee so,  
An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well  
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;  
Not thy subjection: Weigh with her thyself;  
Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right  
Well managed; of that skill the more thou knowest,  
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,  
And to realities yield all her shows:  
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
So awful, that with honour thou mayest love  
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind  
Is propagated, seem such dear delight  
Beyond all other; think the same vouchsafed  
To cattle and each beast; which would not be  
To them made common and divulged, if aught  
Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue  
The soul of man, or passion in him move.  
What higher in her society thou findest  
Attractive, human, rational, love still;  
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,  
Wherein true love consists not: Love refines  
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat  
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale  
By which to heavenly love thou mayest ascend,

Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,  
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.  
 To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied.  
 Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught  
 In procreation common to all kinds,  
 (Though higher of the genial bed by far,  
 And with mysterious reverence I deem,)  
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,  
 Those thousand decencies, that daily flow  
 From all her words and actions mixed with love  
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned  
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul;  
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair  
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.  
 Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose  
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,  
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense  
 Variously representing; yet, still free,  
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.  
 To love, thou blamest me not; for Love, thou sayest,  
 Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide;  
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:  
 Love not the heavenly Spirits, and how their love  
 Express they? by looks only? or do they mix  
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?  
 To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed  
 Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,  
 Answered. Let it suffice thee that thou knowest  
 Us happy, and without love no happiness.  
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoyest,  
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy  
 In eminence; and obstacle find none  
 Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;  
 Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,  
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure  
 Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need,  
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.  
 But I can now no more; the parting sun  
 Beyond the Earth's green Cape and verdant Isles  
 Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.  
 Be strong, live happy, and love! But, first of all,  
 Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep  
 His great command; take heed lest passion sway  
 Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will  
 Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,  
 The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!  
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,  
 And all the Blest: Stand fast; to stand or fall  
 Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.  
 Perfect within, no outward aid require;  
 And all temptation to transgress repel.  
 So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus



Followed with benediction. Since to part,  
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal Messenger,  
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore!  
Gentle to me and affable hath been  
Thy condescension, and shall be honoured ever  
With grateful memory: Thou to mankind  
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!  
So parted they; the Angel up to Heaven  
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

## Book IX

No more of talk where God or Angel guest  
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd,  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast; permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change  
Those notes to tragick; foul distrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,  
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given,  
That brought into this world a world of woe,  
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery  
Death's harbinger: Sad talk! yet argument  
Not less but more heroick than the wrath  
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued  
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage  
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;  
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long  
Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son:

If answerable style I can obtain  
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns  
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,  
And dictates to me slumbering; or inspires  
Easy my unpremeditated verse:  
Since first this subject for heroick song  
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;  
Not sedulous by nature to indite  
Wars, hitherto the only argument  
Heroick deem'd chief mastery to dissect  
With long and tedious havock fabled knights  
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude  
Of patience and heroick martyrdom  
Unsung; or to describe races and games,  
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,  
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,

Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights  
 At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast  
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;  
 The skill of artifice or office mean,  
 Not that which justly gives heroick name  
 To person, or to poem. Me, of these  
 Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument  
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise  
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold  
 Climate, or years, damp my intended wing  
 Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,  
 Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.  
 The sun was sunk, and after him the star  
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring  
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter  
 "twixt day and night, and now from end to end  
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round:  
 When satan, who late fled before the threats  
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd  
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent  
 On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap  
 Of heavier on himself, fearless returned  
 From compassing the earth; cautious of day,  
 Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried  
 His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim  
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,  
 The space of seven continued nights he rode  
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line  
 He circled; four times crossed the car of night  
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;  
 On the eighth returned; and, on the coast averse  
 From entrance or Cherubick watch, by stealth  
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,  
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,  
 Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,  
 Into a gulf shot under ground, till part  
 Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:  
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose  
 Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought  
 Where to lie hid; sea he had searched, and land,  
 From Eden over Pontus and the pool  
 Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;  
 Downward as far antarctick; and in length,  
 West from Orontes to the ocean barred  
 At Darien ; thence to the land where flows  
 Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he roamed  
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep  
 Considered every creature, which of all  
 Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found  
 The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.  
 Him after long debate, irresolute  
 Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose

Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide  
From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake  
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtlety  
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,  
Doubt might beget of diabolick power  
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.  
Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief  
His bursting passion into plaints thus poured.  
More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built  
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!  
O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred  
For what God, after better, worse would build?  
Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens  
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,  
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,  
In thee concentrating all their precious beams  
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven  
Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,  
Centring, receivest from all those orbs: in thee,  
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears  
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth  
Of creatures animate with gradual life  
Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.  
With what delight could I have walked thee round,  
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange  
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,  
Now land, now sea and shores with forest crowned,  
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these  
Find place or refuge; and the more I see  
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel  
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
Of contraries: all good to me becomes  
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.  
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heaven  
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;  
Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
By what I seek, but others to make such  
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:  
For only in destroying I find ease  
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroyed,  
Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
For whom all this was made, all this will soon  
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;  
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:  
To me shall be the glory sole among  
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred  
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days  
Continued making; and who knows how long  
Before had been contriving? though perhaps  
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed

From servitude inglorious well nigh half  
 The angelick name, and thinner left the throng  
 Of his adorers: He, to be avenged,  
 And to repair his numbers thus impaired,  
 Whether such virtue spent of old now failed  
 More Angels to create, if they at least  
 Are his created, or, to spite us more,  
 Determined to advance into our room  
 A creature formed of earth, and him endow,  
 Exalted from so base original,  
 With heavenly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed,  
 He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,  
 Him lord pronounced; and, O indignity!  
 Subjected to his service angel-wings,  
 And flaming ministers to watch and tend  
 Their earthly charge: Of these the vigilance  
 I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist  
 Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry  
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find  
 The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds  
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.  
 O foul descent! that I, who erst contended  
 With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained  
 Into a beast; and, mixed with bestial slime,  
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
 That to the highth of Deity aspired!  
 But what will not ambition and revenge  
 Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low  
 As high he soared; obnoxious, first or last,  
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
 Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:  
 Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,  
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite  
 Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,  
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised  
 From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.  
 So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,  
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on  
 His midnight-search, where soonest he might find  
 The serpent; him fast-sleeping soon he found  
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,  
 His head the midst, well stored with subtile wiles:  
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,  
 Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,  
 Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his mouth  
 The Devil entered; and his brutal sense,  
 In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired  
 With act intelligential; but his sleep  
 Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.  
 Now, when as sacred light began to dawn

In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed  
 Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,  
 From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise  
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill  
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,  
 And joined their vocal worship to the quire  
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake  
 The season prime for sweetest scents and airs:  
 Then commune, how that day they best may ply  
 Their growing work: for much their work out-grew  
 The hands' dispatch of two gardening so wide,  
 And Eve first to her husband thus began.  
 Adam, well may we labour still to dress  
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,  
 Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands  
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,  
 Luxurious by restraint; what we by day  
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
 One night or two with wanton growth derides  
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,  
 Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:  
 Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice  
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind  
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct  
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,  
 In yonder spring of roses intermixed  
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:  
 For, while so near each other thus all day  
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near  
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new  
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits  
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun  
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned?  
 To whom mild answer Adam thus returned.  
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond  
 Compare above all living creatures dear!  
 Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed,  
 How we might best fulfil the work which here  
 God hath assigned us; nor of me shalt pass  
 Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found  
 In woman, than to study household good,  
 And good works in her husband to promote.  
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed  
 Labour, as to debar us when we need  
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,  
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,  
 To brute denied, and are of love the food;  
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.  
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,  
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.  
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands

Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide  
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
 Assist us; But, if much converse perhaps  
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:  
 For solitude sometimes is best society,  
 And short retirement urges sweet return.  
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm  
 Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest  
 What hath been warned us, what malicious foe  
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame  
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand  
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find  
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder;  
 Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each  
 To other speedy aid might lend at need:  
 Whether his first design be to withdraw  
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb  
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss  
 Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;  
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side  
 That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.  
 The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,  
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,  
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.  
 To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,  
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,  
 With sweet austere composure thus replied.  
 Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth's Lord!  
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks  
 Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,  
 And from the parting Angel over-heard,  
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,  
 Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.  
 But, that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt  
 To God or thee, because we have a foe  
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.  
 His violence thou fearest not, being such  
 As we, not capable of death or pain,  
 Can either not receive, or can repel.  
 His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers  
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love  
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;  
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,  
 Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?  
 To whom with healing words Adam replied.  
 Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!  
 For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:  
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade  
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid  
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe.  
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses

The tempted with dishonour foul; supposed  
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof  
 Against temptation: Thou thyself with scorn  
 And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,  
 Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,  
 If such affront I labour to avert  
 From thee alone, which on us both at once  
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;  
 Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.  
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;  
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce  
 Angels; nor think superfluous other's aid.  
 I, from the influence of thy looks, receive  
 Access in every virtue; in thy sight  
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,  
 Shame to be overcome or over-reached,  
 Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.  
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel  
 When I am present, and thy trial choose  
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?  
 So spake domestick Adam in his care  
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought  
 Less attributed to her faith sincere,  
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed.  
 If this be our condition, thus to dwell  
 In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,  
 Subtle or violent, we not endued  
 Single with like defence, wherever met;  
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm?  
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,  
 Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem  
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem  
 Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns  
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared  
 By us? who rather double honour gain  
 From his surmise proved false; find peace within,  
 Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.  
 And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed  
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?  
 Let us not then suspect our happy state  
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,  
 As not secure to single or combined.  
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,  
 And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed.  
 To whom thus Adam fervently replied.  
 O Woman, best are all things as the will  
 Of God ordained them: His creating hand  
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left  
 Of all that he created, much less Man,  
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,  
 Secure from outward force; within himself

The danger lies, yet lies within his power:  
 Against his will he can receive no harm.  
 But God left free the will; for what obeys  
 Reason, is free; and Reason he made right,  
 But bid her well be ware, and still erect;  
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,  
 She dictate false; and mis-inform the will  
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.  
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,  
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.  
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;  
 Since Reason not impossibly may meet  
 Some specious object by the foe suborned,  
 And fall into deception unaware,  
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.  
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid  
 Were better, and most likely if from me  
 Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.  
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve  
 First thy obedience; the other who can know,  
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?  
 But, if thou think, trial unsought may find  
 Us both securer than thus warned thou seemest,  
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;  
 Go in thy native innocence, rely  
 On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!  
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.  
 So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve  
 Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied.  
 With thy permission then, and thus forewarned  
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words  
 Touched only; that our trial, when least sought,  
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared,  
 The willinger I go, nor much expect  
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;  
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.  
 Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand  
 Soft she withdrew; and, like a Wood-Nymph light,  
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,  
 Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self  
 In gait surpassed, and Goddess-like deport,  
 Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,  
 But with such gardening tools as Art yet rude,  
 Guiltless of fire, had formed, or Angels brought.  
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,  
 Likest she seemed, Pomona when she fled  
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,  
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.  
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued  
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.  
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return  
 Repeated; she to him as oft engaged



To be returned by noon amid the bower,  
 And all things in best order to invite  
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.  
 O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,  
 Of thy presumed return! event perverse!  
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
 Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;  
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,  
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent  
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back  
 Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss!  
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,  
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;  
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find  
 The only two of mankind, but in them  
 The whole included race, his purposed prey.  
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft  
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,  
 Their tendance, or plantation for delight;  
 By fountain or by shady rivulet  
 He sought them both, but wished his hap might find  
 Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope  
 Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,  
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
 Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,  
 Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round  
 About her glowed, oft stooping to support  
 Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay  
 Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,  
 Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays  
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while  
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,  
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.  
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed  
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;  
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,  
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers  
 Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:  
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned  
 Or of revived Adonis, or renowned  
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;  
 Or that, not mystick, where the sapient king  
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.  
 Much he the place admired, the person more.  
 As one who long in populous city pent,  
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
 Among the pleasant villages and farms  
 Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight;  
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;  
 If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,

What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more;  
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:  
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve  
 Thus early, thus alone: Her heavenly form  
 Angelick, but more soft, and feminine,  
 Her graceful innocence, her every air  
 Of gesture, or least action, overawed  
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved  
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:  
 That space the Evil-one abstracted stood  
 From his own evil, and for the time remained  
 Stupidly good; of enmity disarmed,  
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:  
 But the hot Hell that always in him burns,  
 Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,  
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
 Of pleasure, not for him ordained: then soon  
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.  
 Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet  
 Compulsion thus transported, to forget  
 What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope  
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
 Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,  
 Save what is in destroying; other joy  
 To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass  
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone  
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,  
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,  
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroick built, though of terrestrial mould;  
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,  
 I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain  
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.  
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods!  
 Not terrible, though terrour be in love  
 And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,  
 Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned;  
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.  
 So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed  
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve  
 Addressed his way: not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,  
 Circular base of rising folds, that towered  
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head  
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;  
 With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape  
 And lovely; never since of serpent-kind

Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed,  
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god  
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen;  
 He with Olympias; this with her who bore  
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique  
 At first, as one who sought access, but feared  
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.  
 As when a ship, by skilful steersmen wrought  
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:  
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train  
 Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,  
 To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound  
 Of rusling leaves, but minded not, as used  
 To such disport before her through the field,  
 From every beast; more duteous at her call,  
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.  
 He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,  
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed  
 His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,  
 Fawning; and licked the ground whereon she trod.  
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length  
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad  
 Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue  
 Organick, or impulse of vocal air,  
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.  
 Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps  
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm  
 Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,  
 Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze  
 Insatiate; I thus single; nor have feared  
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.  
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,  
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine  
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore  
 With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,  
 Where universally admired; but here  
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,  
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,  
 Who sees thee? and what is one? who should be seen  
 A Goddess among Gods, adored and served  
 By Angels numberless, thy daily train.  
 So glozed the Tempter, and his proem tuned:  
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way,  
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,  
 Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake.  
 What may this mean? language of man pronounced  
 By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?  
 The first, at least, of these I thought denied  
 To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,

Created mute to all articulate sound:  
 The latter I demur; for in their looks  
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.  
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field  
 I knew, but not with human voice endued;  
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,  
 How camest thou speakable of mute, and how  
 To me so friendly grown above the rest  
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?  
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due.  
 To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.  
 Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!  
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all  
 What thou commandest; and right thou shouldst be obeyed:  
 I was at first as other beasts that graze  
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,  
 As was my food; nor aught but food discerned  
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:  
 Till, on a day roving the field, I chanced  
 A goodly tree far distant to behold  
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,  
 Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;  
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,  
 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense  
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats  
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,  
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.  
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had  
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved  
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,  
 Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent  
 Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.  
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;  
 For, high from ground, the branches would require  
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's: Round the tree  
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire  
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.  
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung  
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill  
 I spared not; for, such pleasure till that hour,  
 At feed or fountain, never had I found.  
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive  
 Strange alteration in me, to degree  
 Of reason in my inward powers; and speech  
 Wanted not long; though to this shape retained.  
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep  
 I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind  
 Considered all things visible in Heaven,  
 Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair and good:  
 But all that fair and good in thy divine  
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,  
 United I beheld; no fair to thine

Equivalent or second! which compelled  
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come  
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declared  
 Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!  
 So talked the spirited sly Snake; and Eve,  
 Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied.  
 Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt  
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved:  
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?  
 For many are the trees of God that grow  
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown  
 To us; in such abundance lies our choice,  
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,  
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands  
 Help to disburden Nature of her birth.  
 To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad.  
 Empress, the way is ready, and not long;  
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,  
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past  
 Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept  
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon  
 Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled  
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,  
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy  
 Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,  
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night  
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,  
 Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,  
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
 Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way  
 To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;  
 There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.  
 So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud  
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree  
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe;  
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.  
 Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,  
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,  
 The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;  
 Wonderous indeed, if cause of such effects.  
 But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;  
 God so commanded, and left that command  
 Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live  
 Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.  
 To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.  
 Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit  
 Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,  
 Yet Lords declared of all in earth or air?  
 To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit  
 Of each tree in the garden we may eat;

But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst  
 The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat  
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.  
 She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold  
 The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love  
 To Man, and indignation at his wrong,  
 New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,  
 Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely and in act  
 Raised, as of some great matter to begin.  
 As when of old some orator renowned,  
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
 Flourished, since mute! to some great cause addressed,  
 Stood in himself collected; while each part,  
 Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;  
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay  
 Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:  
 So standing, moving, or to highth up grown,  
 The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began.  
 O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,  
 Mother of science! now I feel thy power  
 Within me clear; not only to discern  
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways  
 Of highest agents, deemed however wise.  
 Queen of this universe! do not believe  
 Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:  
 How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life  
 To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,  
 Me, who have touched and tasted; yet both live,  
 And life more perfect have attained than Fate  
 Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.  
 Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast  
 Is open? or will God incense his ire  
 For such a petty trespass? and not praise  
 Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain  
 Of death denounced, whatever thing death be,  
 Deterred not from achieving what might lead  
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;  
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil  
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?  
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;  
 Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:  
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.  
 Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;  
 Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,  
 His worshippers? He knows that in the day  
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,  
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then  
 Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,  
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know.  
 That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man,  
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet;  
 I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.

So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off  
 Human, to put on Gods; death to be wished,  
 Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring.  
 And what are Gods, that Man may not become  
 As they, participating God-like food?  
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds:  
 I question it; for this fair earth I see,  
 Warmed by the sun, producing every kind;  
 Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclosed  
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,  
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains  
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies  
 The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?  
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
 Impart against his will, if all be his?  
 Or is it envy? and can envy dwell  
 In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more  
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit.  
 Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!  
 He ended; and his words, replete with guile,  
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:  
 Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold  
 Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound  
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd  
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:  
 Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and waked  
 An eager appetite, raised by the smell  
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,  
 Inclined now grown to touch or taste,  
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first  
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused.  
 Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,  
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired;  
 Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay  
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:  
 Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,  
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree  
 Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;  
 Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding  
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
 By thee communicated, and our want:  
 For good unknown sure is not had; or, had  
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
 In plain then, what forbids he but to know,  
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
 Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death  
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat  
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!  
 How dies the Serpent? he hath eaten and lives,

And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,  
 Irrational till then. For us alone  
 Was death invented? or to us denied  
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?  
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first  
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy  
 The good befallen him, author unsuspect,  
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.  
 What fear I then? rather, what know to fear  
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
 Of God or death, of law or penalty?  
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,  
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
 Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then  
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?  
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour  
 Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!  
 Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,  
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk  
 The guilty Serpent; and well might; for Eve,  
 Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else  
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,  
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true  
 Or fancied so, through expectation high  
 Of knowledge; not was Godhead from her thought.  
 Greedily she ingorged without restraint,  
 And knew not eating death: Sate at length,  
 And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,  
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began.  
 O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees  
 In Paradise! of operation blest  
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed.  
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end  
 Created; but henceforth my early care,  
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise,  
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease  
 Of thy full branches offered free to all;  
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature  
 In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know;  
 Though others envy what they cannot give:  
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here  
 Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,  
 Best guide; not following thee, I had remained  
 In ignorance; thou openest wisdom's way,  
 And givest access, though secret she retire.  
 And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,  
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct  
 Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps  
 May have diverted from continual watch  
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies  
 About him. But to Adam in what sort



Shall I appear? shall I to him make known  
 As yet my change, and give him to partake  
 Full happiness with me, or rather not,  
 But keeps the odds of knowledge in my power  
 Without copartner? so to add what wants  
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
 And render me more equal; and perhaps,  
 A thing not undesirable, sometime  
 Superiour; for, inferiour, who is free  
 This may be well: But what if God have seen,  
 And death ensue? then I shall be no more!  
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;  
 A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,  
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:  
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths  
 I could endure, without him live no life.  
 So saying, from the tree her step she turned;  
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power  
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infused  
 Into the plant scintial sap, derived  
 From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,  
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn  
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;  
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.  
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new  
 Solace in her return, so long delayed:  
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,  
 Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;  
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
 That morn when first they parted: by the tree  
 Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,  
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand  
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,  
 New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.  
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse  
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt;  
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed.  
 Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?  
 Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived  
 Thy presence; agony of love till now  
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more  
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,  
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:  
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree  
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
 Opening the way, but of divine effect  
 To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
 And hath been tasted such: The serpent wise,  
 Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,

Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,  
 Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth  
 Endued with human voice and human sense,  
 Reasoning to admiration; and with me  
 Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I  
 Have also tasted, and have also found  
 The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,  
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,  
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee  
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.  
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;  
 Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.  
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot  
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;  
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree  
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce  
 Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.  
 Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;  
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.  
 On the other side Adam, soon as he heard  
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,  
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill  
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;  
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve  
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:  
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length  
 First to himself he inward silence broke.  
 O fairest of Creation, last and best  
 Of all God's works, Creature in whom excelled  
 Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,  
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!  
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,  
 Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!  
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress  
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate  
 The sacred fruit forbidden! Some cursed fraud  
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,  
 And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee  
 Certain my resolution is to die:  
 How can I live without thee! how forego  
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,  
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn!  
 Should God create another Eve, and I  
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee  
 Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel  
 The link of Nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.  
 So having said, as one from sad dismay  
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbed  
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,  
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned.

Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,  
 And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared,  
 Had it been only coveting to eye  
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,  
 Much more to taste it under ban to touch.  
 But past who can recall, or done undo?  
 Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so  
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact  
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,  
 Profaned first by the serpent, by him first  
 Made common, and unhallowed, ere our taste;  
 Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he lives;  
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,  
 Higher degree of life; inducement strong  
 To us, as likely tasting to attain  
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be  
 But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-Gods.  
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,  
 Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy  
 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,  
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,  
 For us created, needs with us must fail,  
 Dependant made; so God shall uncreate,  
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;  
 Not well conceived of God, who, though his power  
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth  
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary  
 Triumph, and say; "Fickle their state whom God  
 "Most favours; who can please him long? Me first  
 "He ruined, now Mankind; whom will he next?"  
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.  
 However I with thee have fixed my lot,  
 Certain to undergo like doom: If death  
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;  
 So forcible within my heart I feel  
 The bond of Nature draw me to my own;  
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;  
 Our state cannot be severed; we are one,  
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.  
 So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied.  
 O glorious trial of exceeding love,  
 Illustrious evidence, example high!  
 Engaging me to emulate; but, short  
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,  
 Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,  
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,  
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof  
 This day affords, declaring thee resolved,  
 Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,  
 Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,  
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,  
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;

Whose virtue for of good still good proceeds,  
 Direct, or by occasion, hath presented  
 This happy trial of thy love, which else  
 So eminently never had been known?  
 Were it I thought death menaced would ensue  
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die  
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact  
 Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured  
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
 So faithful, love unequalled: but I feel  
 Far otherwise the event; not death, but life  
 Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,  
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before  
 Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.  
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,  
 And fear of death deliver to the winds.  
 So saying, she embraced him, and for joy  
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love  
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur  
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.  
 In recompence for such compliance bad  
 Such recompence best merits from the bough  
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit  
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,  
 Against his better knowledge; not deceived,  
 But fondly overcome with female charm.  
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again  
 In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;  
 Sky loured; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin  
 Original: while Adam took no thought,  
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate  
 Her former trespass feared, the more to sooth  
 Him with her loved society; that now,  
 As with new wine intoxicated both,  
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
 Divinity within them breeding wings,  
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: But that false fruit  
 Far other operation first displayed,  
 Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve  
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him  
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:  
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.  
 Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,  
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;  
 Since to each meaning savour we apply,  
 And palate call judicious; I the praise  
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.  
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained  
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now  
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be

In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,  
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.  
 But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,  
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;  
 For never did thy beauty, since the day  
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned  
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense  
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now  
 Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!  
 So said he, and forbore not glance or toy  
 Of amorous intent; well understood  
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.  
 Her hand he seised; and to a shady bank,  
 Thick over-head with verdant roof imbowered,  
 He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,  
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,  
 And hyacinth; Earth's freshest softest lap.  
 There they their fill of love and love's disport  
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,  
 The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep  
 Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play,  
 Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,  
 That with exhilarating vapour bland  
 About their spirits had played, and inmost powers  
 Made err, was now exhaled; and grosser sleep,  
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams  
 Incumbered, now had left them; up they rose  
 As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,  
 Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds  
 How darkened; innocence, that as a veil  
 Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;  
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,  
 And honour, from about them, naked left  
 To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe  
 Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,  
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap  
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked  
 Shorn of his strength. They destitute and bare  
 Of all their virtue: Silent, and in face  
 Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute:  
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,  
 At length gave utterance to these words constrained.  
 O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear  
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught  
 To counterfeit Man's voice; true in our fall,  
 False in our promised rising; since our eyes  
 Opened we find indeed, and find we know  
 Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;  
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;  
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,  
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity,  
 Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,

And in our faces evident the signs  
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;  
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first  
Be sure then.--How shall I behold the face  
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy  
And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes  
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze  
Insufferably bright. O! might I here  
In solitude live savage; in some glade  
Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable  
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad  
And brown as evening: Cover me, ye Pines!  
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs  
Hide me, where I may never see them more!--  
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise  
What best may for the present serve to hide  
The parts of each from other, that seem most  
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;  
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sewed,  
And girded on our loins, may cover round  
Those middle parts; that this new comer, Shame,  
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.  
So counselled he, and both together went  
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose  
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,  
But such as at this day, to Indians known,  
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms  
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother tree, a pillared shade  
High over-arched, and echoing walks between:  
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,  
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds  
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves  
They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe;  
And, with what skill they had, together sewed,  
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide  
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike  
To that first naked glory! Such of late  
Columbus found the American, so girt  
With feathered cincture; naked else, and wild  
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.  
Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame in part  
Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,  
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears  
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within  
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,  
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore  
Their inward state of mind, calm region once  
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:  
For Understanding ruled not, and the Will  
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now

To sensual Appetite, who from beneath  
 Usurping over sovran Reason claimed  
 Superiour sway: From thus distempered breast,  
 Adam, estranged in look and altered style,  
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed.  
 Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and staid  
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
 Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,  
 I know not whence possessed thee; we had then  
 Remained still happy; not, as now, despoiled  
 Of all our good; shamed, naked, miserable!  
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve  
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.  
 To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve.  
 What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe!  
 Imputest thou that to my default, or will  
 Of wandering, as thou callest it, which who knows  
 But might as ill have happened thou being by,  
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,  
 Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned  
 Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;  
 No ground of enmity between us known,  
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.  
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.  
 Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,  
 Command me absolutely not to go,  
 Going into such danger, as thou saidst?  
 Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;  
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
 Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,  
 Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me.  
 To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied.  
 Is this the love, is this the recompence  
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! expressed  
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;  
 Who might have lived, and joyed immortal bliss,  
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?  
 And am I now upbraided as the cause  
 Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,  
 It seems, in thy restraint: What could I more  
 I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold  
 The danger, and the lurking enemy  
 That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;  
 And force upon free will hath here no place.  
 But confidence then bore thee on; secure  
 Either to meet no danger, or to find  
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps  
 I also erred, in overmuch admiring  
 What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought  
 No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue

The error now, which is become my crime,  
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall  
Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,  
Lest her will rule: restraint she will not brook;  
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,  
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.  
Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;  
And of their vain contest appeared no end.

## Book X

Mean while the heinous and spiteful act  
Of Satan, done in Paradise; and how  
He, in the serpent, had perverted Eve,  
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,  
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye  
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart  
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,  
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind  
Of Man, with strength entire and free will armed,  
Complete to have discovered and repulsed  
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.  
For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered,  
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,  
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,  
(Incurred what could they less?) the penalty;  
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.  
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste  
The angelick guards ascended, mute, and sad,  
For Man; for of his state by this they knew,  
Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had stolen  
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news  
From Earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased  
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare  
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed  
With pity, violated not their bliss.  
About the new-arrived, in multitudes  
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know  
How all befel: They towards the throne supreme,  
Accountable, made haste, to make appear,  
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance  
And easily approved; when the Most High  
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,  
Amidst in thunder uttered thus his voice.  
Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned  
From unsuccessful charge; be not dismayed,  
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,  
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;



Foretold so lately what would come to pass,  
 When first this tempter crossed the gulf from Hell.  
 I told ye then he should prevail, and speed  
 On his bad errand; Man should be seduced,  
 And flattered out of all, believing lies  
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine  
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,  
 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse  
 His free will, to her own inclining left  
 In even scale. But fallen he is; and now  
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass  
 On his transgression,--death denounced that day?  
 Which he presumes already vain and void,  
 Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,  
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find  
 Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.  
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorned.  
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,  
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferred  
 All judgement, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell.  
 Easy it may be seen that I intend  
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee  
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed  
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,  
 And destined Man himself to judge Man fallen.  
 So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright  
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son  
 Blazed forth unclouded Deity: He full  
 Resplendent all his Father manifest  
 Expressed, and thus divinely answered mild.  
 Father Eternal, thine is to decree;  
 Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will  
 Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son beloved,  
 Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go to judge  
 On earth these thy transgressours; but thou knowest,  
 Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,  
 When time shall be; for so I undertook  
 Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain  
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom  
 On me derived; yet I shall temper so  
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most  
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.  
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none  
 Are to behold the judgement, but the judged,  
 Those two; the third best absent is condemned,  
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:  
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs.  
 Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose  
 Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Powers,  
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant,  
 Accompanied to Heaven-gate; from whence  
 Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.

Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods  
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged.  
 Now was the sun in western cadence low  
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,  
 To fan the earth now waked, and usher in  
 The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool,  
 Came the mild Judge, and Intercessour both,  
 To sentence Man: The voice of God they heard  
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds  
 Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,  
 And from his presence hid themselves among  
 The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,  
 Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud.  
 Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet  
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,  
 Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,  
 Where obvious duty ere while appeared unsought:  
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change  
 Absents thee, or what chance detains?--Come forth!  
 He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first  
 To offend; discountenanced both, and discomposed;  
 Love was not in their looks, either to God,  
 Or to each other; but apparent guilt,  
 And shame, and perturbation, and despair,  
 Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.  
 Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief.  
 I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice  
 Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom  
 The gracious Judge without revile replied.  
 My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,  
 But still rejoiced; how is it now become  
 So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who  
 Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,  
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?  
 To whom thus Adam sore beset replied.  
 O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand  
 Before my Judge; either to undergo  
 Myself the total crime, or to accuse  
 My other self, the partner of my life;  
 Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,  
 I should conceal, and not expose to blame  
 By my complaint: but strict necessity  
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;  
 Lest on my head both sin and punishment,  
 However insupportable, be all  
 Devolved; though should I hold my peace, yet thou  
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.--  
 This Woman, whom thou madest to be my help,  
 And gavest me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
 So fit, so acceptable, so divine,  
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill,  
 And what she did, whatever in itself,

Her doing seemed to justify the deed;  
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.  
 To whom the Sovran Presence thus replied.  
 Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey  
 Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,  
 Superiour, or but equal, that to her  
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place  
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,  
 And for thee, whose perfection far excelled  
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorned  
 She was indeed, and lovely, to attract  
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts  
 Were such, as under government well seemed;  
 Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part  
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.  
 So having said, he thus to Eve in few.  
 Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done?  
 To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,  
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge  
 Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied.  
 The Serpent me beguiled, and I did eat.  
 Which when the Lord God heard, without delay  
 To judgement he proceeded on the accused  
 Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer  
 The guilt on him, who made him instrument  
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end  
 Of his creation; justly then accursed,  
 As vitiated in nature: More to know  
 Concerned not Man, (since he no further knew)  
 Nor altered his offence; yet God at last  
 To Satan first in sin his doom applied,  
 Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best:  
 And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.  
 Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed  
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field;  
 Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,  
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.  
 Between thee and the woman I will put  
 Enmity, and between thine and her seed;  
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.  
 So spake this oracle, then verified  
 When Jesus, Son of Mary, second Eve,  
 Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heaven,  
 Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave  
 Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed  
 In open show; and, with ascension bright,  
 Captivity led captive through the air,  
 The realm itself of Satan, long usurped;  
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;  
 Even he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;  
 And to the Woman thus his sentence turned.  
 Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply

By thy conception; children thou shalt bring  
 In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will  
 Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.  
 On Adam last thus judgement he pronounced.  
 Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,  
 And eaten of the tree, concerning which  
 I charged thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof:  
 Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow  
 Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy life;  
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth  
 Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;  
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,  
 Till thou return unto the ground; for thou  
 Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,  
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.  
 So judged he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent;  
 And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day,  
 Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood  
 Before him naked to the air, that now  
 Must suffer change, disdained not to begin  
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;  
 As when he washed his servants feet; so now,  
 As father of his family, he clad  
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,  
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;  
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies;  
 Nor he their outward only with the skins  
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more.  
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,  
 Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.  
 To him with swift ascent he up returned,  
 Into his blissful bosom reassumed  
 In glory, as of old; to him appeased  
 All, though all-knowing, what had passed with Man  
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.  
 Mean while, ere thus was sinned and judged on Earth,  
 Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death,  
 In counterview within the gates, that now  
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
 Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,  
 Sin opening; who thus now to Death began.  
 O Son, why sit we here each other viewing  
 Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives  
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides  
 For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be  
 But that success attends him; if mishap,  
 Ere this he had returned, with fury driven  
 By his avengers; since no place like this  
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large  
 Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,

Or sympathy, or some connatural force,  
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite,  
 With secret amity, things of like kind,  
 By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade  
 Inseparable, must with me along;  
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.  
 But, lest the difficulty of passing back  
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf  
 Impassable, impervious; let us try  
 Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine  
 Not unagreeable, to found a path  
 Over this main from Hell to that new world,  
 Where Satan now prevails; a monument  
 Of merit high to all the infernal host,  
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,  
 Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.  
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn  
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct.  
 Whom thus the meager Shadow answered soon.  
 Go, whither Fate, and inclination strong,  
 Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err  
 The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw  
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
 The savour of death from all things there that live:  
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest  
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.  
 So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell  
 Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock  
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,  
 Against the day of battle, to a field,  
 Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured  
 With scent of living carcasses designed  
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight:  
 So scented the grim Feature, and upturned  
 His nostril wide into the murky air;  
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.  
 Then both from out Hell-gates, into the waste  
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,  
 Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)  
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met  
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea  
 Tost up and down, together crouded drove,  
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell;  
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse  
 Upon the Cronian sea, together drive  
 Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way  
 Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich  
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil  
 Death with his mace petrifick, cold and dry,  
 As with a trident, smote; and fixed as firm  
 As Delos, floating once; the rest his look  
 Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;

And with Asphaltick slime, broad as the gate,  
Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach  
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on  
Over the foaming deep high-arched, a bridge  
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall  
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,  
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,  
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.  
So, if great things to small may be compared,  
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,  
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,  
Came to the sea: and, over Hellespont  
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined,  
And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.  
Now had they brought the work by wonderous art  
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,  
Over the vexed abyss, following the track  
Of Satan to the self-same place where he  
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe  
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare  
Of this round world: With pins of adamant  
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made  
And durable! And now in little space  
The confines met of empyrean Heaven,  
And of this World; and, on the left hand, Hell  
With long reach interposed; three several ways  
In sight, to each of these three places led.  
And now their way to Earth they had descried,  
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!  
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,  
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering  
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:  
Disguised he came; but those his children dear  
Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.  
He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk  
Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape,  
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act  
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded  
Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought  
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend  
The Son of God to judge them, terrified  
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun  
The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath  
Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned  
By night, and listening where the hapless pair  
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,  
Thence gathered his own doom; which understood  
Not instant, but of future time, with joy  
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned;  
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot  
Of this new wonderous pontifice, unhoped  
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.

Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight  
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy encreased.  
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair  
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.  
 O Parent, these are thy magnifick deeds,  
 Thy trophies! which thou viewest as not thine own;  
 Thou art their author, and prime architect:  
 For I no sooner in my heart divined,  
 My heart, which by a secret harmony  
 Still moves with thine, joined in connexion sweet,  
 That thou on earth hadst prospered, which thy looks  
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt,  
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt,  
 That I must after thee, with this thy son;  
 Such fatal consequence unites us three!  
 Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds,  
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure  
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.  
 Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined  
 Within Hell-gates till now; thou us impowered  
 To fortify thus far, and overlay,  
 With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.  
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won  
 What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gained  
 With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged  
 Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,  
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,  
 As battle hath adjudged; from this new world  
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated;  
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide  
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds,  
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;  
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.  
 Whom thus the Prince of darkness answered glad.  
 Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both;  
 High proof ye now have given to be the race  
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,  
 Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty King,)  
 Amply have merited of me, of all  
 The infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door  
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met,  
 Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,  
 Hell and this world, one realm, one continent  
 Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore, while I  
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,  
 To my associate Powers, them to acquaint  
 With these successes, and with them rejoice;  
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,  
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;  
 There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the earth  
 Dominion exercise and in the air,  
 Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declared;

Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.  
My substitutes I send ye, and create  
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might  
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now  
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,  
Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.  
If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell  
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!  
So saying he dismissed them; they with speed  
Their course through thickest constellations held,  
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars looked wan,  
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse  
Then suffered. The other way Satan went down  
The cause to Hell-gate: On either side  
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,  
And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,  
That scorned his indignation: Through the gate,  
Wide open and unguarded, Satan passed,  
And all about found desolate; for those,  
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,  
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all  
Far to the inland retired, about the walls  
Of Pandemonium; city and proud seat  
Of Lucifer, so by allusion called  
Of that bright star to Satan paragoned;  
There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand  
In council sat, solicitous what chance  
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he  
Departing gave command, and they observed.  
As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,  
By Astracan, over the snowy plains,  
Retires; or Bactrin Sophi, from the horns  
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond  
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat  
To Tauris or Casbeen: So these, the late  
Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell  
Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch  
Round their metropolis; and now expecting  
Each hour their great adventurer, from the search  
Of foreign worlds: He through the midst unmarked,  
In show plebeian Angel militant  
Of lowest order, passed; and from the door  
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible  
Ascended his high throne; which, under state  
Of richest texture spread, at the upper end  
Was placed in regal lustre. Down a while  
He sat, and round about him saw unseen:  
At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head  
And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter; clad  
With what permissive glory since his fall  
Was left him, or false glitter: All amazed  
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng



Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,  
 Their mighty Chief returned: loud was the acclaim:  
 Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,  
 Raised from their dark Divan, and with like joy  
 Congratulant approached him; who with hand  
 Silence, and with these words attention, won.  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 For in possession such, not only of right,  
 I call ye, and declare ye now; returned  
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth  
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit  
 Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,  
 And dungeon of our tyrant: Now possess,  
 As Lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven  
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard  
 With peril great achieved. Long were to tell  
 What I have done; what suffered; with what pain  
 Voyaged th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep  
 Of horrible confusion; over which  
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,  
 To expedite your glorious march; but I  
 Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride  
 The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb  
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;  
 That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed  
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar  
 Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found  
 The new created world, which fame in Heaven  
 Long had foretold, a fabrick wonderful  
 Of absolute perfection! therein Man  
 Placed in a Paradise, by our exile  
 Made happy: Him by fraud I have seduced  
 From his Creator; and, the more to encrease  
 Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat  
 Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up  
 Both his beloved Man, and all his world,  
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,  
 Without our hazard, labour, or alarm;  
 To range in, and to dwell, and over Man  
 To rule, as over all he should have ruled.  
 True is, me also he hath judged, or rather  
 Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape  
 Man I deceived: that which to me belongs,  
 Is enmity which he will put between  
 Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;  
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:  
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise,  
 Or much more grievous pain?--Ye have the account  
 Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,  
 But up, and enter now into full bliss?  
 So having said, a while he stood, expecting  
 Their universal shout, and high applause,

To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears  
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,  
A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
Of publick scorn; he wondered, but not long  
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more,  
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;  
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining  
Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,  
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power  
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,  
According to his doom: he would have spoke,  
But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue  
To forked tongue; for now were all transformed  
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories  
To his bold riot: Dreadful was the din  
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now  
With complicated monsters head and tail,  
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbaena dire,  
Cerastes horned, Hydrus, and Elops drear,  
And Dipsas; (not so thick swarmed once the soil  
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle  
Ophiusa,) but still greatest he the midst,  
Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the sun  
Ingendered in the Pythian vale or slime,  
Huge Python, and his power no less he seemed  
Above the rest still to retain; they all  
Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,  
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,  
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array;  
Sublime with expectation when to see  
In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief;  
They saw, but other sight instead! a croud  
Of ugly serpents; horroure on them fell,  
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,  
They felt themselves, now changing; down their arms,  
Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast;  
And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form  
Caught, by contagion; like in punishment,  
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant,  
Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood  
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Used by the Tempter: on that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining  
For one forbidden tree a multitude  
Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;  
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;

But on they rolled in heaps, and, up the trees  
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks  
 That curled Megaera: greedily they plucked  
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;  
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
 Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay  
 Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit  
 Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste  
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayed,  
 Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,  
 With hatefullest disrelish writhed their jaws,  
 With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell  
 Into the same illusion, not as Man  
 Whom they triumphed once lapsed. Thus were they plagued  
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,  
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;  
 Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo,  
 This annual humbling certain numbered days,  
 To dash their pride, and joy, for Man seduced.  
 However, some tradition they dispersed  
 Among the Heathen, of their purchase got,  
 And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called  
 Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide--  
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule  
 Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven  
 And Ops, ere yet Dictaeon Jove was born.  
 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair  
 Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,  
 Once actual; now in body, and to dwell  
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death,  
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
 On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began.  
 Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!  
 What thinkest thou of our empire now, though earned  
 With travel difficult, not better far  
 Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,  
 Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half starved?  
 Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered soon.  
 To me, who with eternal famine pine,  
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;  
 There best, where most with ravine I may meet;  
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems  
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.  
 To whom the incestuous mother thus replied.  
 Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,  
 Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;  
 No homely morsels! and, whatever thing  
 The sithe of Time mows down, devour unspared;  
 Till I, in Man residing, through the race,  
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;  
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways,  
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make  
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature  
 Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,  
 From his transcendent seat the Saints among,  
 To those bright Orders uttered thus his voice.  
 See, with what heat these dogs of Hell advance  
 To waste and havock yonder world, which I  
 So fair and good created; and had still  
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man  
 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute  
 Folly to me; so doth the Prince of Hell  
 And his adherents, that with so much ease  
 I suffer them to enter and possess  
 A place so heavenly; and, conniving, seem  
 To gratify my scornful enemies,  
 That laugh, as if, transported with some fit  
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,  
 At random yielded up to their misrule;  
 And know not that I called, and drew them thither,  
 My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth  
 Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed  
 On what was pure; til, crammed and gorged, nigh burst  
 With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling  
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,  
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave, at last,  
 Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.  
 Then Heaven and Earth renewed shall be made pure  
 To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:  
 Till then, the curse pronounced on both precedes.  
 He ended, and the heavenly audience loud  
 Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of seas,  
 Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,  
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;  
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,  
 Destined Restorer of mankind, by whom  
 New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,  
 Or down from Heaven descend.--Such was their song;  
 While the Creator, calling forth by name  
 His mighty Angels, gave them several charge,  
 As sorted best with present things. The sun  
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat  
 Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call  
 Decrepit winter; from the south to bring  
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon  
 Her office they prescribed; to the other five  
 Their planetary motions, and aspects,  
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,  
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join  
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed

Their influence malignant when to shower,  
 Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,  
 Should prove tempestuous: To the winds they set  
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound  
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll  
 With terrour through the dark aerial hall.  
 Some say, he bid his Angels turn ascense  
 The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,  
 From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed  
 Oblique the centrick globe: Some say, the sun  
 Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road  
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven  
 Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,  
 Up to the Tropick Crab: thence down amain  
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,  
 As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change  
 Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring  
 Perpetual smiled on earth with vernant flowers,  
 Equal in days and nights, except to those  
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day  
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,  
 To recompense his distance, in their sight  
 Had rounded still the horizon, and not known  
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow  
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far  
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit  
 The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turned  
 His course intended; else, how had the world  
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,  
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?  
 These changes in the Heavens, though slow, produced  
 Like change on sea and land; sidereal blast,  
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,  
 Corrupt and pestilent: Now from the north  
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,  
 And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,  
 Boreas, and Caecias, and Argestes loud,  
 And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;  
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south  
 Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds  
 From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce,  
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,  
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,  
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began  
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,  
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational  
 Death introduced, through fierce antipathy:  
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,  
 Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe  
 Of Man, but fled him; or, with countenance grim,

Glared on him passing. These were from without  
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw  
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,  
 To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within;  
 And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,  
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.  
 O miserable of happy! Is this the end  
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late  
 The glory of that glory, who now become  
 Accursed, of blessed? hide me from the face  
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth  
 Of happiness!--Yet well, if here would end  
 The misery; I deserved it, and would bear  
 My own deservings; but this will not serve:  
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,  
 Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard  
 Delightfully, Encrease and multiply;  
 Now death to hear! for what can I encrease,  
 Or multiply, but curses on my head?  
 Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling  
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
 My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure,  
 For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks  
 Shall be the execration: so, besides  
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from me  
 Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;  
 On me, as on their natural center, light  
 Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys  
 Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!  
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay  
 To mould me Man? did I solicit thee  
 From darkness to promote me, or here place  
 In this delicious garden? As my will  
 Concurred not to my being, it were but right  
 And equal to reduce me to my dust;  
 Desirous to resign and render back  
 All I received; unable to perform  
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold  
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,  
 Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added  
 The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable  
 Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out  
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet  
 Mortality my sentence, and be earth  
 Insensible! How glad would lay me down  
 As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,  
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more  
 Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse  
 To me, and to my offspring, would torment me  
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt  
 Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;  
 Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man

Which God inspired, cannot together perish  
 With this corporeal clod; then, in the grave,  
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
 But I shall die a living death? O thought  
 Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath  
 Of life that sinned; what dies but what had life  
 And sin? The body properly had neither,  
 All of me then shall die: let this appease  
 The doubt, since human reach no further knows.  
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
 Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,  
 But mortal doomed. How can he exercise  
 Wrath without end on Man, whom death must end?  
 Can he make deathless death? That were to make  
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself  
 Impossible is held; as argument  
 Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,  
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite,  
 In punished Man, to satisfy his rigour,  
 Satisfied never? That were to extend  
 His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law;  
 By which all causes else, according still  
 To the reception of their matter, act;  
 Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say  
 That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,  
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery  
 From this day onward; which I feel begun  
 Both in me, and without me; and so last  
 To perpetuity;--Ay me!that fear  
 Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution  
 On my defenceless head; both Death and I  
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both;  
 Nor I on my part single; in me all  
 Posterity stands cursed: Fair patrimony  
 That I must leave ye, Sons! O, were I able  
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!  
 So disinherited, how would you bless  
 Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,  
 For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned,  
 It guiltless? But from me what can proceed,  
 But all corrupt; both mind and will depraved  
 Not to do only, but to will the same  
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand  
 In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,  
 Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain,  
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still  
 But to my own conviction: first and last  
 On me, me only, as the source and spring  
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;  
 So might the wrath! Fond wish!couldst thou support  
 That burden, heavier than the earth to bear;  
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided

With that bad Woman? Thus, what thou desirest,  
 And what thou fearest, alike destroys all hope  
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable  
 Beyond all past example and future;  
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.  
 O Conscience! into what abyss of fears  
 And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which  
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!  
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,  
 Through the still night; not now, as ere Man fell,  
 Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air  
 Accompanied; with damps, and dreadful gloom;  
 Which to his evil conscience represented  
 All things with double terrour: On the ground  
 Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground; and oft  
 Cursed his creation; Death as oft accused  
 Of tardy execution, since denounced  
 The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,  
 Said he, with one thrice-acceptable stroke  
 To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,  
 Justice Divine not hasten to be just?  
 But Death comes not at call; Justice Divine  
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries,  
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!  
 With other echo late I taught your shades  
 To answer, and resound far other song.--  
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,  
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,  
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed:  
 But her with stern regard he thus repelled.  
 Out of my sight, thou Serpent! That name best  
 Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false  
 And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,  
 Like his, and colour serpentine, may show  
 Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee  
 Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pretended  
 To hellish falshood, snare them! But for thee  
 I had persisted happy; had not thy pride  
 And wandering vanity, when least was safe,  
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdained  
 Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,  
 Though by the Devil himself; him overweening  
 To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,  
 Fooled and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee  
 To trust thee from my side; imagined wise,  
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;  
 And understood not all was but a show,  
 Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib  
 Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,  
 More to the part sinister, from me drawn;  
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerary  
 To my just number found. O! why did God,



Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven  
 With Spirits masculine, create at last  
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect  
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once  
 With Men, as Angels, without feminine;  
 Or find some other way to generate  
 Mankind? This mischief had not been befallen,  
 And more that shall befall; innumerable  
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,  
 And strait conjunction with this sex: for either  
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such  
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;  
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained  
 By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld  
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late  
 Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound  
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:  
 Which infinite calamity shall cause  
 To human life, and household peace confound.  
 He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,  
 Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing  
 And tresses all disordered, at his feet  
 Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought  
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.  
 Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven  
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart  
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,  
 Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant  
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
 Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,  
 My only strength and stay: Forlorn of thee,  
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
 Between us two let there be peace; both joining,  
 As joined in injuries, one enmity  
 Against a foe by doom express assigned us,  
 That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not  
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen;  
 On me already lost, me than thyself  
 More miserable! Both have sinned; but thou  
 Against God only; I against God and thee;  
 And to the place of judgement will return,  
 There with my cries importune Heaven; that all  
 The sentence, from thy head removed, may light  
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;  
 Me, me only, just object of his ire!  
 She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,  
 Immoveable, till peace obtained from fault  
 Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought  
 Commiseration: Soon his heart relented

Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,  
Now at his feet submissive in distress;  
Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,  
His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid:  
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,  
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon.  
Unwary, and too desirous, as before,  
So now of what thou knowest not, who desirest  
The punishment all on thyself; alas!  
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain  
His full wrath, whose thou feelest as yet least part,  
And my displeasure bearest so ill. If prayers  
Could alter high decrees, I to that place  
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,  
That on my head all might be visited;  
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,  
To me committed, and by me exposed.  
But rise;--let us no more contend, nor blame  
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive  
In offices of love, how we may lighten  
Each other's burden, in our share of woe;  
Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,  
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil;  
A long day's dying, to augment our pain;  
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived.  
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied.  
Adam, by sad experiment I know  
How little weight my words with thee can find,  
Found so erroneous; thence by just event  
Found so unfortunate: Nevertheless,  
Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place  
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain  
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart  
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide  
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,  
Tending to some relief of our extremes,  
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,  
As in our evils, and of easier choice.  
If care of our descent perplex us most,  
Which must be born to certain woe, devoured  
By Death at last; and miserable it is  
To be to others cause of misery,  
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring  
Into this cursed world a woeful race,  
That after wretched life must be at last  
Food for so foul a monster; in thy power  
It lies, yet ere conception to prevent  
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.  
Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death  
Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two  
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.  
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,

Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
 From love's due rights, nuptial embraces sweet;  
 And with desire to languish without hope,  
 Before the present object languishing  
 With like desire; which would be misery  
 And torment less than none of what we dread;  
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free  
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, --  
 Let us seek Death; -- or, he not found, supply  
 With our own hands his office on ourselves:  
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,  
 That show no end but death, and have the power,  
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,  
 Destruction with destruction to destroy? --  
 She ended here, or vehement despair  
 Broke off the rest: so much of death her thoughts  
 Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale.  
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed,  
 To better hopes his more attentive mind  
 Labouring had raised; and thus to Eve replied.  
 Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems  
 To argue in thee something more sublime  
 And excellent, than what thy mind contemns;  
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes  
 That excellence thought in thee; and implies,  
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret  
 For loss of life and pleasure overloved.  
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end  
 Of misery, so thinking to evade  
 The penalty pronounced; doubt not but God  
 Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire, than so  
 To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,  
 So snatched, will not exempt us from the pain  
 We are by doom to pay; rather, such acts  
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest  
 To make death in us live: Then let us seek  
 Some safer resolution, which methinks  
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed  
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise  
 The Serpent's head; piteous amends! unless  
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,  
 Satan; who, in the serpent, hath contrived  
 Against us this deceit: To crush his head  
 Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost  
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days  
 Resolved, as thou proposest; so our foe  
 Shal 'scape his punishment ordained, and we  
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads.  
 No more be mentioned then of violence  
 Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,  
 That cuts us off from hope; and savours only  
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,

Reluctance against God and his just yoke  
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild  
And gracious temper he both heard, and judged,  
Without wrath or reviling; we expected  
Immediate dissolution, which we thought  
Was meant by death that day; when lo! to thee  
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,  
And bringing forth; soon recompensed with joy,  
Fruit of thy womb: On me the curse aslope  
Glanced on the ground; with labour I must earn  
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;  
My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold  
Or heat should injure us, his timely care  
Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands  
Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged;  
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear  
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,  
And teach us further by what means to shun  
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!  
Which now the sky, with various face, begins  
To show us in this mountain; while the winds  
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks  
Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek  
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish  
Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star  
Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams  
Reflected may with matter sere foment;  
Or, by collision of two bodies, grind  
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds  
Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their shock,  
Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame, driven down  
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine;  
And sends a comfortable heat from far,  
Which might supply the sun: Such fire to use,  
And what may else be remedy or cure  
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,  
He will instruct us praying, and of grace  
Beseeching him; so as we need not fear  
To pass commodiously this life, sustained  
By him with many comforts, till we end  
In dust, our final rest and native home.  
What better can we do, than, to the place  
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall  
Before him reverent; and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears  
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek

## Book XI

Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn  
 From his displeasure; in whose look serene,  
 When angry most he seemed and most severe,  
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone?  
 So spake our father penitent; nor Eve  
 Felt less remorse: they, forthwith to the place  
 Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell  
 Before him reverent; and both confessed  
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begged; with tears  
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air  
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.  
 Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood  
 Praying; for from the mercy-seat above  
 Prevenient grace descending had removed  
 The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh  
 Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breathed  
 Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer  
 Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight  
 Than loudest oratory: Yet their port  
 Not of mean suitors; nor important less  
 Seemed their petition, than when the ancient pair  
 In fables old, less ancient yet than these,  
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore  
 The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine  
 Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers  
 Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds  
 Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed  
 Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad  
 With incense, where the golden altar fumed,  
 By their great intercessour, came in sight  
 Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son  
 Presenting, thus to intercede began.  
 See\$ Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung  
 From thy implanted grace in Man; these sighs  
 And prayers, which in this golden censer mixed  
 With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;  
 Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed  
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees  
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen  
 From innocence. Now therefore, bend thine ear  
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;  
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me  
 Interpret for him; me, his advocate  
 And propitiation; all his works on me,  
 Good, or not good, ingraft; my merit those  
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.  
 Accept me; and, in me, from these receive  
 The smell of peace toward mankind: let him live

Before thee reconciled, at least his days  
 Numbered, though sad; till death, his doom, (which I  
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,)

To better life shall yield him: where with me  
 All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss;  
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.  
 To whom the Father, without cloud, serene.  
 All thy request for Man, accepted Son,  
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree:  
 But, longer in that Paradise to dwell,  
 The law I gave to Nature him forbids:  
 Those pure immortal elements, that know,  
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,  
 Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off,  
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,  
 And mortal food; as may dispose him best  
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first  
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt  
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts  
 Created him endowed; with happiness,  
 And immortality: that fondly lost,  
 This other served but to eternize woe;  
 Till I provided death: so death becomes  
 His final remedy; and, after life,  
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined  
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,  
 Waked in the renovation of the just,  
 Resigns him up with Heaven and Earth renewed.  
 But let us call to synod all the Blest,  
 Through Heaven's wide bounds: from them I will not hide  
 My judgements; how with mankind I proceed,  
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw,  
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed.  
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
 To the bright minister that watched; he blew  
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps  
 When God descended, and perhaps once more  
 To sound at general doom. The angelick blast  
 Filled all the regions: from their blisful bowers  
 Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,  
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat  
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light  
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high;  
 And took their seats; till from his throne supreme  
 The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will.  
 O Sons, like one of us Man is become  
 To know both good and evil, since his taste  
 Of that defended fruit; but let him boast  
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;  
 Happier! had it sufficed him to have known  
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.  
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,

My motions in him; longer than they move,  
His heart I know, how variable and vain,  
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand  
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,  
And live for ever, dream at least to live  
For ever, to remove him I decree,  
And send him from the garden forth to till  
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.  
Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;  
Take to thee from among the Cherubim  
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend,  
Or in behalf of Man, or to invade  
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:  
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God  
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair;  
From hallowed ground the unholy; and denounce  
To them, and to their progeny, from thence  
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint  
At the sad sentence rigorously urged,  
(For I behold them softened, and with tears  
Bewailing their excess,) all terror hide.  
If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal  
To Adam what shall come in future days,  
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix  
My covenant in the Woman's seed renewed;  
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:  
And on the east side of the garden place,  
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
Cherubick watch; and of a sword the flame  
Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,  
And guard all passage to the tree of life:  
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove  
To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;  
With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude.  
He ceased; and the arch-angelick Power prepared  
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright  
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each  
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape  
Spangled with eyes more numerous than those  
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,  
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while,  
To re-salute the world with sacred light,  
Leucothea waked; and with fresh dews imbalmed  
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve  
Had ended now their orisons, and found  
Strength added from above; new hope to spring  
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet linked;  
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed.  
Eve, easily my faith admit, that all  
The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;

But, that from us aught should ascend to Heaven  
 So prevalent as to concern the mind  
 Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,  
 Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer  
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne  
 Even to the seat of God. For since I sought  
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease;  
 Kneeled, and before him humbled all my heart;  
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,  
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew  
 That I was heard with favour; peace returned  
 Home to my breast, and to my memory  
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;  
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now  
 Assures me that the bitterness of death  
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,  
 Eve rightly called, mother of all mankind,  
 Mother of all things living, since by thee  
 Man is to live; and all things live for Man.  
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.  
 Ill-worthy I such title should belong  
 To me transgressour; who, for thee ordained  
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach  
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:  
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
 That I, who first brought death on all, am graced  
 The source of life; next favourable thou,  
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,  
 Far other name deserving. But the field  
 To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,  
 Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,  
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins  
 Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth;  
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined  
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,  
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?  
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content.  
 So spake, so wished much humbled Eve; but Fate  
 Subscribed not: Nature first gave signs, impressed  
 On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed,  
 After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight  
 The bird of Jove, stooped from his aery tour,  
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;  
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,  
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,  
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;  
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.  
 Adam observed, and with his eye the chase  
 Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve thus spake.  
 O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,  
 Which Heaven, by these mute signs in Nature, shows



Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn  
 Us, haply too secure, of our discharge  
 From penalty, because from death released  
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,  
 Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,  
 And thither must return, and be no more?  
 Why else this double object in our sight  
 Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground,  
 One way the self-same hour? why in the east  
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light  
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws  
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
 And slow descends with something heavenly fraught?  
 He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands  
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now  
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt;  
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt  
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.  
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw  
 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;  
 Nor that, which on the flaming mount appeared  
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,  
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise  
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,  
 War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch  
 In their bright stand there left his Powers, to seize  
 Possession of the garden; he alone,  
 To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,  
 Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,  
 While the great visitant approached, thus spake.  
 Eve\$ now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
 Of us will soon determine, or impose  
 New laws to be observed; for I descry,  
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,  
 One of the heavenly host; and, by his gait,  
 None of the meanest; some great Potentate  
 Or of the Thrones above; such majesty  
 Invests him coming! yet not terrible,  
 That I should fear; nor sociably mild,  
 As Raphael, that I should much confide;  
 But solemn and sublime; whom not to offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.  
 He ended: and the Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
 Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms  
 A military vest of purple flowed,  
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain  
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old  
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof;  
 His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime  
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side,

As in a glistering zodiack, hung the sword,  
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.  
 Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from his state  
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared.  
 Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs:  
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seisure many days  
 Given thee of grace; wherein thou mayest repent,  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 Mayest cover: Well may then thy Lord, appeased,  
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come,  
 And send thee from the garden forth to till  
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.  
 He added not; for Adam at the news  
 Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen  
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
 Discovered soon the place of her retire.  
 O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!  
 Must I thus leave thee\$ Paradise? thus leave  
 Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades,  
 Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,  
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day  
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,  
 That never will in other climate grow,  
 My early visitation, and my last  
 ;t even, which I bred up with tender hand  
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!  
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank  
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?  
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorned  
 With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee  
 How shall I part, and whither wander down  
 Into a lower world; to this obscure  
 And wild? how shall we breathe in other air  
 Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?  
 Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild.  
 Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign  
 What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,  
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:  
 Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes  
 Thy husband; whom to follow thou art bound;  
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil.  
 Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp  
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,  
 To Michael thus his humble words addressed.  
 Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or named  
 Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem  
 Prince above princes! gently hast thou told

Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
 And in performing end us; what besides  
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,  
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,  
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
 Recess, and only consolation left  
 Familiar to our eyes! all places else  
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate;  
 Nor knowing us, nor known: And, if by prayer  
 Incessant I could hope to change the will  
 Of Him who all things can, I would not cease  
 To weary him with my assiduous cries:  
 But prayer against his absolute decree  
 No more avails than breath against the wind,  
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
 This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,  
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprived  
 His blessed countenance: Here I could frequent  
 With worship place by place where he vouchsafed  
 Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,  
 'On this mount he appeared; under this tree  
 'Stood visible; among these pines his voice  
 'I heard; here with him at this fountain talked:  
 So many grateful altars I would rear  
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone  
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory,  
 Or monument to ages; and thereon  
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers:  
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek  
 His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?  
 For though I fled him angry, yet recalled  
 To life prolonged and promised race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts  
 Of glory; and far off his steps adore.  
 To whom thus Michael with regard benign.  
 Adam, thou knowest Heaven his, and all the Earth;  
 Not this rock only; his Omnipresence fills  
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
 Fomented by his virtual power and warmed:  
 All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,  
 No despicable gift; surmise not then  
 His presence to these narrow bounds confined  
 Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been  
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread  
 All generations; and had hither come  
 From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate  
 And reverence thee, their great progenitor.  
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down  
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:  
 Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,  
 God is, as here; and will be found alike

Present; and of his presence many a sign  
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round  
 With goodness and paternal love, his face  
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.  
 Which that thou mayest believe, and be confirmed  
 Ere thou from hence depart; know, I am sent  
 To show thee what shall come in future days  
 To thee, and to thy offspring: good with bad  
 Expect to hear; supernal grace contending  
 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn  
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
 And pious sorrow; equally inured  
 By moderation either state to bear,  
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead  
 Safest thy life, and best prepared endure  
 Thy mortal passage when it comes.--Ascend  
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)  
 Here sleep below; while thou to foresight wakest;  
 As once thou sleptst, while she to life was formed.  
 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied.  
 Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path  
 Thou ledest me; and to the hand of Heaven submit,  
 However chastening; to the evil turn  
 My obvious breast; arming to overcome  
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,  
 If so I may attain. -- So both ascend  
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,  
 Of Paradise the highest; from whose top  
 The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,  
 Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay.  
 Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,  
 Whereon, for different cause, the Tempter set  
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness;  
 To show him all Earth's kingdoms, and their glory.  
 His eye might there command wherever stood  
 City of old or modern fame, the seat  
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls  
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,  
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,  
 To Paquin of Sinaean kings; and thence  
 To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,  
 Down to the golden Chersonese; or where  
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since  
 In Hispahan; or where the Russian Ksar  
 In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,  
 Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken  
 The empire of Negus to his utmost port  
 Ercoco, and the less maritim kings  
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
 And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm  
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;  
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount

The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,  
 Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;  
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway  
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled  
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons  
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights  
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,  
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight  
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue  
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see;  
 And from the well of life three drops instilled.  
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,  
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
 That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,  
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced;  
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled.  
 Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold  
 The effects, which thy original crime hath wrought  
 In some to spring from thee; who never touched  
 The excepted tree; nor with the snake conspired;  
 Nor sinned thy sin; yet from that sin derive  
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.  
 His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,  
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves  
 New reaped; the other part sheep-walks and folds;  
 I' the midst an altar as the land-mark stood,  
 Rustick, of grassy sord; thither anon  
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
 First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,  
 Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next,  
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid  
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strowed,  
 On the cleft wood, and all due rights performed:  
 His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven  
 Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam;  
 The other's not, for his was not sincere;  
 Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,  
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone  
 That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,  
 Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused.  
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
 Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried.  
 O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen  
 To that meek man, who well had sacrificed;  
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?  
 To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied.  
 These two are brethren, Adam, and to come

Out of thy loins; the unjust the just hath slain,  
 For envy that his brother's offering found  
 From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact  
 Will be avenged; and the other's faith, approved,  
 Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,  
 Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire.  
 Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!  
 But have I now seen Death? Is this the way  
 I must return to native dust? O sight  
 Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,  
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!  
 To whom thus Michael. Death thou hast seen  
 In his first shape on Man; but many shapes  
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead  
 To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense  
 More terrible at the entrance, than within.  
 Some, as thou sawest, by violent stroke shall die;  
 By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more  
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring  
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew  
 Before thee shall appear; that thou mayest know  
 What misery the inabstinence of Eve  
 Shall bring on Men. Immediately a place  
 Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;  
 A lazarus-house it seemed; wherein were laid  
 Numbers of all diseased; all maladies  
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms  
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,  
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colick-pangs,  
 Demoniack phrenzy, moaping melancholy,  
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.  
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair  
 Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;  
 And over them triumphant Death his dart  
 Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked  
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.  
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
 Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,  
 Though not of woman born; compassion quelled  
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears  
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;  
 And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed.  
 O miserable mankind, to what fall  
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!  
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given  
 To be thus wrested from us? rather, why  
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew  
 What we receive, would either no accept  
 Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down;

Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus  
 The image of God in Man, created once  
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,  
 To such unsightly sufferings be debased  
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,  
 Retaining still divine similitude  
 In part, from such deformities be free,  
 And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?  
 Their Maker's image, answered Michael, then  
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified  
 To serve uncontrolled Appetite; and took  
 His image whom they served, a brutish vice,  
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.  
 Therefore so abject is their punishment,  
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;  
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced;  
 While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules  
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they  
 God's image did not reverence in themselves.  
 I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.  
 But is there yet no other way, besides  
 These painful passages, how we may come  
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?  
 There is, said Michael, if thou well observe  
 The rule of Not too much; by temperance taught,  
 In what thou eatest and drinkest; seeking from thence  
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
 Till many years over thy head return:  
 So mayest thou live; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop  
 Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease  
 Gathered, nor harshly plucked; for death mature:  
 This is Old Age; but then, thou must outlive  
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change  
 To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then,  
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,  
 To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,  
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign  
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry  
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume  
 The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.  
 Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong  
 Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,  
 Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;  
 Which I must keep till my appointed day  
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend  
 My dissolution. Michael replied.  
 Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest  
 Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven:  
 And now prepare thee for another sight.  
 He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
 Were tents of various hue; by some, were herds  
 Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound

Of instruments, that made melodious chime,  
 Was heard, of harp and organ; and, who moved  
 Their stops and chords, was seen; his volant touch,  
 Instinct through all proportions, low and high,  
 Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.  
 In other part stood one who, at the forge  
 Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass  
 Had melted, (whether found where casual fire  
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,  
 Down to the veins of earth; thence gliding hot  
 To some cave's mouth; or whether washed by stream  
 From underground;) the liquid ore he drained  
 Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed  
 First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought  
 Fusil or graven in metal. After these,  
 But on the hither side, a different sort  
 From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,  
 Down to the plain descended; by their guise  
 Just men they seemed, and all their study bent  
 To worship God aright, and know his works  
 Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve  
 Freedom and peace to Men; they on the plain  
 Long had not walked, when from the tents, behold!  
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
 In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung  
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:  
 The men, though grave, eyed them; and let their eyes  
 Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net  
 Fast caught, they liked; and each his liking chose;  
 And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,  
 Love's harbinger, appeared; then, all in heat  
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke  
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:  
 With feast and musick all the tents resound.  
 Such happy interview, and fair event  
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,  
 And charming symphonies, attached the heart  
 Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,  
 The bent of nature; which he thus expressed.  
 True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest;  
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope  
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;  
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;  
 Here Nature seems fulfilled in all her ends.  
 To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best  
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;  
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end  
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.  
 Those tents thou sawest so pleasant, were the tents  
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear  
 Of arts that polish life, inventers rare;



Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.  
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;  
 For that fair female troop thou sawest, that seemed  
 Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
 Woman's domestick honour and chief praise;  
 Bred only and completed to the taste  
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,  
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye:  
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives  
 Religious titled them the sons of God,  
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame  
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
 Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,  
 Erelong to swim at large; and laugh, for which  
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.  
 To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.  
 O pity and shame, that they, who to live well  
 Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread  
 Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!  
 But still I see the tenour of Man's woe  
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.  
 From Man's effeminate slackness it begins,  
 Said the Angel, who should better hold his place  
 By wisdom, and superiour gifts received.  
 But now prepare thee for another scene.  
 He looked, and saw wide territory spread  
 Before him, towns, and rural works between;  
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,  
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,  
 Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise;  
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,  
 Single or in array of battle ranged  
 Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood;  
 One way a band select from forage drives  
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
 From a fat meadow ground; or fleecy flock,  
 Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,  
 Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,  
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;  
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join;  
 Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies  
 With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,  
 Deserted: Others to a city strong  
 Lay siege, encamped; by battery, scale, and mine,  
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
 With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire;  
 On each hand slaughter, and gigantick deeds.  
 In other part the sceptered heralds call  
 To council, in the city-gates; anon  
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,

Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,  
In factious opposition; till at last,  
Of middle age one rising, eminent  
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
Of justice, or religion, truth, and peace,  
And judgement from above: him old and young  
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,  
Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence  
Unseen amid the throng: so violence  
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.  
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide  
Lamenting turned full sad; O! what are these,  
Death's ministers, not men? who thus deal death  
Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew  
His brother: for of whom such massacre  
Make they, but of their brethren; men of men  
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven  
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?  
To whom thus Michael. These are the product  
Of those ill-mated marriages thou sawest;  
Where good with bad were matched, who of themselves  
Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mixed,  
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.  
Such were these giants, men of high renown;  
For in those days might only shall be admired,  
And valour and heroick virtue called;  
To overcome in battle, and subdue  
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
Of human glory; and for glory done  
Of triumph, to be styled great conquerours  
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;  
Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.  
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;  
And what most merits fame, in silence hid.  
But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst  
The only righteous in a world preverse,  
And therefore hated, therefore so beset  
With foes, for daring single to be just,  
And utter odious truth, that God would come  
To judge them with his Saints; him the Most High  
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds  
Did, as thou sawest, receive, to walk with God  
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,  
Exempt from death; to show thee what reward  
Awaits the good; the rest what punishment;  
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.  
He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed;  
The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;  
All now was turned to jollity and game,

To luxury and riot, feast and dance;  
 Marrying or prostituting, as befel,  
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair  
 Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.  
 At length a reverend sire among them came,  
 And of their doings great dislike declared,  
 And testified against their ways; he oft  
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,  
 Triumphs or festivals; and to them preached  
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls  
 In prison, under judgements imminent:  
 But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceased  
 Contending, and removed his tents far off;  
 Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;  
 Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth;  
 Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door  
 Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,  
 For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!  
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,  
 Came sevens, and pairs; and entered in as taught  
 Their order: last the sire and his three sons,  
 With their four wives; and God made fast the door.  
 Mean while the south-wind rose, and, with black wings  
 Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove  
 From under Heaven; the hills to their supply  
 Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,  
 Sent up amain; and now the thickened sky  
 Like a dark cieling stood; down rushed the rain  
 Impetuous; and continued, till the earth  
 No more was seen: the floating vessel swum  
 Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow  
 Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else  
 Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp  
 Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,  
 Sea without shore; and in their palaces,  
 Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped  
 And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,  
 All left, in one small bottom swum embarked.  
 How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,  
 Depopulation! Thee another flood,  
 Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drowned,  
 And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared  
 By the Angel, on thy feet thou stoodest at last,  
 Though comfortless; as when a father mourns  
 His children, all in view destroyed at once;  
 And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.  
 O visions ill foreseen! Better had I  
 Lived ignorant of future! so had borne  
 My part of evil only, each day's lot  
 Enough to bear; those now, that were dispensed

The burden of many ages, on me light  
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth  
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,  
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek  
 Henceforth to be foretold, what shall befall  
 Him or his children; evil he may be sure,  
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;  
 And he the future evil shall no less  
 In apprehension than in substance feel,  
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,  
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped  
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,  
 Wandering that watery desart: I had hope,  
 When violence was ceased, and war on earth,  
 All would have then gone well; peace would have crowned  
 With length of happy days the race of Man;  
 But I was far deceived; for now I see  
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.  
 How comes it thus? unfold, celestial Guide,  
 And whether here the race of Man will end.  
 To whom thus Michael. Those, whom last thou sawest  
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they  
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent  
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void;  
 Who, having spilt much blood, and done much wast  
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby  
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;  
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,  
 Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride  
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.  
 The conquered also, and enslaved by war,  
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose  
 And fear of God; from whom their piety feigned  
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid  
 Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,  
 Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,  
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords  
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear  
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried:  
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved;  
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;  
 One man except, the only son of light  
 In a dark age, against example good,  
 Against allurements, custom, and a world  
 Offended: fearless of reproach and scorn,  
 The grand-child, with twelve sons encreased, departs  
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter called  
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;  
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
 Into the sea: To sojourn in that land  
 He comes, invited by a younger son  
 In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds

Raise him to be the second in that realm  
 Of Pharaoh: There he dies, and leaves his race  
 Growing into a nation, and now grown  
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks  
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways  
 Shall them admonish; and before them set  
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe  
 And full of peace; denouncing wrath to come  
 On their impenitence; and shall return  
 Of them derided, but of God observed  
 The one just man alive; by his command  
 Shall build a wonderous ark, as thou beheldst,  
 To save himself, and household, from amidst  
 A world devote to universal wrack.  
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast  
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,  
 And sheltered round; but all the cataracts  
 Of Heaven set open on the Earth shall pour  
 Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,  
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp  
 Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise  
 Above the highest hills: Then shall this mount  
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved  
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,  
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,  
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,  
 And there take root an island salt and bare,  
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang:  
 To teach thee that God attributes to place  
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought  
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.  
 And now, what further shall ensue, behold.  
 He looked, and saw the ark hull on the flood,  
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,  
 Driven by a keen north-wind, that, blowing dry,  
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;  
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass  
 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,  
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink  
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole  
 With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt  
 His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.  
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,  
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.  
 And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear;  
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,  
 Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.  
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,  
 And after him, the surer messenger,  
 A dove sent forth once and again to spy  
 Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light:

The second time returning, in his bill  
An olive-leaf he brings, pacifick sign:  
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark  
The ancient sire descends, with all his train;  
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,  
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds  
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow  
Conspicuous with three lifted colours gay,  
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.  
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,  
Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy broke forth.  
O thou, who future things canst represent  
As present, heavenly Instructor! I revive  
At this last sight; assured that Man shall live,  
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.  
Far less I now lament for one whole world  
Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice  
For one man found so perfect, and so just,  
That God vouchsafes to raise another world  
From him, and all his anger to forget.  
But say, what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven  
Distended, as the brow of God appeased?  
Or serve they, as a flowery verge, to bind  
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,  
Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?  
To whom the Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aimest;  
So willingly doth God remit his ire,  
Though late repenting him of Man depraved;  
Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw  
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh  
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,  
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,  
That he relents, not to blot out mankind;  
And makes a covenant never to destroy  
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea  
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,  
With man therein or beast; but, when he brings  
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set  
His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look,  
And call to mind his covenant: Day and night,  
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,  
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new,  
Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

## Book XII

As one who in his journey bates at noon,  
Though bent on speed; so here the Arch-Angel paused  
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,

If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;  
 Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.  
 Thus thou hast seen one world begin, and end;  
 And Man, as from a second stock, proceed.  
 Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive  
 Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine  
 Must needs impair and weary human sense:  
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate;  
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.  
 This second source of Men, while yet but few,  
 And while the dread of judgement past remains  
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,  
 With some regard to what is just and right  
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;  
 Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,  
 Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,  
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,  
 With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,  
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed; and dwell  
 Long time in peace, by families and tribes,  
 Under paternal rule: till one shall rise  
 Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content  
 With fair equality, fraternal state,  
 Will arrogate dominion undeserved  
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
 Concord and law of nature from the earth;  
 Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game)  
 With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse  
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous:  
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled  
 Before the Lord; as in despite of Heaven,  
 Or from Heaven, claiming second sovranty;  
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,  
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.  
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins  
 With him or under him to tyrannize,  
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find  
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell:  
 Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build  
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven;  
 And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed  
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost;  
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
 But God, who oft descends to visit men  
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks  
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon,  
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower  
 Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets  
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase  
 Quite out their native language; and, instead,  
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:

Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud,  
 Among the builders; each to other calls  
 Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,  
 As mocked they storm: great laughter was in Heaven,  
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange,  
 And hear the din: Thus was the building left  
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion named.  
 Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeased.  
 O execrable son! so to aspire  
 Above his brethren; to himself assuming  
 Authority usurped, from God not given:  
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,  
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
 By his donation; but man over men  
 He made not lord; such title to himself  
 Reserving, human left from human free.  
 But this usurper his encroachment proud  
 Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends  
 Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food  
 Will he convey up thither, to sustain  
 Himself and his rash army; where thin air  
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,  
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?  
 To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorrest  
 That son, who on the quiet state of men  
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,  
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty  
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells  
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:  
 Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,  
 Immediately inordinate desires,  
 And upstart passions, catch the government  
 From reason; and to servitude reduce  
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits  
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign  
 Over free reason, God, in judgement just,  
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;  
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall  
 His outward freedom: Tyranny must be;  
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.  
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low  
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,  
 But justice, and some fatal curse annexed,  
 Deprives them of their outward liberty;  
 Their inward lost: Witness the irreverent son  
 Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame  
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,  
 Servant of servants, on his vicious race.  
 Thus will this latter, as the former world,  
 Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,  
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw



His presence from among them, and avert  
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth  
 To leave them to their own polluted ways;  
 And one peculiar nation to select  
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,  
 A nation from one faithful man to spring:  
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
 Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men  
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,  
 While yet the patriarch lived, who 'scaped the flood,  
 As to forsake the living God, and fall  
 To worship their own work in wood and stone  
 For Gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes  
 To call by vision, from his father's house,  
 His kindred, and false Gods, into a land  
 Which he will show him; and from him will raise  
 A mighty nation; and upon him shower  
 His benediction so, that in his seed  
 All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;  
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:  
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith  
 He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil,  
 Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford  
 To Haran; after him a cumbrous train  
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;  
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth  
 With God, who called him, in a land unknown.  
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents  
 Pitched about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain  
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives  
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
 From Hameth northward to the Desert south;  
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed;)  
 From Hermon east to the great western Sea;  
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold  
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore  
 Mount Carmel; here, the double-founted stream,  
 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons  
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.  
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth  
 Shall in his seed be blessed: By that seed  
 Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise  
 The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon  
 Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,  
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,  
 A son, and of his son a grand-child, leaves;  
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown:  
 The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs  
 From Canaan to a land hereafter called  
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile  
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
 Into the sea. To sojourn in that land

He comes, invited by a younger son  
 In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds  
 Raise him to be the second in that realm  
 Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race  
 Growing into a nation, and now grown  
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks  
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves  
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:  
 Till by two brethren (these two brethren call  
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim  
 His people from enthralment, they return,  
 With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.  
 But first, the lawless tyrant, who denies  
 To know their God, or message to regard,  
 Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire;  
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;  
 Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill  
 With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;  
 His cattle must of rot and murren die;  
 Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,  
 And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,  
 Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptians sky,  
 And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;  
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,  
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down  
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;  
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;  
 Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born  
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds  
 The river-dragon tamed at length submits  
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft  
 Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice  
 More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage  
 Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea  
 Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,  
 As on dry land, between two crystal walls;  
 Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand  
 Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:  
 Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,  
 Though present in his Angel; who shall go  
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;  
 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;  
 To guide them in their journey, and remove  
 Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues:  
 All night he will pursue; but his approach  
 Darkness defends between till morning watch;  
 Then through the fiery pillar, and the cloud,  
 God looking forth will trouble all his host,  
 And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command  
 Moses once more his potent rod extends

Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;  
On their embattled ranks the waves return,  
And overwhelm their war: The race elect  
Safe toward Canaan from the shore advance  
Through the wild Desert, not the readiest way;  
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,  
War terrify them inexpert, and fear  
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather  
Inglorious life with servitude; for life  
To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.  
This also shall they gain by their delay  
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found  
Their government, and their great senate choose  
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained:  
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top  
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself  
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,  
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain  
To civil justice; part, religious rites  
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types  
And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise  
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve  
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God  
To mortal ear is dreadful: They beseech  
That Moses might report to them his will,  
And terrour cease; he grants what they besought,  
Instructed that to God is no access  
Without Mediator, whose high office now  
Moses in figure bears; to introduce  
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,  
And all the Prophets in their age the times  
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites  
Established, such delight hath God in Men  
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes  
Among them to set up his tabernacle;  
The Holy One with mortal Men to dwell:  
By his prescript a sanctuary is framed  
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein  
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,  
The records of his covenant; over these  
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings  
Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn  
Seven lamps as in a zodiack representing  
The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud  
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;  
Save when they journey, and at length they come,  
Conducted by his Angel, to the land  
Promised to Abraham and his seed:--The rest  
Were long to tell; how many battles fought  
How many kings destroyed; and kingdoms won;  
Or how the sun shall in mid Heaven stand still

A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand,  
'And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,  
'Till Israel overcome! so call the third  
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him  
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.  
Here Adam interposed. O sent from Heaven,  
Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things  
Thou hast revealed; those chiefly, which concern  
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find  
Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much eased;  
Erewhile perplexed with thoughts, what would become  
Of me and all mankind: But now I see  
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;  
Favour unmerited by me, who sought  
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.  
This yet I apprehend not, why to those  
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth  
So many and so various laws are given;  
So many laws argue so many sins  
Among them; how can God with such reside?  
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin  
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;  
And therefore was law given them, to evince  
Their natural pravity, by stirring up  
Sin against law to fight: that when they see  
Law can discover sin, but not remove,  
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,  
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude  
Some blood more precious must be paid for Man;  
Just for unjust; that, in such righteousness  
To them by faith imputed, they may find  
Justification towards God, and peace  
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies  
Cannot appease; nor Man the mortal part  
Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.  
So law appears imperfect; and but given  
With purpose to resign them, in full time,  
Up to a better covenant; disciplined  
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;  
From imposition of strict laws to free  
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear  
To filial; works of law to works of faith.  
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
Highly beloved, being but the minister  
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;  
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,  
His name and office bearing, who shall quell  
The adversary-Serpent, and bring back  
Through the world's wilderness long-wandered Man  
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan placed,

Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins  
National interrupt their publick peace,  
Provoking God to raise them enemies;  
From whom as oft he saves them penitent  
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom  
The second, both for piety renowned  
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
Irrevocable, that his regal throne  
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing  
All Prophecy, that of the royal stock  
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise  
A Son, the Woman's seed to thee foretold,  
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust  
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings  
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.  
But first, a long succession must ensue;  
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,  
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents  
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.  
Such follow him, as shall be registered  
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;  
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults  
Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense  
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,  
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,  
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
To that proud city, whose high walls thou sawest  
Left in confusion; Babylon thence called.  
There in captivity he lets them dwell  
The space of seventy years; then brings them back,  
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn  
To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.  
Returned from Babylon by leave of kings  
Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God  
They first re-edify; and for a while  
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown  
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;  
But first among the priests dissention springs,  
Men who attend the altar, and should most  
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings  
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize  
The scepter, and regard not David's sons;  
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true  
Anointed King Messiah might be born  
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star,  
Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come;  
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:  
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire  
Of squadroned Angels hear his carol sung.

A virgin is his mother, but his sire  
 The power of the Most High: He shall ascend  
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign  
 With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens.  
 He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy  
 Surcharged, as had like grief been dewed in tears,  
 Without the vent of words; which these he breathed.  
 O prophet of glad tidings, finisher  
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain;  
 Why our great Expectation should be called  
 The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, hail,  
 High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins  
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son  
 Of God Most High: so God with Man unites!  
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise  
 Expect with mortal pain: Say where and when  
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel.  
 To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,  
 As of a duel, or the local wounds  
 Of head or heel: Not therefore joins the Son  
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil  
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome  
 Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,  
 Disabled, not to give thee thy death's wound:  
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,  
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
 In thee, and in thy seed: Nor can this be,  
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed  
 On penalty of death, and suffering death;  
 The penalty to thy transgression due,  
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:  
 So only can high Justice rest appaid.  
 The law of God exact he shall fulfil  
 Both by obedience and by love, though love  
 Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment  
 He shall endure, by coming in the flesh  
 To a reproachful life, and cursed death;  
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
 In his redemption; and that his obedience,  
 Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits  
 To save them, not their own, though legal, works.  
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,  
 Seised on by force, judged, and to death condemned  
 A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross  
 By his own nation; slain for bringing life:  
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies,  
 The law that is against thee, and the sins  
 Of all mankind, with him there crucified,  
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
 In this his satisfaction; so he dies,

But soon revives; Death over him no power  
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light  
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise  
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,  
His death for Man, as many as offered life  
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace  
By faith not void of works: This God-like act  
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,  
In sin for ever lost from life; this act  
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,  
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;  
And fix far deeper in his head their stings  
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,  
Or theirs whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,  
A gentle wafting to immortal life.  
Nor after resurrection shall he stay  
Longer on earth, than certain times to appear  
To his disciples, men who in his life  
Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge  
To teach all nations what of him they learned  
And his salvation; them who shall believe  
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign  
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life  
Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,  
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.  
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,  
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins  
Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons  
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;  
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.  
Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend  
With victory, triumphing through the air  
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains  
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;  
Then enter into glory, and resume  
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high  
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,  
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,  
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead;  
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward  
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,  
Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth  
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.  
So spake the Arch-Angel Michael; then paused,  
As at the world's great period; and our sire,  
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied.  
O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!  
That all this good of evil shall produce,  
And evil turn to good; more wonderful

Than that which by creation first brought forth  
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By me done, and occasioned; or rejoice  
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;  
 To God more glory, more good-will to Men  
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.  
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven  
 Must re-ascend, what will betide the few  
 His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,  
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide  
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal  
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?  
 Be sure they will, said the Angel; but from Heaven  
 He to his own a Comforter will send,  
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell  
 His Spirit within them; and the law of faith,  
 Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,  
 To guide them in all truth; and also arm  
 With spiritual armour, able to resist  
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;  
 What man can do against them, not afraid,  
 Though to the death; against such cruelties  
 With inward consolations recompensed,  
 And oft supported so as shall amaze  
 Their proudest persecutors: For the Spirit,  
 Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
 To evangelize the nations, then on all  
 Baptized, shall them with wonderous gifts endue  
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,  
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win  
 Great numbers of each nation to receive  
 With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: At length  
 Their ministry performed, and race well run,  
 Their doctrine and their story written left,  
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,  
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,  
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven  
 To their own vile advantages shall turn  
 Of lucre and ambition; and the truth  
 With superstitions and traditions taint,  
 Left only in those written records pure,  
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,  
 Places, and titles, and with these to join  
 Secular power; though feigning still to act  
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating  
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and given  
 To all believers; and, from that pretence,  
 Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force  
 On every conscience; laws which none shall find  
 Left them inrolled, or what the Spirit within



Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
 But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind  
 His consort Liberty? what, but unbuild  
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,  
 Their own faith, not another's? for, on earth,  
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard  
 Infallible? yet many will presume:  
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise  
 On all, who in the worship persevere  
 Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,  
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms  
 Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire  
 Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith  
 Rarely be found: So shall the world go on,  
 To good malignant, to bad men benign;  
 Under her own weight groaning; till the day  
 Appear of respiration to the just,  
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return  
 Of him so lately promised to thy aid,  
 The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,  
 Now ampler known thy Saviour and thy Lord;  
 Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be revealed  
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise  
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,  
 New Heavens, new Earth, ages of endless date,  
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love;  
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.  
 He ended; and thus Adam last replied.  
 How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,  
 Measured this transient world, the race of time,  
 Till time stand fixed! Beyond is all abyss,  
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.  
 Greatly-instructed I shall hence depart;  
 Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill  
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;  
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire.  
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,  
 And love with fear the only God; to walk  
 As in his presence; ever to observe  
 His providence; and on him sole depend,  
 Merciful over all his works, with good  
 Still overcoming evil, and by small  
 Accomplishing great things, by things deemed weak  
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise  
 By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake  
 Is fortitude to highest victory,  
 And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;  
 Taught this by his example, whom I now  
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.  
 To whom thus also the Angel last replied.  
 This having learned, thou hast attained the sum

Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars  
 Thou knewest by name, and all the ethereal powers,  
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,  
 Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,  
 And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,  
 And all the rule, one empire; only add  
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,  
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,  
 By name to come called charity, the soul  
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth  
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.--  
 Let us descend now therefore from this top  
 Of speculation; for the hour precise  
 Exacts our parting hence; and see! the guards,  
 By me encamped on yonder hill, expect  
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,  
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round:  
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;  
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed  
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed  
 To meek submission: thou, at season fit,  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;  
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her seed to come  
 (For by the Woman's seed) on all mankind:  
 That ye may live, which will be many days,  
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,  
 With cause, for evils past; yet much more cheered  
 With meditation on the happy end.  
 He ended, and they both descend the hill;  
 Descended, Adam to the bower, where Eve  
 Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her waked;  
 And thus with words not sad she him received.  
 Whence thou returnest, and whither wentest, I know;  
 For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress  
 Wearied I fell asleep: But now lead on;  
 In me is no delay; with thee to go,  
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,  
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me  
 Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,  
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.  
 This further consolation yet secure  
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,  
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,  
 By me the Promised Seed shall all restore.  
 So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard  
 Well pleased, but answered not: For now, too nigh  
 The Arch-Angel stood; and, from the other hill  
 To their fixed station, all in bright array

The Cherubim descended; on the ground  
Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist  
Risen from a river o'er the marish glides,  
And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel  
Homeward returning. High in front advanced,  
The brandished sword of God before them blazed,  
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,  
And vapour as the Libyan air adust,  
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat  
In either hand the hastening Angel caught  
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate  
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast  
To the subjected plain; then disappeared.  
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld  
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,  
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate  
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:  
Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;  
The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:  
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way.

[The End]

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 01

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,  
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That, to the height of this great argument,  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first--for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,  
Nor the deep tract of Hell--say first what cause  
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,  
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress his will  
For one restraint, lords of the World besides.  
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,  
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host  
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring  
To set himself in glory above his peers,  
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,  
If he opposed, and with ambitious aim  
Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,  
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In adamant chains and penal fire,  
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night  
To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,  
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,

Confounded, though immortal. But his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,  
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,  
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.  
 At once, as far as Angels ken, he views  
 The dismal situation waste and wild.  
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,  
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
 No light; but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all, but torture without end  
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.  
 Such place Eternal Justice has prepared  
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordained  
 In utter darkness, and their portion set,  
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven  
 As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.  
 Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and named  
 Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,  
 And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:--  
 "If thou beest he--but O how fallen! how changed  
 From him who, in the happy realms of light  
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
 Myriads, though bright!--if he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise  
 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined  
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest  
 From what height fallen: so much the stronger proved  
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,  
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,  
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contentions brought along  
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,  
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?  
All is not lost--the unconquerable will,  
And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
And courage never to submit or yield:  
And what is else not to be overcome?  
That glory never shall his wrath or might  
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
With suppliant knee, and deify his power  
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late  
Doubted his empire--that were low indeed;  
That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,  
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;  
Since, through experience of this great event,  
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,  
We may with more successful hope resolve  
To wage by force or guile eternal war,  
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,  
Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain,  
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;  
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:--

"O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers  
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war  
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds  
Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,  
And put to proof his high supremacy,  
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,  
Too well I see and rue the dire event  
That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,  
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host  
In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
As far as Gods and heavenly Essences  
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,  
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
Here swallowed up in endless misery.  
But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now  
Of force believe almighty, since no less  
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)  
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,  
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,  
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
By right of war, whate'er his business be,  
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,  
Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep?  
What can it the avail though yet we feel  
Strength undiminished, or eternal being  
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied:--

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,  
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure--  
To do aught good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil;  
Which oftentimes may succeed so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
But see! the angry Victor hath recalled  
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,  
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid  
The fiery surge that from the precipice  
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,  
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn  
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,  
The seat of desolation, void of light,  
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend  
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;  
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;  
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,  
Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,  
How overcome this dire calamity,  
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,  
If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,  
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes  
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides  
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,  
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,  
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den  
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast  
Leviathan, which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream.  
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,  
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,  
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,  
Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.

So stretched out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,  
Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence  
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will  
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
That with reiterated crimes he might  
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
Evil to others, and enraged might see  
How all his malice served but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn  
On Man by him seduced, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool  
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames  
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled  
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.  
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,  
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land  
He lights--if it were land that ever burned  
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,  
And such appeared in hue as when the force  
Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side  
Of thundering Etna, whose combustible  
And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,  
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,  
And leave a singed bottom all involved  
With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole  
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;  
Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood  
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,  
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat  
That we must change for Heaven?--this mournful gloom  
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he  
Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: farthest from him is best  
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme  
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,  
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,  
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
Receive thy new possessor--one who brings  
A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.  
What matter where, if I be still the same,  
And what I should be, all but less than he  
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:



Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,  
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:  
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.  
But wherefore let us then our faithful friends,  
Th' associates and co-partners of our loss,  
Lie thus astonished on th' oblivious pool,  
And call them not to share with us their part  
In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub  
Thus answered:--"Leader of those armies bright  
Which, but th' Omnipotent, none could have foiled!  
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
Of hope in fears and dangers--heard so oft  
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults  
Their surest signal--they will soon resume  
New courage and revive, though now they lie  
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,  
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;  
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height!"

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend  
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,  
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,  
Behind him cast. The broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.  
His spear--to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
Of some great admiral, were but a wand--  
He walked with, to support uneasy steps  
Over the burning marl, not like those steps  
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.  
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach  
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called  
His legions--Angel Forms, who lay entranced  
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge  
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed  
Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld  
From the safe shore their floating carcasses  
And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,  
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,

Under amazement of their hideous change.  
He called so loud that all the hollow deep  
Of Hell resounded:--"Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven--once yours; now lost,  
If such astonishment as this can seize  
Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place  
After the toil of battle to repose  
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find  
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds  
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood  
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon  
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
Th' advantage, and, descending, tread us down  
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?  
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"

They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when men went to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed  
Innumerable. As when the potent rod  
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,  
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud  
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,  
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear  
Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
Their course, in even balance down they light  
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:  
A multitude like which the populous North  
Poured never from her frozen loins to pass  
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.  
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,  
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood  
Their great Commander--godlike Shapes, and Forms  
Excelling human; princely Dignities;  
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,  
Though on their names in Heavenly records now  
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased  
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.  
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve

Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,  
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,  
By falsities and lies the greatest part  
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake  
God their Creator, and th' invisible  
Glory of him that made them to transform  
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned  
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
And devils to adore for deities:  
Then were they known to men by various names,  
And various idols through the heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,  
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,  
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth  
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof?

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell  
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix  
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,  
Their altars by his altar, gods adored  
Among the nations round, and durst abide  
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned  
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed  
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,  
Abominations; and with cursed things  
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,  
And with their darkness durst affront his light.  
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;  
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,  
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire  
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,  
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His temple right against the temple of God  
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.  
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
From Aroar to Nebo and the wild  
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
And Horonaim, Seon's real, beyond  
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,  
And Eleale to th' Asphaltic Pool:  
Peor his other name, when he enticed  
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,  
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged  
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove

Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,  
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts  
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth--those male,  
 These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,  
 Not tried or manacled with joint or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,  
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes,  
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.  
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left  
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low  
 Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called  
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built  
 By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,  
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell  
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,  
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock  
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood  
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale  
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,  
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries  
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark  
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,  
 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,  
 Where he fell flat and shamed his worshippers:  
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man  
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high  
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,  
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
 Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat  
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks

Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.  
 He also against the house of God was bold:  
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king--  
 Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
 God's altar to disparage and displace  
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods  
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared  
 A crew who, under names of old renown--  
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train--  
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused  
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek  
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape  
 Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed  
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king  
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,  
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox--  
 Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed  
 From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke  
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.  
 Belial came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd  
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood  
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he  
 In temples and at altars, when the priest  
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled  
 With lust and violence the house of God?  
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,  
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,  
 And injury and outrage; and, when night  
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night  
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might:  
 The rest were long to tell; though far renowned  
 Th' Ionian gods--of Javan's issue held  
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,  
 Their boasted parents;--Titan, Heaven's first-born,  
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized  
 By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,  
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;  
 So Jove usurping reigned. These, first in Crete  
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top  
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,  
 Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,  
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
 Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old  
 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,

And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared  
Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief  
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast  
Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised  
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.  
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared  
His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed  
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
Th' imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:  
At which the universal host up-sent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,  
With orient colours waving: with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move  
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders--such as raised  
To height of noblest temper heroes old  
Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase  
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
Breathing united force with fixed thought,  
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed  
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now  
Advanced in view they stand--a horrid front  
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,  
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief  
Had to impose. He through the armed files  
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse  
The whole battalion views--their order due,  
Their visages and stature as of gods;  
Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,

Glories: for never, since created Man,  
 Met such embodied force as, named with these,  
 Could merit more than that small infantry  
 Warred on by cranes--though all the giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined  
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
 Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds  
 In fable or romance of Uther's son,  
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore  
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed  
 Their dread Commander. He, above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
 Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appeared  
 Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess  
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air  
 Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,  
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
 On half the nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone  
 Above them all th' Archangel: but his face  
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows  
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride  
 Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast  
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold  
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
 (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned  
 For ever now to have their lot in pain--  
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced  
 Of Heaven, and from eteranl splendours flung  
 For his revolt--yet faithful how they stood,  
 Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire  
 Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,  
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,  
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared  
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend  
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round  
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.  
 Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,  
 Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last  
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way:--  
 "O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers  
 Matchless, but with th' Almighty!--and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,

As this place testifies, and this dire change,  
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,  
Forseeing or presaging, from the depth  
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared  
How such united force of gods, how such  
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,  
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?  
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,  
If counsels different, or danger shunned  
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure  
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
Consent or custom, and his regal state  
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed--  
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,  
So as not either to provoke, or dread  
New war provoked: our better part remains  
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,  
What force effected not; that he no less  
At length from us may find, who overcomes  
By force hath overcome but half his foe.  
Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife  
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long  
Intended to create, and therein plant  
A generation whom his choice regard  
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.  
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps  
Our first eruption--thither, or elsewhere;  
For this infernal pit shall never hold  
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th' Abyss  
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;  
For who can think submission? War, then, war  
Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew  
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged  
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms  
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,  
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top  
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
Shone with a glossy scurf--undoubted sign  
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,  
A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands  
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,



Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,  
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on--  
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell  
 From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts  
 Were always downward bent, admiring more  
 The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,  
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed  
 In vision beatific. By him first  
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
 Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands  
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth  
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
 Opened into the hill a spacious wound,  
 And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire  
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those  
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell  
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,  
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame  
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone  
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
 What in an age they, with incessant toil  
 And hands innumerable, scarce perform.  
 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,  
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude  
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,  
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.  
 A third as soon had formed within the ground  
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells  
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;  
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,  
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.  
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge  
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound  
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet--  
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
 With golden architrave; nor did there want  
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;  
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon  
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
 Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine  
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat  
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile  
 Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,  
 Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide  
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth  
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,  
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row  
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed

With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light  
As from a sky. The hasty multitude  
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,  
And some the architect. His hand was known  
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,  
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,  
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders bright.  
Nor was his name unheard or unadored  
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell  
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn  
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
A summer's day, and with the setting sun  
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,  
On Lemnos, th' Aegaeon isle. Thus they relate,  
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now  
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape  
By all his engines, but was headlong sent,  
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged Heralds, by command  
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony  
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim  
A solemn council forthwith to be held  
At Pandemonium, the high capital  
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called  
From every band and squared regiment  
By place or choice the worthiest: they anon  
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came  
Attended. All access was thronged; the gates  
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall  
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold  
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair  
Defied the best of Paynim chivalry  
To mortal combat, or career with lance),  
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,  
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees  
In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,  
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive  
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer  
Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd  
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,  
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed  
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,  
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room  
Throng numberless--like that pygmean race

Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,  
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side  
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon  
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth  
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance  
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;  
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,  
Though without number still, amidst the hall  
Of that infernal court. But far within,  
And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
In close recess and secret conclave sat,  
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,  
Frequent and full. After short silence then,  
And summons read, the great consult began.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 02

High on a throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wealth or Ormus and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised  
To that bad eminence; and, from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success untaught,  
His proud imaginations thus displayed:--

"Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven!--  
For, since no deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,  
I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent  
Celestial Virtues rising will appear  
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate!--  
Me though just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,  
Did first create your leader--next, free choice  
With what besides in council or in fight  
Hath been achieved of merit--yet this loss,  
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more  
Established in a safe, unenvied throne,  
Yielded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? Where there is, then, no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From faction: for none sure will claim in Hell  
Precedence; none whose portion is so small  
Of present pain that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more! With this advantage, then,  
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,  
More than can be in Heaven, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper than prosperity  
Could have assured us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open war or covert guile,  
We now debate. Who can advise may speak."

He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,  
Stood up--the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deemed  
Equal in strength, and rather than be less  
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,  
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake:--

"My sentence is for open war. Of wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those

Contrive who need, or when they need; not now.  
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest--  
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait  
The signal to ascend--sit lingering here,  
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place  
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,  
The prison of his ryranny who reigns  
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,  
Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once  
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,  
Turning our tortures into horrid arms  
Against the Torturer; when, to meet the noise  
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear  
Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angels, and his throne itself  
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,  
His own invented torments. But perhaps  
The way seems difficult, and steep to scale  
With upright wing against a higher foe!  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,  
That in our porper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat; descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,  
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight  
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy, then;  
Th' event is feared! Should we again provoke  
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find  
To our destruction, if there be in Hell  
Fear to be worse destroyed! What can be worse  
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned  
In this abhorred deep to utter woe!  
Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
Must exercise us without hope of end  
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge  
Inexorably, and the torturing hour,  
Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus,  
We should be quite abolished, and expire.  
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense  
His utmost ire? which, to the height enraged,  
Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
To nothing this essential--happier far  
Than miserable to have eternal being!--  
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,  
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:

Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."

He ended frowning, and his look denounced  
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous  
To less than gods. On th' other side up rose  
Belial, in act more graceful and humane.  
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed  
For dignity composed, and high exploit.  
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue  
Dropped manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low--

To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds  
Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,  
And with persuasive accent thus began:--

"I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate, if what was urged  
Main reason to persuade immediate war  
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;  
When he who most excels in fact of arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled  
With armed watch, that render all access  
Impregnable: oft on the bordering Deep  
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing  
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,  
Scorning surprise. Or, could we break our way  
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise  
With blackest insurrection to confound  
Heaven's purest light, yet our great Enemy,  
All incorruptible, would on his throne  
Sit unpolled, and th' ethereal mould,  
Incapable of stain, would soon expel  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,  
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope  
Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage;  
And that must end us; that must be our cure--  
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,  
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated Night,  
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe  
Can give it, or will ever? How he can  
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
Belike through impotence or unaware,

To give his enemies their wish, and end  
Them in his anger whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? 'Wherefore cease we, then?'  
Say they who counsel war; 'we are decreed,  
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
What can we suffer worse?' Is this, then, worst--  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?  
What when we fled amain, pursued and struck  
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought  
The Deep to shelter us? This Hell then seemed  
A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay  
Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse.  
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,  
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,  
And plunge us in the flames; or from above  
Should intermitted vengeance arm again  
His red right hand to plague us? What if all  
Her stores were opened, and this firmament  
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall  
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,  
Designing or exhorting glorious war,  
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled,  
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey  
Or racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk  
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains,  
There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.  
War, therefore, open or concealed, alike  
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile  
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's height  
All these our motions vain sees and derides,  
Not more almighty to resist our might  
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.  
Shall we, then, live thus vile--the race of Heaven  
Thus trampled, thus expelled, to suffer here  
Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,  
By my advice; since fate inevitable  
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,  
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,  
Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust  
That so ordains. This was at first resolved,  
If we were wise, against so great a foe  
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
I laugh when those who at the spear are bold  
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear  
What yet they know must follow--to endure  
Exile, or igominy, or bonds, or pain,  
The sentence of their Conqueror. This is now

Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit  
His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,  
Not mind us not offending, satisfied  
With what is punished; whence these raging fires  
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.  
Our purer essence then will overcome  
Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;  
Or, changed at length, and to the place conformed  
In temper and in nature, will receive  
Familiar the fierce heat; and, void of pain,  
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;  
Besides what hope the never-ending flight  
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change  
Worth waiting--since our present lot appears  
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
If we procure not to ourselves more woe."

Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,  
Counselled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,  
Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:--

"Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven  
We war, if war be best, or to regain  
Our own right lost. Him to unthroned we then  
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield  
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.  
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain  
The latter; for what place can be for us  
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme  
We overpower? Suppose he should relent  
And publish grace to all, on promise made  
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we  
Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne  
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
Forced hallelujahs, while he lordly sits  
Our envied sovereign, and his altar breathes  
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,  
Our servile offerings? This must be our task  
In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome  
Eternity so spent in worship paid  
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,  
By force impossible, by leave obtained  
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state  
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek  
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own  
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,  
Free and to none accountable, preferring  
Hard liberty before the easy yoke  
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear  
Then most conspicuous when great things of small,  
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,  
We can create, and in what place so'er



Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain  
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world  
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire  
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,  
 And with the majesty of darkness round  
 Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar.  
 Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!  
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light  
 Imitate when we please? This desert soil  
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;  
 Nor want we skill or art from whence to raise  
 Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?  
 Our torments also may, in length of time,  
 Become our elements, these piercing fires  
 As soft as now severe, our temper changed  
 Into their temper; which must needs remove  
 The sensible of pain. All things invite  
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state  
 Of order, how in safety best we may  
 Compose our present evils, with regard  
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
 All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."

He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled  
 Th' assembly as when hollow rocks retain  
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance  
 Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay  
 After the tempest. Such applause was heard  
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,  
 Advising peace: for such another field  
 They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear  
 Of thunder and the sword of Michael  
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
 To found this nether empire, which might rise,  
 By policy and long process of time,  
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.  
 Which when Beelzebub perceived--than whom,  
 Satan except, none higher sat--with grave  
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed  
 A pillar of state. Deep on his front engraven  
 Deliberation sat, and public care;  
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,  
 Majestic, though in ruin. Sage he stood  
 With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear  
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look  
 Drew audience and attention still as night  
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:--  
 "Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,  
 Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now  
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called

Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
 Inclines--here to continue, and build up here  
 A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,  
 And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed  
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt  
 From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league  
 Banded against his throne, but to remain  
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,  
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserved  
 His captive multitude. For he, to be sure,  
 In height or depth, still first and last will reign  
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part  
 By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule  
 Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.  
 What sit we then projecting peace and war?  
 War hath determined us and foiled with loss  
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none  
 Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given  
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,  
 And stripes and arbitrary punishment  
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
 But, to our power, hostility and hate,  
 Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,  
 Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least  
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice  
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?  
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
 With dangerous expedition to invade  
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,  
 Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place  
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven  
 Err not)--another World, the happy seat  
 Of some new race, called Man, about this time  
 To be created like to us, though less  
 In power and excellence, but favoured more  
 Of him who rules above; so was his will  
 Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath  
 That shook Heaven's whole circumference confirmed.  
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould  
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power  
 And where their weakness: how attempted best,  
 By force of subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,  
 And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure  
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,  
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left  
 To their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,  
 Some advantageous act may be achieved  
 By sudden onset--either with Hell-fire

To waste his whole creation, or possess  
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,  
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,  
 Seduce them to our party, that their God  
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand  
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass  
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise  
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,  
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
 Their frail original, and faded bliss--  
 Faded so soon! Advise if this be worth  
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
 Hatching vain empires." Thus beelzebub  
 Pleaded his devilish counsel--first devised  
 By Satan, and in part proposed: for whence,  
 But from the author of all ill, could spring  
 So deep a malice, to confound the race  
 Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
 The great Creator? But their spite still serves  
 His glory to augment. The bold design  
 Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
 Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent  
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:--  
 "Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,  
 Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye are,  
 Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep  
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,  
 Nearer our ancient seat--perhaps in view  
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms,  
 And opportune excursion, we may chance  
 Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone  
 Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,  
 Secure, and at the brightening orient beam  
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,  
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,  
 Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send  
 In search of this new World? whom shall we find  
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet  
 The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,  
 And through the palpable obscure find out  
 His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,  
 Upborne with indefatigable wings  
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
 The happy Isle? What strength, what art, can then  
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe,  
 Through the strict senteries and stations thick  
 Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
 All circumspection: and we now no less  
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send  
 The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
 His look suspense, awaiting who appeared  
 To second, or oppose, or undertake  
 The perilous attempt. But all sat mute,  
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each  
 In other's countenance read his own dismay,  
 Astonished. None among the choice and prime  
 Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found  
 So hardy as to proffer or accept,  
 Alone, the dreadful voyage; till, at last,  
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised  
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride  
 Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:--  
 "O Progeny of Heaven! Empyrean Thrones!  
 With reason hath deep silence and demur  
 Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the way  
 And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.  
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,  
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
 Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,  
 Barred over us, prohibit all egress.  
 These passed, if any pass, the void profound  
 Of unessential Night receives him next,  
 Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being  
 Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.  
 If thence he scape, into whatever world,  
 Or unknown region, what remains him less  
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?  
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,  
 And this imperial sovereignty, adorned  
 With splendour, armed with power, if aught proposed  
 And judged of public moment in the shape  
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter  
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,  
 Refusing to accept as great a share  
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due  
 Of hazard more as he above the rest  
 High honoured sits? Go, therefore, mighty Powers,  
 Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home,  
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
 The present misery, and render Hell  
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm  
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain  
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch  
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad  
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
 Deliverance for us all. This enterprise  
 None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose  
 The Monarch, and prevented all reply;  
 Prudent lest, from his resolution raised,

Others among the chief might offer now,  
Certain to be refused, what erst they feared,  
And, so refused, might in opinion stand  
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.  
Their rising all at once was as the sound  
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend  
With awful reverence prone, and as a God  
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.  
Nor failed they to express how much they praised  
That for the general safety he despised  
His own: for neither do the Spirits damned  
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast  
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,  
Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.

Thus they their doubtful consultations dark  
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:  
As, when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread  
Heaven's cheerful face, the louring element  
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow or shower,  
If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,  
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.  
O shame to men! Devil with devil damned  
Firm concord holds; men only disagree  
Of creatures rational, though under hope  
Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,  
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife  
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars  
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:  
As if (which might induce us to accord)  
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,  
That day and night for his destruction wait!

The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth  
In order came the grand infernal Peers:  
Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seemed  
Alone th' antagonist of Heaven, nor less  
Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,  
And god-like imitated state: him round  
A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed  
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.  
Then of their session ended they bid cry  
With trumpet's regal sound the great result:  
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,  
By herald's voice explained; the hollow Abyss  
Heard far adn wide, and all the host of Hell  
With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised  
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers  
 Disband; and, wandering, each his several way  
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
 Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find  
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
 The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.  
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,  
 Upon the wing or in swift race contend,  
 As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;  
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal  
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form:  
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears  
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush  
 To battle in the clouds; before each van  
 Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears,  
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms  
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.  
 Others, with vast Typhoean rage, more fell,  
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air  
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar:--  
 As when Alcides, from Oechalia crowned  
 With conquest, felt th' envenomed robe, and tore  
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,  
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw  
 Into th' Euboic sea. Others, more mild,  
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
 With notes angelical to many a harp  
 Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall  
 By doom of battle, and complain that Fate  
 Free Virtue should enthrall to Force or Chance.  
 Their song was partial; but the harmony  
 (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)  
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet  
 (For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense)  
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,  
 In thoughts more elevatèd, and reasoned high  
 Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate--  
 Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
 And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.  
 Of good and evil much they argued then,  
 Of happiness and final misery,  
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame:  
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!--  
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm  
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast  
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,  
 On bold adventure to discover wide  
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps

Might yield them easier habitation, bend  
Four ways their flying march, along the banks  
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge  
Into the burning lake their baleful streams--  
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;  
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;  
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud  
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton,  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,  
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls  
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets--  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
Beyond this flood a frozen continent  
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms  
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land  
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems  
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,  
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog  
Betwixt Damiatra and Mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air  
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire.  
Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,  
At certain revolutions all the damned  
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change  
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,  
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice  
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round  
Periods of time,--thence hurried back to fire.  
They ferry over this Lethean sound  
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,  
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose  
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
All in one moment, and so near the brink;  
But Fate withstands, and, to oppose th' attempt,  
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards  
The ford, and of itself the water flies  
All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on  
In confused march forlorn, th' adventurous bands,  
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,  
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found  
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale  
They passed, and many a region dolorous,  
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery alp,  
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death--  
A universe of death, which God by curse  
Created evil, for evil only good;  
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
 Obominable, inutterable, and worse  
 Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,  
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.  
 Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,  
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,  
 Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell  
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes  
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;  
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars  
 Up to the fiery concave towering high.  
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried  
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring  
 Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood,  
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,  
 Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed  
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear  
 Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,  
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,  
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock,  
 Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,  
 Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat  
 On either side a formidable Shape.  
 The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,  
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold,  
 Voluminous and vast--a serpent armed  
 With mortal sting. About her middle round  
 A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked  
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung  
 A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,  
 If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,  
 And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled  
 Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these  
 Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts  
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;  
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called  
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,  
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon  
 Eclipses at their charms. The other Shape--  
 If shape it might be called that shape had none  
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;  
 Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,  
 For each seemed either--black it stood as Night,  
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
 And shook a dreadful dart: what seemed his head  
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.  
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat  
 The monster moving onward came as fast  
 With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.



Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admired--  
Admired, not feared (God and his Son except,  
Created thing naught valued he nor shunned),  
And with disdainful look thus first began:--

"Whence and what art thou, execrable Shape,  
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
Thy miscreated front athwart my way  
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,  
That be assured, without leave asked of thee.  
Retire; or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,  
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."

To whom the Goblin, full of wrath, replied:--  
"Art thou that traitor Angel? art thou he,  
Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then  
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms  
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,  
Conjured against the Highest--for which both thou  
And they, outcast from God, are here condemned  
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?  
And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven  
Hell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,  
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,  
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,  
False fugitive; and to thy speed add wings,  
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart  
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,  
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold,  
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,  
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood  
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,  
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge  
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair  
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head  
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands  
No second stroke intend; and such a frown  
Each cast at th' other as when two black clouds,  
With heaven's artillery fraught, came rattling on  
Over the Caspian,--then stand front to front  
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow  
To join their dark encounter in mid-air.  
So frowned the mighty combatants that Hell  
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;  
For never but once more was wither like  
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds  
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat  
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,  
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.

"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,  
"Against thy only son? What fury, O son,

Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart  
Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom?  
For him who sits above, and laughs the while  
At thee, ordained his drudge to execute  
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids--  
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest  
Forbore: then these to her Satan returned:--

"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,  
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
What it intends, till first I know of thee  
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,  
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st  
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son.  
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable than him and thee."

T' whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied:--  
"Hast thou forgot me, then; and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul?--once deemed so fair  
In Heaven, when at th' assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined  
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain  
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes and dizzy swum  
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,  
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,  
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,  
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized  
All th' host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid  
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign  
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,  
I pleased, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse--thee chiefly, who, full oft  
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,  
Becam'st enamoured; and such joy thou took'st  
With me in secret that my womb conceived  
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,  
And fields were fought in Heaven: wherein remained  
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe  
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout  
Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,  
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down  
Into this Deep; and in the general fall  
I also: at which time this powerful key  
Into my hands was given, with charge to keep  
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat  
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,  
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,  
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.

At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,  
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,  
 Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain  
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
 Transformed: but he my inbred enemy  
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,  
 Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out Death!  
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed  
 From all her caves, and back resounded Death!  
 I fled; but he pursued (though more, it seems,  
 Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifter far,  
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,  
 And, in embraces forcible and foul  
 Engendering with me, of that rape begot  
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry  
 Surround me, as thou saw'st--hourly conceived  
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
 To me; for, when they list, into the womb  
 That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw  
 My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth  
 Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,  
 That rest or intermission none I find.  
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who set them on,  
 And me, his parent, would full soon devour  
 For want of other prey, but that he knows  
 His end with mine involved, and knows that I  
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,  
 Whenever that shall be: so Fate pronounced.  
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun  
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,  
 Through tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,  
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist."  
 She finished; and the subtle Fiend his lore  
 Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth:--  
 "Dear daughter--since thou claim'st me for thy sire,  
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge  
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys  
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change  
 Befallen us unforeseen, unthought-of--know,  
 I come no enemy, but to set free  
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain  
 Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host  
 Of Spirits that, in our just pretences armed,  
 Fell with us from on high. From them I go  
 This uncouth errand sole, and one for all  
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread  
 Th' unfounded Deep, and through the void immense  
 To search, with wandering quest, a place foretold  
 Should be--and, by concurring signs, ere now  
 Created vast and round--a place of bliss

In the purlieu of Heaven; and therein placed  
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply  
 Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,  
 Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,  
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught  
 Than this more secret, now designed, I haste  
 To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,  
 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death  
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
 Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed  
 With odours. There ye shall be fed and filled  
 Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."  
 He ceased; for both seemed highly pleased, and Death  
 Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear  
 His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw  
 Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced  
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:--  
 "The key of this infernal Pit, by due  
 And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,  
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
 These adamantine gates; against all force  
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
 Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.  
 But what owe I to his commands above,  
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down  
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,  
 To sit in hateful office here confined,  
 Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly born--  
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,  
 With terrors and with clamours compassed round  
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?  
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou  
 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey  
 But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me soon  
 To that new world of light and bliss, among  
 The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign  
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."  
 Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,  
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
 And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,  
 Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,  
 Which, but herself, not all the Stygian Powers  
 Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns  
 Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar  
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease  
 Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,  
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,  
 Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
 Of Erebus. She opened; but to shut  
 Excelled her power: the gates wide open stood,

That with extended wings a bannered host,  
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through  
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;  
So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth  
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.  
Before their eyes in sudden view appear  
The secrets of the hoary Deep--a dark  
Illimitable ocean, without bound,  
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and height,  
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night  
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,  
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring  
Their embryon atoms: they around the flag  
Of each his faction, in their several clans,  
Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,  
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands  
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,  
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise  
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere  
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,  
And by decision more embroils the fray  
By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,  
Chance governs all. Into this wild Abyss,  
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,  
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,  
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed  
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
His dark materials to create more worlds--  
Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend  
Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,  
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith  
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed  
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare  
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms  
With all her battering engines, bent to rase  
Some capital city; or less than if this frame  
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements  
In mutiny had from her axle torn  
The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans  
He spread for flight, and, in the surging smoke  
Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,  
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides  
Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets  
A vast vacuity. All unawares,  
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he drops  
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour  
Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,  
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,

Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him  
 As many miles aloft. That fury stayed--  
 Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,  
 Nor good dry land--nigh foundered, on he fares,  
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.  
 As when a gryphon through the wilderness  
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,  
 Pursues the Arimasgian, who by stealth  
 Had from his wakeful custody purloined  
 The guarded gold; so eagerly the Fiend  
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,  
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.  
 At length a universal hubbub wild  
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,  
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear  
 With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies  
 Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power  
 Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies  
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne  
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread  
 Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned  
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood  
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name  
 Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,  
 And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,  
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.  
 T' whom Satan, turning boldly, thus:--"Ye Powers  
 And Spirtis of this nethermost Abyss,  
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy  
 With purpose to explore or to disturb  
 The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint  
 Wandering this darksome desert, as my way  
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,  
 Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek,  
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds  
 Confine with Heaven; or, if some other place,  
 From your dominion won, th' Ethereal King  
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
 I travel this profound. Direct my course:  
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings  
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,  
 All usurpation thence expelled, reduce  
 To her original darkness and your sway  
 (Which is my present journey), and once more  
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night.  
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge!"  
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,

With faltering speech and visage incomposed,  
Answered: "I know thee, stranger, who thou art-- \*\*\*  
That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.  
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host  
Fled not in silence through the frightened Deep,  
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates  
Poured out by millions her victorious bands,  
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here  
Keep residence; if all I can will serve  
That little which is left so to defend,  
Encroached on still through our intestine broils  
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first, Hell,  
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;  
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world  
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain  
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell!  
If that way be your walk, you have not far;  
So much the nearer danger. Go, and speed;  
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."

He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,  
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacrity and force renewed  
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,  
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting elements, on all sides round  
Environed, wins his way; harder beset  
And more endangered than when Argo passed  
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks,  
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned  
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steered.  
So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;  
But, he once passed, soon after, when Man fell,  
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,  
Following his track (such was the will of Heaven)  
Paved after him a broad and beaten way  
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf  
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,  
From Hell continued, reaching th' utmost orb  
Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse  
With easy intercourse pass to and fro  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins  
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,  
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,  
With tumult less and with less hostile din;

That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,  
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds  
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold  
Far off th' empyreal Heaven, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermined square or round,  
With opal towers and battlements adorned  
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;  
And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,  
This pendent World, in bigness as a star  
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.  
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

John Milton



### Paradise Lost: Book 03

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven firstborn,  
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproach'd light  
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,  
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest \*\*\*  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.  
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd  
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,  
With other notes than to the Orphean lyre  
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;  
Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down  
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,  
Though hard and rare: Thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt,  
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,  
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
So were I equall'd with them in renown,  
Thy sovran command, that Man should find grace;  
Blind Thamyris, and blind Maeonides,  
And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year  
Seasons return; but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
Presented with a universal blank  
Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.  
 Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
 From the pure empyrean where he sits  
 High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye  
 His own works and their works at once to view:  
 About him all the Sanctities of Heaven  
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd  
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
 The radiant image of his glory sat,  
 His only son; on earth he first beheld  
 Our two first parents, yet the only two  
 Of mankind in the happy garden plac'd  
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,  
 In blissful solitude; he then survey'd  
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there  
 Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night  
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now  
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,  
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd  
 Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,  
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.  
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
 Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,  
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.  
 Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage  
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds  
 Prescrib'd no bars of Hell, nor all the chains  
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss  
 Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems  
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound  
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,  
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way  
 Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,  
 Directly towards the new created world,  
 And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay  
 If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,  
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,  
 And easily transgress the sole command,  
 Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall  
 He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?  
 Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of me  
 All he could have; I made him just and right,  
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
 Such I created all the ethereal Powers  
 And Spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;  
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,

Where only what they needs must do appear'd,  
 Not what they would? what praise could they receive?  
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)  
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,  
 Not me? they therefore, as to right belong'd,  
 So were created, nor can justly accuse  
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,  
 As if predestination over-rul'd  
 Their will dispos'd by absolute decree  
 Or high foreknowledge they themselves decreed  
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,  
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.  
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,  
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,  
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all  
 Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so  
 I form'd them free: and free they must remain,  
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change  
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
 Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.  
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,  
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd  
 By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
 The other none: In mercy and justice both,  
 Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;  
 But Mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.  
 Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd  
 All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect  
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.  
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone  
 Substantially express'd; and in his face  
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,  
 Love without end, and without measure grace,  
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.  
 O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd  
 Thy sovran command, that Man should find grace;  
 , that Man should find grace;  
 For which both Heaven and earth shall high extol  
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound  
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne  
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.  
 For should Man finally be lost, should Man,  
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,  
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd  
 With his own folly? that be from thee far,  
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge  
 Of all things made, and judgest only right.

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain  
 His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfill  
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,  
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,  
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell  
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,  
 By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself  
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake  
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?  
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both  
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.  
 To whom the great Creator thus replied.  
 O son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,  
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone.  
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,  
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all  
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed;  
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will;  
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me  
 Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew  
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit; and enthrall'd  
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;  
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand  
 On even ground against his mortal foe;  
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail  
 His fallen condition is, and to me owe  
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.  
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,  
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:  
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd  
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes  
 The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace  
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,  
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts  
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.  
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,  
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,  
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.  
 And I will place within them as a guide,  
 My umpire Conscience; whom if they will hear,  
 Light after light, well us'd, they shall attain,  
 And to the end, persisting, safe arrive.  
 This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,  
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;  
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,  
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;  
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.  
 But yet all is not done; Man disobeying,  
 Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins  
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven,  
 Affecting God-head, and, so losing all,  
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,

But to destruction sacred and devote,  
 He, with his whole posterity, must die,  
 Die he or justice must; unless for him  
 Some other able, and as willing, pay  
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.  
 Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?  
 Which of you will be mortal, to redeem  
 Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?  
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?  
 And silence was in Heaven: \$ on Man's behalf  
 He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire stood mute,  
 Patron or intercessour none appear'd,  
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw  
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.  
 And now without redemption all mankind  
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell  
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,  
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.  
 Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;  
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,  
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,  
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all  
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?  
 Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid  
 Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost;  
 Atonement for himself, or offering meet,  
 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring;  
 Behold me then: me for him, life for life  
 I offer: on me let thine anger fall;  
 Account me Man; I for his sake will leave  
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee  
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die  
 Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.  
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long  
 Lie vanquished. Thou hast given me to possess  
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live;  
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,  
 All that of me can die, yet, that debt paid,  
 \$ thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave  
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul  
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;  
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue  
 My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil.  
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop  
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed;  
 I through the ample air in triumph high  
 Shall lead Hell captive maugre Hell, and show  
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight  
 Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
 While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes;  
 Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave;

Then, with the multitude of my redeemed,  
Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,  
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured  
And reconcilment: wrath shall be no more  
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.  
His words here ended; but his meek aspect  
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love  
To mortal men, above which only shone  
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice  
Glad to be offered, he attends the will  
Of his great Father. Admiration seized  
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,  
Wondering; but soon th' Almighty thus replied.  
O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace  
Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou  
My sole complacence! Well thou know'st how dear  
To me are all my works; nor Man the least,  
Though last created, that for him I spare  
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,  
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.

Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,  
Their nature also to thy nature join;  
And be thyself Man among men on Earth,  
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,  
By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room  
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.  
As in him perish all men, so in thee,  
As from a second root, shall be restored  
As many as are restored, without thee none.  
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,  
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce  
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,  
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee  
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,  
Shall satisfy for Man, be judged and die,  
And dying rise, and rising with him raise  
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.  
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,  
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,  
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate  
So easily destroyed, and still destroys  
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.  
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume  
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.  
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss  
Equal to God, and equally enjoying  
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save  
A world from utter loss, and hast been found  
By merit more than birthright Son of God,  
Found worthiest to be so by being good,

Far more than great or high; because in thee  
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;  
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt  
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne:  
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign  
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,  
 Anointed universal King; all power  
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume  
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,  
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce:  
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide  
 In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.  
 When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,  
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send  
 The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim  
 Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds,  
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead  
 Of all past ages, to the general doom  
 Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.  
 Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge  
 Bad Men and Angels; they, arraigned, shall sink  
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,  
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while  
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
 New Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,  
 And, after all their tribulations long,  
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
 With joy and peace triumphing, and fair truth.  
 Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,  
 For regal scepter then no more shall need,  
 God shall be all in all. But, all ye Gods,  
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies;  
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me.  
 No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all  
 The multitude of Angels, with a shout  
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung  
 With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled  
 The eternal regions: Lowly reverent  
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground  
 With solemn adoration down they cast  
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;  
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once  
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,  
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence  
 To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,  
 And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,  
 And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven  
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;  
 With these that never fade the Spirits elect  
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;  
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright

Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.  
 Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took,  
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side  
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet  
 Of charming symphony they introduce  
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;  
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join  
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.  
 Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,  
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,  
 Eternal King; the Author of all being,  
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible  
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
 Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest  
 The full blaze of thy beams, and, through a cloud  
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,  
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,  
 Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim  
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.  
 Thee next they sang of all creation first,  
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,  
 In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud  
 Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,  
 Whom else no creature can behold; on thee  
 Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides,  
 Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
 He Heaven of Heavens and all the Powers therein  
 By thee created; and by thee threw down  
 The aspiring Dominations: Thou that day  
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,  
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook  
 Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks  
 Thou drovest of warring Angels disarrayed.  
 Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim  
 Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,  
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,  
 Not so on Man: Him through their malice fallen,  
 Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom  
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline:  
 No sooner did thy dear and only Son  
 Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man  
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,  
 He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife  
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,  
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat  
 Second to thee, offered himself to die  
 For Man's offence. O unexampled love,  
 Love no where to be found less than Divine!  
 Hail, Son of God, Saviour of Men! Thy name  
 Shall be the copious matter of my song  
 Henceforth, and never shall my heart thy praise



Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.  
Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,  
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.  
Mean while upon the firm opacous globe  
Of this round world, whose first convex divides  
The luminous inferiour orbs, enclosed  
From Chaos, and the inroad of Darkness old,  
Satan alighted walks: A globe far off  
It seemed, now seems a boundless continent  
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night  
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms  
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;  
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,  
Though distant far, some small reflection gains  
Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud:  
Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious field.  
As when a vultur on Imaus bred,  
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey  
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,  
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs  
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
But in his way lights on the barren plains  
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:  
So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend  
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey;  
Alone, for other creature in this place,  
Living or lifeless, to be found was none;  
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth  
Up hither like aerial vapours flew  
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin  
With vanity had filled the works of men:  
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things  
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,  
Or happiness in this or the other life;  
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits  
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,  
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find  
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;  
All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,  
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,  
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
Till final dissolution, wander here;  
Not in the neighbouring moon as some have dreamed;  
Those argent fields more likely habitants,  
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold  
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.  
Hither of ill-joined sons and daughters born  
First from the ancient world those giants came  
With many a vain exploit, though then renowned:  
The builders next of Babel on the plain

Of Sennaar, and still with vain design,  
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:  
 Others came single; he, who, to be deemed  
 A God, leaped fondly into Aetna flames,  
 Empedocles; and he, who, to enjoy  
 Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,  
 Cleombrotus; and many more too long,  
 Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars  
 White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.  
 Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek  
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven;  
 And they, who to be sure of Paradise,  
 Dying, put on the weeds of Dominick,  
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;  
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,  
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs  
 The trepidation talked, and that first moved;  
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems  
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot  
 Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo  
 A violent cross wind from either coast  
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry  
 Into the devious air: Then might ye see  
 Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost  
 And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,  
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,  
 The sport of winds: All these, upwhirled aloft,  
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off  
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since called  
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown  
 Long after; now unpeopled, and untrod.  
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he passed,  
 And long he wandered, till at last a gleam  
 Of dawning light turned thither-ward in haste  
 His travelled steps: far distant he descries  
 Ascending by degrees magnificent  
 Up to the wall of Heaven a structure high;  
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared  
 The work as of a kingly palace-gate,  
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold  
 Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems  
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth  
 By model, or by shading pencil, drawn.  
 These stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw  
 Angels ascending and descending, bands  
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled  
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz  
 Dreaming by night under the open sky  
 And waking cried, This is the gate of Heaven.  
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood  
 There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes  
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed

Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon  
 Who after came from earth, failing arrived  
 Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake  
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.  
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare  
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate  
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:  
 Direct against which opened from beneath,  
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,  
 A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,  
 Wider by far than that of after-times  
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,  
 Over the Promised Land to God so dear;  
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,  
 On high behests his angels to and fro  
 Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard  
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,  
 To Beersaba, where the Holy Land  
 Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;  
 So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were set  
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.  
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,  
 That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,  
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view  
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,  
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone  
 All might, and lost by break of cheerful dawn  
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,  
 Which to his eye discovers unaware  
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land  
 First seen, or some renowned metropolis  
 With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned,  
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:  
 Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,  
 The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,  
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.  
 Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood  
 So high above the circling canopy  
 Of night's extended shade,) from eastern point  
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears  
 Andromeda far off Atlantick seas  
 Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole  
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause  
 Down right into the world's first region throws  
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease  
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way  
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone  
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds;  
 Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,  
 Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,  
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,  
 Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there

He staid not to inquire: Above them all  
The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,  
Allured his eye; thither his course he bends  
Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,  
By center, or eccentric, hard to tell,  
Or longitude,) where the great luminary  
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,  
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,  
Dispenses light from far; they, as they move  
Their starry dance in numbers that compute  
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp  
Turn swift their various motions, or are turned  
By his magnetick beam, that gently warms  
The universe, and to each inward part  
With gentle penetration, though unseen,  
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;  
So wonderously was set his station bright.  
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps  
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb  
Through his glazed optick tube yet never saw.  
The place he found beyond expression bright,  
Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;  
Not all parts like, but all alike informed  
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;  
If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;  
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,  
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone  
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides  
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,  
That stone, or like to that which here below  
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,  
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind  
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound  
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,  
Drained through a limbeck to his native form.  
What wonder then if fields and regions here  
Breathe forth Elixir pure, and rivers run  
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch  
The arch-chemick sun, so far from us remote,  
Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed,  
Here in the dark so many precious things  
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?  
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;  
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,  
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon  
Culminate from the equator, as they now  
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,  
No where so clear, sharpened his visual ray  
To objects distant far, whereby he soon  
Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,

The same whom John saw also in the sun:  
 His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;  
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar  
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind  
 Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings  
 Lay waving round; on some great charge employed  
 He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.  
 Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope  
 To find who might direct his wandering flight  
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,  
 His journey's end and our beginning woe.  
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
 Which else might work him danger or delay:  
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb  
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned:  
 Under a coronet his flowing hair  
 In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore  
 Of many a coloured plume, sprinkled with gold;  
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.  
 He drew not nigh unheard; the Angel bright,  
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,  
 Admonished by his ear, and straight was known  
 The Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seven  
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,  
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes  
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to the Earth  
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,  
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.  
 Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that stand  
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,  
 The first art wont his great authentick will  
 Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,  
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend;  
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree  
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye  
 To visit oft this new creation round;  
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know  
 All these his wonderous works, but chiefly Man,  
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom  
 All these his works so wonderous he ordained,  
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim  
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell  
 In which of all these shining orbs hath Man  
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,  
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;  
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze  
 Or open admiration him behold,  
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowed  
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured;

That both in him and all things, as is meet,  
 The universal Maker we may praise;  
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes  
 To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,  
 Created this new happy race of Men  
 To serve him better: Wise are all his ways.  
 So spake the false dissembler unperceived;  
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern  
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth:  
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill  
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguiled  
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held  
 The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;  
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,  
 In his uprightness, answer thus returned.  
 Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know  
 The works of God, thereby to glorify  
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess  
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither  
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,  
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,  
 Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:  
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance always with delight;  
 But what created mind can comprehend  
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite  
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?  
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,  
 This world's material mould, came to a heap:  
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar  
 Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;  
 Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,  
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:  
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then  
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;  
 And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven  
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
 That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars  
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
 Each had his place appointed, each his course;  
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.  
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side  
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;  
 That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light  
 His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,  
 Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon

So call that opposite fair star) her aid  
Timely interposes, and her monthly round  
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heaven,  
With borrowed light her countenance triform  
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the Earth,  
And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
That spot, to which I point, is Paradise,  
Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.  
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.  
Thus said, he turned; and Satan, bowing low,  
As to superiour Spirits is wont in Heaven,  
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,  
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,  
Down from the ecliptick, sped with hoped success,  
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel;  
Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 04

O, for that warning voice, which he, who saw  
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
Came furious down to be revenged on men,  
Woe to the inhabitants on earth! that now,  
While time was, our first parents had been warned  
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,  
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: For now  
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,  
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,  
To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss  
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:  
Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold  
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,  
Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth  
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,  
And like a devilish engine back recoils  
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract  
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir  
The Hell within him; for within him Hell  
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell  
One step, no more than from himself, can fly  
By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair,  
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory  
Of what he was, what is, and what must be  
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.  
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view  
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;  
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun,  
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:  
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.  
O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,  
Lookest from thy sole dominion like the God  
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars  
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,  
Of Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;  
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down  
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King:  
Ah, wherefore! he deserved no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.  
What could be less than to afford him praise,  
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,  
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,  
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
I sdeined subjection, and thought one step higher  
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
The debt immense of endless gratitude,



So burdensome still paying, still to owe,  
 Forgetful what from him I still received,  
 And understood not that a grateful mind  
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
 Indebted and discharged; what burden then  
 O, had his powerful destiny ordained  
 Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood  
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised  
 Ambition! Yet why not some other Power  
 As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,  
 Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great  
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
 Or from without, to all temptations armed.  
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?  
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,  
 But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
 Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,  
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
 Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will  
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly  
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?  
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
 And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
 Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
 O, then, at last relent: Is there no place  
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left?  
 None left but by submission; and that word  
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced  
 With other promises and other vaunts  
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue  
 The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know  
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,  
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,  
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.  
 With diadem and scepter high advanced,  
 The lower still I fall, only supreme  
 In misery: Such joy ambition finds.  
 But say I could repent, and could obtain,  
 By act of grace, my former state; how soon  
 Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay  
 What feigned submission swore? Ease would recant  
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.  
 For never can true reconcilment grow,  
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse  
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear  
 Short intermission bought with double smart.  
 This knows my Punisher; therefore as far  
 From granting he, as I from begging, peace;

All hope excluded thus, behold, in stead  
Mankind created, and for him this world.  
So farewell, hope; and with hope farewell, fear;  
Farewell, remorse! all good to me is lost;  
Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least  
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,  
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;  
As Man ere long, and this new world, shall know.  
Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face  
Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;  
Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed  
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.  
For heavenly minds from such distempers foul  
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,  
Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,  
Artificer of fraud; and was the first  
That practised falsehood under saintly show,  
Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:  
Yet not enough had practised to deceive  
Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down  
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount  
Saw him disfigured, more than could befall  
Spirit of happy sort; his gestures fierce  
He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,  
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.  
So on he fares, and to the border comes  
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,  
As with a rural mound, the champaign head  
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
Access denied; and overhead upgrew  
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend,  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
The verdurous wall of Paradise upsprung;

Which to our general sire gave prospect large  
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.  
And higher than that wall a circling row  
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,  
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,  
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed:  
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams  
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,  
When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed  
That landskip: And of pure now purer air  
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires  
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive  
All sadness but despair: Now gentle gales,  
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense

Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who fail  
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
 Mozambick, off at sea north-east winds blow  
 Sabean odours from the spicy shore  
 Of Araby the blest; with such delay  
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league  
 Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:  
 So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend,  
 Who came their bane; though with them better pleased  
 Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume  
 That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse  
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent  
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.  
 Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill  
 Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;  
 But further way found none, so thick entwined,  
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
 All path of man or beast that passed that way.  
 One gate there only was, and that looked east  
 On the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,  
 Due entrance he disdained; and, in contempt,  
 At one flight bound high over-leaped all bound  
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve  
 In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:  
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash  
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,  
 Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,  
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:  
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;  
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.  
 Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,  
 The middle tree and highest there that grew,  
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life  
 Thereby regained, but sat devising death  
 To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought  
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used  
 For prospect, what well used had been the pledge  
 Of immortality. So little knows  
 Any, but God alone, to value right  
 The good before him, but perverts best things  
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.  
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views,  
 To all delight of human sense exposed,  
 In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,  
 A Heaven on Earth: For blissful Paradise  
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east

Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line  
From Auran eastward to the royal towers  
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
Of where the sons of Eden long before  
Dwelt in Telassar: In this pleasant soil  
His far more pleasant garden God ordained;  
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow  
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
And all amid them stood the tree of life,  
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit  
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,  
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,  
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.  
Southward through Eden went a river large,  
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
Passed underneath engulfed; for God had thrown  
That mountain as his garden-mould high raised  
Upon the rapid current, which, through veins  
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,  
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
Watered the garden; thence united fell  
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,  
Which from his darksome passage now appears,  
And now, divided into four main streams,  
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm  
And country, whereof here needs no account;  
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,  
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,  
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
With mazy errour under pendant shades  
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed  
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art  
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,  
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote  
The open field, and where the unpierced shade  
Imbrowned the noontide bowers: Thus was this place  
A happy rural seat of various view;  
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,  
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,  
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,  
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:  
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,  
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap  
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,  
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:  
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall  
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,

That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned  
Her crystal mirrour holds, unite their streams.  
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,  
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field  
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis  
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain  
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove  
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired  
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise  
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle  
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,  
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,  
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son  
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;  
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,  
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed  
True Paradise under the Ethiop line  
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,  
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend  
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind  
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange  
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
Godlike erect, with native honour clad  
In naked majesty seemed lords of all:  
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,  
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,)  
Whence true authority in men; though both  
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;  
For contemplation he and valour formed;  
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;  
He for God only, she for God in him:  
His fair large front and eye sublime declared  
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks  
Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:  
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist  
Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved  
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied  
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
And by her yielded, by him best received,  
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.  
Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;  
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame

Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,  
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind  
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,  
 And banished from man's life his happiest life,  
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!  
 So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight  
 Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill:  
 So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair,  
 That ever since in love's embraces met;  
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born  
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.  
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green  
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side  
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil  
 Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed  
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease  
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite  
 More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,  
 Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs  
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline  
 On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers:  
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,  
 Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;  
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles  
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems  
 Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,  
 Alone as they. About them frisking played  
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase  
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;  
 Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw  
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
 Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,  
 To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed  
 His kithetmroboscis; close the serpent sly,  
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine  
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile  
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass  
 Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,  
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,  
 Declined, was hasting now with prone career  
 To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale  
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:  
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,  
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad.  
 O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!  
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced  
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,  
 Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright  
 Little inferiour; whom my thoughts pursue  
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace  
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.

Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh  
 Your change approaches, when all these delights  
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;  
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;  
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured  
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven  
 Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe  
 As now is entered; yet no purposed foe  
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
 Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,  
 And mutual amity, so strait, so close,  
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me  
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,  
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such  
 Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,  
 Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold,  
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,  
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,  
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive  
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place,  
 Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge  
 On you who wrong me not for him who wronged.  
 And should I at your harmless innocence  
 Melt, as I do, yet publick reason just,  
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,  
 By conquering this new world, compels me now  
 To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.  
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,  
 The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.  
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree  
 Down he alights among the sportful herd  
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,  
 Now other, as their shape served best his end  
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,  
 To mark what of their state he more might learn,  
 By word or action marked. About them round  
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;  
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied  
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
 Straight couches close, then, rising, changes oft  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
 Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,  
 Griped in each paw: when, Adam first of men  
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,  
 Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.  
 Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,  
 Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power  
 That made us, and for us this ample world,  
 Be infinitely good, and of his good  
 As liberal and free as infinite;  
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here  
 In all this happiness, who at his hand

Have nothing merited, nor can perform  
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires  
From us no other service than to keep  
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees  
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit  
So various, not to taste that only tree  
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;  
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,  
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowest  
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,  
The only sign of our obedience left,  
Among so many signs of power and rule  
Conferred upon us, and dominion given  
Over all other creatures that possess  
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard  
One easy prohibition, who enjoy  
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
Unlimited of manifold delights:  
But let us ever praise him, and extol  
His bounty, following our delightful task,  
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,  
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.  
To whom thus Eve replied. O thou for whom  
And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy flesh,  
And without whom am to no end, my guide  
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.  
For we to him indeed all praises owe,  
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy  
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou  
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.  
That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
I first awaked, and found myself reposed  
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where  
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread  
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved  
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went  
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down  
On the green bank, to look into the clear  
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.  
As I bent down to look, just opposite  
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,  
Bending to look on me: I started back,  
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,  
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks  
Of sympathy and love: There I had fixed  
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,  
Had not a voice thus warned me; 'What thou seest,  
'What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;  
'With thee it came and goes: but follow me,



'And I will bring thee where no shadow stays  
 'Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he  
 'Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy  
 'Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear  
 'Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called  
 'Mother of human race.' What could I do,  
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,  
 Under a platane; yet methought less fair,  
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
 Than that smooth watery image: Back I turned;  
 Thou following cryedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve;  
 'Whom flyest thou? whom thou flyest, of him thou art,  
 'His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
 'Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,  
 'Substantial life, to have thee by my side  
 'Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
 'Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 'My other half:' With that thy gentle hand  
 Seised mine: I yielded; and from that time see  
 How beauty is excelled by manly grace,  
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.  
 So spake our general mother, and with eyes  
 Of conjugal attraction unreproved,  
 And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned  
 On our first father; half her swelling breast  
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold  
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight  
 Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,  
 Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter  
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds  
 That shed Mayflowers; and pressed her matron lip  
 With kisses pure: Aside the Devil turned  
 For envy; yet with jealous leer malign  
 Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained.  
 Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,  
 Imparadised in one another's arms,  
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill  
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,  
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
 Among our other torments not the least,  
 Still unfulfilled with pain of longing pines.  
 Yet let me not forget what I have gained  
 From their own mouths: All is not theirs, it seems;  
 One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,  
 Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidden  
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
 Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?  
 Can it be death? And do they only stand  
 By ignorance? Is that their happy state,  
 The proof of their obedience and their faith?  
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build

Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds  
 With more desire to know, and to reject  
 Envious commands, invented with design  
 To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt  
 Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,  
 They taste and die: What likelier can ensue  
 But first with narrow search I must walk round  
 This garden, and no corner leave unspied;  
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet  
 Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain side,  
 Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw  
 What further would be learned. Live while ye may,  
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed!  
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,  
 But with sly circumspection, and began  
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam  
 Mean while in utmost longitude, where Heaven  
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun  
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise  
 Levelled his evening rays: It was a rock  
 Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,  
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent  
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;  
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung  
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.  
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,  
 Chief of the angelick guards, awaiting night;  
 About him exercised heroick games  
 The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand  
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,  
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even  
 On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star  
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired  
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner  
 From what point of his compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds: He thus began in haste.  
 Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given  
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place  
 No evil thing approach or enter in.  
 This day at highth of noon came to my sphere  
 A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know  
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,  
 God's latest image: I described his way  
 Bent all on speed, and marked his aery gait;  
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
 Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks  
 Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:  
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
 Lost sight of him: One of the banished crew,

I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise  
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.  
To whom the winged warrior thus returned.  
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst,  
See far and wide: In at this gate none pass  
The vigilance here placed, but such as come  
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour  
No creature thence: If Spirit of other sort,  
So minded, have o'er-leaped these earthly bounds  
On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude  
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.  
But if within the circuit of these walks,  
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know.  
So promised he; and Uriel to his charge  
Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised  
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fallen  
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,  
Incredible how swift, had thither rolled  
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,  
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there  
Arraying with reflected purple and gold  
The clouds that on his western throne attend.  
Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;  
She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
Silence was pleased: Now glowed the firmament  
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led  
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.  
When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Consort, the hour  
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,  
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set  
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men  
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,  
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines  
Our eye-lids: Other creatures all day long  
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;  
Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;  
While other animals unactive range,  
And of their doings God takes no account.  
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east  
With first approach of light, we must be risen,  
And at our pleasant labour, to reform

Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,  
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,  
That mock our scant manuring, and require  
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:  
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,  
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,  
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;  
Mean while, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.  
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned  
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst  
Unargued I obey: So God ordains;  
God is thy law, thou mine: To know no more  
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.  
With thee conversing I forget all time;  
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.  
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,  
When first on this delightful land he spreads  
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,  
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,  
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,  
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:  
But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends  
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun  
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,  
Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,  
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.  
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom  
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?  
To whom our general ancestor replied.  
Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve,  
These have their course to finish round the earth,  
By morrow evening, and from land to land  
In order, though to nations yet unborn,  
Ministring light prepared, they set and rise;  
Lest total Darkness should by night regain  
Her old possession, and extinguish life  
In Nature and all things; which these soft fires  
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat  
Of various influence foment and warm,  
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down  
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow  
On earth, made hereby apter to receive  
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.  
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,  
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,  
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:  
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
 Both day and night: How often from the steep  
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard  
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
 Sole, or responsive each to others note,  
 Singing their great Creator? oft in bands  
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,  
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds  
 In full harmonick number joined, their songs  
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.  
 Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed  
 On to their blissful bower: it was a place  
 Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed  
 All things to Man's delightful use; the roof  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,  
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,  
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,  
 Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaick; underfoot the violet,  
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
 Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone  
 Of costliest emblem: Other creature here,  
 Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,  
 Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower  
 More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,  
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph  
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,  
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,  
 Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed;  
 And heavenly quires the hymenaeal sung,  
 What day the genial Angel to our sire  
 Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,  
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods  
 Endowed with all their gifts, and O! too like  
 In sad event, when to the unwiser son  
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared  
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged  
 On him who had stole Jove's authentick fire.  
 Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,  
 Both turned, and under open sky adored  
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,  
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,  
 And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,  
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,  
 Which we, in our appointed work employed,  
 Have finished, happy in our mutual help  
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss  
 Ordained by thee; and this delicious place

For us too large, where thy abundance wants  
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
But thou hast promised from us two a race  
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.  
This said unanimous, and other rites  
Observing none, but adoration pure  
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower  
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off  
These troublesome disguises which we wear,  
Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,  
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
Mysterious of connubial love refused:  
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk  
Of purity, and place, and innocence,  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.  
Our Maker bids encrease; who bids abstain  
But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?  
Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source  
Of human offspring, sole propriety  
In Paradise of all things common else!  
By thee adulterous Lust was driven from men  
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee  
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.  
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,  
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,  
Perpetual fountain of domestick sweets,  
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,  
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.  
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights  
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile  
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,  
Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,  
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,  
Or serenate, which the starved lover sings  
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.  
These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,  
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof  
Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,  
Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek  
No happier state, and know to know no more.  
Now had night measured with her shadowy cone  
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,  
And from their ivory port the Cherubim,  
Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed  
To their night watches in warlike parade;  
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south  
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;  
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,  
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.  
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called  
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.  
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed  
 Search through this garden, leave unsearched no nook;  
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,  
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.  
 This evening from the sun's decline arrived,  
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped  
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:  
 Such, where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.  
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,  
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct  
 In search of whom they sought: Him there they found  
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,  
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
 Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;  
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise  
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise  
 At least distempered, discontented thoughts,  
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
 Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.  
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear  
 Touched lightly; for no falshood can endure  
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
 Of force to its own likeness: Up he starts  
 Discovered and surprised. As when a spark  
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid  
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store  
 Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,  
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;  
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.  
 Back stept those two fair Angels, half amazed  
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;  
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.  
 Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell  
 Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,  
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,  
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?  
 Know ye not then said Satan, filled with scorn,  
 Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate  
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:  
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,  
 The lowest of your throng; or, if ye know,  
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin  
 Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.  
 Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,  
 Or undiminished brightness to be known,  
 As when thou stoodest in Heaven upright and pure;  
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,  
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now  
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.  
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account  
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep  
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.  
 So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,  
 Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
 Invincible: Abashed the Devil stood,  
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined  
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observed  
 His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed  
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,  
 Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,  
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,  
 Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,  
 Will save us trial what the least can do  
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.  
 The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;  
 But, like a proud steed reined, went haughty on,  
 Champing his iron curb: To strive or fly  
 He held it vain; awe from above had quelled  
 His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh  
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards  
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,  
 A waiting next command. To whom their Chief,  
 Gabriel, from the front thus called aloud.  
 O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet  
 Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern  
 Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;  
 And with them comes a third of regal port,  
 But faded splendour wan; who by his gait  
 And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,  
 Not likely to part hence without contest;  
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.  
 He scarce had ended, when those two approached,  
 And brief related whom they brought, where found,  
 How busied, in what form and posture couched.  
 To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.  
 Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed  
 To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge  
 Of others, who approve not to transgress  
 By thy example, but have power and right  
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
 Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those  
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss!  
 To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.



Gabriel? thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,  
 And such I held thee; but this question asked  
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain!  
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,  
 Though thither doomed! Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt  
 And boldly venture to whatever place  
 Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change  
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense  
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;  
 To thee no reason, who knowest only good,  
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object  
 His will who bounds us! Let him surer bar  
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay  
 In that dark durance: Thus much what was asked.  
 The rest is true, they found me where they say;  
 But that implies not violence or harm.  
 Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,  
 Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.  
 O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise  
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,  
 And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,  
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither  
 Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;  
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain  
 However, and to 'scape his punishment!  
 So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,  
 Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight  
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain  
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.  
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee  
 Came not all hell broke loose? or thou than they  
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous Chief!  
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged  
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.  
 To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern.  
 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,  
 Insulting Angel! well thou knowest I stood  
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid  
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,  
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.  
 But still thy words at random, as before,  
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves  
 From hard assays and ill successes past  
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all  
 Through ways of danger by himself untried:  
 I, therefore, I alone first undertook  
 To wing the desolate abyss, and spy  
 This new created world, whereof in Hell  
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find

Better abode, and my afflicted Powers  
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air;  
 Though for possession put to try once more  
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;  
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord  
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,  
 And practised distances to cringe, not fight,  
 To whom the warrior Angel soon replied.  
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first  
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,  
 Argues no leader but a liar traced,  
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head.  
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve  
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?  
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servily adored  
 Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope  
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
 But mark what I arreer thee now, Avant;  
 Fly neither whence thou fledst! If from this hour  
 Within these hallowed limits thou appear,  
 Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,  
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn  
 The facile gates of Hell too slightly barred.  
 So threatened he; but Satan to no threats  
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied.  
 Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,  
 Proud liminary Cherub! but ere then  
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King  
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,  
 Us'd to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels  
 In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved.  
 While thus he spake, the angelick squadron bright  
 Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns  
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round  
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field  
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,  
 Left on the threshing floor his hopeless sheaves  
 Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,  
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:  
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest  
 Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp  
 What seemed both spear and shield: Now dreadful deeds

Might have ensued, nor only Paradise  
In this commotion, but the starry cope  
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements  
At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn  
With violence of this conflict, had not soon  
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,  
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen  
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,  
Wherein all things created first he weighed,  
The pendulous round earth with balanced air  
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
Battles and realms: In these he put two weights,  
The sequel each of parting and of fight:  
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam,  
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.  
Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest mine;  
Neither our own, but given: What folly then  
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more  
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now  
To trample thee as mire: For proof look up,  
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign;  
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,  
If thou resist. The Fiend looked up, and knew  
His mounted scale aloft: Nor more; but fled  
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 05

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime  
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,  
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep  
Was airy-light, from pure digestion bred,  
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound  
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song  
Of birds on every bough; so much the more  
His wonder was to find unawakened Eve  
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,  
As through unquiet rest: He, on his side  
Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love  
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld  
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,  
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice  
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
Her hand soft touching, whispered thus. Awake,  
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,  
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!  
Awake: The morning shines, and the fresh field  
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,  
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,  
How nature paints her colours, how the bee  
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.  
Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye  
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.  
O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,  
My glory, my perfection! glad I see  
Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night  
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,  
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,  
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,  
But of offence and trouble, which my mind  
Knew never till this irksome night: Methought,  
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk  
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: It said,  
'Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
'The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
'To the night-warbling bird, that now awake  
'Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns  
'Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light  
'Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,  
'If none regard; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,  
'Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?  
'In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
'Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.'  
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;  
To find thee I directed then my walk;  
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways  
That brought me on a sudden to the tree  
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,

Much fairer to my fancy than by day:  
 And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood  
 One shaped and winged like one of those from Heaven  
 By us oft seen; his dewy locks distilled  
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;  
 And 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,  
 'Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,  
 'Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despised?  
 'Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
 'Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
 'Longer thy offered good; why else set here?  
 This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm  
 He plucked, he tasted; me damp horror chilled  
 At such bold words vouched with a deed so bold:  
 But he thus, overjoyed; 'O fruit divine,  
 'Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,  
 'Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit  
 'For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:  
 'And why not Gods of Men; since good, the more  
 'Communicated, more abundant grows,  
 'The author not impaired, but honoured more?  
 'Here, happy creature, fair angelick Eve!  
 'Partake thou also; happy though thou art,  
 'Happier thou mayest be, worthier canst not be:  
 'Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods  
 'Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confined,  
 'But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes  
 'Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see  
 'What life the Gods live there, and such live thou!'

So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,  
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part  
 Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell  
 So quickened appetite, that I, methought,  
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds  
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld  
 The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide  
 And various: Wondering at my flight and change  
 To this high exaltation; suddenly  
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,  
 And fell asleep; but O, how glad I waked  
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night  
 Related, and thus Adam answered sad.  
 Best image of myself, and dearer half,  
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
 Affects me equally; nor can I like  
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;  
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,  
 Created pure. But know that in the soul  
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve  
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next  
 Her office holds; of all external things  
 Which the five watchful senses represent,

She forms imaginations, aery shapes,  
 Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames  
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call  
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
 Into her private cell, when nature rests.  
 Oft in her absence mimick Fancy wakes  
 To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,  
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;  
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.  
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find  
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,  
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
 Evil into the mind of God or Man  
 May come and go, so unreprieved, and leave  
 No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope  
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,  
 Waking thou never will consent to do.  
 Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks,  
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene,  
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;  
 And let us to our fresh employments rise  
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers  
 That open now their choisest bosomed smells,  
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store.  
 So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheered;  
 But silently a gentle tear let fall  
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;  
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,  
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell  
 Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse  
 And pious awe, that feared to have offended.  
 So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.  
 But first, from under shady arborous roof  
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight  
 Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce up-risen,  
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,  
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,  
 Discovering in wide landskip all the east  
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,  
 Lowly they bowed adoring, and began  
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid  
 In various style; for neither various style  
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung  
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence  
 Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,  
 More tuneable than needed lute or harp  
 To add more sweetness; and they thus began.  
 These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,  
 Almighty! Thine this universal frame,  
 Thus wonderous fair; Thyself how wonderous then!  
 Unspeakable, who sitst above these heavens

To us invisible, or dimly seen  
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare  
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.  
 Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,  
 Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs  
 And choral symphonies, day without night,  
 Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven  
 On Earth join all ye Creatures to extol  
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.  
 Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,  
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crownest the smiling morn  
 With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,  
 While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.  
 Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,  
 Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climbest,  
 And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fallest.  
 Moon, that now meetest the orient sun, now flyest,  
 With the fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies;  
 And ye five other wandering Fires, that move  
 In mystick dance not without song, resound  
 His praise, who out of darkness called up light.  
 Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth  
 Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run  
 Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix  
 And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change  
 Vary to our great Maker still new praise.  
 Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise  
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,  
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
 In honour to the world's great Author rise;  
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,  
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,  
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
 His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,  
 Breathe soft or loud; and, wave your tops, ye Pines,  
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.  
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,  
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
 Join voices, all ye living Souls: Ye Birds,  
 That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,  
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.  
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk  
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;  
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,  
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,  
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.  
 Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still  
 To give us only good; and if the night  
 Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,  
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark!

So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts  
 Firm peace recovered soon, and wonted calm.  
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,  
 Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row  
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reached too far  
 Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check  
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine  
 To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines  
 Her marriageable arms, and with him brings  
 Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn  
 His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld  
 With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called  
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned  
 To travel with Tobias, and secured  
 His marriage with the seventimes-wedded maid.  
 Raphael, said he, thou hearest what stir on Earth  
 Satan, from Hell 'scaped through the darksome gulf,  
 Hath raised in Paradise; and how disturbed  
 This night the human pair; how he designs  
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.  
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend  
 Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade  
 Thou findest him from the heat of noon retired,  
 To respite his day-labour with repast,  
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,  
 As may advise him of his happy state,  
 Happiness in his power left free to will,  
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,  
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware  
 He swerve not, too secure: Tell him withal  
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,  
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now  
 The fall of others from like state of bliss;  
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;  
 But by deceit and lies: This let him know,  
 Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend  
 Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned.  
 So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfilled  
 All justice: Nor delayed the winged Saint  
 After his charge received; but from among  
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood  
 Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up springing light,  
 Flew through the midst of Heaven; the angelick quires,  
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
 Through all the empyreal road; till, at the gate  
 Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide  
 On golden hinges turning, as by work  
 Divine the sovran Architect had framed.  
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
 Star interposed, however small he sees,  
 Not unconformed to other shining globes,  
 Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned



Above all hills. As when by night the glass  
 Of Galileo, less assured, observes  
 Imagined lands and regions in the moon:  
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades  
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens  
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky  
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing  
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan  
 Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar  
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems  
 A phoenix, gazed by all as that sole bird,  
 When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's  
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.  
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise  
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns  
 A Seraph winged: Six wings he wore, to shade  
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad  
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast  
 With regal ornament; the middle pair  
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold  
 And colours dipt in Heaven; the third his feet  
 Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,  
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,  
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled  
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands  
 Of Angels under watch; and to his state,  
 And to his message high, in honour rise;  
 For on some message high they guessed him bound.  
 Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come  
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,  
 And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;  
 A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here  
 Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will  
 Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,  
 Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.  
 Him through the spicy forest onward come  
 Adam discerned, as in the door he sat  
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun  
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm  
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:  
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepared  
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please  
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
 Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,  
 Berry or grape: To whom thus Adam called.  
 Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold  
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape  
 Comes this way moving; seems another morn  
 Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from Heaven  
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe

This day to be our guest. But go with speed,  
 And, what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour  
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive  
 Our heavenly stranger: Well we may afford  
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow  
 From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies  
 Her fertile growth, and by disburthening grows  
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.  
 To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallowed mould,  
 Of God inspired! small store will serve, where store,  
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;  
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains  
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:  
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,  
 Each plant and juciest gourd, will pluck such choice  
 To entertain our Angel-guest, as he  
 Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth  
 God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.  
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste  
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent  
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,  
 What order, so contrived as not to mix  
 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring  
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;  
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk  
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields  
 In India East or West, or middle shore  
 In Pontus or the Punick coast, or where  
 Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat  
 Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,  
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board  
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape  
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths  
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed  
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold  
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground  
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.  
 Mean while our primitive great sire, to meet  
 His God-like guest, walks forth, without more train  
 Accompanied than with his own complete  
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,  
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits  
 On princes, when their rich retinue long  
 Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,  
 Dazzles the croud, and sets them all agape.  
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,  
 Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,  
 As to a superiour nature bowing low,  
 Thus said. Native of Heaven, for other place  
 None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain;  
 Since, by descending from the thrones above,  
 Those happy places thou hast deigned a while

To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us  
 Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess  
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower  
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears  
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline.  
 Whom thus the angelick Virtue answered mild.  
 Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such  
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,  
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,  
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower  
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,  
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge  
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled,  
 With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells; but Eve,  
 Undecked save with herself, more lovely fair  
 Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feigned  
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,  
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil  
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm  
 Altered her cheek. On whom the Angel Hail  
 Bestowed, the holy salutation used  
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.  
 Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb  
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,  
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God  
 Have heaped this table!--Raised of grassy turf  
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,  
 And on her ample square from side to side  
 All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here  
 Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;  
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began  
 Our author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste  
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom  
 All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,  
 To us for food and for delight hath caused  
 The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps  
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,  
 That one celestial Father gives to all.  
 To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives  
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to Man in part  
 Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found  
 No ingrateful food: And food alike those pure  
 Intelligential substances require,  
 As doth your rational; and both contain  
 Within them every lower faculty  
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,  
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
 For know, whatever was created, needs  
 To be sustained and fed: Of elements  
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,

Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires  
 Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;  
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged  
 Vapours not yet into her substance turned.  
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale  
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.  
 The sun that light imparts to all, receives  
 From all his alimantal recompence  
 In humid exhalations, and at even  
 Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees  
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines  
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn  
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground  
 Covered with pearly grain: Yet God hath here  
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,  
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste  
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,  
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly  
 The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss  
 Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch  
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat  
 To transubstantiate: What redounds, transpires  
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire  
 Of sooty coal the empirick alchemist  
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,  
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,  
 As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve  
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups  
 With pleasant liquours crowned: O innocence  
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been  
 Enamoured at that sight; but in those hearts  
 Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy  
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell.  
 Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,  
 Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose  
 In Adam, not to let the occasion pass  
 Given him by this great conference to know  
 Of things above his world, and of their being  
 Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw  
 Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,  
 Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far  
 Exceeded human; and his wary speech  
 Thus to the empyreal minister he framed.  
 Inhabitant with God, now know I well  
 Thy favour, in this honour done to Man;  
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed  
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,  
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
 At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare  
 To whom the winged Hierarch replied.

O Adam, One Almighty is, from whom  
 All things proceed, and up to him return,  
 If not depraved from good, created all  
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
 Endued with various forms, various degrees  
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;  
 But more refined, more spiritous, and pure,  
 As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending  
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,  
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root  
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower  
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,  
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,  
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,  
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul  
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
 Discursive, or intuitive; discourse  
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,  
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.  
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good  
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you  
 To proper substance. Time may come, when Men  
 With Angels may participate, and find  
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;  
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
 Improved by tract of time, and, winged, ascend  
 Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,  
 Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;  
 If ye be found obedient, and retain  
 Unalterably firm his love entire,  
 Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy  
 Your fill what happiness this happy state  
 Can comprehend, incapable of more.  
 To whom the patriarch of mankind replied.  
 O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,  
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set  
 From center to circumference; whereon,  
 In contemplation of created things,  
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,  
 What meant that caution joined, If ye be found  
 Obedient? Can we want obedience then  
 To him, or possibly his love desert,  
 Who formed us from the dust and placed us here  
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss  
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?  
 To whom the Angel. Son of Heaven and Earth,  
 Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God;

That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,  
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.  
 This was that caution given thee; be advised.  
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;  
 And good he made thee, but to persevere  
 He left it in thy power; ordained thy will  
 By nature free, not over-ruled by fate  
 Inextricable, or strict necessity:  
 Our voluntary service he requires,  
 Not our necessitated; such with him  
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how  
 Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve  
 Willing or no, who will but what they must  
 By destiny, and can no other choose?  
 Myself, and all the angelick host, that stand  
 In sight of God, enthroned, our happy state  
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;  
 On other surety none: Freely we serve,  
 Because we freely love, as in our will  
 To love or not; in this we stand or fall:  
 And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,  
 And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall  
 From what high state of bliss, into what woe!  
 To whom our great progenitor. Thy words  
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear,  
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when  
 Cherubick songs by night from neighbouring hills  
 Aereal musick send: Nor knew I not  
 To be both will and deed created free;  
 Yet that we never shall forget to love  
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command  
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
 Assured me, and still assure: Though what thou tellest  
 Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me move,  
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,  
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,  
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;  
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun  
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins  
 His other half in the great zone of Heaven.  
 Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,  
 After short pause assenting, thus began.  
 High matter thou enjoimest me, O prime of men,  
 Sad task and hard: For how shall I relate  
 To human sense the invisible exploits  
 Of warring Spirits? how, without remorse,  
 The ruin of so many glorious once  
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold  
 The secrets of another world, perhaps  
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good  
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach  
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,

By likening spiritual to corporal forms,  
 As may express them best; though what if Earth  
 Be but a shadow of Heaven, and things therein  
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?  
 As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild  
 Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where Earth now rests  
 Upon her center poised; when on a day  
 (For time, though in eternity, applied  
 To motion, measures all things durable  
 By present, past, and future,) on such day  
 As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host  
 Of Angels by imperial summons called,  
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne  
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heaven, appeared  
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:  
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,  
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear  
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve  
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;  
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblazed  
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs  
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,  
 Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,  
 By whom in bliss imbosomed sat the Son,  
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top  
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.  
 Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light,  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.  
 This day I have begot whom I declare  
 My only Son, and on this holy hill  
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint;  
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow  
 All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord:  
 Under his great vice-gerent reign abide  
 United, as one individual soul,  
 For ever happy: Him who disobeys,  
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,  
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls  
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulfed, his place  
 Ordained without redemption, without end.  
 So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words  
 All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all.  
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent  
 In song and dance about the sacred hill;  
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere  
 Of planets, and of fixed, in all her wheels  
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,  
 Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular  
 Then most, when most irregular they seem;

And in their motions harmony divine  
 So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear  
 Listens delighted. Evening now approached,  
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,  
 We ours for change delectable, not need;)

Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn  
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,  
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled  
 With Angels food, and rubied nectar flows  
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,  
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.  
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,  
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure  
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds  
 Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered  
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.

Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhaled  
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade  
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed  
 To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there  
 In darker veil,) and roseat dews disposed  
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;  
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far  
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,  
 (Such are the courts of God) the angelick throng,  
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend  
 By living streams among the trees of life,  
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,  
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept  
 Fanned with cool winds; save those, who, in their course,  
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne  
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked  
 Satan; so call him now, his former name  
 Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,  
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in power,  
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught  
 With envy against the Son of God, that day  
 Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed  
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear  
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.  
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,  
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour  
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved  
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave  
 Unworshipt, unobeyed, the throne supreme,  
 Contemptuous; and his next subordinate  
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.  
 Sleepest thou, Companion dear? What sleep can close  
 Thy eye-lids? and rememberest what decree  
 Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips  
 Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts



Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;  
Both waking we were one; how then can now  
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;  
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise  
In us who serve, new counsels to debate  
What doubtful may ensue: More in this place  
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou  
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;  
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night  
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,  
And all who under me their banners wave,  
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess  
The quarters of the north; there to prepare  
Fit entertainment to receive our King,  
The great Messiah, and his new commands,  
Who speedily through all the hierarchies  
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.  
So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infused  
Bad influence into the unwary breast  
Of his associate: He together calls,  
Or several one by one, the regent Powers,  
Under him Regent; tells, as he was taught,  
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,  
Now ere dim night had disincumbered Heaven,  
The great hierarchal standard was to move;  
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between  
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound  
Or taint integrity: But all obeyed  
The wonted signal, and superiour voice  
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed  
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven;  
His countenance, as the morning-star that guides  
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies  
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.  
Mean while the Eternal eye, whose sight discerns  
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,  
And from within the golden lamps that burn  
Nightly before him, saw without their light  
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread  
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes  
Were banded to oppose his high decree;  
And, smiling, to his only Son thus said.  
Son, thou in whom my glory I behold  
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,  
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure  
Of our Omnipotence, and with what arms  
We mean to hold what anciently we claim  
Of deity or empire: Such a foe  
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne  
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;  
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try  
In battle, what our power is, or our right.

Let us advise, and to this hazard draw  
 With speed what force is left, and all employ  
 In our defence; lest unawares we lose  
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.  
 To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear,  
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,  
 Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes  
 Justly hast in derision, and, secure,  
 Laughest at their vain designs and tumults vain,  
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate  
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power  
 Given me to quell their pride, and in event  
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue  
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.  
 So spake the Son; but Satan, with his Powers,  
 Far was advanced on winged speed; an host  
 Innumerable as the stars of night,  
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun  
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.  
 Regions they passed, the mighty regencies  
 Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,  
 In their triple degrees; regions to which  
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more  
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,  
 And all the sea, from one entire globose  
 Stretched into longitude; which having passed,  
 At length into the limits of the north  
 They came; and Satan to his royal seat  
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount  
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;  
 The palace of great Lucifer, (so call  
 That structure in the dialect of men  
 Interpreted,) which not long after, he  
 Affecting all equality with God,  
 In imitation of that mount whereon  
 Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,  
 The Mountain of the Congregation called;  
 For thither he assembled all his train,  
 Pretending so commanded to consult  
 About the great reception of their King,  
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art  
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 If these magnifick titles yet remain  
 Not merely titular, since by decree  
 Another now hath to himself engrossed  
 All power, and us eclipsed under the name  
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste  
 Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,  
 This only to consult how we may best,  
 With what may be devised of honours new,

Receive him coming to receive from us  
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!  
 Too much to one! but double how endured,  
 To one, and to his image now proclaimed?  
 But what if better counsels might erect  
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?  
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend  
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust  
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves  
 Natives and sons of Heaven possessed before  
 By none; and if not equal all, yet free,  
 Equally free; for orders and degrees  
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.  
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume  
 Monarchy over such as live by right  
 His equals, if in power and splendour less,  
 In freedom equal? or can introduce  
 Law and edict on us, who without law  
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,  
 And look for adoration, to the abuse  
 Of those imperial titles, which assert  
 Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.  
 Thus far his bold discourse without controul  
 Had audience; when among the Seraphim  
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored  
 The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,  
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe  
 The current of his fury thus opposed.  
 O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!  
 Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven  
 Expected, least of all from thee, Ingrate,  
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.  
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn  
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,  
 That to his only Son, by right endued  
 With regal scepter, every soul in Heaven  
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due  
 Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou sayest,  
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,  
 And equal over equals to let reign,  
 One over all with unsucceeded power.  
 Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute  
 With him the points of liberty, who made  
 Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heaven  
 Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?  
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,  
 And of our good and of our dignity  
 How provident he is; how far from thought  
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt  
 Our happy state, under one head more near  
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,  
 That equal over equals monarch reign:

Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,  
 Or all angelick nature joined in one,  
 Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,  
 As by his Word, the Mighty Father made  
 All things, even thee; and all the Spirits of Heaven  
 By him created in their bright degrees,  
 Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,  
 Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured,  
 But more illustrious made; since he the head  
 One of our number thus reduced becomes;  
 His laws our laws; all honour to him done  
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,  
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease  
 The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,  
 While pardon may be found in time besought.  
 So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal  
 None seconded, as out of season judged,  
 Or singular and rash: Whereat rejoiced  
 The Apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied.  
 That we were formed then sayest thou? and the work  
 Of secondary hands, by task transferred  
 From Father to his Son? strange point and new!  
 Doctrine which we would know whence learned: who saw  
 When this creation was? rememberest thou  
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
 We know no time when we were not as now;  
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised  
 By our own quickening power, when fatal course  
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature  
 Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.  
 Our puissance is our own; our own right hand  
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try  
 Who is our equal: Then thou shalt behold  
 Whether by supplication we intend  
 Address, and to begirt the almighty throne  
 Beseeking or besieging. This report,  
 These tidings carry to the anointed King;  
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.  
 He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,  
 Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause  
 Through the infinite host; nor less for that  
 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone  
 Encompassed round with foes, thus answered bold.  
 O alienate from God, O Spirit accursed,  
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall  
 Determined, and thy hapless crew involved  
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread  
 Both of thy crime and punishment: Henceforth  
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke  
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws  
 Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees

Against thee are gone forth without recall;  
That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,  
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break  
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;  
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly  
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath  
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,  
Distinguish not: For soon expect to feel  
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.  
Then who created thee lamenting learn,  
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.  
So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
Among the faithless, faithful only he;  
Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified,  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;  
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought  
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,  
Though single. From amidst them forth he passed,  
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained  
Superiour, nor of violence feared aught;  
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned  
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 06

All night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,  
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till Morn,  
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave  
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven  
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;  
Light issues forth, and at the other door  
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour  
To veil the Heaven, though darkness there might well  
Seem twilight here: And now went forth the Morn  
Such as in highest Heaven arrayed in gold  
Empyrean; from before her vanished Night,  
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain  
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,  
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:  
War he perceived, war in procinct; and found  
Already known what he for news had thought  
To have reported: Gladly then he mixed  
Among those friendly Powers, who him received  
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,  
That of so many myriads fallen, yet one  
Returned not lost. On to the sacred hill  
They led him high applauded, and present  
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,  
From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.  
Servant of God. Well done; well hast thou fought  
The better fight, who single hast maintained  
Against revolted multitudes the cause  
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;  
And for the testimony of truth hast borne  
Universal reproach, far worse to bear  
Than violence; for this was all thy care  
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds  
Judged thee perverse: The easier conquest now  
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,  
Than scorned thou didst depart; and to subdue  
By force, who reason for their law refuse,  
Right reason for their law, and for their King  
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.  
Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,  
And thou, in military prowess next,  
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons  
Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,  
By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,  
Equal in number to that Godless crew  
Rebellious: Them with fire and hostile arms  
Fearless assault; and, to the brow of Heaven  
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,

Into their place of punishment, the gulf  
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide  
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.  
So spake the Sovran Voice, and clouds began  
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll  
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign  
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud  
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:  
At which command the Powers militant,  
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined  
Of union irresistible, moved on  
In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed  
Heroick ardour to adventurous deeds  
Under their God-like leaders, in the cause  
Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides  
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground  
Their march was, and the passive air upbore  
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind  
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,  
Came summoned over Eden to receive  
Their names of thee; so over many a tract  
Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide,  
Tenfold the length of this terrene: At last,  
Far in the horizon to the north appeared  
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched  
In battailous aspect, and nearer view  
Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields  
Various, with boastful argument portrayed,  
The banded Powers of Satan hasting on  
With furious expedition; for they weened  
That self-same day, by fight or by surprise,  
To win the mount of God, and on his throne  
To set the Envier of his state, the proud  
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain  
In the mid way: Though strange to us it seemed  
At first, that Angel should with Angel war,  
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet  
So oft in festivals of joy and love  
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,  
Hymning the Eternal Father: But the shout  
Of battle now began, and rushing sound  
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.  
High in the midst, exalted as a God,  
The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,  
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed  
With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields;  
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now  
"twixt host and host but narrow space was left,

A dreadful interval, and front to front  
 Presented stood in terrible array  
 Of hideous length: Before the cloudy van,  
 On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,  
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,  
 Came towering, armed in adamant and gold;  
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood  
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,  
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.  
 O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest  
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty  
 Remain not: Wherefore should not strength and might  
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove  
 Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?  
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,  
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried  
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,  
 That he, who in debate of truth hath won,  
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike  
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,  
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so  
 Most reason is that reason overcome.  
 So pondering, and from his armed peers  
 Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met  
 His daring foe, at this prevention more  
 Incensed, and thus securely him defied.  
 Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reached  
 The highth of thy aspiring unopposed,  
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side  
 Abandoned, at the terrour of thy power  
 Or potent tongue: Fool! not to think how vain  
 Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;  
 Who out of smallest things could, without end,  
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat  
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand  
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,  
 Unaided, could have finished thee, and whelmed  
 Thy legions under darkness: But thou seest  
 All are not of thy train; there be, who faith  
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then  
 To thee not visible, when I alone  
 Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent  
 From all: My sect thou seest; now learn too late  
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.  
 Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,  
 Thus answered. Ill for thee, but in wished hour  
 Of my revenge, first sought for, thou returnest  
 From flight, seditious Angel! to receive  
 Thy merited reward, the first assay  
 Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,  
 Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose  
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met



Their deities to assert; who, while they feel  
 Vigour divine within them, can allow  
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest  
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win  
 From me some plume, that thy success may show  
 Destruction to the rest: This pause between,  
 (Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know,  
 At first I thought that Liberty and Heaven  
 To heavenly souls had been all one; but now  
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
 Ministring Spirits, trained up in feast and song!  
 Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,  
 Servility with freedom to contend,  
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.  
 To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied.  
 Apostate! still thou errest, nor end wilt find  
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:  
 Unjustly thou depravest it with the name  
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,  
 Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,  
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels  
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
 To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled  
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,  
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;  
 Yet lewdly darest our ministring upbraid.  
 Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve  
 In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine  
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;  
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect: Mean while  
 From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,  
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.  
 So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,  
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell  
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,  
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,  
 Such ruin intercept: Ten paces huge  
 He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee  
 His massy spear upstaid; as if on earth  
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,  
 Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,  
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seised  
 The rebel Thrones, but greater rage, to see  
 Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and shout,  
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire  
 Of battle: Whereat Michael bid sound  
 The Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven  
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung  
 Hosanna to the Highest: Nor stood at gaze  
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined  
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,  
 And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now

Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed  
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels  
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise  
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss  
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
And flying vaulted either host with fire.  
So under fiery cope together rushed  
Both battles main, with ruinous assault  
And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven  
Resounded; and had Earth been then, all Earth  
Had to her center shook. What wonder? when  
Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought  
On either side, the least of whom could wield  
These elements, and arm him with the force  
Of all their regions: How much more of power  
Army against army numberless to raise  
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,  
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;  
Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent,  
From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled  
And limited their might; though numbered such  
As each divided legion might have seemed  
A numerous host; in strength each armed hand  
A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed  
Each warrior single as in chief, expert  
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway  
Of battle, open when, and when to close  
The ridges of grim war: No thought of flight,  
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed  
That argued fear; each on himself relied,  
As only in his arm the moment lay  
Of victory: Deeds of eternal fame  
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread  
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground  
A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,  
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then  
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale  
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day  
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms  
No equal, ranging through the dire attack  
Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length  
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled  
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway  
Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down  
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand  
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb  
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,  
A vast circumference. At his approach  
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil  
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end  
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued  
Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown

And visage all inflamed first thus began.  
 Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,  
 Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest  
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself,  
 And thy adherents: How hast thou disturbed  
 Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought  
 Misery, uncreated till the crime  
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled  
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright  
 And faithful, now proved false! But think not here  
 To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out  
 From all her confines. Heaven, the seat of bliss,  
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.  
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along,  
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell;  
 Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,  
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,  
 Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God,  
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain.  
 So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus  
 The Adversary. Nor think thou with wind  
 Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds  
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these  
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise  
 Unvanquished, easier to transact with me  
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats  
 To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end  
 The strife which thou callest evil, but we style  
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win,  
 Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell  
 Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,  
 If not to reign: Mean while thy utmost force,  
 And join him named Almighty to thy aid,  
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.  
 They ended parle, and both addressed for fight  
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
 Of Angels, can relate, or to what things  
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift  
 Human imagination to such highth  
 Of Godlike power? for likest Gods they seemed,  
 Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,  
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.  
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air  
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields  
 Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood  
 In horror: From each hand with speed retired,  
 Where erst was thickest fight, the angelick throng,  
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
 Of such commotion; such as, to set forth  
 Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,  
 Among the constellations war were sprung,

Two planets, rushing from aspect malign  
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky  
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.  
 Together both with next to almighty arm  
 Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aimed  
 That might determine, and not need repeat,  
 As not of power at once; nor odds appeared  
 In might or swift prevention: But the sword  
 Of Michael from the armoury of God  
 Was given him tempered so, that neither keen  
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met  
 The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor staid,  
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared  
 All his right side: Then Satan first knew pain,  
 And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore  
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
 Passed through him: But the ethereal substance closed,  
 Not long divisible; and from the gash  
 A stream of necturous humour issuing flowed  
 Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,  
 And all his armour stained, ere while so bright.  
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run  
 By Angels many and strong, who interposed  
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields  
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired  
 From off the files of war: There they him laid  
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,  
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride  
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath  
 His confidence to equal God in power.  
 Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that live throughout  
 Vital in every part, not as frail man  
 In entrails, heart of head, liver or reins,  
 Cannot but by annihilating die;  
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound  
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:  
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,  
 All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,  
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size  
 Assume, as?kikes them best, condense or rare.  
 Mean while in other parts like deeds deserved  
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,  
 And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array  
 Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,  
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound  
 Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven  
 Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon  
 Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms  
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing  
 Uriel, and Raphael, his vaunting foe,  
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed,

Vanquished Adramelech, and Asmadai,  
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods  
 Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,  
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.  
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow  
 Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence  
 Of Ramiel scorched and blasted, overthrew.  
 I might relate of thousands, and their names  
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect  
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,  
 Seek not the praise of men: The other sort,  
 In might though wonderous and in acts of war,  
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom  
 Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,  
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.  
 For strength from truth divided, and from just,  
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise  
 And ignominy; yet to glory aspires  
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:  
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.  
 And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,  
 With many an inroad gored; deformed rout  
 Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground  
 With shivered armour strown, and on a heap  
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,  
 And fiery-foaming steeds; what stood, recoiled  
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanick host  
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,  
 Then first with fear surprised, and sense of pain,  
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought  
 By sin of disobedience; till that hour  
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.  
 Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,  
 In cubick phalanx firm, advanced entire,  
 Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;  
 Such high advantages their innocence  
 Gave them above their foes; not to have sinned,  
 Not to have disobeyed; in fight they stood  
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained  
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved,  
 Now Night her course began, and, over Heaven  
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,  
 And silence on the odious din of war:  
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,  
 Victor and vanquished: On the foughten field  
 Michael and his Angels prevalent  
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,  
 Cherubick waving fires: On the other part,  
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared,  
 Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,  
 His potentates to council called by night;

And in the midst thus undismayed began.  
 O now in danger tried, now known in arms  
 Not to be overpowered, Companions dear,  
 Found worthy not of liberty alone,  
 Too mean pretence! but what we more affect,  
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;  
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight,  
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)  
 What Heaven's Lord had powerfullest to send  
 Against us from about his throne, and judged  
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
 But proves not so: Then fallible, it seems,  
 Of future we may deem him, though till now  
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly armed,  
 Some disadvantage we endured and pain,  
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned;  
 Since now we find this our empyreal form  
 Incapable of mortal injury,  
 Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,  
 Soon closing, and by native vigour healed.  
 Of evil then so small as easy think  
 The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,  
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes,  
 Or equal what between us made the odds,  
 In nature none: If other hidden cause  
 Left them superiour, while we can preserve  
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,  
 Due search and consultation will disclose.  
 He sat; and in the assembly next upstood  
 Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;  
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,  
 Sore toiled, his riven arms to havock hewn,  
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake.  
 Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
 Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard  
 For Gods, and too unequal work we find,  
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,  
 Against unpained, impassive; from which evil  
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails  
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain  
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands  
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well  
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,  
 But live content, which is the calmest life:  
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst  
 Of evils, and, excessive, overturns  
 All patience. He, who therefore can invent  
 With what more forcible we may offend  
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm  
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves  
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look composed Satan replied.  
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright  
 Believest so main to our success, I bring.  
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface  
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,  
 This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned  
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems, and gold;  
 Whose eye so superficially surveys  
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow  
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,  
 Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touched  
 With Heaven's ray, and tempered, they shoot forth  
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?  
 These in their dark nativity the deep  
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;  
 Which, into hollow engines, long and round,  
 Thick rammed, at the other bore with touch of fire  
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth  
 From far, with thundering noise, among our foes  
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash  
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands  
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed  
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.  
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,  
 Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;  
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined  
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.  
 He ended, and his words their drooping cheer  
 Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.  
 The invention all admired, and each, how he  
 To be the inventer missed; so easy it seemed  
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought  
 Impossible: Yet, haply, of thy race  
 In future days, if malice should abound,  
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspired  
 With devilish machination, might devise  
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men  
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.  
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew;  
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands  
 Were ready; in a moment up they turned  
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath  
 The originals of nature in their crude  
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam  
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,  
 Concocted and adusted they reduced  
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:  
 Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth  
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,  
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls  
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed  
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.

So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,  
 Secret they finished, and in order set,  
 With silent circumspection, unespied.  
 Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appeared,  
 Up rose the victor-Angels, and to arms  
 The matin trumpet sung: In arms they stood  
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,  
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills  
 Look round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,  
 Each quarter to descry the distant foe,  
 Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,  
 In motion or in halt: Him soon they met  
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow  
 But firm battalion; back with speediest sail  
 Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,  
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried.  
 Arm, Warriours, arm for fight; the foe at hand,  
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit  
 This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud  
 He comes, and settled in his face I see  
 Sad resolution, and secure: Let each  
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each  
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,  
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,  
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,  
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.  
 So warned he them, aware themselves, and soon  
 In order, quit of all impediment;  
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,  
 And onward moved embattled: When behold!  
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe  
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube  
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled  
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,  
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
 A while; but suddenly at head appeared  
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.  
 Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;  
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek  
 Peace and composure, and with open breast  
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like  
 Our overture; and turn not back perverse:  
 But that I doubt; however witness, Heaven!  
 Heaven, witness thou anon! while we discharge  
 Freely our part: ye, who appointed stand  
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch  
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear!  
 So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce  
 Had ended; when to right and left the front  
 Divided, and to either flank retired:  
 Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,  
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid



On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed,  
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,  
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled,)  
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths  
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,  
Portending hollow truce: At each behind  
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed  
Stood waving tipt with fire; while we, suspense,  
Collected stood within our thoughts amused,  
Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds  
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied  
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,  
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,  
From those deep-throated engines belched, whose roar  
Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,  
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul  
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail  
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host  
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,  
That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,  
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell  
By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel rolled;  
The sooner for their arms; unarmed, they might  
Have easily, as Spirits, evaded swift  
By quick contraction or remove; but now  
Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;  
Nor served it to relax their serried files.  
What should they do? if on they rushed, repulse  
Repeated, and indecent overthrow  
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,  
And to their foes a laughter; for in view  
Stood ranked of Seraphim another row,  
In posture to displode their second tire  
Of thunder: Back defeated to return  
They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,  
And to his mates thus in derision called.  
O Friends! why come not on these victors proud  
Ere while they fierce were coming; and when we,  
To entertain them fair with open front  
And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms  
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,  
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seemed  
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps  
For joy of offered peace: But I suppose,  
If our proposals once again were heard,  
We should compel them to a quick result.  
To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood.  
Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
Of hard contents, and full of force urged home;  
Such as we might perceive amused them all,  
And stumbled many: Who receives them right,

Had need from head to foot well understand;  
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,  
 They show us when our foes walk not upright.  
 So they among themselves in pleasant vein  
 Stood scoffing, hightened in their thoughts beyond  
 All doubt of victory: Eternal Might  
 To match with their inventions they presumed  
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,  
 And all his host derided, while they stood  
 A while in trouble: But they stood not long;  
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms  
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.  
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,  
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!)  
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills  
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heaven  
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)  
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;  
 From their foundations loosening to and fro,  
 They plucked the seated hills, with all their load,  
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops  
 Up-lifting bore them in their hands: Amaze,  
 Be sure, and terrour, seized the rebel host,  
 When coming towards them so dread they saw  
 The bottom of the mountains upward turned;  
 Till on those cursed engines' triple-row  
 They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence  
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep;  
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads  
 Main promontories flung, which in the air  
 Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed;  
 Their armour helped their harm, crushed in and bruised  
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain  
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;  
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind  
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,  
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.  
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms  
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore:  
 So hills amid the air encountered hills,  
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire;  
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;  
 Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game  
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped  
 Upon confusion rose: And now all Heaven  
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread;  
 Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits  
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,  
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised:  
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,  
 To honour his anointed Son avenged

Upon his enemies, and to declare  
 All power on him transferred: Whence to his Son,  
 The Assessour of his throne, he thus began.  
 Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,  
 Son, in whose face invisible is beheld  
 Visibly, what by Deity I am;  
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,  
 Second Omnipotence! two days are past,  
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,  
 Since Michael and his Powers went forth to tame  
 These disobedient: Sore hath been their fight,  
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;  
 For to themselves I left them; and thou knowest,  
 Equal in their creation they were formed,  
 Save what sin hath impaired; which yet hath wrought  
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;  
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last  
 Endless, and no solution will be found:  
 War wearied hath performed what war can do,  
 And to disordered rage let loose the reins  
 With mountains, as with weapons, armed; which makes  
 Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.  
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;  
 For thee I have ordained it; and thus far  
 Have suffered, that the glory may be thine  
 Of ending this great war, since none but Thou  
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace  
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know  
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;  
 And, this perverse commotion governed thus,  
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir  
 Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King  
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.  
 Go then, Thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might;  
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels  
 That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,  
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms  
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;  
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out  
 From all Heaven's bounds into the utter deep:  
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise  
 God, and Messiah his anointed King.  
 He said, and on his Son with rays direct  
 Shone full; he all his Father full expressed  
 Ineffably into his face received;  
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake.  
 O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,  
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st  
 To glorify thy Son, I always thee,  
 As is most just: This I my glory account,  
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
 That thou, in me well pleased, declarest thy will

Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.  
 Scepter and power, thy giving, I assume,  
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end  
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee  
 For ever; and in me all whom thou lovest:  
 But whom thou hatest, I hate, and can put on  
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,  
 Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled;  
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,  
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm;  
 That from thy just obedience could revolt,  
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.  
 Then shall thy Saints unmixed, and from the impure  
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,  
 Unfeigned Halleluiahs to thee sing,  
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.  
 So said, he, o'er his scepter bowing, rose  
 From the right hand of Glory where he sat;  
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,  
 Dawning through Heaven. Forth rushed with whirlwind sound  
 The chariot of Paternal Deity,  
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,  
 Itself instinct with Spirit, but convoyed  
 By four Cherubick shapes; four faces each  
 Had wonderous; as with stars, their bodies all  
 And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels  
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;  
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,  
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure  
 Amber, and colours of the showery arch.  
 He, in celestial panoply all armed  
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,  
 Ascended; at his right hand Victory  
 Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow  
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored;  
 And from about him fierce effusion rolled  
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:  
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,  
 He onward came; far off his coming shone;  
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)  
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen;  
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime  
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,  
 Illustrious far and wide; but by his own  
 First seen: Them unexpected joy surprised,  
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed  
 Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven;  
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced  
 His army, circumfused on either wing,  
 Under their Head imbodyed all in one.  
 Before him Power Divine his way prepared;

At his command the uprooted hills retired  
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went  
 Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,  
 And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.  
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,  
 And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,  
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.  
 In heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?  
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,  
 Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?  
 They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,  
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight  
 Took envy; and, aspiring to his highth,  
 Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud  
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail  
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall  
 In universal ruin last; and now  
 To final battle drew, disdainning flight,  
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
 To all his host on either hand thus spake.  
 Stand still in bright array, ye Saints; here stand,  
 Ye Angels armed; this day from battle rest:  
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God  
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;  
 And as ye have received, so have ye done,  
 Invincibly: But of this cursed crew  
 The punishment to other hand belongs;  
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:  
 Number to this day's work is not ordained,  
 Nor multitude; stand only, and behold  
 God's indignation on these godless poured  
 By me; not you, but me, they have despised,  
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,  
 Because the Father, to whom in Heaven s'preme  
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,  
 Hath honoured me, according to his will.  
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned;  
 That they may have their wish, to try with me  
 In battle which the stronger proves; they all,  
 Or I alone against them; since by strength  
 They measure all, of other excellence  
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;  
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.  
 So spake the Son, and into terrour changed  
 His countenance too severe to be beheld,  
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.  
 At once the Four spread out their starry wings  
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs  
 Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound  
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.  
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,  
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels

The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,  
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon  
 Among them he arrived; in his right hand  
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent  
 Before him, such as in their souls infixed  
 Plagues: They, astonished, all resistance lost,  
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:  
 O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode  
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,  
 That wished the mountains now might be again  
 Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.  
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four  
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels  
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;  
 One Spirit in them ruled; and every eye  
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire  
 Among the accursed, that withered all their strength,  
 And of their wonted vigour left them drained,  
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.  
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked  
 His thunder in mid volley; for he meant  
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:  
 The overthrown he raised, and as a herd  
 Of goats or timorous flock together thronged  
 Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued  
 With terrours, and with furies, to the bounds  
 And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,  
 Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed  
 Into the wasteful deep: The monstrous sight  
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse  
 Urged them behind: Headlong themselves they threw  
 Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath  
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.  
 Hell heard the unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
 Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled  
 Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep  
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.  
 Nine days they fell: Confounded Chaos roared,  
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall  
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout  
 Incumbered him with ruin: Hell at last  
 Yawning received them whole, and on them closed;  
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire  
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.  
 Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired  
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.  
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,  
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:  
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,  
 With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,

Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright,  
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,  
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,  
Worthiest to reign: He, celebrated, rode  
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts  
And temple of his Mighty Father throned  
On high; who into glory him received,  
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.  
Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on Earth,  
At thy request, and that thou mayest beware  
By what is past, to thee I have revealed  
What might have else to human race been hid;  
The discord which befel, and war in Heaven  
Among the angelick Powers, and the deep fall  
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled  
With Satan; he who envies now thy state,  
Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
Thee also from obedience, that, with him  
Bereaved of happiness, thou mayest partake  
His punishment, eternal misery;  
Which would be all his solace and revenge,  
As a despite done against the Most High,  
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.  
But listen not to his temptations, warn  
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,  
By terrible example, the reward  
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 07

Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name  
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine  
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,  
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!  
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou  
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwellest; but, heavenly-born,  
Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,  
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased  
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee  
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,  
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down  
Return me to my native element:  
Lest from this flying steed unreined, (as once  
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,)  
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,  
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.  
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound  
Within the visible diurnal sphere;  
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged  
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,  
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;  
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,  
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou  
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or when morn  
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.  
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance  
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race  
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears  
To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned  
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend  
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:  
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.  
Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphael,  
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarned  
Adam, by dire example, to beware  
Apostasy, by what befel in Heaven  
To those apostates; lest the like befall  
In Paradise to Adam or his race,  
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,  
So easily obeyed amid the choice  
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,  
Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve,  
The story heard attentive, and was filled  
With admiration and deep muse, to hear



Of things so high and strange; things, to their thought  
 So unimaginable, as hate in Heaven,  
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss,  
 With such confusion: but the evil, soon  
 Driven back, redounded as a flood on those  
 From whom it sprung; impossible to mix  
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed  
 The doubts that in his heart arose: and now  
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
 What nearer might concern him, how this world  
 Of Heaven and Earth conspicuous first began;  
 When, and whereof created; for what cause;  
 What within Eden, or without, was done  
 Before his memory; as one whose drouth  
 Yet scarce allayed still eyes the current stream,  
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,  
 Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest.  
 Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,  
 Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed,  
 Divine interpreter! by favour sent  
 Down from the empyrean, to forewarn  
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,  
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;  
 For which to the infinitely Good we owe  
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment  
 Receive, with solemn purpose to observe  
 Immutably his sovran will, the end  
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed  
 Gently, for our instruction, to impart  
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned  
 Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemed,  
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate  
 What may no less perhaps avail us known,  
 How first began this Heaven which we behold  
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorned  
 Innumerable; and this which yields or fills  
 All space, the ambient air wide interfused  
 Embracing round this floried Earth; what cause  
 Moved the Creator, in his holy rest  
 Through all eternity, so late to build  
 In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon  
 Absolved; if unforbid thou mayest unfold  
 What we, not to explore the secrets ask  
 Of his eternal empire, but the more  
 To magnify his works, the more we know.  
 And the great light of day yet wants to run  
 Much of his race though steep; suspense in Heaven,  
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,  
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell  
 His generation, and the rising birth  
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:  
 Or if the star of evening and the moon

Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring,  
 Silence; and Sleep, listening to thee, will watch;  
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song  
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.  
 Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:  
 And thus the Godlike Angel answered mild.  
 This also thy request, with caution asked,  
 Obtain; though to recount almighty works  
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve  
 To glorify the Maker, and infer  
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
 Thy hearing; such commission from above  
 I have received, to answer thy desire  
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain  
 To ask; nor let thine own inventions hope  
 Things not revealed, which the invisible King,  
 Only Omniscient, hath suppressed in night;  
 To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:  
 Enough is left besides to search and know.  
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
 Her temperance over appetite, to know  
 In measure what the mind may well contain;  
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.  
 Know then, that, after Lucifer from Heaven  
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host  
 Of Angels, than that star the stars among,)  
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep  
 Into his place, and the great Son returned  
 Victorious with his Saints, the Omnipotent  
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld  
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.  
 At least our envious Foe hath failed, who thought  
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid  
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat  
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,  
 He trusted to have seised, and into fraud  
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more:  
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,  
 Their station; Heaven, yet populous, retains  
 Number sufficient to possess her realms  
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent  
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites:  
 But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm  
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,  
 My damage fondly deemed, I can repair  
 That detriment, if such it be to lose  
 Self-lost; and in a moment will create  
 Another world, out of one man a race  
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,

Not here; till, by degrees of merit raised,  
 They open to themselves at length the way  
 Up hither, under long obedience tried;  
 And Earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to Earth,  
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.  
 Mean while inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;  
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee  
 This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!  
 My overshadowing Spirit and Might with thee  
 I send along; ride forth, and bid the Deep  
 Within appointed bounds be Heaven and Earth;  
 Boundless the Deep, because I Am who fill  
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.  
 Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire,  
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free  
 To act or not, Necessity and Chance  
 Approach not me, and what I will is Fate.  
 So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake  
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.  
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift  
 Than time or motion, but to human ears  
 Cannot without process of speech be told,  
 So told as earthly notion can receive.  
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven,  
 When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;  
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good will  
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace;  
 Glory to Him, whose just avenging ire  
 Had driven out the ungodly from his sight  
 And the habitations of the just; to Him  
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained  
 Good out of evil to create; instead  
 Of Spirits malign, a better race to bring  
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse  
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.  
 So sang the Hierarchies: Mean while the Son  
 On his great expedition now appeared,  
 Girt with Omnipotence, with radiance crowned  
 Of Majesty Divine; sapience and love  
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.  
 About his chariot numberless were poured  
 Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones,  
 And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged  
 From the armoury of God; where stand of old  
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged  
 Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,  
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth  
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit lived,  
 Attendant on their Lord: Heaven opened wide  
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound  
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth  
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word

And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.  
On heavenly ground they stood; and from the shore  
They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss  
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,  
Up from the bottom turned by furious winds  
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault  
Heaven's highth, and with the center mix the pole.  
Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace,  
Said then the Omnipotent Word; your discord end!  
Nor staid; but, on the wings of Cherubim  
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode  
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;  
For Chaos heard his voice: Him all his train  
Followed in bright procession, to behold  
Creation, and the wonders of his might.  
Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand  
He took the golden compasses, prepared  
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe  
This universe, and all created things:  
One foot he centered, and the other turned  
Round through the vast profundity obscure;  
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,  
This be thy just circumference, O World!  
Thus God the Heaven created, thus the Earth,  
Matter unformed and void: Darkness profound  
Covered the abyss: but on the watery calm  
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,  
And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth  
Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purged  
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,  
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed  
Like things to like; the rest to several place  
Disparted, and between spun out the air;  
And Earth self-balanced on her center hung.  
Let there be light, said God; and forthwith Light  
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,  
Sprung from the deep; and from her native east  
To journey through the aery gloom began,  
Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun  
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle  
Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;  
And light from darkness by the hemisphere  
Divided: light the Day, and darkness Night,  
He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:  
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung  
By the celestial quires, when orient light  
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;  
Birth-day of Heaven and Earth; with joy and shout  
The hollow universal orb they filled,  
And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised  
God and his works; Creator him they sung,  
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

Again, God said, Let there be firmament  
Amid the waters, and let it divide  
The waters from the waters; and God made  
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,  
Transparent, elemental air, diffused  
In circuit to the uttermost convex  
Of this great round; partition firm and sure,  
The waters underneath from those above  
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world  
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide  
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule  
Of Chaos far removed; lest fierce extremes  
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:  
And Heaven he named the Firmament: So even  
And morning chorus sung the second day.  
The Earth was formed, but in the womb as yet  
Of waters, embryon immature involved,  
Appeared not: over all the face of Earth  
Main ocean flowed, not idle; but, with warm  
Prolifick humour softening all her globe,  
Fermented the great mother to conceive,  
Satiated with genial moisture; when God said,  
Be gathered now ye waters under Heaven  
Into one place, and let dry land appear.  
Immediately the mountains huge appear  
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave  
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:  
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low  
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,  
Capacious bed of waters: Thither they  
Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled,  
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:  
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,  
For haste; such flight the great command impressed  
On the swift floods: As armies at the call  
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)  
Troop to their standard; so the watery throng,  
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,  
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,  
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;  
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide  
With serpent error wandering, found their way,  
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;  
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,  
All but within those banks, where rivers now  
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.  
The dry land, Earth; and the great receptacle  
Of congregated waters, he called Seas:  
And saw that it was good; and said, Let the Earth  
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,  
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,  
Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth.

He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then  
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,  
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad  
 Her universal face with pleasant green;  
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered  
 Opening their various colours, and made gay  
 Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,  
 Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept  
 The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed  
 Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,  
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last  
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed  
 Their blossoms: With high woods the hills were crowned;  
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side;  
 With borders long the rivers: that Earth now  
 Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where Gods might dwell,  
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt  
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained  
 Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground  
 None was; but from the Earth a dewy mist  
 Went up, and watered all the ground, and each  
 Plant of the field; which, ere it was in the Earth,  
 God made, and every herb, before it grew  
 On the green stem: God saw that it was good:  
 So even and morn recorded the third day.  
 Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights  
 High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide  
 The day from night; and let them be for signs,  
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years;  
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain  
 Their office in the firmament of Heaven,  
 To give light on the Earth; and it was so.  
 And God made two great lights, great for their use  
 To Man, the greater to have rule by day,  
 The less by night, altern; and made the stars,  
 And set them in the firmament of Heaven  
 To illuminate the Earth, and rule the day  
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,  
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,  
 Surveying his great work, that it was good:  
 For of celestial bodies first the sun  
 A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,  
 Though of ethereal mould: then formed the moon  
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,  
 And sowed with stars the Heaven, thick as a field:  
 Of light by far the greater part he took,  
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed  
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive  
 And drink the liquid light; firm to retain  
 Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.  
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars

Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,  
And hence the morning-planet gilds her horns;  
By tincture or reflection they augment  
Their small peculiar, though from human sight  
So far remote, with diminution seen,  
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,  
Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the gray  
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence: Less bright the moon,  
But opposite in levelled west was set,  
His mirrour, with full face borrowing her light  
From him; for other light she needed none  
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps  
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,  
Revolved on Heaven's great axle, and her reign  
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,  
With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared  
Spangling the hemisphere: Then first adorned  
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,  
Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day.  
And God said, Let the waters generate  
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:  
And let fowl fly above the Earth, with wings  
Displayed on the open firmament of Heaven.  
And God created the great whales, and each  
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously  
The waters generated by their kinds;  
And every bird of wing after his kind;  
And saw that it was good, and blessed them, saying.  
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,  
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;  
And let the fowl be multiplied, on the Earth.  
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,  
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals  
Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales,  
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft  
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,  
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves  
Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance,  
Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold;  
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food  
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal  
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk  
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,  
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretched like a promontory sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving land; and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.

Mean while the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,  
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon  
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclosed  
 Their callow young; but feathered soon and fledge  
 They summed their pens; and, soaring the air sublime,  
 With clang despised the ground, under a cloud  
 In prospect; there the eagle and the stork  
 On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:  
 Part loosely wing the region, part more wise  
 In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,  
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
 Their aery caravan, high over seas  
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing  
 Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane  
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air  
 Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes:  
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song  
 Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings  
 Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale  
 Ceased warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:  
 Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed  
 Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,  
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows  
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit  
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower  
 The mid aerial sky: Others on ground  
 Walked firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds  
 The silent hours, and the other whose gay train  
 Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue  
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus  
 With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,  
 Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.  
 The sixth, and of creation last, arose  
 With evening harps and matin; when God said,  
 Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
 Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the Earth,  
 Each in their kind. The Earth obeyed, and straight  
 Opening her fertile womb teemed at a birth  
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,  
 Limbed and full grown: Out of the ground up rose,  
 As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons  
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;  
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked:  
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green:  
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks  
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.  
 The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared  
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free  
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,  
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,  
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole  
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw



In hillocks: The swift stag from under ground  
 Bore up his branching head: Scarce from his mould  
 Behemoth biggest born of earth upheaved  
 His vastness: Fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,  
 As plants: Ambiguous between sea and land  
 The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.  
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,  
 Insect or worm: those waved their limber fans  
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact  
 In all the liveries decked of summer's pride  
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:  
 These, as a line, their long dimension drew,  
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all  
 Minims of nature; some of serpent-kind,  
 Wonderous in length and corpulence, involved  
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept  
 The parsimonious emmet, provident  
 Of future; in small room large heart enclosed;  
 Pattern of just equality perhaps  
 Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes  
 Of commonalty: Swarming next appeared  
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone  
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells  
 With honey stored: The rest are numberless,  
 And thou their natures knowest, and gavest them names,  
 Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown  
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,  
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes  
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee  
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.  
 Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled  
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand  
 First wheeled their course: Earth in her rich attire  
 Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,  
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked,  
 Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained:  
 There wanted yet the master-work, the end  
 Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone  
 And brute as other creatures, but endued  
 With sanctity of reason, might erect  
 His stature, and upright with front serene  
 Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence  
 Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,  
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
 Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes  
 Directed in devotion, to adore  
 And worship God Supreme, who made him chief  
 Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent  
 Eternal Father (for where is not he  
 Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.  
 Let us make now Man in our image, Man  
 In our similitude, and let them rule

Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,  
 Beast of the field, and over all the Earth,  
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.  
 This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O Man,  
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed  
 The breath of life; in his own image he  
 Created thee, in the image of God  
 Express; and thou becamest a living soul.  
 Male he created thee; but thy consort  
 Female, for race; then blessed mankind, and said,  
 Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth;  
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold  
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,  
 And every living thing that moves on the Earth.  
 Wherever thus created, for no place  
 Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou knowest,  
 He brought thee into this delicious grove,  
 This garden, planted with the trees of God,  
 Delectable both to behold and taste;  
 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food  
 Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the Earth yields,  
 Variety without end; but of the tree,  
 Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,  
 Thou mayest not; in the day thou eatest, thou diest;  
 Death is the penalty imposed; beware,  
 And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin  
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.  
 Here finished he, and all that he had made  
 Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;  
 So even and morn accomplished the sixth day:  
 Yet not till the Creator from his work  
 Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,  
 Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode;  
 Thence to behold this new created world,  
 The addition of his empire, how it showed  
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,  
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode  
 Followed with acclamation, and the sound  
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned  
 Angelick harmonies: The earth, the air  
 Resounded, (thou rememberest, for thou heardst,)  
 The heavens and all the constellations rung,  
 The planets in their station listening stood,  
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
 Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung,  
 Open, ye Heavens! your living doors; let in  
 The great Creator from his work returned  
 Magnificent, his six days work, a World;  
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign  
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men,  
 Delighted; and with frequent intercourse  
 Thither will send his winged messengers

On errands of supernal grace. So sung  
The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,  
That opened wide her blazing portals, led  
To God's eternal house direct the way;  
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold  
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,  
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,  
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest  
Powdered with stars. And now on Earth the seventh  
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun  
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,  
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount  
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne  
Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,  
The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down  
With his great Father; for he also went  
Invisible, yet staid, (such privilege  
Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordained,  
Author and End of all things; and, from work  
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh day,  
As resting on that day from all his work,  
But not in silence holy kept: the harp  
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe,  
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,  
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,  
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice  
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,  
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.  
Creation and the six days acts they sung:  
Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite  
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue  
Relate thee! Greater now in thy return  
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day  
Thy thunders magnified; but to create  
Is greater than created to destroy.  
Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound  
Thy empire! Easily the proud attempt  
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,  
Thou hast repelled; while impiously they thought  
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw  
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks  
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves  
To manifest the more thy might: his evil  
Thou usest, and from thence createst more good.  
Witness this new-made world, another Heaven  
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view  
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;  
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars  
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world  
Of destined habitation; but thou knowest  
Their seasons: among these the seat of Men,  
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,

Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy Men,  
And sons of Men, whom God hath thus advanced!  
Created in his image, there to dwell  
And worship him; and in reward to rule  
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,  
And multiply a race of worshippers  
Holy and just: Thrice happy, if they know  
Their happiness, and persevere upright!  
So sung they, and the empyrean rung  
With halleluiahs: Thus was sabbath kept.  
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked  
How first this world and face of things began,  
And what before thy memory was done  
From the beginning; that posterity,  
Informed by thee, might know: If else thou seekest  
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 08

The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he a while  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;  
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied.  
What thanks sufficient, or what recompence  
Equal, have I to render thee, divine  
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed  
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed  
This friendly condescension to relate  
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard  
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,  
With glory attributed to the high  
Creator! Something yet of doubt remains,  
Which only thy solution can resolve.  
When I behold this goodly frame, this world,  
Of Heaven and Earth consisting; and compute  
Their magnitudes; this Earth, a spot, a grain,  
An atom, with the firmament compared  
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll  
Spaces incomprehensible, (for such  
Their distance argues, and their swift return  
Diurnal,) merely to officiate light  
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,  
One day and night; in all her vast survey  
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,  
How Nature wise and frugal could commit  
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
So many nobler bodies to create,  
Greater so manifold, to this one use,  
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose  
Such restless revolution day by day  
Repeated; while the sedentary Earth,  
That better might with far less compass move,  
Served by more noble than herself, attains  
Her end without least motion, and receives,  
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought  
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.  
So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed  
Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve  
Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,  
With lowliness majestick from her seat,  
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,  
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,  
To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,  
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,  
And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.  
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
Delighted, or not capable her ear  
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,  
Adam relating, she sole auditress;  
Her husband the relater she preferred

Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix  
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip  
 Not words alone pleased her. O! when meet now  
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?  
 With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went,  
 Not unattended; for on her, as Queen,  
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
 And from about her shot darts of desire  
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.  
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,  
 Benevolent and facile thus replied.  
 To ask or search, I blame thee not; for Heaven  
 Is as the book of God before thee set,  
 Wherein to read his wonderous works, and learn  
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:  
 This to attain, whether Heaven move or Earth,  
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest  
 From Man or Angel the great Architect  
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
 His secrets to be scanned by them who ought  
 Rather admire; or, if they list to try  
 Conjecture, he his fabrick of the Heavens  
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move  
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide  
 Hereafter; when they come to model Heaven  
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield  
 The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive  
 To save appearances; how gird the sphere  
 With centrick and eccentric scribbled o'er,  
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:  
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess,  
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest  
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve  
 The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,  
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
 The benefit: Consider first, that great  
 Or bright infers not excellence: the Earth  
 Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,  
 Nor glistening, may of solid good contain  
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines;  
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect,  
 But in the fruitful Earth; there first received,  
 His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.  
 Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries  
 Officious; but to thee, Earth's habitant.  
 And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak  
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built  
 So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;  
 That Man may know he dwells not in his own;  
 An edifice too large for him to fill,

Lodged in a small partition; and the rest  
Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.  
The swiftness of those circles attribute,  
Though numberless, to his Omnipotence,  
That to corporeal substances could add  
Speed almost spiritual: Me thou thinkest not slow,  
Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven  
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived  
In Eden; distance inexpressible  
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,  
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show  
Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;  
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem  
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.  
God, to remove his ways from human sense,  
Placed Heaven from Earth so far, that earthly sight,  
If it presume, might err in things too high,  
And no advantage gain. What if the sun  
Be center to the world; and other stars,  
By his attractive virtue and their own  
Incited, dance about him various rounds?  
Their wandering course now high, now low, then hid,  
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,  
In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these  
The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,  
Insensibly three different motions move?  
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,  
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;  
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift  
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,  
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel  
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,  
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day  
Travelling east, and with her part averse  
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part  
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,  
Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,  
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,  
Enlightening her by day, as she by night  
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,  
Fields and inhabitants: Her spots thou seest  
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce  
Fruits in her softened soil for some to eat  
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,  
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,  
Communicating male and female light;  
Which two great sexes animate the world,  
Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in Nature unpossessed  
By living soul, desart and desolate,  
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far

Down to this habitable, which returns  
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.  
 But whether thus these things, or whether not;  
 But whether the sun, predominant in Heaven,  
 Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;  
 He from the east his flaming road begin;  
 Or she from west her silent course advance,  
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps  
 On her soft axle, while she paces even,  
 And bears thee soft with the smooth hair along;  
 Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;  
 Leave them to God above; him serve, and fear!  
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,  
 Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou  
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise  
 And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high  
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:  
 Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;  
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there  
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree;  
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed  
 Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven.  
 To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied.  
 How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure  
 Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene!  
 And, freed from intricacies, taught to live  
 The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts  
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which  
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,  
 And not molest us; unless we ourselves  
 Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.  
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove  
 Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;  
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,  
 That, not to know at large of things remote  
 From use, obscure and subtle; but, to know  
 That which before us lies in daily life,  
 Is the prime wisdom: What is more, is fume,  
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence:  
 And renders us, in things that most concern,  
 Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.  
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend  
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand  
 Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise  
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,  
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deigned.  
 Thee I have heard relating what was done  
 Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate  
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;  
 And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest  
 How subtly to detain thee I devise;  
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate;



Fond! were it not in hope of thy reply:  
 For, while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven;  
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
 Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst  
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour  
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,  
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine  
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.  
 To whom thus Raphael answered heavenly meek.  
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,  
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee  
 Abundantly his gifts hath also poured  
 Inward and outward both, his image fair:  
 Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace  
 Attends thee; and each word, each motion, forms;  
 Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth  
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire  
 Gladly into the ways of God with Man:  
 For God, we see, hath honoured thee, and set  
 On Man his equal love: Say therefore on;  
 For I that day was absent, as befel,  
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,  
 Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;  
 Squared in full legion (such command we had)  
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,  
 Or enemy, while God was in his work;  
 Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,  
 Destruction with creation might have mixed.  
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;  
 But us he sends upon his high behests  
 For state, as Sovran King; and to inure  
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut,  
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;  
 But long ere our approaching heard within  
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,  
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.  
 Glad we returned up to the coasts of light  
 Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in charge.  
 But thy relation now; for I attend,  
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine.  
 So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.  
 For Man to tell how human life began  
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew  
 Desire with thee still longer to converse  
 Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,  
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,  
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun  
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.  
 Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned,  
 And gazed a while the ample sky; till, raised  
 By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,  
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright

Stood on my feet: about me round I saw  
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,  
 And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,  
 Creatures that lived and moved, and walked, or flew;  
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled;  
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.  
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb  
 Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:  
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,  
 Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;  
 My tongue obeyed, and readily could name  
 Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light,  
 And thou enlightened Earth, so fresh and gay,  
 Ye Hills, and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plains,  
 And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,  
 Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?--  
 Not of myself;--by some great Maker then,  
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent:  
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,  
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,  
 And feel that I am happier than I know.--  
 While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,  
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld  
 This happy light; when, answer none returned,  
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,  
 Pensive I sat me down: There gentle sleep  
 First found me, and with soft oppression seised  
 My droused sense, untroubled, though I thought  
 I then was passing to my former state  
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:  
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,  
 Whose inward apparition gently moved  
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,  
 And lived: One came, methought, of shape divine,  
 And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,  
 'First Man, of men innumerable ordained  
 'First Father! called by thee, I come thy guide  
 'To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'  
 So saying, by the hand he took me raised,  
 And over fields and waters, as in air  
 Smooth-sliding without step, last led me up  
 A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,  
 A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees  
 Planted, with walks, and bowers; that what I saw  
 Of Earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree,  
 Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye  
 Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite  
 To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found  
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream  
 Had lively shadowed: Here had new begun  
 My wandering, had not he, who was my guide

Up hither, from among the trees appeared,  
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,  
 In adoration at his feet I fell  
 Submiss: He reared me, and 'Whom thou soughtest I am,'  
 Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest  
 'Above, or round about thee, or beneath.  
 'This Paradise I give thee, count it thine  
 'To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:  
 'Of every tree that in the garden grows  
 'Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:  
 'But of the tree whose operation brings  
 'Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set  
 'The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,  
 'Amid the garden by the tree of life,  
 'Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,  
 'And shun the bitter consequence: for know,  
 'The day thou eatest thereof, my sole command  
 'Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,  
 'From that day mortal; and this happy state  
 'Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world  
 'Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced  
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds  
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice  
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect  
 Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed.  
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth  
 'To thee and to thy race I give; as lords  
 'Possess it, and all things that therein live,  
 'Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and fowl.  
 'In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold  
 'After their kinds; I bring them to receive  
 'From thee their names, and pay thee fealty  
 'With low subjection; understand the same  
 'Of fish within their watery residence,  
 'Not hither summoned, since they cannot change  
 'Their element, to draw the thinner air.'  
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold  
 Approaching two and two; these cowering low  
 With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing.  
 I named them, as they passed, and understood  
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued  
 My sudden apprehension: But in these  
 I found not what methought I wanted still;  
 And to the heavenly Vision thus presumed.  
 O, by what name, for thou above all these,  
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,  
 Surpassest far my naming; how may I  
 Adore thee, Author of this universe,  
 And all this good to man? for whose well being  
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,  
 Thou hast provided all things: But with me  
 I see not who partakes. In solitude

What happiness, who can enjoy alone,  
 Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?  
 Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,  
 As with a smile more brightened, thus replied.  
 What callest thou solitude? Is not the Earth  
 With various living creatures, and the air  
 Replenished, and all these at thy command  
 To come and play before thee? Knowest thou not  
 Their language and their ways? They also know,  
 And reason not contemptibly: With these  
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.  
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seemed  
 So ordering: I, with leave of speech implored,  
 And humble deprecation, thus replied.  
 Let not my words offend thee, Heavenly Power;  
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak.  
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
 And these inferiour far beneath me set?  
 Among unequals what society  
 Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?  
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due  
 Given and received; but, in disparity  
 The one intense, the other still remiss,  
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove  
 Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak  
 Such as I seek, fit to participate  
 All rational delight: wherein the brute  
 Cannot be human consort: They rejoice  
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;  
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:  
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl  
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;  
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.  
 Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeas'd.  
 A nice and subtle happiness, I see,  
 Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice  
 Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste  
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.  
 What thinkest thou then of me, and this my state?  
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed  
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone  
 From all eternity; for none I know  
 Second to me or like, equal much less.  
 How have I then with whom to hold converse,  
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those  
 To me inferiour, infinite descents  
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?  
 He ceased; I lowly answered. To attain  
 The highth and depth of thy eternal ways  
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!  
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee  
 Is no deficiencie found: Not so is Man,

But in degree; the cause of his desire  
 By conversation with his like to help  
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou  
 Shouldst propagate, already Infinite;  
 And through all numbers absolute, though One:  
 But Man by number is to manifest  
 His single imperfection, and beget  
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,  
 In unity defective; which requires  
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.  
 Thou in thy secrecy although alone,  
 Best with thyself accompanied, seekest not  
 Social communication; yet, so pleased,  
 Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt  
 Of union or communion, deified:  
 I, by conversing, cannot these erect  
 From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.  
 Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used  
 Permissive, and acceptance found; which gained  
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine.  
 Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased;  
 And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,  
 Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself;  
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free,  
 My image, not imparted to the brute;  
 Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee  
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;  
 And be so minded still: I, ere thou spakest,  
 Knew it not good for Man to be alone;  
 And no such company as then thou sawest  
 Intended thee; for trial only brought,  
 To see how thou couldest judge of fit and meet:  
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,  
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,  
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.  
 He ended, or I heard no more; for now  
 My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,  
 Which it had long stood under, strained to the highth  
 In that celestial colloquy sublime,  
 As with an object that excels the sense  
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair  
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called  
 By Nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.  
 Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell  
 Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,  
 Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,  
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape  
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood:  
 Who stooping opened my left side, and took  
 From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,  
 And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,  
 But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:

The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;  
Under his forming hands a creature grew,  
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,  
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now  
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained  
And in her looks; which from that time infused  
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
And into all things from her air inspired  
The spirit of love and amorous delight.  
She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked  
To find her, or for ever to deplore  
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:  
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,  
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned  
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow  
To make her amiable: On she came,  
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,  
And guided by his voice; nor uninformed  
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:  
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,  
In every gesture dignity and love.  
I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud.  
This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled  
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,  
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this  
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see  
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself  
Before me: Woman is her name; of Man  
Extracted: for this cause he shall forego  
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;  
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.  
She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,  
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,  
Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,  
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,  
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retired,  
The more desirable; or, to say all,  
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned:  
I followed her; she what was honour knew,  
And with obsequious majesty approved  
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower  
I led her blushing like the morn: All Heaven,  
And happy constellations, on that hour  
Shed their selectest influence; the Earth  
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;  
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs  
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings  
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,  
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night  
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening-star  
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought  
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss,  
 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find  
 In all things else delight indeed, but such  
 As, used or not, works in the mind no change,  
 Nor vehement desire; these delicacies  
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,  
 Walks, and the melody of birds: but here  
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
 Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else  
 Superiour and unmoved; here only weak  
 Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.  
 Or Nature failed in me, and left some part  
 Not proof enough such object to sustain;  
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps  
 More than enough; at least on her bestowed  
 Too much of ornament, in outward show  
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
 For well I understand in the prime end  
 Of Nature her the inferiour, in the mind  
 And inward faculties, which most excel;  
 In outward also her resembling less  
 His image who made both, and less expressing  
 The character of that dominion given  
 O'er other creatures: Yet when I approach  
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
 And in herself complete, so well to know  
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best:  
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
 Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her  
 Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shows;  
 Authority and Reason on her wait,  
 As one intended first, not after made  
 Occasionally; and, to consummate all,  
 Greatness of mind and Nobleness their seat  
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
 About her, as a guard angelick placed.  
 To whom the Angel with contracted brow.  
 Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;  
 Do thou but thine; and be not diffident  
 Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou  
 Dismiss not her, when most thou needest her nigh,  
 By attributing overmuch to things  
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceivest.  
 For, what admirest thou, what transports thee so,  
 An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well  
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;  
 Not thy subjection: Weigh with her thyself;  
 Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more  
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right

Well managed; of that skill the more thou knowest,  
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,  
 And to realities yield all her shows:  
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
 So awful, that with honour thou mayest love  
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind  
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight  
 Beyond all other; think the same vouchsafed  
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be  
 To them made common and divulged, if aught  
 Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue  
 The soul of man, or passion in him move.  
 What higher in her society thou findest  
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;  
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,  
 Wherein true love consists not: Love refines  
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat  
 In reason, and is judicious; is the scale  
 By which to heavenly love thou mayest ascend,  
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,  
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.  
 To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied.  
 Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught  
 In procreation common to all kinds,  
 (Though higher of the genial bed by far,  
 And with mysterious reverence I deem,)  
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,  
 Those thousand decencies, that daily flow  
 From all her words and actions mixed with love  
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned  
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul;  
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair  
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.  
 Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose  
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,  
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense  
 Variously representing; yet, still free,  
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.  
 To love, thou blamest me not; for Love, thou sayest,  
 Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide;  
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:  
 Love not the heavenly Spirits, and how their love  
 Express they? by looks only? or do they mix  
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?  
 To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed  
 Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,  
 Answered. Let it suffice thee that thou knowest  
 Us happy, and without love no happiness.  
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoyest,  
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy  
 In eminence; and obstacle find none



Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;  
Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,  
Total they mix, union of pure with pure  
Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need,  
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.  
But I can now no more; the parting sun  
Beyond the Earth's green Cape and verdant Isles  
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.  
Be strong, live happy, and love! But, first of all,  
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep  
His great command; take heed lest passion sway  
Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will  
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,  
The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!  
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,  
And all the Blest: Stand fast; to stand or fall  
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.  
Perfect within, no outward aid require;  
And all temptation to transgress repel.  
So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus  
Followed with benediction. Since to part,  
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal Messenger,  
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore!  
Gentle to me and affable hath been  
Thy condescension, and shall be honoured ever  
With grateful memory: Thou to mankind  
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!  
So parted they; the Angel up to Heaven  
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 09

No more of talk where God or Angel guest  
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd,  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast; permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change  
Those notes to tragick; foul distrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,  
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given,  
That brought into this world a world of woe,  
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery  
Death's harbinger: Sad talk! yet argument  
Not less but more heroick than the wrath  
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued  
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage  
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;  
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long  
Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son:

If answerable style I can obtain  
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns  
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,  
And dictates to me slumbering; or inspires  
Easy my unpremeditated verse:  
Since first this subject for heroick song  
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;  
Not sedulous by nature to indite  
Wars, hitherto the only argument  
Heroick deem'd chief mastery to dissect  
With long and tedious havock fabled knights  
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude  
Of patience and heroick martyrdom  
Unsung; or to describe races and games,  
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,  
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,  
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights  
At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast  
Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;  
The skill of artifice or office mean,  
Not that which justly gives heroick name  
To person, or to poem. Me, of these  
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument  
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise  
That name, unless an age too late, or cold  
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing  
Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,  
Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.  
The sun was sunk, and after him the star  
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring  
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter  
"twixt day and night, and now from end to end

Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round:  
 When satan, who late fled before the threats  
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd  
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent  
 On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap  
 Of heavier on himself, fearless returned  
 From compassing the earth; cautious of day,  
 Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried  
 His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim  
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,  
 The space of seven continued nights he rode  
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line  
 He circled; four times crossed the car of night  
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;  
 On the eighth returned; and, on the coast averse  
 From entrance or Cherubick watch, by stealth  
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,  
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,  
 Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,  
 Into a gulf shot under ground, till part  
 Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:  
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose  
 Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought  
 Where to lie hid; sea he had searched, and land,  
 From Eden over Pontus and the pool  
 Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;  
 Downward as far antarctick; and in length,  
 West from Orontes to the ocean barred  
 At Darien ; thence to the land where flows  
 Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he roamed  
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep  
 Considered every creature, which of all  
 Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found  
 The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.  
 Him after long debate, irresolute  
 Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose  
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom  
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide  
 From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake  
 Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,  
 As from his wit and native subtlety  
 Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,  
 Doubt might beget of diabolick power  
 Active within, beyond the sense of brute.  
 Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief  
 His bursting passion into plaints thus poured.  
 More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built  
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!  
 O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred  
 For what God, after better, worse would build?  
 Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens  
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,

Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,  
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams  
 Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven  
 Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,  
 Centring, receivest from all those orbs: in thee,  
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears  
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth  
 Of creatures animate with gradual life  
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.  
 With what delight could I have walked thee round,  
 If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange  
 Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,  
 Now land, now sea and shores with forest crowned,  
 Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these  
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see  
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel  
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
 Of contraries: all good to me becomes  
 Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.  
 But neither here seek I, no nor in Heaven  
 To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;  
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
 By what I seek, but others to make such  
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound:  
 For only in destroying I find ease  
 To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroyed,  
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
 For whom all this was made, all this will soon  
 Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;  
 In woe then; that destruction wide may range:  
 To me shall be the glory sole among  
 The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred  
 What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days  
 Continued making; and who knows how long  
 Before had been contriving? though perhaps  
 Not longer than since I, in one night, freed  
 From servitude inglorious well nigh half  
 The angelick name, and thinner left the throng  
 Of his adorers: He, to be avenged,  
 And to repair his numbers thus impaired,  
 Whether such virtue spent of old now failed  
 More Angels to create, if they at least  
 Are his created, or, to spite us more,  
 Determined to advance into our room  
 A creature formed of earth, and him endow,  
 Exalted from so base original,  
 With heavenly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed,  
 He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,  
 Him lord pronounced; and, O indignity!  
 Subjected to his service angel-wings,  
 And flaming ministers to watch and tend

Their earthly charge: Of these the vigilance  
 I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist  
 Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry  
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find  
 The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds  
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.  
 O foul descent! that I, who erst contended  
 With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained  
 Into a beast; and, mixed with bestial slime,  
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
 That to the highth of Deity aspired!  
 But what will not ambition and revenge  
 Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low  
 As high he soared; obnoxious, first or last,  
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
 Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:  
 Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,  
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite  
 Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,  
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised  
 From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.  
 So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,  
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on  
 His midnight-search, where soonest he might find  
 The serpent; him fast-sleeping soon he found  
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,  
 His head the midst, well stored with subtile wiles:  
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,  
 Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,  
 Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his mouth  
 The Devil entered; and his brutal sense,  
 In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired  
 With act intelligential; but his sleep  
 Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.  
 Now, when as sacred light began to dawn  
 In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed  
 Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,  
 From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise  
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill  
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,  
 And joined their vocal worship to the quire  
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake  
 The season prime for sweetest scents and airs:  
 Then commune, how that day they best may ply  
 Their growing work: for much their work out-grew  
 The hands' dispatch of two gardening so wide,  
 And Eve first to her husband thus began.  
 Adam, well may we labour still to dress  
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,  
 Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands  
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,

Luxurious by restraint; what we by day  
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
 One night or two with wanton growth derides  
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,  
 Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:  
 Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice  
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind  
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct  
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,  
 In yonder spring of roses intermixed  
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:  
 For, while so near each other thus all day  
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near  
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new  
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits  
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun  
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned?  
 To whom mild answer Adam thus returned.  
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond  
 Compare above all living creatures dear!  
 Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed,  
 How we might best fulfil the work which here  
 God hath assigned us; nor of me shalt pass  
 Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found  
 In woman, than to study household good,  
 And good works in her husband to promote.  
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed  
 Labour, as to debar us when we need  
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,  
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,  
 To brute denied, and are of love the food;  
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.  
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,  
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.  
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands  
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide  
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
 Assist us; But, if much converse perhaps  
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:  
 For solitude sometimes is best society,  
 And short retirement urges sweet return.  
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm  
 Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest  
 What hath been warned us, what malicious foe  
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame  
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand  
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find  
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder;  
 Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each  
 To other speedy aid might lend at need:

Whether his first design be to withdraw  
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb  
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss  
 Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;  
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side  
 That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.  
 The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,  
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,  
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.  
 To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,  
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,  
 With sweet austere composure thus replied.  
 Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth's Lord!  
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks  
 Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,  
 And from the parting Angel over-heard,  
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,  
 Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.  
 But, that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt  
 To God or thee, because we have a foe  
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.  
 His violence thou fearest not, being such  
 As we, not capable of death or pain,  
 Can either not receive, or can repel.  
 His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers  
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love  
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;  
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,  
 Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?  
 To whom with healing words Adam replied.  
 Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!  
 For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:  
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade  
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid  
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe.  
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses  
 The tempted with dishonour foul; supposed  
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof  
 Against temptation: Thou thyself with scorn  
 And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,  
 Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,  
 If such affront I labour to avert  
 From thee alone, which on us both at once  
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;  
 Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.  
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;  
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce  
 Angels; nor think superfluous other's aid.  
 I, from the influence of thy looks, receive  
 Access in every virtue; in thy sight  
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,

Shame to be overcome or over-reached,  
 Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.  
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel  
 When I am present, and thy trial choose  
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?  
 So spake domestick Adam in his care  
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought  
 Less attributed to her faith sincere,  
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed.  
 If this be our condition, thus to dwell  
 In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,  
 Subtle or violent, we not endued  
 Single with like defence, wherever met;  
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm?  
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,  
 Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem  
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem  
 Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns  
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared  
 By us? who rather double honour gain  
 From his surmise proved false; find peace within,  
 Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.  
 And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed  
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?  
 Let us not then suspect our happy state  
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,  
 As not secure to single or combined.  
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,  
 And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed.  
 To whom thus Adam fervently replied.  
 O Woman, best are all things as the will  
 Of God ordained them: His creating hand  
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left  
 Of all that he created, much less Man,  
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,  
 Secure from outward force; within himself  
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:  
 Against his will he can receive no harm.  
 But God left free the will; for what obeys  
 Reason, is free; and Reason he made right,  
 But bid her well be ware, and still erect;  
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,  
 She dictate false; and mis-inform the will  
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.  
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,  
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.  
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;  
 Since Reason not impossibly may meet  
 Some specious object by the foe suborned,  
 And fall into deception unaware,  
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.  
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid



Were better, and most likely if from me  
 Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.  
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve  
 First thy obedience; the other who can know,  
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?  
 But, if thou think, trial unsought may find  
 Us both securer than thus warned thou seemest,  
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;  
 Go in thy native innocence, rely  
 On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!  
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.  
 So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve  
 Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied.  
 With thy permission then, and thus forewarned  
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words  
 Touched only; that our trial, when least sought,  
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared,  
 The willinger I go, nor much expect  
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;  
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.  
 Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand  
 Soft she withdrew; and, like a Wood-Nymph light,  
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,  
 Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self  
 In gait surpassed, and Goddess-like deport,  
 Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,  
 But with such gardening tools as Art yet rude,  
 Guiltless of fire, had formed, or Angels brought.  
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,  
 Likest she seemed, Pomona when she fled  
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,  
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.  
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued  
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.  
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return  
 Repeated; she to him as oft engaged  
 To be returned by noon amid the bower,  
 And all things in best order to invite  
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.  
 O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,  
 Of thy presumed return! event perverse!  
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
 Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;  
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,  
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent  
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back  
 Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss!  
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,  
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;  
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find  
 The only two of mankind, but in them  
 The whole included race, his purposed prey.

In bower and field he sought, where any tuft  
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,  
Their tendance, or plantation for delight;  
By fountain or by shady rivulet  
He sought them both, but wished his hap might find  
Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope  
Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,  
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,  
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round  
About her glowed, oft stooping to support  
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay  
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,  
Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays  
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while  
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,  
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.  
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed  
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;  
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,  
Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers  
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:  
Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned  
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned  
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;  
Or that, not mystick, where the sapient king  
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.  
Much he the place admired, the person more.  
As one who long in populous city pent,  
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight;  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;  
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,  
What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more;  
She most, and in her look sums all delight:  
Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve  
Thus early, thus alone: Her heavenly form  
Angelick, but more soft, and feminine,  
Her graceful innocence, her every air  
Of gesture, or least action, overawed  
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved  
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:  
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood  
From his own evil, and for the time remained  
Stupidly good; of enmity disarmed,  
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:  
But the hot Hell that always in him burns,  
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,

And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
 Of pleasure, not for him ordained: then soon  
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.  
 Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet  
 Compulsion thus transported, to forget  
 What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope  
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
 Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,  
 Save what is in destroying; other joy  
 To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass  
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone  
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,  
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,  
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroick built, though of terrestrial mould;  
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,  
 I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain  
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.  
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods!  
 Not terrible, though terrour be in love  
 And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,  
 Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned;  
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.  
 So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed  
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve  
 Addressed his way: not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,  
 Circular base of rising folds, that towered  
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head  
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;  
 With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape  
 And lovely; never since of serpent-kind  
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed,  
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god  
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen;  
 He with Olympias; this with her who bore  
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique  
 At first, as one who sought access, but feared  
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.  
 As when a ship, by skilful steersmen wrought  
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:  
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train  
 Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,  
 To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound  
 Of rusling leaves, but minded not, as used  
 To such disport before her through the field,

From every beast; more duteous at her call,  
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.  
 He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,  
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed  
 His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,  
 Fawning; and licked the ground whereon she trod.  
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length  
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad  
 Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue  
 Organick, or impulse of vocal air,  
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.  
 Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps  
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm  
 Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,  
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze  
 Insatiate; I thus single; nor have feared  
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.  
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,  
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine  
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore  
 With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,  
 Where universally admired; but here  
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,  
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,  
 Who sees thee? and what is one? who should be seen  
 A Goddess among Gods, adored and served  
 By Angels numberless, thy daily train.  
 So gloz'd the Tempter, and his proem tuned:  
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way,  
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,  
 Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake.  
 What may this mean? language of man pronounced  
 By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?  
 The first, at least, of these I thought denied  
 To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,  
 Created mute to all articulate sound:  
 The latter I demur; for in their looks  
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.  
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field  
 I knew, but not with human voice endued;  
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,  
 How camest thou speakable of mute, and how  
 To me so friendly grown above the rest  
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?  
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due.  
 To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.  
 Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!  
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all  
 What thou commandest; and right thou shouldst be obeyed:  
 I was at first as other beasts that graze  
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,

As was my food; nor aught but food discerned  
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:  
 Till, on a day roving the field, I chanced  
 A goodly tree far distant to behold  
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,  
 Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;  
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,  
 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense  
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats  
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,  
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.  
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had  
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved  
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,  
 Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent  
 Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.  
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;  
 For, high from ground, the branches would require  
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's: Round the tree  
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire  
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.  
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung  
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill  
 I spared not; for, such pleasure till that hour,  
 At feed or fountain, never had I found.  
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive  
 Strange alteration in me, to degree  
 Of reason in my inward powers; and speech  
 Wanted not long; though to this shape retained.  
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep  
 I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind  
 Considered all things visible in Heaven,  
 Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair and good:  
 But all that fair and good in thy divine  
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,  
 United I beheld; no fair to thine  
 Equivalent or second! which compelled  
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come  
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declared  
 Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!  
 So talked the spirited sly Snake; and Eve,  
 Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied.  
 Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt  
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved:  
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?  
 For many are the trees of God that grow  
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown  
 To us; in such abundance lies our choice,  
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,  
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands  
 Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad.  
 Empress, the way is ready, and not long;  
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,  
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past  
 Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept  
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon  
 Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled  
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,  
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy  
 Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,  
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night  
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,  
 Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,  
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
 Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way  
 To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;  
 There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.  
 So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud  
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree  
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe;  
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.  
 Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,  
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,  
 The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;  
 Wonderous indeed, if cause of such effects.  
 But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;  
 God so commanded, and left that command  
 Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live  
 Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.  
 To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.  
 Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit  
 Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,  
 Yet Lords declared of all in earth or air?  
 To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit  
 Of each tree in the garden we may eat;  
 But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst  
 The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat  
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.  
 She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold  
 The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love  
 To Man, and indignation at his wrong,  
 New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,  
 Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely and in act  
 Raised, as of some great matter to begin.  
 As when of old some orator renowned,  
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
 Flourished, since mute! to some great cause addressed,  
 Stood in himself collected; while each part,  
 Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;  
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay  
 Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:

So standing, moving, or to highth up grown,  
 The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began.  
 O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,  
 Mother of science! now I feel thy power  
 Within me clear; not only to discern  
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways  
 Of highest agents, deemed however wise.  
 Queen of this universe! do not believe  
 Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:  
 How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life  
 To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,  
 Me, who have touched and tasted; yet both live,  
 And life more perfect have attained than Fate  
 Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.  
 Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast  
 Is open? or will God incense his ire  
 For such a petty trespass? and not praise  
 Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain  
 Of death denounced, whatever thing death be,  
 Deterred not from achieving what might lead  
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;  
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil  
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?  
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;  
 Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:  
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.  
 Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;  
 Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,  
 His worshippers? He knows that in the day  
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,  
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then  
 Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,  
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know.  
 That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man,  
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet;  
 I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.  
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off  
 Human, to put on Gods; death to be wished,  
 Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring.  
 And what are Gods, that Man may not become  
 As they, participating God-like food?  
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds:  
 I question it; for this fair earth I see,  
 Warmed by the sun, producing every kind;  
 Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclosed  
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,  
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains  
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies  
 The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?  
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
 Impart against his will, if all be his?

Or is it envy? and can envy dwell  
 In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more  
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit.  
 Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!  
 He ended; and his words, replete with guile,  
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:  
 Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold  
 Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound  
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd  
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:  
 Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and waked  
 An eager appetite, raised by the smell  
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,  
 Inclined now grown to touch or taste,  
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first  
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused.  
 Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,  
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired;  
 Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay  
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:  
 Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,  
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree  
 Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;  
 Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding  
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
 By thee communicated, and our want:  
 For good unknown sure is not had; or, had  
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
 In plain then, what forbids he but to know,  
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
 Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death  
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat  
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!  
 How dies the Serpent? he hath eaten and lives,  
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,  
 Irrational till then. For us alone  
 Was death invented? or to us denied  
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?  
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first  
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy  
 The good befallen him, author unsuspect,  
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.  
 What fear I then? rather, what know to fear  
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
 Of God or death, of law or penalty?  
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,  
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
 Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then  
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?  
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour



Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!  
 Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,  
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk  
 The guilty Serpent; and well might; for Eve,  
 Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else  
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,  
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true  
 Or fancied so, through expectation high  
 Of knowledge; not was Godhead from her thought.  
 Greedily she ingorged without restraint,  
 And knew not eating death: Sate at length,  
 And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,  
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began.  
 O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees  
 In Paradise! of operation blest  
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed.  
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end  
 Created; but henceforth my early care,  
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise,  
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease  
 Of thy full branches offered free to all;  
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature  
 In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know;  
 Though others envy what they cannot give:  
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here  
 Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,  
 Best guide; not following thee, I had remained  
 In ignorance; thou openest wisdom's way,  
 And givest access, though secret she retire.  
 And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,  
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct  
 Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps  
 May have diverted from continual watch  
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies  
 About him. But to Adam in what sort  
 Shall I appear? shall I to him make known  
 As yet my change, and give him to partake  
 Full happiness with me, or rather not,  
 But keeps the odds of knowledge in my power  
 Without copartner? so to add what wants  
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
 And render me more equal; and perhaps,  
 A thing not undesirable, sometime  
 Superiour; for, inferiour, who is free  
 This may be well: But what if God have seen,  
 And death ensue? then I shall be no more!  
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;  
 A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,  
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:  
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths

I could endure, without him live no life.  
 So saying, from the tree her step she turned;  
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power  
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infused  
 Into the plant scintillating sap, derived  
 From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,  
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn  
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;  
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.  
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new  
 Solace in her return, so long delayed:  
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,  
 Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;  
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
 That morn when first they parted: by the tree  
 Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,  
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand  
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,  
 New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.  
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse  
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt;  
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed.  
 Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?  
 Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived  
 Thy presence; agony of love till now  
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more  
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,  
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:  
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree  
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
 Opening the way, but of divine effect  
 To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
 And hath been tasted such: The serpent wise,  
 Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,  
 Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,  
 Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth  
 Endued with human voice and human sense,  
 Reasoning to admiration; and with me  
 Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I  
 Have also tasted, and have also found  
 The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,  
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,  
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee  
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.  
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;  
 Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.  
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot  
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;  
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree  
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce

Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.  
 Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;  
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.  
 On the other side Adam, soon as he heard  
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,  
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill  
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;  
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve  
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:  
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length  
 First to himself he inward silence broke.  
 O fairest of Creation, last and best  
 Of all God's works, Creature in whom excelled  
 Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,  
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!  
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,  
 Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!  
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress  
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate  
 The sacred fruit forbidden! Some cursed fraud  
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,  
 And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee  
 Certain my resolution is to die:  
 How can I live without thee! how forego  
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,  
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn!  
 Should God create another Eve, and I  
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee  
 Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel  
 The link of Nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.  
 So having said, as one from sad dismay  
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbed  
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,  
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned.  
 Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,  
 And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared,  
 Had it been only coveting to eye  
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,  
 Much more to taste it under ban to touch.  
 But past who can recall, or done undo?  
 Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so  
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact  
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,  
 Profaned first by the serpent, by him first  
 Made common, and unhallowed, ere our taste;  
 Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he lives;  
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,  
 Higher degree of life; inducement strong  
 To us, as likely tasting to attain  
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be

But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-Gods.  
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,  
 Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy  
 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,  
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,  
 For us created, needs with us must fail,  
 Dependant made; so God shall uncreate,  
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;  
 Not well conceived of God, who, though his power  
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth  
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary  
 Triumph, and say; "Fickle their state whom God  
 "Most favours; who can please him long? Me first  
 "He ruined, now Mankind; whom will he next?"  
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.  
 However I with thee have fixed my lot,  
 Certain to undergo like doom: If death  
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;  
 So forcible within my heart I feel  
 The bond of Nature draw me to my own;  
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;  
 Our state cannot be severed; we are one,  
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.  
 So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied.  
 O glorious trial of exceeding love,  
 Illustrious evidence, example high!  
 Engaging me to emulate; but, short  
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,  
 Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,  
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,  
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof  
 This day affords, declaring thee resolved,  
 Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,  
 Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,  
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,  
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;  
 Whose virtue for of good still good proceeds,  
 Direct, or by occasion, hath presented  
 This happy trial of thy love, which else  
 So eminently never had been known?  
 Were it I thought death menaced would ensue  
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die  
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact  
 Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured  
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
 So faithful, love unequalled: but I feel  
 Far otherwise the event; not death, but life  
 Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,  
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before  
 Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.  
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,

And fear of death deliver to the winds.  
 So saying, she embraced him, and for joy  
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love  
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur  
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.  
 In recompence for such compliance bad  
 Such recompence best merits from the bough  
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit  
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,  
 Against his better knowledge; not deceived,  
 But fondly overcome with female charm.  
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again  
 In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;  
 Sky loured; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin  
 Original: while Adam took no thought,  
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate  
 Her former trespass feared, the more to sooth  
 Him with her loved society; that now,  
 As with new wine intoxicated both,  
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
 Divinity within them breeding wings,  
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: But that false fruit  
 Far other operation first displayed,  
 Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve  
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him  
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:  
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.  
 Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,  
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;  
 Since to each meaning savour we apply,  
 And palate call judicious; I the praise  
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.  
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained  
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now  
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be  
 In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,  
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.  
 But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,  
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;  
 For never did thy beauty, since the day  
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned  
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense  
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now  
 Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!  
 So said he, and forbore not glance or toy  
 Of amorous intent; well understood  
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.  
 Her hand he seised; and to a shady bank,  
 Thick over-head with verdant roof imbowered,  
 He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,  
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,

And hyacinth; Earth's freshest softest lap.  
 There they their fill of love and love's disport  
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,  
 The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep  
 Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play,  
 Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,  
 That with exhilarating vapour bland  
 About their spirits had played, and inmost powers  
 Made err, was now exhaled; and grosser sleep,  
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams  
 Incumbered, now had left them; up they rose  
 As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,  
 Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds  
 How darkened; innocence, that as a veil  
 Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;  
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,  
 And honour, from about them, naked left  
 To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe  
 Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,  
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap  
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked  
 Shorn of his strength. They destitute and bare  
 Of all their virtue: Silent, and in face  
 Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute:  
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,  
 At length gave utterance to these words constrained.  
 O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear  
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught  
 To counterfeit Man's voice; true in our fall,  
 False in our promised rising; since our eyes  
 Opened we find indeed, and find we know  
 Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;  
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;  
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,  
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity,  
 Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,  
 And in our faces evident the signs  
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;  
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first  
 Be sure then.--How shall I behold the face  
 Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy  
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes  
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze  
 Insufferably bright. O! might I here  
 In solitude live savage; in some glade  
 Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable  
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad  
 And brown as evening: Cover me, ye Pines!  
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs  
 Hide me, where I may never see them more!--  
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise  
 What best may for the present serve to hide

The parts of each from other, that seem most  
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;  
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sewed,  
 And girded on our loins, may cover round  
 Those middle parts; that this new comer, Shame,  
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.  
 So counselled he, and both together went  
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose  
 The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,  
 But such as at this day, to Indians known,  
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms  
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
 About the mother tree, a pillared shade  
 High over-arched, and echoing walks between:  
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,  
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds  
 At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves  
 They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe;  
 And, with what skill they had, together sewed,  
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide  
 Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike  
 To that first naked glory! Such of late  
 Columbus found the American, so girt  
 With feathered cincture; naked else, and wild  
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.  
 Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame in part  
 Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,  
 They sat them down to weep; nor only tears  
 Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within  
 Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,  
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore  
 Their inward state of mind, calm region once  
 And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:  
 For Understanding ruled not, and the Will  
 Heard not her lore; both in subjection now  
 To sensual Appetite, who from beneath  
 Usurping over sovran Reason claimed  
 Superiour sway: From thus distempered breast,  
 Adam, estranged in look and altered style,  
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed.  
 Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and staid  
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
 Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,  
 I know not whence possessed thee; we had then  
 Remained still happy; not, as now, despoiled  
 Of all our good; shamed, naked, miserable!  
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve  
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.  
 To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve.  
 What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe!

Imputest thou that to my default, or will  
Of wandering, as thou callest it, which who knows  
But might as ill have happened thou being by,  
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,  
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned  
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;  
No ground of enmity between us known,  
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.  
Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.  
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,  
Command me absolutely not to go,  
Going into such danger, as thou saidst?  
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;  
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,  
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me.  
To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied.  
Is this the love, is this the recompence  
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! expressed  
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;  
Who might have lived, and joyed immortal bliss,  
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?  
And am I now upbraided as the cause  
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,  
It seems, in thy restraint: What could I more  
I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold  
The danger, and the lurking enemy  
That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;  
And force upon free will hath here no place.  
But confidence then bore thee on; secure  
Either to meet no danger, or to find  
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps  
I also erred, in overmuch admiring  
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought  
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue  
The error now, which is become my crime,  
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall  
Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,  
Lest her will rule: restraint she will not brook;  
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,  
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.  
Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;  
And of their vain contest appeared no end.

John Milton



## Paradise Lost: Book 10

Mean while the heinous and despiteful act  
Of Satan, done in Paradise; and how  
He, in the serpent, had perverted Eve,  
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,  
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye  
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart  
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,  
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind  
Of Man, with strength entire and free will armed,  
Complete to have discovered and repulsed  
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.  
For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered,  
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,  
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,  
(Incurred what could they less?) the penalty;  
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.  
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste  
The angelick guards ascended, mute, and sad,  
For Man; for of his state by this they knew,  
Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had stolen  
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news  
From Earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased  
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare  
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed  
With pity, violated not their bliss.  
About the new-arrived, in multitudes  
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know  
How all befel: They towards the throne supreme,  
Accountable, made haste, to make appear,  
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance  
And easily approved; when the Most High  
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,  
Amidst in thunder uttered thus his voice.  
Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned  
From unsuccessful charge; be not dismayed,  
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,  
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;  
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,  
When first this tempter crossed the gulf from Hell.  
I told ye then he should prevail, and speed  
On his bad errand; Man should be seduced,  
And flattered out of all, believing lies  
Against his Maker; no decree of mine  
Concurring to necessitate his fall,  
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse  
His free will, to her own inclining left  
In even scale. But fallen he is; and now  
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass  
On his transgression,--death denounced that day?  
Which he presumes already vain and void,  
Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,  
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find

Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.  
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorned.  
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,  
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferred  
 All judgement, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell.  
 Easy it may be seen that I intend  
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee  
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed  
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,  
 And destined Man himself to judge Man fallen.  
 So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright  
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son  
 Blazed forth unclouded Deity: He full  
 Resplendent all his Father manifest  
 Expressed, and thus divinely answered mild.  
 Father Eternal, thine is to decree;  
 Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will  
 Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son beloved,  
 Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go to judge  
 On earth these thy transgressours; but thou knowest,  
 Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,  
 When time shall be; for so I undertook  
 Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain  
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom  
 On me derived; yet I shall temper so  
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most  
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.  
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none  
 Are to behold the judgement, but the judged,  
 Those two; the third best absent is condemned,  
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:  
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs.  
 Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose  
 Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Powers,  
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant,  
 Accompanied to Heaven-gate; from whence  
 Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.  
 Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods  
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged.  
 Now was the sun in western cadence low  
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,  
 To fan the earth now waked, and usher in  
 The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool,  
 Came the mild Judge, and Intercessour both,  
 To sentence Man: The voice of God they heard  
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds  
 Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,  
 And from his presence hid themselves among  
 The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,  
 Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud.  
 Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet  
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,

Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,  
 Where obvious duty ere while appeared unsought:  
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change  
 Absents thee, or what chance detains?--Come forth!  
 He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first  
 To offend; discountenanced both, and discomposed;  
 Love was not in their looks, either to God,  
 Or to each other; but apparent guilt,  
 And shame, and perturbation, and despair,  
 Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.  
 Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief.  
 I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice  
 Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom  
 The gracious Judge without revile replied.  
 My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,  
 But still rejoiced; how is it now become  
 So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who  
 Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,  
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?  
 To whom thus Adam sore beset replied.  
 O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand  
 Before my Judge; either to undergo  
 Myself the total crime, or to accuse  
 My other self, the partner of my life;  
 Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,  
 I should conceal, and not expose to blame  
 By my complaint: but strict necessity  
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;  
 Lest on my head both sin and punishment,  
 However insupportable, be all  
 Devolved; though should I hold my peace, yet thou  
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.--  
 This Woman, whom thou madest to be my help,  
 And gavest me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
 So fit, so acceptable, so divine,  
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill,  
 And what she did, whatever in itself,  
 Her doing seemed to justify the deed;  
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.  
 To whom the Sovran Presence thus replied.  
 Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey  
 Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,  
 Superiour, or but equal, that to her  
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place  
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,  
 And for thee, whose perfection far excelled  
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorned  
 She was indeed, and lovely, to attract  
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts  
 Were such, as under government well seemed;  
 Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part  
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few.  
 Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done?  
 To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,  
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge  
 Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied.  
 The Serpent me beguiled, and I did eat.  
 Which when the Lord God heard, without delay  
 To judgement he proceeded on the accused  
 Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer  
 The guilt on him, who made him instrument  
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end  
 Of his creation; justly then accursed,  
 As vitiated in nature: More to know  
 Concerned not Man, (since he no further knew)  
 Nor altered his offence; yet God at last  
 To Satan first in sin his doom applied,  
 Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best:  
 And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.  
 Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed  
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field;  
 Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,  
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.  
 Between thee and the woman I will put  
 Enmity, and between thine and her seed;  
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.  
 So spake this oracle, then verified  
 When Jesus, Son of Mary, second Eve,  
 Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heaven,  
 Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave  
 Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed  
 In open show; and, with ascension bright,  
 Captivity led captive through the air,  
 The realm itself of Satan, long usurped;  
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;  
 Even he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;  
 And to the Woman thus his sentence turned.  
 Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply  
 By thy conception; children thou shalt bring  
 In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will  
 Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.  
 On Adam last thus judgement he pronounced.  
 Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,  
 And eaten of the tree, concerning which  
 I charged thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof:  
 Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow  
 Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy life;  
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth  
 Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;  
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,  
 Till thou return unto the ground; for thou  
 Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,  
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judged he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent;  
 And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day,  
 Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood  
 Before him naked to the air, that now  
 Must suffer change, disdained not to begin  
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;  
 As when he washed his servants feet; so now,  
 As father of his family, he clad  
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,  
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;  
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies;  
 Nor he their outward only with the skins  
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more.  
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,  
 Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.  
 To him with swift ascent he up returned,  
 Into his blissful bosom reassumed  
 In glory, as of old; to him appeased  
 All, though all-knowing, what had passed with Man  
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.  
 Mean while, ere thus was sinned and judged on Earth,  
 Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death,  
 In counterview within the gates, that now  
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
 Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,  
 Sin opening; who thus now to Death began.  
 O Son, why sit we here each other viewing  
 Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives  
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides  
 For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be  
 But that success attends him; if mishap,  
 Ere this he had returned, with fury driven  
 By his avengers; since no place like this  
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large  
 Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,  
 Or sympathy, or some connatural force,  
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite,  
 With secret amity, things of like kind,  
 By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade  
 Inseparable, must with me along;  
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.  
 But, lest the difficulty of passing back  
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf  
 Impassable, impervious; let us try  
 Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine  
 Not unagreeable, to found a path  
 Over this main from Hell to that new world,  
 Where Satan now prevails; a monument  
 Of merit high to all the infernal host,  
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,

Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.  
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn  
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct.  
 Whom thus the meager Shadow answered soon.  
 Go, whither Fate, and inclination strong,  
 Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err  
 The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw  
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
 The savour of death from all things there that live:  
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest  
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.  
 So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell  
 Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock  
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,  
 Against the day of battle, to a field,  
 Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured  
 With scent of living carcasses designed  
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight:  
 So scented the grim Feature, and upturned  
 His nostril wide into the murky air;  
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.  
 Then both from out Hell-gates, into the waste  
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,  
 Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)  
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met  
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea  
 Tost up and down, together crouded drove,  
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell;  
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse  
 Upon the Cronian sea, together drive  
 Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way  
 Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich  
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil  
 Death with his mace petrifick, cold and dry,  
 As with a trident, smote; and fixed as firm  
 As Delos, floating once; the rest his look  
 Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;  
 And with Asphaltick slime, broad as the gate,  
 Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach  
 They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on  
 Over the foaming deep high-arched, a bridge  
 Of length prodigious, joining to the wall  
 Immoveable of this now fenceless world,  
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,  
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.  
 So, if great things to small may be compared,  
 Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,  
 From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,  
 Came to the sea: and, over Hellespont  
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined,  
 And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.  
 Now had they brought the work by wonderous art

Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,  
Over the vexed abyss, following the track  
Of Satan to the self-same place where he  
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe  
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare  
Of this round world: With pins of adamant  
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made  
And durable! And now in little space  
The confines met of empyrean Heaven,  
And of this World; and, on the left hand, Hell  
With long reach interposed; three several ways  
In sight, to each of these three places led.  
And now their way to Earth they had descried,  
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!  
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,  
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering  
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:  
Disguised he came; but those his children dear  
Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.  
He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk  
Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape,  
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act  
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded  
Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought  
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend  
The Son of God to judge them, terrified  
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun  
The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath  
Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned  
By night, and listening where the hapless pair  
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,  
Thence gathered his own doom; which understood  
Not instant, but of future time, with joy  
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned;  
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot  
Of this new wonderous pontifice, unhop'd  
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.  
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight  
Of that stupendious bridge his joy encreased.  
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair  
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.  
O Parent, these are thy magnifick deeds,  
Thy trophies! which thou viewest as not thine own;  
Thou art their author, and prime architect:  
For I no sooner in my heart divined,  
My heart, which by a secret harmony  
Still moves with thine, joined in connexion sweet,  
That thou on earth hadst prospered, which thy looks  
Now also evidence, but straight I felt,  
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt,  
That I must after thee, with this thy son;  
Such fatal consequence unites us three!

Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds,  
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure  
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.  
 Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined  
 Within Hell-gates till now; thou us impowered  
 To fortify thus far, and overlay,  
 With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.  
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won  
 What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gained  
 With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged  
 Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,  
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,  
 As battle hath adjudged; from this new world  
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated;  
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide  
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds,  
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;  
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.  
 Whom thus the Prince of darkness answered glad.  
 Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both;  
 High proof ye now have given to be the race  
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,  
 Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty King,)

Amply have merited of me, of all  
 The infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door  
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met,  
 Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,  
 Hell and this world, one realm, one continent  
 Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore, while I  
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,  
 To my associate Powers, them to acquaint  
 With these successes, and with them rejoice;  
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,  
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;  
 There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the earth  
 Dominion exercise and in the air,  
 Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declared;  
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.  
 My substitutes I send ye, and create  
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might  
 Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now  
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,  
 Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.  
 If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell  
 No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!  
 So saying he dismissed them; they with speed  
 Their course through thickest constellations held,  
 Spreading their bane; the blasted stars looked wan,  
 And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse  
 Then suffered. The other way Satan went down  
 The causeway to Hell-gate: On either side  
 Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,



And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,  
 That scorned his indignation: Through the gate,  
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan passed,  
 And all about found desolate; for those,  
 Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,  
 Flown to the upper world; the rest were all  
 Far to the inland retired, about the walls  
 Of Pandemonium; city and proud seat  
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion called  
 Of that bright star to Satan paragoned;  
 There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand  
 In council sat, solicitous what chance  
 Might intercept their emperor sent; so he  
 Departing gave command, and they observed.  
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,  
 By Astracan, over the snowy plains,  
 Retires; or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns  
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond  
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat  
 To Tauris or Casbeen: So these, the late  
 Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell  
 Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch  
 Round their metropolis; and now expecting  
 Each hour their great adventurer, from the search  
 Of foreign worlds: He through the midst unmarked,  
 In show plebeian Angel militant  
 Of lowest order, passed; and from the door  
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible  
 Ascended his high throne; which, under state  
 Of richest texture spread, at the upper end  
 Was placed in regal lustre. Down a while  
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen:  
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head  
 And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter; clad  
 With what permissive glory since his fall  
 Was left him, or false glitter: All amazed  
 At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng  
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,  
 Their mighty Chief returned: loud was the acclaim:  
 Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,  
 Raised from their dark Divan, and with like joy  
 Congratulant approached him; who with hand  
 Silence, and with these words attention, won.  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 For in possession such, not only of right,  
 I call ye, and declare ye now; returned  
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth  
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit  
 Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,  
 And dungeon of our tyrant: Now possess,  
 As Lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven  
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard

With peril great achieved. Long were to tell  
What I have done; what suffered; with what pain  
Voyaged th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep  
Of horrible confusion; over which  
By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,  
To expedite your glorious march; but I  
Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride  
The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb  
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;  
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed  
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar  
Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found  
The new created world, which fame in Heaven  
Long had foretold, a fabrick wonderful  
Of absolute perfection! therein Man  
Placed in a Paradise, by our exile  
Made happy: Him by fraud I have seduced  
From his Creator; and, the more to encrease  
Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat  
Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up  
Both his beloved Man, and all his world,  
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,  
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm;  
To range in, and to dwell, and over Man  
To rule, as over all he should have ruled.  
True is, me also he hath judged, or rather  
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape  
Man I deceived: that which to me belongs,  
Is enmity which he will put between  
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;  
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:  
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,  
Or much more grievous pain?--Ye have the account  
Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,  
But up, and enter now into full bliss?  
So having said, a while he stood, expecting  
Their universal shout, and high applause,  
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears  
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,  
A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
Of publick scorn; he wondered, but not long  
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more,  
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;  
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining  
Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,  
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power  
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,  
According to his doom: he would have spoke,  
But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue  
To forked tongue; for now were all transformed  
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories

To his bold riot: Dreadful was the din  
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now  
With complicated monsters head and tail,  
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbaena dire,  
Cerastes horned, Hydrus, and Elops drear,  
And Dipsas; (not so thick swarmed once the soil  
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle  
Ophiusa,) but still greatest he the midst,  
Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the sun  
Ingendered in the Pythian vale or slime,  
Huge Python, and his power no less he seemed  
Above the rest still to retain; they all  
Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,  
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,  
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array;  
Sublime with expectation when to see  
In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief;  
They saw, but other sight instead! a croud  
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,  
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,  
They felt themselves, now changing; down their arms,  
Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast;  
And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form  
Caught, by contagion; like in punishment,  
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant,  
Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood  
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Used by the Tempter: on that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining  
For one forbidden tree a multitude  
Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;  
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;  
But on they rolled in heaps, and, up the trees  
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks  
That curled Megaera: greedily they plucked  
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;  
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay  
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit  
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste  
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayed,  
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,  
With hatefullest disrelish writhed their jaws,  
With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell  
Into the same illusion, not as Man  
Whom they triumphed once lapsed. Thus were they plagued

And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,  
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;  
 Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo,  
 This annual humbling certain numbered days,  
 To dash their pride, and joy, for Man seduced.  
 However, some tradition they dispersed  
 Among the Heathen, of their purchase got,  
 And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called  
 Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide--  
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule  
 Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven  
 And Ops, ere yet Dictaeon Jove was born.  
 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair  
 Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,  
 Once actual; now in body, and to dwell  
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death,  
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
 On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began.  
 Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!  
 What thinkest thou of our empire now, though earned  
 With travel difficult, not better far  
 Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,  
 Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half starved?  
 Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered soon.  
 To me, who with eternal famine pine,  
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;  
 There best, where most with ravine I may meet;  
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems  
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.  
 To whom the incestuous mother thus replied.  
 Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,  
 Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;  
 No homely morsels! and, whatever thing  
 The sithe of Time mows down, devour unspared;  
 Till I, in Man residing, through the race,  
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;  
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.  
 This said, they both betook them several ways,  
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make  
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature  
 Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,  
 From his transcendent seat the Saints among,  
 To those bright Orders uttered thus his voice.  
 See, with what heat these dogs of Hell advance  
 To waste and havock yonder world, which I  
 So fair and good created; and had still  
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man  
 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute  
 Folly to me; so doth the Prince of Hell  
 And his adherents, that with so much ease  
 I suffer them to enter and possess  
 A place so heavenly; and, conniving, seem

To gratify my scornful enemies,  
 That laugh, as if, transported with some fit  
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,  
 At random yielded up to their misrule;  
 And know not that I called, and drew them thither,  
 My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth  
 Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed  
 On what was pure; til, crammed and gorged, nigh burst  
 With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling  
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,  
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave, at last,  
 Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.  
 Then Heaven and Earth renewed shall be made pure  
 To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:  
 Till then, the curse pronounced on both precedes.  
 He ended, and the heavenly audience loud  
 Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of seas,  
 Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,  
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;  
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,  
 Destined Restorer of mankind, by whom  
 New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,  
 Or down from Heaven descend.--Such was their song;  
 While the Creator, calling forth by name  
 His mighty Angels, gave them several charge,  
 As sorted best with present things. The sun  
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat  
 Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call  
 Decrepit winter; from the south to bring  
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon  
 Her office they prescribed; to the other five  
 Their planetary motions, and aspects,  
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,  
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join  
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed  
 Their influence malignant when to shower,  
 Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,  
 Should prove tempestuous: To the winds they set  
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound  
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll  
 With terrour through the dark aerial hall.  
 Some say, he bid his Angels turn ascense  
 The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,  
 From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed  
 Oblique the centrick globe: Some say, the sun  
 Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road  
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven  
 Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,  
 Up to the Tropick Crab: thence down amain  
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,

As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change  
 Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring  
 Perpetual smiled on earth with vernal flowers,  
 Equal in days and nights, except to those  
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day  
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,  
 To recompense his distance, in their sight  
 Had rounded still the horizon, and not known  
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow  
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far  
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit  
 The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turned  
 His course intended; else, how had the world  
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,  
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?  
 These changes in the Heavens, though slow, produced  
 Like change on sea and land; sidereal blast,  
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,  
 Corrupt and pestilent: Now from the north  
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,  
 And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,  
 Boreas, and Caecias, and Argestes loud,  
 And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;  
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south  
 Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds  
 From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce,  
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,  
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,  
 Sirocco and Libeccio. Thus began  
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,  
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational  
 Death introduced, through fierce antipathy:  
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,  
 Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe  
 Of Man, but fled him; or, with countenance grim,  
 Glared on him passing. These were from without  
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw  
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,  
 To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within;  
 And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,  
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.  
 O miserable of happy! Is this the end  
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late  
 The glory of that glory, who now become  
 Accursed, of blessed? hide me from the face  
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth  
 Of happiness!--Yet well, if here would end  
 The misery; I deserved it, and would bear  
 My own deservings; but this will not serve:  
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,

Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard  
Delightfully, Encrease and multiply;  
Now death to hear! for what can I encrease,  
Or multiply, but curses on my head?  
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling  
The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure,  
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks  
Shall be the execration: so, besides  
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me  
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;  
On me, as on their natural center, light  
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys  
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!  
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay  
To mould me Man? did I solicit thee  
From darkness to promote me, or here place  
In this delicious garden? As my will  
Concurred not to my being, it were but right  
And equal to reduce me to my dust;  
Desirous to resign and render back  
All I received; unable to perform  
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold  
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,  
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added  
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable  
Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out  
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet  
Mortality my sentence, and be earth  
Insensible! How glad would lay me down  
As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,  
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more  
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse  
To me, and to my offspring, would torment me  
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt  
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;  
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man  
Which God inspired, cannot together perish  
With this corporeal clod; then, in the grave,  
Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
But I shall die a living death? O thought  
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath  
Of life that sinned; what dies but what had life  
And sin? The body properly had neither,  
All of me then shall die: let this appease  
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.  
For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,  
But mortal doomed. How can he exercise  
Wrath without end on Man, whom death must end?  
Can he make deathless death? That were to make  
Strange contradiction, which to God himself

Impossible is held; as argument  
 Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,  
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite,  
 In punished Man, to satisfy his rigour,  
 Satisfied never? That were to extend  
 His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law;  
 By which all causes else, according still  
 To the reception of their matter, act;  
 Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say  
 That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,  
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery  
 From this day onward; which I feel begun  
 Both in me, and without me; and so last  
 To perpetuity;--Ay me!that fear  
 Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution  
 On my defenceless head; both Death and I  
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both;  
 Nor I on my part single; in me all  
 Posterity stands cursed: Fair patrimony  
 That I must leave ye, Sons! O, were I able  
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!  
 So disinherited, how would you bless  
 Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,  
 For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned,  
 It guiltless? But from me what can proceed,  
 But all corrupt; both mind and will depraved  
 Not to do only, but to will the same  
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand  
 In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,  
 Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain,  
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still  
 But to my own conviction: first and last  
 On me, me only, as the source and spring  
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;  
 So might the wrath! Fond wish!couldst thou support  
 That burden, heavier than the earth to bear;  
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided  
 With that bad Woman? Thus, what thou desirest,  
 And what thou fearest, alike destroys all hope  
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable  
 Beyond all past example and future;  
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.  
 O Conscience! into what abyss of fears  
 And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which  
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!  
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,  
 Through the still night; not now, as ere Man fell,  
 Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air  
 Accompanied; with damps, and dreadful gloom;  
 Which to his evil conscience represented  
 All things with double terrour: On the ground  
 Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground; and oft



Cursed his creation; Death as oft accused  
Of tardy execution, since denounced  
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,  
Said he, with one thrice-acceptable stroke  
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,  
Justice Divine not hasten to be just?  
But Death comes not at call; Justice Divine  
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries,  
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!  
With other echo late I taught your shades  
To answer, and resound far other song.--  
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,  
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,  
Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed:  
But her with stern regard he thus repelled.  
Out of my sight, thou Serpent! That name best  
Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false  
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,  
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show  
Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee  
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pretended  
To hellish falshood, snare them! But for thee  
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride  
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,  
Rejected my forewarning, and disdained  
Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,  
Though by the Devil himself; him overweening  
To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,  
Fooled and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee  
To trust thee from my side; imagined wise,  
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;  
And understood not all was but a show,  
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib  
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,  
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;  
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary  
To my just number found. O! why did God,  
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven  
With Spirits masculine, create at last  
This novelty on earth, this fair defect  
Of nature, and not fill the world at once  
With Men, as Angels, without feminine;  
Or find some other way to generate  
Mankind? This mischief had not been befallen,  
And more that shall befall; innumerable  
Disturbances on earth through female snares,  
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either  
He never shall find out fit mate, but such  
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;  
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained  
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld

By parents; or his happiest choice too late  
 Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound  
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:  
 Which infinite calamity shall cause  
 To human life, and household peace confound.  
 He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,  
 Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing  
 And tresses all disordered, at his feet  
 Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought  
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.  
 Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven  
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart  
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,  
 Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant  
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
 Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,  
 My only strength and stay: Forlorn of thee,  
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
 Between us two let there be peace; both joining,  
 As joined in injuries, one enmity  
 Against a foe by doom express assigned us,  
 That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not  
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen;  
 On me already lost, me than thyself  
 More miserable! Both have sinned; but thou  
 Against God only; I against God and thee;  
 And to the place of judgement will return,  
 There with my cries importune Heaven; that all  
 The sentence, from thy head removed, may light  
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;  
 Me, me only, just object of his ire!  
 She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,  
 Immoveable, till peace obtained from fault  
 Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought  
 Commiseration: Soon his heart relented  
 Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,  
 Now at his feet submissive in distress;  
 Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,  
 His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid:  
 As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,  
 And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon.  
 Unwary, and too desirous, as before,  
 So now of what thou knowest not, who desirest  
 The punishment all on thyself; alas!  
 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain  
 His full wrath, whose thou feelest as yet least part,  
 And my displeasure bearest so ill. If prayers  
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place  
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,  
 That on my head all might be visited;

Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,  
 To me committed, and by me exposed.  
 But rise;--let us no more contend, nor blame  
 Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive  
 In offices of love, how we may lighten  
 Each other's burden, in our share of woe;  
 Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,  
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil;  
 A long day's dying, to augment our pain;  
 And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived.  
 To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied.  
 Adam, by sad experiment I know  
 How little weight my words with thee can find,  
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event  
 Found so unfortunate: Nevertheless,  
 Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place  
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain  
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart  
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide  
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,  
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,  
 Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,  
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.  
 If care of our descent perplex us most,  
 Which must be born to certain woe, devoured  
 By Death at last; and miserable it is  
 To be to others cause of misery,  
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring  
 Into this cursed world a woeful race,  
 That after wretched life must be at last  
 Food for so foul a monster; in thy power  
 It lies, yet ere conception to prevent  
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.  
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death  
 Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two  
 Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.  
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,  
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
 From love's due rights, nuptial embraces sweet;  
 And with desire to languish without hope,  
 Before the present object languishing  
 With like desire; which would be misery  
 And torment less than none of what we dread;  
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free  
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, --  
 Let us seek Death; -- or, he not found, supply  
 With our own hands his office on ourselves:  
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,  
 That show no end but death, and have the power,  
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,  
 Destruction with destruction to destroy? --  
 She ended here, or vehement despair

Broke off the rest: so much of death her thoughts  
 Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale.  
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed,  
 To better hopes his more attentive mind  
 Labouring had raised; and thus to Eve replied.  
 Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems  
 To argue in thee something more sublime  
 And excellent, than what thy mind contemns;  
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes  
 That excellence thought in thee; and implies,  
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret  
 For loss of life and pleasure overloved.  
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end  
 Of misery, so thinking to evade  
 The penalty pronounced; doubt not but God  
 Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire, than so  
 To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,  
 So snatched, will not exempt us from the pain  
 We are by doom to pay; rather, such acts  
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest  
 To make death in us live: Then let us seek  
 Some safer resolution, which methinks  
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed  
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise  
 The Serpent's head; piteous amends! unless  
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,  
 Satan; who, in the serpent, hath contrived  
 Against us this deceit: To crush his head  
 Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost  
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days  
 Resolved, as thou proposest; so our foe  
 Shal 'scape his punishment ordained, and we  
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads.  
 No more be mentioned then of violence  
 Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,  
 That cuts us off from hope; and savours only  
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,  
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke  
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild  
 And gracious temper he both heard, and judged,  
 Without wrath or reviling; we expected  
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought  
 Was meant by death that day; when lo! to thee  
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,  
 And bringing forth; soon recompensed with joy,  
 Fruit of thy womb: On me the curse aslope  
 Glanced on the ground; with labour I must earn  
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;  
 My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold  
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care  
 Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands  
 Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged;

How much more, if we pray him, will his ear  
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,  
And teach us further by what means to shun  
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!  
Which now the sky, with various face, begins  
To show us in this mountain; while the winds  
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks  
Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek  
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish  
Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star  
Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams  
Reflected may with matter sere foment;  
Or, by collision of two bodies, grind  
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds  
Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their shock,  
Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame, driven down  
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine;  
And sends a comfortable heat from far,  
Which might supply the sun: Such fire to use,  
And what may else be remedy or cure  
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,  
He will instruct us praying, and of grace  
Beseeching him; so as we need not fear  
To pass commodiously this life, sustained  
By him with many comforts, till we end  
In dust, our final rest and native home.  
What better can we do, than, to the place  
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall  
Before him reverent; and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears  
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 11

Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn  
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,  
When angry most he seemed and most severe,  
What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone?  
So spake our father penitent; nor Eve  
Felt less remorse: they, forthwith to the place  
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell  
Before him reverent; and both confessed  
Humbly their faults, and pardon begged; with tears  
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.  
Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood  
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above  
Prevenient grace descending had removed  
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh  
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breathed  
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer  
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight  
Than loudest oratory: Yet their port  
Not of mean suitors; nor important less  
Seemed their petition, than when the ancient pair  
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,  
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore  
The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine  
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers  
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds  
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed  
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad  
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,  
By their great intercessour, came in sight  
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son  
Presenting, thus to intercede began.  
See\$ Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung  
From thy implanted grace in Man; these sighs  
And prayers, which in this golden censer mixed  
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;  
Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed  
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees  
Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen  
From innocence. Now therefore, bend thine ear  
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;  
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me  
Interpret for him; me, his advocate  
And propitiation; all his works on me,  
Good, or not good, ingraft; my merit those  
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.  
Accept me; and, in me, from these receive  
The smell of peace toward mankind: let him live  
Before thee reconciled, at least his days  
Numbered, though sad; till death, his doom, (which I

To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,)
   
 To better life shall yield him: where with me
   
 All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss;
   
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.
   
 To whom the Father, without cloud, serene.
   
 All thy request for Man, accepted Son,
   
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
   
 But, longer in that Paradise to dwell,
   
 The law I gave to Nature him forbids:
   
 Those pure immortal elements, that know,
   
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
   
 Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off,
   
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
   
 And mortal food; as may dispose him best
   
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
   
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
   
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
   
 Created him endowed; with happiness,
   
 And immortality: that fondly lost,
   
 This other served but to eternize woe;
   
 Till I provided death: so death becomes
   
 His final remedy; and, after life,
   
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
   
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
   
 Waked in the renovation of the just,
   
 Resigns him up with Heaven and Earth renewed.
   
 But let us call to synod all the Blest,
   
 Through Heaven's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
   
 My judgements; how with mankind I proceed,
   
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw,
   
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed.
   
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high
   
 To the bright minister that watched; he blew
   
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
   
 When God descended, and perhaps once more
   
 To sound at general doom. The angelick blast
   
 Filled all the regions: from their blisful bowers
   
 Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,
   
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat
   
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
   
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high;
   
 And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
   
 The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will.
   
 O Sons, like one of us Man is become
   
 To know both good and evil, since his taste
   
 Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
   
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
   
 Happier! had it sufficed him to have known
   
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.
   
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
   
 My motions in him; longer than they move,
   
 His heart I know, how variable and vain,

Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand  
 Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,  
 And live for ever, dream at least to live  
 For ever, to remove him I decree,  
 And send him from the garden forth to till  
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.  
 Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;  
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim  
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend,  
 Or in behalf of Man, or to invade  
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:  
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God  
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair;  
 From hallowed ground the unholy; and denounce  
 To them, and to their progeny, from thence  
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint  
 At the sad sentence rigorously urged,  
 (For I behold them softened, and with tears  
 Bewailing their excess,) all terror hide.  
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
 Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal  
 To Adam what shall come in future days,  
 As I shall thee enlighten; intermix  
 My covenant in the Woman's seed renewed;  
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:  
 And on the east side of the garden place,  
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
 Cherubick watch; and of a sword the flame  
 Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,  
 And guard all passage to the tree of life:  
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove  
 To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;  
 With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude.  
 He ceased; and the arch-angelick Power prepared  
 For swift descent; with him the cohort bright  
 Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each  
 Had, like a double Janus; all their shape  
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those  
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,  
 Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while,  
 To re-salute the world with sacred light,  
 Leucothea waked; and with fresh dews imbalmed  
 The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve  
 Had ended now their orisons, and found  
 Strength added from above; new hope to spring  
 Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet linked;  
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed.  
 Eve, easily my faith admit, that all  
 The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;  
 But, that from us aught should ascend to Heaven  
 So prevalent as to concern the mind



Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,  
 Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer  
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne  
 Even to the seat of God. For since I sought  
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease;  
 Kneeled, and before him humbled all my heart;  
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,  
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew  
 That I was heard with favour; peace returned  
 Home to my breast, and to my memory  
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;  
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now  
 Assures me that the bitterness of death  
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,  
 Eve rightly called, mother of all mankind,  
 Mother of all things living, since by thee  
 Man is to live; and all things live for Man.  
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.  
 Ill-worthy I such title should belong  
 To me transgressour; who, for thee ordained  
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach  
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:  
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
 That I, who first brought death on all, am graced  
 The source of life; next favourable thou,  
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,  
 Far other name deserving. But the field  
 To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,  
 Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,  
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins  
 Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth;  
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined  
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,  
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?  
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content.  
 So spake, so wished much humbled Eve; but Fate  
 Subscribed not: Nature first gave signs, impressed  
 On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed,  
 After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight  
 The bird of Jove, stooped from his aery tour,  
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;  
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,  
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,  
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;  
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.  
 Adam observed, and with his eye the chase  
 Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve thus spake.  
 O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,  
 Which Heaven, by these mute signs in Nature, shows  
 Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn  
 Us, haply too secure, of our discharge

From penalty, because from death released  
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,  
 Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,  
 And thither must return, and be no more?  
 Why else this double object in our sight  
 Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground,  
 One way the self-same hour? why in the east  
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light  
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws  
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
 And slow descends with something heavenly fraught?  
 He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands  
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now  
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt;  
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt  
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.  
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw  
 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;  
 Nor that, which on the flaming mount appeared  
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,  
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise  
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,  
 War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch  
 In their bright stand there left his Powers, to seize  
 Possession of the garden; he alone,  
 To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,  
 Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,  
 While the great visitant approached, thus spake.  
 Eve\$ now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
 Of us will soon determine, or impose  
 New laws to be observed; for I descry,  
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,  
 One of the heavenly host; and, by his gait,  
 None of the meanest; some great Potentate  
 Or of the Thrones above; such majesty  
 Invests him coming! yet not terrible,  
 That I should fear; nor sociably mild,  
 As Raphael, that I should much confide;  
 But solemn and sublime; whom not to offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.  
 He ended: and the Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
 Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms  
 A military vest of purple flowed,  
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain  
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old  
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof;  
 His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime  
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side,  
 As in a glistening zodiack, hung the sword,  
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.

Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from his state  
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared.  
 Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs:  
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seizure many days  
 Given thee of grace; wherein thou mayest repent,  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 Mayest cover: Well may then thy Lord, appeased,  
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come,  
 And send thee from the garden forth to till  
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.  
 He added not; for Adam at the news  
 Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen  
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
 Discovered soon the place of her retire.  
 O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!  
 Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave  
 Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades,  
 Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,  
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day  
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,  
 That never will in other climate grow,  
 My early visitation, and my last  
 ;t even, which I bred up with tender hand  
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!  
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank  
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?  
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorned  
 With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee  
 How shall I part, and whither wander down  
 Into a lower world; to this obscure  
 And wild? how shall we breathe in other air  
 Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?  
 Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild.  
 Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign  
 What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,  
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:  
 Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes  
 Thy husband; whom to follow thou art bound;  
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil.  
 Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp  
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,  
 To Michael thus his humble words addressed.  
 Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or named  
 Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem  
 Prince above princes! gently hast thou told  
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
 And in performing end us; what besides

Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,  
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,  
Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
Recess, and only consolation left  
Familiar to our eyes! all places else  
Inhospitable appear, and desolate;  
Nor knowing us, nor known: And, if by prayer  
Incessant I could hope to change the will  
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease  
To weary him with my assiduous cries:  
But prayer against his absolute decree  
No more avails than breath against the wind,  
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,  
As from his face I shall be hid, deprived  
His blessed countenance: Here I could frequent  
With worship place by place where he vouchsafed  
Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,  
'On this mount he appeared; under this tree  
'Stood visible; among these pines his voice  
'I heard; here with him at this fountain talked:  
So many grateful altars I would rear  
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone  
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,  
Or monument to ages; and thereon  
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers:  
In yonder nether world where shall I seek  
His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?  
For though I fled him angry, yet recalled  
To life prolonged and promised race, I now  
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts  
Of glory; and far off his steps adore.  
To whom thus Michael with regard benign.  
Adam, thou knowest Heaven his, and all the Earth;  
Not this rock only; his Omnipresence fills  
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed:  
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,  
No despicable gift; surmise not then  
His presence to these narrow bounds confined  
Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been  
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread  
All generations; and had hither come  
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate  
And reverence thee, their great progenitor.  
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down  
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:  
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,  
God is, as here; and will be found alike  
Present; and of his presence many a sign  
Still following thee, still compassing thee round

With goodness and paternal love, his face  
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.  
 Which that thou mayest believe, and be confirmed  
 Ere thou from hence depart; know, I am sent  
 To show thee what shall come in future days  
 To thee, and to thy offspring: good with bad  
 Expect to hear; supernal grace contending  
 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn  
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
 And pious sorrow; equally inured  
 By moderation either state to bear,  
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead  
 Safest thy life, and best prepared endure  
 Thy mortal passage when it comes.--Ascend  
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)  
 Here sleep below; while thou to foresight wakest;  
 As once thou sleptst, while she to life was formed.  
 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied.  
 Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path  
 Thou leadest me; and to the hand of Heaven submit,  
 However chastening; to the evil turn  
 My obvious breast; arming to overcome  
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,  
 If so I may attain. -- So both ascend  
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,  
 Of Paradise the highest; from whose top  
 The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,  
 Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay.  
 Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,  
 Whereon, for different cause, the Tempter set  
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness;  
 To show him all Earth's kingdoms, and their glory.  
 His eye might there command wherever stood  
 City of old or modern fame, the seat  
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls  
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,  
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,  
 To Paquin of Sinaean kings; and thence  
 To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,  
 Down to the golden Chersonese; or where  
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since  
 In Hispahan; or where the Russian Ksar  
 In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,  
 Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken  
 The empire of Negus to his utmost port  
 Ercoco, and the less maritim kings  
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
 And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm  
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;  
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount  
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,  
 Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;

On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway  
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled  
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons  
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights  
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,  
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight  
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue  
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see;  
 And from the well of life three drops instilled.  
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,  
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
 That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,  
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced;  
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled.  
 Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold  
 The effects, which thy original crime hath wrought  
 In some to spring from thee; who never touched  
 The excepted tree; nor with the snake conspired;  
 Nor sinned thy sin; yet from that sin derive  
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.  
 His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,  
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves  
 New reaped; the other part sheep-walks and folds;  
 I' the midst an altar as the land-mark stood,  
 Rustick, of grassy sord; thither anon  
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
 First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,  
 Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next,  
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid  
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strowed,  
 On the cleft wood, and all due rights performed:  
 His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven  
 Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam;  
 The other's not, for his was not sincere;  
 Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,  
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone  
 That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,  
 Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused.  
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
 Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried.  
 O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen  
 To that meek man, who well had sacrificed;  
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?  
 To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied.  
 These two are brethren, Adam, and to come  
 Out of thy loins; the unjust the just hath slain,  
 For envy that his brother's offering found

From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact  
 Will be avenged; and the other's faith, approved,  
 Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,  
 Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire.  
 Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!  
 But have I now seen Death? Is this the way  
 I must return to native dust? O sight  
 Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,  
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!  
 To whom thus Michael. Death thou hast seen  
 In his first shape on Man; but many shapes  
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead  
 To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense  
 More terrible at the entrance, than within.  
 Some, as thou sawest, by violent stroke shall die;  
 By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more  
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring  
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew  
 Before thee shall appear; that thou mayest know  
 What misery the inabstinence of Eve  
 Shall bring on Men. Immediately a place  
 Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;  
 A lazarus-house it seemed; wherein were laid  
 Numbers of all diseased; all maladies  
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms  
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,  
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colick-pangs,  
 Demoniack phrenzy, moaping melancholy,  
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.  
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair  
 Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;  
 And over them triumphant Death his dart  
 Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked  
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.  
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
 Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,  
 Though not of woman born; compassion quelled  
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears  
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;  
 And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed.  
 O miserable mankind, to what fall  
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!  
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given  
 To be thus wrested from us? rather, why  
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew  
 What we receive, would either no accept  
 Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down;  
 Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus  
 The image of God in Man, created once

So goodly and erect, though faulty since,  
 To such unsightly sufferings be debased  
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,  
 Retaining still divine similitude  
 In part, from such deformities be free,  
 And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?  
 Their Maker's image, answered Michael, then  
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified  
 To serve ungoverned Appetite; and took  
 His image whom they served, a brutish vice,  
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.  
 Therefore so abject is their punishment,  
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;  
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced;  
 While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules  
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they  
 God's image did not reverence in themselves.  
 I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.  
 But is there yet no other way, besides  
 These painful passages, how we may come  
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?  
 There is, said Michael, if thou well observe  
 The rule of Not too much; by temperance taught,  
 In what thou eatest and drinkest; seeking from thence  
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
 Till many years over thy head return:  
 So mayest thou live; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop  
 Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease  
 Gathered, nor harshly plucked; for death mature:  
 This is Old Age; but then, thou must outlive  
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change  
 To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then,  
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,  
 To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,  
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign  
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry  
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume  
 The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.  
 Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong  
 Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,  
 Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;  
 Which I must keep till my appointed day  
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend  
 My dissolution. Michael replied.  
 Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest  
 Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven:  
 And now prepare thee for another sight.  
 He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
 Were tents of various hue; by some, were herds  
 Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound  
 Of instruments, that made melodious chime,  
 Was heard, of harp and organ; and, who moved



Their stops and chords, was seen; his volant touch,  
 Instinct through all proportions, low and high,  
 Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.  
 In other part stood one who, at the forge  
 Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass  
 Had melted, (whether found where casual fire  
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,  
 Down to the veins of earth; thence gliding hot  
 To some cave's mouth; or whether washed by stream  
 From underground;) the liquid ore he drained  
 Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed  
 First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought  
 Fusil or graven in metal. After these,  
 But on the hither side, a different sort  
 From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,  
 Down to the plain descended; by their guise  
 Just men they seemed, and all their study bent  
 To worship God aright, and know his works  
 Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve  
 Freedom and peace to Men; they on the plain  
 Long had not walked, when from the tents, behold!  
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
 In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung  
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:  
 The men, though grave, eyed them; and let their eyes  
 Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net  
 Fast caught, they liked; and each his liking chose;  
 And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,  
 Love's harbinger, appeared; then, all in heat  
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke  
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:  
 With feast and musick all the tents resound.  
 Such happy interview, and fair event  
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,  
 And charming symphonies, attached the heart  
 Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,  
 The bent of nature; which he thus expressed.  
 True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest;  
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope  
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;  
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;  
 Here Nature seems fulfilled in all her ends.  
 To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best  
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;  
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end  
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.  
 Those tents thou sawest so pleasant, were the tents  
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear  
 Of arts that polish life, inventers rare;  
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.

Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;  
 For that fair female troop thou sawest, that seemed  
 Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
 Woman's domestick honour and chief praise;  
 Bred only and completed to the taste  
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,  
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye:  
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives  
 Religious titled them the sons of God,  
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame  
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
 Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,  
 Erelong to swim at large; and laugh, for which  
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.  
 To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.  
 O pity and shame, that they, who to live well  
 Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread  
 Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!  
 But still I see the tenour of Man's woe  
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.  
 From Man's effeminate slackness it begins,  
 Said the Angel, who should better hold his place  
 By wisdom, and superiour gifts received.  
 But now prepare thee for another scene.  
 He looked, and saw wide territory spread  
 Before him, towns, and rural works between;  
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,  
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,  
 Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise;  
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,  
 Single or in array of battle ranged  
 Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood;  
 One way a band select from forage drives  
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
 From a fat meadow ground; or fleecy flock,  
 Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,  
 Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,  
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;  
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join;  
 Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies  
 With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,  
 Deserted: Others to a city strong  
 Lay siege, encamped; by battery, scale, and mine,  
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
 With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire;  
 On each hand slaughter, and gigantick deeds.  
 In other part the sceptered heralds call  
 To council, in the city-gates; anon  
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,  
 Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,  
 In factious opposition; till at last,

Of middle age one rising, eminent  
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
 Of justice, or religion, truth, and peace,  
 And judgement from above: him old and young  
 Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,  
 Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence  
 Unseen amid the throng: so violence  
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.  
 Adam was all in tears, and to his guide  
 Lamenting turned full sad; O! what are these,  
 Death's ministers, not men? who thus deal death  
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
 Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew  
 His brother: for of whom such massacre  
 Make they, but of their brethren; men of men  
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven  
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?  
 To whom thus Michael. These are the product  
 Of those ill-mated marriages thou sawest;  
 Where good with bad were matched, who of themselves  
 Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mixed,  
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.  
 Such were these giants, men of high renown;  
 For in those days might only shall be admired,  
 And valour and heroick virtue called;  
 To overcome in battle, and subdue  
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
 Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
 Of human glory; and for glory done  
 Of triumph, to be styled great conquerours  
 Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;  
 Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.  
 Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;  
 And what most merits fame, in silence hid.  
 But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst  
 The only righteous in a world preverse,  
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset  
 With foes, for daring single to be just,  
 And utter odious truth, that God would come  
 To judge them with his Saints; him the Most High  
 Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds  
 Did, as thou sawest, receive, to walk with God  
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,  
 Exempt from death; to show thee what reward  
 Awaits the good; the rest what punishment;  
 Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.  
 He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed;  
 The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;  
 All now was turned to jollity and game,  
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance;  
 Marrying or prostituting, as befel,

Rape or adultery, where passing fair  
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.  
At length a reverend sire among them came,  
And of their doings great dislike declared,  
And testified against their ways; he oft  
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,  
Triumphs or festivals; and to them preached  
Conversion and repentance, as to souls  
In prison, under judgements imminent:  
But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceased  
Contending, and removed his tents far off;  
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;  
Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth;  
Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door  
Contrived; and of provisions laid in large,  
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!  
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,  
Came sevens, and pairs; and entered in as taught  
Their order: last the sire and his three sons,  
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.  
Mean while the south-wind rose, and, with black wings  
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove  
From under Heaven; the hills to their supply  
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,  
Sent up amain; and now the thickened sky  
Like a dark cieling stood; down rushed the rain  
Impetuous; and continued, till the earth  
No more was seen: the floating vessel swum  
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow  
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else  
Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp  
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,  
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,  
Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped  
And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,  
All left, in one small bottom swum imbarcked.  
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,  
Depopulation! Thee another flood,  
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drowned,  
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared  
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stoodest at last,  
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns  
His children, all in view destroyed at once;  
And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.  
O visions ill foreseen! Better had I  
Lived ignorant of future! so had borne  
My part of evil only, each day's lot  
Enough to bear; those now, that were dispensed  
The burden of many ages, on me light  
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth

Abortive, to torment me ere their being,  
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek  
 Henceforth to be foretold, what shall befall  
 Him or his children; evil he may be sure,  
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;  
 And he the future evil shall no less  
 In apprehension than in substance feel,  
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,  
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped  
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,  
 Wandering that watery desart: I had hope,  
 When violence was ceased, and war on earth,  
 All would have then gone well; peace would have crowned  
 With length of happy days the race of Man;  
 But I was far deceived; for now I see  
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.  
 How comes it thus? unfold, celestial Guide,  
 And whether here the race of Man will end.  
 To whom thus Michael. Those, whom last thou sawest  
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they  
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent  
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void;  
 Who, having spilt much blood, and done much wast  
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby  
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;  
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,  
 Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride  
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.  
 The conquered also, and enslaved by war,  
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose  
 And fear of God; from whom their piety feigned  
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid  
 Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,  
 Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,  
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords  
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear  
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried:  
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved;  
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;  
 One man except, the only son of light  
 In a dark age, against example good,  
 Against allurements, custom, and a world  
 Offended: fearless of reproach and scorn,  
 The grand-child, with twelve sons increased, departs  
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter called  
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;  
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
 Into the sea: To sojourn in that land  
 He comes, invited by a younger son  
 In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds  
 Raise him to be the second in that realm  
 Of Pharaoh: There he dies, and leaves his race

Growing into a nation, and now grown  
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks  
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways  
 Shall them admonish; and before them set  
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe  
 And full of peace; denouncing wrath to come  
 On their impenitence; and shall return  
 Of them derided, but of God observed  
 The one just man alive; by his command  
 Shall build a wonderous ark, as thou beheldst,  
 To save himself, and houshold, from amidst  
 A world devote to universal wrack.  
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast  
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,  
 And sheltered round; but all the cataracts  
 Of Heaven set open on the Earth shall pour  
 Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,  
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp  
 Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise  
 Above the highest hills: Then shall this mount  
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved  
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,  
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,  
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,  
 And there take root an island salt and bare,  
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang:  
 To teach thee that God attributes to place  
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought  
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.  
 And now, what further shall ensue, behold.  
 He looked, and saw the ark hull on the flood,  
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,  
 Driven by a keen north-wind, that, blowing dry,  
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;  
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass  
 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,  
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink  
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole  
 With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt  
 His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.  
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,  
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.  
 And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear;  
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,  
 Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.  
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,  
 And after him, the surer messenger,  
 A dove sent forth once and again to spy  
 Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light:  
 The second time returning, in his bill  
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacifick sign:

Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark  
The ancient sire descends, with all his train;  
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,  
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds  
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow  
Conspicuous with three lifted colours gay,  
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.  
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,  
Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy broke forth.  
O thou, who future things canst represent  
As present, heavenly Instructor! I revive  
At this last sight; assured that Man shall live,  
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.  
Far less I now lament for one whole world  
Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice  
For one man found so perfect, and so just,  
That God vouchsafes to raise another world  
From him, and all his anger to forget.  
But say, what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven  
Distended, as the brow of God appeased?  
Or serve they, as a flowery verge, to bind  
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,  
Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?  
To whom the Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aimest;  
So willingly doth God remit his ire,  
Though late repenting him of Man depraved;  
Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw  
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh  
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,  
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,  
That he relents, not to blot out mankind;  
And makes a covenant never to destroy  
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea  
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,  
With man therein or beast; but, when he brings  
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set  
His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look,  
And call to mind his covenant: Day and night,  
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,  
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new,  
Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book 12

As one who in his journey bates at noon,  
Though bent on speed; so here the Arch-Angel paused  
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,  
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;  
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.  
Thus thou hast seen one world begin, and end;  
And Man, as from a second stock, proceed.  
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive  
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine  
Must needs impair and weary human sense:  
Henceforth what is to come I will relate;  
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.  
This second source of Men, while yet but few,  
And while the dread of judgement past remains  
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,  
With some regard to what is just and right  
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;  
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,  
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,  
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,  
With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,  
Shall spend their days in joy unblamed; and dwell  
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,  
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise  
Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content  
With fair equality, fraternal state,  
Will arrogate dominion undeserved  
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
Concord and law of nature from the earth;  
Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game)  
With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse  
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:  
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled  
Before the Lord; as in despite of Heaven,  
Or from Heaven, claiming second sovranty;  
And from rebellion shall derive his name,  
Though of rebellion others he accuse.  
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins  
With him or under him to tyrannize,  
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find  
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell:  
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build  
A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven;  
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed  
In foreign lands, their memory be lost;  
Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
But God, who oft descends to visit men  
Unseen, and through their habitations walks  
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,  
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower  
Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets



Upon their tongues a various spirit, to raise  
 Quite out their native language; and, instead,  
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:  
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud,  
 Among the builders; each to other calls  
 Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,  
 As mocked they storm: great laughter was in Heaven,  
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange,  
 And hear the din: Thus was the building left  
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion named.  
 Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd.  
 O execrable son! so to aspire  
 Above his brethren; to himself assuming  
 Authority usurped, from God not given:  
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,  
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
 By his donation; but man over men  
 He made not lord; such title to himself  
 Reserving, human left from human free.  
 But this usurper his encroachment proud  
 Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends  
 Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food  
 Will he convey up thither, to sustain  
 Himself and his rash army; where thin air  
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,  
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?  
 To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorrest  
 That son, who on the quiet state of men  
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,  
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty  
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells  
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:  
 Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,  
 Immediately inordinate desires,  
 And upstart passions, catch the government  
 From reason; and to servitude reduce  
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits  
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign  
 Over free reason, God, in judgement just,  
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;  
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall  
 His outward freedom: Tyranny must be;  
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.  
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low  
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,  
 But justice, and some fatal curse annexed,  
 Deprives them of their outward liberty;  
 Their inward lost: Witness the irreverent son  
 Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame  
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,  
 Servant of servants, on his vicious race.

Thus will this latter, as the former world,  
Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,  
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
His presence from among them, and avert  
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth  
To leave them to their own polluted ways;  
And one peculiar nation to select  
From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,  
A nation from one faithful man to spring:  
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men  
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,  
While yet the patriarch lived, who 'scaped the flood,  
As to forsake the living God, and fall  
To worship their own work in wood and stone  
For Gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes  
To call by vision, from his father's house,  
His kindred, and false Gods, into a land  
Which he will show him; and from him will raise  
A mighty nation; and upon him shower  
His benediction so, that in his seed  
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;  
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:  
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith  
He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil,  
Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford  
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train  
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;  
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth  
With God, who called him, in a land unknown.  
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents  
Pitched about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain  
Of Moreh; there by promise he receives  
Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
From Hameth northward to the Desert south;  
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed;)  
From Hermon east to the great western Sea;  
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold  
In prospect, as I point them; on the shore  
Mount Carmel; here, the double-founted stream,  
Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons  
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.  
This ponder, that all nations of the earth  
Shall in his seed be blessed: By that seed  
Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise  
The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon  
Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,  
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,  
A son, and of his son a grand-child, leaves;  
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown:  
The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs  
From Canaan to a land hereafter called

Egypt, divided by the river Nile  
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
Into the sea. To sojourn in that land  
He comes, invited by a younger son  
In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds  
Raise him to be the second in that realm  
Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race  
Growing into a nation, and now grown  
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks  
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves  
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:  
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call  
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim  
His people from enthralment, they return,  
With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.  
But first, the lawless tyrant, who denies  
To know their God, or message to regard,  
Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire;  
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;  
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill  
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;  
His cattle must of rot and murren die;  
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,  
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,  
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptians sky,  
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;  
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,  
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down  
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;  
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;  
Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born  
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds  
The river-dragon tamed at length submits  
To let his sojourners depart, and oft  
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice  
More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage  
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea  
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,  
As on dry land, between two crystal walls;  
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand  
Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:  
Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,  
Though present in his Angel; who shall go  
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;  
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;  
To guide them in their journey, and remove  
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues:  
All night he will pursue; but his approach  
Darkness defends between till morning watch;  
Then through the fiery pillar, and the cloud,

God looking forth will trouble all his host,  
 And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command  
 Moses once more his potent rod extends  
 Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;  
 On their embattled ranks the waves return,  
 And overwhelm their war: The race elect  
 Safe toward Canaan from the shore advance  
 Through the wild Desert, not the readiest way;  
 Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,  
 War terrify them inexpert, and fear  
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather  
 Inglorious life with servitude; for life  
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
 Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.  
 This also shall they gain by their delay  
 In the wide wilderness; there they shall found  
 Their government, and their great senate choose  
 Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained:  
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top  
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself  
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,  
 Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain  
 To civil justice; part, religious rites  
 Of sacrifice; informing them, by types  
 And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise  
 The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve  
 Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God  
 To mortal ear is dreadful: They beseech  
 That Moses might report to them his will,  
 And terrour cease; he grants what they besought,  
 Instructed that to God is no access  
 Without Mediator, whose high office now  
 Moses in figure bears; to introduce  
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,  
 And all the Prophets in their age the times  
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites  
 Established, such delight hath God in Men  
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes  
 Among them to set up his tabernacle;  
 The Holy One with mortal Men to dwell:  
 By his prescript a sanctuary is framed  
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein  
 An ark, and in the ark his testimony,  
 The records of his covenant; over these  
 A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings  
 Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn  
 Seven lamps as in a zodiack representing  
 The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud  
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;  
 Save when they journey, and at length they come,  
 Conducted by his Angel, to the land  
 Promised to Abraham and his seed:--The rest

Were long to tell; how many battles fought  
 How many kings destroyed; and kingdoms won;  
 Or how the sun shall in mid Heaven stand still  
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand,  
 'And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,  
 'Till Israel overcome! so call the third  
 From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him  
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.  
 Here Adam interposed. O sent from Heaven,  
 Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things  
 Thou hast revealed; those chiefly, which concern  
 Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find  
 Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much eased;  
 Erewhile perplexed with thoughts, what would become  
 Of me and all mankind: But now I see  
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;  
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought  
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.  
 This yet I apprehend not, why to those  
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth  
 So many and so various laws are given;  
 So many laws argue so many sins  
 Among them; how can God with such reside?  
 To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin  
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;  
 And therefore was law given them, to evince  
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up  
 Sin against law to fight: that when they see  
 Law can discover sin, but not remove,  
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,  
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude  
 Some blood more precious must be paid for Man;  
 Just for unjust; that, in such righteousness  
 To them by faith imputed, they may find  
 Justification towards God, and peace  
 Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies  
 Cannot appease; nor Man the mortal part  
 Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.  
 So law appears imperfect; and but given  
 With purpose to resign them, in full time,  
 Up to a better covenant; disciplined  
 From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;  
 From imposition of strict laws to free  
 Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear  
 To filial; works of law to works of faith.  
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
 Highly beloved, being but the minister  
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;  
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,  
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell  
 The adversary-Serpent, and bring back

Through the world's wilderness long-wandered Man  
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan placed,  
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins  
National interrupt their publick peace,  
Provoking God to raise them enemies;  
From whom as oft he saves them penitent  
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom  
The second, both for piety renowned  
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
Irrevocable, that his regal throne  
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing  
All Prophecy, that of the royal stock  
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise  
A Son, the Woman's seed to thee foretold,  
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust  
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings  
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.  
But first, a long succession must ensue;  
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,  
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents  
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.  
Such follow him, as shall be registered  
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;  
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults  
Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense  
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,  
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,  
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
To that proud city, whose high walls thou sawest  
Left in confusion; Babylon thence called.  
There in captivity he lets them dwell  
The space of seventy years; then brings them back,  
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn  
To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.  
Returned from Babylon by leave of kings  
Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God  
They first re-edify; and for a while  
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown  
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;  
But first among the priests dissention springs,  
Men who attend the altar, and should most  
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings  
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize  
The scepter, and regard not David's sons;  
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true  
Anointed King Messiah might be born  
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star,  
Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come;  
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:  
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells

To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
 They gladly thither haste, and by a quire  
 Of squadroned Angels hear his carol sung.  
 A virgin is his mother, but his sire  
 The power of the Most High: He shall ascend  
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign  
 With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens.  
 He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy  
 Surcharged, as had like grief been dewed in tears,  
 Without the vent of words; which these he breathed.  
 O prophet of glad tidings, finisher  
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain;  
 Why our great Expectation should be called  
 The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, hail,  
 High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins  
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son  
 Of God Most High: so God with Man unites!  
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise  
 Expect with mortal pain: Say where and when  
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel.  
 To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,  
 As of a duel, or the local wounds  
 Of head or heel: Not therefore joins the Son  
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil  
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome  
 Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,  
 Disabled, not to give thee thy death's wound:  
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,  
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
 In thee, and in thy seed: Nor can this be,  
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed  
 On penalty of death, and suffering death;  
 The penalty to thy transgression due,  
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:  
 So only can high Justice rest appaid.  
 The law of God exact he shall fulfil  
 Both by obedience and by love, though love  
 Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment  
 He shall endure, by coming in the flesh  
 To a reproachful life, and cursed death;  
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
 In his redemption; and that his obedience,  
 Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits  
 To save them, not their own, though legal, works.  
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,  
 Seised on by force, judged, and to death condemned  
 A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross  
 By his own nation; slain for bringing life:  
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies,  
 The law that is against thee, and the sins

Of all mankind, with him there crucified,  
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
 In this his satisfaction; so he dies,  
 But soon revives; Death over him no power  
 Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light  
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise  
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
 Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,  
 His death for Man, as many as offered life  
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace  
 By faith not void of works: This God-like act  
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldest have died,  
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act  
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,  
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;  
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings  
 Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,  
 Or theirs whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,  
 A gentle wafting to immortal life.  
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay  
 Longer on earth, than certain times to appear  
 To his disciples, men who in his life  
 Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge  
 To teach all nations what of him they learned  
 And his salvation; them who shall believe  
 Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign  
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life  
 Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,  
 For death, like that which the Redeemer died.  
 All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,  
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins  
 Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons  
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;  
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest.  
 Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend  
 With victory, triumphing through the air  
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
 The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains  
 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;  
 Then enter into glory, and resume  
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high  
 Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,  
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,  
 With glory and power to judge both quick and dead;  
 To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward  
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,  
 Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth  
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days.  
 So spake the Arch-Angel Michael; then paused,  
 As at the world's great period; and our sire,  
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied.



O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!  
 That all this good of evil shall produce,  
 And evil turn to good; more wonderful  
 Than that which by creation first brought forth  
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By me done, and occasioned; or rejoice  
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;  
 To God more glory, more good-will to Men  
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.  
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven  
 Must re-ascend, what will betide the few  
 His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,  
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide  
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal  
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?  
 Be sure they will, said the Angel; but from Heaven  
 He to his own a Comforter will send,  
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell  
 His Spirit within them; and the law of faith,  
 Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,  
 To guide them in all truth; and also arm  
 With spiritual armour, able to resist  
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;  
 What man can do against them, not afraid,  
 Though to the death; against such cruelties  
 With inward consolations recompensed,  
 And oft supported so as shall amaze  
 Their proudest persecutors: For the Spirit,  
 Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
 To evangelize the nations, then on all  
 Baptized, shall them with wonderous gifts endue  
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,  
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win  
 Great numbers of each nation to receive  
 With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: At length  
 Their ministry performed, and race well run,  
 Their doctrine and their story written left,  
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,  
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,  
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven  
 To their own vile advantages shall turn  
 Of lucre and ambition; and the truth  
 With superstitions and traditions taint,  
 Left only in those written records pure,  
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,  
 Places, and titles, and with these to join  
 Secular power; though feigning still to act  
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating  
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and given  
 To all believers; and, from that pretence,

Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force  
On every conscience; laws which none shall find  
Left them inrolled, or what the Spirit within  
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind  
His consort Liberty? what, but unbuild  
His living temples, built by faith to stand,  
Their own faith, not another's? for, on earth,  
Who against faith and conscience can be heard  
Infallible? yet many will presume:  
Whence heavy persecution shall arise  
On all, who in the worship persevere  
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,  
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms  
Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire  
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith  
Rarely be found: So shall the world go on,  
To good malignant, to bad men benign;  
Under her own weight groaning; till the day  
Appear of respiration to the just,  
And vengeance to the wicked, at return  
Of him so lately promised to thy aid,  
The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,  
Now ampler known thy Saviour and thy Lord;  
Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be revealed  
In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
Satan with his perverted world; then raise  
From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,  
New Heavens, new Earth, ages of endless date,  
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love;  
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.  
He ended; and thus Adam last replied.  
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,  
Measured this transient world, the race of time,  
Till time stand fixed! Beyond is all abyss,  
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.  
Greatly-instructed I shall hence depart;  
Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill  
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;  
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.  
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,  
And love with fear the only God; to walk  
As in his presence; ever to observe  
His providence; and on him sole depend,  
Merciful over all his works, with good  
Still overcoming evil, and by small  
Accomplishing great things, by things deemed weak  
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise  
By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake  
Is fortitude to highest victory,  
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;  
Taught this by his example, whom I now

Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.  
 To whom thus also the Angel last replied.  
 This having learned, thou hast attained the sum  
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars  
 Thou knewest by name, and all the ethereal powers,  
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,  
 Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,  
 And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,  
 And all the rule, one empire; only add  
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,  
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,  
 By name to come called charity, the soul  
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth  
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.--  
 Let us descend now therefore from this top  
 Of speculation; for the hour precise  
 Exacts our parting hence; and see! the guards,  
 By me encamped on yonder hill, expect  
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,  
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round:  
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;  
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed  
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed  
 To meek submission: thou, at season fit,  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;  
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her seed to come  
 (For by the Woman's seed) on all mankind:  
 That ye may live, which will be many days,  
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,  
 With cause, for evils past; yet much more cheered  
 With meditation on the happy end.  
 He ended, and they both descend the hill;  
 Descended, Adam to the bower, where Eve  
 Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her waked;  
 And thus with words not sad she him received.  
 Whence thou returnest, and whither wentest, I know;  
 For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress  
 Wearied I fell asleep: But now lead on;  
 In me is no delay; with thee to go,  
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,  
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me  
 Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,  
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.  
 This further consolation yet secure  
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,  
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,  
 By me the Promised Seed shall all restore.  
 So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard

Well pleased, but answered not: For now, too nigh  
The Arch-Angel stood; and, from the other hill  
To their fixed station, all in bright array  
The Cherubim descended; on the ground  
Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist  
Risen from a river o'er the marish glides,  
And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel  
Homeward returning. High in front advanced,  
The brandished sword of God before them blazed,  
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,  
And vapour as the Libyan air adust,  
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat  
In either hand the hastening Angel caught  
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate  
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast  
To the subjected plain; then disappeared.  
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld  
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,  
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate  
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:  
Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;  
The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:  
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book I

Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,  
Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,  
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos. Or if Sion Hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's Brook that flow'd  
Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.  
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first  
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss  
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the highth of this great Argument  
I may assert th' Eternal Providence,  
And justifie the wayes of God to men.  
Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view  
Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause  
Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,  
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress his Will  
For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?  
Who first seduc'd them to that fowl revolt?  
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile  
Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd  
The Mother of Mankinde, what time his Pride  
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host  
Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring  
To set himself in Glory above his Peers,  
He trusted to have equal'd the most High,  
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim  
Against the Throne and Monarchy of God  
Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud  
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie  
With hideous ruine and combustion down  
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,  
Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.  
Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night  
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew  
Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe

Confounded though immortal: But his doom  
 Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes  
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay  
 Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:  
 At once as far as Angels kenn he views  
 The dismal Situation waste and wilde,  
 A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
 As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames  
 No light, but rather darkness visible  
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all; but torture without end  
 Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:  
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd  
 For those rebellious, here their Prison ordain'd  
 In utter darkness, and their portion set  
 As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n  
 As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole.  
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'rewhelm'd  
 With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns, and weltring by his side  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd  
 Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,  
 And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began.  
 If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd  
 From him, who in the happy Realms of Light  
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightnes didst outshine  
 Myriads though bright: If he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope,  
 And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,  
 Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd  
 In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest  
 From what highth fal'n, so much the stronger provd  
 He with his Thunder: and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those  
 Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict do I repent or change,  
 Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind  
 And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,  
 That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd  
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd  
 In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?  
 All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,  
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome?  
 That Glory never shall his wrath or might  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deifie his power  
 Who from the terrour of this Arm so late  
 Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
 This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods  
 And this Empyrean substance cannot fail,  
 Since through experience of this great event  
 In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage by force or guile eternal Warr  
 Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.  
 So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain,  
 Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despaire:  
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.  
 O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,  
 That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to Warr  
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds  
 Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual King;  
 And put to proof his high Supremacy,  
 Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,  
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,  
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat  
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host  
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
 As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences  
 Can Perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns,  
 Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state  
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery.  
 But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now  
 Of force believe Almighty, since no less  
 Then such could have orepow'rd such force as ours)  
 Have left us this our spirit and strength intire  
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,  
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
 By right of Warr, what e're his business be  
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,  
 Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;  
 What can it then avail though yet we feel  
 Strength undiminisht, or eternal being  
 To undergo eternal punishment?  
 Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable  
 Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,  
 To do ought good never will be our task,  
 But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
 As being the contrary to his high will  
 Whom we resist. If then his Providence  
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
 And out of good still to find means of evil;  
 Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps  
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
 But see the angry Victor hath recall'd  
 His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
 Back to the Gates of Heav'n: The Sulphurous Hail  
 Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid  
 The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice  
 Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,  
 Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,  
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
 Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,  
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
 Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,  
 The seat of desolation, void of light,  
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend  
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,  
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there,  
 And reassembling our afflicted Powers,  
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
 Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,  
 How overcome this dire Calamity,  
 What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,  
 If not what resolution from despare.  
 Thus Satan talking to his nearest Mate  
 With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes  
 That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides  
 Prone on the Flood, extended long and large  
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
 As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,  
 Titanian, or Earth-Born, that warr'd on Jove,  
 Briarios or Typhon, whom the Den  
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast  
 Leviathan, which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:  
 Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam  
 The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,  
 Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,  
 With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind  
 Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night  
 Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delays:



So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay  
 Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence  
 Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will  
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
 That with reiterated crimes he might  
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
 Evil to others, and enrag'd might see  
 How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth  
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn  
 On Man by him seduc't, but on himself  
 Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.  
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool  
 His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames  
 Drivn backward slope their pointing spires, & rowld  
 In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid Vale.  
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air  
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land  
 He lights, if it were Land that ever burn'd  
 With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;  
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force  
 Of subterranean wind transports a Hill  
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side  
 Of thundring Aetna, whose combustible  
 And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,  
 Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,  
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd  
 With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole  
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,  
 Both glorying to have scap't the Stygian flood  
 As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,  
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.  
 Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,  
 Said then the lost Arch Angel, this the seat  
 That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom  
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since hee  
 Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid  
 What shall be right: fardest from him is best  
 Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream  
 Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields  
 Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail  
 Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell  
 Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings  
 A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.  
 The mind is its own place, and in it self  
 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.  
 What matter where, if I be still the same,  
 And what I should be, all but less then hee  
 Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:

Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce  
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:  
 Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.  
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,  
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss  
 Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,  
 And call them not to share with us their part  
 In this unhappy Mansion, or once more  
 With rallied Arms to try what may be yet  
 Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?  
 So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub  
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those Armies bright,  
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld,  
 If once they hear that voyce, their liveliest pledge  
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
 In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge  
 Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults  
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume  
 New courage and revive, though now they lye  
 Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire,  
 As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,  
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.  
 He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield  
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,  
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
 Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb  
 Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views  
 At Ev'ning from the top of Fesole,  
 Or in Valdarno to descry new Lands,  
 Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.  
 His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine  
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast  
 Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,  
 He walkt with to support uneasie steps  
 Over the burning Marle, not like those steps  
 On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime  
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;  
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach  
 Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd  
 His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't  
 Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks  
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
 High overarch't imbowr; or scatterd sedge  
 Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd  
 Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew  
 Busiris and his Memphian Chivalrie,  
 VVhile with perfidious hatred they pursu'd  
 The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld  
 From the safe shore their floating Carkases  
 And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown  
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,

Under amazement of their hideous change.  
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep  
 Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
 Warriors, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,  
 If such astonishment as this can sieze  
 Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place  
 After the toyl of Battel to repose  
 Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find  
 To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n?  
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
 To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds  
 Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood  
 With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon  
 His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern  
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down  
 Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts  
 Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.  
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.  
 They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung  
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch  
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
 Nor did they not perceave the evil plight  
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
 Yet to their Generals Voyce they soon obeyd  
 Innumerable. As when the potent Rod  
 Of Amrams Son in Egypts evill day  
 Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud  
 Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern Wind,  
 That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
 Like Night, and darken'd all the Land of Nile:  
 So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
 Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell  
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;  
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear  
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
 Thir course, in even ballance down they light  
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;  
 A multitude, like which the populous North  
 Pour'd never from her frozen loyns, to pass  
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous Sons  
 Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread  
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.  
 Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band  
 The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood  
 Their great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms  
 Excelling human, Princely Dignities,  
 And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones;  
 Though of their Names in heav'nly Records now  
 Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd  
 By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.  
 Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve

Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth,  
 Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man,  
 By falsities and lyes the greatest part  
 Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake  
 God their Creator, and th' invisible  
 Glory of him, that made them, to transform  
 Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd  
 With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,  
 And Devils to adore for Deities:  
 Then were they known to men by various Names,  
 And various Idols through the Heathen World.  
 Say, Muse, their Names then known, who first, who last,  
 Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery Couch,  
 At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth  
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
 While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof?  
 The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell  
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix  
 Their Seats long after next the Seat of God,  
 Their Altars by his Altar, Gods ador'd  
 Among the Nations round, and durst abide  
 Jehovah thundring out of Sion, thron'd  
 Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd  
 Within his Sanctuary it self their Shrines,  
 Abominations; and with cursed things  
 His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd,  
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.  
 First Moloch, horrid King besmear'd with blood  
 Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,  
 Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud  
 Their childrens cries unheard, that past through fire  
 To his grim Idol. Him the Ammonite  
 Worshipt in Rabba and her watry Plain,  
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart  
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
 His Temple right against the Temple of God  
 On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove  
 The pleasant Vally of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
 And black Gehenna call'd, the Type of Hell.  
 Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moabs Sons,  
 From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild  
 Of Southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
 And Heronaim, Seons Realm, beyond  
 The flowry Dale of Sibma clad with Vines,  
 And Eleale to th' Asphaltick Pool.  
 Peor his other Name, when he entic'd  
 Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile  
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
 Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd  
 Even to that Hill of scandal, by the Grove

Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;  
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they, who from the bordring flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the Brook that parts  
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general Names  
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,  
 These Feminine. For Spirits when they please  
 Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their Essence pure,  
 Not ti'd or manacl'd with joynt or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose  
 Dilated or condens't, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their aerie purposes,  
 And works of love or enmity fulfill.  
 For those the Race of Israel oft forsook  
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left  
 His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial Gods; for which their heads as low  
 Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd  
 Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns;  
 To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon  
 Sidonian Virgins paid their Vows and Songs,  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built  
 By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,  
 Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell  
 To Idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd  
 The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,  
 While smooth Adonis from his native Rock  
 Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood  
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the Love-tale  
 Infected Sions daughters with like heat,  
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch  
 Ezekiel saw, when by the Vision led  
 His eye survay'd the dark Idolatries  
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark  
 Maim'd his brute Image, head and hands lopt off  
 In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,  
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his Worshipers:  
 Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man  
 And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high  
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast  
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,  
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
 Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful Seat  
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile Banks

Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.  
 He also against the house of God was bold:  
 A Leper once he lost and gain'd a King,  
 Ahaz his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew  
 Gods Altar to disparage and displace  
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
 His odious offerings, and adore the Gods  
 Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear'd  
 A crew who under Names of old Renown,  
 Osiris, Isis, Orus and their Train  
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd  
 Fanatic Egypt and her Priests, to seek  
 Thir wandring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape  
 Th' infection when their borrow'd Gold compos'd  
 The Calf in Oreb: and the Rebel King  
 Doubl'd that sin in Bethel and in Dan,  
 Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox,  
 Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass'd  
 From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke  
 Both her first born and all her bleating Gods.  
 Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd  
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
 Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood  
 Or Altar smook'd; yet who more oft than hee  
 In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest  
 Turns Atheist, as did Ely's Sons, who fill'd  
 With lust and violence the house of God.  
 In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns  
 And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse  
 Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,  
 And injury and outrage: And when Night  
 Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons  
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
 Witness the Streets of Sodom, and that night  
 In Gibeah, when hospitable Dores  
 Yielded thir Matrons to prevent worse rape.  
 These were the prime in order and in might;  
 The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,  
 Th' Ionian Gods, of JAvans Issue held  
 Gods, yet confest later than Heav'n and Earth  
 Thir boasted Parents; Titan Heav'ns first born  
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd  
 By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove  
 His own and Rhea's Son like measure found;  
 So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Creet  
 And Ida known, thence on the Snowy top  
 Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle Air  
 Thir highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian Cliff,  
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
 Of Doric Land; or who with Saturn old  
 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian Fields,

And ore the Celtic roam'd the utmost Isles.  
 All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
 Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd  
 Obscure som glimps of joy, to have found thir chief  
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
 In loss it self; which on his count'nance cast  
 Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride  
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
 Semblance of worth not substance, gently rais'd  
 Their fainted courage, and dispel'd their fears.  
 Then strait commands that at the warlike sound  
 Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard  
 His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim'd  
 Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall:  
 Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld  
 Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't  
 Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind  
 With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,  
 Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while  
 Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:  
 At which the universal Host upsent  
 A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond  
 Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night.  
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
 Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air  
 With Orient Colours waving: with them rose  
 A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms  
 Appear'd, and serried Shields in thick array  
 Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move  
 In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood  
 Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd  
 To highth of noblest temper Hero's old  
 Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage  
 Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd  
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,  
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
 With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and chase  
 Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they  
 Breathing united force with fixed thought  
 Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd  
 Thir painful steps o're the burnt soyle; and now  
 Advanc't in view they stand, a horrid Front  
 Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise  
 Of Warriors old with order'd Spear and Shield,  
 Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief  
 Had to impose: He through the armed Files  
 Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse  
 The whole Battalion views, thir order due,  
 Thir visages and stature as of Gods,  
 Thir number last he summs. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength

Glories: For never since created man,  
 Met such imbodyed force, as nam'd with these  
 Could merit more then that small infantry  
 Warr'd on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd  
 That fought at Theb's and Ilium, on each side  
 Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds  
 In Fable or Romance of Uthers Son  
 Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;  
 And all who since, Baptiz'd or Infidel  
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore  
 When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd  
 Thir dread Commander: he above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent  
 Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost  
 All her Original brightness, nor appear'd  
 Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess  
 Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n  
 Looks through the Horizontal misty Air  
 Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon  
 In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds  
 On half the Nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes Monarchs. Dark'n'd so, yet shon  
 Above them all th' Arch Angel: but his face  
 Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes  
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride  
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast  
 Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
 (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd  
 For ever now to have their lot in pain,  
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't  
 Of Heav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung  
 For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood,  
 Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire  
 Hath scath'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines,  
 With singed top their stately growth though bare  
 Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar'd  
 To speak; whereat their doubl'd Ranks they bend  
 From Wing to Wing, and half enclose him round  
 With all his Peers: attention held them mute.  
 Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spite of scorn,  
 Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last  
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way.  
 O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers  
 Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,



As this place testifies, and this dire change  
 Hateful to utter: but what power of mind  
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth  
 Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,  
 How such united force of Gods, how such  
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
 For who can yet beleieve, though after loss,  
 That all these puissant Legions, whose exile  
 Hath emptied Heav'n, shall faile to re-ascend  
 Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat.  
 For me, be witness all the Host of Heav'n,  
 If counsels different, or danger shun'd  
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
 Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure  
 Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,  
 Consent or custome, and his Regal State  
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,  
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own  
 So as not either to provoke, or dread  
 New warr, provok't; our better part remains  
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile  
 What force effected not: that he no less  
 At length from us may find, who overcomes  
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.  
 Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife  
 There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long  
 Intended to create, and therein plant  
 A generation, whom his choice regard  
 Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:  
 Thither, if but to prie, shall be perhaps  
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:  
 For this Infernal Pit shall never hold  
 Cælestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyesse  
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
 Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,  
 For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr  
 Open or understood must be resolv'd.  
 He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew  
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
 Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd  
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arm's  
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,  
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.  
 There stood a Hill not far whose griesly top  
 Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire  
 Shon with a glossie scurfff, undoubted sign  
 That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,  
 The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed  
 A numerous Brigad hasten'd. As when bands  
 Of Pioners with Spade and Pickaxe arm'd

Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,  
 Or cast a Rampart. Mammon led them on,  
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell  
 From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks & thoughts  
 Were always downward bent, admiring more  
 The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold,  
 Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd  
 In vision beatific: by him first  
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
 Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands  
 Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth  
 For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
 Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound  
 And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire  
 That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best  
 Deserve the pretious bane. And here let those  
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondring tell  
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian Kings,  
 Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame,  
 And Strength and Art are easily outdone  
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
 What in an age they with incessant toyle  
 And hands innumerable scarce perform  
 Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd,  
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
 Sluc'd from the Lake, a second multitude  
 With wondrous Art founded the massie Ore,  
 Severing each kinde, and scum'd the Bullion dross:  
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground  
 A various mould, and from the boyling cells  
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,  
 As in an Organ from one blast of wind  
 To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths.  
 A non out of the earth a Fabrick huge  
 Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound  
 Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,  
 Built like a Temple, where Pilasters round  
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
 With Golden Architrave; nor did there want  
 Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n,  
 The Roof was fretted Gold. Not Babilon,  
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
 Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine  
 Belus or Serapis thir Gods, or seat  
 Thir Kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove  
 In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile  
 Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores  
 Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide  
 Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth  
 And level pavement: from the arched roof  
 Pendant by suttile Magic many a row  
 Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed

With Naphtha and Asphaltus yeilded light  
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude  
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise  
 And some the Architect: his hand was known  
 In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,  
 Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence,  
 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King  
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
 Each in his Herarchie, the Orders bright.  
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd  
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell  
 From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove  
 Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements: from Morn  
 To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,  
 A Summers day; and with the setting Sun  
 Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,  
 On Lemnos th' Ægean Ile: thus they relate,  
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
 Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now  
 To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he scape  
 By all his Engins, but was headlong sent  
 With his industrious crew to build in hell.  
 Mean while the winged Haralds by command  
 Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony  
 And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim  
 A solemn Councel forthwith to be held  
 At Pandæmonium, the high Capital  
 Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd  
 From every and Band squared Regiment  
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon  
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came  
 Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates  
 And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall  
 (Though like a cover'd field, where Champions bold  
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair  
 Defi'd the best of Panim chivalry  
 To mortal combat or carreer with Lance)  
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,  
 Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees  
 In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,  
 Poure forth thir populous youth about the Hive  
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
 Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,  
 The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,  
 New rub'd with Baume, expatiate and confer  
 Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd  
 Swarm'd and were straitn'd; till the Signal giv'n,  
 Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd  
 In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons  
 Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room  
 Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race

Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faerie Elves,  
Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side  
Or Fountain fume belated Peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while over head the Moon  
Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth  
Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth & dance  
Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;  
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
Reduc'd thir shapes immense, and were at large,  
Though without number still amidst the Hall  
Of that infernal Court. But far within  
And in thir own dimensions like themselves  
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
In close recess and secret conclave sat  
A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat's,  
Frequent and full. After short silence then  
And summons read, the great consult began.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book II

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far  
Outshon the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Shows on her Kings Barbaric Pearl & Gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd  
To that bad eminence; and from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain Warr with Heav'n, and by success untaught  
His proud imaginations thus displaid.  
Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,  
For since no deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall'n,  
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent  
Celestial vertues rising, will appear  
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:  
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of Heav'n  
Did first create your Leader, next, free choice,  
With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,  
Hath bin achievd of merit, yet this loss  
Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more  
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne  
Yeilded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Formost to stand against the Thunderers aime  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? where there is then no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From Faction; for none sure will claim in hell  
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small  
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more. With this advantage then  
To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,  
More then can be in Heav'n, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper then prosperity  
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open Warr or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.  
He ceas'd, and next him Moloc, Scepter'd King  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heav'n; now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd  
Equal in strength, and rather then be less  
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse  
He reckd not, and these words thereafter spake.  
My sentence is for open Warr: Of Wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those

Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.  
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,  
Millions that stand in Arms, and longing wait  
The Signal to ascend, sit lingring here  
Heav'ns fugitives, and for thir dwelling place  
Accept this dark opprobrious Den of shame,  
The Prison of his Tyranny who Reigns  
By our delay? no, let us rather choose  
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury all at once  
O're Heav'ns high Towrs to force resistless way,  
Turning our Tortures into horrid Arms  
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise  
Of his Almighty Engin he shall hear  
Infernal Thunder, and for Lightning see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angels; and his Throne it self  
Mixt with Tartarean Sulphur, and strange fire,  
His own invented Torments. But perhaps  
The way seems difficult and steep to scale  
With upright wing against a higher foe.  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
Of that forgetful Lake benumme not still,  
That in our proper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat: descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late  
When the fierce Foe hung on our brok'n Rear  
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the Deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight  
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easie then;  
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke  
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find  
To our destruction: if there be in Hell  
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse  
Then to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd  
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;  
Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
Must exercise us without hope of end  
The Vassals of his anger, when the Scourge  
Inexorably, and the torturing houre  
Calls us to Penance? More destroy'd then thus  
We should be quite abolisht and expire.  
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense  
His utmost ire? which to the highth enrag'd,  
Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
To nothing this essential, happier farr  
Then miserable to have eternal being:  
Or if our substance be indeed Divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,  
And with perpetual inrodes to Allarme,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal Throne:

Which if not Victory is yet Revenge.  
 He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd  
 Desperate revenge, and Battel dangerous  
 To less then Gods. On th' other side up rose  
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane;  
 A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seemd  
 For dignity compos'd and high exploit:  
 But all was false and hollow; though his Tongue  
 Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear  
 The better reason, to perplex and dash  
 Maturest Counsels: for his thoughts were low;  
 To vice industrious, but to Nobler deeds  
 Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the eare,  
 And with perswasive accent thus began.  
 I should be much for open Warr, O Peers,  
 As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd  
 Main reason to perswade immediate Warr,  
 Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success:  
 When he who most excels in fact of Arms,  
 In what he counsels and in what excels  
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
 And utter dissolution, as the scope  
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
 First, what Revenge? the Towrs of Heav'n are fill'd  
 With Armed watch, that render all access  
 Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep  
 Encamp thir Legions, or with obscure wing  
 Scout farr and wide into the Realm of night,  
 Scorning surprize. Or could we break our way  
 By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise  
 With blackest Insurrection, to confound  
 Heav'ns purest Light, yet our great Enemie  
 All incorruptible would on his Throne  
 Sit unpolluted, and th' Ethereal mould  
 Incapable of stain would soon expel  
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire  
 Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope  
 Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
 Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
 And that must end us, that must be our cure,  
 To be no more; sad cure; for who would loose,  
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
 Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,  
 To perish rather, swallowd up and lost  
 In the wide womb of uncreated night,  
 Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,  
 Let this be good, whether our angry Foe  
 Can give it, or will ever? how he can  
 Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.  
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
 Belike through impotence, or unaware,

To give his Enemies thir wish, and end  
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves  
 To punish endless? wherefore cease we then?  
 Say they who counsel Warr, we are decreed,  
 Reserv'd and destin'd to Eternal woe;  
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
 What can we suffer worse? is this then worst,  
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in Arms?  
 What when we fled amain, pursu'd and strook  
 With Heav'ns afflicting Thunder, and besought  
 The Deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd  
 A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay  
 Chain'd on the burning Lake? that sure was worse.  
 What if the breath that kindl'd those grim fires  
 Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage  
 And plunge us in the Flames? or from above  
 Should intermitted vengeance Arme again  
 His red right hand to plague us? what if all  
 Her stores were op'n'd, and this Firmament  
 Of Hell should spout her Cataracts of Fire,  
 Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall  
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps  
 Designing or exhorting glorious Warr,  
 Caught in a fierie Tempest shall be hurl'd  
 Each on his rock transfixt, the sport and prey  
 Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk  
 Under yon boyling Ocean, wrapt in Chains;  
 There to converse with everlasting groans,  
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepreevd,  
 Ages of hopeless end; this would be worse.  
 Warr therefore, open or conceal'd, alike  
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile  
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
 Views all things at one view? he from heav'ns highth  
 All these our motions vain, sees and derides;  
 Not more Almighty to resist our might  
 Then wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.  
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n  
 Thus trampil'd, thus expell'd to suffer here  
 Chains & these Torments? better these then worse  
 By my advice; since fate inevitable  
 Subdues us, and Omnipotent Decree,  
 The Victors will. To suffer, as to doe,  
 Our strength is equal, nor the Law unjust  
 That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,  
 If we were wise, against so great a foe  
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
 I laugh, when those who at the Spear are bold  
 And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear  
 What yet they know must follow, to endure  
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
 The sentence of thir Conquerour: This is now



Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
 Our Supream Foe in time may much remit  
 His anger, and perhaps thus farr remov'd  
 Not mind us not offending, satisfi'd  
 With what is punish't; whence these raging fires  
 Will slack'n, if his breath stir not thir flames.  
 Our purer essence then will overcome  
 Thir noxious vapour, or enur'd not feel,  
 Or chang'd at length, and to the place conformd  
 In temper and in nature, will receive  
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;  
 This horror will grow milde, this darkness light,  
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight  
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change  
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears  
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
 If we procure not to our selves more woe.  
 Thus Belial with words cloath'd in reasons garb  
 Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloath,  
 Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.  
 Either to disinthrone the King of Heav'n  
 We warr, if warr be best, or to regain  
 Our own right lost: him to unthrone we then  
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yeild  
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:  
 The former vain to hope argues as vain  
 The latter: for what place can be for us  
 Within Heav'ns bound, unless Heav'ns Lord supream  
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent  
 And publish Grace to all, on promise made  
 Of new Subjection; with what eyes could we  
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
 Strict Laws impos'd, to celebrate his Throne  
 With warbl'd Hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
 Forc't Halleluiah's; while he Lordly sits  
 Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes  
 Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,  
 Our servile offerings. This must be our task  
 In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisom  
 Eternity so spent in worship paid  
 To whom we hate. Let us not then pursue  
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd  
 Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state  
 Of splendid vassalage, but rather seek  
 Our own good from our selves, and from our own  
 Live to our selves, though in this vast recess,  
 Free, and to none accountable, preferring  
 Hard liberty before the easie yoke  
 Of servile Pomp. Our greatness will appear  
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,  
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse  
 We can create, and in what place so e're

Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain  
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world  
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'ns all-ruling Sire  
 Choose to reside, his Glory unobscur'd,  
 And with the Majesty of darkness round  
 Covers his Throne; from whence deep thunders roar  
 Must'ring thir rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?  
 As he our Darkness, cannot we his Light  
 Imitate when we please? This Desart soile  
 Wants not her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold;  
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise  
 Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?  
 Our torments also may in length of time  
 Become our Elements, these piercing Fires  
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd  
 Into their temper; which must needs remove  
 The sensible of pain. All things invite  
 To peaceful Counsels, and the settl'd State  
 Of order, how in safety best we may  
 Compose our present evils, with regard  
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
 All thoughts of Warr: ye have what I advise.  
 He scarce had finisht, when such murmur filld  
 Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain  
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
 Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Sea-faring men orewatcht, whose Bark by chance  
 Or Pinnacle anchors in a craggy Bay  
 After the Tempest: Such applause was heard  
 As Mammon ended, and his Sentence pleas'd,  
 Advising peace: for such another Field  
 They dreaded worse then Hell: so much the fear  
 Of Thunder and the Sword of Michael  
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
 To found this nether Empire, which might rise  
 By pollicy, and long process of time,  
 In emulation opposite to Heav'n.  
 Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, then whom,  
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave  
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd  
 A Pillar of State; deep on his Front engraven  
 Deliberation sat and publick care;  
 And Princely counsel in his face yet shon,  
 Majestick though in ruin: sage he stood  
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear  
 The weight of mightiest Monarchies; his look  
 Drew audience and attention still as Night  
 Or Summers Noon-tide air, while thus he spake.  
 Thrones and imperial Powers, off-spring of heav'n,  
 Ethereal Vertues; or these Titles now  
 Must we renounce, and changing stile be call'd

Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here  
 A growing Empire; doubtless; while we dream,  
 And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doom'd  
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
 Beyond his Potent arm, to live exempt  
 From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new League  
 Banded against his Throne, but to remaine  
 In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,  
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd  
 His captive multitude: For he, be sure,  
 In highth or depth, still first and last will Reign  
 Sole King, and of his Kingdom loose no part  
 By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
 His Empire, and with Iron Scepter rule  
 Us here, as with his Golden those in Heav'n.  
 What sit we then projecting Peace and Warr?  
 Warr hath determin'd us, and foild with loss  
 Irreparable; tearms of peace yet none  
 Voutsaf't or sought; for what peace will be giv'n  
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe,  
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
 But to our power hostility and hate,  
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,  
 Yet ever plotting how the Conquerour least  
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoyce  
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?  
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
 With dangerous expedition to invade  
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or Siege,  
 Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
 Some easier enterprize? There is a place  
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n  
 Err not) another World, the happy seat  
 Of som new Race call'd Man, about this time  
 To be created like to us, though less  
 In power and excellence, but favour'd more  
 Of him who rules above; so was his will  
 Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an Oath,  
 That shook Heav'n's whol circumference, confirm'd.  
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,  
 Or substance, how endu'd, and what thir Power,  
 And where thir weakness, how attempted best,  
 By force or suttlety: Though Heav'n be shut,  
 And Heav'n's high Arbitrator sit secure  
 In his own strength, this place may lye expos'd  
 The utmost border of his Kingdom, left  
 To their defence who hold it: here perhaps  
 Som advantagious act may be achiev'd  
 By sudden onset, either with Hell fire

To waste his whole Creation, or possess  
 All as our own, and drive as we were driven,  
 The punie habitants, or if not drive,  
 Seduce them to our Party, that thir God  
 May prove thir foe, and with repenting hand  
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass  
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
 In our Confusion, and our Joy upraise  
 In his disturbance; when his darling Sons  
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
 Thir frail Originals, and faded bliss,  
 Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth  
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
 Hatching vain Empires. Thus Beelzebub  
 Pleaded his devilish Counsel, first devis'd  
 By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence,  
 But from the Author of all ill could Spring  
 So deep a malice, to confound the race  
 Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
 The great Creatour? But thir spite still serves  
 His glory to augment. The bold design  
 Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
 Sparkl'd in all thir eyes; with full assent  
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.  
 Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,  
 Synod of Gods, and like to what ye are,  
 Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep  
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of Fate,  
 Neerer our ancient Seat; perhaps in view  
 Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring Arms  
 And opportune excursion we may chance  
 Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some milde Zone  
 Dwell not unvisited of Heav'ns fair Light  
 Secure, and at the brightning Orient beam  
 Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious Air,  
 To heal the scarr of these corrosive Fires  
 Shall breath her balme. But first whom shall we send  
 In search of this new world, whom shall we find  
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandring feet  
 The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss  
 And through the palpable obscure find out  
 His uncouth way, or spread his aerie flight  
 Upporn with indefatigable wings  
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
 The happy Ile; what strength, what art can then  
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe  
 Through the strict Senteries and Stations thick  
 Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
 All circumspection, and we now no less  
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,  
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
 His look suspence, awaiting who appear'd  
 To second, or oppose, or undertake  
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,  
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; & each  
 In others count'nance red his own dismay  
 Astonisht: none among the choice and prime  
 Of those Heav'n-warring Champions could be found  
 So hardie as to proffer or accept  
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last  
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd  
 Above his fellows, with Monarchal pride  
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.  
 O Progeny of Heav'n, Empyrean Thrones,  
 With reason hath deep silence and demurr  
 Seis'd us, though undismaid: long is the way  
 And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light;  
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of Fire,  
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
 Ninefold, and gates of burning Adamant  
 Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.  
 These past, if any pass, the void profound  
 Of unessential Night receives him next  
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being  
 Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.  
 If thence he scape into what ever world,  
 Or unknown Region, what remains him less  
 Than unknown dangers and as hard escape.  
 But I should ill become this Throne, O Peers,  
 And this Imperial Sov'ranty, adorn'd  
 With splendor, arm'd with power, if aught propos'd  
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape  
 Of difficulty or danger could deterre  
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
 These Royalties, and not refuse to Reign,  
 Refusing to accept as great a share  
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
 To him who Reigns, and so much to him due  
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest  
 High honourd sits? Go therefore mighty powers,  
 Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,  
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
 The present misery, and render Hell  
 More tollerable; if there be cure or charm  
 To respite or deceive, or slack the pain  
 Of this ill Mansion: intermit no watch  
 Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad  
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprize  
 None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose  
 The Monarch, and prevented all reply,  
 Prudent, least from his resolution rais'd

Others among the chief might offer now  
 (Certain to be refus'd) what erst they feard;  
 And so refus'd might in opinion stand  
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
 Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;  
 Thir rising all at once was as the sound  
 Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend  
 With awful reverence prone; and as a God  
 Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n:  
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,  
 That for the general safety he despis'd  
 His own: for neither do the Spirits damn'd  
 Loose all thir vertue; least bad men should boast  
 Thir specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,  
 Or close ambition varnisht o're with zeal.  
 Thus they thir doubtful consultations dark  
 Ended rejoicing in thir matchless Chief:  
 As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds  
 Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, o'respread  
 Heav'ns chearful face, the lowring Element  
 Scowls ore the dark'nd lantskip Snow, or showre;  
 If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet  
 Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,  
 The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds  
 Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.  
 O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd  
 Firm concord holds, men onely disagree  
 Of Creatures rational, though under hope  
 Of heavenly Grace: and God proclaiming peace,  
 Yet live in hatred, enmitie, and strife  
 Among themselves, and levie cruel warres,  
 Wasting the Earth, each other to destroy:  
 As if (which might induce us to accord)  
 Man had not hellish foes anow besides,  
 That day and night for his destruction waite.  
 The Stygian Council thus dissolv'd; and forth  
 In order came the grand infernal Peers,  
 Midst came thir mighty Paramount, and seemd  
 Alone th' Antagonist of Heav'n, nor less  
 Than Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream,  
 And God-like imitated State; him round  
 A Globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd  
 With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.  
 Then of thir Session ended they bid cry  
 With Trumpets regal sound the great result:  
 Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
 Put to thir mouths the sounding Alchymie  
 By Haralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyss  
 Heard farr and wide, and all the host of Hell  
 With deafning shout, return'd them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease thir minds and somewhat rais'd  
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers  
 Disband, and wandring, each his several way  
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
 Leads him perplext, where he may likeliest find  
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
 The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.  
 Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime  
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,  
 As at th' Olympian Games or Pythian fields;  
 Part curb thir fierie Steeds, or shun the Goal  
 With rapid wheels, or fronted Brigads form.  
 As when to warn proud Cities warr appears  
 Wag'd in the troubl'd Skie, and Armies rush  
 To Battel in the Clouds, before each Van  
 Pric forth the Aerie Knights, and couch thir spears  
 Till thickest Legions close; with feats of Arms  
 From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.  
 Others with vast Typhoean rage more fell  
 Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air  
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar.  
 As when Alcides from Oealia Crown'd  
 With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore  
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian Pines,  
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw  
 Into th' Euboic Sea. Others more milde,  
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
 With notes Angelical to many a Harp  
 Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall  
 By doom of Battel; and complain that Fate  
 Free Vertue should enthrall to Force or Chance.  
 Thir song was partial, but the harmony  
 (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)  
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet  
 (For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense,)  
 Others apart sat on a Hill retir'd,  
 In thoughts more elevatèd, and reason'd high  
 Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,  
 Fixt Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
 And found no end, in wandring mazes lost.  
 Of good and evil much they argu'd then,  
 Of happiness and final misery,  
 Passion and Apathie, and glory and shame,  
 Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie:  
 Yet with a pleasing sorcerie could charm  
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured brest  
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
 Another part in Squadrons and gross Bands,  
 On bold adventure to discover wide  
 That dismal world, if any Clime perhaps

Might yeild them easier habitation, bend  
 Four ways thir flying March, along the Banks  
 Of four infernal Rivers that disgorge  
 Into the burning Lake thir baleful streams;  
 Abhorred Styx the flood of deadly hate,  
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;  
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud  
 Heard on the ruful stream; fierce Phlegeton  
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
 Farr off from these a slow and silent stream,  
 Lethe the River of Oblivion roules  
 Her watrie Labyrinth, whereof who drinks,  
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
 Beyond this flood a frozen Continent  
 Lies dark and wilde, beat with perpetual storms  
 Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land  
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems  
 Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,  
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian Bog  
 Betwixt Damiatra and mount Casius old,  
 Where Armies whole have sunk: the parching Air  
 Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of Fire.  
 Thither by harpy-footed Furies hail'd,  
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd  
 Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change  
 Of fierce extrems, extrems by change more fierce,  
 From Beds of raging Fire to starve in Ice  
 Thir soft Ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
 Immovable, infixt, and frozen round,  
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.  
 They ferry over this Lethean Sound  
 Both to and fro, thir sorrow to augment,  
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to loose  
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
 All in one moment, and so neer the brink;  
 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt  
 Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards  
 The Ford, and of it self the water flies  
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on  
 In confus'd march forlorn, th' adventrous Bands  
 With shuddring horror pale, and eyes agast  
 View'd first thir lamentable lot, and found  
 No rest: through many a dark and drearie Vaile  
 They pass'd, and many a Region dolorous,  
 O're many a Frozen, many a Fierie Alpe,  
 Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death,  
 A Universe of death, which God by curse  
 Created evil, for evil only good,  
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,



Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
 Then Fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,  
 Gorgons and Hydra's, and Chimera's dire.  
 Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,  
 Satan with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,  
 Puts on swift wings, and toward the Gates of Hell  
 Explores his solitary flight; som times  
 He scours the right hand coast, som times the left,  
 Now shaves with level wing the Deep, then soars  
 Up to the fiery concave touring high.  
 As when farr off at Sea a Fleet descri'd  
 Hangs in the Clouds, by Æquinoctial Winds  
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the Iles  
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence Merchants bring  
 Thir spicie Drugs: they on the trading Flood  
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
 Ply stemming nightly toward the Pole. So seem'd  
 Farr off the flying Fiend: at last appeer  
 Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid Roof,  
 And thrice threefold the Gates; three folds were Brass  
 Three Iron, three of Adamantine Rock,  
 Impenitrable, impal'd with circling fire,  
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the Gates there sat  
 On either side a formidable shape;  
 The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,  
 But ended foul in many a scaly fould  
 Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd  
 With mortal sting: about her middle round  
 A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd  
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung  
 A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,  
 If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her woomb,  
 And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd  
 Within unseen. Farr less abhorrd then these  
 Vex'd Scylla bathing in the Sea that parts  
 Calabria from the hoarce Trinacrian shore:  
 Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call'd  
 In secret, riding through the Air she comes  
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
 With Lapland Witches, while the labouring Moon  
 Eclipses at thir charms. The other shape,  
 If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
 Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,  
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
 For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,  
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
 And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem'd his head  
 The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on.  
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat  
 The Monster moving onward came as fast,  
 With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.

Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,  
 Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,  
 Created thing naught vallu'd he nor shun'd;  
 And with disdainful look thus first began.  
 Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,  
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
 Thy miscreated Front athwart my way  
 To yonder Gates? through them I mean to pass,  
 That be assur'd, without leave askt of thee:  
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,  
 Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n.  
 To whom the Goblin full of wrauth reply'd,  
 Art thou that Traitor Angel, art thou hee,  
 Who first broke peace in Heav'n and Faith, till then  
 Unbrok'n, and in proud rebellious Arms  
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Sons  
 Conjur'd against the highest, for which both Thou  
 And they outcast from God, are here condemn'd  
 To waste Eternal daies in woe and pain?  
 And reck'n'st thou thy self with Spirits of Heav'n,  
 Hell-doomd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,  
 Where I reign King, and to enrage thee more,  
 Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,  
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,  
 Least with a whip of Scorpions I pursue  
 Thy lingring, or with one stroke of this Dart  
 Strange horror seise thee, and pangs unfelt before.  
 So spake the grieslie terrour, and in shape,  
 So speaking and so threatning, grew ten fold  
 More dreadful and deform: on th' other side  
 Incenc't with indignation Satan stood  
 Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burn'd,  
 That fires the length of Ophiucus huge  
 In th' Artick Sky, and from his horrid hair  
 Shakes Pestilence and Warr. Each at the Head  
 Level'd his deadly aime; thir fatall hands  
 No second stroke intend, and such a frown  
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black Clouds  
 With Heav'ns Artillery fraught, come rattling on  
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front  
 Hov'ring a space, till Winds the signal blow  
 To joyn thir dark Encounter in mid air:  
 So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell  
 Grew darker at their frown, so matcht they stood;  
 For never but once more was either like  
 To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds  
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,  
 Had not the Snakie Sorceress that sat  
 Fast by Hell Gate, and kept the fatal Key,  
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.  
 O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,  
 Against thy only Son? What fury O Son,

Possesses thee to bend that mortal Dart  
 Against thy Fathers head? and know'st for whom;  
 For him who sits above and laughs the while  
 At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute  
 What e're his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids,  
 His wrath which one day will destroy ye both.  
 She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest  
 Forbore, then these to her Satan return'd:  
 So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand  
 Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
 What it intends; till first I know of thee,  
 What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why  
 In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st  
 Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?  
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
 Sight more detestable then him and thee.  
 T' whom thus the Portress of Hell Gate reply'd;  
 Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem  
 Now in thine eye so foul, once deem'd so fair  
 In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight  
 Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd  
 In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King,  
 All on a sudden miserable pain  
 Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie swumm  
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
 Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,  
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,  
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd  
 Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seis'd  
 All th' Host of Heav'n; back they recoild affraid  
 At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a Sign  
 Portentous held me; but familiar grown,  
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won  
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft  
 Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing  
 Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st  
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd  
 A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,  
 And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remaind  
 (For what could else) to our Almighty Foe  
 Clear Victory, to our part loss and rout  
 Through all the Empyrean: down they fell  
 Driv'n headlong from the Pitch of Heaven, down  
 Into this Deep, and in the general fall  
 I also; at which time this powerful Key  
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep  
 These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat  
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb  
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown  
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.

At last this odious offspring whom thou seest  
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way  
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain  
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
 Transform'd: but he my inbred enemie  
 Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal Dart  
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death;  
 Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd  
 From all her Caves, and back resounded Death.  
 I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems,  
 Infram'd with lust then rage) and swifter far,  
 Me overtook his mother all dismaid,  
 And in embraces forcible and foule  
 Ingendring with me, of that rape begot  
 These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry  
 Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv'd  
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
 To me, for when they list into the womb  
 That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw  
 My Bowels, their repast; then bursting forth  
 Afresh with conscious terrours vex me round,  
 That rest or intermission none I find.  
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
 Grim Death my Son and foe, who sets them on,  
 And me his Parent would full soon devour  
 For want of other prey, but that he knows  
 His end with mine involvd; and knows that I  
 Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane,  
 When ever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.  
 But thou O Father, I forewarn thee, shun  
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
 To be invulnerable in those bright Arms,  
 Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,  
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist.  
 She finish'd, and the suttile Fiend his lore  
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answerd smooth.  
 Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy Sire,  
 And my fair Son here showst me, the dear pledge  
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys  
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change  
 Befalln us unforeseen, unthought of, know  
 I come no enemie, but to set free  
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain,  
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly Host  
 Of Spirits that in our just pretenses arm'd  
 Fell with us from on high: from them I go  
 This uncouth errand sole, and one for all  
 My self expose, with lonely steps to tread  
 Th' unfounded deep, & through the void immense  
 To search with wandring quest a place foretold  
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss

In the Pourlieues of Heav'n, and therein plac't  
 A race of upstart Creatures, to supply  
 Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd,  
 Least Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude  
 Might hap to move new broiles: Be this or aught  
 Then this more secret now design'd, I haste  
 To know, and this once known, shall soon return,  
 And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death  
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
 Wing silently the buxom Air, imbalm'd  
 With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd  
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.  
 He ceas'd, for both seemd highly pleas'd, and Death  
 Grinn'd horrible a gastly smile, to hear  
 His famine should be fill'd, and blest his mawe  
 Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoyc'd  
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire.  
 The key of this infernal Pit by due,  
 And by command of Heav'ns all-powerful King  
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
 These Adamantine Gates; against all force  
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
 Fearless to be o'rematcht by living might.  
 But what ow I to his commands above  
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down  
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,  
 To sit in hateful Office here confin'd,  
 Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nlie-born,  
 Here in perpetual agonie and pain,  
 With terrors and with clamors compass't round  
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed:  
 Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou  
 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey  
 But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon  
 To that new world of light and bliss, among  
 The Gods who live at ease, where I shall Reign  
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.  
 Thus saying, from her side the fatal Key,  
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
 And towards the Gate rouling her bestial train,  
 Forthwith the huge Porcullis high up drew,  
 Which but her self not all the Stygian powers  
 Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns  
 Th' intricate wards, and every Bolt and Bar  
 Of massie Iron or sollid Rock with ease  
 Unfast'ns: on a sudden op'n flie  
 With impetuous recoile and jarring sound  
 Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges great  
 Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
 Of Erebus . She op'nd, but to shut  
 Excel'd her power; the Gates wide op'n stood,

That with extended wings a Bannerd Host  
 Under spread Ensigns marching might pass through  
 With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;  
 So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth  
 Cast forth redounding smoak and ruddy flame.  
 Before thir eyes in sudden view appear  
 The secrets of the hoarie deep, a dark  
 Illimitable Ocean without bound,  
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,  
 And time and place are lost; where eldest Night  
 And Chaos, Ancestors of Nature, hold  
 Eternal Anarchie, amidst the noise  
 Of endless warrs and by confusion stand.  
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions fierce  
 Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring  
 Thir embryon Atoms; they around the flag  
 Of each his faction, in thir several Clanns,  
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,  
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the Sands  
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,  
 Levied to side with warring Winds, and poise  
 Thir lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,  
 Hee rules a moment; Chaos Umpire sits,  
 And by decision more imbroiles the fray  
 By which he Reigns: next him high Arbiter  
 Chance governs all. Into this wilde Abyss,  
 The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,  
 Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,  
 But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt  
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,  
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
 His dark materials to create more Worlds,  
 Into this wilde Abyss the warie fiend  
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,  
 Pondering his Voyage; for no narrow frith  
 He had to cross. Nor was his eare less peal'd  
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare  
 Great things with small) then when Bellona storms,  
 With all her battering Engines bent to rase  
 Som Capital City, or less then if this frame  
 Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements  
 In mutinie had from her Axle torn  
 The stedfast Earth. At last his Sail-broad Vannes  
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak  
 Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League  
 As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides  
 Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets  
 A vast vacuitie: all unawares  
 Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops  
 Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour  
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance  
 The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud

Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him  
 As many miles aloft: that furie stay'd,  
 Quencht in a Boggie Syrtis , neither Sea,  
 Nor good dry Land: nigh founderd on he fares,  
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
 Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and Saile.  
 As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness  
 With winged course ore Hill or moarie Dale,  
 Pursues the Arimasgian , who by stelth  
 Had from his wakeful custody purloind  
 The guarded Gold: So eagerly the fiend  
 Ore bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
 With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,  
 And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:  
 At length a universal hubbub wilde  
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd  
 Born through the hollow dark assaults his eare  
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plyes,  
 Undaunted to meet there what ever power  
 Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lyes  
 Bordering on light; when strait behold the Throne  
 Of Chaos, and his dark Pavilion spread  
 Wide on the wasteful Deep; with him Enthron'd  
 Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
 The consort of his Reign; and by them stood  
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name  
 Of Demogorgon ; Rumor next and Chance,  
 And Tumult and Confusion all imbroild,  
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.  
 T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers  
 And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,  
 Chaos and Ancient Night , I come no Spie,  
 With purpose to explore or to disturb  
 The secrets of your Realm, but by constraint  
 Wandring this darksome desart, as my way  
 Lies through your spacious Empire up to light,  
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek  
 What readiest path leads where your gloomie bounds  
 Confine with Heav'n; or if som other place  
 From your Dominion won, th' Ethereal King  
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
 I travel this profound, direct my course;  
 Directed, no mean recompence it brings  
 To your behoof, if I that Region lost,  
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce  
 To her original darkness and your sway  
 (Which is my present journey) and once more  
 Erect the Standerd there of Ancient Night;  
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.  
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old

With faulting speech and visage incompas'd  
 Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,  
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
 Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrown.  
 I saw and heard, for such a numerous host  
 Fled not in silence through the frighted deep  
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
 Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n Gates  
 Poured out by millions her victorious Bands  
 Pursuing. I upon my Frontiers here  
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve,  
 That little which is left so to defend  
 Encroacht on still through our intestine broiles  
 Weakning the Scepter of old Night: first Hell  
 Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;  
 Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World  
 Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain  
 To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions fell:  
 If that way be your walk, you have not farr;  
 So much the neerer danger; goe and speed;  
 Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.  
 He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply,  
 But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,  
 With fresh alacritie and force renew'd  
 Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire  
 Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock  
 Of fighting Elements, on all sides round  
 Environ'd wins his way; harder beset  
 And more endanger'd, then when Argo pass'd  
 Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling Rocks:  
 Or when Ulysses on the Larbord shunnd  
 Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steard.  
 So he with difficulty and labour hard  
 Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee;  
 But hee once past, soon after when man fell,  
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain  
 Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,  
 Pav'd after him a broad and beat'n way  
 Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf  
 Tamely endur'd a Bridge of wondrous length  
 From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe  
 Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse  
 With easie intercourse pass to and fro  
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
 God and good Angels guard by special grace.  
 But now at last the sacred influence  
 Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n  
 Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night  
 A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins  
 Her fardest verge, and Chaos to retire  
 As from her outmost works a brok'n foe  
 With tumult less and with less hostile din,



That Satan with less toil, and now with ease  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light  
And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds  
Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn;  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold  
Farr off th' Empyreal Heav'n, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermind square or round,  
With Opal Towrs and Battlements adorn'd  
Of living Sapphire, once his native Seat;  
And fast by hanging in a golden Chain  
This pendant world, in bigness as a Starr  
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.  
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies.

John Milton

### Paradise Lost: Book III

Hail holy light, ofspring of Heav'n first-born,  
Or of th' Eternal Coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproach'd light  
Dwelt from Eternitie, dwelt then in thee,  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
Whose Fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.  
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
Escap't the Stygian Pool, though long detain'd  
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
Through utter and through middle darkness borne  
With other notes than to th' Orphean Lyre  
I sung of Chaos and Eternal Night,  
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down  
The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital Lamp; but thou  
Revisit'st not these eyes, that rowle in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veild. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
Clear Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee Sion and the flowrie Brooks beneath  
That wash thy hallowd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
Those other two equal'd with me in Fate,  
So were I equal'd with them in renown,  
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,  
And Tiresias and Phineus Prophets old.  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful Bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal Note. Thus with the Year  
Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the chearful waies of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledg fair  
Presented with a Universal blanc  
Of Natures works to mee expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
So much the rather thou Celestial light  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.  
 Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
 From the pure Empyrean where he sits  
 High Thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,  
 His own works and their works at once to view:  
 About him all the Sanctities of Heaven  
 Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv'd  
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
 The radiant image of his Glory sat,  
 His onely Son; On Earth he first beheld  
 Our two first Parents, yet the onely two  
 Of mankind, in the happie Garden plac't,  
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivald love  
 In blissful solitude; he then survey'd  
 Hell and the Gulf between, and Satan there  
 Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night  
 In the dun Air sublime, and ready now  
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet  
 On the bare outside of this World, that seem'd  
 Firm land imbosom'd without Firmament,  
 Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.  
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,  
 Thus to his onely Son foreseeing spake.  
 Onely begotten Son, seest thou what rage  
 Transports our adversarie, whom no bounds  
 Prescrib'd, no barrs of Hell, nor all the chains  
 Heapt on him there, nor yet the main Abyss  
 Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems  
 On desperat revenge, that shall redound  
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now  
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way  
 Not farr off Heav'n, in the Precincts of light,  
 Directly towards the new created World,  
 And Man there plac't, with purpose to assay  
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,  
 By som false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
 For man will heark'n to his glozing lyes,  
 And easily transgress the sole Command,  
 Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall  
 Hee and his faithless Progenie: whose fault?  
 Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of mee  
 All he could have; I made him just and right,  
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
 Such I created all th' Ethereal Powers  
 And Spirits, both them who stood & them who faild;  
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
 Not free, what proof could they have givn sincere  
 Of true allegiance, constant Faith or Love,

Where onely what they needs must do, appeard,  
 Not what they would? what praise could they receive?  
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
 When Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)  
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoild,  
 Made passive both, had servd necessitie,  
 Not mee. They therefore as to right belongd,  
 So were created, nor can justly accuse  
 Thir maker, or thir making, or thir Fate;  
 As if Predestination over-rul'd  
 Thir will, dispos'd by absolute Decree  
 Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed  
 Thir own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,  
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.  
 So without least impulse or shadow of Fate,  
 Or aught by me immutablie foreseen,  
 They trespass, Authors to themselves in all  
 Both what they judge and what they choose; for so  
 I formd them free, and free they must remain,  
 Till they enthrall themselves: I else must change  
 Thir nature, and revoke the high Decree  
 Unchangeable, Eternal, which ordain'd  
 Thir freedom, they themselves ordain'd thir fall.  
 The first sort by thir own suggestion fell,  
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd  
 By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
 The other none: in Mercy and Justice both,  
 Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glorie excel,  
 But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.  
 Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd  
 All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect  
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:  
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
 Most glorious, in him all his Father shon  
 Substantially express'd, and in his face  
 Divine compassion visibly appeerd,  
 Love without end, and without measure Grace,  
 Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.  
 O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd  
 Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace;  
 For which both Heav'n and Earth shall high extoll  
 Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound  
 Of Hymns and sacred Songs, wherewith thy Throne  
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.  
 For should Man finally be lost, should Man  
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest Son  
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joynd  
 With his own folly? that be from thee farr,  
 That farr be from thee, Father, who art Judge  
 Of all things made, and judgest onely right.  
 Or shall the Adversarie thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine, shall he fulfill  
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,  
 Or proud return though to his heavier doom,  
 Yet with revenge accomplish't and to Hell  
 Draw after him the whole Race of mankind,  
 By him corrupted? or wilt thou thy self  
 Abolish thy Creation, and unmake,  
 For him, what for thy glorie thou hast made?  
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both  
 Be questiond and blasphem'd without defence.  
 To whom the great Creatour thus reply'd.  
 O Son, in whom my Soul hath chief delight,  
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone  
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,  
 All hast thou spok'n as my thoughts are, all  
 As my Eternal purpose hath decreed:  
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,  
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me  
 Freely voutsaft; once more I will renew  
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthrall'd  
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;  
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand  
 On even ground against his mortal foe,  
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail  
 His fall'n condition is, and to me ow  
 All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.  
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace  
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:  
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warnd  
 Thir sinful state, and to appease betimes  
 Th' incens'd Deitie, while offerd grace  
 Invites; for I will cleer thir senses dark,  
 What may suffice, and soft'n stonie hearts  
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.  
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,  
 Though but endevord with sincere intent,  
 Mine eare shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.  
 And I will place within them as a guide  
 My Umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,  
 Light after light well us'd they shall attain,  
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.  
 This my long sufferance and my day of grace  
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;  
 But hard be hard'nd, blind be blinded more,  
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;  
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.  
 But yet all is not don; Man disobeying,  
 Disloyal breaks his fealtie, and sinns  
 Against the high Supremacie of Heav'n,  
 Affecting God-head, and so loosing all,  
 To expiate his Treason hath naught left,  
 But to destruction sacred and devote,

He with his whole posteritie must die,  
 Die hee or Justice must; unless for him  
 Som other able, and as willing, pay  
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.  
 Say Heav'nly Powers, where shall we find such love,  
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem  
 Mans mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save,  
 Dwels in all Heaven charitie so deare?  
 He ask'd, but all the Heav'nly Quire stood mute,  
 And silence was in Heav'n: on mans behalf  
 Patron or Intercessor none appeerd,  
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw  
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.  
 And now without redemption all mankind  
 Must have bin lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell  
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
 In whom the fulness dwels of love divine,  
 His dearest mediation thus renewd.  
 Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;  
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,  
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,  
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all  
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought,  
 Happie for man, so coming; he her aide  
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;  
 Attonement for himself or offering meet,  
 Indebted and undon, hath none to bring:  
 Behold mee then, mee for him, life for life  
 I offer, on mee let thine anger fall;  
 Account mee man; I for his sake will leave  
 Thy bosom, and this glorie next to thee  
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die  
 Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreck all his rage;  
 Under his gloomie power I shall not long  
 Lie vanquisht; thou hast givn me to possess  
 Life in my self for ever, by thee I live,  
 Though now to Death I yeild, and am his due  
 All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,  
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsom grave  
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted Soule  
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;  
 But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue  
 My Vanquisher, spoild of his vanted spoile;  
 Death his deaths wound shall then receive, & stoop  
 Inglorious, of his mortall sting disarm'd.  
 I through the ample Air in Triumph high  
 Shall lead Hell Captive maugre Hell, and show  
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight  
 Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my Foes,  
 Death last, and with his Carcass glut the Grave:  
 Then with the multitude of my redeemd

Shall enter Heaven long absent, and returne,  
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd,  
 And reconcilment; wrauth shall be no more  
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence Joy entire.  
 His words here ended, but his meek aspect  
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love  
 To mortal men, above which only shon  
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice  
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will  
 Of his great Father. Admiration seis'd  
 All Heav'n, what this might mean, & whither tend  
 Wondring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd:  
 O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace  
 Found out for mankind under wrauth, O thou  
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear,  
 To me are all my works, nor Man the least  
 Though last created, that for him I spare  
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,  
 By loosing thee a while, the whole Race lost.  
 Thou therefore whom thou only canst redeeme,  
 Thir Nature also to thy Nature joyne;  
 And be thy self Man among men on Earth,  
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,  
 By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room  
 The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son.  
 As in him perish all men, so in thee  
 As from a second root shall be restor'd,  
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.  
 His crime makes guiltie all his Sons, thy merit  
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce  
 Thir own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,  
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee  
 Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,  
 Shall satisfie for Man, be judg'd and die,  
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise  
 His Brethren, ransomd with his own dear life.  
 So Heav'nly love shal outdoo Hellish hate,  
 Giving to death, and dying to redeeme,  
 So dearly to redeem what Hellish hate  
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroyes  
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.  
 Nor shalt thou by descending to assume  
 Mans Nature, less'n or degrade thine owne.  
 Because thou hast, though Thron'd in highest bliss  
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying  
 God-like fruition, quitted all to save  
 A World from utter loss, and hast been found  
 By Merit more then Birthright Son of God,  
 Found worthiest to be so by being Good,  
 Farr more then Great or High; because in thee  
 Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds,

Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt  
 With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;  
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt Reigne  
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,  
 Anointed universal King; all Power  
 I give thee, reign for ever, and assume  
 Thy Merits; under thee as Head Supream  
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:  
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide  
 In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell;  
 When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n  
 Shalt in the Skie appeer, and from thee send  
 The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaime  
 Thy dread Tribunal: forthwith from all Windes  
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead  
 Of all past Ages to the general Doom  
 Shall hast'n, such a peal shall rouse thir sleep.  
 Then all thy Saints assembl'd, thou shalt judge  
 Bad men and Angels, they arraignd shall sink  
 Beneath thy Sentence; Hell, her numbers full,  
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while  
 The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
 New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell  
 And after all thir tribulations long  
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
 With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.  
 Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,  
 For regal Scepter then no more shall need,  
 God shall be All in All. But all ye Gods,  
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies,  
 Adore the Son, and honour him as mee.  
 No sooner had th' Almighty ceas't, but all  
 The multitude of Angels with a shout  
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung  
 With Jubilee, and loud Hosanna's fill'd  
 Th' eternal Regions: lowly reverent  
 Towards either Throne they bow, & to the ground  
 With solemn adoration down they cast  
 Thir Crowns inwove with Amarant and Gold,  
 Immortal Amarant, a Flour which once  
 In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life  
 Began to bloom, but soon for mans offence  
 To Heav'n remov'd where first it grew, there grows,  
 And flours aloft shading the Fount of Life,  
 And where the river of Bliss through midst of Heavn  
 Rowls o're Elisian Flours her Amber stream;  
 With these that never fade the Spirits Elect  
 Bind thir resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,  
 Now in loose Garlands thick thrown off, the bright  
 Pavement that like a Sea of Jasper shon  
 Impurpl'd with Celestial Roses smil'd.



Then Crown'd again thir gold'n Harps they took,  
 Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side  
 Like Quivers hung, and with Præamble sweet  
 Of charming symphonie they introduce  
 Thir sacred Song, and waken raptures high;  
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could joine  
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.  
 Thee Father first they sung Omnipotent,  
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,  
 Eternal King; thee Author of all being,  
 Fountain of Light, thy self invisible  
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st  
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud  
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant Shrine,  
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appeer,  
 Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim  
 Approach not, but with both wings veil thir eyes.  
 Thee next they sang of all Creation first,  
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,  
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud  
 Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,  
 Whom else no Creature can behold; on thee  
 Impresst the effulgence of his Glorie abides,  
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
 Hee Heav'n of Heavens and all the Powers therein  
 By thee created, and by thee threw down  
 Th' aspiring Dominations: thou that day  
 Thy Fathers dreadful Thunder didst not spare,  
 Nor stop thy flaming Chariot wheels, that shook  
 Heav'ns everlasting Frame, while o're the necks  
 Thou drov'st of warring Angels disarraid.  
 Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaime  
 Thee only extold, Son of thy Fathers might,  
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,  
 Not so on Man; him through their malice fall'n,  
 Father of Mercie and Grace, thou didst not doome  
 So strictly, but much more to pitie encline:  
 No sooner did thy dear and onely Son  
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail Man  
 So strictly, but much more to pitie enclin'd,  
 He to appease thy wrauth, and end the strife  
 Of Mercy and Justice in thy face discern'd,  
 Regardless of the Bliss wherein hee sat  
 Second to thee, offerd himself to die  
 For mans offence. O unexempl'd love,  
 Love no where to be found less then Divine!  
 Hail Son of God, Saviour of Men, thy Name  
 Shall be the copious matter of my Song  
 Henceforth, and never shall my Harp thy praise  
 Forget, nor from thy Fathers praise disjoine.  
 Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry Sphear,

Thir happie hours in joy and hymning spent.  
 Mean while upon the firm opacous Globe  
 Of this round World, whose first convex divides  
 The luminous inferior Orbs, enclos'd  
 From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,  
 Satan alighted walks: a Globe farr off  
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless Continent  
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night  
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threatning storms  
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement skie;  
 Save on that side which from the wall of Heav'n  
 Though distant farr som small reflection gaines  
 Of glimmering air less vext with tempest loud:  
 Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field.  
 As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,  
 Whose snowie ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
 Dislodging from a Region scarce of prey  
 To gorge the flesh of Lambs or yeanling Kids  
 On Hills where Flocks are fed, flies toward the Springs  
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
 But in his way lights on the barren plaines  
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
 With Sails and Wind thir canie Waggons light:  
 So on this windie Sea of Land, the Fiend  
 Walk'd up and down alone bent on his prey,  
 Alone, for other Creature in this place  
 Living or liveless to be found was none,  
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth  
 Up hither like Aereal vapours flew  
 Of all things transitorie and vain, when Sin  
 With vanity had filld the works of men:  
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things  
 Built thir fond hopes of Glorie or lasting fame,  
 Or happiness in this or th' other life;  
 All who have thir reward on Earth, the fruits  
 Of painful Superstition and blind Zeal,  
 Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find  
 Fit retribution, emptie as thir deeds;  
 All th' unaccomplisht works of Natures hand,  
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixt,  
 Dissolvd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
 Till final dissolution, wander here,  
 Not in the neighbouring Moon, as some have dreamd;  
 Those argent Fields more likely habitants,  
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold  
 Betwixt th' Angelical and Human kinde:  
 Hither of ill-joynd Sons and Daughters born  
 First from the ancient World those Giants came  
 With many a vain exploit, though then renownd:  
 The builders next of Babel on the Plain  
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain designe  
 New Babels, had they wherewithall, would build:

Others came single; hee who to be deemd  
 A God, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,  
 Empedocles, and hee who to enjoy  
 Plato's Elysium leap'd into the Sea,  
 Cleombrotus, and many more too long,  
 Embryo's and Idiots, Eremites and Friers  
 White, Black and Grey, with all thir trumperie.  
 Here Pilgrims roam, that stray'd so farr to seek  
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n;  
 And they who to be sure of Paradise  
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,  
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd;  
 They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fixt,  
 And that Crystalline Sphear whose ballance weighs  
 The Trepidation talkt, and that first mov'd;  
 And now Saint Peter at Heav'ns Wicket seems  
 To wait them with his Keys, and now at foot  
 Of Heav'ns ascent they lift thir Feet, when loe  
 A violent cross wind from either Coast  
 Blows them transverse ten thousand Leagues awry  
 Into the devious Air; then might ye see  
 Cowles, Hoods and Habits with thir wearers tost  
 And flutterd into Raggs, then Reliques, Beads,  
 Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,  
 The sport of Winds: all these upwhirld aloft  
 Fly o're the backside of the World farr off  
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since calld  
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown  
 Long after, now unpeopl'd, and untrod;  
 All this dark Globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,  
 And long he wanderd, till at last a gleame  
 Of dawning light turnd thither-ward in haste  
 His travell'd steps; farr distant hee descries  
 Ascending by degrees magnificent  
 Up to the wall of Heaven a Structure high,  
 At top whereof, but farr more rich appeerd  
 The work as of a Kingly Palace Gate  
 With Frontispice of Diamond and Gold  
 Imbellisht, thick with sparkling orient Gemmes  
 The Portal shon, inimitable on Earth  
 By Model, or by shading Pencil drawn.  
 The Stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw  
 Angels ascending and descending, bands  
 Of Guardians bright, when he from Esau fled  
 To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,  
 Dreaming by night under the open Skie,  
 And waking cri'd, This is the Gate of Heav'n.  
 Each Stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood  
 There alwaies, but drawn up to Heav'n somtimes  
 Viewless, and underneath a bright Sea flow'd  
 Of Jasper, or of liquid Pearle, whereon  
 Who after came from Earth, sayling arriv'd,

Wafted by Angels, or flew o're the Lake  
 Rapt in a Chariot drawn by fiery Steeds.  
 The Stairs were then let down, whether to dare  
 The Fiend by easie ascent, or aggravate  
 His sad exclusion from the dores of Bliss.  
 Direct against which op'nd from beneath,  
 Just o're the blissful seat of Paradise,  
 A passage down to th' Earth, a passage wide,  
 Wider by farr then that of after-times  
 Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large,  
 Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,  
 By which, to visit oft those happy Tribes,  
 On high behests his Angels to and fro  
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard  
 From Paneas the fount of Jordans flood  
 To Beersaba where the Holy Land  
 Borders on Ægypt and the Arabian shoare;  
 So wide the op'ning seemd, where bounds were set  
 To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave.  
 Satan from hence now on the lower stair  
 That scal'd by steps of Gold to Heav'n Gate  
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view  
 Of all this World at once. As when a Scout  
 Through dark and desart wayes with peril gone  
 All night; at last by break of chearful dawne  
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing Hill,  
 Which to his eye discovers unaware  
 The goodly prospect of some forein land  
 First-seen, or some renownd Metropolis  
 With glistening Spires and Pinnacles adornd,  
 Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams.  
 Such wonder seis'd, though after Heaven seen,  
 The Spirit maligne, but much more envy seis'd  
 At sight of all this World beheld so faire.  
 Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood  
 So high above the circling Canopie  
 Of Nights extended shade; from Eastern Point  
 Of Libra to the fleecie Starr that bears  
 Andromeda farr off Atlantick Seas  
 Beyond th' Horizon; then from Pole to Pole  
 He views in bredth, and without longer pause  
 Down right into the Worlds first Region throws  
 His flight precipitant, and windes with ease  
 Through the pure marble Air his oblique way  
 Amongst innumerable Starrs, that shon  
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seemd other Worlds,  
 Or other Worlds they seemd, or happy Iles,  
 Like those Hesperian Gardens fam'd of old,  
 Fortunate Fields, and Groves and flourie Vales,  
 Thrice happy Iles, but who dwelt happy there  
 He stayd not to enquire: above them all  
 The golden Sun in splendor likest Heaven

Allur'd his eye: Thither his course he bends  
 Through the calm Firmament; but up or downe  
 By center, or eccentric, hard to tell,  
 Or Longitude, where the great Luminarie  
 Alooff the vulgar Constellations thick,  
 That from his Lordly eye keep distance due,  
 Dispenses Light from farr; they as they move  
 Thir Starry dance in numbers that compute  
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-chearing Lamp  
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turnd  
 By his Magnetic beam, that gently warms  
 The Univers, and to each inward part  
 With gentle penetration, though unseen,  
 Shoots invisible vertue even to the deep:  
 So wondrously was set his Station bright.  
 There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps  
 Astronomer in the Sun's lucent Orbe  
 Through his glaz'd Optic Tube yet never saw.  
 The place he found beyond expression bright,  
 Compar'd with aught on Earth, Medal or Stone;  
 Not all parts like, but all alike informd  
 Which radiant light, as glowing Iron with fire;  
 If mettal, part seemd Gold, part Silver cleer;  
 If stone, Carbuncle most or Chrysolite,  
 Rubie or Topaz, to the Twelve that shon  
 In Aarons Brest-plate, and a stone besides  
 Imagind rather oft then elsewhere seen,  
 That stone, or like to that which here below  
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,  
 In vain, though by thir powerful Art they binde  
 Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound  
 In various shapes old Proteus from the Sea,  
 Draind through a Limbec to his Native forme.  
 What wonder then if fields and regions here  
 Breathe forth Elixer pure, and Rivers run  
 Potable Gold, when with one vertuous touch  
 Th' Arch-chimic Sun so farr from us remote  
 Produces with Terrestrial Humor mixt  
 Here in the dark so many precious things  
 Of colour glorious and effect so rare?  
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
 Undazl'd, farr and wide his eye commands,  
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,  
 But all Sun-shine, as when his Beams at Noon  
 Culminate from th' Æquator as they now  
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
 Shadow from body opaque can fall, and the Aire,  
 No where so cleer, sharp'nd his visual ray  
 To objects distant farr, whereby he soon  
 Saw within kenn a glorious Angel stand,  
 The same whom John saw also in the Sun:  
 His back was turnd, but not his brightness hid;

Of beaming sunnie Raies, a golden tiar  
 Circl'd his Head, nor less his Locks behind  
 Illustrious on his Shoulders fledge with wings  
 Lay waving round; on som great charge imploy'd  
 Hee seemd, or fixt in cogitation deep.  
 Glad was the Spirit impure; as now in hope  
 To find who might direct his wandring flight  
 To Paradise the happie seat of Man,  
 His journies end and our beginning woe.  
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
 Which else might work him danger or delay:  
 And now a stripling Cherube he appeers,  
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 Youth smil'd Celestial, and to every Limb  
 Sutable grace diffus'd, so well he feignd;  
 Under a Coronet his flowing haire  
 In curles on either cheek plaid, wings he wore  
 Of many a colourd plume sprinkl'd with Gold,  
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
 Before his decent steps a Silver wand.  
 He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright,  
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turnd,  
 Admonisht by his eare, and strait was known  
 Th' Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seav'n  
 Who in Gods presence, neerest to his Throne  
 Stand ready at command, and are his Eyes  
 That run through all the Heav'ns, or down to th' Earth  
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,  
 O're Sea and Land: him Satan thus accostes;  
 Uriel, for thou of those seav'n Spirits that stand  
 In sight of God's high Throne, gloriously bright,  
 The first art wont his great authentic will  
 Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,  
 Where all his Sons thy Embassie attend;  
 And here art likeliest by supream decree  
 Like honour to obtain, and as his Eye  
 To visit oft this new Creation round;  
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know  
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,  
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom  
 All these his works so wondrous he ordaind,  
 Hath brought me from the Quires of Cherubim  
 Alone thus wandring. Brightest Seraph tell  
 In which of all these shining Orbes hath Man  
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,  
 But all these shining Orbes his choice to dwell;  
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,  
 Or open admiration him behold  
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowd  
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces powrd;  
 That both in him and all things, as is meet,  
 The Universal Maker we may praise;

Who justly hath drivn out his Rebell Foes  
 To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss  
 Created this new happie Race of Men  
 To serve him better: wise are all his wayes.  
 So spake the false dissembler unperceivd;  
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern  
 Hypocrisie, the only evil that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth:  
 And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
 At wisdoms Gate, and to simplicitie  
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill  
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd  
 Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held  
 The sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n;  
 Who to the fraudulent Impostor foule  
 In his uprightness answer thus returnd.  
 Faire Angel, thy desire which tends to know  
 The works of God, thereby to glorifie  
 The great Work-Maister, leads to no excess  
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither  
 From thy Empyrean Mansion thus alone,  
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps  
 Contented with report heare onely in heav'n:  
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance alwayes with delight;  
 But what created mind can comprehend  
 Thir number, or the wisdom infinite  
 That brought them forth, but hid thir causes deep.  
 I saw when at his Word the formless Mass,  
 This worlds material mould, came to a heap:  
 Confusion heard his voice, and wilde uproar  
 Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;  
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,  
 Light shon, and order from disorder sprung:  
 Swift to thir several Quarters hasted then  
 The cumbrous Elements, Earth, Flood, Aire, Fire,  
 And this Ethereal quintessence of Heav'n  
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
 That rowld orbicular, and turnd to Starrs  
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
 Each had his place appointed, each his course,  
 The rest in circuit walles this Universe.  
 Look downward on that Globe whose hither side  
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;  
 That place is Earth the seat of Man, that light  
 His day, which else as th' other Hemisphere  
 Night would invade, but there the neighbouring Moon  
 (So call that opposite fair Starr) her aide  
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round

Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n;  
With borrowd light her countenance triform  
Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' Earth,  
And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
That spot to which I point is Paradise,  
Adams abode, those loftie shades his Bowre.  
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.  
Thus said, he turnd, and Satan bowing low,  
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,  
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,  
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,  
Down from th' Ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,  
Throws his steep flight with many an Aerie wheele,  
Nor staid, till on Niphates top he lights.

John Milton



## Paradise Lost: Book IV

O for that warning voice, which he who saw  
Th' Apocalyps, heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,  
Wo to the inhabitants on earth! that now,  
While time was, our first Parents had bin warn'd  
The coming of thir secret foe, and scap'd  
Haply so scap'd his mortal snare; for now  
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,  
The Tempter ere th' Accuser of man-kind,  
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss  
Of that first Battel, and his flight to Hell:  
Yet not rejoycing in his speed, though bold,  
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,  
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth  
Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest,  
And like a devillish Engine back recoiles  
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract  
His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stirr  
The Hell within him, for within him Hell  
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell  
One step no more then from himself can fly  
By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair  
That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie  
Of what he was, what is, and what must be  
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.  
Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view  
Lay pleasant, his grievd look he fixes sad,  
Sometimes towards Heav'n and the full-blazing Sun,  
Which now sat high in his Meridian Towre:  
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.  
O thou that with surpassing Glory crown'd,  
Look'st from thy sole Dominion like the God  
Of this new World; at whose sight all the Starrs  
Hide thir diminisht heads; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;  
Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down  
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless King:  
Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.  
What could be less then to afford him praise,  
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,  
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,  
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher  
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
The debt immense of endless gratitude,

So burthensome, still paying, still to ow;  
 Forgetful what from him I still receivd,  
 And understood not that a grateful mind  
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
 Indebted and dischargd; what burden then?  
 O had his powerful Destiny ordaind  
 Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood  
 Then happie; no unbounded hope had rais'd  
 Ambition. Yet why not? som other Power  
 As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean  
 Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great  
 Fell not, but stand unshak'n, from within  
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.  
 Hadst thou the same free Will and Power to stand?  
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,  
 But Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all?  
 Be then his Love accurst, since love or hate,  
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
 Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will  
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
 Me miserable! which way shall I flie  
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despaire?  
 Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell;  
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep  
 Still threatning to devour me opens wide,  
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.  
 O then at last relent: is there no place  
 Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?  
 None left but by submission; and that word  
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
 Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd  
 With other promises and other vaunts  
 Then to submit, boasting I could subdue  
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know  
 How dearly I abide that boast so vaine,  
 Under what torments inwardly I groane;  
 While they adore me on the Throne of Hell,  
 With Diadem and Scepter high advanc'd  
 The lower still I fall, onely Supream  
 In miserie; such joy Ambition findes.  
 But say I could repent and could obtaine  
 By Act of Grace my former state; how soon  
 Would highth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay  
 What feign'd submission swore: ease would recant  
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.  
 For never can true reconcilment grow  
 Where wounds of deadly hate have peirc'd so deep:  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse  
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase deare  
 Short intermission bought with double smart.  
 This knows my punisher; therefore as farr  
 From granting hee, as I from begging peace:

All hope excluded thus, behold in stead  
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,  
 Mankind created, and for him this World.  
 So farwel Hope, and with Hope farwel Fear,  
 Farwel Remorse: all Good to me is lost;  
 Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least  
 Divided Empire with Heav'ns King I hold  
 By thee, and more then half perhaps will reigne;  
 As Man ere long, and this new World shall know.  
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face  
 Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envie and despair,  
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betraid  
 Him counterfet, if any eye beheld.  
 For heav'nly mindes from such distempers foule  
 Are ever cleer. Whereof hee soon aware,  
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calme,  
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first  
 That practisd falshood under saintly shew,  
 Deep malice to conceale, couch't with revenge:  
 Yet not anough had practisd to deceive  
 Uriel once warnd; whose eye pursu'd him down  
 The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount  
 Saw him disfigur'd, more then could befall  
 Spirit of happie sort: his gestures fierce  
 He markd and mad demeanour, then alone,  
 As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.  
 So on he fares, and to the border comes  
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
 Now nearer, Crowns with her enclosure green,  
 As with a rural mound the champain head  
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairie sides  
 With thicket overgrown, grottesque and wilde,  
 Access deni'd; and over head up grew  
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,  
 Cedar, and Pine, and Firr, and branching Palm,  
 A Silvan Scene, and as the ranks ascend  
 Shade above shade, a woodie Theatre  
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher then thir tops  
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung:  
 Which to our general Sire gave prospect large  
 Into his neather Empire neighbouring round.  
 And higher then that Wall a circling row  
 Of goodliest Trees loaden with fairest Fruit,  
 Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue  
 Appeerd, with gay enameld colours mixt:  
 On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams  
 Then in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,  
 When God hath showrd the earth; so lovely seemd  
 That Lantskip: And of pure now purer aire  
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires  
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive  
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales

Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense  
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
 Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile  
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
 Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow  
 Sabean Odours from the spicie shoare  
 Of Arabie the blest, with such delay  
 Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League  
 Cheard with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.  
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend  
 Who came thir bane, though with them better pleas'd  
 Then Asmodeus with the fishie fume,  
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the Spouse  
 Of Tobits Son, and with a vengeance sent  
 From Demia post to Ægypt, there fast bound.  
 Now to th' ascent of that steep savage Hill  
 Satan had journied on, pensive and slow;  
 But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,  
 As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth  
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd  
 All path of Man or Beast that past that way:  
 One Gate there onely was, and that look'd East  
 On th' other side: which when th' arch-fellon saw  
 Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt,  
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound  
 Of Hill or highest Wall, and sheer within  
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling Wolfe,  
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
 Watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eeven  
 In hurdl'd Cotes amid the field secure,  
 Leaps o're the fence with ease into the Fould:  
 Or as a Thief bent to unhoord the cash  
 Of some rich Burgher, whose substantial dores,  
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,  
 In at the window climbs, or o're the tiles;  
 So clomb this first grand Thief into Gods Fould:  
 So since into his Church lewd Hirelings climbe.  
 Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,  
 The middle Tree and highest there that grew,  
 Sat like a Cormorant; yet not true Life  
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising Death  
 To them who liv'd; nor on the vertue thought  
 Of that life-giving Plant, but only us'd  
 For prospect, what well us'd had bin the pledge  
 Of immortalitie. So little knows  
 Any, but God alone, to value right  
 The good before him, but perverts best things  
 To worst abuse, or to thir meanest use.  
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views  
 To all delight of human sense expos'd  
 In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,  
 A Heaven on Earth, for blissful Paradise

Of God the Garden was, by him in the East  
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretchd her Line  
 From Auran Eastward to the Royal Towrs  
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian Kings,  
 Or where the Sons of Eden long before  
 Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soile  
 His farr more pleasant Garden God ordaind;  
 Out of the fertill ground he caus'd to grow  
 All Trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,  
 High eminent, blooming Ambrosial Fruit  
 Of vegetable Gold; and next to Life  
 Our Death the Tree of Knowledge grew fast by,  
 Knowledge of Good bought dear by knowing ill.  
 Southward through Eden went a River large,  
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggie hill  
 Pass'd underneath ingulft, for God had thrown  
 That Mountain as his Garden mould high rais'd  
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins  
 Of porous Earth with kindly thirst up drawn,  
 Rose a fresh Fountain, and with many a rill  
 Waterd the Garden; thence united fell  
 Down the steep glade, and met the neather Flood,  
 Which from his darksom passage now appeers,  
 And now divided into four main Streams,  
 Runs divers, wandring many a famous Realme  
 And Country whereof here needs no account,  
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,  
 How from that Saphire Fount the crisped Brooks,  
 Rowling on Orient Pearl and sands of Gold,  
 With mazie error under pendant shades  
 Ran Nectar, visiting each plant, and fed  
 Flours worthy of Paradise which not nice Art  
 In Beds and curious Knots, but Nature boon  
 Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine,  
 Both where the morning Sun first warmly smote  
 The open field, and where the unpierc't shade  
 Imbound the noontide Bows: Thus was this place,  
 A happy rural seat of various view;  
 Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme,  
 Others whose fruit burnisht with Golden Rinde  
 Hung amiable, Hesperian Fables true,  
 If true, here onely, and of delicious taste:  
 Betwixt them Lawns, or level Downs, and Flocks  
 Grasing the tender herb, were interpos'd,  
 Or palmie hilloc, or the flourie lap  
 Of som irriguous Valley spread her store,  
 Flours of all hue, and without Thorn the Rose:  
 Another side, umbrageous Grots and Caves  
 Of coole recess, o're which the mantling Vine  
 Layes forth her purple Grape, and gently creeps  
 Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall

Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,  
 That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd,  
 Her chrystall mirror holds, unite thir streams.  
 The Birds thir quire apply; aires, vernal aires,  
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
 The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan  
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance  
 Led on th' Eternal Spring. Not that faire field  
 Of Enna, where Proserpin gathring flours  
 Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis  
 Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain  
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove  
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd  
 Castalian Spring might with this Paradise  
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian ile  
 Girt with the River Triton, where old Cham,  
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,  
 Hid Amalthea and her Florid Son  
 Young Bacchus from his stepdame Rhea's eye;  
 Nor where Abassin Kings thir issue Guard,  
 Mount Amara, though this by som suppos'd  
 True Paradise under the Ethiop Line  
 By Nilus head, enclos'd with shining Rock,  
 A whole dayes journey high, but wide remote  
 From this Assyrian Garden, where the Fiend  
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind  
 Of living Creatures new to sight and strange:  
 Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,  
 Godlike erect, with native Honour clad  
 In naked Majestie seemd Lords of all,  
 And worthie seemd, for in thir looks Divine  
 The image of thir glorious Maker shon,  
 Truth, Wisdome, Sanctitude severe and pure,  
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plac't;  
 Whence true autoritie in men; though both  
 Not equal, as thir sex not equal seemd;  
 For contemplation hee and valour formd,  
 For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,  
 Hee for God only, shee for God in him:  
 His fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd  
 Absolute rule; and Hyacinthin Locks  
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:  
 Shee as a vail down to the slender waste  
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
 Dissheveld, but in wanton ringlets wav'd  
 As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd  
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,  
 And by her yeilded, by him best receivd,  
 Yeilded with coy submission, modest pride,  
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.  
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceald,

Then was not guiltie shame, dishonest shame  
 Of natures works, honor dishonorable,  
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubl'd all mankind  
 With shews instead, meer shews of seeming pure,  
 And banisht from mans life his happiest life,  
 Simplicities and spotless innocence.  
 So passd they naked on, nor shund the sight  
 Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill:  
 So hand in hand they passd, the lovliest pair  
 That ever since in loves embraces met,  
 Adam the goodliest man of men since borne  
 His Sons, the fairest of her Daughters Eve.  
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green  
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh Fountain side  
 They sat them down, and after no more toil  
 Of thir sweet Gardning labour then suffic'd  
 To recommend coole Zephyr, and made ease  
 More easie, wholsom thirst and appetite  
 More grateful, to thir Supper Fruits they fell,  
 Nectarine Fruits which the compliant boughes  
 Yeilded them, side-long as they sat recline  
 On the soft downie Bank damaskt with flours:  
 The savourie pulp they chew, and in the rinde  
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;  
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles  
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems  
 Fair couple, linkt in happie nuptial League,  
 Alone as they. About them frisking playd  
 All Beasts of th' Earth, since wilde, and of all chase  
 In Wood or Wilderness, Forrest or Den;  
 Sporting the Lion rampd, and in his paw  
 Dandl'd the Kid; Bears, Tygers, Ounces, Pardes  
 Gambold before them, th' unwieldy Elephant  
 To make them mirth us'd all his might, & wreathd  
 His Lithe Proboscis; close the Serpent sly  
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine  
 His breaded train, and of his fatal guile  
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass  
 Coucht, and now fild with pasture gazing sat,  
 Or Bedward ruminating: for the Sun  
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone carreer  
 To th' Ocean Iles, and in th' ascending Scale  
 Of Heav'n the Starrs that usher Evening rose:  
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,  
 Scarce thus at length faild speech recoverd sad.  
 O Hell! what doe mine eyes with grief behold,  
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc't  
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,  
 Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright  
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue  
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
 In them Divine resemblance, and such grace

The hand that formd them on thir shape hath pourd.  
 Ah gentle pair, yee little think how nigh  
 Your change approaches, when all these delights  
 Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,  
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;  
 Happie, but for so happie ill secur'd  
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heav'n  
 Ill fenc't for Heav'n to keep out such a foe  
 As now is enterd; yet no purpos'd foe  
 To you whom I could pittie thus forlorne  
 Though I unpittied: League with you I seek,  
 And mutual amitie so streight, so close,  
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me  
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please  
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such  
 Accept your Makers work; he gave it me,  
 Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfould,  
 To entertain you two, her widest Gates,  
 And send forth all her Kings; there will be room,  
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive  
 Your numerous ofspring; if no better place,  
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge  
 On you who wrong me not for him who wrongd.  
 And should I at your harmless innocence  
 Melt, as I doe, yet public reason just,  
 Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg'd,  
 By conquering this new World, compels me now  
 To do what else though damnd I should abhorre.  
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,  
 The Tyrants plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.  
 Then from his loftie stand on that high Tree  
 Down he alights among the sportful Herd  
 Of those fourfooted kindes, himself now one,  
 Now other, as thir shape servd best his end  
 Neerer to view his prey, and unespi'd  
 To mark what of thir state he more might learn  
 By word or action markt: about them round  
 A Lion now he stalkes with fierie glare,  
 Then as a Tiger, who by chance hath spi'd  
 In some Purlieu two gentle Fawnes at play,  
 Strait couches close, then rising changes oft  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground  
 Whence rushing he might surest seise them both  
 Grip't in each paw: when Adam first of men  
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,  
 Turnd him all eare to heare new utterance flow.  
 Sole partner and sole part of all these joyes,  
 Dearer thy self then all; needs must the Power  
 That made us, and for us this ample World  
 Be infinitely good, and of his good  
 As liberal and free as infinite,  
 That rais'd us from the dust and plac't us here



In all this happiness, who at his hand  
 Have nothing merited, nor can performe  
 Aught whereof hee hath need, hee who requires  
 From us no other service then to keep  
 This one, this easie charge, of all the Trees  
 In Paradise that beare delicious fruit  
 So various, not to taste that onely Tree  
 Of knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life,  
 So neer grows Death to Life, what ere Death is,  
 Som dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowst  
 God hath pronounc't it death to taste that Tree,  
 The only sign of our obedience left  
 Among so many signes of power and rule  
 Conferd upon us, and Dominion giv'n  
 Over all other Creatures that possesse  
 Earth, Aire, and Sea. Then let us not think hard  
 One easie prohibition, who enjoy  
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
 Unlimited of manifold delights:  
 But let us ever praise him, and extoll  
 His bountie, following our delightful task  
 To prune these growing Plants, & tend these Flours,  
 Which were it toilsom, yet with thee were sweet.  
 To whom thus Eve repli'd. O thou for whom  
 And from whom I was formd flesh of thy flesh,  
 And without whom am to no end, my Guide  
 And Head, what thou hast said is just and right.  
 For wee to him indeed all praises owe,  
 And daily thanks, I chiefly who enjoy  
 So farr the happier Lot, enjoying thee  
 Preeminent by so much odds, while thou  
 Like consort to thy self canst no where find.  
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
 I first awak't, and found my self repos'd  
 Under a shade on flours, much wondring where  
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread  
 Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd  
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went  
 With unexperient thought, and laid me downe  
 On the green bank, to look into the cleer  
 Smooth Lake, that to me seemd another Skie.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite,  
 A Shape within the watry gleam appeerd  
 Bending to look on me, I started back,  
 It started back, but pleasd I soon returnd,  
 Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathie and love, there I had fixt  
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,  
 Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,  
 What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,

With thee it came and goes: but follow me,  
 And I will bring thee where no shadow staies  
 Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee  
 Whose image thou art, him thou shall enjoy  
 Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare  
 Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd  
 Mother of human Race: what could I doe,  
 But follow strait, invisibly thus led?  
 Till I espi'd thee, fair indeed and tall,  
 Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,  
 Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,  
 Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd,  
 Thou following cryd'st aloud, Return fair Eve,  
 Whom fli'st thou? whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,  
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart  
 Substantial Life, to have thee by my side  
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
 Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 My other half: with that thy gentle hand  
 Seisd mine, I yeilded, and from that time see  
 How beauty is excelld by manly grace  
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.  
 So spake our general Mother, and with eyes  
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,  
 And meek surrender, half imbracing leand  
 On our first Father, half her swelling Breast  
 Naked met his under the flowing Gold  
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight  
 Both of her Beauty and submissive Charms  
 Smil'd with superior Love, as Jupiter  
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the Clouds  
 That shed May Flowers; and press'd her Matron lip  
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turnd  
 For envie, yet with jealous leer maligne  
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plained.  
 Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two  
 Imparadis't in one anothers arms  
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy thir fill  
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,  
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
 Among our other torments not the least,  
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines;  
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd  
 From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:  
 One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call'd,  
 Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd'n?  
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord  
 Envie them that? can it be sin to know,  
 Can it be death? and do they onely stand  
 By Ignorance, is that thir happie state,  
 The proof of thir obedience and thir faith?

O fair foundation laid whereon to build  
 Thir ruine! Hence I will excite thir minds  
 With more desire to know, and to reject  
 Envious commands, invented with designe  
 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt  
 Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,  
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?  
 But first with narrow search I must walk round  
 This Garden, and no corner leave unspi'd;  
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet  
 Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by Fountain side,  
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw  
 What further would be learnt. Live while ye may,  
 Yet happie pair; enjoy, till I return,  
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.  
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,  
 But with sly circumspection, and began  
 Through wood, through waste, o're hil, o're dale his roam.  
 Mean while in utmost Longitude, where Heav'n  
 With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting Sun  
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
 Against the eastern Gate of Paradise  
 Leveld his eevning Rayes: it was a Rock  
 Of Alablaster, pil'd up to the Clouds,  
 Conspicuous farr, winding with one ascent  
 Accessible from Earth, one entrance high;  
 The rest was craggie cliff, that overhung  
 Still as it rose, impossible to climbe.  
 Betwixt these rockie Pillars Gabriel sat  
 Chief of th' Angelic Guards, awaiting night;  
 About him exercis'd Heroic Games  
 Th' unarmed Youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand  
 Celestial Armourie, Shields, Helmes, and Speares  
 Hung high with Diamond flaming, and with Gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the Eeven  
 On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting Starr  
 In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd  
 Impress the Air, and shews the Mariner  
 From what point of his Compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.  
 Gabriel, to thee thy cours by Lot hath giv'n  
 Charge and strict watch that to this happie place  
 No evil thing approach or enter in;  
 This day at highth of Noon came to my Spheare  
 A Spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know  
 More of th' Almightyes works, and chiefly Man  
 Gods latest Image: I describ'd his way  
 Bent all on speed, and markt his Aerie Gate;  
 But in the Mount that lies from Eden North,  
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks  
 Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:  
 Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade

Lost sight of him; one of the banisht crew  
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise  
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find.  
 To whom the winged Warriour thus returnd:  
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfet sight,  
 Amid the Suns bright circle where thou sitst,  
 See farr and wide: in at this Gate none pass  
 The vigilance here plac't, but such as come  
 Well known from Heav'n; and since Meridian hour  
 No Creature thence: if Spirit of other sort,  
 So minded, have oreleapt these earthie bounds  
 On purpose, hard thou knowst it to exclude  
 Spiritual substance with corporeal barr.  
 But if within the circuit of these walks  
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
 Thou telst, by morrow dawning I shall know.  
 So promis'd hee, and Uriel to his charge  
 Returnd on that bright beam, whose point now raisd  
 Bore him slope downward to the Sun now fall'n  
 Beneath th' Azores; whither the prime Orb,  
 Incredible how swift, had thither rowl'd  
 Diurnal, or this less volubil Earth  
 By shorter flight to th' East, had left him there  
 Arraying with reflected Purple and Gold  
 The Clouds that on his Western Throne attend:  
 Now came still Eevning on, and Twilight gray  
 Had in her sober Liverie all things clad;  
 Silence accompanied, for Beast and Bird,  
 They to thir grassie Couch, these to thir Nests  
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful Nightingale;  
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the Firmament  
 With living Saphirs: Hersperus that led  
 The starrie Host, rode brightest, till the Moon  
 Rising in clouded Majestie, at length  
 Apparent Queen unvaild her peerless light,  
 And o're the dark her Silver Mantle threw.  
 When Adam thus to Eve: Fair Consort, th' hour  
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest  
 Mind us of like repose, since God hath set  
 Labour and rest, as day and night to men  
 Successive, and the timely dew of sleep  
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines  
 Our eye-lids; other Creatures all day long  
 Rove idle unimploid, and less need rest;  
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
 Appointed, which declares his Dignitie,  
 And the regard of Heav'n on all his waies;  
 While other Animals unactive range,  
 And of thir doings God takes no account.  
 Tomorrow ere fresh Morning streak the East  
 With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,

And at our pleasant labour, to reform  
 Yon flourie Arbors, yonder Allies green,  
 Our walks at noon, with branches overgrown,  
 That mock our scant manuring, and require  
 More hands then ours to lop thir wanton growth:  
 Those Blossoms also, and those dropping Gumms,  
 That lie bestrowne unsightly and unsmooth,  
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;  
 Mean while, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest.  
 To whom thus Eve with perfet beauty adornd.  
 My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst  
 Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains,  
 God is thy Law, thou mine: to know no more  
 Is womans happiest knowledge and her praise.  
 With thee conversing I forget all time,  
 All seasons and thir change, all please alike.  
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,  
 With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun  
 When first on this delightful Land he spreads  
 His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flour,  
 Glistring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
 Of grateful Eevning milde, then silent Night  
 With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,  
 And these the Gemms of Heav'n, her starrie train:  
 But neither breath of Morn when she ascends  
 With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun  
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, floure,  
 Glistring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,  
 Nor grateful Evening mild, nor silent Night  
 With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon,  
 Or glittering Starr-light without thee is sweet.  
 But wherfore all night long shine these, for whom  
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?  
 To whom our general Ancestor repli'd.  
 Daughter of God and Man, accomplisht Eve,  
 Those have thir course to finish, round the Earth,  
 By morrow Eevning, and from Land to Land  
 In order, though to Nations yet unborn,  
 Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise;  
 Least total darkness should by Night regaine  
 Her old possession, and extinguish life  
 In Nature and all things, which these soft fires  
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heate  
 Of various influence foment and warme,  
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down  
 Thir stellar vertue on all kinds that grow  
 On Earth, made hereby apter to receive  
 Perfection from the Suns more potent Ray.  
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,  
 Shine not in vain, nor think, though men were none,  
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise;

Millions of spiritual Creatures walk the Earth  
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
 Both day and night: how often from the steep  
 Of echoing Hill or Thicket have we heard  
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
 Sole, or responsive each to others note  
 Singing thir great Creator: oft in bands  
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk  
 With Heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds  
 In full harmonic number joind, thir songs  
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.  
 Thus talking hand in hand alone they pass'd  
 On to thir blissful Bower; it was a place  
 Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd  
 All things to mans delightful use; the roofe  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and Mirtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub  
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flour,  
 Iris all hues, Roses, and Gessamin  
 Rear'd high thir flourisht heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaic; underfoot the Violet,  
 Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay  
 Broiderd the ground, more colour'd then with stone  
 Of costliest Emblem: other Creature here  
 Beast, Bird, Insect, or Worm durst enter none;  
 Such was thir awe of man. In shadier Bower  
 More sacred and sequesterd, though but feignd,  
 Pan or never slept, nor Nymph,  
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess  
 With Flowers, Garlands, and sweet-smelling Herbs  
 Espoused Eve deckt first her Nuptial Bed,  
 And heav'nly Quires the Hymenæan sung,  
 What day the genial Angel to our Sire  
 Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd,  
 More lovely then Pandora, whom the Gods  
 Endowd with all thir gifts, and O too like  
 In sad event, when to the unwiser Son  
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd  
 Mankind with her faire looks, to be aveng'd  
 On him who had stole Joves authentic fire.  
 Thus at thir shadie Lodge arriv'd, both stood,  
 Both turnd, and under op'n Skie ador'd  
 The God that made both Skie, Air, Earth & Heav'n  
 Which they beheld, the Moons resplendent Globe  
 And starrie Pole: Thou also mad'st the Night,  
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the Day,  
 Which we in our appointed work imployd  
 Have finisht happie in our mutual help  
 And mutual love, the Crown of all our bliss

Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place  
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants  
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
 But thou hast promis'd from us two a Race  
 To fill the Earth, who shall with us extoll  
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.  
 This said unanimous, and other Rites  
 Observing none, but adoration pure  
 Which God likes best, into thir inmost bower  
 Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off  
 These troublesom disguises which wee wear,  
 Strait side by side were laid, nor turnd I weene  
 Adam from his fair Spouse, nor Eve the Rites  
 Mysterious of connubial Love refus'd:  
 Whatever Hypocrites austerely talk  
 Of puritie and place and innocence,  
 Defaming as impure what God declares  
 Pure, and commands to som, leaves free to all.  
 Our Maker bids increase, who bids abstain  
 But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?  
 Haile wedded Love, mysterious Law, true source  
 Of human ofspring, sole proprietie,  
 In Paradise of all things common else.  
 By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men  
 Among the bestial herds to raunge, by thee  
 Founded in Reason, Loyal, Just, and Pure,  
 Relations dear, and all the Charities  
 Of Father, Son, and Brother first were known.  
 Farr be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,  
 Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,  
 Perpetual Fountain of Domestic sweets,  
 Whose Bed is undefil'd and chast pronounc't,  
 Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.  
 Here Love his golden shafts imploies, here lights  
 His constant Lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile  
 Of Harlots, loveless, joyless, unindeard,  
 Casual fruition, nor in Court Amours  
 Mixt Dance, or wanton Mask, or Midnight Bal,  
 Or Serenate, which the starv'd Lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.  
 These lulld by Nightingales imbraceing slept,  
 And on thir naked limbs the flourie roof  
 Showrd Roses, which the Morn repair'd. Sleep on,  
 Blest pair; and O yet happiest if ye seek  
 No happier state, and know to know no more.  
 Now had night measur'd with her shaddowie Cone  
 Half way up Hill this vast Sublunar Vault,  
 And from thir Ivorie Port the Cherubim  
 Forth issuing at th' accustomd hour stood armd  
 To thir night watches in warlike Parade,

When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.  
 Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the South  
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the North,  
 Our circuit meets full West. As flame they part  
 Half wheeling to the Shield, half to the Spear.  
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he call'd  
 That neer him stood, and gave them thus in charge.  
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with wingd speed  
 Search through this Garden, leav unsearcht no nook,  
 But chiefly where those two fair Creatures Lodge,  
 Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harme.  
 This Eevning from the Sun's decline arriv'd  
 Who tells of som infernal Spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd  
 The barrs of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:  
 Such where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.  
 So saying, on he led his radiant Files,  
 Daz'ling the Moon; these to the Bower direct  
 In search of whom they sought: him there they found  
 Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of Eve;  
 Assaying by his Devilish art to reach  
 The Organs of her Fancie, and with them forge  
 Illusions as he list, Phantasms and Dreams,  
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
 Th' animal Spirits that from pure blood arise  
 Like gentle breaths from Rivers pure, thence raise  
 At least distemperd, discontented thoughts,  
 Vain hopes, vain aimes, inordinate desires  
 Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.  
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his Spear  
 Touch'd lightly; for no falshood can endure  
 Touch of Celestial temper, but returns  
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts  
 Discoverd and surpriz'd. As when a spark  
 Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder, laid  
 Fit for the Tun som Magazin to store  
 Against a rumord Warr, the Smuttie graine  
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the Aire:  
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.  
 Back stept those two fair Angels half amaz'd  
 So sudden to behold the grieslie King;  
 Yet thus, unmovd with fear, accost him soon.  
 Which of those rebell Spirits adjudg'd to Hell  
 Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison, and transform'd,  
 Why satst thou like an enemie in waite  
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?  
 Know ye not then said Satan, filld with scorn,  
 Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate  
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soare;  
 Not to know mee argues your selves unknown,  
 The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,  
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin



Your message, like to end as much in vain?  
 To whom thus Zephon , answering scorn with scorn.  
 Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,  
 Or undiminisht brightness, to be known  
 As when thou stoodst in Heav'n upright and pure;  
 That Glorie then, when thou no more wast good,  
 Departed from thee, and thou resembl'st now  
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foule.  
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account  
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep  
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.  
 So spake the Cherube, and his grave rebuke  
 Severe in youthful beautie, added grace  
 Invincible: abasht the Devil stood,  
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
 Vertue in her shape how lovly, saw, and pin'd  
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observd  
 His lustre visibly impar'd; yet seemd  
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,  
 Best with the best, the Sender not the sent,  
 Or all at once; more glorie will be wonn,  
 Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,  
 Will save us trial what the least can doe  
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.  
 The Fiend repli'd not, overcome with rage;  
 But like a proud Steed reind, went hautie on,  
 Chaumping his iron curb: to strive or flie  
 He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd  
 His heart, not else dismai'd. Now drew they nigh  
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards  
 Just met, & closing stood in squadron joind  
 Awaiting next command. To whom thir Chief  
 Gabriel from the Front thus call'd aloud.  
 O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet  
 Hasting this way, and now by glimps discerne  
 Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,  
 And with them comes a third of Regal port,  
 But faded splendor wan; who by his gate  
 And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,  
 Not likely to part hence without contest;  
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.  
 He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd  
 And brief related whom they brought, wher found,  
 How busied, in what form and posture coucht.  
 To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.  
 Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd  
 To thy transgressions, and disturbd the charge  
 Of others, who approve not to transgress  
 By thy example, but have power and right  
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
 Imploi'd it seems to violate sleep, and those  
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.  
 Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,  
 And such I held thee; but this question askt  
 Puts me in doubt. Lives ther who loves his pain?  
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,  
 Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thy self, no doubt,  
 And boldly venture to whatever place  
 Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change  
 Torment with ease, & soonest recompence  
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;  
 To thee no reason; who knowst only good,  
 But evil hast not tri'd: and wilt object  
 His will who bound us? let him surer barr  
 His Iron Gates, if he intends our stay  
 In that dark durance: thus much what was askt.  
 The rest is true, they found me where they say;  
 But that implies not violence or harme.  
 Thus hee in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,  
 Disdainfully half smiling thus repli'd.  
 O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,  
 Since Satan fell, whom follie overthrew,  
 And now returns him from his prison scap't,  
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither  
 Unlicenc't from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;  
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain  
 However, and to scape his punishment.  
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrauth,  
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight  
 Seavenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain  
 Can equal anger infinite provok't.  
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee  
 Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them  
 Less pain, less to be fled, or thou then they  
 Less hardie to endure? courageous Chief,  
 The first in flight from pain, had'st thou alleg'd  
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.  
 To which the Fiend thus answerd frowning stern.  
 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,  
 Insulting Angel, well thou knowst I stood  
 Thy fiercest, when in Battel to thy aide  
 The blasting volied Thunder made all speed  
 And seconded thy else not dreaded Spear.  
 But still thy words at random, as before,  
 Argue thy inexperience what behooves  
 From hard assaies and ill successes past  
 A faithful Leader, not to hazard all  
 Through wayes of danger by himself untri'd.  
 I therefore, I alone first undertook  
 To wing the desolate Abyss, and spie

This new created World, whereof in Hell  
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find  
 Better abode, and my afflicted Powers  
 To settle here on Earth, or in mid Aire;  
 Though for possession put to try once more  
 What thou and thy gay Legions dare against;  
 Whose easier business were to serve thir Lord  
 High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymne his Throne,  
 And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.  
 To whom the warriour Angel soon repli'd.  
 To say and strait unsay, pretending first  
 Wise to flie pain, professing next the Spie,  
 Argues no Leader, but a lyar trac't,  
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Armie of Fiends, fit body to fit head;  
 Was this your discipline and faith ingag'd,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve  
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power supream?  
 And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more then thou  
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilly ador'd  
 Heav'ns awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope  
 To dispossess him, and thy self to reigne?  
 But mark what I arreede thee now, avant;  
 Flie thither whence thou fledst: if from this houre  
 Within these hallowd limits thou appeer,  
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chaind,  
 And Seale thee so, as henceforth not to scorne  
 The facil gates of hell too slightly barrd.  
 So threatn'd hee, but Satan to no threats  
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage repli'd.  
 Then when I am thy captive talk of chaines,  
 Proud limitarie Cherube, but ere then  
 Farr heavier load thy self expect to feel  
 From my prevailing arme, though Heavens King  
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy Compeers,  
 Us'd to the yোক, draw'st his triumphant wheels  
 In progress through the rode of Heav'n Star-pav'd.  
 While thus he spake, th' Angelic Squadron bright  
 Turnd fierie red, sharpning in mooned hornes  
 Thir Phalanx, and began to hemm him round  
 With ported Spears, as thick as when a field  
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
 Her bearded Grove of ears, which way the wind  
 Swayes them; the careful Plowman doubting stands  
 Least on the threshing floore his hopeful sheaves  
 Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan allarm'd  
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,  
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:  
 His stature reacht the Skie, and on his Crest

Sat horror Plum'd; nor wanted in his graspe  
What seemd both Spear and Shield: now dreadful deeds  
Might have ensu'd, nor onely Paradise  
In this commotion, but the Starrie Cope  
Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the Elements  
At least had gon to rack, disturbd and torne  
With violence of this conflict, had not soon  
Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray  
Hung forth in Heav'n his golden Scales, yet seen  
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion signe,  
Wherein all things created first he weighd,  
The pendulous round Earth with ballanc't Aire  
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
Battels and Realms: in these he put two weights  
The sequel each of parting and of fight;  
The latter quick up flew, and kickt the beam;  
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.  
Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowst mine,  
Neither our own but giv'n; what follie then  
To boast what Arms can doe, since thine no more  
Then Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubld now  
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,  
And read thy Lot in yon celestial Sign  
Where thou art weigh'd, & shown how light, how weak,  
If thou resist. The Fiend lookt up and knew  
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled  
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book IX

Meanwhile the hainous and despightfull act  
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how  
Hee in the Serpent had perverted Eve,  
Her Husband shee, to taste the fatall fruit,  
Was known in Heav'n; for what can scape the Eye  
Of God All-seeing, or deceive his Heart  
Omniscient, who in all things wise and just,  
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the minde  
Of Man, with strength entire, and free Will arm'd,  
Complete to have discover'd and repulst  
Whatever wiles of Foe or seeming Friend.  
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd  
The high Injunction not to taste that Fruit,  
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,  
Incurr'd, what could they less, the penaltie,  
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.  
Up into Heav'n from Paradise in hast  
Th' Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad  
For Man, for of his state by this they knew,  
Much wondring how the suttle Fiend had stoln  
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news  
From Earth arriv'd at Heaven Gate, displeas'd  
All were who heard, dim sadness did not spare  
That time Celestial visages, yet mixt  
With pitie, violated not thir bliss.  
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes  
Th' ethereal People ran, to hear and know  
How all befell: they towards the Throne Supream  
Accountable made haste to make appear  
With righteous plea, thir utmost vigilance,  
And easily approv'd; when the most High  
Eternal Father from his secret Cloud,  
Amidst in Thunder utter'd thus his voice.  
Assembl'd Angels, and ye Powers return'd  
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismaid,  
Nor troubl'd at these tidings from the Earth,  
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,  
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,  
When first this Tempter cross'd the Gulf from Hell.  
I told ye then he should prevail and speed  
On his bad Errand, Man should be seduc't  
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies  
Against his Maker; no Decree of mine  
Concurring to necessitate his Fall,  
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse  
His free Will, to her own inclining left  
In eevn scale. But fall'n he is, and now  
What rests, but that the mortal Sentence pass  
On his transgression, Death denounc't that day,  
Which he presumes already vain and void,  
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,  
By some immediate stroak; but soon shall find

Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.  
 Justice shall not return as bountie scorn'd.  
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee  
 Vicegerent Son, to thee I have transferr'd  
 All Judgement, whether in Heav'n, or Earth; or Hell.  
 Easie it may be seen that I intend  
 Mercie colleague with Justice, sending thee  
 Mans Friend, his Mediator, his design'd  
 Both Ransom and Redeemer voluntarie,  
 And destin'd Man himself to judge Man fall'n.  
 So spake the Father, and unfoulding bright  
 Toward the right hand his Glorie, on the Son  
 Blaz'd forth unclouded Deitie; he full  
 Resplendent all his Father manifest  
 Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd milde.  
 Father Eternal, thine is to decree,  
 Mine both in Heav'n and Earth to do thy will  
 Supream, that thou in mee thy Son belov'd  
 Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge  
 On Earth these thy transgressors, but thou knowst,  
 Whoever judg'd, the worst on mee must light,  
 When time shall be, for so I undertook  
 Before thee; and not repenting, this obtaine  
 Of right, that I may mitigate thir doom  
 On me deriv'd, yet I shall temper so  
 Justice with Mercie, as may illustrate most  
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.  
 Attendance none shall need, nor Train, where none  
 Are to behold the Judgement, but the judg'd,  
 Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,  
 Convict by flight, and Rebel to all Law  
 Conviction to the Serpent none belongs.  
 Thus saying, from his radiant Seat he rose  
 Of high collateral glorie: him Thrones and Powers,  
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant  
 Accompanied to Heaven Gate, from whence  
 Eden and all the Coast in prospect lay.  
 Down he descended strait; the speed of Gods  
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.  
 Now was the Sun in Western cadence low  
 From Noon, and gentle Aires due at thir hour  
 To fan the Earth now wak'd, and usher in  
 The Eevning coole when he from wrauth more coole  
 Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both  
 To sentence Man: the voice of God they heard  
 Now walking in the Garden, by soft windes  
 Brought to thir Ears, while day declin'd, they heard  
 And from his presence hid themselves among  
 The thickest Trees, both Man and Wife, till God  
 Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.  
 Where art thou Adam, wont with joy to meet  
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,

Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude,  
 Where obvious dutie erewhile appear'd unsaught:  
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change  
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth.  
 He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first  
 To offend, discount'nanc't both, and discompos'd;  
 Love was not in thir looks, either to God  
 Or to each other, but apparent guilt,  
 And shame, and perturbation, and despaire,  
 Anger, and obstinacie, and hate, and guile.  
 Whence Adam faulting long, thus answer'd brief.  
 I heard thee in the Garden, and of thy voice  
 Affraid, being naked, hid my self. To whom  
 The gracious Judge without revile repli'd.  
 My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,  
 But still rejoyc't, how is it now become  
 So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who  
 Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the Tree  
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?  
 To whom thus Adam sore beset repli'd.  
 O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand  
 Before my Judge, either to undergoe  
 My self the total Crime, or to accuse  
 My other self, the partner of my life;  
 Whose failing, while her Faith to me remaines,  
 I should conceal, and not expose to blame  
 By my complaint; but strict necessitie  
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,  
 Least on my head both sin and punishment,  
 However insupportable, be all  
 Devolv'd; though should I hold my peace, yet thou  
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceale.  
 This Woman whom thou mad'st to be my help,  
 And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
 So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,  
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill,  
 And what she did, whatever in it self,  
 Her doing seem'd to justifie the deed;  
 Shee gave me of the Tree, and I did eate.  
 To whom the sovrain Presence thus repli'd.  
 Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey  
 Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,  
 Superior, or but equal, that to her  
 Thou did'st resigne thy Manhood, and the Place  
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,  
 And for thee, whose perfection farr excell'd  
 Hers in all real dignitie: Adorn'd  
 She was indeed, and lovely to attract  
 Thy Love, not thy Subjection, and her Gifts  
 Were such as under Government well seem'd,  
 Unseemly to beare rule, which was thy part  
 And person, had'st thou known thy self aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:  
 Say Woman, what is this which thou hast done?  
 To whom sad Eve with shame nigh overwhelm'd,  
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge  
 Bold or loquacious, thus abasht repli'd.  
 The Serpent me beguil'd and I did eate.  
 Which when the Lord God heard, without delay  
 To Judgement he proceeded on th' accus'd  
 Serpent though brute, unable to transerre  
 The Guilt on him who made him instrument  
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end  
 Of his Creation; justly then accurst,  
 As vitiated in Nature: more to know  
 Concern'd not Man (since he no further knew)  
 Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last  
 To Satan first in sin his doom apply'd,  
 Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:  
 And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.  
 Because thou hast done this, thou art accurst  
 Above all Cattel, each Beast of the Field;  
 Upon thy Belly groveling thou shalt goe,  
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy Life.  
 Between Thee and the Woman I will put  
 Enmitie, and between thine and her Seed;  
 Her Seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.  
 So spake this Oracle, then verifi'd  
 When Jesus son of Mary second Eve,  
 Saw Satan fall like Lightning down from Heav'n,  
 Prince of the Aire; then rising from his Grave  
 Spoild Principalities and Powers, triumpht  
 In open shew, and with ascention bright  
 Captivity led captive through the Aire,  
 The Realme it self of Satan long usurpt,  
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;  
 Eevn hee who now foretold his fatal bruise,  
 And to the Woman thus his Sentence turn'd.  
 Thy sorrow I will greatly multiplie  
 By thy Conception; Children thou shalt bring  
 In sorrow forth, and to thy Husbands will  
 Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule.  
 On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc'd.  
 Because thou hast heark'nd to the voice of thy Wife,  
 And eaten of the Tree concerning which  
 I charg'd thee, saying: Thou shalt not eate thereof,  
 Curs'd is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow  
 Shalt eate thereof all the days of thy Life;  
 Thornes also and Thistles it shall bring thee forth  
 Unbid, and thou shalt eate th' Herb of th' Field,  
 In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eate Bread,  
 Till thou return unto the ground, for thou  
 Out of the ground wast taken, know thy Birth,  
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust returne.



So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,  
 And th' instant stroke of Death denounc't that day  
 Remov'd farr off; then pittying how they stood  
 Before him naked to the aire, that now  
 Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin  
 Thenceforth the forme of servant to assume,  
 As when he wash'd his servants feet, so now  
 As Father of his Familie he clad  
 Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts, or slain,  
 Or as the Snake with youthful Coate repaid;  
 And thought not much to cloath his Enemies:  
 Nor hee thir outward onely with the Skins  
 Of Beasts, but inward nakedness, much more  
 Opprobrious, with his Robe of righteousness,  
 Araying cover'd from his Fathers sight.  
 To him with swift ascent he up returnd,  
 Into his blissful bosom reassum'd  
 In glory as of old, to him appeas'd  
 All, though all-knowing, what had past with Man  
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.  
 Meanwhile ere thus was sin'd and judg'd on Earth,  
 Within the Gates of Hell sate Sin and Death,  
 In counterview within the Gates, that now  
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
 Farr into Chaos, since the Fiend pass'd through,  
 Sin opening, who thus now to Death began.  
 O Son, why sit we here each other viewing  
 Idlely, while Satan our great Author thrives  
 In other Worlds, and happier Seat provides  
 For us his ofspring deare? It cannot be  
 But that success attends him; if mishap,  
 Ere this he had return'd, with fury driv'n  
 By his Avenger, since no place like this  
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
 Wings growing, and Dominion giv'n me large  
 Beyond this Deep; whatever drawes me on,  
 Or sympathie, or som connatural force  
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite  
 With secret amity things of like kinde  
 By secretest conveyance. Thou my Shade  
 Inseparable must with mee along:  
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.  
 But least the difficultie of passing back  
 Stay his returne perhaps over this Gulfe  
 Impassable, impervious, let us try  
 Adventrous work, yet to thy power and mine  
 Not unagreeable, to found a path  
 Over this Maine from Hell to that new World  
 Where Satan now prevailles, a Monument  
 Of merit high to all th' infernal Host,  
 Easing thir passage hence, for intercourse,

Or transmigration, as thir lot shall lead.  
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn  
 By this new felt attraction and instinct.  
 Whom thus the meager Shadow answerd soon.  
 Goe whither Fate and inclination strong  
 Leads thee, I shall not lag behinde, nor erre  
 The way, thou leading, such a sent I draw  
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
 The savour of Death from all things there that live:  
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest  
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.  
 So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell  
 Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock  
 Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,  
 Against the day of Battel, to a Field,  
 Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur'd  
 With sent of living Carcasses design'd  
 For death, the following day, in bloodie fight.  
 So sented the grim Feature, and upturn'd  
 His Nostril wide into the murkie Air,  
 Sagacious of his Quarrey from so farr.  
 Then Both from out Hell Gates into the waste  
 Wide Anarchie of Chaos damp and dark  
 Flew divers, & with Power (thir Power was great)  
 Hovering upon the Waters; what they met  
 Solid or slimie, as in raging Sea  
 Tost up and down, together crowded drove  
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell.  
 As when two Polar Winds blowing adverse  
 Upon the Cronian Sea, together drive  
 Mountains of Ice, that stop th' imagin'd way  
 Beyond Petsora Eastward, to the rich  
 Cathaian Coast. The aggregated Soyle  
 Death with his Mace petrific, cold and dry,  
 As with a Trident smote, and fix't as firm  
 As Delos floating once; the rest his look  
 Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,  
 And with Asphaltic slime; broad as the Gate,  
 Deep to the Roots of Hell the gather'd beach  
 They fasten'd, and the Mole immense wraught on  
 Over the foaming deep high Archt, a Bridge  
 Of length prodigious joyning to the Wall  
 Immoveable of this now fenceless world  
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,  
 Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell.  
 So, if great things to small may be compar'd,  
 Xerxes the Libertie of Greece to yoke,  
 From Susa his Memnonian Palace high  
 Came to the Sea, and over Hellespont  
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joyn'd,  
 And scourg'd with many a stroak th' indignant waves.  
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous Art

Pontifical, a ridge of pendent Rock  
 Over the vext Abyss, following the track  
 Of Satan, to the selfsame place where hee  
 First lighted from his Wing, and landed safe  
 From out of Chaos to the outside bare  
 Of this round World: with Pinns of Adamant  
 And Chains they made all fast, too fast they made  
 And durable; and now in little space  
 The Confines met of Empyrean Heav'n  
 And of this World, and on the left hand Hell  
 With long reach interpos'd; three sev'ral wayes  
 In sight, to each of these three places led.  
 And now thir way to Earth they had descri'd,  
 To Paradise first tending, when behold  
 Satan in likeness of an Angel bright  
 Betwixt the Centaure and the Scorpion steering  
 His Zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:  
 Disguis'd he came, but those his Children dear  
 Thir Parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.  
 Hee, after Eve seduc't, unminded slunk  
 Into the Wood fast by, and changing shape  
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act  
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded  
 Upon her Husband, saw thir shame that sought  
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend  
 The Son of God to judge them, terrifi'd  
 Hee fled, not hoping to escape, but shun  
 The present, fearing guiltie what his wrauth  
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd  
 By Night, and listning where the hapless Paire  
 Sate in thir sad discourse, and various plaint,  
 Thence gatherd his own doom, which understood  
 Not instant, but of future time. With joy  
 And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd,  
 And at the brink of Chaos, neer the foot  
 Of this new wondrous Pontifice, unhop't  
 Met who to meet him came, his Ofspring dear.  
 Great joy was at thir meeting, and at sight  
 Of that stupendious Bridge his joy encreas'd.  
 Long hee admiring stood, till Sin, his faire  
 Inchanting Daughter, thus the silence broke.  
 O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,  
 Thy Trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own,  
 Thou art thir Author and prime Architect:  
 For I no sooner in my Heart divin'd,  
 My Heart, which by a secret harmonie  
 Still moves with thine, joyn'd in connexion sweet,  
 That thou on Earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks  
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt  
 Though distant from thee Worlds between, yet felt  
 That I must after thee with this thy Son;  
 Such fatal consequence unites us three:

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,  
 Nor this unvoyageable Gulf obscure  
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.  
 Thou hast atchiev'd our libertie, confin'd  
 Within Hell Gates till now, thou us impow'rd  
 To fortifie thus farr, and overlay  
 With this portentous Bridge the dark Abyss.  
 Thine now is all this World, thy vertue hath won  
 What thy hands builded not, thy Wisdom gain'd  
 With odds what Warr hath lost, and fully aveng'd  
 Our foile in Heav'n; here thou shalt Monarch reign,  
 There didst not; there let him still Victor sway,  
 As Battel hath adjudg'd, from this new World  
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated,  
 And henceforth Monarchie with thee divide  
 Of all things, parted by th' Empyreal bounds,  
 His Quadrature, from thy Orbicular World,  
 Or trie thee now more dang'rous to his Throne.  
 Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answerd glad.  
 Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both,  
 High proof ye now have giv'n to be the Race  
 Of Satan (for I glorie in the name,  
 Antagonist of Heav'ns Almighty King)  
 Amply have merited of me, of all  
 Th' Infernal Empire, that so neer Heav'ns dore  
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met,  
 Mine with this glorious Work, & made one Realm  
 Hell and this World, one Realm, one Continent  
 Of easie thorough-fare. Therefore while I  
 Descend through Darkness, on your Rode with ease  
 To my associate Powers, them to acquaint  
 With these successes, and with them rejoyce,  
 You two this way, among those numerous Orbs  
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;  
 There dwell & Reign in bliss, thence on the Earth  
 Dominion exercise and in the Aire,  
 Chiefly on Man, sole Lord of all declar'd,  
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.  
 My Substitutes I send ye, and Create  
 Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might  
 Issuing from mee: on your joynt vigor now  
 My hold of this new Kingdom all depends,  
 Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.  
 If your joynt power prevaile, th' affaires of Hell  
 No detriment need feare, goe and be strong.  
 So saying he dismiss'd them, they with speed  
 Thir course through thickest Constellations held  
 Spreading thir bane; the blasted Starrs lookt wan,  
 And Planets, Planet-strook, real Eclips  
 Then sufferd. Th' other way Satan went down  
 The Causey to Hell Gate; on either side  
 Disparted Chaos over built exclaimd,

And with rebounding surge the barrs assaild,  
 That scorn'd his indignation: through the Gate,  
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,  
 And all about found desolate; for those  
 Appointed to sit there, had left thir charge,  
 Flown to the upper World; the rest were all  
 Farr to the inland retir'd, about the walls  
 Of Pandemonium, Citie and proud seate  
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion calld,  
 Of that bright Starr to Satan paragond.  
 There kept thir Watch the Legions, while the Grand  
 In Council sate, sollicitous what chance  
 Might intercept thir Emperour sent, so hee  
 Departing gave command, and they observ'd.  
 As when the Tartar from his Russian Foe  
 By Astracan over the Snowie Plaines  
 Retires, or Bactrian Sophi from the hornes  
 Of Turkish Crescent, leaves all waste beyond  
 The Realme of Aladule, in his retreat  
 To Tauris or Casbeen. So these the late  
 Heav'n-banisht Host, left desert utmost Hell  
 Many a dark League, reduc't in careful Watch  
 Round their Metropolis, and now expecting  
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search  
 Of Forrein Worlds: he through the midst unmarkt,  
 In shew plebeian Angel militant  
 Of lowest order, past; and from the dore  
 Of that Plutonian Hall, invisible  
 Ascended his high Throne, which under state  
 Of richest texture spred, at th' upper end  
 Was plac't in regal lustre. Down a while  
 He sate, and round about him saw unseen:  
 At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head  
 And shape Starr bright appeer'd, or brighter, clad  
 With what permissive glory since his fall  
 Was left him, or false glitter: All amaz'd  
 At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng  
 Bent thir aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,  
 Thir mighty Chief returnd: loud was th' acclaime:  
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting Peers,  
 Rais'd from thir dark Divan, and with like joy  
 Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand  
 Silence, and with these words attention won.  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,  
 For in possession such, not onely of right,  
 I call ye and declare ye now, returnd  
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth  
 Triumphant out of this infernal Pit  
 Abominable, accurst, the house of woe,  
 And Dungeon of our Tyrant: Now possess,  
 As Lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven  
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard

With peril great atchiev'd. Long were to tell  
 What I have don, what sufferd, with what paine  
 Voyag'd the unreal, vast, unbounded deep  
 Of horrible confusion, over which  
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd  
 To expedite your glorious march; but I  
 Toild out my uncouth passage, forc't to ride  
 Th' untractable Abyesse, plung'd in the womb  
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wilde,  
 That jealous of thir secrets fiercely oppos'd  
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproare  
 Protesting Fate supream; thence how I found  
 The new created World, which fame in Heav'n  
 Long had foretold, a Fabrick wonderful  
 Of absolute perfection, therein Man  
 Plac't in a Paradise, by our exile  
 Made happie: Him by fraud I have seduc'd  
 From his Creator, and the more to increase  
 Your wonder, with an Apple; he thereat  
 Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up  
 Both his beloved Man and all his World,  
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,  
 Without our hazard, labour or allarme,  
 To range in, and to dwell, and over Man  
 To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.  
 True is, mee also he hath judg'd, or rather  
 Mee not, but the brute Serpent in whose shape  
 Man I deceav'd: that which to mee belongs,  
 Is enmity, which he will put between  
 Mee and Mankind; I am to bruise his heel;  
 His Seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:  
 A World who would not purchase with a bruise,  
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account  
 Of my performance: What remaines, ye Gods,  
 But up and enter now into full bliss.  
 So having said, a while he stood, expecting  
 Thir universal shout and high applause  
 To fill his eare, when contrary he hears  
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues  
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
 Of public scorn; he wonderd, but not long  
 Had leasure, wondring at himself now more;  
 His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,  
 His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining  
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
 A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,  
 Reluctant, but in vaine, a greater power  
 Now rul'd him, punisht in the shape he sin'd,  
 According to his doom: he would have spoke,  
 But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue  
 To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd  
 Alike, to Serpents all as accessories

To his bold Riot: dreadful was the din  
 Of hissing through the Hall, thick swarming now  
 With complicated monsters, head and taile,  
 Scorpion and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,  
 Cerastes hornd, Hydrus, and Ellops drear,  
 And Dipsas (Not so thick swarm'd once the Soil  
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the Isle  
 Ophiusa) but still greatest hee the midst,  
 Now Dragon grown, larger then whom the Sun  
 Ingenderd in the Pythian Vale on slime,  
 Huge Python, and his Power no less he seem'd  
 Above the rest still to retain; they all  
 Him follow'd issuing forth to th' open Field,  
 Where all yet left of that revolted Rout  
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array,  
 Sublime with expectation when to see  
 In Triumph issuing forth thir glorious Chief;  
 They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd  
 Of ugly Serpents; horror on them fell,  
 And horrid sympathie; for what they saw,  
 They felt themselvs now changing; down thir arms,  
 Down fell both Spear and Shield, down they as fast,  
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form  
 Catcht by Contagion, like in punishment,  
 As in thir crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,  
 Turnd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
 Cast on themselves from thir own mouths. There stood  
 A Grove hard by, sprung up with this thir change,  
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
 Thir penance, laden with fair Fruit, like that  
 VWhich grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
 Us'd by the Tempter: on that prospect strange  
 Thir earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining  
 For one forbidden Tree a multitude  
 Now ris'n, to work them funder woe or shame;  
 Yet parcht with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,  
 But on they rould in heaps, and up the Trees  
 Climbing, sat thicker then the snakie locks  
 That curld Megæra: greedily they pluck'd  
 The Frutage fair to sight, like that which grew  
 Neer that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd;  
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
 Deceav'd; they fondly thinking to allay  
 Thir appetite with gust, instead of Fruit  
 Chewd bitter Ashes, which th' offended taste  
 VWith spattering noise rejected: oft they assayd,  
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugd as oft,  
 VWith hatefullest disrelish writh'd thir jaws  
 VWith foot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell  
 Into the same illusion, not as Man  
 Whom they triumph'd once lapst. Thus were they plagu'd

And worn with Famin, long and ceasless hiss,  
 Till thir lost shape, permitted, they resum'd,  
 Yearly enjoynd, some say, to undergo  
 This annual humbling certain number'd days,  
 To dash thir pride, and joy for Man seduc't.  
 However some tradition they dispers'd  
 Among the Heathen of thir purchase got,  
 And Fabl'd how the Serpent, whom they call'd  
 Ophion with Eurynome, the wide-  
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule  
 Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driv'n  
 And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.  
 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair  
 Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in power before,  
 Once actual, now in body, and to dwell  
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death  
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
 On his pale Horse: to whom Sin thus began.  
 Second of Satan sprung, all conquering Death,  
 What thinkst thou of our Empire now, though earnd  
 With travail difficult, not better farr  
 Then stil at Hels dark threshold to have sate watch,  
 Unnam'd, undreaded, and thy self half starv'd?  
 Whom thus the Sin-born Monster answerd soon.  
 To mee, who with eternal Famin pine,  
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven,  
 There best, where most with ravin I may meet;  
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems  
 To stuff this Maw, this vast unhide-bound Corps.  
 To whom th' incestuous Mother thus repli'd.  
 Thou therefore on these Herbs, and Fruits, & Flours  
 Feed first, on each Beast next, and Fish, and Fowle,  
 No homely morsels, and whatever thing  
 The Sithe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd,  
 Till I in Man residing through the Race,  
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,  
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.  
 This said, they both betook them several wayes,  
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make  
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature  
 Sooner or later; which th' Almightye seeing,  
 From his transcendent Seat the Saints among,  
 To those bright Orders utterd thus his voice.  
 See with what heat these Dogs of Hell advance  
 To waste and havoc yonder VWorld, which I  
 So fair and good created, and had still  
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man  
 Let in these wastful Furies, who impute  
 Folly to mee, so doth the Prince of Hell  
 And his Adherents, that with so much ease  
 I suffer them to enter and possess  
 A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem



To gratifie my scornful Enemies,  
 That laugh, as if transported with some fit  
 Of Passion, I to them had quitted all,  
 At random yeilded up to their misrule;  
 And know not that I call'd and drew them thither  
 My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth  
 Which mans polluting Sin with taint hath shed  
 On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst  
 With suckt and glutted offal, at one fling  
 Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son,  
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at last  
 Through Chaos hurld, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jawes.  
 Then Heav'n and Earth renewd shall be made pure  
 To sanctitie that shall receive no staine:  
 Till then the Curse pronounc't on both precedes.  
 Hee ended, and the heav'nly Audience loud  
 Sung Halleluia, as the sound of Seas,  
 Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,  
 Righteous are thy Decrees on all thy Works;  
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,  
 Destin'd restorer of Mankind, by whom  
 New Heav'n and Earth shall to the Ages rise,  
 Or down from Heav'n descend. Such was thir song,  
 While the Creator calling forth by name  
 His mightie Angels gave them several charge,  
 As sorted best with present things. The Sun  
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
 As might affect the Earth with cold and heat  
 Scarce tollerable, and from the North to call  
 Decrepit Winter, from the South to bring  
 Solstitial summers heat. To the blanc Moone  
 Her office they prescrib'd, to th' other five  
 Thir planetarie motions and aspects  
 In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,  
 Of noxious efficacie, and when to joyne  
 In Synod unbenigne, and taught the fixt  
 Thir influence malignant when to showre,  
 Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,  
 Should prove tempestuous: To the Winds they set  
 Thir corners, when with bluster to confound  
 Sea, Aire, and Shoar, the Thunder when to rowle  
 With terror through the dark Aereal Hall.  
 Some say he bid his Angels turne ascense  
 The Poles of Earth twice ten degrees and more  
 From the Suns Axle; they with labour push'd  
 Oblique the Centric Globe: Som say the Sun  
 Was bid turn Reines from th' Equinoctial Rode  
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the Seav'n  
 Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan Twins  
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amaine  
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales

As deep as Capricorne, to bring in change  
 Of Seasons to each Clime; else had the Spring  
 Perpetual smil'd on Earth with vernant Flours,  
 Equal in Days and Nights, except to those  
 Beyond the Polar Circles; to them Day  
 Had unbeNighted shon, while the low Sun  
 To recompence his distance, in thir sight  
 Had rounded still th' Horizon, and not known  
 Or East or West, which had forbid the Snow  
 From cold Estotiland, and South as farr  
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted Fruit  
 The Sun, as from Thyestean Banquet, turn'd  
 His course intended; else how had the World  
 Inhabited, though sinless, more then now,  
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heate?  
 These changes in the Heav'ns, though slow, produc'd  
 Like change on Sea and Land, sideral blast,  
 Vapour, and Mist, and Exhalation hot,  
 Corrupt and Pestilent: Now from the North  
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shoar  
 Bursting thir brazen Dungeon, armd with ice  
 And snow and haile and stormie gust and flaw,  
 Boreas and Cæcias and Argestes loud  
 And Thrascias rend the Woods and Seas upturn;  
 With adverse blast up-turns them from the South  
 Notus and Afer black with thundrous Clouds  
 From Serraliona; thwart of these as fierce  
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent VVindes  
 Eurus and Zephir with thir lateral noise,  
 Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began  
 Outrage from liveless things; but Discord first  
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,  
 Death introduc'd through fierce antipathie:  
 Beast now with Beast gan war, & Fowle with Fowle,  
 And Fish with Fish; to graze the Herb all leaving,  
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe  
 Of Man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim  
 Glar'd on him passing: these were from without  
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw  
 Alreadie in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,  
 To sorrow abandond, but worse felt within,  
 And in a troubl'd Sea of passion tost,  
 Thus to disburd'n sought with sad complaint.  
 O miserable of happie! is this the end  
 Of this new glorious World, and mee so late  
 The Glory of that Glory, who now becom  
 Accurst of blessed, hide me from the face  
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth  
 Of happiness: yet well, if here would end  
 The miserie, I deserv'd it, and would beare  
 My own deservings; but this will not serve;  
 All that I eate or drink, or shall beget,

Is propagated curse. O voice once heard  
 Delightfully, Encrease and multiply,  
 Now death to heare! for what can I encrease  
 Or multiplie, but curses on my head?  
 Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling  
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
 My Head, Ill fare our Ancestor impure,  
 For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks  
 Shall be the execration; so besides  
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from mee  
 Shall with a fierce reflux on mee redound,  
 On mee as on thir natural center light  
 Heavie, though in thir place. O fleeting joyes  
 Of Paradise, deare bought with lasting woes!  
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my Clay  
 To mould me Man, did I sollicite thee  
 From darkness to promote me, or here place  
 In this delicious Garden? as my Will  
 Concurd not to my being, it were but right  
 And equal to reduce me to my dust,  
 Desirous to resigne, and render back  
 All I receav'd, unable to performe  
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold  
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,  
 Sufficient penaltie, why hast thou added  
 The sense of endless woes? inexplicable  
 Thy Justice seems; yet to say truth, too late,  
 I thus contest; then should have been refusd  
 Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:  
 Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,  
 Then cavil the conditions? and though God  
 Made thee without thy leave, what if thy Son  
 Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,  
 Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:  
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee  
 That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,  
 But Natural necessity begot.  
 God made thee of choice his own, and of his own  
 To serve him, thy reward was of his grace,  
 Thy punishment then justly is at his Will.  
 Be it so, for I submit, his doom is fair,  
 That dust I am, and shall to dust returne:  
 O welcom hour whenever! why delays  
 His hand to execute what his Decree  
 Fixd on this day? why do I overlive,  
 Why am I mockt with death, and length'nd out  
 To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet  
 Mortalitie my sentence, and be Earth  
 Insensible, how glad would lay me down  
 As in my Mothers lap? there I should rest  
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more  
 Would Thunder in my ears, no fear of worse

To mee and to my ofspring would torment me  
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt  
 Pursues me still, least all I cannot die,  
 Least that pure breath of Life, the Spirit of Man  
 Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish  
 With this corporeal Clod; then in the Grave,  
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
 But I shall die a living Death? O thought  
 Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath  
 Of Life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life  
 And sin? the Bodie properly hath neither.  
 All of me then shall die: let this appease  
 The doubt, since humane reach no further knows.  
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
 Is his wrauth also? be it, man is not so,  
 But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise  
 Wrath without end on Man whom Death must end?  
 Can he make deathless Death? that were to make  
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself  
 Impossible is held, as Argument  
 Of weakness, not of Power. Will he, draw out,  
 For angers sake, finite to infinite  
 In punisht man, to satisfie his rigour  
 Satisfi'd never; that were to extend  
 His Sentence beyond dust and Natures Law,  
 By which all Causes else according still  
 To the reception of thir matter act,  
 Not to th' extent of thir own Spheare. But say  
 That Death be not one stroak, as I suppos'd,  
 Bereaving sense, but endless miserie  
 From this day onward, which I feel begun  
 Both in me, and without me, and so last  
 To perpetuitie; Ay me, that fear  
 Comes thundring back with dreadful revolution  
 On my defensless head; both Death and I  
 Am found Eternal, and incorporate both,  
 Nor I on my part single, in mee all  
 Posteritie stands curst: Fair Patrimonie  
 That I must leave ye, Sons; O were I able  
 To waste it all my self, and leave ye none!  
 So disinherited how would ye bless  
 Me now your Curse! Ah, why should all mankind  
 For one mans fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,  
 If guiltless? But from mee what can proceed,  
 But all corrupt, both Mind and Will deprav'd,  
 Not to do onely, but to will the same  
 With me? how can they acquitted stand  
 In sight of God? Him after all Disputes  
 Forc't I absolve: all my evasions vain  
 And reasonings, though through Mazes, lead me still  
 But to my own conviction: first and last  
 On mee, mee onely, as the sourse and spring

Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;  
 So might the wrauth, Fond wish! couldst thou support  
 That burden heavier then the Earth to bear,  
 Then all the world much heavier, though divided  
 With that bad Woman? Thus what thou desir'st,  
 And what thou fearst, alike destroyes all hope  
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable  
 Beyond all past example and future,  
 To Satan onely like both crime and doom.  
 O Conscience, into what Abyss of fears  
 And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which  
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!  
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud  
 Through the still Night, Night now now, as ere man fell,  
 Wholsom and cool, and mild, but with black Air  
 Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,  
 Which to his evil Conscience represented  
 All things with double terror: On the ground  
 Outstretcht he lay, on the cold ground, and oft  
 Curs'd his Creation, Death as oft accus'd  
 Of tardie execution, since denounc't  
 The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,  
 Said hee, with one thrice acceptable stroke  
 To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,  
 Justice Divine not hast'n to be just?  
 But Death comes not at call, Justice Divine  
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.  
 O Woods, O Fountains, Hillocks, Dales and Bowrs,  
 VVith other echo farr I taught your Shades  
 To answer, and resound farr other Song.  
 VVhom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,  
 Desolate where she sate, approaching nigh,  
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd:  
 But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.  
 Out of my sight, thou Serpent, that name best  
 Befits thee with him leagu'd, thy self as false  
 And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,  
 Like his, and colour Serpentine may shew  
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all Creatures from thee  
 Henceforth; least that too heav'nly form, pretended  
 To hellish falshood, snare them. But for thee  
 I had persisted happie, had not thy pride  
 And wandring vanitie, when lest was safe,  
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd  
 Not to be trusted, longing to be seen  
 Though by the Devil himself, him overweening  
 To over-reach, but with the Serpent meeting  
 Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee,  
 To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,  
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,  
 And understood not all was but a shew  
 Rather then solid vertu, all but a Rib

Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,  
 More to the part sinister from me drawn,  
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerarie  
 To my just number found. O why did God,  
 Creator wise, that peopl'd highest Heav'n  
 With Spirits Masculine, create at last  
 This noveltie on Earth, this fair defect  
 Of Nature, and not fill the World at once  
 With Men as Angels without Feminine,  
 Or find some other way to generate  
 Mankind? this mischief had not then befall'n,  
 And more that shall befall, innumerable  
 Disturbances on Earth through Femal snares,  
 And straight conjunction with this Sex: for either  
 He never shall find out fit Mate, but such  
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake,  
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gaine  
 By a farr worse, or if she love, withheld  
 By Parents, or his happiest choice too late  
 Shall meet, already linkt and Wedlock-bound  
 To a fell Adversarie, his hate or shame:  
 Which infinite calamitie shall cause  
 To humane life, and household peace confound.  
 He added not, and from her turn'd, but Eve  
 Not so repulst, with Tears that ceas'd not flowing,  
 And tresses all disorderd, at his feet  
 Fell humble, and embracing them, besought  
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.  
 Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n  
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart  
 I beare thee, and unweeting have offended,  
 Unhappilie deceav'd; thy suppliant  
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,  
 My onely strength and stay: forlorn of thee,  
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
 Between us two let there be peace, both joyning,  
 As joyn'd in injuries, one enmitie  
 Against a Foe by doom express assign'd us,  
 That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not  
 Thy hatred for this miserie befall'n,  
 On me already lost, mee then thy self  
 More miserable; both have sin'd, but thou  
 Against God onely, I against God and thee,  
 And to the place of judgement will return,  
 There with my cries importune Heaven, that all  
 The sentence from thy head remov'd may light  
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,  
 Mee mee onely just object of his ire.

She ended weeping, and her lowlie plight,  
 Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault  
 Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wraught  
 Commiseration; soon his heart relented  
 Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,  
 Now at his feet submissive in distress,  
 Creature so faire his reconcilment seeking,  
 His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aide;  
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,  
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.  
 Unwarie, and too desirous, as before,  
 So now of what thou knowst not, who desir'st  
 The punishment all on thy self; alas,  
 Beare thine own first, ill able to sustaine  
 His full wrauth whose thou feelst as yet lest part,  
 And my displeasure bearest so ill. If Prayers  
 Could alter high Decrees, I to that place  
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,  
 That on my head all might be visited,  
 Thy frailtie and infirmer Sex forgiv'n,  
 To me committed and by me expos'd.  
 But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame  
 Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive  
 In offices of Love, how we may light'n  
 Each others burden in our share of woe;  
 Since this days Death denounc't, if ought I see,  
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac't evill,  
 A long days dying to augment our paine,  
 And to our Seed (O hapless Seed!) deriv'd.  
 To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, repli'd.  
 Adam, by sad experiment I know  
 How little weight my words with thee can finde,  
 Found so erroneous, thence by just event  
 Found so unfortunate; nevertheless,  
 Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place  
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regaine  
 Thy Love, the sole contentment of my heart,  
 Living or dying from thee I will not hide  
 What thoughts in my unquiet brest are ris'n,  
 Tending to som relief of our extremes,  
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,  
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.  
 If care of our descent perplex us most,  
 Which must be born to certain woe, devourd  
 By Death at last, and miserable it is  
 To be to others cause of misery,  
 Our own begotten, and of our Loines to bring  
 Into this cursed World a woful Race,  
 That after wretched Life must be at last  
 Food for so foule a Monster, in thy power  
 It lies, yet ere Conception to prevent  
 The Race unblest, to being yet unbegot.

Childless thou art, Childless remaine:  
 So Death shall be deceav'd his glut, and with us two  
 Be forc'd to satisfie his Rav'nous Maw.  
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,  
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
 From Loves due Rites, Nuptial embraces sweet,  
 And with desire to languish without hope,  
 Before the present object languishing  
 With like desire, which would be miserie  
 And torment less then none of what we dread,  
 Then both our selves and Seed at once to free  
 From what we fear for both, let us make short,  
 Let us seek Death, or hee not found, supply  
 With our own hands his Office on our selves;  
 Why stand we longer shivering under feares,  
 That shew no end but Death, and have the power,  
 Of many wayes to die the shortest choosing,  
 Destruction with destruction to destroy.  
 She ended heer, or vehement despaire  
 Broke off the rest; so much of Death her thoughts  
 Had entertaind, as di'd her Cheeks with pale.  
 But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd,  
 To better hopes his more attentive minde  
 Labouring had rais'd, and thus to Eve repli'd.  
 Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems  
 To argue in thee somthing more sublime  
 And excellent then what thy minde contemnes;  
 But self-destruction therefore saught, refutes  
 That excellence thought in thee, and implies,  
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret  
 For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.  
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end  
 Of miserie, so thinking to evade  
 The penaltie pronounc't, doubt not but God  
 Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire then so  
 To be forestall'd; much more I fear least Death  
 So snatcht will not exempt us from the paine  
 We are by doom to pay; rather such acts  
 Of contumacie will provoke the highest  
 To make death in us live: Then let us seek  
 Som safer resolution, which methinks  
 I have in view, calling to minde with heed  
 Part of our Sentence, that thy Seed shall bruise  
 The Serpents head; piteous amends, unless  
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand Foe  
 Satan, who in the Serpent hath contriv'd  
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head  
 Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost  
 By death brought on our selves, or childless days  
 Resolv'd, as thou proposet; so our Foe  
 Shall scape his punishment ordain'd, and wee  
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads.



No more be mention'd then of violence  
 Against our selves, and wilful barrenness,  
 That cuts us off from hope, and savours onely  
 Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,  
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke  
 Laid on our Necks. Remember with what mild  
 And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd  
 Without wrauth or reviling; wee expected  
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought  
 Was meant by Death that day, when lo, to thee  
 Pains onely in Child-bearing were foretold,  
 And bringing forth, soon recompenc't with joy,  
 Fruit of thy Womb: On mee the Curse aslope  
 Glanc'd on the ground, with labour I must earne  
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had bin worse;  
 My labour will sustain me; and least Cold  
 Or Heat should injure us, his timely care  
 Hath unbesought provided, and his hands  
 Cloath'd us unworthie, pitying while he judg'd;  
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear  
 Be open, and his heart to pitie incline,  
 And teach us further by what means to shun  
 Th' inclement Seasons, Rain, Ice, Hail and Snow,  
 Which now the Skie with various Face begins  
 To shew us in this Mountain, while the Winds  
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks  
 Of these fair spreading Trees; which bids us seek  
 Som better shroud, som better warmth to cherish  
 Our Limbs benumm'd, ere this diurnal Starr  
 Leave cold the Night, how we his gather'd beams  
 Reflected, may with matter sere foment,  
 Or by collision of two bodies grinde  
 The Air attrite to Fire, as late the Clouds  
 Justling or pusht with Winds rude in thir shock  
 Tine the slant Lightning, whose thwart flame driv'n down  
 Kindles the gummie bark of Firr or Pine,  
 And sends a comfortable heat from farr,  
 Which might supplie the Sun: such Fire to use,  
 And what may else be remedie or cure  
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,  
 Hee will instruct us praying, and of Grace  
 Beseeching him, so as we need not fear  
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd  
 By him with many comforts, till we end  
 In dust, our final rest and native home.  
 What better can we do, then to the place  
 Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall  
 Before him reverent, and there confess  
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears  
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the Air  
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

Undoubtedly he will relent and turn  
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,  
When angry most he seem'd and most severe,  
What else but favor, grace, and mercie shon?  
So spake our Father penitent, nor Eve  
Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place  
Repairing where he judg'd them prostrate fell  
Before him reverent, and both confess'd  
Humbly thir faults, and pardon beg'd, with tears  
Watering the ground, and with thir sighs the Air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book V

Now Morn her rosie steps in th' Eastern Clime  
Advancing, sow'd the Earth with Orient Pearle,  
When Adam wak't, so custom'd, for his sleep  
Was Aerie light, from pure digestion bred,  
And temperat vapors bland, which th' only sound  
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill Matin Song  
Of Birds on every bough; so much the more  
His wonder was to find unwak'nd Eve  
With Tresses discompos'd, and glowing Cheek,  
As through unquiet rest: he on his side  
Leaning half-rais'd, with looks of cordial Love  
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld  
Beautie, which whether waking or asleep,  
Shot forth peculiar Graces; then with voice  
Milde, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
Her hand soft touching, whisperd thus. Awake  
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,  
Heav'ns last best gift, my ever new delight,  
Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field  
Calls us, we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
Our tended Plants, how blows the Citron Grove,  
What drops the Myrrhe, & what the balmie Reed,  
How Nature paints her colours, how the Bee  
Sits on the Bloom extracting liquid sweet.  
Such whispering wak'd her, but with startl'd eye  
On Adam, whom imbracing, thus she spake.  
O Sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,  
My Glorie, my Perfection, glad I see  
Thy face, and Morn return'd, for I this Night,  
Such night till this I never pass'd, have dream'd,  
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee,  
Works of day pass't, or morrows next designe,  
But of offence and trouble, which my mind  
Knew never till this irksom night; methought  
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk  
With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,  
Why sleepest thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
To the night-warbling Bird, that now awake  
Tunes sweetest his love-labor'd song; now reignes  
Full Orb'd the Moon, and with more pleasing light  
Shadowie sets off the face of things; in vain,  
If none regard; Heav'n wakes with all his eyes,  
Whom to behold but thee, Natures desire,  
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.  
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;  
To find thee I directed then my walk;  
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways  
That brought me on a sudden to the Tree  
Of interdicted Knowledge: fair it seem'd,

Much fairer to my Fancie then by day:  
 And as I wondring lookt, beside it stood  
 One shap'd & wing'd like one of those from Heav'n  
 By us oft seen; his dewie locks distill'd  
 Ambrosia; on that Tree he also gaz'd;  
 And O fair Plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,  
 Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,  
 Nor God, nor Man; is Knowledge so despis'd?  
 Or envie, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
 Longer thy offerd good, why else set here?  
 This said he paus'd not, but with ventrous Arme  
 He pluckt, he tasted; mee damp horror chil'd  
 At such bold words voucht with a deed so bold:  
 But he thus overjoy'd, O Fruit Divine,  
 Sweet of thy self, but much more sweet thus cropt,  
 Forbidd'n here, it seems, as onely fit  
 For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:  
 And why not Gods of Men, since good, the more  
 Communicated, more abundant growes,  
 The Author not impair'd, but honourd more?  
 Here, happie Creature, fair Angelic Eve,  
 Partake thou also; happie though thou art,  
 Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:  
 Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods  
 Thy self a Goddess, not to Earth confin'd,  
 But somtimes in the Air, as wee, somtimes  
 Ascend to Heav'n, by merit thine, and see  
 What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.  
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,  
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part  
 Which he had pluckt; the pleasant savourie smell  
 So quick'nd appetite, that I, methought,  
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the Clouds  
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld  
 The Earth outstretcht immense, a prospect wide  
 And various: wondring at my flight and change  
 To this high exaltation; suddenly  
 My Guide was gon, and I, me thought, sunk down,  
 And fell asleep; but O how glad I wak'd  
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her Night  
 Related, and thus Adam answerd sad.  
 Best Image of my self and dearer half,  
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
 Affects me equally; nor can I like  
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear;  
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,  
 Created pure. But know that in the Soule  
 Are many lesser Faculties that serve  
 Reason as chief; among these Fancie next  
 Her office holds; of all external things,  
 Which the five watchful Senses represent,

She forms Imaginations, Aerie shapes,  
 Which Reason joyning or disjoyning, frames  
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call  
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
 Into her private Cell when Nature rests.  
 Oft in her absence mimic Fansie wakes  
 To imitate her; but misjoyning shapes,  
 Wilde work produces oft, and most in dreams,  
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.  
 Som such resemblances methinks I find  
 Of our last Eevnings talk, in this thy dream,  
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
 Evil into the mind of God or Man  
 May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave  
 No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope  
 That what in sleep thou didst abhorr to dream,  
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.  
 Be not disheart'nd then, nor cloud those looks  
 That wont to be more chearful and serene  
 Then when fair Morning first smiles on the World,  
 And let us to our fresh employments rise  
 Among the Groves, the Fountains, and the Flours  
 That open now thir choicest bosom'd smells  
 Reservd from night, and kept for thee in store.  
 So cheard he his fair Spouse, and she was cheard,  
 But silently a gentle tear let fall  
 From either eye, and wip'd them with her haire;  
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,  
 Each in thir chrystal sluce, hee ere they fell  
 Kiss'd as the gracious signs of sweet remorse  
 And pious awe, that feard to have offended.  
 So all was cleard, and to the Field they haste.  
 But first from under shadie arborous roof,  
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight  
 Of day-spring, and the Sun, who scarce up risen  
 With wheels yet hov'ring o're the Ocean brim,  
 Shot paralel to the earth his dewie ray,  
 Discovering in wide Lantskip all the East  
 Of Paradise and Edens happie Plains,  
 Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began  
 Thir Orisons, each Morning duly paid  
 In various style, for neither various style  
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
 Thir Maker, in fit strains pronounc't or sung  
 Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence  
 Flowd from thir lips, in Prose or numerous Verse,  
 More tuneable then needed Lute or Harp  
 To add more sweetness, and they thus began.  
 These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,  
 Almighty, thine this universal Frame,  
 Thus wondrous fair; thy self how wondrous then!  
 Unspeakable, who sitst above these Heavens

To us invisible or dimly seen  
 In these thy lowest works, yet these declare  
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and Power Divine:  
 Speak yee who best can tell, ye Sons of light,  
 Angels, for yee behold him, and with songs  
 And choral symphonies, Day without Night,  
 Circle his Throne rejoycing, yee in Heav'n,  
 On Earth joyn all yee Creatures to extoll  
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.  
 Fairest of Starrs, last in the train of Night,  
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crownst the smiling Morn  
 With thy bright Circket, praise him in thy Spheare  
 While day arises, that sweet hour of Prime.  
 Thou Sun, of this great World both Eye and Soule,  
 Acknowledge him thy Greater, sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,  
 And when high Noon hast gaind, & when thou fallst.  
 Moon, that now meetst the orient Sun, now fli'st  
 With the fixt Starrs, fixt in thir Orb that flies,  
 And yee five other wandring Fires that move  
 In mystic Dance not without Song, resound  
 His praise, who out of Darkness call'd up Light.  
 Aire, and ye Elements the eldest birth  
 Of Natures Womb, that in quaternion run  
 Perpetual Circle, multiform; and mix  
 And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change  
 Varie to our great Maker still new praise.  
 Ye Mists and Exhalations that now rise  
 From Hill or steaming Lake, duskie or grey,  
 Till the Sun paint your fleecie skirts with Gold,  
 In honour to the Worlds great Author rise,  
 Whether to deck with Clouds the uncolour'd skie,  
 Or wet the thirstie Earth with falling showers,  
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
 His praise ye Winds, that from four Quarters blow,  
 Breath soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,  
 With every Plant, in sign of Worship wave.  
 Fountains and yee, that warble, as ye flow,  
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
 Joyn voices all ye living Souls, ye Birds,  
 That singing up to Heaven Gate ascend,  
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise;  
 Yee that in Waters glide, and yee that walk  
 The Earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;  
 Witness if I be silent, Morn or Eeven,  
 To Hill, or Valley, Fountain, or fresh shade  
 Made vocal by my Song, and taught his praise.  
 Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still  
 To give us onely good; and if the night  
 Have gathered aught of evil or conceald,  
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to thir thoughts  
 Firm peace recoverd soon and wonted calm.  
 On to thir mornings rural work they haste  
 Among sweet dewes and flours; where any row  
 Of Fruit-trees overwoodie reachd too farr  
 Thir pamperd boughes, and needed hands to check  
 Fruitless imbraces: or they led the Vine  
 To wed her Elm; she spous'd about him twines  
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings  
 Her dowr th' adopted Clusters, to adorn  
 His barren leaves. Them thus imploid beheld  
 With pittie Heav'ns high King, and to him call'd  
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deign'd  
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd  
 His marriage with the seaventimes-wedded Maid.  
 Raphael, said hee, thou hear'st what stir on Earth  
 Satan from Hell scap't through the darksom Gulf  
 Hath raisd in Paradise, and how disturbd  
 This night the human pair, how he designes  
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.  
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend  
 Converse with Adam, in what Bowre or shade  
 Thou find'st him from the heat of Noon retir'd,  
 To respit his day-labour with repast,  
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,  
 As may advise him of his happie state,  
 Happiness in his power left free to will,  
 Left to his own free Will, his Will though free,  
 Yet mutable; whence warne him to beware  
 He swerve not too secure: tell him withall  
 His danger, and from whom, what enemie  
 Late falln himself from Heav'n, is plotting now  
 The fall of others from like state of bliss;  
 By violence, no, for that shall be withstood,  
 But by deceit and lies; this let him know,  
 Least wilfully transgressing he pretend  
 Surprisal, unadmonisht, unforewarnd.  
 So spake th' Eternal Father, and fulfilld  
 All Justice: nor delaid the winged Saint  
 After his charge receivd, but from among  
 Thousand Celestial Ardors, where he stood  
 Vaild with his gorgeous wings, up springing light  
 Flew through the midst of Heav'n; th' angelic Quires  
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
 Through all th' Empyreal road; till at the Gate  
 Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-opend wide  
 On golden Hinges turning, as by work  
 Divine the sov'ran Architect had fram'd.  
 From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
 Starr interpos'd, however small he sees,  
 Not unconform to other shining Globes,  
 Earth and the Gard'n of God, with Cedars crownd

Above all Hills. As when by night the Glass  
 Of Galileo less assur'd, observes  
 Imagin'd Lands and Regions in the Moon:  
 Or Pilot from amidst the Cyclades  
 Delos or Samos first appearing kenns  
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
 He speeds, and through the vast Ethereal Skie  
 Sailes between worlds & worlds, with steddie wing  
 Now on the polar windes, then with quick Fann  
 Winnows the buxom Air; till within soare  
 Of Towing Eagles, to all the Fowles he seems  
 A Phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole Bird  
 When to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's  
 Bright Temple, to Ægyptian Theb's he flies.  
 At once on th' Eastern cliff of Paradise  
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns  
 A Seraph wingd; six wings he wore, to shade  
 His lineaments Divine; the pair that clad  
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o're his brest  
 With regal Ornament; the middle pair  
 Girt like a Starrie Zone his waste, and round  
 Skirted his loines and thighes with downie Gold  
 And colours dipt in Heav'n; the third his feet  
 Shaddowd from either heele with featherd maile  
 Skie-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,  
 And shook his Plumes, that Heav'nly fragrance filld  
 The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands  
 Of Angels under watch; and to his state,  
 And to his message high in honour rise;  
 For on som message high they guesd him bound.  
 Thir glittering Tents he passd, and now is come  
 Into the blissful field, through Groves of Myrrhe,  
 And flouring Odours, Cassia, Nard, and Balme;  
 A Wilderness of sweets; for Nature here  
 Wantond as in her prime, and plaid at will  
 Her Virgin Fancies, pouring forth more sweet,  
 Wilde above rule or art; enormous bliss.  
 Him through the spicie Forrest onward com  
 Adam discern'd, as in the dore he sat  
 Of his coole Bowre, while now the mounted Sun  
 Shot down direct his fervid Raies, to warme  
 Earths inmost womb, more warmth then Adam need;  
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd  
 For dinner savourie fruits, of taste to please  
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
 Of nectarous draughts between, from milkie stream,  
 Berrie or Grape: to whom thus Adam call'd.  
 Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold  
 Eastward among those Trees, what glorious shape  
 Comes this way moving; seems another Morn  
 Ris'n on mid-noon; som great behest from Heav'n  
 To us perhaps he brings, and will voutsafe



This day to be our Guest. But goe with speed,  
 And what thy stores contain, bring forth and poure  
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive  
 Our Heav'nly stranger; well we may afford  
 Our givers thir own gifts, and large bestow  
 From large bestowd, where Nature multiplies  
 Her fertil growth, and by disburd'ning grows  
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.  
 To whom thus Eve. Adam, earths hallowd mould,  
 Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,  
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;  
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains  
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:  
 But I will haste and from each bough and break,  
 Each Plant & juciest Gourd will pluck such choice  
 To entertain our Angel guest, as hee  
 Beholding shall confess that here on Earth  
 God hath dispenst his bounties as in Heav'n.  
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste  
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent  
 What choice to chuse for delicacie best,  
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix  
 Tastes, not well joynd, inelegant, but bring  
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change,  
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk  
 Whatever Earth all-bearing Mother yeilds  
 In India East or West, or middle shoare  
 In Pontus or the Punic Coast, or where  
 Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kindes, in coate,  
 Rough, or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell  
 She gathers, Tribute large, and on the board  
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the Grape  
 She crushes, inoffensive moust, and meathes  
 From many a berrie, and from sweet kernels prest  
 She tempers dulcet creams, nor these to hold  
 Wants her fit vessels pure, then strews the ground  
 With Rose and Odours from the shrub unfum'd.  
 Mean while our Primitive great Sire, to meet  
 His god-like Guest, walks forth, without more train  
 Accompani'd then with his own compleat  
 Perfections, in himself was all his state,  
 More solemn then the tedious pomp that waits  
 On Princes, when thir rich Retinue long  
 Of Horses led, and Grooms besmeard with Gold  
 Dazles the croud, and sets them all agape.  
 Neerer his presence Adam though not awd,  
 Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,  
 As to a superior Nature, bowing low,  
 Thus said. Native of Heav'n, for other place  
 None can then Heav'n such glorious shape contain;  
 Since by descending from the Thrones above,  
 Those happie places thou hast deign'd a while

To want, and honour these, voutsafe with us  
 Two onely, who yet by sov'ran gift possess  
 This spacious ground, in yonder shadie Bowre  
 To rest, and what the Garden choicest bears  
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
 Be over, and the Sun more coole decline.  
 Whom thus the Angelic Vertue answerd milde.  
 Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such  
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,  
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heav'n  
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy Bowre  
 Oreshades; for these mid-hours, till Eevning rise  
 I have at will. So to the Silvan Lodge  
 They came, that like Pomona's Arbour smil'd  
 With flourets deck't and fragrant smells; but Eve  
 Undeckt, save with her self more lovely fair  
 Then Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign'd  
 Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,  
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heav'n; no vaile  
 Shee needed, Vertue-proof, no thought infirme  
 Alterd her cheek. On whom the Angel Haile  
 Bestowd, the holy salutation us'd  
 Long after to blest Marie, second Eve.  
 Haile Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb  
 Shall fill the World more numerous with thy Sons  
 Then with these various fruits the Trees of God  
 Have heap'd this Table. Rais'd of grassie terf  
 Thir Table was, and mossie seats had round,  
 And on her ample Square from side to side  
 All Autumn pil'd, though and Autumn here  
 Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;  
 No fear lest Dinner coole; when thus began  
 Our Authour. Heav'nly stranger, please to taste  
 These bounties which our Nourisher, from whom  
 All perfet good unmeasur'd out, descends,  
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd  
 The Earth to yeild; unsavourie food perhaps  
 To spiritual Natures; only this I know,  
 That one Celestial Father gives to all.  
 To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives  
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part  
 Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found  
 No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure  
 Intelligential substances require  
 As doth your Rational; and both contain  
 Within them every lower facultie  
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,  
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
 For know, whatever was created, needs  
 To be sustaind and fed; of Elements  
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,

Earth and the Sea feed Air, the Air those Fires  
 Ethereal, and as lowest first the Moon;  
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd  
 Vapours not yet into her substance turnd.  
 Nor doth the Moon no nourishment exhale  
 From her moist Continent to higher Orbes.  
 The Sun that light imparts to all, receives  
 From all his alimantal recompence  
 In humid exhalations, and at Even  
 Sups with the Ocean: though in Heav'n the Trees  
 Of life ambrosial frutage bear, and vines  
 Yeild Nectar, though from off the boughs each Morn  
 We brush mellifluous Dewes, and find the ground  
 Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here  
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,  
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste  
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,  
 And to thir viands fell, nor seemingly  
 The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss  
 Of Theologians, but with keen dispatch  
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heate  
 To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires  
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire  
 Of sooty coal the Empiric Alchemist  
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn  
 Metals of drossiest Ore to perfet Gold  
 As from the Mine. Mean while at Table Eve  
 Ministerd naked, and thir flowing cups  
 With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence  
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
 Then had the Sons of God excuse to have bin  
 Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts  
 Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy  
 Was understood, the injur'd Lovers Hell.  
 Thus when with meats & drinks they had suffic'd,  
 Not burd'nd Nature, sudden mind arose  
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass  
 Given him by this great Conference to know  
 Of things above his World, and of thir being  
 Who dwell in Heav'n, whose excellence he saw  
 Transcend his own so farr, whose radiant forms  
 Divine effulgence, whose high Power so far  
 Exceeded human, and his wary speech  
 Thus to th' Emphyreal Minister he fram'd.  
 Inhabitant with God, now know I well  
 Thy favour, in this honour done to man,  
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast voutsaf't  
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,  
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
 At Heav'ns high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?  
 To whom the winged Hierarch repli'd.

O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom  
 All things proceed, and up to him return,  
 If not deprav'd from good, created all  
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
 Indu'd with various forms, various degrees  
 Of substance, and in things that live, of life;  
 But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,  
 As neerer to him plac't or neerer tending  
 Each in thir several active Sphears assignd,  
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
 Proportiond to each kind. So from the root  
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
 More aerie, last the bright consummate floure  
 Spirits odorous breathes: flours and thir fruit  
 Mans nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd  
 To vital Spirits aspire, to animal,  
 To intellectual, give both life and sense,  
 Fansie and understanding, whence the soule  
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
 Discursive, or Intuitive; discourse  
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,  
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.  
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good  
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,  
 To proper substance; time may come when men  
 With Angels may participate, and find  
 No inconvenient Diet, nor too light Fare:  
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
 Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit  
 Improv'd by tract of time, and wingd ascend  
 Ethereal, as wee, or may at choice  
 Here or in Heav'nly Paradises dwell;  
 If ye be found obedient, and retain  
 Unalterably firm his love entire  
 Whose progenie you are. Mean while enjoy  
 Your fill what happiness this happie state  
 Can comprehend, incapable of more.  
 To whom the Patriarch of mankind repli'd.  
 O favourable spirit, propitious guest,  
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
 Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set  
 From center to circumference, whereon  
 In contemplation of created things  
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,  
 What meant that caution joind, If ye be found  
 Obedient? can wee want obedience then  
 To him, or possibly his love desert  
 Who formd us from the dust, and plac'd us here  
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss  
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?  
 To whom the Angel. Son of Heav'n and Earth,  
 Attend: That thou art happie, owe to God;

That thou continu'st such, owe to thy self,  
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.  
 This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.  
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;  
 And good he made thee, but to persevere  
 He left it in thy power, ordain'd thy will  
 By nature free, not over-rul'd by Fate  
 Inextricable, or strict necessity;  
 Our voluntarie service he requires,  
 Not our necessitated, such with him  
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find, for how  
 Can hearts, not free, be tri'd whether they serve  
 Willing or no, who will but what they must  
 By Destinie, and can no other choose?  
 My self and all th' Angelic Host that stand  
 In sight of God enthron'd, our happie state  
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;  
 On other surety none; freely we serve.  
 Because wee freely love, as in our will  
 To love or not; in this we stand or fall:  
 And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,  
 And so from Heav'n to deepest Hell; O fall  
 From what high state of bliss into what woe!  
 To whom our great Progenitor. Thy words  
 Attentive, and with more delighted eare  
 Divine instructor, I have heard, then when  
 Cherubic Songs by night from neighbouring Hills  
 Aereal Music send: nor knew I not  
 To be both will and deed created free;  
 Yet that we never shall forget to love  
 Our maker, and obey him whose command  
 Single, is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
 Assur'd me and still assure: though what thou tellst  
 Hath past in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,  
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,  
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,  
 Worthy of Sacred silence to be heard;  
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the Sun  
 Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins  
 His other half in the great Zone of Heav'n.  
 Thus Adam made request, and Raphael  
 After short pause assenting, thus began.  
 High matter thou injoinst me, O prime of men,  
 Sad task and hard, for how shall I relate  
 To human sense th' invisible exploits  
 Of warring Spirits; how without remorse  
 The ruin of so many glorious once  
 And perfect while they stood; how last unfould  
 The secrets of another world, perhaps  
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good  
 This is dispenc't, and what surmounts the reach  
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,

By lik'ning spiritual to corporal forms,  
 As may express them best, though what if Earth  
 Be but the shaddow of Heav'n, and things therein  
 Each to other like, more then on earth is thought?  
 As yet this world was not, and Chaos wilde  
 Reignd where these Heav'ns now rowl, where Earth now rests  
 Upon her Center pois'd, when on a day  
 (For Time, though in Eternitie, appli'd  
 To motion, measures all things durable  
 By present, past, and future) on such day  
 As Heav'ns great Year brings forth, th' Empyreall Host  
 Of Angels by Imperial summons call'd,  
 Innumerable before th' Almightyes Throne  
 Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appeerd  
 Under thir Hierarchs in orders bright  
 Ten thousand thousand Ensignes high advanc'd,  
 Standards, and Gonfalons twixt Van and Reare  
 Streame in the Aire, and for distinction serve  
 Of Hierarchies, of Orders, and Degrees;  
 Or in thir glittering Tissues bear imblaz'd  
 Holy Memorials, acts of Zeale and Love  
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in Orbes  
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,  
 Orb within Orb, the Father infinite,  
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,  
 Amidst as from a flaming Mount, whose [ t]op  
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.  
 Hear all ye Angels, Progenie of Light,  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,  
 Hear my Decree, which unrevok't shall stand.  
 This day I have begot whom I declare  
 My onely Son, and on this holy Hill  
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
 At my right hand; your Head I him appoint;  
 And by my Self have sworn to him shall bow  
 All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:  
 Under his great Vice-regent Reign abide  
 United as one individual Soule  
 For ever happie: him who disobeyes  
 Mee disobeyes, breaks union, and that day  
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls  
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulft, his place  
 Ordaind without redemption, without end.  
 So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words  
 All seemd well pleas'd, all seem'd, but were not all.  
 That day, as other solem dayes, they spent  
 In song and dance about the sacred Hill,  
 Mystical dance, which yonder starrie Spheare  
 Of Planets and of fixt in all her Wheelles  
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,  
 Eccentric, intervov'd, yet regular  
 Then most, when most irregular they seem:

And in thir motions harmonie Divine  
 So smooths her charming tones, that Gods own ear  
 Listens delighted. Eevning approachd  
 (For we have also our Eevning and our Morn,  
 We ours for change delectable, not need)  
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn  
 Desirous, all in Circles as they stood,  
 Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd  
 With Angels Food, and rubied Nectar flows:  
 In Pearl, in Diamond, and massie Gold,  
 Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of Heav'n.  
 They eat, they drink, and with refection sweet  
 Are fill'd, before th' all bounteous King, who showrd  
 With copious hand, rejoycing in thir joy.  
 Now when ambrosial Night with Clouds exhal'd  
 From that high mount of God, whence light & shade  
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had changd  
 To grateful Twilight (for Night comes not there  
 In darker veile) and roseat Dews dispos'd  
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest,  
 Wide over all the Plain, and wider farr  
 Then all this globous Earth in Plain outspred,  
 (Such are the Courts of God) Th' Angelic throng  
 Disperst in Bands and Files thir Camp extend  
 By living Streams among the Trees of Life,  
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reard,  
 Celestial Tabernacles, where they slept  
 Fannd with coole Winds, save those who in thir course  
 Melodious Hymns about the sovran Throne  
 Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd  
 Satan, so call him now, his former name  
 Is heard no more Heav'n; he of the first,  
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power,  
 In favour and præeminence, yet fraught  
 With envie against the Son of God, that day  
 Honourd by his great Father, and proclaimd  
 Messiah King anointed, could not beare  
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaird.  
 Deep malice thence conceiving & disdain,  
 Soon as midnight brought on the duskie houre  
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd  
 With all his Legions to dislodge, and leave  
 Unworshipt, unobey'd the Throne supream  
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate  
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.  
 Sleepst thou Companion dear, what sleep can close  
 Thy eye-lids? and remembrest what Decree  
 Of yesterday, so late hath past the lips  
 Of Heav'ns Almightye. Thou to me thy thoughts  
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;  
 Both waking we were one; how then can now  
 Thy sleep dissent? new Laws thou seest impos'd;

New Laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise  
 In us who serve, new Counsels, to debate  
 What doubtful may ensue, more in this place  
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou  
 Of all those Myriads which we lead the chief;  
 Tell them that by command, ere yet dim Night  
 Her shadowie Cloud withdraws, I am to haste,  
 And all who under me thir Banners wave,  
 Homeward with flying march where we possess  
 The Quarters of the North, there to prepare  
 Fit entertainment to receive our King  
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,  
 Who speedily through all the Hierarchies  
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give Laws.  
 So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd  
 Bad influence into th' unwarie brest  
 Of his Associate; hee together calls,  
 Or several one by one, the Regent Powers,  
 Under him Regent, tells, as he was taught,  
 That the most High commanding, now ere Night,  
 Now ere dim Night had disincumberd Heav'n,  
 The great Hierarchal Standard was to move;  
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between  
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound  
 Or taint integritie; but all obey'd  
 The wonted signal, and superior voice  
 Of thir great Potentate; for great indeed  
 His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n;  
 His count'nance, as the Morning Starr that guides  
 The starrie flock, allur'd them, and with lyes  
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Host:  
 Mean while th' Eternal eye, whose sight discernes  
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy Mount  
 And from within the golden Lamps that burne  
 Nightly before him, saw without thir light  
 Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spred  
 Among the sons of Morn, what multitudes  
 Were banded to oppose his high Decree;  
 And smiling to his onely Son thus said.  
 Son, thou in whom my glory I behold  
 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,  
 Neerly it now concernes us to be sure  
 Of our Omnipotence, and with what Arms  
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim  
 Of Deitie or Empire, such a foe  
 Is rising, who intends to erect his Throne  
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious North;  
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to trie  
 In battel, what our Power is, or our right.  
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw  
 With speed what force is left, and all imploy  
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose



This our high place, our Sanctuarie, our Hill.  
 To whom the Son with calm aspect and cleer  
 Light'ning Divine, ineffable, serene,  
 Made answer. Mightie Father, thou thy foes  
 Justly hast in derision, and secure  
 Laugh'st at thir vain designes and tumults vain,  
 Matter to mee of Glory, whom thir hate  
 Illustrates, when they see all Regal Power  
 Giv'n me to quell thir pride, and in event  
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue  
 Thy Rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.  
 So spake the Son, but Satan with his Powers  
 Farr was advanc't on winged speed, an Host  
 Innumerable as the Starrs of Night,  
 Or Starrs of Morning[,] Dew-drops, which the Sun  
 Impearls on every leaf and every flouer.  
 Regions they pass'd, the mightie Regencies  
 Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones  
 In thir triple Degrees, Regions to which  
 All thy Dominion, Adam, is no more  
 Then what this Garden is to all the Earth,  
 And all the Sea, from one entire globose  
 Stretcht into Longitude; which having pass'd  
 At length into the limits of the North  
 They came, and Satan to his Royal seat  
 High on a Hill, far blazing, as a Mount  
 Rais'd on a Mount, with Pyramids and Towrs  
 From Diamond Quarries hew'n, & Rocks of Gold,  
 The Palace of great Lucifer, (so call  
 That Structure in the Dialect of men  
 Interpreted) which not long after, hee  
 Affecting all equality with God,  
 In imitation of that Mount whereon  
 Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n,  
 The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;  
 For thither he assembl'd all his Train,  
 Pretending so commanded to consult  
 About the great reception of thir King,  
 Thither to come, and with calumnious Art  
 Of counterfeted truth thus held thir ears.  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedomes, Vertues, Powers,  
 If these magnific Titles yet remain  
 Not meerly titular, since by Decree  
 Another now hath to himself ingross't  
 All Power, and us eclipst under the name  
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste  
 Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,  
 This onely to consult how we may best  
 With what may be devis'd of honours new  
 Receive him coming to receive from us  
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,  
 Too much to one, but double how endur'd,

To one and to his image now proclaim'd?  
 But what if better counsels might erect  
 Our minds and teach us to cast off this Yoke?  
 Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend  
 The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust  
 To know ye right, or if ye know your selves  
 Natives and Sons of Heav'n possest before  
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,  
 Equally free; for Orders and Degrees  
 Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.  
 Who can in reason then or right assume  
 Monarchie over such as live by right  
 His equals, if in power and splendor less,  
 In freedome equal? or can introduce  
 Law and Edict on us, who without law  
 Erre not, much less for this to be our Lord,  
 And look for adoration to th' abuse  
 Of those Imperial Titles which assert  
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve?  
 Thus farr his bold discourse without controule  
 Had audience, when among the Seraphim  
 Abdiel, then whom none with more zeale ador'd  
 The Deitie, and divine commands obei'd,  
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeale severe  
 The current of his fury thus oppos'd.  
 O argument blasphemous, false and proud!  
 Words which no eare ever to hear in Heav'n  
 Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate  
 In place thy self so high above thy Peeres.  
 Canst thou with impious obloquie condemne  
 The just Decree of God, pronounc't and sworn,  
 That to his only Son by right endu'd  
 With Regal Scepter, every Soule in Heav'n  
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due  
 Confess him rightful King? unjust thou saist  
 Flatly unjust, to binde with Laws the free,  
 And equal over equals to let Reigne,  
 One over all with unsucceeded power.  
 Shalt thou give Law to God, shalt thou dispute  
 With him the points of libertie, who made  
 Thee what thou art, & formd the Pow'rs of Heav'n  
 Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd thir being?  
 Yet by experience taught we know how good,  
 And of our good, and of our dignitie  
 How provident he is, how farr from thought  
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt  
 Our happie state under one Head more neer  
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,  
 That equal over equals Monarch Reigne:  
 Thy self though great & glorious dost thou count,  
 Or all Angelic Nature joind in one,  
 Equal to him begotten Son, by whom

As by his Word the mighty Father made  
 All things, ev'n thee, and all the Spirits of Heav'n  
 By him created in thir bright degrees,  
 Crownd them with Glory, & to thir Glory nam'd  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers  
 Essential Powers, nor by his Reign obscur'd,  
 But more illustrious made, since he the Head  
 One of our number thus reduc't becomes,  
 His Laws our Laws, all honour to him done  
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,  
 And tempt not these; but hast'n to appease  
 Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,  
 While Pardon may be found in time besought.  
 So spake the fervent Angel, but his zeale  
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd,  
 Or singular and rash, whereat rejoic'd  
 Th' Apostat, and more haughty thus repli'd.  
 That we were form'd then saist thou? & the work  
 Of secundarie hands, by task transferd  
 From Father to his Son? strange point and new!  
 Doctrin which we would know whence learnt: who saw  
 When this creation was? rememberst thou  
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
 We know no time when we were not as now;  
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd  
 By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course  
 Had circl'd his full Orbe, the birth mature  
 Of this our native Heav'n, Ethereal Sons.  
 Our puissance is our own, our own right hand  
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try  
 Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold  
 Whether by supplication we intend  
 Address, and to begirt th' Almighty Throne  
 Beseeking or besieging. This report,  
 These tidings carrie to th' anointed King;  
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.  
 He said, and as the sound of waters deep  
 Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause  
 Through the infinite Host, nor less for that  
 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone  
 Encompass'd round with foes, thus answerd bold.  
 O alienate from God, O spirit accurst,  
 Forsak'n of all good; I see thy fall  
 Determind, and thy hapless crew involv'd  
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread  
 Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth  
 No more be troubl'd how to quit the yoke  
 Of Gods Messiah; those indulgent Laws  
 Will not be now voutsaf't, other Decrees  
 Against thee are gon forth without recall;  
 That Golden Scepter which thou didst reject  
 Is now an Iron Rod to bruise and breake

Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,  
Yet not for thy advise or threats I fly  
These wicked Tents devoted, least the wrauth  
Impendent, raging into sudden flame  
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel  
His Thunder on thy head, devouring fire.  
Then who created thee lamenting learne,  
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.  
So spake the Seraph Abdiel faithful found,  
Among the faithless, faithful only hee;  
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,  
Unshak'n, uneduc'd, unterrifi'd  
His Loyaltie he kept, his Love, his Zeale;  
Nor number, nor example with him wrought  
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind  
Though single. From amidst them forth he passd,  
Long way through hostile scorn, which he susteind  
Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;  
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd  
On those proud Towrs to swift destruction doom'd.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book VI

All night the dreadless Angel unpursu'd  
Through Heav'n's wide Champain held his way, till Morn,  
Wak't by the circling Hours, with rosie hand  
Unbarr'd the gates of Light. There is a Cave  
Within the Mount of God, fast by his Throne,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heav'n  
Grateful vicissitude, like Day and Night;  
Light issues forth, and at the other dore  
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour  
To veile the Heav'n, though darkness there might well  
Seem twilight here; and now went forth the Morn  
Such as in highest Heav'n, arrayd in Gold  
Empyrean, from before her vanisht Night,  
Shot through with orient Beams: when all the Plain  
Coverd with thick embatteld Squadrons bright,  
Chariots and flaming Armes, and fierie Steeds  
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:  
Warr he perceav'd, warr in procinct, and found  
Already known what he for news had thought  
To have reported: gladly then he mixt  
Among those friendly Powers who him receav'd  
With joy and acclamations loud, that one  
That of so many Myriads fall'n, yet one  
Returnd not lost: On to the sacred hill  
They led him high applauded, and present  
Before the seat supream; from whence a voice  
From midst a Golden Cloud thus milde was heard.  
Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought  
The better fight, who single hast maintaind  
Against revolted multitudes the Cause  
Of Truth, in word mightier then they in Armes;  
And for the testimonie of Truth hast born  
Universal reproach, far worse to beare  
Then violence: for this was all thy care  
To stand approv'd in sight of God, though Worlds  
Judg'd thee perverse: the easier conquest now  
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
Back on thy foes more glorious to return  
Then scornd thou didst depart, and to subdue  
By force, who reason for thir Law refuse,  
Right reason for thir Law, and for thir King  
Messiah, who by right of merit Reigns.  
Goe Michael of Celestial Armies Prince,  
And thou in Military prowess next  
Gabriel, lead forth to Battel these my Sons  
Invincible, lead forth my armed Saints  
By Thousands and by Millions rang'd for fight;  
Equal in number to that Godless crew  
Rebellious, them with Fire and hostile Arms  
Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heav'n  
Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss,

Into thir place of punishment, the Gulf  
 Of Tartarus , which ready opens wide  
 His fiery Chaos to receive thir fall.  
 So spake the Sovran voice, and Clouds began  
 To darken all the Hill, and smoak to rowl  
 In duskie wreathes, reluctant flames, the signe  
 Of wrauth awak't: nor with less dread the loud  
 Ethereal Trumpet from on high gan blow:  
 At which command the Powers Militant,  
 That stood for Heav'n, in mighty Quadrate joyn'd  
 Of Union irresistible, mov'd on  
 In silence thir bright Legions, to the sound  
 Of instrumental Harmonie that breath'd  
 Heroic Ardor to advent'rous deeds  
 Under thir God-like Leaders, in the Cause  
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious Hill,  
 Nor streit'ning Vale, nor Wood, nor Stream divides  
 Thir perfet ranks; for high above the ground  
 Thir march was, and the passive Air upbore  
 Thir nimble tread; as when the total kind  
 Of Birds in orderly array on wing  
 Came summond over Eden to receive  
 Thir names of thee; so over many a tract  
 Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a Province wide  
 Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last  
 Farr in th' Horizon to the North appeer'd  
 From skirt to skirt a fierie Region, stretcht  
 In battailous aspect, and neerer view  
 Bristl'd with upright beams innumerable  
 Of rigid Spears, and Helmets throng'd, and Shields  
 Various, with boastful Argument portraid,  
 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on  
 With furious expedition; for they weend  
 That self same day by fight, or by surprize  
 To win the Mount of God, and on his Throne  
 To set the envier of his State, the proud  
 Aspirer, but thir thoughts prov'd fond and vain  
 In the mid way: though strange to us it seemd  
 At first, that Angel should with Angel warr,  
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet  
 So oft in Festivals of joy and love  
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire  
 Hymning th' Eternal Father: but the shout  
 Of Battel now began, and rushing sound  
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.  
 High in the midst exalted as a God  
 Th' Apostat in his Sun-bright Chariot sate  
 Idol of Majestie Divine, enclos'd  
 With Flaming Cherubim, and golden Shields;  
 Then lighted from his gorgeous Throne, for now  
 'Twixt Host and Host but narrow space was left,

A dreadful interval, and Front to Front  
 Presented stood in terrible array  
 Of hideous length: before the cloudie Van,  
 On the rough edge of battel ere it joyn'd,  
 Satan with vast and haughtie strides advanc't,  
 Came trowing, armd in Adamant and Gold;  
 Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood  
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,  
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.  
 O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest  
 Should yet remain, where faith and realtie  
 Remain not; wherefore should not strength & might  
 There fail where Vertue fails, or weakest prove  
 Where boldest; though to sight unconquerable?  
 His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aide,  
 I mean to try, whose Reason I have tri'd  
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,  
 That he who in debate of Truth hath won,  
 Should win in Arms, in both disputes alike  
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foule,  
 When Reason hath to deal with force, yet so  
 Most reason is that Reason overcome.  
 So pondering, and from his armed Peers  
 Forth stepping opposite, half way he met  
 His daring foe, at this prevention more  
 Incens't, and thus securely him defi'd.  
 Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reacht  
 The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,  
 The Throne of God unguarded, and his side  
 Abandon'd at the terror of thy Power  
 Or potent tongue; fool, not to think how vain  
 Against th' Omnipotent to rise in Arms;  
 Who out of smallest things could without end  
 Have rais'd incessant Armies to defeat  
 Thy folly; or with solitarie hand  
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow  
 Unaided could have finisht thee, and whelmd  
 Thy Legions under darkness; but thou seest  
 All are not of thy Train; there be who Faith  
 Prefer, and Pietie to God, though then  
 To thee not visible, when I alone  
 Seemd in thy World erroneous to dissent  
 From all: my Sect thou seest, now learn too late  
 How few somtimes may know, when thousands err.  
 Whom the grand foe with scornful eye askance  
 Thus answerd. Ill for thee, but in wisht houre  
 Of my revenge, first sought for thou returnst  
 From flight, seditious Angel, to receive  
 Thy merited reward, the first assay  
 Of this right hand provok't, since first that tongue  
 Inspir'd with contradiction durst oppose  
 A third part of the Gods, in Synod met

Thir Deities to assert, who while they feel  
 Vigour Divine within them, can allow  
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou comst  
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win  
 From me som Plume, that thy success may show  
 Destruction to the rest: this pause between  
 (Unanswerd least thou boast) to let thee know;  
 At first I thought that Libertie and Heav'n  
 To heav'nly Soules had bin all one; but now  
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
 Ministring Spirits, traind up in Feast and Song;  
 Such hast thou arm'd, the Minstrelsie of Heav'n,  
 Servilitie with freedom to contend,  
 As both thir deeds compar'd this day shall prove.  
 To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern repli'd.  
 Apostat, still thou errst, nor end wilt find  
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:  
 Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name  
 Of Servitude to serve whom God ordains,  
 Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,  
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excells  
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebelld  
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,  
 Thy self not free, but to thy self enthralld;  
 Yet leudly dar'st our ministring upbraid.  
 Reign thou in Hell thy Kingdom, let mee serve  
 In Heav'n God ever blessed, and his Divine  
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd,  
 Yet Chains in Hell, not Realms expect: mean while  
 From mee returnd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,  
 This greeting on thy impious Crest receive.  
 So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,  
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell  
 On the proud Crest of Satan, that no sight,  
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his Shield  
 Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge  
 He back recoild; the tenth on bended knee  
 His massie Spear upstaid; as if on Earth  
 Winds under ground or waters forcing way  
 Sidelong, had push't a Mountain from his seat  
 Half sunk with all his Pines. Amazement seisd  
 The Rebel Thrones, but greater rage to see  
 Thus foil'd thir mightiest, ours joy filld, and shout,  
 Presage of Victorie and fierce desire  
 Of Battel: whereat Michael bid sound  
 Th' Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heav'n  
 It sounded, and the faithful Armies rung  
 Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze  
 The adverse Legions, nor less hideous joyn'd  
 The horrid shock: now storming furie rose,  
 And clamour such as heard in Heav'n till now



Was never, Arms on Armour clashing bray'd  
 Horrible discord, and the madding Wheelles  
 Of brazen Chariots rag'd; dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery Darts in flaming volies flew,  
 And flying vaulted either Host with fire.  
 Sounder fierie Cope together rush'd  
 Both Battels maine, with ruinous assault  
 And inextinguishable rage; all Heav'n  
 Resounded, and had Earth bin then, all Earth  
 Had to her Center shook. What wonder? when  
 Millions of fierce encountring Angels fought  
 On either side, the least of whom could weild  
 These Elements, and arm him with the force  
 Of all thir Regions: how much more of Power  
 Armie against Armie numberless to raise  
 Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,  
 Though not destroy, thir happie Native seat;  
 Had not th' Eternal King Omnipotent  
 From his strong hold of Heav'n high over-rul'd  
 And limited thir might; though numberd such  
 As each divided Legion might have seemd  
 A numerous Host, in strength each armed hand  
 A Legion; led in fight, yet Leader seemd  
 Each Warriour single as in Chief, expert  
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway  
 Of Battel, open when, and when to close  
 The ridges of grim Warr; no thought of flight,  
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed  
 That argu'd fear; each on himself reli'd,  
 As onely in his arm the moment lay  
 Of victorie; deeds of eternal fame  
 Were don, but infinite: for wide was spread  
 That Warr and various; sometimes on firm ground  
 A standing fight, then soaring on main wing  
 Tormented all the Air; all Air seemd then  
 Conflicting Fire: long time in eeven scale  
 The Battel hung; till Satan, who that day  
 Prodigious power had shewn, and met in Armes  
 No equal, raunging through the dire attack  
 Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length  
 Saw where the Sword of Michael smote, and fell'd  
 Squadrons at once, with huge two-handed sway  
 Brandisht aloft the horrid edge came down  
 Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand  
 He hasted, and oppos'd the rockie Orb  
 Of tenfold Adamant, his ample Shield  
 A vast circumference: At his approach  
 The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toile  
 Surceas'd, and glad as hoping here to end  
 Intestine War in Heav'n, the arch foe subdu'd  
 Or Captive drag'd in Chains, with hostile frown

And visage all enflam'd first thus began.  
 Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,  
 Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest  
 These Acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
 Though heaviest by just measure on thy self  
 And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd  
 Heav'ns blessed peace, and into Nature brought  
 Miserie, uncreated till the crime  
 Of thy Rebellion? how hast thou instill'd  
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright  
 And faithful, now prov'd false. But think not here  
 To trouble Holy Rest; Heav'n casts thee out  
 From all her Confines. Heav'n the seat of bliss  
 Brooks not the works of violence and Warr.  
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along  
 Thy ofspring, to the place of evil, Hell,  
 Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broiles,  
 Ere this avenging Sword begin thy doome,  
 Or som more sudden vengeance wing'd from God  
 Precipitate thee with augmented paine.  
 So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus  
 The Adversarie. Nor think thou with wind  
 Of airie threats to aw whom yet with deeds  
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turnd the least of these  
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise  
 Unvanquisht, easier to transact with mee  
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, & with threats  
 To chase me hence? erre not that so shall end  
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but wee style  
 The strife of Glorie: which we mean to win,  
 Or turn this Heav'n it self into the Hell  
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,  
 If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,  
 And join him nam'd Almightye to thy aid,  
 I flie not, but have sought thee farr and nigh.  
 They ended parle, and both addrest for fight  
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
 Of Angels, can relate, or to what things  
 Liken on Earth conspicuous, that may lift  
 Human imagination to such highth  
 Of Godlike Power: for likest Gods they seemd,  
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms  
 Fit to decide the Empire of great Heav'n.  
 Now wav'd thir fierie Swords, and in the Aire  
 Made horrid Circles; two broad Suns thir Shields  
 Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood  
 In horror; from each hand with speed retir'd  
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' Angelic throng,  
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
 Of such commotion, such as to set forth  
 Great things by small, If Natures concord broke,  
 Among the Constellations warr were sprung,

Two Planets rushing from aspect maligne  
 Of fiercest opposition in mid Skie,  
 Should combat, and thir jarring Sphears confound.  
 Together both with next to Almightye Arme,  
 Uplifted imminent one stroke they aim'd  
 That might determine, and not need repeate,  
 As not of power, at once; nor odds appeerd  
 In might or swift prevention; but the sword  
 Of Michael from the Armorie of God  
 Was giv'n him temperd so, that neither keen  
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met  
 The sword of Satan with steep force to smite  
 Descending, and in half cut sheere, nor staid,  
 But with swift wheele reverse, deep entring shar'd  
 All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,  
 And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore  
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
 Pass'd through him, but th' Ethereal substance clos'd  
 Not long divisible, and from the gash  
 A stream of Nectarous humor issuing flow'd  
 Sanguin, such as Celestial Spirits may bleed,  
 And all his Armour staind ere while so bright.  
 Forthwith on all sides to his aide was run  
 By Angels many and strong, who interpos'd  
 Defence, while others bore him on thir Shields  
 Back to his Chariot; where it stood retir'd  
 From off the files of warr; there they him laid  
 Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame  
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride  
 Humbl'd by such rebuke, so farr beneath  
 His confidence to equal God in power.  
 Yet soon he heal'd; for Spirits that live throughout  
 Vital in every part, not as frail man  
 In Entrailles, Heart or Head, Liver or Reines,  
 Cannot but by annihilating die;  
 Nor in thir liquid texture mortal wound  
 Receive, no more then can the fluid Aire:  
 All Heart they live, all Head, all Eye, all Eare,  
 All Intellect, all Sense, and as they please,  
 They Limb themselves, and colour, shape or size  
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.  
 Mean while in other parts like deeds deservd  
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,  
 And with fierce Ensignes pierc'd the deep array  
 Of Moloc furious King, who him defi'd,  
 And at his Chariot wheelles to drag him bound  
 Threatn'd, nor from the Holie One of Heav'n  
 Refrein'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon  
 Down clov'n to the waste, with shatterd Armes  
 And uncouth paine fled bellowing. On each wing  
 Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,  
 Though huge, and in a Rock of Diamond Armd,

Vanquish'd Adramelec, and Asmadai,  
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less then Gods  
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in thir flight,  
 Mangl'd with gastly wounds through Plate and Maile.  
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
 The Atheist crew, but with redoubl'd blow  
 Ariel and Arioc, and the violence  
 Of Ramiel scorcht and blasted overthrew.  
 I might relate of thousands, and thir names  
 Eternize here on Earth; but those elect  
 Angels contented with thir fame in Heav'n  
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort  
 In might though wondrous and in Acts of Warr,  
 Nor of Renown less eager, yet by doome  
 Cancel'd from Heav'n and sacred memorie,  
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.  
 For strength from Truth divided and from Just,  
 Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise  
 And ignominie, yet to glorie aspires  
 Vain glorious, and through infamie seeks fame:  
 Therefore Eternal silence be thir doome.  
 And now thir mightiest quell'd, the battel swerv'd,  
 With many an inrode gor'd; deformed rout  
 Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground  
 With shiverd armour strow'n, and on a heap  
 Chariot and Charioter lay overturn'd  
 And fierie foaming Steeds; what stood, recoyld  
 Orewearied, through the faint Satanic Host  
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,  
 Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of paine  
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought  
 By sinne of disobedience, till that hour  
 Not liable to fear or flight or paine.  
 Far otherwise th' inviolable Saints  
 In Cubic Phalanx firm advanc't entire,  
 Invulnerable, impenitrably arm'd:  
 Such high advantages thir innocence  
 Gave them above thir foes, not to have sinnd,  
 Not to have disobei'd; in fight they stood  
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd  
 By wound, though from thir place by violence mov'd.  
 Now Night her course began, and over Heav'n  
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,  
 And silence on the odious dinn of Warr:  
 Under her Cloudie covert both retir'd,  
 Victor and Vanquisht: on the foughten field  
 Michael and his Angels prevalent  
 Encamping, plac'd in Guard thir Watches round,  
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part  
 Satan with his rebellious disappeerd,  
 Far in the dark dislodg'd, and void of rest,  
 His Potentates to Councel call'd by night;

And in the midst thus undismal'd began.  
 O now in danger tri'd, now known in Armes  
 Not to be overpowerd, Companions deare,  
 Found worthy not of Libertie alone,  
 Too mean pretense, but what we more affect,  
 Honour, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne,  
 Who have sustaind one day in doubtful fight,  
 (And if one day, why not Eternal dayes?)  
 What Heavens Lord had powerfullest to send  
 Against us from about his Throne, and judg'd  
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,  
 Of future we may deem him, though till now  
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd,  
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and paine,  
 Till now not known, but known as soon contemnd,  
 Since now we find this our Emyreal forme  
 Incapable of mortal injurie  
 Imperishable, and though peirc'd with wound,  
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.  
 Of evil then so small as easie think  
 The remedie; perhaps more valid Armes,  
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes,  
 Or equal what between us made the odds,  
 In Nature none: if other hidden cause  
 Left them Superiour, while we can preserve  
 Unhurt our mindes, and understanding sound,  
 Due search and consultation will disclose.  
 He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood  
 Nisroc, of Principalities the prime;  
 As one he stood escap't from cruel fight,  
 Sore toild, his riv'n Armes to havoc hewn,  
 And cloudie in aspect thus answering spake.  
 Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
 Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard  
 For Gods, and too unequal work we find  
 Against unequal armes to fight in paine,  
 Against unpaid, impassive; from which evil  
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avales  
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain  
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands  
 Of Mightiest. Sense of pleasure we may well  
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,  
 But live content, which is the calmest life:  
 But pain is perfet miserie, the worst  
 Of evils, and excessive, overturnes  
 All patience. He who therefore can invent  
 With what more forcible we may offend  
 Our yet unwounded Enemies, or arme  
 Our selves with like defence, to mee deserves  
 No less then for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan repli'd.  
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright  
 Belevst so main to our success, I bring;  
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface  
 Of this Ethereous mould whereon we stand,  
 This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorn'd  
 With Plant, Fruit, Flour Ambrosial, Gemms & Gold,  
 Whose Eye so superficially surveyes  
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow  
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,  
 Of spiritous and fierie spume, till toucht  
 With Heav'ns ray, and temperd they shoot forth  
 So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light.  
 These in thir dark Nativitie the Deep  
 Shall yeild us, pregnant with infernal flame,  
 Which into hallow Engins long and round  
 Thick-rammd, at th' other bore with touch of fire  
 Dilated and infuriate shall send forth  
 From far with thundring noise among our foes  
 Such implements of mischief as shall dash  
 To pieces, and orewhelm whatever stands  
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd  
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.  
 Nor long shall be our labour, yet ere dawne,  
 Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;  
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joind  
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.  
 He ended, and his words thir drooping chere  
 Enlightn'd, and thir languisht hope reviv'd.  
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how hee  
 To be th' inventer miss'd, so easie it seem'd  
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought  
 Impossible: yet haply of thy Race  
 In future dayes, if Malice should abound,  
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd  
 With dev'lish machination might devise  
 Like instrument to plague the Sons of men  
 For sin, on warr and mutual slaughter bent.  
 Forthwith from Council to the work they flew,  
 None arguing stood, innumerable hands  
 Were ready, in a moment up they turnd  
 Wide the Celestial soile, and saw beneath  
 Th' originals of Nature in thir crude  
 Conception; Sulphurous and Nitrous Foame  
 They found, they mingl'd, and with suttile Art,  
 Concocted and adusted they reduc'd  
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyd:  
 Part hidd'n veins diggd up (nor hath this Earth  
 Entrails unlike) of Mineral and Stone,  
 Whereof to found thir Engins and thir Balls  
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed  
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.

So all ere day spring, under conscious Night  
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,  
 With silent circumspection unespied.  
 Now when fair Morn Orient in Heav'n appeerd  
 Up rose the Victor Angels, and to Arms  
 The matin Trumpet Sung: in Arms they stood  
 Of Golden Panoplie, refulgent Host,  
 Soon banded; others from the dawning Hills  
 Lookd round, and Scouts each Coast light-armed scoure,  
 Each quarter, to descie the distant foe,  
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,  
 In motion or in alt: him soon they met  
 Under spread Ensignes moving nigh, in slow  
 But firm Battalion; back with speediest Sail  
 Zephiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,  
 Came flying, and in mid Aire aloud thus cri'd.  
 Arme, Warriours, Arme for fight, the foe at hand,  
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit  
 This day, fear not his flight; so thick a Cloud  
 He comes, and settl'd in his face I see  
 Sad resolution and secure: let each  
 His Adamantine coat gird well, and each  
 Fit well his Helme, gripe fast his orb'd Shield,  
 Born even or high, for this day will pour down,  
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling showr,  
 But rattling storm of Arrows barb'd with fire.  
 So warn'd he them aware themselves, and soon  
 In order, quit of all impediment;  
 Instant without disturb they took Allarm,  
 And onward move Embattel'd; when behold  
 Not distant far with heavie pace the Foe  
 Approaching gross and huge; in hollow Cube  
 Training his devilish Enginrie, impal'd  
 On every side with shadding Squadrons Deep,  
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
 A while, but suddenly at head appeerd  
 Satan: And thus was heard Commanding loud.  
 Vanguard, to Right and Left the Front unfould;  
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek  
 Peace and composure, and with open brest  
 Stand readie to receive them, if they like  
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse;  
 But that I doubt, however witness Heaven,  
 Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge  
 Freely our part: yee who appointed stand  
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch  
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear.  
 So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce  
 Had ended; when to Right and Left the Front  
 Divided, and to either Flank retir'd.  
 Which to our eyes discoverd new and strange,  
 A triple-mounted row of Pillars laid

On Wheels (for like to Pillars most they seem'd  
 Or hollow'd bodies made of Oak or Firr  
 With branches lopt, in Wood or Mountain fell'd)  
 Brass, Iron, Stonie mould, had not thir mouthes  
 With hideous orifice gap't on us wide,  
 Portending hollow truce; at each behind  
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a Reed  
 Stood waving tipt with fire; while we suspense,  
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,  
 Not long, for sudden all at once thir Reeds  
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent appli'd  
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,  
 But soon obscur'd with smoak, all Heav'n appeerd,  
 From those deep-throated Engins belcht, whose roar  
 Emboweld with outragious noise the Air,  
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foule  
 Thir devillish glut, chaind Thunderbolts and Hail  
 Of Iron Globes, which on the Victor Host  
 Level'd, with such impetuous furie smote,  
 That whom they hit, none on thir feet might stand,  
 Though standing else as Rocks, but down they fell  
 By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel rowl'd;  
 The sooner for thir Arms, unarm'd they might  
 Have easily as Spirits evaded swift  
 By quick contraction or remove; but now  
 Foule dissipation follow'd and forc't rout;  
 Nor serv'd it to relax thir serried files.  
 What should they do? if on they rusht, repulse  
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow  
 Doubl'd, would render them yet more despis'd,  
 And to thir foes a laughter; for in view  
 Stood rankt of Seraphim another row  
 In posture to displode thir second tire  
 Of Thunder: back defeated to return  
 They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld thir plight,  
 And to his Mates thus in derision call'd.  
 O Friends, why come not on these Victors proud?  
 Ere while they fierce were coming, and when wee,  
 To entertain them fair with open Front  
 And Brest, (what could we more?) propounded terms  
 Of composition, strait they chang'd thir minds,  
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
 As they would dance, yet for a dance they seemd  
 Somwhat extravagant and wilde, perhaps  
 For joy of offerd peace: but I suppose  
 If our proposals once again were heard  
 We should compel them to a quick result.  
 To whom thus Belial in like gamesom mood.  
 Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
 Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,  
 Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,  
 And stumbl'd many, who receives them right,



Had need from head to foot well understand;  
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,  
 They shew us when our foes walk not upright.  
 So they among themselves in pleasant veine  
 Stood scoffing, highthn'd in thir thoughts beyond  
 All doubt of Victorie, eternal might  
 To match with thir inventions they presum'd  
 So easie, and of his Thunder made a scorn,  
 And all his Host derided, while they stood  
 A while in trouble; but they stood not long,  
 Rage prompted them at length, & found them arms  
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.  
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power  
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd)  
 Thir Arms away they threw, and to the Hills  
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heav'n  
 Of pleasure situate in Hill and Dale)  
 Light as the Lightning glimps they ran, they flew,  
 From thir foundations loosning to and fro  
 They pluckt the seated Hills with all thir load,  
 Rocks, Waters, Woods, and by the shaggie tops  
 Up lifting bore them in thir hands: Amaze,  
 Be sure, and terrour seis'd the rebel Host,  
 When coming towards them so dread they saw  
 The bottom of the Mountains upward turn'd,  
 Till on those cursed Engins triple-row  
 They saw them whelmd, and all thir confidence  
 Under the weight of Mountains buried deep,  
 Themselves invaded next, and on thir heads  
 Main Promontories flung, which in the Air  
 Came shadowing, and opprest whole Legions arm'd,  
 Thir armor help'd thir harm, crush't in and brus'd  
 Into thir substance pent, which wrought them pain  
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,  
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind  
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,  
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.  
 The rest in imitation to like Armes  
 Betook them, and the neighbouring Hills uptore;  
 So Hills amid the Air encounterd Hills  
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,  
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;  
 Infernal noise; Warr seem'd a civil Game  
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heapt  
 Upon confusion rose: and now all Heav'n  
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspred,  
 Had not th' Almighty Father where he sits  
 Shrin'd in his Sanctuarie of Heav'n secure,  
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
 This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:  
 That his great purpose he might so fulfill,  
 To honour his Anointed Son aveng'd

Upon his enemies, and to declare  
 All power on him transferr'd: whence to his Son  
 Th' Assessor of his Throne he thus began.  
 Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov'd,  
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld  
 Visibly, what by Deitie I am,  
 And in whose hand what by Decree I doe,  
 Second Omnipotence, two dayes are past,  
 Two dayes, as we compute the dayes of Heav'n,  
 Since Michael and his Powers went forth to tame  
 These disobedient; sore hath been thir fight,  
 As likeliest was, when two such Foes met arm'd;  
 For to themselves I left them, and thou knowst,  
 Equal in their Creation they were form'd,  
 Save what sin hath impaird, which yet hath wrought  
 Insensibly, for I suspend thir doom;  
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last  
 Endless, and no solution will be found:  
 Warr wearied hath perform'd what Warr can do,  
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reines,  
 With Mountains as with Weapons arm'd, which makes  
 Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the maine.  
 Two dayes are therefore past, the third is thine;  
 For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus farr  
 Have sufferd, that the Glorie may be thine  
 Of ending this great Warr, since none but Thou  
 Can end it. Into thee such Vertue and Grace  
 Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know  
 In Heav'n and Hell thy Power above compare,  
 And this perverse Commotion governd thus,  
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir  
 Of all things, to be Heir and to be King  
 By Sacred Unction, thy deserved right.  
 Go then thou Mightiest in thy Fathers might,  
 Ascend my Chariot, guide the rapid Wheelles  
 That shake Heav'ns basis, bring forth all my Warr,  
 My Bow and Thunder, my Almighty Arms  
 Gird on, and Sword upon thy puissant Thigh;  
 Pursue these sons of Darkness, drive them out  
 From all Heav'ns bounds into the utter Deep:  
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise  
 God and Messiah his anointed King.  
 He said, and on his Son with Rayes direct  
 Shon full, he all his Father full exprest  
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd,  
 And thus the filial Godhead answering spake.  
 O Father, O Supream of heav'nly Thrones,  
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou alwayes seekst  
 To glorifie thy Son, I alwayes thee,  
 As is most just; this I my Glorie account,  
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
 That thou in me well pleas'd, declarst thy will

Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.  
 Scepter and Power, thy giving, I assume,  
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end  
 Thou shalt be All in All, and I in thee  
 For ever, and in mee all whom thou lov'st:  
 But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on  
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,  
 Armd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,  
 To thir prepar'd ill Mansion driven down  
 To chains of Darkness, and th' undying Worm,  
 That from thy just obedience could revolt,  
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.  
 Then shall thy Saints unmixt, and from th' impure  
 Farr separate, circling thy holy Mount  
 Unfained Halleluiahs to thee sing,  
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.  
 So said, he o're his Scepter bowing, rose  
 From the right hand of Glorie where he sate,  
 And the third sacred Morn began to shine  
 Dawning through Heav'n: forth rush'd with whirlwind sound  
 The Chariot of Paternal Deitie,  
 Flashing thick flames, Wheele within Wheele undrawn,  
 It self instinct with Spirit, but convoyd  
 By four Cherubic shapes, four Faces each  
 Had wondrous, as with Starrs thir bodies all  
 And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the Wheels  
 Of Beril, and careering Fires between;  
 Over thir heads a chrystal Firmament,  
 Whereon a Saphir Throne, inlaid with pure  
 Amber, and colours of the showrie Arch.  
 Hee in Celestial Panoplie all armd  
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,  
 Ascended, at his right hand Victorie  
 Sate Eagle-wing'd, beside him hung his Bow  
 And Quiver with three-bolted Thunder stor'd,  
 And from about him fierce Effusion rowld  
 Of smoak and bickering flame, and sparkles dire;  
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,  
 He onward came, farr off his coming shon,  
 And twentie thousand (I thir number heard)  
 Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen:  
 Hee on the wings of Cherub rode sublime  
 On the Crystallin Skie, in Saphir Thron'd.  
 Illustrious farr and wide, but by his own  
 First seen, them unexpected joy surpriz'd,  
 When the great Ensign of Messiah blaz'd  
 Aloft by Angels born, his Sign in Heav'n:  
 Under whose Conduct Michael soon reduc'd  
 His Armie, circumfus'd on either Wing,  
 Under thir Head imbodyed all in one.  
 Before him Power Divine his way prepar'd;

At his command the uprooted Hills retir'd  
 Each to his place, they heard his voice and went  
 Obsequious, Heav'n his wonted face renewd,  
 And with fresh Flourets Hill and Valley smil'd.  
 This saw his hapless Foes, but stood obdur'd,  
 And to rebellious fight rallied thir Powers  
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.  
 In heav'nly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?  
 But to convince the proud what Signs availe,  
 Or Wonders move th' obdurate to relent?  
 They hard'nd more by what might most reclame,  
 Grieving to see his Glorie, at the sight  
 Took envie, and aspiring to his highth,  
 Stood reimbattell'd fierce, by force or fraud  
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevaile  
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall  
 In universal ruin last, and now  
 To final Battel drew, disdainning flight,  
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
 To all his Host on either hand thus spake.  
 Stand still in bright array ye Saints, here stand  
 Ye Angels arm'd, this day from Battel rest;  
 Faithful hath been your Warfare, and of God  
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous Cause,  
 And as ye have receivd, so have ye don  
 Invincibly; but of this cursed crew  
 The punishment to other hand belongs,  
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints;  
 Number to this dayes work is not ordain'd  
 Nor multitude, stand onely and behold  
 Gods indignation on these Godless pourd  
 By mee; not you but mee they have despis'd,  
 Yet envied; against mee is all thir rage,  
 Because the Father, t' whom in Heav'n supream  
 Kingdom and Power and Glorie appertains,  
 Hath honourd me according to his will.  
 Therefore to mee thir doom he hath assig'n'd;  
 That they may have thir wish, to trie with mee  
 In Battel which the stronger proves, they all,  
 Or I alone against them, since by strength  
 They measure all, of other excellence  
 Not emulous, nor care who them excells;  
 Nor other strife with them do I voutsafe.  
 So spake the Son, and into terrour chang'd  
 His count'nance too severe to be beheld  
 And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies.  
 At once the Four spred out thir Starrie wings  
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the Orbes  
 Of his fierce Chariot rowld, as with the sound  
 Of torrent Floods, or of a numerous Host.  
 Hee on his impious Foes right onward drove,  
 Gloomie as Night; under his burning Wheelles

The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout,  
 All but the Throne it self of God. Full soon  
 Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand  
 Grasping ten thousand Thunders, which he sent  
 Before him, such as in thir Soules infix'd  
 Plagues; they astonisht all resistance lost,  
 All courage; down thir idle weapons drop'd;  
 O're Shields and Helmes, and helmed heads he rode  
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,  
 That wish'd the Mountains now might be again  
 Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.  
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Foure,  
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living Wheels,  
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes,  
 One Spirit in them rul'd, and every eye  
 Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire  
 Among th' accurst, that witherd all thir strength,  
 And of thir wonted vigour left them draind,  
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.  
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd  
 His Thunder in mid Volie, for he meant  
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n:  
 The overthrown he rais'd, and as a Heard  
 Of Goats or timerous flock together throngd  
 Drove them before him Thunder-struck, pursu'd  
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds  
 And Chrystall wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide,  
 Rowld inward, and a spacious Gap disclos'd  
 Into the wastful Deep; the monstrous sight  
 Strook them with horror backward, but far worse  
 Urg'd them behind; headlong themselvs they threw  
 Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrauth  
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.  
 Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
 Heav'n ruining from Heav'n and would have fled  
 Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep  
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.  
 Nine dayes they fell; confounded Chaos roard,  
 And felt tenfold confusion in thir fall  
 Through his wilde Anarchie, so huge a rout  
 Incumberd him with ruin: Hell at last  
 Yawning receavd them whole, and on them clos'd,  
 Hell thir fit habitation fraught with fire  
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and paine.  
 Disburd'nd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repaired  
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rowld.  
 Sole Victor from th' expulsion of his Foes  
 Messiah his triumphal Chariot turnd:  
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
 Eye witnesses of his Almighty Acts,  
 With Jubilie advanc'd; and as they went,

Shaded with branching Palme, each order bright,  
Sung Triumph, and him sung Victorious King,  
Son, Heire, and Lord, to him Dominion giv'n,  
Worthiest to Reign: he celebrated rode  
Triumphant through mid Heav'n, into the Courts  
And Temple of his mightie Father Thron'd  
On high; who into Glorie him receav'd,  
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.  
Thus measuring things in Heav'n by things on Earth  
At thy request, and that thou maist beware  
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd  
What might have else to human Race bin hid;  
The discord which befel, and Warr in Heav'n  
Among th' Angelic Powers, and the deep fall  
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelld  
With Satan, hee who envies now thy state,  
Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
Thee also from obedience, that with him  
Bereavd of happiness thou maist partake  
His punishment, Eternal miserie;  
Which would be all his solace and revenge,  
As a despite don against the most High,  
Thee once to gaine Companion of his woe.  
But list'n not to his Temptations, warne  
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard  
By terrible Example the reward  
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book VII

Descend from Heav'n Urania, by that name  
If rightly thou art call'd, whose Voice divine  
Following, above th' Olympian Hill I soare,  
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.  
The meaning, not the Name I call: for thou  
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwell'st, but Heav'nlie borne,  
Before the Hills appeerd, or Fountain flow'd,  
Thou with Eternal wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy Sister, and with her didst play  
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleas'd  
With thy Celestial Song. Up led by thee  
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,  
An Earthlie Guest, and drawn Empyrean Aire,  
Thy tempring; with like safetie guided down  
Return me to my Native Element:  
Least from this flying Steed unrein'd, (as once  
Bellerophon, though from a lower Clime)  
Dismounted, on th' Aleian Field I fall  
Erroneous, there to wander and forlorne.  
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound  
Within the visible Diurnal Spheare;  
Standing on Earth, not rapt above the Pole,  
More safe I Sing with mortal voice, unchang'd  
To hoarce or mute, though fall'n on evil dayes,  
On evil dayes though fall'n, and evil tongues;  
In darkness, and with dangers compast rou[n]d,  
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou  
Visit'st my slumbers Nightly, or when Morn  
Purples the East: still govern thou my Song,  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.  
But drive farr off the barbarous dissonance  
Of Bacchus and his Revellers, the Race  
Of that wilde Rout that tore the Thracian Bard  
In Rhodope, where Woods and Rocks had Eares  
To rapture, till the savage clamor dround  
Both Harp and Voice; nor could the Muse defend  
Her Son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:  
For thou art Heav'nlie, shee an empty dreame.  
Say Goddess, what ensu'd when Raphael,  
The affable Arch-angel, had forewarn'd  
Adam by dire example to beware  
Apostasie, by what befell in Heaven  
To those Apostates, least the like befall  
In Paradise to Adam or his Race,  
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted Tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,  
So easily obeyd amid the choice  
Of all tasts else to please thir appetite,  
Though wandring. He with his consorted Eve  
The storie heard attentive, and was fill'd  
With admiration, and deep Muse to heare

Of things so high and strange, things to thir thought  
 So unimaginable as hate in Heav'n,  
 And Warr so neer the Peace of God in bliss  
 With such confusion: but the evil soon  
 Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those  
 From whom it sprung, impossible to mix  
 With Blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd  
 The doubts that in his heart arose: and now  
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
 What neerer might concern him, how this World  
 Of Heav'n and Earth conspicuous first began,  
 When, and whereof created, for what cause,  
 What within Eden or without was done  
 Before his memorie, as one whose drouth  
 Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current streame,  
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,  
 Proceeded thus to ask his Heav'nly Guest.  
 Great things, and full of wonder in our eares,  
 Farr differing from this World, thou hast reveal'd  
 Divine Interpreter, by favour sent  
 Down from the Empyrean to forewarne  
 Us timely of what might else have bin our loss,  
 Unknown, which human knowledg could not reach:  
 For which to the infinitely Good we owe  
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment  
 Receave with solemne purpose to observe  
 Immutably his sovran will, the end  
 Of what we are. But since thou hast voutsaft  
 Gently for our instruction to impart  
 Things above Earthly thought, which yet concernd  
 Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemd,  
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate  
 What may no less perhaps availe us known,  
 How first began this Heav'n which we behold  
 Distant so high, with moving Fires adorn'd  
 Innumerable, and this which yeelds or fills  
 All space, the ambient Aire wide interfus'd  
 Imbracing round this florid Earth, what cause  
 Mov'd the Creator in his holy Rest  
 Through all Eternitie so late to build  
 In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon  
 Absolv'd, if unforbid thou maist unfould  
 What wee, not to explore the secrets aske  
 Of his Eternal Empire, but the more  
 To magnifie his works, the more we know.  
 And the great Light of Day yet wants to run  
 Much of his Race though steep, suspens in Heav'n  
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he heares,  
 And longer will delay to heare thee tell  
 His Generation, and the rising Birth  
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:  
 Or if the Starr of Eevning and the Moon



Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring  
 Silence, and Sleep listning to thee will watch,  
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy Song  
 End, and dismiss thee ere the Morning shine.  
 Thus Adam his illustrious Guest besought:  
 And thus the Godlike Angel answerd milde.  
 This also thy request with caution askt  
 Obtaine: though to recount Almightye works  
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve  
 To glorifie the Maker, and inferr  
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
 Thy hearing, such Commission from above  
 I have receav'd, to answer thy desire  
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain  
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope  
 Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,  
 Onely Omniscient, hath supprest in Night,  
 To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:  
 Anough is left besides to search and know.  
 But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
 Her Temperance over Appetite, to know  
 In measure what the mind may well contain,  
 Oppresses else with Surfet, and soon turns  
 Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Winde.  
 Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n  
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the Host  
 Of Angels, then that Starr the Starrs among)  
 Fell with his flaming Legions through the Deep  
 Into his place, and the great Son returnd  
 Victorious with his Saints, th' Omnipotent  
 Eternal Father from his Throne beheld  
 Thir multitude, and to his Son thus spake.  
 At least our envious Foe hath fail'd, who thought  
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid  
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat  
 Of Deitie supream, us dispossesst,  
 He trusted to have seis'd, and into fraud  
 Drew many, whom thir place knows here no more;  
 Yet farr the greater part have kept, I see,  
 Thir station, Heav'n yet populous retaines  
 Number sufficient to possess her Realmes  
 Though wide, and this high Temple to frequent  
 With Ministeries due and solemn Rites:  
 But least his heart exalt him in the harme  
 Already done, to have dispeopl'd Heav'n,  
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repaire  
 That detriment, if such it be to lose  
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create  
 Another World, out of one man a Race  
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,

Not here, till by degrees of merit rais'd  
 They open to themselves at length the way  
 Up hither, under long obedience tri'd,  
 And Earth be chang'd to Heavn, & Heav'n to Earth,  
 One Kingdom, Joy and Union without end.  
 Mean while inhabit laxe, ye Powers of Heav'n,  
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee  
 This I perform, speak thou, and be it don:  
 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee  
 I send along, ride forth, and bid the Deep  
 Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and Earth,  
 Boundless the Deep, because I am who fill  
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.  
 Though I uncircumscrib'd my self retire,  
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free  
 To act or not, Necessitie and Chance  
 Approach not mee, and what I will is Fate.  
 So spake th' Almightye, and to what he spake  
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.  
 Immediate are the Acts of God, more swift  
 Then time or motion, but to human ears  
 Cannot without process of speech be told,  
 So told as earthly notion can receive.  
 Great triumph and rejoycing was in Heav'n  
 When such was heard declar'd the Almightye's will;  
 Glorie they sung to the most High, good will  
 To future men, and in thir dwellings peace:  
 Glorie to him whose just avenging ire  
 Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight  
 And th' habitations of the just; to him  
 Glorie and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd  
 Good out of evil to create, in stead  
 Of Spirits maligne a better Race to bring  
 Into thir vacant room, and thence diffuse  
 His good to Worlds and Ages infinite.  
 So sang the Hierarchies: Mean while the Son  
 On his great Expedition now appeer'd,  
 Girt with Omnipotence, with Radiance crown'd  
 Of Majestie Divine, Sapience and Love  
 Immense, and all his Father in him shon.  
 About his Chariot numberless were pour'd  
 Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,  
 And Vertues, winged Spirits, and Chariots wing'd,  
 From the Armoury of God, where stand of old  
 Myriads between two brazen Mountains lodg'd  
 Against a solemn day, harness at hand,  
 Celestial Equipage; and now came forth  
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit livd,  
 Attendant on thir Lord: Heav'n op'nd wide  
 Her ever during Gates, Harmonious sound  
 On golden Hinges moving, to let forth  
 The King of Glorie in his powerful Word

And Spirit coming to create new Worlds.  
 On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore  
 They view'd the vast immeasurable Abyss  
 Outrageous as a Sea, dark, wasteful, wilde,  
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious windes  
 And surging waves, as Mountains to assault  
 Heav'ns highth, and with the Center mix the Pole.  
 Silence, ye troubl'd waves, and thou Deep, peace,  
 Said then th' Omnific Word, your discord end:  
 Nor staid, but on the Wings of Cherubim  
 Uplifted, in Paternal Glorie rode  
 Farr into Chaos, and the World unborn;  
 For Chaos heard his voice: him all his Traine  
 Follow'd in bright procession to behold  
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.  
 Then staid the fervid Wheelles, and in his hand  
 He took the golden Compasses, prepar'd  
 In Gods Eternal store, to circumscribe  
 This Universe, and all created things:  
 One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd  
 Round through the vast profunditie obscure,  
 And said, thus farr extend, thus farr thy bounds,  
 This be thy just Circumference, O World.  
 Thus God the Heav'n created, thus the Earth,  
 Matter unform'd and void: Darkness profound  
 Cover'd th' Abyss: but on the watrie calme  
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspred,  
 And vital vertue infus'd, and vital warmth  
 Throughout the fluid Mass, but downward purg'd  
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs  
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd  
 Like things to like, the rest to several place  
 Disparted, and between spun out the Air,  
 And Earth self-ballanc't on her Center hung.  
 Let ther be Light, said God, and forthwith Light  
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure  
 Sprung from the Deep, and from her Native East  
 To journie through the airie gloom began,  
 Sphear'd in a radiant Cloud, for yet the Sun  
 Was not; shee in a cloudie Tabernacle  
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the Light was good;  
 And light from darkness by the Hemisphere  
 Divided: Light the Day, and Darkness Night  
 He nam'd. Thus was the first Day Eev'n and Morn:  
 Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung  
 By the Celestial Quires, when Orient Light  
 Exhaling first from Darkness they beheld;  
 Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth; with joy and shout  
 The hollow Universal Orb they fill'd,  
 And touch't thir Golden Harps, & hymning prais'd  
 God and his works, Creatour him they sung,  
 Both when first Eevning was, and when first Morn.

Again, God said, let ther be Firmament  
 Amid the Waters, and let it divide  
 The Waters from the Waters: and God made  
 The Firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,  
 Transparent, Elemental Air, diffus'd  
 In circuit to the uttermost convex  
 Of this great Round: partition firm and sure,  
 The Waters underneath from those above  
 Dividing: for as Earth, so hee the World  
 Built on circumfluous Waters calme, in wide  
 Crystallin Ocean, and the loud misrule  
 Of Chaos farr remov'd, least fierce extreames  
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:  
 And Heav'n he nam'd the Firmament: So Eev'n  
 And Morning CHORus sung the second Day.  
 The Earth was form'd, but in the Womb as yet  
 Of Waters, Embryon immature involv'd,  
 Appeer'd not: over all the face of Earth  
 Main Ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warme  
 Prolific humour soft'ning all her Globe,  
 Fermented the great Mother to conceive,  
 Satiated with genial moisture, when God said  
 Be gather'd now ye Waters under Heav'n  
 Into one place, and let dry Land appeer.  
 Immediately the Mountains huge appeer  
 Emergent, and thir broad bare backs upheave  
 Into the Clouds, thir tops ascend the Skie:  
 So high as heav'd the tumid Hills, so low  
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,  
 Capacious bed of Waters: thither they  
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uprowld  
 As drops on dust conglobing from the drie;  
 Part rise in crystal Wall, or ridge direct,  
 For haste; such flight the great command impress'd  
 On the swift flouds: as Armies at the call  
 Of Trumpet (for of Armies thou hast heard)  
 Troop to thir Standard, so the watrie throng,  
 Wave rowling after Wave, where way they found,  
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through Plaine,  
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them Rock or Hill,  
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide  
 With Serpent errour wandring, found thir way,  
 And on the washie Oose deep Channels wore;  
 Easie, e're God had bid the ground be drie,  
 All but within those banks, where Rivers now  
 Stream, and perpetual draw thir humid traine.  
 The dry Land, Earth, and the great receptacle  
 Of congregated Waters he call'd Seas:  
 And saw that it was good, and said, Let th' Earth  
 Put forth the verdant Grass, Herb yeilding Seed,  
 And Fruit Tree yeilding Fruit after her kind;  
 Whose Seed is in her self upon the Earth.

He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then  
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,  
 Brought forth the tender Grass, whose verdure clad  
 Her Universal Face with pleasant green,  
 Then Herbs of every leaf, that sudden flour'd  
 Op'ning thir various colours, and made gay  
 Her bosom smelling sweet: and these scarce blown,  
 Forth flourish't thick the clustring Vine, forth crept  
 The smelling Gourd, up stood the cornie Reed  
 Embattell'd in her field: add the humble Shrub,  
 And Bush with frizl'd hair implicit: last  
 Rose as in Dance the stately Trees, and spred  
 Thir branches hung with copious Fruit; or gemm'd  
 Thir Blossoms: with high Woods the Hills were crownd,  
 With tufts the vallies & each fountain side,  
 With borders long the Rivers. That Earth now  
 Seemd like to Heav'n, a seat where Gods might dwell,  
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt  
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd  
 Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground  
 None was, but from the Earth a dewie Mist  
 Went up and waterd all the ground, and each  
 Plant of the field, which e're it was in the Earth  
 God made, and every Herb, before it grew  
 On the green stemm; God saw that it was good:  
 So Eev'n and Morn recorded the Third Day.  
 Again th' Almightye spake: Let there be Lights  
 High in th' expanse of Heaven to divide  
 The Day from Night; and let them be for Signes,  
 For Seasons, and for Dayes, and circling Years,  
 And let them be for Lights as I ordaine  
 Thir Office in the Firmament of Heav'n  
 To give Light on the Earth; and it was so.  
 And God made two great Lights, great for thir use  
 To Man, the greater to have rule by Day,  
 The less by Night alterne: and made the Starrs,  
 And set them in the Firmament of Heav'n  
 To illuminate the Earth, and rule the Day  
 In thir vicissitude, and rule the Night,  
 And Light from Darkness to divide. God saw,  
 Surveying his great Work, that it was good:  
 For of Celestial Bodies first the Sun  
 A mightie Spheare he fram'd, unlightsom first,  
 Though of Ethereal Mould: then form'd the Moon  
 Globose, and everie magnitude of Starrs,  
 And sowd with Starrs the Heav'n thick as a field:  
 Of Light by farr the greater part he took,  
 Transplanted from her cloudie Shrine, and plac'd  
 In the Suns Orb, made porous to receive  
 And drink the liquid Light, firm to retaine  
 Her gather'd beams, great Palace now of Light.  
 Hither as to thir Fountain other Starrs

Repairing, in thir gold'n Urns draw Light,  
 And hence the Morning Planet guilds his horns;  
 By tincture or reflection they augment  
 Thir small peculiar, though from human sight  
 So farr remote, with diminution seen.  
 First in his East the glorious Lamp was seen,  
 Regent of Day, and all th' Horizon round  
 Invested with bright Rayes, jocond to run  
 His Longitude through Heav'ns high rode: the gray  
 Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd  
 Shedding sweet influence: less bright the Moon,  
 But opposite in level West was set  
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her Light  
 From him, for other light she needed none  
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps  
 Till night, then in the East her turn she shines,  
 Revolv'd on Heav'ns great Axle, and her Reign  
 With thousand lesser Lights dividual holds,  
 With thousand thousand Starres, that then appeer'd  
 Spangling the Hemisphere: then first adorn'd  
 With thir bright Luminaries that Set and Rose,  
 Glad Eevning & glad Morn crownd the fourth day.  
 And God said, let the Waters generate  
 Reptil with Spawn abundant, living Soule:  
 And let Fowle flie above the Earth, with wings  
 Displayd on the op'n Firmament of Heav'n.  
 And God created the great Whales, and each  
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously  
 The waters generated by thir kindes,  
 And every Bird of wing after his kinde;  
 And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying,  
 Be fruitful, multiply, and in the Seas  
 And Lakes and running Streams the waters fill;  
 And let the Fowle be multiply'd on the Earth.  
 Forthwith the Sounds and Seas, each Creek & Bay  
 With Frie innumerable swarme, and Shoales  
 Of Fish that with thir Finns and shining Scales  
 Glide under the green Wave, in Sculles that oft  
 Bank the mid Sea: part single or with mate  
 Graze the Sea weed thir pasture, & through Groves  
 Of Coral stray, or sporting with quick glance  
 Show to the Sun thir wav'd coats dropt with Gold,  
 Or in thir Pearlie shells at ease, attend  
 Moist nutriment, or under Rocks thir food  
 In jointed Armour watch: on smooth the Seale,  
 And bended Dolphins play: part huge of bulk  
 Wallowing unweildie, enormous in thir Gate  
 Tempest the Ocean: there Leviathan  
 Hugest of living Creatures, on the Deep  
 Stretcht like a Promontorie sleeps or swimmes,  
 And seems a moving Land, and at his Gilles  
 Draws in, and at his Trunck spouts out a Sea.

Mean while the tepid Caves, and Fens and shoares  
 Thir Brood as numerous hatch, from the Egg that soon  
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd  
 Thir callow young, but featherd soon and fledge  
 They summ'd thir Penns, and soaring th' air sublime  
 With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud  
 In prospect; there the Eagle and the Stork  
 On Cliffs and Cedar tops thir Eyries build:  
 Part loosly wing the Region, part more wise  
 In common, rang'd in figure wedge thir way,  
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
 Thir Aerie Caravan high over Sea's  
 Flying, and over Lands with mutual wing  
 Easing thir flight; so steers the prudent Crane  
 Her annual Voiage, born on Windes; the Aire  
 Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:  
 From Branch to Branch the smaller Birds with song  
 Solac'd the Woods, and spred thir painted wings  
 Till Ev'n, nor then the solemn Nightingal  
 Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft layes:  
 Others on Silver Lakes and Rivers Bath'd  
 Thir downie Brest; the Swan with Arched neck  
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, Rowes  
 Her state with Oarie feet: yet oft they quit  
 The Dank, and rising on stiff Pennons, towre  
 The mid Aereal Skie: Others on ground  
 Walk'd firm; the crested Cock whose clarion sounds  
 The silent hours, and th' other whose gay Traine  
 Adorns him, colour'd with the Florid hue  
 Of Rainbows and Starrie Eyes. The Waters thus  
 With Fish replenisht, and the Aire with Fowle,  
 Ev'ning and Morn solemniz'd the Fift day.  
 The Sixt, and of Creation last arose  
 With Eevning Harps and Mattin, when God said,  
 Let th' Earth bring forth Fowle living in her kinde,  
 Cattel and Creeping things, and Beast of the Earth,  
 Each in their kinde. The Earth obey'd, and strait  
 Op'ning her fertil Woomb teem'd at a Birth  
 Innumeros living Creatures, perfet formes,  
 Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up-rose  
 As from his Laire the wilde Beast where he wonns  
 In Forrest wilde, in Thicket, Brake, or Den;  
 Among the Trees in Pairs they rose, they walk'd:  
 The Cattel in the Fields and Meddowes green:  
 Those rare and solitarie, these in flocks  
 Pasturing at once, and in broad Herds upsprung:  
 The grassie Clods now Calv'd, now half appeer'd  
 The Tawnie Lion, pawing to get free  
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from Bonds,  
 And Rampant shakes his Brinded main; the Ounce,  
 The Libbard, and the Tyger, as the Moale  
 Rising, the crumbl'd Earth above them threw

In Hillocks; the swift Stag from under ground  
 Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould  
 Behemoth biggest born of Earth upheav'd  
 His vastness: Fleec't the Flocks and bleating rose,  
 As Plants: ambiguous between Sea and Land  
 The River Horse and scalie Crocodile.  
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,  
 Insect or Worme; those wav'd thir limber fans  
 For wings, and smallest Lineaments exact  
 In all the Liveries dect of Summers pride  
 With spots of Gold and Purple, azure and green:  
 These as a line thir long dimension drew,  
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all  
 Minims of Nature; some of Serpent kinde  
 Wondrous in length and corpulence involv'd  
 Thir Snakie foulds, and added wings. First crept  
 The Parsimonious Emmet, provident  
 Of future, in small room large heart enclos'd,  
 Pattern of just equalitie perhaps  
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular Tribes  
 Of Commonaltie: swarming next appeer'd  
 The Femal Bee that feeds her Husband Drone  
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen Cells  
 With Honey stor'd: the rest are numberless,  
 And thou thir Natures know'st, and gav'st them Names,  
 Needlest to thee repea[t]ed; nor unknown  
 The Serpent suttl'st Beast of all the field,  
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen Eyes  
 And hairie Main terrific, though to thee  
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.  
 Now Heav'n in all her Glorie shon, and rowld  
 Her motions, as the great first-Movers hand  
 First wheeld thir course; Earth in her rich attire  
 Consummate lovly smil'd; Aire, Water, Earth,  
 By Fowl, Fish, Beast, was flown, was swum, was walkt  
 Frequent; and of the Sixt day yet remain'd;  
 There wanted yet the Master work, the end  
 Of all yet don; a Creature who not prone  
 And Brute as other Creatures, but endu'd  
 With Sanctitie of Reason, might erect  
 His Stature, and upright with Front serene  
 Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence  
 Magnanimous to correspond with Heav'n,  
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
 Descends, thither with heart and voice and eyes  
 Directed in Devotion, to adore  
 And worship God Supream, who made him chief  
 Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent  
 Eternal Father (For where is not he  
 Present) thus to his Son audibly spake.  
 Let us make now Man in our image, Man  
 In our similitude, and let them rule



Over the Fish and Fowle of Sea and Aire,  
 Beast of the Field, and over all the Earth,  
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.  
 This said, he formd thee, Adam, thee O Man  
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd  
 The breath of Life; in his own Image hee  
 Created thee, in the Image of God  
 Express, and thou becam'st a living Soul.  
 Male he created thee, but thy consort  
 Femal for Race; then bless'd Mankinde, and said,  
 Be fruitful, multiplie, and fill the Earth,  
 Subdue it, and throughout Dominion hold  
 Over Fish of the Sea, and Fowle of the Aire,  
 And every living thing that moves on the Earth.  
 Wherever thus created, for no place  
 Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st  
 He brought thee into this delicious Grove,  
 This Garden, planted with the Trees of God,  
 Delectable both to behold and taste;  
 And freely all thir pleasant fruit for food  
 Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th' Earth yeelds,  
 Varietie without end; but of the Tree  
 Which tasted works knowledge of Good and Evil,  
 Thou mai'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou di'st;  
 Death is the penaltie impos'd, beware,  
 And govern well thy appetite, least sin  
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.  
 Here finish'd hee, and all that he had made  
 View'd, and behold all was entirely good;  
 So Ev'n and Morn accomplish'd the Sixt day:  
 Yet not till the Creator from his work  
 Desisting, though unwearied, up returnd  
 Up to the Heav'n of Heav'ns his high abode,  
 Thence to behold this new created World  
 Th' addition of his Empire, how it shew'd  
 In prospect from his Throne, how good, how faire,  
 Answering his great Idea. Up he rode  
 Followd with acclamation and the sound  
 Symphonious of ten thousand Harpes that tun'd  
 Angelic harmonies: the Earth, the Aire  
 Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heardst)  
 The Heav'ns and all the Constellations rung,  
 The Planets in thir stations list'ning stood,  
 While the bright Pomp ascended jubilant.  
 Open, ye everlasting Gates, they sung,  
 Open, ye Heav'ns, your living dores; let in  
 The great Creator from his work returnd  
 Magnificent, his Six days work, a World;  
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deigne  
 To visit oft the dwellings of just Men  
 Delighted, and with frequent intercourse  
 Thither will send his winged Messengers

On errands of supernal Grace. So sung  
 The glorious Train ascending: He through Heav'n,  
 That open'd wide her blazing Portals, led  
 To Gods Eternal house direct the way,  
 A broad and ample rode, whose dust is Gold  
 And pavement Starrs, as Starrs to thee appeer,  
 Seen in the Galaxie, that Milkie way  
 Which nightly as a circling Zone thou seest  
 Pouderd with Starrs. And now on Earth the Seaventh  
 Eev'ning arose in Eden, for the Sun  
 Was set, and twilight from the East came on,  
 Forerunning Night; when at the holy mount  
 Of Heav'ns high-seated top, th' Impereal Throne  
 Of Godhead, fixt for ever firm and sure,  
 The Filial Power arriv'd, and sate him down  
 With his great Father (for he also went  
 Invisible, yet staid (such priviledge  
 Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordain'd,  
 Author and end of all things, and from work  
 Now resting, bless'd and hallowd the Seav'nth day,  
 As resting on that day from all his work,  
 But not in silence holy kept; the Harp  
 Had work and rested not, the solemn Pipe,  
 And Dulcimer, all Organs of sweet stop,  
 All sounds on Fret by String or Golden Wire  
 Temper'd soft Tunings, intermixt with Voice  
 Choral or Unison: of incense Clouds  
 Fuming from Golden Censers hid the Mount.  
 Creation and the Six dayes acts they sung,  
 Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite  
 Thy power; what thought can measure thee or tongue  
 Relate thee; greater now in thy return  
 Then from the Giant Angels; thee that day  
 Thy Thunders magnifi'd; but to create  
 Is greater then created to destroy.  
 Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound  
 Thy Empire? easily the proud attempt  
 Of Spirits apostat and thir Counsels vaine  
 Thou hast repeld, while impiously they thought  
 Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw  
 The number of thy worshippers. Who seekes  
 To lessen thee, against his purpose serves  
 To manifest the more thy might: his evil  
 Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.  
 Witness this new-made World, another Heav'n  
 From Heaven Gate not farr, founded in view  
 On the cleer Hyaline, the Glassie Sea;  
 Of amplitude almost immense, with Starr's  
 Numerous, and every Starr perhaps a World  
 Of destind habitation; but thou know'st  
 Thir seasons: among these the seat of men,  
 Earth with her nether Ocean circumfus'd,

Thir pleasant dwelling place. Thrice happie men,  
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc't,  
 Created in his Image, there to dwell  
 And worship him, and in reward to rule  
 Over his Works, on Earth, in Sea, or Air,  
 And multiply a Race of Worshippers  
 Holy and just: thrice happie if they know  
 Thir happiness, and persevere upright.  
 So sung they, and the Emyrean rung,  
 With Halleluiahs: Thus was Sabbath kept.  
 And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd  
 How first this World and face of things began,  
 And what before thy memorie was don  
 From the beginning, that posteritie  
 Informd by thee might know; if else thou seekst  
 Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.  
 To whom thus Adam gratefully repli'd.  
 What thanks sufficient, or what recompence  
 Equal have I to render thee, Divine  
 Hystorian, who thus largely hast allayd  
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and voutsaf't  
 This friendly condescention to relate  
 Things else by me unsearchable, now heard  
 VWith wonder, but delight, and, as is due,  
 With glorie attributed to the high  
 Creator; some thing yet of doubt remaines,  
 VWhich onely thy solution can resolve.  
 VWhen I behold this goodly Frame, this VWorld  
 Of Heav'n and Earth consisting, and compute,  
 Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a graine,  
 An Atom, with the Firmament compar'd  
 And all her numberd Starrs, that seem to rowle  
 Spaces incomprehensible (for such  
 Thir distance argues and thir swift return  
 Diurnal) meerly to officiate light  
 Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,  
 One day and night; in all thir vast survey  
 Useless besides, reasoning I oft admire,  
 How Nature wise and frugal could commit  
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
 So many nobler Bodies to create,  
 Greater so manifold to this one use,  
 For aught appeers, and on thir Orbs impose  
 Such restless revolution day by day  
 Repeated, while the sedentarie Earth,  
 That better might with farr less compass move,  
 Serv'd by more noble then her self, attaines  
 Her end without least motion, and receaves,  
 As Tribute such a sumless journey brought  
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness Number failes.  
 So spake our Sire, and by his count'nance seemd

Entring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve  
 Perceiving where she sat retir'd in sight,  
 With lowliness Majestic from her seat,  
 And Grace that won who saw to wish her stay,  
 Rose, and went forth among her Fruits and Flours,  
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,  
 Her Nurserie; they at her coming sprung  
 And toucht by her fair tendance gladlier grew.  
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
 Delighted, or not capable her eare  
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd,  
 Adam relating, she sole Auditress;  
 Her Husband the Relater she preferr'd  
 Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
 Chose rather; hee, she knew would intermix  
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
 With conjugal Caresses, from his Lip  
 Not Words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now  
 Such pairs, in Love and mutual Honour joyn'd?  
 With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went;  
 Not unattended, for on her as Queen  
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
 And from about her shot Darts of desire  
 Into all Eyes to wish her still in sight.  
 And Raphael now to Adam's doubt propos'd  
 Benevolent and facil thus repli'd.  
 To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n  
 Is as the Book of God before thee set,  
 Wherein to read his wondrous Works, and learne  
 His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or Yeares:  
 This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,  
 Imports not, if thou reck'n right, the rest  
 From Man or Angel the great Architect  
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought  
 Rather admire; or if they list to try  
 Conjecture, he his Fabric of the Heav'ns  
 Hath left to thir disputes, perhaps to move  
 His laughter at thir quaint Opinions wide  
 Hereafter, when they come to model Heav'n  
 And calculate the Starrs, how they will weild  
 The mightie frame, how build, unbuild, contrive  
 To save appeerances, how gird the Sphear  
 With Centric and Eccentric scribl'd o're,  
 Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb:  
 Alreadie by thy reasoning this I guess,  
 Who art to lead thy ofspring, and supposest  
 That Bodies bright and greater should not serve  
 The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journies run,  
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
 The benefit: consider first, that Great  
 Or Bright inferrs not Excellence: the Earth

Though, in comparison of Heav'n, so small,  
 Nor glistening, may of solid good containe  
 More plenty then the Sun that barren shines,  
 Whose vertue on it self workes no effect,  
 But in the fruitful Earth; there first receavd  
 His beams, unactive else, thir vigor find.  
 Yet not to Earth are those bright Luminaries  
 Officious, but to thee Earths habitant.  
 And for the Heav'ns wide Circuit, let it speak  
 The Makers high magnificence, who built  
 So spacious, and his Line stretcht out so farr;  
 That Man may know he dwells not in his own;  
 An Edifice too large for him to fill,  
 Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest  
 Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.  
 The swiftness of those Circles attribute,  
 Though numberless, to his Omnipotence,  
 That to corporeal substances could adde  
 Speed almost Spiritual; mee thou thinkst not slow,  
 Who since the Morning hour set out from Heav'n  
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd  
 In Eden, distance inexpressible  
 By Numbers that have name. But this I urge,  
 Admitting Motion in the Heav'ns, to shew  
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;  
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem  
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.  
 God to remove his wayes from human sense,  
 Plac'd Heav'n from Earth so farr, that earthly sight,  
 If it presume, might erre in things too high,  
 And no advantage gaine. What if the Sun  
 Be Center to the World, and other Starrs  
 By his attractive vertue and thir own  
 Incited, dance about him various rounds?  
 Thir wandring course now high, now low, then hid,  
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,  
 In six thou seest, and what if sev'nth to these  
 The Planet Earth, so stedfast though she seem,  
 Insensibly three different Motions move?  
 Which else to several Sphears thou must ascribe,  
 Mov'd contrarie with thwart obliquities,  
 Or save the Sun his labour, and that swift  
 Nocturnal and Diurnal rhomb suppos'd,  
 Invisible else above all Starrs, the Wheele  
 Of Day and Night; which needs not thy beleefe,  
 If Earth industrious of her self fetch Day  
 Travelling East, and with her part averse  
 From the Suns beam meet Night, her other part  
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light  
 Sent from her through the wide transpicuous aire,  
 To the terrestrial Moon be as a Starr  
 Enlightning her by Day, as she by Night

This Earth? reciprocal, if Land be there,  
Fields and Inhabitants: Her spots thou seest  
As Clouds, and Clouds may rain, and Rain produce  
Fruits in her soft'nd Soile, for some to eat  
Allotted there; and other Suns perhaps  
With thir attendant Moons thou wilt describe  
Communicating Male and Femal Light,  
Which two great Sexes animate the World,  
Stor'd in each Orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in Nature unpossess  
By living Soule, desert and desolate,  
Onely to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each Orb a glimpse of Light, conveyd so farr  
Down to this habitable, which returns  
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.  
But whether thus these things, or whether not,  
Whether the Sun predominant in Heav'n  
Rise on the Earth, or Earth rise on the Sun,  
Hee from the East his flaming rode begin,  
Or Shee from West her silent course advance  
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps  
On her soft Axle, while she paces Eev'n,  
And bears thee soft with the smooth Air along,  
Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,  
Leave them to God above, him serve and feare;  
Of other Creatures, as him pleases best,  
Wherever plac't, let him dispose: joy thou  
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise  
And thy faire Eve; Heav'n is for thee too high  
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:  
Think onely what concernes thee and thy being;  
Dream not of other Worlds, what Creatures there  
Live, in what state, condition or degree,  
Contented that thus farr hath been reveal'd  
Not of Earth onely but of highest Heav'n.  
To whom thus Adam cleerd of doubt, repli'd.  
How fully hast thou satisfi'd mee, pure  
Intelligence of Heav'n, Angel serene,  
And freed from intricacies, taught to live,  
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts  
To interrupt the sweet of Life, from which  
God hath bid dwell farr off all anxious cares,  
And not molest us, unless we our selves  
Seek them with wandring thoughts, and notions vaine.  
But apt the Mind or Fancie is to roave  
Uncheckt, and of her roaving is no end;  
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learne,  
That not to know at large of things remote  
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know  
That which before us lies in daily life,  
Is the prime Wisdom, what is more, is fume,  
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,

And renders us in things that most concerne  
 Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.  
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend  
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand  
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise  
 Of something not unseasonable to ask  
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deign'd.  
 Thee I have heard relating what was don  
 Ere my remembrance: now hear mee relate  
 My Storie, which perhaps thou hast not heard;  
 And Day is yet not spent; till then thou seest  
 How suttly to detain thee I devise,  
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,  
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:  
 For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n,  
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my eare  
 Then Fruits of Palm-tree pleasantest to thirst  
 And hunger both, from labour, at the houre  
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,  
 Though pleasant, but thy words with Grace Divine  
 Imbu'd, bring to thir sweetness no satietie.  
 To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek.  
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,  
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee  
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd,  
 Inward and outward both, his image faire:  
 Speaking or mute all comliness and grace  
 Attends thee, and each word, each motion formes.  
 Nor less think wee in Heav'n of thee on Earth  
 Then of our fellow servant, and inquire  
 Gladly into the wayes of God with Man:  
 For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set  
 On Man his equal Love: say therefore on;  
 For I that Day was absent, as befell,  
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,  
 Farr on excursion toward the Gates of Hell;  
 Squar'd in full Legion (such command we had)  
 To see that none thence issu'd forth a spie,  
 Or enemie, while God was in his work,  
 Least hee incenst at such eruption bold,  
 Destruction with Creation might have mixt.  
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt,  
 But us he sends upon his high behests  
 For state, as Sovran King, and to enure  
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut  
 The dismal Gates, and barricado'd strong;  
 But long ere our approaching heard within  
 Noise, other then the sound of Dance or Song,  
 Torment, and lowd lament, and furious rage.  
 Glad we return'd up to the coasts of Light  
 Ere Sabbath Eev'ning: so we had in charge.  
 But thy relation now; for I attend,

Pleas'd with thy words no less then thou with mine.  
 So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.  
 For Man to tell how human Life began  
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?  
 Desire with thee still longer to converse  
 Induc'd me. As new wak't from soundest sleep  
 Soft on the flourie herb I found me laid  
 In Balmie Sweat, which with his Beames the Sun  
 Soon dri'd, and on the reaking moisture fed.  
 Strait toward Heav'n my wondring Eyes I turnd,  
 And gaz'd a while the ample Skie, till rais'd  
 By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,  
 As thitherward endeavoring, and upright  
 Stood on my feet; about me round I saw  
 Hill, Dale, and shadie Woods, and sunnie Plaines,  
 And liquid Lapse of murmuring Streams; by these,  
 Creatures that livd, and movd, and walk'd, or flew,  
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd,  
 With fragrance and with joy my heart oreflow'd.  
 My self I then perus'd, and Limb by Limb  
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:  
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,  
 Knew not; to speak I tri'd, and forthwith spake,  
 My Tongue obey'd and readily could name  
 What e're I saw. Thou Sun, said I, faire Light,  
 And thou enlight'nd Earth, so fresh and gay,  
 Ye Hills and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plaines,  
 And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,  
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?  
 Not of my self; by some great Maker then,  
 In goodness and in power præeminent;  
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,  
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,  
 And feel that I am happier then I know.  
 While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,  
 From where I first drew Aire, and first beheld  
 This happie Light, when answer none return'd,  
 On a green shadie Bank profuse of Flours  
 Pensive I sate me down; there gentle sleep  
 First found me, and with soft oppression seis'd  
 My droused sense, untroubl'd, though I thought  
 I then was passing to my former state  
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:  
 When suddenly stood at my Head a dream,  
 Whose inward apparition gently mov'd  
 My Fancy to believe I yet had being,  
 And livd: One came, methought, of shape Divine,  
 And said, thy Mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,  
 First Man, of Men innumerable ordain'd  
 First Father, call'd by thee I come thy Guide  
 To the Garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd.



So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd,  
 And over Fields and Waters, as in Aire  
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up  
 A woodie Mountain; whose high top was plaine,  
 A Circuit wide, enclos'd, with goodliest Trees  
 Planted, with Walks, and Bowers, that what I saw  
 Of Earth before scarce pleasant seemd. Each Tree  
 Load'n with fairest Fruit, that hung to the Eye  
 Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite  
 To pluck and eate; whereat I wak'd, and found  
 Before mine Eyes all real, as the dream  
 Had lively shadowd: Here had new begun  
 My wandring, had not hee who was my Guide  
 Up hither, from among the Trees appeer'd,  
 Presence Divine. Rejoycing, but with aw  
 In adoration at his feet I fell  
 Submiss: he rear'd me, & Whom thou soughtst I am,  
 Said mildely, Author of all this thou seest  
 Above, or round about thee or beneath.  
 This Paradise I give thee, count it thine  
 To Till and keep, and of the Fruit to eate:  
 Of every Tree that in the Garden growes  
 Eate freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:  
 But of the Tree whose operation brings  
 Knowledg of good and ill, which I have set  
 The Pledge of thy Obedience and thy Faith,  
 Amid the Garden by the Tree of Life,  
 Remember what I warne thee, shun to taste,  
 And shun the bitter consequence: for know,  
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command  
 Transgrest, inevitably thou shalt dye;  
 From that day mortal, and this happie State  
 Shalt loose, expell'd from hence into a World  
 Of woe and sorrow. Sternly he pronounc'd  
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds  
 Yet dreadful in mine eare, though in my choice  
 Not to incur; but soon his cleer aspect  
 Return'd and gracious purpose thus renew'd.  
 Not onely these fair bounds, but all the Earth  
 To thee and to thy Race I give; as Lords  
 Possess it, and all things that therein live,  
 Or live in Sea, or Aire, Beast, Fish, and Fowle.  
 In signe whereof each Bird and Beast behold  
 After thir kindes; I bring them to receave  
 From thee thir Names, and pay thee fealtie  
 With low subjection; understand the same  
 Of Fish within thir watry residence,  
 Not hither summond, since they cannot change  
 Thir Element to draw the thinner Aire.  
 As thus he spake, each Bird and Beast behold  
 Approaching two and two, These cowering low  
 With blandishment, each Bird stoop'd on his wing.

I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood  
 Thir Nature, with such knowledg God endu'd  
 My sudden apprehension: but in these  
 I found not what me thought I wanted still;  
 And to the Heav'nly vision thus presum'd.  
 O by what Name, for thou above all these,  
 Above mankinde, or aught then mankinde higher,  
 Surpassest farr my naming, how may I  
 Adore thee, Author of this Universe,  
 And all this good to man, for whose well being  
 So amply, and with hands so liberal  
 Thou hast provided all things: but with mee  
 I see not who partakes. In solitude  
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone,  
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?  
 Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,  
 As with a smile more bright'nd, thus repli'd.  
 What call'st thou solitude, is not the Earth  
 With various living creatures, and the Aire  
 Replenisht, and all these at thy command  
 To come and play before thee, know'st thou not  
 Thir language and thir wayes, they also know,  
 And reason not contemptibly; with these  
 Find pastime, and beare rule; thy Realm is large.  
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd  
 So ordering. I with leave of speech implor'd,  
 And humble deprecation thus repli'd.  
 Let not my words offend thee, Heav'nly Power,  
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak.  
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
 And these inferiour farr beneath me set?  
 Among unequals what societie  
 Can sort, what harmonie or true delight?  
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due  
 Giv'n and receiv'd; but in disparitie  
 The one intense, the other still remiss  
 Cannot well suite with either, but soon prove  
 Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak  
 Such as I seek, fit to participate  
 All rational delight, wherein the brute  
 Cannot be human consort; they rejoyce  
 Each with thir kinde, Lion with Lioness;  
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd;  
 Much less can Bird with Beast, or Fish with Fowle  
 So well converse, nor with the Ox the Ape;  
 Wors then can Man with Beast, and least of all.  
 Where to th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.  
 A nice and suttile happiness I see  
 Thou to thy self proposest, in the choice  
 Of thy Associates, Adam, and wilt taste  
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitarie.  
 What thinkst thou then of mee, and this my State,

Seem I to thee sufficiently possess  
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone  
 From all Eternitie, for none I know  
 Second to mee or like, equal much less.  
 How have I then with whom to hold converse  
 Save with the Creatures which I made, and those  
 To me inferiour, infinite descents  
 Beneath what other Creatures are to thee?  
 He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd. To attain  
 The highth and depth of thy Eternal wayes  
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things;  
 Thou in thy self art perfect, and in thee  
 Is no deficiency found; not so is Man,  
 But in degree, the cause of his desire  
 By conversation with his like to help,  
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou  
 Shouldst propagate, already infinite;  
 And through all numbers absolute, though One;  
 But Man by number is to manifest  
 His single imperfection, and beget  
 Like of his like, his Image multipli'd,  
 In unitie defective, which requires  
 Collateral love, and dearest amitie.  
 Thou in thy seclusion although alone,  
 Best with thy self accompanied, seek'st not  
 Social communication, yet so pleas'd,  
 Canst raise thy Creature to what highth thou wilt  
 Of Union or Communion, deifi'd;  
 I by conversing cannot these erect  
 From prone, nor in their wayes complacence find.  
 Thus I embold'nd spake, and freedom us'd  
 Permissive, and acceptance found, which gain'd  
 This answer from the gracious voice Divine.  
 Thus farr to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,  
 And finde thee knowing not of Beasts alone,  
 Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thy self,  
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free,  
 My Image, not imparted to the Brute,  
 Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee  
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,  
 And be so minded still; I, ere thou spak'st,  
 Knew it not good for Man to be alone,  
 And no such companie as then thou saw'st  
 Intended thee, for trial onely brought,  
 To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet:  
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,  
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,  
 Thy wish, exactly to thy hearts desire.  
 Hee ended, or I heard no more, for now  
 My earthly by his Heav'nly overpowerd,  
 Which it had long stood under, streind to the highth  
 In that celestial Colloquie sublime,

As with an object that excels the sense,  
 Dazl'd and spent, sunk down, and sought repair  
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd  
 By Nature as in aide, and clos'd mine eyes.  
 Mine eyes he clos'd, but op'n left the Cell  
 Of Fancie my internal sight, by which  
 Abstract as in a transe methought I saw,  
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape  
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;  
 Who stooping op'nd my left side, and took  
 From thence a Rib, with cordial spirits warme,  
 And Life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,  
 But suddenly with flesh fill'd up & heal'd:  
 The Rib he formd and fashond with his hands;  
 Under his forming hands a Creature grew,  
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovly faire,  
 That what seemd fair in all the World, seemd now  
 Mean, or in her summd up, in her containd  
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd  
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
 And into all things from her Aire inspir'd  
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.  
 She disappeerd, and left me dark, I wak'd  
 To find her, or for ever to deplore  
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:  
 When out of hope, behold her, not farr off,  
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adornd  
 With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow  
 To make her amiable: On she came,  
 Led by her Heav'nly Maker, though unseen,  
 And guided by his voice, nor uninformd  
 Of nuptial Sanctitie and marriage Rites:  
 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her Eye,  
 In every gesture dignitie and love.  
 I overjoyd could not forbear aloud.  
 This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd  
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benigne,  
 Giver of all things faire, but fairest this  
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see  
 Bone of my Bone, Flesh of my Flesh, my Self  
 Before me; Woman is her Name, of Man  
 Extracted; for this cause he shall forgoe  
 Father and Mother, and to his Wife adhere;  
 And they shall be one Flesh, one Heart, one Soule.  
 She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,  
 Yet Innocence and Virgin Modestie,  
 Her vertue and the conscience of her worth,  
 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,  
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,  
 The more desirable, or to say all,  
 Nature her self, though pure of sinful thought,  
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd;

I follow'd her, she what was Honour knew,  
 And with obsequious Majestie approv'd  
 My pleaded reason. To the Nuptial Bowre  
 I led her blushing like the Morn: all Heav'n,  
 And happie Constellations on that houre  
 Shed thir selectest influence; the Earth  
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each Hill;  
 Joyous the Birds; fresh Gales and gentle Aires  
 Whisper'd it to the Woods, and from thir wings  
 Flung Rose, flung Odours from the spicie Shrub,  
 Disporting, till the amorous Bird of Night  
 Sung Spousal, and bid haste the Eevning Starr  
 On his Hill top, to light the bridal Lamp.  
 Thus I have told thee all my State, and brought  
 My Storie to the sum of earthly bliss  
 Which I enjoy, and must confess to find  
 In all things else delight indeed, but such  
 As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,  
 Nor vehement desire, these delicacies  
 I mean of Taste, Sight, Smell, Herbs, Fruits, & Flours,  
 Walks, and the melodie of Birds; but here  
 Farr otherwise, transported I behold,  
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else  
 Superiour and unmov'd, here onely weake  
 Against the charm of Beauties powerful glance.  
 Or Nature faild in mee, and left some part  
 Not proof enough such Object to sustain,  
 Or from my side subducting, took perhaps  
 More then enough; at least on her bestow'd  
 Too much of Ornament, in outward shew  
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
 For well I understand in the prime end  
 Of Nature her th' inferiour, in the mind  
 And inward Faculties, which most excell,  
 In outward also her resembling less  
 His Image who made both, and less expressing  
 The character of that Dominion giv'n  
 O're other Creatures; yet when I approach  
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
 And in her self compleat, so well to know  
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
 Seems wisest, vertuosest, discrettest, best;  
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
 Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her  
 Looses discount'nanc't, and like folly shewes;  
 Authoritie and Reason on her waite,  
 As one intended first, not after made  
 Occasionally; and to consummate all,  
 Greatness of mind and nobleness thir seat  
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
 About her, as a guard Angelic plac't.

To whom the Angel with contracted brow.  
 Accuse not Nature, she hath don her part;  
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident  
 Of Wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou  
 Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her nigh,  
 By attributing overmuch to things  
 Less excellent, as thou thy self perceav'st.  
 For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,  
 An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well  
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,  
 Not thy subjection: weigh with her thy self;  
 Then value: Oft times nothing profits more  
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right  
 Well manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,  
 The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,  
 And to realities yeild all her shows;  
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
 So awful, that with honour thou maist love  
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
 But if the sense of touch whereby mankind  
 Is propagated seem such dear delight  
 Beyond all other, think the same voutsaf't  
 To Cattel and each Beast; which would not be  
 To them made common & divulg'd, if aught  
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue  
 The Soule of Man, or passion in him move.  
 What higher in her societie thou findst  
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;  
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,  
 Wherein true Love consists not; love refines  
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat  
 In Reason, and is judicious, is the scale  
 By which to heav'nly Love thou maist ascend,  
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause  
 Among the Beasts no Mate for thee was found.  
 To whom thus half abash't Adam repli'd.  
 Neither her out-side formd so fair, nor aught  
 In procreation common to all kindes  
 (Though higher of the genial Bed by far,  
 And with mysterious reverence I deem)  
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,  
 Those thousand decencies that daily flow  
 From all her words and actions, mixt with Love  
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd  
 Union of Mind, or in us both one Soule;  
 Harmonie to behold in wedded pair  
 More grateful then harmonious sound to the eare.  
 Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose  
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foild,  
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense  
 Variously representing; yet still free  
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.

To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou saist  
 Leads up to Heav'n, is both the way and guide;  
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;  
 Love not the heav'nly Spirits, and how thir Love  
 Express they, by looks onely, or do they mix  
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?  
 To whom the Angel with a smile that glow'd  
 Celestial rosie red, Loves proper hue,  
 Answer'd. Let it suffice thee that thou know'st  
 Us happie, and without Love no happiness.  
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st  
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy  
 In eminence, and obstacle find none  
 Of membrane, joynt, or limb, exclusive barrs:  
 Easier then Air with Air, if Spirits embrace,  
 Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure  
 Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need  
 As Flesh to mix with Flesh, or Soul with Soul.  
 But I can now no more; the parting Sun  
 Beyond the Earths green Cape and verdant Isles  
 Herperean sets, my Signal to depart.  
 Be strong, live happie, and love, but first of all  
 Him whom to love is to obey, and keep  
 His great command; take heed least Passion sway  
 Thy Judgement to do aught, which else free Will  
 Would not admit; thine and of all thy Sons  
 The weal or woe in thee is plac't; beware.  
 I in thy persevering shall rejoyce,  
 And all the Blest: stand fast; to stand or fall  
 Free in thine own Arbitrement it lies.  
 Perfet within, no outward aid require;  
 And all temptation to transgress repel.  
 So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus  
 Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,  
 Go heavenly Guest, Ethereal Messenger,  
 Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore.  
 Gentle to me and affable hath been  
 Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever  
 With grateful Memorie: thou to mankind  
 Be good and friendly still, and oft return.  
 So parted they, the Angel up to Heav'n  
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his Bowre.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book VIII

No more of talk where God or Angel Guest  
With Man, as with his Friend, familiar us'd  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast, permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblam'd: I now must change  
Those Notes to Tragic; foul distrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt  
And disobedience: On the part of Heav'n  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement giv'n,  
That brought into this World a world of woe,  
Sinne and her shadow Death, and Miserie  
Deaths Harbinger: Sad task, yet argument  
Not less but more Heroic then the wrauth  
Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu'd  
Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall; or rage  
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,  
Or Neptun's ire or Juno's, that so long  
Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's Son;  
If answerable style I can obtaine  
Of my Celestial Patroness, who deignes  
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,  
And dictates to me slumbring, or inspires  
Easie my unpremeditated Verse:  
Since first this subject for Heroic Song  
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;  
Not sedulous by Nature to indite  
Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument  
Heroic deem'd, chief maistrie to dissect  
With long and tedious havoc fabl'd Knights  
In Battels feign'd; the better fortitude  
Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom  
Unsung; or to describe Races and Games,  
Or tilting Furniture, emblazon'd Shields,  
Impreses quaint, Caparisons and Steeds;  
Bases and tinsel Trappings, gorgious Knights  
At Joust and Torneament; then marshal'd Feast  
Serv'd up in Hall with Sewers, and Seneshals;  
The skill of Artifice or Office mean,  
Not that which justly gives Heroic name  
To Person or to Poem. Mee of these  
Nor skilld nor studious, higher Argument  
Remaines, sufficient of it self to raise  
That name, unless an age too late, or cold  
Climat, or Years damp my intended wing  
Deprest, and much they may, if all be mine,  
Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear.  
The Sun was sunk, and after him the Starr  
Of Hesperus, whose Office is to bring  
Twilight upon the Earth, short Arbiter  
Twixt Day and Night, and now from end to end  
Nights Hemisphere had veild the Horizon round:



When Satan who late fled before the threats  
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd  
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent  
 On mans destruction, maugre what might hap  
 Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.  
 By Night he fled, and at Midnight return'd  
 From compassing the Earth, cautious of day,  
 Since Uriel Regent of the Sun descri'd  
 His entrance, and forewarnd the Cherubim  
 That kept thir watch; thence full of anguish driv'n,  
 The space of seven continu'd Nights he rode  
 With darkness, thrice the Equinoctial Line  
 He circl'd, four times cross'd the Carr of Night  
 From Pole to Pole, traversing each Colure;  
 On the eighth return'd, and on the Coast averse  
 From entrance or Cherubic Watch, by stealth  
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,  
 Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wraught the change,  
 Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise  
 Into a Gulf shot under ground, till part  
 Rose up a Fountain by the Tree of Life;  
 In with the River sunk, and with it rose  
 Satan involv'd in rising Mist, then sought  
 Where to lie hid; Sea he had searcht and Land  
 From Eden over Pontus, and the Poole  
 Mæotis, up beyond the River Ob;  
 Downward as farr Antartic; and in length  
 West from Orontes to the Ocean barr'd  
 At Darien, thence to the Land where flowes  
 Ganges and Indus: thus the Orb he roam'd  
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep  
 Consider'd every Creature, which of all  
 Most opportune might serve his Wiles, and found  
 The Serpent suttlest Beast of all the Field.  
 Him after long debate, irresolute  
 Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose  
 Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of fraud, in whom  
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide  
 From sharpest sight: for in the wilie Snake,  
 Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,  
 As from his wit and native suttletie  
 Proceeding, which in other Beasts observ'd  
 Doubt might beget of Diabolic pow'r  
 Active within beyond the sense of brute.  
 Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward griefe  
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd:  
 O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd  
 More justly, Seat worthier of Gods, as built  
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!  
 For what God after better worse would build?  
 Terrestrial Heav'n, danc't round by other Heav'ns  
 That shine, yet bear thir bright officious Lamps,

Light above Light, for thee alone, as seems,  
 In thee concentring all thir precious beams  
 Of sacred influence: As God in Heav'n  
 Is Center, yet extends to all, so thou  
 Centring receav'st from all those Orbs; in thee,  
 Not in themselves, all thir known vertue appeers  
 Productive in Herb, Plant, and nobler birth  
 Of Creatures animate with gradual life  
 Of Growth, Sense, Reason, all summ'd up in Man.  
 With what delight could I have walkt thee round  
 If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange  
 Of Hill and Vallie, Rivers, Woods and Plaines,  
 Now Land, now Sea, & Shores with Forrest crownd,  
 Rocks, Dens, and Caves; but I in none of these  
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see  
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel  
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
 Of contraries; all good to me becomes  
 Bane, and in Heav'n much worse would be my state.  
 But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n  
 To dwell, unless by maistring Heav'ns Supream;  
 Nor hope to be my self less miserable  
 By what I seek, but others to make such  
 As I though thereby worse to me redound:  
 For onely in destroying I finde ease  
 To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyd,  
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
 For whom all this was made, all this will soon  
 Follow, as to him linkt in weal or woe,  
 In wo then; that destruction wide may range:  
 To mee shall be the glorie sole among  
 The infernal Powers, in one day to have marr'd  
 What he Almightye styl'd, six Nights and Days  
 Continu'd making, and who knows how long  
 Before had bin contriving, though perhaps  
 Not longer then since I in one Night freed  
 From servitude inglorious welnigh half  
 Th' Angelic Name, and thinner left the throng  
 Of his adorers: hee to be aveng'd,  
 And to repaire his numbers thus impair'd,  
 Whether such vertue spent of old now faild  
 More Angels to Create, if they at least  
 Are his Created or to spite us more,  
 Determin'd to advance into our room  
 A Creature form'd of Earth, and him endow,  
 Exalted from so base original,  
 With Heav'nly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed  
 He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
 Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat,  
 Him Lord pronounc'd, and, O indignitie!  
 Subjected to his service Angel wings,  
 And flaming Ministers to watch and tend

Thir earthlie Charge: Of these the vigilance  
 I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist  
 Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and prie  
 In every Bush and Brake, where hap may finde  
 The Serpent sleeping, in whose mazie foulds  
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.  
 O foul descent! that I who erst contended  
 With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained  
 Into a Beast, and mixt with bestial slime,  
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
 That to the hight of Deitie aspir'd;  
 But what will not Ambition and Revenge  
 Descend to? who aspires must down as low  
 As high he soard, obnoxious first or last  
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
 Bitter ere long back on it self recoiles;  
 Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,  
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
 Provokes my envie, this new Favorite  
 Of Heav'n, this Man of Clay, Son of despite,  
 Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais'd  
 From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.  
 So saying, through each Thicket Danck or Drie,  
 Like a black mist low creeping, he held on  
 His midnight search, where soonest he might finde  
 The Serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found  
 In Labyrinth of many a round self-rowl'd,  
 His head the midst, well stor'd with suttile wiles:  
 Not yet in horrid Shade or dismal Den,  
 Not nocent yet, but on the grassie Herbe  
 Fearless unfeard he slept: in at his Mouth  
 The Devil enterd, and his brutal sense,  
 In heart or head, possessing soon inspir'd  
 With act intelligential; but his sleep  
 Disturbd not, waiting close th' approach of Morn.  
 Now whenas sacred Light began to dawne  
 In Eden on the humid Flours, that breathd  
 Thir morning Incense, when all things that breath,  
 From th' Earths great Altar send up silent praise  
 To the Creator, and his Nostrils fill  
 With gratefull Smell, forth came the human pair  
 And joynd thir vocal Worship to the Quire  
 Of Creatures wanting voice, that done, partake  
 The season, prime for sweetest Sents and Aires:  
 Then commune how that day they best may ply  
 Thir growing work: for much thir work outgrew  
 The hands dispatch of two Gardning so wide.  
 And Eve first to her Husband thus began.  
 Adam, well may we labour still to dress  
 This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour.  
 Our pleasant task enjoyn'd, but till more hands  
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,

Luxurious by restraint; what we by day  
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
 One night or two with wanton growth derides  
 Tending to wilde. Thou therefore now advise  
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present,  
 Let us divide our labours, thou where choice  
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind  
 The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct  
 The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I  
 In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt  
 With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon:  
 For while so near each other thus all day  
 Our task we choose, what wonder if no near  
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new  
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits  
 Our dayes work brought to little, though begun  
 Early, and th' hour of Supper comes unearn'd.  
 To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.  
 Sole Eve, Associate sole, to me beyond  
 Compare above all living Creatures deare,  
 Well hast thou motion'd, wel thy thoughts imployd  
 How we might best fulfill the work which here  
 God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass  
 Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found  
 In woman, then to studie household good,  
 And good workes in her Husband to promote.  
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd  
 Labour, as to debarr us when we need  
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,  
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from Reason flow,  
 To brute deni'd, and are of Love the food,  
 Love not the lowest end of human life.  
 For not to irksom toile, but to delight  
 He made us, and delight to Reason joyn'd.  
 These paths and Bowers doubt not but our joynt  
 Will keep from Wilderness with ease, as wide  
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
 Assist us: But if much converse perhaps  
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yeild.  
 For solitude somtimes is best societie,  
 And short retirement urges sweet returne.  
 But other doubt possesses me, least harm  
 Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou knowst  
 What hath bin warn'd us, what malicious Foe  
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame  
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand  
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find  
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder,  
 Hopeless to circumvent us joynd, where each  
 To other speedie aide might lend at need;

Whether his first design be to withdraw  
 Our fealtie from God, or to disturb  
 Conjugal Love, then which perhaps no bliss  
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envie more;  
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side  
 That gave thee being, stil shades thee and protects.  
 The Wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,  
 Safest and seemliest by her Husband staies,  
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.  
 To whom the Virgin Majestie of Eve,  
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,  
 With sweet austere composure thus reply'd.  
 Ofspring of Heav'n and Earth, and all Earths Lord,  
 That such an enemie we have, who seeks  
 Our ruin, both by thee informd I learne,  
 And from the parting Angel over-heard  
 As in a shadie nook I stood behind,  
 Just then returnd at shut of Evening Flours.  
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt  
 To God or thee, because we have a foe  
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.  
 His violence thou fearst not, being such,  
 As wee, not capable of death or paine,  
 Can either not receive, or can repell.  
 His fraud is then thy fear, which plain inferrs  
 Thy equal fear that my firm Faith and Love  
 Can by his fraud be shak'n or seduc't;  
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy Brest,  
 Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?  
 To whom with healing words Adam reply'd.  
 Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve,  
 For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:  
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade  
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid  
 Th' attempt it self, intended by our Foe.  
 For hee who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses  
 The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd  
 Not incorruptible of Faith, not prooff  
 Against temptation: thou thy self with scorne  
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong,  
 Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,  
 If such affront I labour to avert  
 From thee alone, which on us both at once  
 The Enemie, though bold, will hardly dare,  
 Or daring, first on mee th' assault shall light.  
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;  
 Suttle he needs must be, who could seduce  
 Angels, nor think superfluous others aid.  
 I from the influence of thy looks receive  
 Access in every Vertue, in thy sight  
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,

Shame to be overcome or over-reacht  
 Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.  
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel  
 When I am present, and thy trial choose  
 With me, best witness of thy Vertue tri'd.  
 So spake domestick Adam in his care  
 And Matrimonial Love, but Eve, who thought  
 Less attributed to her Faith sincere,  
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renewd.  
 If this be our condition, thus to dwell  
 In narrow circuit strait'nd by a Foe,  
 Suttle or violent, we not endu'd  
 Single with like defence, wherever met,  
 How are we happie, still in fear of harm?  
 But harm precedes not sin: onely our Foe  
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem  
 Of our integritie: his foul esteeme  
 Sticks no dishonor on our Front, but turns  
 Foul on himself; then wherfore shund or feard  
 By us? who rather double honour gaine  
 From his surmise prov'd false, finde peace within,  
 Favour from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.  
 And what is Faith, Love, Vertue unassaid  
 Alone, without exterior help sustaind?  
 Let us not then suspect our happie State  
 Left so imperfet by the Maker wise,  
 As not secure to single or combin'd.  
 Fraile is our happiness, if this be so,  
 And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.  
 To whom thus Adam fervently repli'd.  
 O Woman, best are all things as the will  
 Of God ordaind them, his creating hand  
 Nothing imperfet or deficient left  
 Of all that he Created, much less Man,  
 Or ought that might his happie State secure,  
 Secure from outward force; within himself  
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:  
 Against his will he can receive no harme.  
 But God left free the Will, for what obeyes  
 Reason, is free, and Reason he made right,  
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,  
 Least by some faire appeering good surpris'd  
 She dictate false, and missinforme the Will  
 To do what God expresly hath forbid.  
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoynes,  
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.  
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,  
 Since Reason not impossibly may meet  
 Some specious object by the Foe subornd,  
 And fall into deception unaware,  
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warnd.  
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoide

Were better, and most likelie if from mee  
 Thou sever not; Trial will come unsought.  
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancie, approve  
 First thy obedience; th' other who can know,  
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?  
 But if thou think, trial unsought may finde  
 Us both securer then thus warnd thou seemst,  
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;  
 Go in thy native innocence, relie  
 On what thou hast of vertue, summon all,  
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.  
 So spake the Patriarch of Mankinde, but Eve  
 Persisted, yet submiss, though last, repli'd.  
 With thy permission then, and thus forewarnd  
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words  
 Touchd onely, that our trial, when least sought,  
 May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar'd,  
 The willinger I goe, nor much expect  
 A Foe so proud will first the weaker seek;  
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.  
 Thus saying, from her Husbands hand her hand  
 Soft she withdrew, and like a Wood-Nymph light  
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's Traine,  
 Betook her to the Groves, but Delia's self  
 In gate surpass'd and Goddess-like deport,  
 Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver armd,  
 But with such Gardning Tools as Are yet rude,  
 Guiltless of fire had formd, or Angels brought,  
 To Pales or Pomona, thus adornd,  
 Likest she seemd, Pomona when she fled  
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her Prime,  
 Yet Virgin of Proserpina from Jove.  
 Her long with ardent look his Eye pursu'd  
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.  
 Oft he to her his charge of quick returne,  
 Repeated, shee to him as oft engag'd  
 To be returnd by Noon amid the Bowre,  
 And all things in best order to invite  
 Noontide repast, or Afternoons repose.  
 O much deceav'd, much failing, hapless Eve,  
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!  
 Thou never from that houre in Paradise  
 Foundst either sweet repast, or found repose;  
 Such ambush hid among sweet Flours and Shades  
 Waited with hellish rancor imminent  
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back  
 Despoild of Innocence, of Faith, of Bliss.  
 For now, and since first break of dawne the Fiend,  
 Meer Serpent in appearance, forth was come,  
 And on his Quest, where likeliest he might finde  
 The onely two of Mankinde, but in them  
 The whole included Race, his purposd prey.

In Bowre and Field he sought, where any tuft  
 Of Grove or Garden-Plot more pleasant lay,  
 Their tendance or Plantation for delight,  
 By Fountain or by shadie Rivulet  
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find  
 Eve separate, he wish'd, but not with hope  
 Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,  
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
 Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood,  
 Half spi'd, so thick the Roses bushing round  
 About her glowd, oft stooping to support  
 Each Flour of slender stalk, whose head though gay  
 Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold,  
 Hung drooping unsustaind, them she upstaies  
 Gently with Mirtle band, mindless the while,  
 Her self, though fairest unsupported Flour,  
 From her best prop so farr, and storn so nigh.  
 Neererhe drew, and many a walk travers'd  
 Of stateliest Covert, Cedar, Pine, or Palme,  
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen  
 Among thick-wov'n Arborets and Flours  
 Imborderd on each Bank, the hand of Eve:  
 Spot more delicious then those Gardens feign'd  
 Or of reviv'd Adonis or renownd  
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes Son,  
 Or that, not Mystic, where the Sapient King  
 Held dalliance with his faire Egyptian Spouse.  
 Much hee the Place admir'd, the Person more.  
 As one who long in populous City pent,  
 Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy the Aire,  
 Forth issuing on a Summers Morn, to breathe  
 Among the pleasant Villages and Farmes  
 Adjoynd, from each thing met conceaves delight,  
 The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine,  
 Or Dairie, each rural sight, each rural sound;  
 If chance with Nymphlike step fair Virgin pass,  
 What pleasing seemd, for her now pleases more,  
 She most, and in her look summs all Delight.  
 Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
 This Flourie Plat, the sweet recess of Eve  
 Thus earlie, thus alone; her Heav'nly forme  
 Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,  
 Her graceful Innocence, her every Aire  
 Of gesture or lest action overawd  
 His Malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd  
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:  
 That space the Evil one abstracted stood  
 From his own evil, and for the time remaind  
 Stupidly good, of enmitie disarm'd,  
 Of guile, of hate, of envie, of revenge;  
 But the hot Hell that alwayes in him burnes,  
 Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight,



And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
 Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon  
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.  
 Thoughts, whither have he led me, with what sweet  
 Compulsion thus transported to forget  
 What hither brought us, hate, not love, nor hope  
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,  
 Save what is in destroying, other joy  
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass  
 Occasion which now smiles, behold alone  
 The Woman, opportune to all attempts,  
 Her Husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,  
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould,  
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,  
 I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and paine  
 Infeebld me, to what I was in Heav'n.  
 Shee fair, divinely fair, fit Love for Gods,  
 Not terrible, though terrour be in Love  
 And beautie, not approacht by stronger hate,  
 Hate stronger, under shew of Love well feign'd,  
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.  
 So spake the Enemie of Mankind, enclos'd  
 In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward Eve  
 Address'd his way, not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,  
 Circular base of rising foulds, that tour'd  
 Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head  
 Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes;  
 With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass  
 Floted redundant: pleasing was his shape,  
 And lovely, never since of Serpent kind  
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd  
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the God  
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,  
 Hee with Olympias, this with her who bore  
 Scipio the highth of Rome. With tract oblique  
 At first, as one who sought access, but feard  
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.  
 As when a Ship by skilful Steersman wrought  
 Nigh Rivers mouth or Foreland, where the Wind  
 Veres oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Saile;  
 So varied hee, and of his tortuous Traine  
 Curld many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,  
 To lure her Eye; shee busied heard the sound  
 Of rusling Leaves, but minded not, as us'd  
 To such disport before her through the Field,

From every Beast, more duteous at her call,  
 Then at Circean call the Herd disguis'd.  
 Hee boulder now, uncall'd before her stood;  
 But as in gaze admiring: Oft he bowd  
 His turret Crest, and sleek enamel'd Neck,  
 Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.  
 His gentle dumb expression turnd at length  
 The Eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad  
 Of her attention gaind, with Serpent Tongue  
 Organic, or impulse of vocal Air,  
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.  
 Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps  
 Thou canst, who art sole Wonder, much less arm  
 Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,  
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze  
 Insatiate, I thus single; nor have feard  
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.  
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire,  
 Thee all living things gaze on, all things thine  
 By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore  
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld  
 Where universally admir'd; but here  
 In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,  
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,  
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen  
 A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd  
 By Angels numberless, thy daily Train.  
 So glaz'd the Tempter, and his Proem tun'd;  
 Into the Heart of Eve his words made way,  
 Though at the voice much marveling; at length  
 Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake.  
 What may this mean? Language of Man pronounc't  
 By Tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest?  
 The first at lest of these I thought deni'd  
 To Beasts, whom God on their Creation-Day  
 Created mute to all articulat sound;  
 The latter I demurre, for in thir looks  
 Much reason, and in thir actions oft appeers.  
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field  
 I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;  
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,  
 How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how  
 To me so friendly grown above the rest  
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?  
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due.  
 To whom the guileful Tempter thus reply'd.  
 Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve,  
 Easie to mee it is to tell thee all  
 What thou commandst, and right thou shouldst be obeyd:  
 I was at first as other Beasts that graze  
 The trodden Herb, of abject thoughts and low,

As was my food, nor aught but food discern'd  
 Or Sex, and apprehended nothing high:  
 Till on a day roaving the field, I chanc'd  
 A goodly Tree farr distant to behold  
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixt,  
 Ruddle and Gold: I nearer drew to gaze;  
 When from the boughes a savorie odour blow'n,  
 Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense  
 Then smell of sweetest Fenel, or the Teats  
 Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Eevn,  
 Unsuckt of Lamb or Kid, that tend thir play.  
 To satisfie the sharp desire I had  
 Of tasting those fair Apples, I resolv'd  
 Not to deferr; hunger and thirst at once,  
 Powerful perswaders, quick'nd at the scent  
 Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keene.  
 About the Mossie Trunk I wound me soon,  
 For high from ground the branches would require  
 Thy utmost reach or Adams: Round the Tree  
 All other Beasts that saw, with like desire  
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.  
 Amid the Tree now got, where plentie hung  
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill  
 I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour  
 At Feed or Fountain never had I found.  
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceave  
 Strange alteration in me, to degree  
 Of Reason in my inward Powers, and Speech  
 Wanted not long, though to this shape retaind.  
 Thenceforth to Speculations high or deep  
 I turnd my thoughts, and with capacious mind  
 Considerd all things visible in Heav'n,  
 Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good;  
 But all that fair and good in thy Divine  
 Semblance, and in thy Beauties heav'nly Ray  
 United I beheld; no Fair to thine  
 Equivalent or second, which compel'd  
 Mee thus, though importune perhaps, to come  
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd  
 Sovran of Creatures, universal Dame.  
 So talk'd the spirited sly Snake; and Eve  
 Yet more amaz'd unwarie thus reply'd.  
 Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt  
 The vertue of that Fruit, in thee first prov'd:  
 But say, where grows the Tree, from hence how far?  
 For many are the Trees of God that grow  
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown  
 To us, in such abundance lies our choice,  
 As leaves a greater store of Fruit untoucht,  
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
 Grow up to thir provision, and more hands  
 Help to disburden Nature of her Bearth.

To whom the wilie Adder, blithe and glad.  
 Empress, the way is readie, and not long,  
 Beyond a row of Myrtles, on a Flat,  
 Fast by a Fountain, one small Thicket past  
 Of blowing Myrrh and Balme; if thou accept  
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.  
 Lead then, said Eve. Hee leading swiftly rowld  
 In tangles, and make intricate seem strait,  
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy  
 Bright'ns his Crest, as when a wandring Fire  
 Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night  
 Condenses, and the cold invirons round,  
 Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,  
 Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,  
 Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,  
 Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way  
 To Boggs and Mires, & oft through Pond or Poole,  
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour farr.  
 So glister'd the dire Snake and into fraud  
 Led Eve our credulous Mother, to the Tree  
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe;  
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.  
 Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,  
 Fruitless to me, though Fruit be here to excess,  
 The credit of whose vertue rest with thee,  
 Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.  
 But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch;  
 God so commanded, and left that Command  
 Sole Daughter of his voice; the rest, we live  
 Law to our selves, our Reason is our Law.  
 To whom the Tempter guilefully repli'd.  
 Indeed? hath God then said that of the Fruit  
 Of all these Garden Trees ye shall not eate,  
 Yet Lords declar'd of all in Earth or Aire?  
 To whom thus Eve yet sinless. Of the Fruit  
 Of each Tree in the Garden we may eate,  
 But of the Fruit of this fair Tree amidst  
 The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eate  
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die.  
 She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold  
 The Tempter, but with shew of Zeale and Love  
 To Man, and indignation at his wrong,  
 New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,  
 Fluctuats disturbd, yet comely, and in act  
 Rais'd, as of som great matter to begin.  
 As when of old som Orator renound  
 In Athens or free Rome, where Eloquence  
 Flourishd, since mute, to som great cause adrest,  
 Stood in himself collected, while each part,  
 Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,  
 Somtimes in highth began, as no delay  
 Of Preface brooking through his Zeal of Right.

So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown  
 The Tempter all impassiond thus began.  
 O Sacred, Wise, and Wisdom-giving Plant,  
 Mother of Science, Now I feel thy Power  
 Within me cleere, not onely to discern  
 Things in thir Causes, but to trace the wayes  
 Of highest Agents, deemd however wise.  
 Queen of this Universe, doe not believe  
 Those rigid threats of Death; ye shall not Die:  
 How should ye? by the Fruit? it gives you Life  
 To Knowledge? By the Threatner, look on mee,  
 Mee who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,  
 And life more perfet have attaind then Fate  
 Meant mee, by ventring higher then my Lot.  
 Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast  
 Is open? or will God incense his ire  
 For such a pretty Trespass, and not praise  
 Rather your dauntless vertue, whom the pain  
 Of Death denounc't, whatever thing Death be,  
 Deterrd not from atchieving what might leade  
 To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil;  
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil  
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?  
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;  
 Not just, not God; not feard then, nor obeid:  
 Your feare it self of Death removes the feare.  
 Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,  
 Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,  
 His worshippers; he knows that in the day  
 Ye Eate thereof, your Eyes that seem so cleere,  
 Yet are but dim, shall perfetly be then  
 Op'nd and cleerd, and ye shall be as Gods,  
 Knowing both Good and Evil as they know.  
 That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man,  
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet,  
 I of brute human, yee of human Gods.  
 So ye shalt die perhaps, by putting off  
 Human, to put on Gods, death to be wisht,  
 Though threat'nd, which no worse then this can bring  
 And what are Gods that Man may not become  
 As they, participating God-like food?  
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds,  
 I question it, for this fair Earth I see,  
 Warm'd by the Sun, producing every kind,  
 Them nothing: If they all things, who enclos'd  
 Knowledge of Good and Evil in this Tree,  
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains  
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies  
 Th' offence, that Man should thus attain to know?  
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this Tree  
 Impart against his will if all be his?

Or is it envie, and can envie dwell  
 In heav'nly breasts? these, these and many more  
 Causes import your need of this fair Fruit.  
 Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.  
 He ended, and his words replete with guile  
 Into her heart too easie entrance won:  
 Fixt on the Fruit she gaz'd, which to behold  
 Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound  
 Yet rung of his perswasive words, impregn'd  
 With Reason, to her seeming, and with Truth;  
 Meanwhile the hour of Noon drew on, and wak'd  
 An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell  
 So savorie of that Fruit, which with desire,  
 Incluable now grown to touch or taste,  
 Sollicited her longing eye; yet first  
 Pausing a while, thus to her self she mus'd.  
 Great are thy Vertues, doubtless, best of Fruits,  
 Though kept from Man, & worthy to be admir'd,  
 Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay  
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
 The Tongue not made for Speech to speak thy praise:  
 Thy praise hee also who forbids thy use,  
 Conceales not from us, naming thee the Tree  
 Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;  
 Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding  
 Commends thee more, while it inferrs the good  
 By thee communicated, and our want:  
 For good unknown, sure is not had, or had  
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
 In plain then, what forbids he but to know,  
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
 Such prohibitions binde not. But if Death  
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eate  
 Of this fair Fruit, our doom is, we shall die.  
 How dies the Serpent? hee hath eat'n and lives,  
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discernes,  
 Irrational till then. For us alone  
 Was death invented? or to us deni'd  
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?  
 For Beasts it seems: yet that one Beast which first  
 Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy  
 The good befall'n him, Author unsuspect,  
 Friendly to man, farr from deceit or guile.  
 What fear I then, rather what know to feare  
 Under this ignorance of Good and Evil,  
 Of God or Death, of Law or Penaltie?  
 Here grows the Cure of all, this Fruit Divine,  
 Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste,  
 Of vertue to make wise: what hinders then  
 To reach, and feed at once both Bodie and Mind?  
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour

Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:  
 Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat  
 Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,  
 That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk  
 The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for Eve  
 Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else  
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd,  
 In Fruit she never tasted, whether true  
 Or fansied so, through expectation high  
 Of knowledge, nor was God-head from her thought.  
 Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,  
 And knew not eating Death: Satiated at length,  
 And hight'nd as with Wine, jocond and boon,  
 Thus to her self she pleasingly began.  
 O Sovran, vertuous, precious of all Trees  
 In Paradise, of operation blest  
 To Sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,  
 And thy fair Fruit let hang, as to no end  
 Created; but henceforth my early care,  
 Not without Song, each Morning, and due praise  
 Shall tend thee, and the fertil burden ease  
 Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;  
 Till dieted by thee I grow mature  
 In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know;  
 Though others envie what they cannot give;  
 For had the gift bin theirs, it had not here  
 Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,  
 Best guide; not following thee, I had remaind  
 In ignorance, thou op'nst Wisdoms way,  
 And giv'st access, though secret she retire.  
 And I perhaps am secret; Heav'n is high,  
 High and remote to see from thence distinct  
 Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps  
 May have diverted from continual watch  
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his Spies  
 About him. But to Adam in what sort  
 Shall I appeer? shall I to him make known  
 As yet my change, and give him to partake  
 Full happiness with mee, or rather not,  
 But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power  
 Without Copartner? so to add what wants  
 In Femal Sex, the more to draw his Love,  
 And render me more equal, and perhaps  
 A thing not undesireable, sometime  
 Superior; for inferior who is free?  
 This may be well: but what if God have seen,  
 And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,  
 And Adam wedded to another Eve,  
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;  
 A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve,  
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:  
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths

I could endure; without him live no life.  
 So saying, from the Tree her step she turnd,  
 But first low Reverence don, as to the power  
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd  
 Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd  
 From Nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while  
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
 Of choicest Flours a Garland to adorne  
 Her Tresses, and her rural labours crown  
 As Reapers oft are wont thir Harvest Queen.  
 Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new  
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd;  
 Yet oft his heart, divine of somthing ill,  
 Misgave him; hee the faultring measure felt;  
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
 That Morn when first they parted; by the Tree  
 Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,  
 Scarse from the Tree returning; in her hand  
 A bough of fairest fruit that downie smil'd,  
 New gatherd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.  
 To him she hasted, in her face excuse  
 Came Prologue, and Apologie to prompt,  
 Which with bland words at will she thus adress.  
 Hast thou not wonderd, Adam, at my stay?  
 Thee I have misst, and thought it long, depriv'd  
 Thy presence, agonie of love till now  
 Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more  
 Mean I to trie, what rash untri'd I sought,  
 The paine of absence from thy sight. But strange  
 Hath bin the cause, and wonderful to heare:  
 This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree  
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
 Op'ning the way, but of Divine effect  
 To open Eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
 And hath bin tasted such; the Serpent wise,  
 Or not restrain'd as wee, or not obeying,  
 Hath eat'n of the fruit, and is become,  
 Not dead, as we are threatn'd, but thenceforth  
 Endu'd with human voice and human sense,  
 Reasoning to admiration, and with mee  
 Perswasively hath so prevaild, that I  
 Have also tasted, and have also found  
 Th' effects to correspond, opener mine Eyes,  
 Dimm erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart,  
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee  
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.  
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,  
 Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.  
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot  
 May joyne us, equal Joy, as equal Love;  
 Least thou not tasting, different degree  
 Disjoyne us, and I then too late renounce



Deitie for thee, when Fate will not permit.  
 Thus Eve with Countenance blithe her storie told;  
 But in her Cheek distemper flushing glowd.  
 On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard  
 The fatal Trespass don by Eve, amaz'd,  
 Astonied stood and Blank, while horror chill  
 Ran through his veins, and all his joynts relax'd;  
 From his slack hand the Garland wreath'd for Eve  
 Down drop'd, and all the faded Roses shed:  
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length  
 First to himself he inward silence broke.  
 O fairest of Creation, last and best  
 Of all Gods Works, Creature in whom excell'd  
 Whatever can to fight or thought be found,  
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!  
 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,  
 Defac't, deflourd, and now to Death devote?  
 Rather how hast thou yeelded to transgress  
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate  
 The sacred Fruit forbidd'n! som cursed fraud  
 Of Enemie hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,  
 And mee with thee hath ruind, for with thee  
 Certain my resolution is to Die;  
 How can I live without thee, how forgoe  
 Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly joyn'd,  
 To live again in these wilde Woods forlorn?  
 Should God create another Eve, and I  
 Another Rib afford, yet loss of thee  
 Would never from my heart; no no, I feel  
 The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,  
 Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State  
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.  
 So having said, as one from sad dismay  
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbd  
 Submitting to what seemd remediless,  
 Thus in calme mood his Words to Eve he turnd.  
 Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventrous Eve,  
 And peril great provok't, who thus hast dar'd  
 Had it bin onely coveting to Eye  
 That sacred Fruit, sacred to abstinence,  
 Much more to taste it under banne to touch.  
 But past who can recall, or don undoe?  
 Not God omnipotent, for Fate, yet so  
 Perhaps thou shalt not Die, perhaps the Fact  
 Is not so hainous now, foretasted Fruit,  
 Profan'd first by the Serpent, by him first  
 Made common and unhallowd: ere one tastes;  
 Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,  
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gaines to live as Man  
 Higher degree of Life, inducement strong  
 To us, as likely tasting to attaine  
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be

But to be Gods, or Angels Demi-gods.  
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,  
 Though threatning, will in earnest so destroy  
 Us his prime Creatures, dignifi'd so high,  
 Set over all his Works, which in our Fall,  
 For us created, needs with us must faile,  
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,  
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour loose,  
 Not well conceav'd of God, who though his Power  
 Creation could repeate, yet would be loath  
 Us to abolish, least the Adversary  
 Triumph and say; Fickle their State whom God  
 Most Favors, who can please him long? Mee first  
 He ruind, now Mankind; whom will he next?  
 Matter of scorne, not to be given the Foe.  
 However I with thee have fixt my Lot,  
 Certain to undergoe like doom, if Death  
 Consort with thee, Death is to mee as Life;  
 So forcible within my heart I feel  
 The Bond of Nature draw me to my owne,  
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;  
 Our State cannot be severd, we are one,  
 One Flesh; to loose thee were to loose my self.  
 So Adam, and thus Eve to him repli'd.  
 O glorious trial of exceeding Love,  
 Illustrious evidence, example high!  
 Ingaging me to emulate, but short  
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attaine,  
 Adam, from whose deare side I boast me sprung,  
 And gladly of our Union heare thee speak,  
 One Heart, one Soul in both; whereof good prooff  
 This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,  
 Rather then Death or aught then Death more dread  
 Shall separate us, linkt in Love so deare,  
 To undergoe with mee one Guilt, one Crime,  
 If any be, of tasting this fair Fruit,  
 Whose vertue, for of good still good proceeds,  
 Direct, or by occasion hath presented  
 This happie trial of thy Love, which else  
 So eminently never had bin known.  
 Were it I thought Death menac't would ensue  
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
 The worst, and not perswade thee, rather die  
 Deserted, then oblige thee with a fact  
 Pernicious to thy Peace, chiefly assur'd  
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
 So faithful Love unequald; but I feel  
 Farr otherwise th' event, not Death, but Life  
 Augmented, op'nd Eyes, new Hopes, new Joyes,  
 Taste so Divine, that what of sweet before  
 Hath toucht my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.  
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,

And fear of Death deliver to the Windes.  
 So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy  
 Tenderly wept, much won that he his Love  
 Had so enobl'd, as of choice to incurr  
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or Death.  
 In recompence (for such compliance bad  
 Such recompence best merits) from the bough  
 She gave him of that fair enticing Fruit  
 With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat  
 Against his better knowledge, not deceav'd,  
 But fondly overcome with Femal charm.  
 Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again  
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,  
 Skie lowr'd, and muttering Thunder, som sad drops  
 Wept at compleating of the mortal Sin  
 Original; while Adam took no thought,  
 Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate  
 Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe  
 Him with her lov'd societie, that now  
 As with new Wine intoxicated both  
 They swim in mirth, and fansie that they feel  
 Divinitie within them breeding wings  
 Wherewith to scorn the Earth: but that false Fruit  
 Farr other operation first displaid,  
 Carnal desire enflaming, hee on Eve  
 Began to cast lascivious Eyes, she him  
 As wantonly repaid; in Lust they burne:  
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.  
 Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,  
 And elegant, of Sapience no small part,  
 Since to each meaning savour we apply,  
 And Palate call judicious; I the praise  
 Yeild thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.  
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd  
 From this delightful Fruit, nor known till now  
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be  
 In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd,  
 For this one Tree had bin forbidden ten.  
 But come, so well refresh't, now let us play,  
 As meet is, after such delicious Fare;  
 For never did thy Beautie since the day  
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd  
 With all perfections, so enflame my sense  
 With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now  
 Then ever, bountie of this vertuous Tree.  
 So said he, and forbore not glance or toy  
 Of amorous intent, well understood  
 Of Eve, whose Eye darted contagious Fire.  
 Her hand he seis'd, and to a shadie bank,  
 Thick overhead with verdant roof imbowr'd  
 He led her nothing loath; Flours were the Couch,  
 Pansies, and Violets, and Asphodel,

And Hyacinth, Earths freshest softest lap.  
 There they thir fill of Love and Loves disport  
 Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seale,  
 The solace of thir sin, till dewie sleep  
 Oppress'd them, wearied with thir amorous play.  
 Soon as the force of that fallacious Fruit,  
 That with exhilarating vapour bland  
 About thir spirits had plaid, and inmost powers  
 Made erre, was now exhal'd, and grosser sleep  
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscios dreams  
 Encumberd, now had left them, up they rose  
 As from unrest, and each the other viewing,  
 Soon found thir Eyes how op'nd, and thir minds  
 How dark'nd; innocence, that as a veile  
 Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gon,  
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,  
 And honour from about them, naked left  
 To guiltie shame hee cover'd, but his Robe  
 Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong  
 Herculean Samson from the Harlot-lap  
 Of Philistian Dalilah, and wak'd  
 Shorn of his strength, They destitute and bare  
 Of all thir vertue: silent, and in face  
 Confounded long they sate, as struck'n mute,  
 Till Adam, though not less then Eve abasht,  
 At length gave utterance to these words constraind.  
 O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give care  
 To that false Worm, of whomsoever taught  
 To counterfet Mans voice, true in our Fall,  
 False in our promis'd Rising; since our Eyes  
 Op'nd we find indeed, and find we know  
 Both Good and Evil, Good lost and Evil got,  
 Bad Fruit of Knowledge, if this be to know,  
 Which leaves us naked thus, of Honour void,  
 Of Innocence, of Faith, of Puritie,  
 Our wonted Ornaments now soild and staind,  
 And in our Faces evident the signes  
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;  
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first  
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face  
 Henceforth of God or Angel, earst with joy  
 And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes  
 Will dazle now this earthly, with thir blaze  
 Insufferably bright. O might I here  
 In solitude live savage, in some glad  
 Obscur'd, where highest Woods impenetrable  
 To Starr or Sun-light, spread thir umbrage broad,  
 And brown as Evening: Cover me ye Pines,  
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs  
 Hide me, where I may never see them more.  
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise  
 What best may for the present serve to hide

The Parts of each from other, that seem most  
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen,  
 Some Tree whose broad smooth Leaves together sowl,  
 And girded on our loyns, may cover round  
 Those middle parts, that this new commer, Shame,  
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.  
 So counsel'd hee, and both together went  
 Into the thickest Wood, there soon they chose  
 The Figtree, not that kind for Fruit renown'd,  
 But such as at this day to Indians known  
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her Armes  
 Braunching so broad and long, that in the ground  
 The bended Twigs take root, and Daughters grow  
 About the Mother Tree, a Pillard shade  
 High overarch't, and echoing Walks between;  
 There oft the Indian Herdsman shunning heate  
 Shelters in coole, and tends his pasturing Herds  
 At Loopholes cut through thickest shade: Those Leaves  
 They gatherd, broad as Amazonian Targe,  
 And with what skill they had, together sowl,  
 To gird thir waste, vain Covering if to hide  
 Thir guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike  
 To that first naked Glorie. Such of late  
 Columbus found th' American to girt  
 With featherd Cincture, naked else and wilde  
 Among the Trees on Iles and woodie Shores.  
 Thus fenc't, and as they thought, thir shame in part  
 Coverd, but not at rest or ease of Mind,  
 They sate them down to weep, nor onely Teares  
 Raind at thir Eyes, but high Winds worse within  
 Began to rise, high Passions, Anger, Hate,  
 Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore  
 Thir inward State of Mind, calme Region once  
 And full of Peace, now tost and turbulent:  
 For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will  
 Heard not her lore, both in subjection now  
 To sensual Appetite, who from beneath  
 Usurping over sovran Reason claimd  
 Superior sway: From thus distemperd brest,  
 Adam, estrang'd in look and alterd stile,  
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewd.  
 Would thou hadst heark'nd to my words, & stai'd  
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
 Desire of wandring this unhappie Morn,  
 I know not whence possessd thee; we had then  
 Remaind still happie, not as now, despoild  
 Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.  
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve  
 The Faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to faile.  
 To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame thus Eve.  
 What words have past thy Lips, Adam severe,

Imput'st thou that to my default, or will  
 Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which who knows  
 But might as ill have happ'nd thou being by,  
 Or to thy self perhaps: hadst thou bin there,  
 Or bere th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd  
 Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;  
 No ground of enmitie between us known,  
 Why hee should mean me ill, or seek to harme.  
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
 As good have grown there still a liveless Rib.  
 Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head  
 Command me absolutely not to go,  
 Going into such danger as thou saidst?  
 Too facil then thou didst not much gainsay,  
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
 Hadst thou bin firm and fixt in thy dissent,  
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with mee.  
 To whom then first incenst Adam repli'd.  
 Is this the Love, is the recompence  
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, exprest  
 Immutable when thou wert lost, not I,  
 Who might have liv'd and joyd immortal bliss,  
 Yet willingly chose rather Death with thee:  
 And am I now upbraided, as the cause  
 Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,  
 It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?  
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold  
 The danger, and the lurking Enemie  
 That lay in wait; beyond this had bin force,  
 And force upon free Will hath here no place.  
 But confidence then bore thee on, secure  
 Either to meet no danger, or to finde  
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps  
 I also err'd in overmuch admiring  
 What seem'd in thee so perfet, that I thought  
 No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue  
 That error now, which is become my crime,  
 And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall  
 Him who to worth in Women overtrusting  
 Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brook,  
 And left to her self, if evil thence ensue,  
 Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.  
 Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning  
 And of thir vain contest appeer'd no end.

John Milton

## Paradise Lost: Book X

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood  
Praying, for from the Mercie-seat above  
Prevenient Grace descending had remov'd  
The stonie from thir hearts, and made new flesh  
Regenerat grow instead, that sighs now breath'd  
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer  
Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with speedier flight  
Then loudest Oratorie: yet thir port  
Not of mean suiters, nor important less  
Seem'd thir Petition, then when th' ancient Pair  
In Fables old, less ancient yet then these,  
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha to restore  
The Race of Mankind drown'd, before the Shrine  
Of Themis stood devout. To Heav'n thir prayers  
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious windes  
Blow'n vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd  
Dimensionless through Heav'nly dores; then clad  
With incense, where the Golden Altar fum'd,  
By thir great Intercessor, came in sight  
Before the Fathers Throne: Them the glad Son  
Presenting, thus to intercede began.  
See Father, what first fruits on Earth are sprung  
From thy implanted Grace in Man, these Sighs  
And Prayers, which in this Golden Censer, mixt  
With Incense, I thy Priest before thee bring,  
Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed  
Sow'n with contrition in his heart, then those  
Which his own hand manuring all the Trees  
Of Paradise could have produc't, ere fall'n  
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine eare  
To supplication, heare his sighs though mute;  
Unskilful with what words to pray, let mee  
Interpret for him, mee his Advocate  
And propitiation, all his works on mee  
Good or not good ingraft, my Merit those  
Shall perfet, and for these my Death shall pay.  
Accept me, and in mee from these receive  
The smell of peace toward Mankinde, let him live  
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days  
Numberd, though sad, till Death, his doom (which I  
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse)  
To better life shall yeeld him, where with mee  
All my redeemd may dwell in joy and bliss,  
Made one with me as I with thee am one.  
To whom the Father, without Cloud, serene.  
All thy request for Man, accepted Son,  
Obtain, all thy request was my Decree:  
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,  
The Law I gave to Nature him forbids:  
Those pure immortal Elements that know  
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foule,  
Eject him tainted now, and purge him off

As a distemper, gross to aire as gross,  
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best  
 For dissolution wrought by Sin, that first  
 Distemperd all things, and of incorrupt  
 Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts  
 Created him endowd, with Happiness  
 And Immortalitie: that fondly lost,  
 This other serv'd but to eternize woe;  
 Till I provided Death; so Death becomes  
 His final remedie, and after Life  
 Tri'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd  
 By Faith and faithful works, to second Life,  
 Wak't in the renovation of the just,  
 Resignes him up with Heav'n and Earth renewd.  
 But let us call to Synod all the Blest  
 Through Heav'ns wide bounds; from them I will not hide  
 My judgments, how with Mankind I proceed,  
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw;  
 And in thir state, though firm, stood more confirmd.  
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
 To the bright Minister that watchd, hee blew  
 His Trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps  
 When God descended, and perhaps once more  
 To sound at general Doom. Th' Angelic blast  
 Filld all the Regions: from thir blissful Bows  
 Of Amarantin Shade, Fountain or Spring,  
 By the waters of Life, where ere they sate  
 In fellowships of joy: the Sons of Light  
 Hasted, resorting to the Summons high,  
 And took thir Seats; till from his Throne supream  
 Th' Almighty thus pronounced his sovran Will.  
 O Sons, like one of us Man is become  
 To know both Good and Evil, since his taste  
 Of that defended Fruit; but let him boast  
 His knowledge of Good lost, and Evil got,  
 Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known  
 Good by it self, and Evil not at all.  
 He sorrows now, repents, and prayes contrite,  
 My motions in him, longer then they move,  
 His heart I know, how variable and vain  
 Self-left. Least therefore his now bolder hand  
 Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,  
 And live for ever, dream at least to live  
 Forever, to remove him I decree,  
 And send him from the Garden forth to Till  
 The Ground whence he was taken, fitter soile.  
 Michael, this my behest have thou in charge,  
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim  
 Thy choice of flaming Warriours, lest the Fiend  
 Or in behalf of Man, or to invade  
 Vacant possession som new trouble raise:  
 Hast thee, and from the Paradise of God



Without remorse drive out the sinful Pair,  
 From hallowd ground th' unholie, and denounce  
 To them and to thir Progenie from thence  
 Perpetual banishment. Yet least they faint  
 At the sad Sentence rigorously urg'd,  
 For I behold them soft'nd and with tears  
 Bewailing thir excess, all terror hide.  
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
 Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveale  
 To Adam what shall come in future dayes,  
 As I shall thee enlighten, intermix  
 My Cov'nant in the Womans seed renewd;  
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:  
 And on the East side of the Garden place,  
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
 Cherubic watch, and of a Sword the flame  
 Wide waving, all approach farr off to fright,  
 And guard all passage to the Tree of Life:  
 Least Paradise a receptacle prove  
 To Spirits foule, and all my Trees thir prey,  
 With whose stol'n Fruit Man once more to delude.  
 He ceas'd; and th' Archangelic Power prepar'd  
 For swift descent, with him the Cohort bright  
 Of watchful Cherubim; four faces each  
 Had, like a double Janus, all thir shape  
 Spangl'd with eyes more numerous then those  
 Of Argus, and more wakeful then to drouze,  
 Charm'd with Arcadian Pipe, the Pastoral Reed  
 Of Hermes, or his opiate Rod. Meanwhile  
 To resalute the World with sacred Light  
 Leucothia wak'd, and with fresh dews imbalmd  
 The Earth, when Adam and first Matron Eve  
 Had ended now thir Orisons, and found,  
 Strength added from above, new hope to spring  
 Out of despaire, joy, but with fear yet linkt;  
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewd.  
 Eve, easily may Faith admit, that all  
 The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends  
 But that from us ought should ascend to Heav'n  
 So prevalent as to concerne the mind  
 Of God high blest, or to incline his will,  
 Hard to belief may seem; yet this will Prayer,  
 Or one short sigh of humane breath, up-borne  
 Ev'n to the Seat of God. For since I saught  
 By Prayer th' offended Deitie to appease,  
 Kneel'd and before him humbl'd all my heart,  
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,  
 Bending his eare; perswasion in me grew  
 That I was heard with favour; peace returnd  
 Home to my brest, and to my memorie  
 His promise, that thy Seed shall bruise our Foe;  
 Which then not minded in dismay, yet now

Assures me that the bitterness of death  
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence Haile to thee,  
 Eve rightly call'd, Mother of all Mankind,  
 Mother of all things living, since by thee  
 Man is to live, and all things live for Man.  
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.  
 Ill worthie I such title should belong  
 To me transgressour, who for thee ordaind  
 A help, became thy snare; to mee reproach  
 Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise:  
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
 That I who first brought Death on all, am grac't  
 The sourse of life; next favourable thou,  
 Who highly thus to entitle me voutsaf't,  
 Farr other name deserving. But the Field  
 To labour calls us now with sweat impos'd,  
 Though after sleepless Night; for see the Morn,  
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins  
 Her rosie progress smiling; let us forth,  
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
 Wherere our days work lies, though now enjoind  
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,  
 What can be toilsom in these pleasant Walkes?  
 Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content.  
 So spake, so wish'd much-humbl'd Eve, but Fate  
 Subscrib'd not; Nature first gave Signs, imprest  
 On Bird, Beast, Aire, Aire suddenly eclips'd  
 After short blush of Morn; nigh in her sight  
 The Bird of Jove, stoopt from his aerie tour,  
 Two Birds of gayest plume before him drove:  
 Down from a Hill the Beast that reigns in Woods,  
 First Hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,  
 Goodliest of all the Forrest, Hart and Hinde;  
 Direct to th' Eastern Gate was bent thir flight.  
 Adam observ'd, and with his Eye the chase  
 Pursuing, not unmov'd to Eve thus spake.  
 O Eve, some furdur change awaits us nigh,  
 Which Heav'n by these mute signs in Nature shews  
 Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn  
 Us haply too secure of our discharge  
 From penaltie, because from death releast  
 Some days; how long, and what till then our life,  
 Who knows, or more then this, that we are dust,  
 And thither must return and be no more.  
 VVhy else this double object in our sight  
 Of flight pursu'd in th' Air and ore the ground  
 One way the self-same hour? why in the East  
 Darkness ere Dayes mid-course, and Morning light  
 More orient in yon VVestern Cloud that draws  
 O're the blew Firmament a radiant white,  
 And slow descends, with somthing heav'nly fraught.  
 He err'd not, for by this the heav'nly Bands

Down from a Skie of Jasper lighted now  
 In Paradise, and on a Hill made alt,  
 A glorious Apparition, had not doubt  
 And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adams eye.  
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw  
 The field Pavillion'd with his Guardians bright;  
 Nor that which on the flaming Mount appeerd  
 In Dothan, cover'd with a Camp of Fire,  
 Against the Syrian King, who to surprize  
 One man, Assassin-like had levied Warr,  
 Warr unproclam'd. The Princely Hierarch  
 In thir bright stand, there left his Powers to seise  
 Possession of the Garden; hee alone,  
 To finde where Adam shelterd, took his way,  
 Not unperceav'd of Adam, who to Eve,  
 While the great Visitant approachd, thus spake.  
 Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
 Of us will soon determin, or impose  
 New Laws to be observ'd; for I descrie  
 From yonder blazing Cloud that veils the Hill  
 One of the heav'nly Host, and by his Gate  
 None of the meanest, some great Potentate  
 Or of the Thrones above, such Majestie  
 Invests him coming; yet not terrible,  
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,  
 As Raphael, that I should much confide,  
 But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.  
 He ended; and th' Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape Celestial, but as Man  
 Clad to meet Man; over his lucid Armes  
 A militarie Vest of purple flowd  
 Livelier then Meliboean or the graine  
 Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Hero's old  
 In time of Truce; Iris had dipt the wooff;  
 His starrie Helme unbuckl'd shew'd him prime  
 In Manhood where Youth ended; by his side  
 As in a glistening Zodiac hung the Sword,  
 Satans dire dread, and in his hand the Spear.  
 Adam bowd low, hee Kingly from his State  
 Incl'in'd not, but his coming thus declar'd.  
 Adam, Heav'ns high behest no Preface needs:  
 Sufficient that thy Prayers are heard, and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seisure many dayes  
 Giv'n thee of Grace, wherein thou may'st repent,  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord appeas'd  
 Redeem thee quite from Deaths rapacious claimes;  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not; to remove thee I am come,

And send thee from the Garden forth to till  
 The ground whence thou wast tak'n, fitter Soile.  
 He added not, for Adam at the newes  
 Heart-strook with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen  
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
 Discover'd soon the place of her retire.  
 O unexpected stroke, worse then of Death!  
 Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave  
 Thee Native Soile, these happie Walks and Shades,  
 Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,  
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day  
 That must be mortal to us both. O flours,  
 That never will in other Climate grow,  
 My early visitation, and my last  
 At Eev'n, which I bred up with tender hand  
 From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye Names,  
 Who now shall reare ye to the Sun, or ranke  
 Your Tribes, and water from th' ambrosial Fount?  
 Thee lastly nuptial Bowre, by mee adorn'd  
 With what to sight or smell was sweet; from thee  
 How shall I part, and whither wander down  
 Into a lower World, to this obscure  
 And wilde, how shall we breath in other Aire  
 Less pure, accustom'd to immortal Fruits?  
 Whom thus the Angel interrupted milde.  
 Lament not Eve, but patiently resigne  
 What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,  
 Thus over fond, on that which is not thine;  
 Thy going is not lonely, with thee goes  
 Thy Husband, him to follow thou art bound;  
 Where he abides, think there thy native soile.  
 Adam by this from the cold sudden damp  
 Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,  
 To Michael thus his humble words address'd.  
 Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd  
 Of them the Highest, for such of shape may seem  
 Prince above Princes, gently hast thou tould  
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
 And in performing end us; what besides  
 Of sorrow and dejection and despair  
 Our frailtie can sustain, thy tidings bring,  
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
 Recess, and onely consolation left  
 Familiar to our eyes, all places else  
 Inhospitable appeer and desolate,  
 Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer  
 Incessant I could hope to change the will  
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease  
 To wearie him with my assiduous cries:  
 But prayer against his absolute Decree  
 No more avales then breath against the winde,

Blown stifling back on him that breaths it forth:  
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
 This most afflicts me, that departing hence,  
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprivd  
 His blessed count'nance; here I could frequent,  
 With worship, place by place where he voutsaf'd  
 Presence Divine, and to my Sons relate;  
 On this Mount he appeerd, under this Tree  
 Stood visible, among these Pines his voice  
 I heard, here with him at this Fountain talk'd:  
 So many grateful Altars I would reare  
 Of grassie Terfe, and pile up every Stone  
 Of lustre from the brook, in memorie,  
 Or monument to Ages, and thereon  
 Offer sweet smelling Gumms & Fruits and Flours:  
 In yonder nether World where shall I seek  
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace?  
 For though I fled him angrie, yet recall'd  
 To life prolongd and promis'd Race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts  
 Of glory, and farr off his steps adore.  
 To whom thus Michael with regard benigne.  
 Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the Earth  
 Not this Rock onely; his Omnipresence fills  
 Land, Sea, and Aire, and every kinde that lives,  
 Fomented by his virtual power and warmd:  
 All th' Earth he gave thee to possess and rule,  
 No despicable gift; surmise not then  
 His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd  
 Of Paradise or Eden: this had been  
 Perhaps thy Capital Seate, from whence had spread  
 All generations, and had hither come  
 From all the ends of th' Earth, to celebrate  
 And reverence thee thir great Progenitor.  
 But this præeminence thou hast lost, brought down  
 To dwell on eeven ground now with thy Sons:  
 Yet doubt not but in Vallie and in Plaine  
 God is as here, and will be found alike  
 Present, and of his presence many a signe  
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round  
 With goodness and paternal Love, his Face  
 Express, and of his steps the track Divine.  
 Which that thou mayst beleeve, and be confirmd,  
 Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent  
 To shew thee what shall come in future dayes  
 To thee and to thy Ofspring; good with bad  
 Expect to hear, supernal Grace contending  
 With sinfulness of Men; thereby to learn  
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
 And pious sorrow, equally enur'd  
 By moderation either state to beare,  
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead

Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure  
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend  
 This Hill; let Eve (for I have drencht her eyes)  
 Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st,  
 As once thou slepst, while Shee to life was formd.  
 To whom thus Adam gratefully repli'd.  
 Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path  
 Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heav'n submit,  
 However chast'ning, to the evil turne  
 My obvious breast, arming to overcom  
 By suffering, and earne rest from labour won,  
 If so I may attain. So both ascend  
 In the Visions of God: It was a Hill  
 Of Paradise the highest, from whose top  
 The Hemisphere of Earth in cleerest Ken  
 Stretcht out to amplest reach of prospect lay.  
 Not higher that Hill nor wider looking round,  
 Whereon for different cause the Tempter set  
 Our second Adam in the Wilderness,  
 To shew him all Earths Kingdomes and thir Glory.  
 His Eye might there command wherever stood  
 City of old or modern Fame, the Seat  
 Of mightiest Empire, from the destind Walls  
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can  
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temirs Throne,  
 To Paquin of Sinæan Kings, and thence  
 To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul  
 Down to the golden Chersonese, or where  
 The Persian in Ecbatan sate, or since  
 In Hispahan, or where the Russian Ksar  
 In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance,  
 Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken  
 Th' Empire of Negus to his utmost Port  
 Ercoco and the less Maritime Kings  
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
 And Sofala thought Ophir, to the Realme  
 Of Congo, and Angola fardest South;  
 Or thence from Niger Flood to Atlas Mount  
 The Kingdoms of Almansor, Fez, and Sus,  
 Marocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;  
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway  
 The VWorld: in Spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico the seat of Motezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd  
 Guiana, whose great Citie Geryons Sons  
 Call El Dorado: but to nobler sights  
 Michael from Adams eyes the Filme remov'd  
 VWhich that false Fruit that promis'd clearer sight  
 Had bred; then purg'd with Euphrasie and Rue  
 The visual Nerve, for he had much to see;  
 And from the VWell of Life three drops instill'd.

So deep the power of these Ingredients pierc'd,  
 Evn to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
 That Adam now enforc't to close his eyes,  
 Sunk down and all his Spirits became intranst:  
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
 Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.  
 Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold  
 Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought  
 In some to spring from thee, who never touch'd  
 Th' excepted Tree, nor with the Snake conspir'd,  
 Nor sinn'd thy sin, yet from that sin derive  
 Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds.  
 His eyes he op'nd, and beheld a field,  
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were Sheaves  
 New reapt, the other part sheep-walks and foulds;  
 Ith' midst an Altar as the Land-mark stood  
 Rustic, of grassie sord; thither anon  
 A sweatie Reaper from his Tillage brought  
 First Fruits, the green Eare, and the yellow Sheaf,  
 Uncull'd, as came to hand; a Shepherd next  
 More meek came with the Firstlings of his Flock  
 Choicest and best; then sacrificing, laid  
 The Inwards and thir Fat, with Incense strew'd,  
 On the cleft Wood, and all due Rites perform'd.  
 His Offring soon propitious Fire from Heav'n  
 Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steame;  
 The others not, for his was not sincere;  
 Whereat hee inlie rag'd, and as they talk'd,  
 Smote him into the Midriff with a stone  
 That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale  
 Groand out his Soul with gushing bloud effus'd.  
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
 Dismai'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cri'd.  
 O Teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n  
 To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd;  
 Is Pietie thus and pure Devotion paid?  
 T' whom Michael thus, hee also mov'd, repli'd.  
 These two are Brethren, Adam, and to come  
 Out of thy loyns; th' unjust the just hath slain,  
 For envie that his Brothers Offering found  
 From Heav'n acceptance; but the bloodie Fact  
 Will be aveng'd, and th' others Faith approv'd  
 Loose no reward, though here thou see him die,  
 Rowling in dust and gore. To which our Sire.  
 Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!  
 But have I now seen Death? Is this the way  
 I must return to native dust? O sight  
 Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,  
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!  
 To whom thus Michael. Death thou hast seen  
 In his first shape on man; but many shapes  
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead

To his grim Cave, all dismal; yet to sense  
 More terrible at th' entrance than within.  
 Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,  
 By Fire, Flood, Famin, by Intemperance more  
 In Meats and Drinks, which on the Earth shal bring  
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew  
 Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know  
 What miserie th' inabstinence of Eve  
 Shall bring on men. Immediately a place  
 Before his eyes appeard, sad, noysom, dark,  
 A Lazar-house it seemd, wherein were laid  
 Numbers of all diseas'd, all maladies  
 Of gastly Spasm, or racking torture, qualmes  
 Of heart-sick Agonie, all feavorous kinds,  
 Convulsions, Epilepsies, fierce Catarrhs,  
 Intestin Stone and Ulcer, Colic pangs,  
 Dropsies, and Asthma's, and Joint-racking Rheums.  
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans, despair  
 Tended the sick busiest from Couch to Couch;  
 And over them triumphant Death his Dart  
 Shook, but delaid to strike, though oft invok't  
 With vows, as thir chief good, and final hope.  
 Sight so deform what heart of Rock could long  
 Drie-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,  
 Though not of Woman born; compassion quell'd  
 His best of Man, and gave him up to tears  
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess,  
 And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.  
 O miserable Mankind, to what fall  
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd?  
 Better end heer unborn. Why is life giv'n  
 To be thus wrested from us? rather why  
 Obtruded on us thus? who if we knew  
 What we receive, would either not accept  
 Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down,  
 Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus  
 Th' Image of God in man created once  
 So goodly and erect, though faultie since,  
 To such unsightly sufferings be debas't  
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,  
 Retainine still Divine similitude  
 In part, from such deformities be free,  
 And for his Makers Image sake exempt?  
 Thir Makers Image, answerd Michael, then  
 Forsook them, when themselves they villifi'd  
 To serve ungovern'd appetite, and took  
 His Image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,  
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.  
 Therefore so abject is thir punishment,  
 Disfiguring not Gods likeness, but thir own,  
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defac't  
 While they pervert pure Natures healthful rules



To loathsom sickness, worthily, since they  
 Gods Image did not reverence in themselves.  
 I yeild it just, said Adam, and submit.  
 But is there yet no other way, besides  
 These painful passages, how we may come  
 To Death, and mix with our connatural dust?  
 There is, said Michael, if thou well observe  
 The rule of not too much, by temperance taught  
 In what thou eatst and drinkst, seeking from thence  
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
 Till many years over thy head return:  
 So maist thou live, till like ripe Fruit thou drop  
 Into thy Mothers lap, or be with ease  
 Gatherd, not harshly pluckt, for death mature:  
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive  
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change  
 To witherd weak & gray; thy Senses then  
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgoe,  
 To what thou hast, and for the Aire of youth  
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reigne  
 A melancholly damp of cold and dry  
 To waigh thy spirits down, and last consume  
 The Balme of Life. To whom our Ancestor.  
 Henceforth I flie not Death, nor would prolong  
 Life much, bent rather how I may be quit  
 Fairest and easiest of this combrous charge,  
 Which I must keep till my appointed day  
 Of rendring up. Michael to him repli'd.  
 Nor love thy Life, nor hate; but what thou livst  
 Live well, how long or short permit to Heav'n:  
 And now prepare thee for another sight.  
 He lookd and saw a spacious Plaine, whereon  
 Were Tents of various hue; by some were herds  
 Of Cattel grazing: others, whence the sound  
 Of Instruments that made melodious chime  
 Was heard, of Harp and Organ; and who moovd  
 Thir stops and chords was seen: his volant touch  
 Instinct through all proportions low and high  
 Fled and pursu'd transverse the resonant fugue.  
 In other part stood one who at the Forge  
 Labouring, two massie clods of Iron and Brass  
 Had melted (whether found where casual fire  
 Had wasted woods on Mountain or in Vale,  
 Down to the veins of Earth, thence gliding hot  
 To som Caves mouth, or whether washt by stream  
 From underground) the liquid Ore he dreind  
 Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he formd  
 First his own Tooles; then, what might else be wrought  
 Fulfil or grav'n in mettle. After these,  
 But on the hether side a different sort  
 From the high neighbouring Hills, which was thir Seat,  
 Down to the Plain descended: by thir guise

Just men they seemd, and all thir study bent  
 To worship God aright, and know his works  
 Not hid, nor those things lost which might preserve  
 Freedom and Peace to men: they on the Plain  
 Long had not walkt, when from the Tents behold  
 A Beavie of fair Women, richly gay  
 In Gems and wanton dress; to the Harp they sung  
 Soft amorous Ditties, and in dance came on:  
 The Men though grave, ey'd them, and let thir eyes  
 Rove without rein, till in the amorous Net  
 Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose;  
 And now of love they treat till th' Eevning Star  
 Loves Harbinger appeerd; then all in heat  
 They light the Nuptial Torch, and bid invoke  
 Hymen, then first to marriage Rites invok't;  
 With Feast and Musick all the Tents resound.  
 Such happy interview and fair event  
 Of love & youth not lost, Songs, Garlands, Flours,  
 And charming Symphonies attach'd the heart  
 Of Adam, soon enclin'd to admit delight,  
 The bent of Nature; which he thus express'd.  
 True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest,  
 Much better seems this Vision, and more hope  
 Of peaceful dayes portends, then those two past;  
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse,  
 Here Nature seems fulfilld in all her ends.  
 To whom thus Michael. Judg not what is best  
 By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,  
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end  
 Holie and pure, conformitie divine.  
 Those Tents thou sawst so pleasant, were the Tents  
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his Race  
 Who slew his Brother; studious they appere  
 Of Arts that polish Life, Inventers rare,  
 Unmindful of thir Maker, though his Spirit  
 Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.  
 Yet they a beauteous ofspring shall beget;  
 For that fair femal Troop thou sawst, that seemd  
 Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
 Womans domestic honour and chief praise;  
 Bred onely and completed to the taste  
 Of lustful apperence, to sing, to dance,  
 To dress, and troule the Tongue, and roule the Eye.  
 To these that sober Race of Men, whose lives  
 Religious titl'd them the Sons of God,  
 Shall yeild up all thir vertue, all thir fame  
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
 Of these fair Atheists, and now swim in joy,  
 (Erelong to swim at larg) and laugh; for which  
 The world erelong a world of tears must weepe.  
 To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft.

O pittie and shame, that they who to live well  
 Enterd so faire, should turn aside to tread  
 Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!  
 But still I see the tenor of Mans woe  
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.  
 From Mans effeminate slackness it begins,  
 Said th' Angel, who should better hold his place  
 By wisdom, and superiour gifts receavd.  
 But now prepare thee for another Scene.  
 He lookd and saw wide Territorie spred  
 Before him, Towns, and rural works between,  
 Cities of Men with lofty Gates and Towrs,  
 Concours in Arms, fierce Faces threatning Warr,  
 Giants of mightie Bone, and bould emprise;  
 Part wield thir Arms, part courb the foaming Steed,  
 Single or in Array of Battel rang'd  
 Both Horse and Foot, nor idely mustering stood;  
 One way a Band select from forage drives  
 A herd of Beeves, faire Oxen and faire Kine  
 From a fat Meddow ground; or fleecy Flock,  
 Ewes and thir bleating Lambs over the Plaine,  
 Thir Bootie; scarce with Life the Shepherds flye,  
 But call in aide, which tacks a bloody Fray;  
 With cruel Tournament the Squadrons joine;  
 Where Cattel pastur'd late, now scatterd lies  
 With Carcasses and Arms th' ensanguind Field  
 Deserted: Others to a Citie strong  
 Lay Siege, encampt; by Batterie, Scale, and Mine,  
 Assaulting; others from the Wall defend  
 With Dart and Jav'lin, Stones and sulfurous Fire;  
 On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.  
 In other part the scepter'd Haralds call  
 To Council in the Citie Gates: anon  
 Grey-headed men and grave, with Warriours mixt,  
 Assemble, and Harangues are heard, but soon  
 In factious opposition, till at last  
 Of middle Age one rising, eminent  
 In wise deport, spake much of Right and Wrong,  
 Of Justice, of Religion, Truth and Peace,  
 And Judgement from above: him old and young  
 Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,  
 Had not a Cloud descending snatch'd him thence  
 Unseen amid the throng: so violence  
 Proceeded, and Oppression, and Sword-Law  
 Through all the Plain, and refuge none was found.  
 Adam was all in tears, and to his guide  
 Lamenting turnd full sad; O what are these,  
 Deaths Ministers, not Men, who thus deal Death  
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
 Ten thousand fould the sin of him who slew  
 His Brother; for of whom such massacher  
 Make they but of thir Brethren, men of men?

But who was that Just Man, whom had not Heav'n  
 Rescu'd, had in his Righteousness bin lost?  
 To whom thus Michael: These are the product  
 Of those ill-mated Marriages thou saw'st;  
 Where good with bad were matcht, who of themselves  
 Abhor to joyn; and by imprudence mixt,  
 Produce prodigious Births of bodie or mind.  
 Such were these Giants, men of high renown;  
 For in those dayes Might onely shall be admir'd,  
 And Valour and Heroic Vertu call'd;  
 To overcome in Battel, and subdue  
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
 Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
 Of human Glorie, and for Glorie done  
 Of triumph, to be styl'd great Conquerours,  
 Patrons of Mankind, Gods, and Sons of Gods,  
 Destroyers rightlier call'd and Plagues of men.  
 Thus Fame shall be achiev'd, renown on Earth,  
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.  
 But hee the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst  
 The onely righteous in a World perverse,  
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset  
 With Foes for daring single to be just,  
 And utter odious Truth, that God would come  
 To judge them with his Saints: Him the most High  
 Rapt in a balmie Cloud with winged Steeds  
 Did, as thou sawst, receive, to walk with God  
 High in Salvation and the Climes of bliss,  
 Exempt from Death; to shew thee what reward  
 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;  
 Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.  
 He look'd, & saw the face of things quite chang'd;  
 The brazen Throat of Warr had ceast to roar,  
 All now was turn'd to jollitie and game,  
 To luxurie and riot, feast and dance,  
 Marrying or prostituting, as befell,  
 Rape or Adulterie, where passing faire  
 Allurd them; thence from Cups to civil Broiles.  
 At length a Reverend Sire among them came,  
 And of thir doings great dislike declar'd,  
 And testifi'd against thir wayes; hee oft  
 Frequented thir Assemblies, whereso met,  
 Triumphs or Festivals, and to them preachd  
 Conversion and Repentance, as to Souls  
 In prison under Judgements imminent:  
 But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas'd  
 Contending, and remov'd his Tents farr off;  
 Then from the Mountain hewing Timber tall,  
 Began to build a Vessel of huge bulk,  
 Measur'd by Cubit, length, & breadth, and highth,  
 Smeard round with Pitch, and in the side a dore  
 Contriv'd, and of provisions laid in large

For Man and Beast: when loe a wonder strange!  
 Of everie Beast, and Bird, and Insect small  
 Came seavens, and pairs, and enterd in, as taught  
 Thir order; last the Sire, and his three Sons  
 With thir four Wives, and God made fast the dore.  
 Meanwhile the Southwind rose, & with black wings  
 Wide hovering, all the Clouds together drove  
 From under Heav'n; the Hills to their supplie  
 Vapour, and Exhalation dusk and moist,  
 Sent up amain; and now the thick'nd Skie  
 Like a dark Ceeling stood; down rush'd the Rain  
 Impetuous, and continu'd till the Earth  
 No more was seen; the floating Vessel swum  
 Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow  
 Rode tilting o're the Waves, all dwellings else  
 Flood overwhelmd, and them with all thir pomp  
 Deep under water rould; Sea cover'd Sea,  
 Sea without shoar; and in thir Palaces  
 Where luxurie late reign'd, Sea-monsters whelp'd  
 And stabl'd; of Mankind, so numerous late,  
 All left, in one small bottom swum imbark't.  
 How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
 The end of all thy Ofspring, end so sad,  
 Depopulation; thee another Floud,  
 Of tears and sorrow a Floud thee also drown'd,  
 And sunk thee as thy Sons; till gently reard  
 By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stoodst at last,  
 Though comfortless, as when a Father mourns  
 His Childern, all in view destroyd at once;  
 And scarce to th' Angel utterdst thus thy plaint.  
 O Visions ill foreseen! better had I  
 Liv'd ignorant of future, so had borne  
 My part of evil onely, each dayes lot  
 Anough to bear; those now, that were dispenst  
 The burd'n of many Ages, on me light  
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining Birth  
 Abortive, to torment me ere thir being,  
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek  
 Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall  
 Him or his Childern, evil he may be sure,  
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,  
 And hee the future evil shall no less  
 In apprehension then in substance feel  
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,  
 Man is not whom to warne: those few escap't  
 Famin and anguish will at last consume  
 Wandring that watrie Desert: I had hope  
 When violence was ceas't, and Warr on Earth,  
 All would have then gon well, peace would have crownd  
 With length of happy days the race of man;  
 But I was farr deceav'd; for now I see  
 Peace to corrupt no less then Warr to waste.

How comes it thus? unfould, Celestial Guide,  
 And whether here the Race of man will end.  
 To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou sawst  
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they  
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent  
 And great exploits, but of true vertu void;  
 Who having spilt much blood, and don much waste  
 Subduing Nations, and achievd thereby  
 Fame in the World, high titles, and rich prey,  
 Shall change thir course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,  
 Surfet, and lust, till wantonness and pride  
 Raise out of friendship hostil deeds in Peace.  
 The conquerd also, and enslav'd by Warr  
 Shall with thir freedom lost all vertu loose  
 And feare of God, from whom thir pietie feign'd  
 In sharp contest of Battel found no aide  
 Against invaders; therefore coold in zeale  
 Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,  
 Worldlie or dissolute, on what thir Lords  
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' Earth shall bear  
 More then anough, that temperance may be tri'd:  
 So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd,  
 Justice and Temperance, Truth and Faith forgot;  
 One Man except, the onely Son of light  
 In a dark Age, against example good,  
 Against allurement, custom, and a World  
 Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,  
 Or violence, hee of thir wicked wayes  
 Shall them admonish, and before them set  
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,  
 And full of peace, denouncing wrauth to come  
 On thir impenitence; and shall returne  
 Of them derided, but of God observd  
 The one just Man alive; by his command  
 Shall build a wondrous Ark, as thou beheldst,  
 To save himself and household from amidst  
 A World devote to universal rack.  
 No sooner hee with them of Man and Beast  
 Select for life shall in the Ark be lodg'd,  
 And shelterd round, but all the Cataracts  
 Of Heav'n set open on the Earth shall powre  
 Raine day and night, all fountaines of the Deep  
 Broke up, shall heave the Ocean to usurp  
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise  
 Above the highest Hills: then shall this Mount  
 Of Paradise by might of Waves be moovd  
 Out of his place, pushd by the horned fload,  
 With all his verdure spoil'd, and Trees adrift  
 Down the great River to the op'ning Gulf,  
 And there take root an Iland salt and bare,  
 The haunt of Seales and Orcs, and Sea-mews clang.  
 To teach thee that God attributes to place

No sanctitie, if none be thither brought  
 By Men who there frequent, or therein dwell.  
 And now what further shall ensue, behold.  
 He lookd, and saw the Ark hull on the floud,  
 Which now abated, for the Clouds were fled,  
 Drivn by a keen North-winde, that blowing drie  
 Wrinkl'd the face of Deluge, as decal'd;  
 And the cleer Sun on his wide watrie Glass  
 Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh Wave largely drew,  
 As after thirst, which made thir flowing shrink  
 From standing lake to tripping ebbe, that stole  
 With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt  
 His Sluces, as the Heav'n his windows shut.  
 The Ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground  
 Fast on the top of som high mountain fixt.  
 And now the tops of Hills as Rocks appeer;  
 With clamor thence the rapid Currents drive  
 Towards the retreating Sea thir furious tyde.  
 Forthwith from out the Arke a Raven flies,  
 And after him, the surer messenger,  
 A Dove sent forth once and agen to spie  
 Green Tree or ground whereon his foot may light;  
 The second time returning, in his Bill  
 An Olive leafe he brings, pacific signe:  
 Anon drie ground appeers, and from his Arke  
 The ancient Sire descends with all his Train;  
 Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,  
 Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds  
 A dewie Cloud, and in the Cloud a Bow  
 Conspicuous with three lifted colours gay,  
 Betok'ning peace from God, and Cov'nant new.  
 Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad  
 Greatly rejoyc'd, and thus his joy broke forth.  
 O thou that future things canst represent  
 As present, Heav'nly instructor, I revive  
 At this last sight, assur'd that Man shall live  
 With all the Creatures, and thir seed preserve.  
 Farr less I now lament for one whole World  
 Of wicked Sons destroyd, then I rejoyce  
 For one Man found so perfet and so just,  
 That God voutsafes to raise another World  
 From him, and all his anger to forget.  
 But say, what mean those colourd streaks in Heavn,  
 Distended as the Brow of God appeas'd,  
 Or serve they as a flourie verge to binde  
 The fluid skirts of that same watrie Cloud,  
 Least it again dissolve and showr the Earth?  
 To whom th' Archangel. Dextrously thou aim'st;  
 So willingly doth God remit his Ire,  
 Though late repenting him of Man deprav'd,  
 Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw  
 The whole Earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh

Corrupting each thir way; yet those remoov'd,  
 Such grace shall one just Man find in his sight,  
 That he relents, not to blot out mankind,  
 And makes a Covenant never to destroy  
 The Earth again by flood, nor let the Sea  
 Surpass his bounds, nor Rain to drown the World  
 With Man therein or Beast; but when he brings  
 Over the Earth a Cloud, will therein set  
 His triple-colour'd Bow, whereon to look  
 And call to mind his Cov'nant: Day and Night,  
 Seed time and Harvest, Heat and hoary Frost  
 Shall hold thir course, till fire purge all things new,  
 Both Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.  
 Thus thou hast seen one World begin and end;  
 And Man as from a second stock proceed.  
 Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceave  
 Thy mortal sight to faile; objects divine  
 Must needs impaire and wearie human sense:  
 Henceforth what is to com I will relate,  
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.  
 This second sours of Men, while yet but few,  
 And while the dread of judgement past remains  
 Fresh in thir mindes, fearing the Deitie,  
 With some regard to what is just and right  
 Shall lead thir lives, and multiplie apace,  
 Labouring the soile, and reaping plenteous crop,  
 Corn wine and oyle; and from the herd or flock,  
 Oft sacrificing Bullock, Lamb, or Kid,  
 With large Wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred Feast  
 Shal spend thir dayes in joy unblam'd, and dwell  
 Long time in peace by Families and Tribes  
 Under paternal rule; till one shall rise  
 Of proud ambitious heart, who not content  
 With fair equalitie, fraternal state,  
 Will arrogate Dominion undeserv'd  
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
 Concord and law of Nature from the Earth;  
 Hunting (and Men not Beasts shall be his game)  
 With Warr and hostile snare such as refuse  
 Subjection to his Empire tyrannous:  
 A mightie Hunter thence he shall be styl'd  
 Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav'n,  
 Or from Heav'n claming second Sovrantie;  
 And from Rebellion shall derive his name,  
 Though of Rebellion others he accuse.  
 Hee with a crew, whom like Ambition joyns  
 With him or under him to tyrannize,  
 Marching from Eden towards the West, shall finde  
 The Plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
 Boiles out from under ground, the mouth of Hell;  
 Of Brick, and of that stuff they cast to build  
 A Citie & Towre, whose top may reach to Heav'n;



And get themselves a name, least far disperst  
 In foraign Lands thir memorie be lost,  
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
 But God who oft descends to visit men  
 Unseen, and through thir habitations walks  
 To mark thir doings, them beholding soon,  
 Comes down to see thir Citie, ere the Tower  
 Obstruct Heav'n Towrs, and in derision sets  
 Upon thir Tongues a various Spirit to rase  
 Quite out thir Native Language, and instead  
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:  
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud  
 Among the Builders; each to other calls  
 Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,  
 As mockt they storm; great laughter was in Heav'n  
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange  
 And hear the din; thus was the building left  
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.  
 Where to thus Adam fatherly displeas'd.  
 O execrable Son so to aspire  
 Above his Brethren, to himself affirming  
 Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv'n:  
 He gave us onely over Beast, Fish, Fowl  
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
 By his donation; but Man over men  
 He made not Lord; such title to himself  
 Reserving, human left from human free.  
 But this Usurper his encroachment proud  
 Stayes not on Man; to God his Tower intends  
 Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food  
 Will he convey up thither to sustain  
 Himself and his rash Armie, where thin Aire  
 Above the Clouds will pine his entrails gross,  
 And famish him of Breath, if not of Bread?  
 To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st  
 That Son, who on the quiet state of men  
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
 Rational Libertie; yet know withall,  
 Since thy original lapse, true Libertie  
 Is lost, which alwayes with right Reason dwells  
 Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being:  
 Reason in man obscur'd, or not obeyd,  
 Immediately inordinate desires  
 And upstart Passions catch the Government  
 From Reason, and to servitude reduce  
 Man till then free. Therefore since hee permits  
 Within himself unworthie Powers to reign  
 Over free Reason, God in Judgement just  
 Subjects him from without to violent Lords;  
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall  
 His outward freedom: Tyrannie must be,  
 Though to the Tyrant thereby no excuse.

Yet sometimes Nations will decline so low  
 From vertue, which is reason, that no wrong,  
 But Justice, and some fatal curse annex  
 Deprives them of thir outward libertie,  
 Thir inward lost: Witness th' irreverent Son  
 Of him who built the Ark, who for the shame  
 Don to his Father, heard this heavie curse,  
 Servant of servants, on his vitious Race.  
 Thus will this latter, as the former World,  
 Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last  
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
 His presence from among them, and avert  
 His holy Eyes; resolving from thenceforth  
 To leave them to thir own polluted wayes;  
 And one peculiar Nation to select  
 From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,  
 A Nation from one faithful man to spring:  
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
 Bred up in Idol-worship; O that men  
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,  
 While yet the Patriark liv'd, who scap'd the Flood,  
 As to forsake the living God, and fall  
 To-worship thir own work in Wood and Stone  
 For Gods! yet him God the most High voutsafes  
 To call by Vision from his Fathers house,  
 His kindred and false Gods, into a Land  
 Which he will shew him, and from him will raise  
 A mightie Nation, and upon him showre  
 His benediction so, that in his Seed  
 All Nations shall be blest; hee straight obeys,  
 Not knowing to what Land, yet firm believes:  
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what Faith  
 He leaves his Gods, his Friends, and native Soile  
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the Ford  
 To Haran, after him a cumbrous Train  
 Of Herds and Flocks, and numerous servitude;  
 Not wandring poor, but trusting all his wealth  
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.  
 Canaan he now attains, I see his Tents  
 Pitcht about Sechem, and the neighbouring Plaine  
 Of Moreb; there by promise he receaves  
 Gift to his Progenie of all that Land;  
 From Hamath Northward to the Desert South  
 (Things by thir names I call, though yet unnam'd)  
 From Hermon East to the great Western Sea,  
 Mount Hermon, yonder Sea, each place behold  
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shoare  
 Mount Carmel; here the double-founded stream  
 Jordan, true limit Eastward; but his Sons  
 Shall dwell to Senir; that long ridge of Hills.  
 This ponder, that all Nations of the Earth  
 Shall in his Seed be blessed; by that Seed

Is meant thy great deliverer, who shall bruise  
 The Serpents head; whereof to thee anon  
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This Patriarch blest,  
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,  
 A Son, and of his Son a Grand-childe leaves,  
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;  
 The Grandchilde with twelve Sons increast, departs  
 From Canaan, to a Land hereafter call'd  
 Egypt, divided by the River Nile;  
 See where it flows, disgorging at seaven mouthes  
 Into the Sea: to sojourn in that Land  
 He comes invited by a yonger Son  
 In time of dearth, a Son whose worthy deeds  
 Raise him to be the second in that Realme  
 Of Pharao: there he dies, and leaves his Race  
 Growing into a Nation, and now grown  
 Suspected to a sequent King, who seeks  
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves  
 Inhospitably, and kills thir infant Males:  
 Till by two brethren (those two brethren call  
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claime  
 His people from enthralment, they return  
 With glory and spoile back to thir promis'd Land.  
 But first the lawless Tyrant, who denies  
 To know thir God, or message to regard,  
 Must be compell'd by Signes and Judgements dire;  
 To blood unshed the Rivers must be turnd,  
 Frogs, Lice and Flies must all his Palace fill  
 With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;  
 His Cattel must of Rot and Murren die,  
 Botches and blaines must all his flesh imboss,  
 And all his people; Thunder mixt with Haile,  
 Haile mixt with fire must rend th' Egyptian Skie  
 And wheel on th' Earth, devouring where it rould;  
 What it devours not, Herb, or Fruit, or Graine,  
 A darksom Cloud of Locusts swarming down  
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:  
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three dayes;  
 Last with one midnight stroke all the first-born  
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds  
 This River-dragon tam'd at length submits  
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft  
 Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as Ice  
 More hard'nd after thaw, till in his rage  
 Pursuing whom he late dismissd, the Sea  
 Swallows him with his Host, but them lets pass  
 As on drie land between two christal walls,  
 Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand  
 Divided, till his rescu'd gain thir shoar:  
 Such wondrous power God to his Saint will lend,

Though present in his Angel, who shall goe  
 Before them in a Cloud, and Pillar of Fire,  
 By day a Cloud, by night a pillar of Fire,  
 To guide them in thir journey, and remove  
 Behinde them, while th' obdurat King pursues:  
 All night he will pursue, but his approach  
 Darkness defends between till morning Watch;  
 Then through the Firey Pillar and the Cloud  
 God looking forth will trouble all his Host  
 And craze thir Chariot wheels: when by command  
 Moses once more his potent Rod extends  
 Over the Sea; the Sea his Rod obeys;  
 On thir imbattelld ranks the Waves return,  
 And overwhelm thir Warr: the Race elect  
 Safe towards Canaan from the shoar advance  
 Through the wilde Desert, not the readiest way,  
 Least entring on the Canaanite allarmd  
 Warr terrifie them inexpert, and feare  
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather  
 Inglorious life with servitude; for life  
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
 Untraind in Armes, where rashness leads not on.  
 This also shall they gain by thir delay  
 In the wide Wilderness, there they shall found  
 Thir government, and thir great Senate choose  
 Through the twelve Tribes, to rule by Laws ordaind:  
 God from the Mount of Sinai, whose gray top  
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself  
 In Thunder Lightning and loud Trumpets sound  
 Ordaine them Lawes; part such as appertaine  
 To civil Justice, part religious Rites  
 Of sacrifice, informing them, by types  
 And shadowes, of that destind Seed to bruise  
 The Serpent, by what meanes he shall achieve  
 Mankinds deliverance. But the voice of God  
 To mortal eare is dreadful; they beseech  
 That Moses might report to them his will,  
 And terror cease; he grants them thir desire,  
 Instructed that to God is no access  
 Without Mediator, whose high Office now  
 Moses in figure beares, to introduce  
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,  
 And all the Prophets in thir Age the times  
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus Laws and Rites  
 Establisht, such delight hath God in Men  
 Obedient to his will, that he voutsafes  
 Among them to set up his Tabernacle,  
 The holy One with mortal Men to dwell:  
 By his prescript a Sanctuary is fram'd  
 Of Cedar, overlaid with Gold, therein  
 An Ark, and in the Ark his Testimony,  
 The Records of his Cov'nant, over these

A Mercie-seat of Gold between the wings  
 Of two bright Cherubim, before him burn  
 Seaven Lamps as in a Zodiac representing  
 The Heav'nly fires; over the Tent a Cloud  
 Shall rest by Day, a fierie gleame by Night,  
 Save when they journie, and at length they come,  
 Conducted by his Angel to the Land  
 Promisd to Abraham and his Seed: the rest  
 Were long to tell, how many Battels fought,  
 How many Kings destroyd, and Kingdoms won,  
 Or how the Sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still  
 A day entire, and Nights due course adjourne,  
 Mans voice commanding, Sun in Gibeon stand,  
 And thou Moon in the vale of Aialon  
 Till Israel overcome; so call the third  
 From Abraham, Son of Isaac, and from him  
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.  
 Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heav'n,  
 Enlightner of my darkness, gracious things  
 Thou hast reveal'd, those chiefly which concerne  
 Just Abraham and his Seed: now first I finde  
 Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eas'd,  
 Erwhile perplex't with thoughts what would becom  
 Of mee and all Mankind; but now I see  
 His day, in whom all Nations shall be blest,  
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought  
 Forbidd'n knowledge by forbidd'n means.  
 This yet I apprehend not, why to those  
 Among whom God will deigne to dwell on Earth  
 So many and so various Laws are giv'n;  
 So many Laws argue so many sins  
 Among them; how can God with such reside?  
 To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin  
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;  
 And therefore was Law given them to evince  
 Thir natural pravitie, by stirring up  
 Sin against Law to fight; that when they see  
 Law can discover sin, but not remove,  
 Save by those shadowie expiations weak,  
 The blood of Bulls and Goats, they may conclude  
 Some blood more precious must be paid for Man,  
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness  
 To them by Faith imputed, they may finde  
 Justification towards God, and peace  
 Of Conscience, which the Law by Ceremonies  
 Cannot appease, nor Man the moral part  
 Perform, and not performing cannot live.  
 So Law appears imperfet, and but giv'n  
 With purpose to resign them in full time  
 Up to a better Cov'nant, disciplin'd  
 From shadowie Types to Truth, from Flesh to Spirit,  
 From imposition of strict Laws, to free

Acceptance of large Grace, from servil fear  
 To filial, works of Law to works of Faith.  
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
 Highly belov'd, being but the Minister  
 Of Law, his people into Canaan lead;  
 But Joshua whom the Gentiles Jesus call,  
 His Name and Office bearing, who shall quell  
 The adversarie Serpent, and bring back  
 Through the worlds wilderness long wanderd man  
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
 Meanwhile they in thir earthly Canaan plac't  
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins  
 National interrupt thir public peace,  
 Provoking God to raise them enemies:  
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent  
 By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom  
 The second, both for pietie renownd  
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
 Irrevocable, that his Regal Throne  
 For ever shall endure; the like shall sing  
 All Prophecie, [t]hat of the Royal Stock  
 Of David (so I name this King) shall rise  
 A Son, the Womans Seed to thee foretold,  
 Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust  
 All Nations, and to Kings foretold, of Kings  
 The last, for of his Reign shall be no end.  
 But first a long succession must ensue,  
 And his next Son for Wealth and Wisdom fam'd,  
 The clouded Ark of God till then in Tents  
 Wandring, shall in a glorious Temple enshrine.  
 Such follow him, as shall be registerd  
 Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scrowle,  
 Whose foul Idolatries, and other faults  
 Heapt to the popular summe, will so incense  
 God, as to leave them, and expose thir Land,  
 Thir Citie, his Temple, and his holy Ark  
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
 To that proud Citie, whose high Walls thou saw'st  
 Left in confusion, Babylon thence call'd.  
 There in captivitie he lets them dwell  
 The space of seventie years, then brings them back,  
 Remembring mercie, and his Cov'nant sworn  
 To David, stablisht as the dayes of Heav'n.  
 Returnd from Babylon by leave of Kings  
 Thir Lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God  
 They first re-edifie, and for a while  
 In mean estate live moderate, till grown  
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;  
 But first among the Priests dissension springs,  
 Men who attend the Altar, and should most  
 Endeavour Peace: thir strife pollution brings  
 Upon the Temple it self: at last they seise

The Scepter, and regard not Davids Sons,  
 Then loose it to a stranger, that the true  
 Anointed King Messiah might be born  
 Barr'd of his right; yet at his Birth a Starr  
 Unseen before in Heav'n proclaims him com,  
 And guides the Eastern Sages, who enquire  
 His place, to offer Incense, Myrrh, and Gold;  
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
 To simple Shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
 They gladly thither haste, and by a Quire  
 Of squadron'd Angels hear his Carol sung.  
 A Virgin is his Mother, but his Sire  
 The Power of the most High; he shall ascend  
 The Throne hereditarie, and bound his Reign  
 With earths wide bounds, his glory with the Heav'ns.  
 He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy  
 Surcharg'd, as had like grief bin dew'd in tears,  
 Without the vent of words, which these he breathd.  
 O Prophet of glad tidings, finisher  
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
 What oft my steddier thoughts have searcht in vain,  
 Why our great expectation should be call'd  
 The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, Haile,  
 High in the love of Heav'n, yet from my Loynes  
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy Womb the Son  
 Of God most High; So God with man unites.  
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise  
 Expect with mortal paine: say where and when  
 Thir fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victors heel.  
 To whom thus Michael. Dream not of thir fight,  
 As of a Duel, or the local wounds  
 Of head or heel: not therefore joynes the Son  
 Manhood to God-head, with more strength to foil  
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome  
 Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise,  
 Disabl'd not to give thee thy deaths wound:  
 Which hee, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,  
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
 In thee and in thy Seed: nor can this be,  
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
 Obedience to the Law of God, impos'd  
 On penaltie of death, and suffering death,  
 The penaltie to thy transgression due,  
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:  
 So onely can high Justice rest appaid.  
 The Law of God exact he shall fulfill  
 Both by obedience and by love, though love  
 Alone fulfill the Law; thy punishment  
 He shall endure by coming in the Flesh  
 To a reproachful life and cursed death,  
 Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe  
 In his redemption, and that his obedience

Imputed becomes theirs by Faith, his merits  
 To save them, not thir own, though legal works.  
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,  
 Seis'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemnd  
 A shameful and accurst, naild to the Cross  
 By his own Nation, slaine for bringing Life;  
 But to the Cross he nailes thy Enemies,  
 The Law that is against thee, and the sins  
 Of all mankinde, with him there crucifi'd,  
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
 In this his satisfaction; so he dies,  
 But soon revives, Death over him no power  
 Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light  
 Returne, the Starres of Morn shall see him rise  
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
 Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,  
 His death for Man, as many as offerd Life  
 Neglect not, and the benefit imbrace  
 By Faith not void of works: this God-like act  
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy'd,  
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act  
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength  
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two maine armes,  
 And fix farr deeper in his head thir stings  
 Then temporal death shall bruise the Victors heel,  
 Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,  
 A gentle wafting to immortal Life.  
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay  
 Longer on Earth then certaine times to appeer  
 To his Disciples, Men who in his Life  
 Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge  
 To teach all nations what of him they learn'd  
 And his Salvation, them who shall beleeve  
 Baptizing in the profluent streame, the signe  
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to Life  
 Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,  
 For death, like that which the redeemer dy'd.  
 All Nations they shall teach; for from that day  
 Not onely to the Sons of Abrahams Loines  
 Salvation shall be Preacht, but to the Sons  
 Of Abrahams Faith wherever through the world;  
 So in his seed all Nations shall be blest.  
 Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend  
 With victory, triumphing through the aire  
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
 The Serpent, Prince of aire, and drag in Chaines  
 Through all his realme, & there confounded leave;  
 Then enter into glory, and resume  
 His Seat at Gods right hand, exalted high  
 Above all names in Heav'n; and thence shall come,  
 When this worlds dissolution shall be ripe,  
 With glory and power to judge both quick & dead,



To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward  
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,  
 Whether in Heav'n or Earth, for then the Earth  
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
 Than this of Eden, and far happier daies.  
 So spake th' Archangel Michael, then paus'd,  
 As at the Worlds great period; and our Sire  
 Replete with joy and wonder thus repli'd.  
 O goodness infinite, goodness immense!  
 That all this good of evil shall produce,  
 And evil turn to good; more wonderful  
 Than that which by creation first brought forth  
 Light out of darkness! full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By mee done and occasiond, or rejoyce  
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,  
 To God more glory, more good will to Men  
 From God, and over wrauth grace shall abound.  
 But say, if our deliverer up to Heav'n  
 Must reascend, what will betide the few  
 His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,  
 The enemies of truth; who then shall guide  
 His people, who defend? will they not deale  
 Wors with his followers then with him they dealt?  
 Be sure they will, said th' Angel; but from Heav'n  
 Hee to his own a Comforter will send,  
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell  
 His Spirit within them, and the Law of Faith  
 Working through love, upon thir hearts shall write,  
 To guide them in all truth, and also arme  
 With spiritual Armour, able to resist  
 Satans assaults, and quench his fierie darts  
 What Man can do against them, not affraid,  
 Though to the death, against such cruelties  
 With inward consolations recompenc't,  
 And oft supported so as shall amaze  
 Thir proudest persecuters: for the Spirit  
 Powrd first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
 To evangelize the Nations, then on all  
 Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue  
 To speak all Tongues, and do all Miracles,  
 As did thir Lord before them. Thus they win  
 Great numbers of each Nation to receive  
 With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length  
 Thir Ministry perform'd, and race well run,  
 Thir doctrine and thir story written left,  
 They die; but in thir room, as they forewarne,  
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous Wolves,  
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n  
 To thir own vile advantages shall turne  
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth  
 With superstitions and traditions taint,

Left onely in those written Records pure,  
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,  
 Places and titles, and with these to joine  
 Secular power, though feigning still to act  
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating  
 The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and giv'n  
 To all Beleevers; and from that pretense,  
 Spiritual Lawes by carnal power shall force  
 On every conscience; Laws which none shall finde  
 Left them inrould, or what the Spirit within  
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
 But force the Spirit of Grace it self, and binde  
 His consort Libertie; what, but unbuild  
 His living Temples, built by Faith to stand,  
 Thir own Faith not anothers: for on Earth  
 Who against Faith and Conscience can be heard  
 Infallible? yet many will presume:  
 Whence heavie persecution shall arise  
 On all who in the worship persevere  
 Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, farr greater part,  
 Will deem in outward Rites and specious formes  
 Religion satisfi'd; Truth shall retire  
 Bestuck with slandrous darts, and works of Faith  
 Rarely be found: so shall the World goe on,  
 To good malignant, to bad men benigne,  
 Under her own waight groaning, till the day  
 Appeer of respiration to the just,  
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return  
 Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,  
 The Womans seed, obscurely then foretold,  
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,  
 Last in the Clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd  
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
 Satan with his perverted World, then raise  
 From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,  
 New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date  
 Founded in righteousness and peace and love,  
 To bring forth fruits Joy and eternal Bliss.  
 He ended; and thus Adam last reply'd.  
 How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,  
 Measur'd this transient World, the Race of time,  
 Till time stand fixt: beyond is all abyss,  
 Eternitie, whose end no eye can reach.  
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,  
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill  
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can containe;  
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire.  
 Henceforth I learne, that to obey is best,  
 And love with feare the onely God, to walk  
 As in his presence, ever to observe  
 His providence, and on him sole depend,

Merciful over all his works, with good  
 Still overcoming evil, and by small  
 Accomplishing great things, by things deemd weak  
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise  
 By simply meek; that suffering for Truths sake  
 Is fortitude to highest victorie,  
 And to the faithful Death the Gate of Life;  
 Taught this by his example whom I now  
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.  
 To whom thus also th' Angel last repli'd:  
 This having learnt, thou hast attaind the summe  
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the Starrs  
 Thou knewst by name, and all th' ethereal Powers,  
 All secrets of the deep, all Natures works,  
 Or works of God in Heav'n, Air, Earth, or Sea,  
 And all the riches of this World enjoydst,  
 And all the rule, one Empire; onely add  
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add Faith,  
 Add Vertue, Patience, Temperance, add Love,  
 By name to come call'd Charitie, the soul  
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath  
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
 A Paradise within thee, happier farr.  
 Let us descend now therefore from this top  
 Of Speculation; for the hour precise  
 Exacts our parting hence; and see the Guards,  
 By mee encampt on yonder Hill, expect  
 Thir motion, at whose Front a flaming Sword,  
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;  
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;  
 Her also I with gentle Dreams have calm'd  
 Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd  
 To meek submission: thou at season fit  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,  
 Chiefly what may concern her Faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her Seed to come  
 (For by the Womans Seed) on all Mankind.  
 That ye may live, which will be many dayes,  
 Both in one Faith unanimous though sad,  
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheer'd  
 With meditation on the happie end.  
 He ended, and they both descend the Hill;  
 Descended, Adam to the Bowre where Eve  
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak't;  
 And thus with words not sad she him receav'd.  
 Whence thou returnst, & whither wentst, I know;  
 For God is also in sleep, and Dreams advise,  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since with sorrow and hearts distress  
 VVearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;  
 In mee is no delay; with thee to goe,  
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,

Is to go hence unwilling; thou to mee  
Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,  
Who for my wilful crime art banisht hence.  
This further consolation yet secure  
I carry hence; though all by mee is lost,  
Such favour I unworthie am voutsaft,  
By mee the Promis'd Seed shall all restore.  
So spake our Mother Eve, and Adam heard  
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now too nigh  
Th' Archangel stood, and from the other Hill  
To thir fixt Station, all in bright array  
The Cherubim descended; on the ground  
Gliding meteorous, as Ev'ning Mist  
Ris'n from a River o're the marish glides,  
And gathers ground fast at the Labourers heel  
Homeward returning. High in Front advanc't,  
The brandisht Sword of God before them blaz'd  
Fierce as a Comet; which with torrid heat,  
And vapour as the Libyan Air adust,  
Began to parch that temperate Clime; whereat  
In either hand the hastning Angel caught  
Our lingring Parents, and to th' Eastern Gate  
Let them direct, and down the Cliff as fast  
To the subjected Plaine; then disappear'd.  
They looking back, all th' Eastern side beheld  
Of Paradise, so late thir happie seat,  
Wav'd over by that flaming Brand, the Gate  
With dreadful Faces throng'd and fierie Armes:  
Som natural tears they drop'd, but wip'd them soon;  
The World was all before them, where to choose  
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:  
They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,  
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.

John Milton

## **Paradise Lost: Books II-III (Editorial Summary)**

NOTES  
Other poems by Milton ... The poet's life and works ...  
Composition Date: ca. 1642-65  
Form: unrhymed iambic pentameter  
Summary: BOOK II presents the "great consult": Moloch urges open war against Heaven, while Belial counsels complete passivity lest worse befall them, and Mammon proposes exploiting the riches of Hell; Beelzebub offers what purports to be a compromise, but is really the plan predetermined by Satan, namely, an attack, by guile, not force, against God through his latest creation, man. Satan now intervenes to announce that he will undertake the perilous journey to earth to spy out the land. In his absence his followers explore their new domain, which enables the poet to complete his description of Hell. Meanwhile Satan reaches the gate of Hell and finds it guarded by his daughter, Sin, and his son by her, Death; and the book concludes with his journey through the realms of the anarch Chaos to the outer sphere of the earthly universe. BOOK III commences with the famous invocation to light, and, leaving Satan, introduces us to Heaven, where, in the presence of the Angels, the Father explains that, of his own free will, and subject to no compulsion, man will succumb to Satan's wiles, and the Son offers, in this event, to suffer the inevitable punishment in man's stead. (The first is essential to the declaring of God's justice; the second to the assertion of eternal Providence.) The remainder of the book narrates Satan's descent through the spheres, past Uriel, the guardian of the sun, whom he deceives, down to earth.

John Milton

## **Paradise Lost: Books V-VIII (Editorial Summary)**

NOTES Other poems by Milton ... The poet's life and works ... In BOOK V Eve recounts to Adam the dream, prefiguring her fall, which Satan has inspired; then the Archangel Raphael appears, sent by God to satisfy man's legitimate curiosity, to put him on his guard against Satan and thus to render his disobedience inexcusable. Here commences the "antecedent action," the account of what has taken place prior to Satan's determination to direct his effort against man. In BOOKS V and VI Raphael narrates how the Father declared in Heaven the divine honour to be paid to the Son; how this inspired Satan's jealousy; how he seduced the Angels under his command to rebel--all except the seraph Abdiel, who remained faithful to God; how for three days of indecisive battle the faithful Angels under Michael opposed the Satanic host, and how victory was reserved for the Son, who then rode forth in the "chariot of paternal Deity" and drove the terror-struck rebels before him, expelling them from Heaven to fall through the Chaos to the fiery lake of Hell, where they were discovered in Book I. But more remains to be told. In BOOK VII Raphael recounts God's creation of the world and its inhabitants, shaped from the first matter of the Chaos by the agency of the Son and Spirit. And in BOOK VIII he describes the Ptolemaic universe, which Milton adopts as the setting of the human drama, and, after listening to Adam's account of the creation of Eve, exhorts him to remain obedient and happy, and departs.

John Milton

## **Paradise Lost: Books XI-XII (Editorial Summary)**

NOTES Other poems by Milton ... The poet's life and works ... In BOOKS XI and XII the Archangel Michael presents Adam with a prophetic survey of the fallen world and its history, in the form of a series of visions, giving place to narrative and explanation, which reveals to him the full meaning of the promised redemption by Christ, the Last Judgment, and the creation of a new Heaven and Earth. The survey and explanation completed, Adam and Eve quit Eden hand in hand.

John Milton

## Paradise Regained

### THE FIRST BOOK

I, WHO erewhile the happy Garden sung  
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing  
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,  
By one man's firm obedience fully tried  
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foiled  
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,  
And Eden raised in the waste Wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who led'st this glorious Eremite  
Into the desert, his victorious field  
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence 10  
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,  
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,  
And bear through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,  
With prosperous wing full summed, to tell of deeds  
Above heroic, though in secret done,  
And unrecorded left through many an age:  
Worthy to have not remained so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice  
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried 20  
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand  
To all baptized. To his great baptism flocked  
With awe the regions round, and with them came  
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deemed  
To the flood Jordan--came as then obscure,  
Unmarked, unknown. But him the Baptist soon  
Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore  
As to his worthier, and would have resigned  
To him his heavenly office. Nor was long  
His witness unconfirmed: on him baptized 30  
Heaven opened, and in likeness of a Dove  
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice  
From Heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.

That heard the Adversary, who, roving still  
About the world, at that assembly famed  
Would not be last, and, with the voice divine  
Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted man to whom  
Such high attest was given a while surveyed  
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,  
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air  
To council summons all his mighty Peers, 40  
Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involved,  
A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,  
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:--

"O ancient Powers of Air and this wide World  
(For much more willingly I mention Air,  
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,  
Our hated habitation), well ye know  
How many ages, as the years of men,  
This Universe we have possessed, and ruled  
In manner at our will the affairs of Earth, 50



Since Adam and his facile consort Eve  
 Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since  
 With dread attending when that fatal wound  
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve  
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven  
 Delay, for longest time to Him is short;  
 And now, too soon for us, the circling hours  
 This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we  
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound  
 (At least, if so we can, and by the head 60  
 Broken be not intended all our power  
 To be infringed, our freedom and our being  
 In this fair empire won of Earth and Air)--  
 For this ill news I bring: The Woman's Seed,  
 Destined to this, is late of woman born.  
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause;  
 But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying  
 All virtue, grace and wisdom to achieve  
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear. 70  
 Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim  
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all  
 Invites, and in the consecrated stream  
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so  
 Purified to receive him pure, or rather  
 To do him honour as their King. All come,  
 And he himself among them was baptized--  
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive  
 The testimony of Heaven, that who he is  
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt. I saw 80  
 The Prophet do him reverence; on him, rising  
 Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds  
 Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head  
 A perfect Dove descend (whate'er it meant);  
 And out of Heaven the sovraign voice I heard,  
 'This is my Son beloved,--in him am pleased.'  
 His mother, than, is mortal, but his Sire  
 He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven;  
 And what will He not do to advance his Son?  
 His first-begot we know, and sore have felt, 90  
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the Deep;  
 Who this is we must learn, for Man he seems  
 In all his lineaments, though in his face  
 The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.  
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge  
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate,  
 But must with something sudden be opposed  
 (Not force, but well-couched fraud, well-woven snares),  
 Ere in the head of nations he appear,  
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on Earth.  
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook 100  
 The dismal expedition to find out  
 And ruin Adam, and the exploit performed

Successfully: a calmer voyage now  
Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once  
Induces best to hope of like success."

He ended, and his words impression left  
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,  
Distracted and surprised with deep dismay  
At these sad tidings. But no time was then  
For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 110

Unanimous they all commit the care  
And management of this man enterprise  
To him, their great Dictator, whose attempt  
At first against mankind so well had thrived  
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march  
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,  
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,  
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.  
So to the coast of Jordan he directs

His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles, 120  
Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,  
This man of men, attested Son of God,  
Temptation and all guile on him to try--  
So to subvert whom he suspected raised  
To end his reign on Earth so long enjoyed:

But, contrary, unweeting he fulfilled  
The purposed counsel, pre-ordained and fixed,  
Of the Most High, who, in full frequency bright  
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:--

"Gabriel, this day, by proof, thou shalt behold, 130  
Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth  
With Man or men's affairs, how I begin  
To verify that solemn message late,  
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure  
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,  
Great in renown, and called the Son of God.

Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be  
To her a virgin, that on her should come  
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest  
O'ershadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown, 140  
To shew him worthy of his birth divine

And high prediction, henceforth I expose  
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay  
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts  
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng  
Of his Apostasy. He might have learnt  
Less overweening, since he failed in Job,  
Whose constant perseverance overcame  
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.

He now shall know I can produce a man, 150  
Of female seed, far abler to resist  
All his solicitations, and at length  
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell--  
Winning by conquest what the first man lost

By fallacy surprised. But first I mean  
To exercise him in the Wilderness;  
There he shall first lay down the rudiments  
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth  
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes.  
By humiliation and strong sufferance 160  
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,  
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;  
That all the Angels and aethereal Powers--  
They now, and men hereafter--may discern  
From what consummate virtue I have chose  
This perfet man, by merit called my Son,  
To earn salvation for the sons of men."

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven  
Admiring stood a space; then into hymns  
Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved, 170  
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand  
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:--

"Victory and triumph to the Son of God,  
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,  
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!  
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure  
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,  
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,  
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.  
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell, 180  
And, devilish machinations, come to nought!"

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tuned.  
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days  
Lodged in Bethabara, where John baptized,  
Musing and much revolving in his breast  
How best the mighty work he might begin  
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first  
Publish his godlike office now mature,  
One day forth walked alone, the Spirit leading  
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190  
With solitude, till, far from track of men,  
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,  
He entered now the bordering Desert wild,  
And, with dark shades and rocks environed round,  
His holy meditations thus pursued:--

"O what a multitude of thoughts at once  
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider  
What from within I feel myself, and hear  
What from without comes often to my ears,  
Ill sorting with my present state compared! 200  
When I was yet a child, no childish play  
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set  
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,  
What might be public good; myself I thought  
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,  
All righteous things. Therefore, above my years,

The Law of God I read, and found it sweet;  
 Made it my whole delight, and in it grew  
 To such perfection that, ere yet my age  
 Had measured twice six years, at our great Feast 210  
 I went into the Temple, there to hear  
 The teachers of our Law, and to propose  
 What might improve my knowledge or their own,  
 And was admired by all. Yet this not all  
 To which my spirit aspired. Victorious deeds  
 Flamed in my heart, heroic acts--one while  
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;  
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,  
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,  
 Till truth were freed, and equity restored: 220  
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first  
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,  
 And make persuasion do the work of fear;  
 At least to try, and teach the erring soul,  
 Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware  
 Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.  
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,  
 By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,  
 And said to me apart, 'High are thy thoughts,  
 O Son! but nourish them, and let them soar 230  
 To what highth sacred virtue and true worth  
 Can raise them, though above example high;  
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.  
 For know, thou art no son of mortal man;  
 Though men esteem thee low of parentage,  
 Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules  
 All Heaven and Earth, Angels and sons of men.  
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth  
 Conceived in me a virgin; he foretold  
 Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne, 240  
 And of thy kingdom there should be no end.  
 At thy nativity a glorious quire  
 Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung  
 To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,  
 And told them the Messiah now was born,  
 Where they might see him; and to thee they came,  
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st;  
 For in the inn was left no better room.  
 A Star, not seen before, in heaven appearing,  
 Guided the Wise Men thither from the East, 250  
 To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;  
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,  
 Affirming it thy star, new-graven in heaven,  
 By which they knew thee King of Israel born.  
 Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warned  
 By vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake,  
 Before the altar and the vested priest,  
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.'

This having heart, straight I again revolved  
 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ 260  
 Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes  
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake  
 I am--this chiefly, that my way must lie  
 Through many a hard assay, even to the death,  
 Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,  
 Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'  
 Full weight must be transferred upon my head.  
 Yet, neither thus disheartened or dismayed,  
 The time prefixed I waited; when behold  
 The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270  
 Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come  
 Before Messiah, and his way prepare!  
 I, as all others, to his baptism came,  
 Which I believed was from above; but he  
 Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaimed  
 Me him (for it was shewn him so from Heaven)--  
 Me him whose harbinger he was; and first  
 Refused on me his baptism to confer,  
 As much his greater, and was hardly won.  
 But, as I rose out of the laving stream, 280  
 Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence  
 The Spirit descended on me like a Dove;  
 And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,  
 Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounced me his,  
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone  
 He was well pleased: by which I knew the time  
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure,  
 But openly begin, as best becomes  
 The authority which I derived from Heaven.  
 And now by some strong motion I am led 290  
 Into this wilderness; to what intent  
 I learn not yet. Perhaps I need not know;  
 For what concerns my knowledge God reveals."  
 So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,  
 And, looking round, on every side beheld  
 A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades.  
 The way he came, not having marked return,  
 Was difficult, by human steps untrod;  
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts  
 Accompanied of things past and to come 300  
 Lodged in his breast as well might recommend  
 Such solitude before choicest society.  
 Full forty days he passed--whether on hill  
 Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night  
 Under the covert of some ancient oak  
 Or cedar to defend him from the dew,  
 Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;  
 Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,  
 Till those days ended; hungered then at last  
 Among wild beasts. They at his sight grew mild, 310

Nor sleeping him nor waking harmed; his walk  
 The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm;  
 The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.  
 But now an aged man in rural weeds,  
 Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray eye,  
 Or withered sticks to gather, which might serve  
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,  
 To warm him wet returned from field at eve,  
 He saw approach; who first with curious eye  
 Perused him, then with words thus uttered spake:-- 320  
 "Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place,  
 So far from path or road of men, who pass  
 In troop or caravan? for single none  
 Durst ever, who returned, and dropt not here  
 His carcass, pined with hunger and with droughth.  
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,  
 For that to me thou seem'st the man whom late  
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford  
 Of Jordan honoured so, and called thee Son  
 Of God. I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330  
 Who dwell this wild, constrained by want, come forth  
 To town or village nigh (nighest is far),  
 Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,  
 What happens new; fame also finds us out."  
 To whom the Son of God:--"Who brought me hither  
 Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek."  
 "By miracle he may," replied the swain;  
 "What other way I see not; for we here  
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured  
 More than the camel, and to drink go far-- 340  
 Men to much misery and hardship born.  
 But, if thou be the Son of God, command  
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;  
 So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve  
 With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste."  
 He ended, and the Son of God replied:--  
 "Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written  
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st),  
 Man lives not by bread only, but each word  
 Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed 350  
 Our fathers here with manna? In the Mount  
 Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank;  
 And forty days Eliah without food  
 Wandered this barren waste; the same I now.  
 Why dost thou, then, suggest to me distrust  
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?"  
 Whom thus answered the Arch-Fiend, now undisguised:--  
 "'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate  
 Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,  
 Kept not my happy station, but was driven 360  
 With them from bliss to the bottomless Deep--  
 Yet to that hideous place not so confined

By rigour unconniving but that oft,  
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy  
Large liberty to round this globe of Earth,  
Or range in the Air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens  
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.  
I came, among the Sons of God, when he  
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,  
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth; 370

And, when to all his Angels he proposed  
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud,  
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,  
I undertook that office, and the tongues  
Of all his flattering prophets glibbed with lies  
To his destruction, as I had in charge:  
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost  
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost  
To be beloved of God, I have not lost 380  
To love, at least contemplate and admire,  
What I see excellent in good, or fair,  
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense.

What can be then less in me than desire  
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know  
Declared the Son of God, to hear attent  
Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?  
Men generally think me much a foe  
To all mankind. Why should I? they to me  
Never did wrong or violence. By them  
I lost not what I lost; rather by them 390

I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell  
Copartner in these regions of the World,  
If not disposer--lend them oft my aid,  
Oft my advice by presages and signs,  
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,  
Whereby they may direct their future life.  
Envy, they say, excites me, thus to gain  
Companions of my misery and woe!

At first it may be; but, long since with woe  
Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof 400  
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,  
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load;  
Small consolation, then, were Man adjoined.  
This wounds me most (what can it less?) that Man,  
Man fallen, shall be restored, I never more."

To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:--  
"Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies  
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end,  
Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come  
Into the Heaven of Heavens. Thou com'st, indeed, 410  
As a poor miserable captive thrall  
Comes to the place where he before had sat  
Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,  
Ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunned,

A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,  
 To all the host of Heaven. The happy place  
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy--  
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing  
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable;  
 So never more in Hell than when in Heaven. 420  
 But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King!  
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear  
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?  
 What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem  
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him  
 With all inflictions? but his patience won.  
 The other service was thy chosen task,  
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;  
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.  
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth! all oracles 430  
 By thee are given, and what confessed more true  
 Among the nations? That hath been thy craft,  
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.  
 But what have been thy answers? what but dark,  
 Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,  
 Which they who asked have seldom understood,  
 And, not well understood, as good not known?  
 Who ever, by consulting at thy shrine,  
 Returned the wiser, or the more instruct  
 To fly or follow what concerned him most, 440  
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?  
 For God hath justly given the nations up  
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell  
 Idolatrous. But, when his purpose is  
 Among them to declare his providence,  
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,  
 But from him, or his Angels president  
 In every province, who, themselves disdaining  
 To approach thy temples, give thee in command  
 What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say 450  
 To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,  
 Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st;  
 Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.  
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrenched;  
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse  
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceased,  
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice  
 Shalt be enquired at Delphos or elsewhere--  
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.  
 God hath now sent his living Oracle 460  
 Into the world to teach his final will,  
 And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell  
 In pious hearts, an inward oracle  
 To all truth requisite for men to know."  
 So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,  
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,



Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned:--

"Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,  
And urged me hard with doings which not will,  
But misery, hath wrested from me. Where 470  
Easily canst thou find one miserable,  
And not inforced oft-times to part from truth,  
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,  
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?  
But thou art placed above me; thou art Lord;  
From thee I can, and must, submiss, endure  
Cheek or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.  
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,  
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,  
And tunable as sylvan pipe or song; 480  
What wonder, then, if I delight to hear  
Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire  
Virtue who follow not her lore. Permit me  
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),  
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.  
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,  
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest  
To tread his sacred courts, and minister  
About his altar, handling holy things,  
Praying or vowing, and voutsafed his voice 490  
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet  
Inspired: disdain not such access to me."

To whom our Saviour, with unaltered brow:--  
"Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,  
I bid not, or forbid. Do as thou find'st  
Permission from above; thou canst not more."

He added not; and Satan, bowling low  
His gray dissimulation, disappeared,  
Into thin air diffused: for now began  
Night with her sullen wing to double-shade 500  
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;  
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

## THE SECOND BOOK

MEANWHILE the new-baptized, who yet remained  
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen  
Him whom they heard so late expressly called  
Jesus Messiah, Son of God, declared,  
And on that high authority had believed,  
And with him talked, and with him lodged--I mean  
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,  
With others, though in Holy Writ not named--  
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,  
So lately found and so abruptly gone, 10  
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,  
And, as the days increased, increased their doubt.

Sometimes they thought he might be only shewn,  
 And for a time caught up to God, as once  
 Moses was in the Mount and missing long,  
 And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels  
 Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.  
 Therefore, as those young prophets then with care  
 Sought lost Eliah, so in each place these  
 Nigh to Bethabara--in Jericho 20  
 The city of palms, AEnon, and Salem old,  
 Machaerus, and each town or city walled  
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,  
 Or in Peraea--but returned in vain.  
 Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,  
 Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,  
 Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),  
 Close in a cottage low together got,  
 Their unexpected loss and plaints outbreathed:--  
 "Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30  
 Unlooked for are we fallen! Our eyes beheld  
 Messiah certainly now come, so long  
 Expected of our fathers; we have heard  
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth.  
 'Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand;  
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restored.'  
 Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turned  
 Into perplexity and new amaze.  
 For whither is he gone? what accident  
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire 40  
 After appearance, and again prolong  
 Our expectation? God of Israel,  
 Send thy Messiah forth; the time is come.  
 Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress  
 Thy Chosen, to what highth their power unjust  
 They have exalted, and behind them cast  
 All fear of Thee; arise, and vindicate  
 Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke!  
 But let us wait; thus far He hath performed--  
 Sent his Anointed, and to us revealed him 50  
 By his great Prophet pointed at and shown  
 In public, and with him we have conversed.  
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears  
 Lay on his providence; He will not fail,  
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall--  
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence:  
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return."  
 Thus they out of their plaints new hope resume  
 To find whom at the first they found unsought.  
 But to his mother Mary, when she saw 60  
 Others returned from baptism, not her Son,  
 Nor left at Jordan tidings of him none,  
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,  
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised

Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad:--

"Oh, what avails me now that honour high,  
To have conceived of God, or that salute,  
'Hail, highly favoured, among women blest!'  
While I to sorrows am no less advanced,  
And fears as eminent above the lot  
Of other women, by the birth I bore: 70

In such a season born, when scarce a shed  
Could be obtained to shelter him or me  
From the bleak air? A stable was our warmth,  
A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly  
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king  
Were dead, who sought his life, and, missing, filled  
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem.  
From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth  
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life 80

Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,  
Little suspicious to any king. But now,  
Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,  
By John the Baptist, and in public shewn,  
Son owned from Heaven by his Father's voice,  
I looked for some great change. To honour? no;  
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,  
That to the fall and rising he should be  
Of many in Israel, and to a sign 90

Spoken against--that through my very soul  
A sword shall pierce. This is my favoured lot,  
My exaltation to afflictions high!  
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest!  
I will not argue that, nor will repine.  
But where delays he now? Some great intent  
Conceals him. When twelve years he scarce had seen,  
I lost him, but so found as well I saw  
He could not lose himself, but went about  
His Father's business. What he meant I mused--  
Since understand; much more his absence now 100  
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.  
But I to wait with patience am inured;  
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things  
And sayings laid up, pretending strange events."

Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind  
Recalling what remarkably had passed  
Since first her Salutation heard, with thoughts  
Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:  
The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,  
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed, 110  
Into himself descended, and at once  
All his great work to come before him set--  
How to begin, how to accomplish best  
His end of being on Earth, and mission high.  
For Satan, with sly preface to return,  
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone

Up to the middle region of thick air,  
 Where all his Potentates in council sate.  
 There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,  
 Solicitous and blank, he thus began:-- 120  
 "Princes, Heaven's ancient Sons, AETHEREAL THRONES--  
 Daemonian Spirits now, from the element  
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called  
 Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath  
 (So may we hold our place and these mild seats  
 Without new trouble!)--such an enemy  
 Is risen to invade us, who no less  
 Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell.  
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote  
 Consenting in full frequency was impowered, 130  
 Have found him, viewed him, tasted him; but find  
 Far other labour to be undergone  
 Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men,  
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,  
 However to this Man inferior far--  
 If he be Man by mother's side, at least  
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,  
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,  
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.  
 Therefore I am returned, lest confidence 140  
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise  
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure  
 Of like succeeding here. I summon all  
 Rather to be in readiness with hand  
 Or counsel to assist, lest I, who erst  
 Thought none my equal, now be overmatched."  
 So spake the old Serpent, doubting, and from all  
 With clamour was assured their utmost aid  
 At his command; when from amidst them rose  
 Belial, the dissolutes Spirit that fell, 150  
 The sensualest, and, after Asmodai,  
 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advised:--  
 "Set women in his eye and in his walk,  
 Among daughters of men the fairest found.  
 Many are in each region passing fair  
 As the noon sky, more like to goddesses  
 Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,  
 Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues  
 Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild  
 And sweet allayed, yet terrible to approach, 160  
 Skilled to retire, and in retiring draw  
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.  
 Such object hath the power to soften and tame  
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,  
 Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,  
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead  
 At will the manliest, resolute breast,  
 As the magnetic hardest iron draws.

Women, when nothing else, beguiled the heart  
 Of wisest Solomon, and made him build, 170  
 And made him bow, to the gods of his wives."  
 To whom quick answer Satan thus returned:--  
 "Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st  
 All others by thyself. Because of old  
 Thou thyself doat'st on womankind, admiring  
 Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,  
 None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.  
 Before the Flood, thou, with thy lusty crew,  
 False titled Sons of God, roaming the Earth,  
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men, 180  
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.  
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,  
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,  
 In wood or grove, by mossy fountain-side,  
 In valley or green meadow, to waylay  
 Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,  
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,  
 Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more  
 Too long--then lay'st thy scapes on names adored,  
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190  
 Satyr, or Faun, or Silvan? But these haunts  
 Delight not all. Among the sons of men  
 How many have with a smile made small account  
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorned  
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent!  
 Remember that Pellean conqueror,  
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East  
 He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;  
 How he surnamed of Africa dismissed,  
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid. 200  
 For Solomon, he lived at ease, and, full  
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aimed not beyond  
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;  
 Thence to the bait of women lay exposed.  
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far  
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,  
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment  
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,  
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,  
 On whom his leisure will voutsafe an eye 210  
 Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,  
 As sitting queen adored on Beauty's throne,  
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt  
 To enamour, as the zone of Venus once  
 Wrought that effect on Jove (so fables tell),  
 How would one look from his majestic brow,  
 Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,  
 Discountenance her despised, and put to rout  
 All her array, her female pride deject,  
 Or turn to reverent awe! For Beauty stands 220

In the admiration only of weak minds  
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes  
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,  
At every sudden slighting quite abashed.  
Therefore with manlier objects we must try  
His constancy--with such as have more shew  
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise  
(Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wrecked);  
Or that which only seems to satisfy  
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond. 230

And now I know he hungers, where no food  
Is to be found, in the wide Wilderness:  
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass  
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay."  
He ceased, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;  
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band  
Of Spirits likest to himself in guile,  
To be at hand and at his beck appear,  
If cause were to unfold some active scene  
Of various persons, each to know his part; 240

Then to the desert takes with these his flight,  
Where still, from shade to shade, the Son of God,  
After forty days' fasting, had remained,  
Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:--  
"Where will this end? Four times ten days I have passed  
Wandering this woody maze, and human food  
Nor tasted, nor had appetite. That fast  
To virtue I impute not, or count part  
Of what I suffer here. If nature need not,  
Or God support nature without repast, 250

Though needing, what praise is it to endure?  
But now I feel I hunger; which declares  
Nature hath need of what she asks. Yet God  
Can satisfy that need some other way,  
Though hunger still remain. So it remain  
Without this body's wasting, I content me,  
And from the sting of famine fear no harm;  
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed  
Me hungering more to do my Father's will."

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260  
Communed in silent walk, then laid him down  
Under the hospitable covert nigh  
Of trees thick interwoven. There he slept,  
And dreamed, as appetite is wont to dream,  
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.  
Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,  
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks  
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn--  
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought;  
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled 270  
Into the desert, and how there he slept  
Under a juniper--then how, awaked,

He found his supper on the coals prepared,  
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,  
 And eat the second time after repose,  
 The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:  
 Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,  
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.  
 Thus wore out night; and now the harald Lark  
 Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry 280  
 The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song.  
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose  
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;  
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.  
 Up to a hill anon his steps he reared,  
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,  
 If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;  
 But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw--  
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,  
 With chaunt of tuneful birds resounding loud. 290  
 Thither he bent his way, determined there  
 To rest at noon, and entered soon the shade  
 High-roofed, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,  
 That opened in the midst a woody scene;  
 Nature's own work it seemed (Nature taught Art),  
 And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt  
 Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs. He viewed it round;  
 When suddenly a man before him stood,  
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,  
 As one in city or court or palace bred, 300  
 And with fair speech these words to him addressed:--  
 "With granted leave officious I return,  
 But much more wonder that the Son of God  
 In this wild solitude so long should bide,  
 Of all things destitute, and, well I know,  
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,  
 As story tells, have trod this wilderness:  
 The fugitive Bond-woman, with her son,  
 Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief  
 By a providing Angel; all the race 310  
 Of Israel here had famished, had not God  
 Rained from heaven manna; and that Prophet bold,  
 Native of Thebez, wandering here, was fed  
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.  
 Of thee those forty days none hath regard,  
 Forty and more deserted here indeed."  
 To whom thus Jesus:--"What conclud'st thou hence?  
 They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none."  
 "How hast thou hunger then?" Satan replied.  
 "Tell me, if food were now before thee set, 320  
 Wouldst thou not eat?" "Thereafter as I like  
 the giver," answered Jesus. "Why should that  
 Cause thy refusal?" said the subtle Fiend.  
 "Hast thou not right to all created things?

Owe not all creatures, by just right, to thee  
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,  
But tender all their power? Nor mention I  
Meats by the law unclean, or offered first  
To idols--those young Daniel could refuse;  
Nor proffered by an enemy--though who 330  
Would scruple that, with want oppressed? Behold,  
Nature ashamed, or, better to express,  
Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purveyed  
From all the elements her choicest store,  
To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord  
With honour. Only deign to sit and eat."

He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,  
Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld,  
In ample space under the broadest shade,  
A table richly spread in regal mode, 340  
With dishes piled and meats of noblest sort  
And savour--beasts of chase, or fowl of game,  
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,  
Grisamber-steamed; all fish, from sea or shore,  
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,  
And exquisitest name, for which was drained  
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

Alas! how simple, to these cates compared,  
Was that crude Apple that diverted Eve!  
And at a stately sideboard, by the wine, 350  
That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood  
Tall stripling youths rich-clad, of fairer hue  
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more,  
Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood,  
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades  
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,  
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seemed  
Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since  
Of faery damsels met in forest wide  
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones, 360  
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore.

And all the while harmonious airs were heard  
Of chiming strings or charming pipes; and winds  
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fanned  
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.  
Such was the splendour; and the Tempter now  
His invitation earnestly renewed:--

"What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?  
These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict  
Defends the touching of these viands pure; 370  
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,  
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,  
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.  
All these are Spirits of air, and woods, and springs,  
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay  
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord.



What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat."

To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:--

"Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?  
And who withholds my power that right to use? 380

Shall I receive by gift what of my own,  
When and where likes me best, I can command?

I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,

Command a table in this wilderness,

And call swift flights of Angels ministrant,

Arrayed in glory, on my cup to attend:

Why shouldst thou, then, obtrude this diligence

In vain, where no acceptance it can find?

And with my hunger what hast thou to do?

Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390

And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles."

To whom thus answered Satan, male-content:--

"That I have also power to give thou seest;

If of that power I bring thee voluntary

What I might have bestowed on whom I pleased,

And rather opportunely in this place

Chose to impart to thy apparent need,

Why shouldst thou not accept it? But I see

What I can do or offer is suspect.

Of these things others quickly will dispose, 400

Whose pains have earned the far-fet spoil." With that

Both table and provision vanished quite,

With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard;

Only the importune Tempter still remained,

And with these words his temptation pursued:--

"By hunger, that each other creature tames,

Thou art not to be harmed, therefore not moved;

Thy temperance, invincible besides,

For no allurement yields to appetite;

And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410

High actions. But wherewith to be achieved?

Great acts require great means of enterprise;

Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,

A carpenter thy father known, thyself

Bred up in poverty and straits at home,

Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit.

Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire

To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?

What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,

Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude, 420

Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?

Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms.

What raised Antipater the Edomite,

And his son Herod placed on Juda's throne,

Thy throne, but gold, that got him puissant friends?

Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,

Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap--

Not difficult, if thou hearken to me.

Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;  
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain, 430  
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want."

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:--  
"Yet wealth without these three is impotent  
To gain dominion, or to keep it gained--  
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,  
In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolved;  
But men endued with these have oft attained,  
In lowest poverty, to highest deeds--  
Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad 440  
Whose offspring on the throne of Juda sate  
So many ages, and shall yet regain  
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.

Among the Heathen (for throughout the world  
To me is not unknown what hath been done  
Worthy of memorial) canst thou not remember  
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?  
For I esteem those names of men so poor,  
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn  
Riches, though offered from the hand of kings. 450  
And what in me seems wanting but that I  
May also in this poverty as soon

Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?  
Extol not riches, then, the toil of fools,  
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt  
To slacken virtue and abate her edge  
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.  
What if with like aversion I reject  
Riches and realms! Yet not for that a crown,  
Golden in shew, is but a wreath of thorns,  
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights, 460  
To him who wears the regal diadem,

When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;  
For therein stands the office of a king,  
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,  
That for the public all this weight he bears.  
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules  
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king--  
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;  
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule 470  
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,  
Subject himself to anarchy within,  
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.

But to guide nations in the way of truth  
By saving doctrine, and from error lead  
To know, and, knowing, worship God aright,  
Is yet more kingly. This attracts the soul,  
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;  
That other o'er the body only reigns,  
And oft by force--which to a generous mind  
So reigning can be no sincere delight. 480

Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought  
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down  
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.  
Riches are needless, then, both for themselves,  
And for thy reason why they should be sought--  
To gain a sceptre, ofttest better missed."

### THE THIRD BOOK

SO spake the Son of God; and Satan stood  
A while as mute, confounded what to say,  
What to reply, confuted and convinced  
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;  
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,  
With soothing words renewed, him thus accosts:--  
"I see thou know'st what is of use to know,  
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;  
Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words  
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart 10  
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.  
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,  
Thy counsel would be as the oracle  
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems  
On Aaron's breast, or tongue of Seers old  
Infallible; or, wert thou sought to deeds  
That might require the array of war, thy skill  
Of conduct would be such that all the world  
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist 20  
In battle, though against thy few in arms.  
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide?  
Affecting private life, or more obscure  
In savage wilderness, wherefore deprive  
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself  
The fame and glory--glory, the reward  
That sole excites to high attempts the flame  
Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure  
AETHEREAL, who all pleasures else despise,  
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross, 30  
And dignities and powers, all but the highest?  
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe. The son  
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these  
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held  
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down  
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quelled  
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.  
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,  
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.  
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,  
The more he grew in years, the more inflamed 40  
With glory, wept that he had lived so long  
Inglorious. But thou yet art not too late."



Who names not now with honour patient Job?  
 Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)  
 By what he taught and suffered for so doing,  
 For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now  
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.  
 Yet, if for fame and glory aught be done, 100  
 Aught suffered--if young African for fame  
 His wasted country freed from Punic rage--  
 The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,  
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.  
 Shall I seek glory, then, as vain men seek,  
 Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but His  
 Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am."  
 To whom the Tempter, murmuring, thus replied:--  
 "Think not so slight of glory, therein least  
 Resembling thy great Father. He seeks glory, 110  
 And for his glory all things made, all things  
 Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven,  
 By all his Angels glorified, requires  
 Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,  
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption.  
 Above all sacrifice, or hallowed gift,  
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives,  
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,  
 Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declared;  
 From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts." 120  
 To whom our Saviour fervently replied:  
 "And reason; since his Word all things produced,  
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,  
 But to shew forth his goodness, and impart  
 His good communicable to every soul  
 Freely; of whom what could He less expect  
 Than glory and benediction--that is, thanks--  
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense  
 From them who could return him nothing else,  
 And, not returning that, would likeliest render 130  
 Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?  
 Hard recompense, unsuitable return  
 For so much good, so much beneficence!  
 But why should man seek glory, who of his own  
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs  
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame--  
 Who, for so many benefits received,  
 Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false,  
 And so of all true good himself despoiled;  
 Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140  
 That which to God alone of right belongs?  
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,  
 That who advances his glory, not their own,  
 Them he himself to glory will advance."  
 So spake the Son of God; and here again  
 Satan had not to answer, but stood struck

With guilt of his own sin--for he himself,  
 Insatiable of glory, had lost all;  
 Yet of another plea bethought him soon:--  
 "Of glory, as thou wilt," said he, "so deem;                   150  
 Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.  
 But to a Kingdom thou art born--ordained  
 To sit upon thy father David's throne,  
 By mother's side thy father, though thy right  
 Be now in powerful hands, that will not part  
 Easily from possession won with arms.  
 Judaea now and all the Promised Land,  
 Reduced a province under Roman yoke,  
 Obeys Tiberius, nor is always ruled  
 With temperate sway: oft have they violated                   160  
 The Temple, oft the Law, with foul affronts,  
 Abominations rather, as did once  
 Antiochus. And think'st thou to regain  
 Thy right by sitting still, or thus retiring?  
 So did not Machabeus. He indeed  
 Retired unto the Desert, but with arms;  
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevailed  
 That by strong hand his family obtained,  
 Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurped,  
 With Modin and her suburbs once content.                   170  
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal  
 And duty--zeal and duty are not slow,  
 But on Occasion's forelock watchful wait:  
 They themselves rather are occasion best--  
 Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free  
 Thy country from her heathen servitude.  
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify,  
 The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign--  
 The happier reign the sooner it begins.  
 Rein then; what canst thou better do the while?"                   180  
 To whom our Saviour answer thus returned:--  
 "All things are best fulfilled in their due time;  
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said.  
 If of my reign Prophetic Writ hath told  
 That it shall never end, so, when begin  
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed--  
 He in whose hand all times and seasons rowl.  
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first  
 Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,  
 By tribulations, injuries, insults,                   190  
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,  
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting  
 Without distrust or doubt, that He may know  
 What I can suffer, how obey? Who best  
 Can suffer best can do, best reign who first  
 Well hath obeyed--just trial ere I merit  
 My exaltation without change or end.  
 But what concerns it thee when I begin

My everlasting Kingdom? Why art thou  
Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition? 200  
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,  
And my promotion will be thy destruction?"

To whom the Tempter, inly racked, replied:--  
"Let that come when it comes. All hope is lost  
Of my reception into grace; what worse?  
For where no hope is left is left no fear.

If there be worse, the expectation more  
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.  
I would be at the worst; worst is my port,  
My harbour, and my ultimate repose, 210  
The end I would attain, my final good.

My error was my error, and my crime  
My crime; whatever, for itself condemned,  
And will alike be punished, whether thou  
Reign or reign not--though to that gentle brow  
Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,  
From that placid aspect and meek regard,  
Rather than aggravate my evil state,  
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire  
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell) 220  
A shelter and a kind of shading cool  
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.

If I, then, to the worst that can be haste,  
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best?  
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,  
That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their King!  
Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detained  
Of the enterprise so hazardous and high!  
No wonder; for, though in thee be united  
What of perfection can in Man be found, 230  
Or human nature can receive, consider

Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent  
At home, scarce viewed the Galilean towns,  
And once a year Jerusalem, few days'  
Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?  
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,  
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts--  
Best school of best experience, quickest in sight  
In all things that to greatest actions lead.

The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever 240  
Timorous, and loth, with novice modesty  
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom)  
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous.

But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit  
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes  
The monarchies of the Earth, their pomp and state--  
Sufficient introduction to inform  
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,  
And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know  
How best their opposition to withstand." 250

With that (such power was given him then), he took  
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.  
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet  
 A spacious plain outstretched in circuit wide  
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,  
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between  
 Fair champaign, with less rivers interveined,  
 Then meeting joined their tribute to the sea.  
 Fertil of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;  
 With herds the pasture thronged, with flocks the hills;     260  
 Huge cities and high-towered, that well might seem  
 The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large  
 The prospect was that here and there was room  
 For barren desert, fountainless and dry.  
 To this high mountain-top the Tempter brought  
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began:--  
 "Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,  
 Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,  
 Cut shorter many a league. Here thou behold'st  
 Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,     270  
 Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on  
 As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,  
 And oft beyond; to south the Persian bay,  
 And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth:  
 Here, Nineveh, of length within her wall  
 Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,  
 Of that first golden monarchy the seat,  
 And seat of Salmanassar, whose success  
 Israel in long captivity still mourns;  
 There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,     280  
 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice  
 Judah and all thy father David's house  
 Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,  
 Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,  
 His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there;  
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shews,  
 And Hecatompylos her hunderd gates;  
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,  
 The drink of none but kings; of later fame,  
 Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,     290  
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there  
 Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,  
 Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.  
 All these the Parthian (now some ages past  
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first  
 That empire) under his dominion holds,  
 From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.  
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view  
 Of his great power; for now the Parthian king  
 In Ctesiphon hath gathered all his host     300  
 Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild  
 Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid



He marches now in haste. See, though from far,  
 His thousands, in what martial equipage  
 They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,  
 Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit--  
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;  
 See how in warlike muster they appear,  
 In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings."

He looked, and saw what numbers numberless 310  
 The city gates outpoured, light-armed troops  
 In coats of mail and military pride.  
 In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,  
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice  
 Of many provinces from bound to bound--  
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,  
 And Margiana, to the Hyrcanian cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;  
 From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains  
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south 320  
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.  
 He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,  
 How quick they wheeled, and flying behind them shot  
 Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face  
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;  
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown.  
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor, on each horn,  
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,  
 Chariots, or elephants indorsed with towers  
 Of archers; nor of labouring pioners 330  
 A multitude, with spades and axes armed,  
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,  
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay  
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke:  
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,  
 And waggons fraught with utensils of war.  
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,  
 When Agrican, with all his northern powers,  
 Besieged Albracea, as romances tell,  
 The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win 340  
 The fairest of her sex, Angelica,  
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,  
 Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemane.  
 Such and so numerous was their chivalry;  
 At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presumed,  
 And to our Saviour thus his words renewed:--  
 "That thou may'st know I seek not to engage  
 Thy virtue, and not every way secure  
 On no slight grounds thy safety, hear and mark  
 To what end I have brought thee hither, and shew 350  
 All this fair sight. Thy kingdom, though foretold  
 By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou  
 Endeavour, as thy father David did,  
 Thou never shalt obtain: prediction still

In all things, and all men, supposes means;  
 Without means used, what it predicts revokes.  
 But say thou wert possessed of David's throne  
 By free consent of all, none opposite,  
 Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope  
 Long to enjoy it quiet and secure 360  
 Between two such enclosing enemies,  
 Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these  
 Thou must make sure thy own: the Parthian first,  
 By my advice, as nearer, and of late  
 Found able by invasion to annoy  
 Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,  
 Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,  
 Maugre the Roman. It shall be my task  
 To render thee the Parthian at dispose,  
 Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league. 370  
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,  
 That which alone can truly reinstall thee  
 In David's royal seat, his true successor--  
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those Ten Tribes  
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve  
 In Habor, and among the Medes dispersed:  
 The sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost  
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old  
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,  
 This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380  
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore  
 To their inheritance, then, nor till then,  
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,  
 From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond,  
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Caesar not need fear."  
 To whom our Saviour answered thus, unmoved:--  
 "Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm  
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,  
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,  
 Before mine eyes thou hast set, and in my ear 390  
 Vented much policy, and projects deep  
 Of enemies, of aids, battles, and leagues,  
 Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.  
 Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else  
 Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne!  
 My time, I told thee (and that time for thee  
 Were better farthest off), is not yet come.  
 When that comes, think not thou to find me slack  
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need  
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome 400  
 Luggage of war there shewn me--argument  
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.  
 My brethren, as thou call'st them, those Ten Tribes,  
 I must deliver, if I mean to reign  
 David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway  
 To just extent over all Israel's sons!

But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then  
 For Israel, or for David, or his throne,  
 When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride  
 Of numbering Israel--which cost the lives 410  
 of threescore and ten thousand Israelites  
 By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal  
 To Israel then, the same that now to me.  
 As for those captive tribes, themselves were they  
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off  
 From God to worship calves, the deities  
 Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,  
 And all the idolatries of heathen round,  
 Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;  
 Nor in the land of their captivity 420  
 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought  
 The God of their forefathers, but so died  
 Impenitent, and left a race behind  
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce  
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,  
 And God with idols in their worship joined.  
 Should I of these the liberty regard,  
 Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,  
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreformed,  
 Headlong would follow, and to their gods perhaps 430  
 Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve  
 Their enemies who serve idols with God.  
 Yet He at length, time to himself best known,  
 Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call  
 May bring them back, repentant and sincere,  
 And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,  
 While to their native land with joy they haste,  
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,  
 When to the Promised Land their fathers passed.  
 To his due time and providence I leave them." 440  
 So spake Israel's true King, and to the Fiend  
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.  
 So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

#### THE FOURTH BOOK

Perplexed and troubled at his bad success  
 The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,  
 Discovered in his fraud, thrown from his hope  
 So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric  
 That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve,  
 So little here, nay lost. But Eve was Eve;  
 This far his over-match, who, self-deceived  
 And rash, beforehand had no better weighed  
 The strength he was to cope with, or his own.  
 But--as a man who had been matchless held 10  
 In cunning, over-reached where least he thought,

To salve his credit, and for very spite,  
 Still will be tempting him who foils him still,  
 And never cease, though to his shame the more;  
 Or as a swarm of flies in vintage-time,  
 About the wine-press where sweet must is poured,  
 Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;  
 Or surging waves against a solid rock,  
 Though all to shivers dashed, the assault renew,  
 (Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end-- 20  
 So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse  
 Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,  
 Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,  
 And his vain importunity pursues.  
 He brought our Saviour to the western side  
 Of that high mountain, whence he might behold  
 Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,  
 Washed by the southern sea, and on the north  
 To equal length backed with a ridge of hills  
 That screened the fruits of the earth and seats of men 30  
 From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst  
 Divided by a river, off whose banks  
 On each side an Imperial City stood,  
 With towers and temples proudly elevate  
 On seven small hills, with palaces adorned,  
 Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,  
 Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,  
 Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes  
 Above the highth of mountains interposed--  
 By what strange parallax, or optic skill 40  
 Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass  
 Of telescope, were curious to enquire.  
 And now the Tempter thus his silence broke:--  
 "The city which thou seest no other deem  
 Than great and glorious Rome, Queen of the Earth  
 So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched  
 Of nations. There the Capitol thou seest,  
 Above the rest lifting his stately head  
 On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel  
 Impregnable; and there Mount Palatine, 50  
 The imperial palace, compass huge, and high  
 The structure, skill of noblest architects,  
 With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,  
 Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires.  
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like  
 Houses of gods--so well I have disposed  
 My aerie microscope--thou may'st behold,  
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs  
 Carved work, the hand of famed artificers  
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold. 60  
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see  
 What conflux issuing forth, or entering in:  
 Praetors, proconsuls to their provinces

Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;  
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power;  
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;  
 Or embassies from regions far remote,  
 In various habits, on the Appian road,  
 Or on the AEmilian--some from farthest south,  
 Syene, and where the shadow both way falls, 70  
 Meroe, Nilotic isle, and, more to west,  
 The realm of Bocchus to the Blackmoor sea;  
 From the Asian kings (and Parthian among these),  
 From India and the Golden Chersoness,  
 And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,  
 Dusk faces with white silken turbants wreathed;  
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;  
 Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians north  
 Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.  
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay-- 80  
 To Rome's great Emperor, whose wide domain,  
 In ample territory, wealth and power,  
 Civility of manners, arts and arms,  
 And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer  
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,  
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,  
 Shared among petty kings too far removed;  
 These having shewn thee, I have shewn thee all  
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. 90  
 This Emperor hath no son, and now is old,  
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired  
 To Capreae, an island small but strong  
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there  
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;  
 Committing to a wicked favourite  
 All public cares, and yet of him suspicious;  
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,  
 Endued with regal virtues as thou art,  
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,  
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne, 100  
 Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,  
 A victor-people free from servile yoke!  
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power  
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.  
 Aim, therefore, at no less than all the world;  
 Aim at the highest; without the highest attained,  
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,  
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will."  
 To whom the Son of God, unmoved, replied:--  
 "Nor doth this grandeur and majestic shew 110  
 Of luxury, though called magnificence,  
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,  
 Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell  
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts  
 On citron tables or Atlantic stone

(For I have also heard, perhaps have read),  
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,  
 Chios and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,  
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, imbossed with gems  
 And studs of pearl--to me should'st tell, who thirst 120  
 And hunger still. Then embassies thou shew'st  
 From nations far and nigh! What honour that,  
 But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear  
 So many hollow compliments and lies,  
 Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk  
 Of the Emperor, how easily subdued,  
 How gloriously. I shall, thou say'st, expel  
 A brutish monster: what if I withal  
 Expel a Devil who first made him such?  
 Let his tormentor, Conscience, find him out; 130  
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free  
 That people, victor once, now vile and base,  
 Deservedly made vassal--who, once just,  
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquered well,  
 But govern ill the nations under yoke,  
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all  
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown  
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity;  
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured  
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed; 140  
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,  
 And from the daily Scene effeminate.  
 What wise and valiant man would seek to free  
 These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,  
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free?  
 Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit  
 On David's throne, it shall be like a tree  
 Spreading and overshadowing all the earth,  
 Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash  
 All monarchies besides throughout the world; 150  
 And of my Kingdom there shall be no end.  
 Means there shall be to this; but what the means  
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell."  
 To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied:--  
 "I see all offers made by me how slight  
 Thou valuest, because offered, and reject'st.  
 Nothing will please the difficult and nice,  
 Or nothing more than still to contradict.  
 On the other side know also thou that I  
 On what I offer set as high esteem, 160  
 Nor what I part with mean to give for naught,  
 All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,  
 The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give  
 (For, given to me, I give to whom I please),  
 No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else--  
 On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,  
 And worship me as thy superior Lord

(Easily done), and hold them all of me;  
For what can less so great a gift deserve?"

Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain:-- 170

"I never liked thy talk, thy offers less;  
Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter  
The abominable terms, impious condition.  
But I endure the time, till which expired  
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,  
The first of all commandments, 'Thou shalt worship  
The Lord thy God, and only Him shalt serve.'

And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound  
To worship thee, accursed? now more accursed  
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve, 180  
And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.

The kingdoms of the world to thee were given!  
Permitted rather, and by thee usurped;  
Other donation none thou canst produce.  
If given, by whom but by the King of kings,  
God over all supreme? If given to thee,  
By thee how fairly is the Giver now  
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost

Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame  
As offer them to me, the Son of God-- 190

To me my own, on such abhorred pact,  
That I fall down and worship thee as God?  
Get thee behind me! Plain thou now appear'st  
That Evil One, Satan for ever damned."

To whom the Fiend, with fear abashed, replied:--

"Be not so sore offended, Son of God--  
Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men--  
If I, to try whether in higher sort

Than these thou bear'st that title, have proposed  
What both from Men and Angels I receive, 200

Tetrarchs of Fire, Air, Flood, and on the Earth  
Nations besides from all the quartered winds--  
God of this World invoked, and World beneath.  
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold  
To me most fatal, me it most concerns.

The trial hath indamaged thee no way,  
Rather more honour left and more esteem;  
Me naught advantaged, missing what I aimed.

Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,  
The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more  
Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not. 210

And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined  
Than to a worldly crown, addicted more  
To contemplation and profound dispute;  
As by that early action may be judged,  
When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st  
Alone into the Temple, there wast found  
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant  
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,

Teaching, not taught. The childhood shews the man, 220  
 As morning shews the day. Be famous, then,  
 By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,  
 So let extend thy mind o'er all the world  
 In knowledge; all things in it comprehend.  
 All knowledge is not couched in Moses' law,  
 The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;  
 The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach  
 To admiration, led by Nature's light;  
 And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,  
 Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st. 230  
 Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,  
 Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?  
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute  
 Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?  
 Error by his own arms is best evinced.  
 Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,  
 Westward, much nearer by south-west; behold  
 Where on the AEgean shore a city stands,  
 Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil--  
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts 240  
 And Eloquence, native to famous wits  
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,  
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.  
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,  
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird  
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;  
 There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound  
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites  
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rows  
 His whispering stream. Within the walls then view 250  
 The schools of ancient sages--his who bred  
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,  
 Lyceum there; and painted Stoa next.  
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power  
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit  
 By voice or hand, and various-measured verse,  
 AEolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,  
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,  
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer called,  
 Whose poem Phoebus challenged for his own. 260  
 Thence what the lofty grave Tragedians taught  
 In chorus or iambic, teachers best  
 Of moral prudence, with delight received  
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat  
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,  
 High actions and high passions best describing.  
 Thence to the famous Orators repair,  
 Those ancient whose resistless eloquence  
 Wielded at will that fierce democracy,  
 Shook the Arsenal, and fulminated over Greece 270  
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.



To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,  
From heaven descended to the low-roofed house  
Of Socrates--see there his tenement--  
Whom, well inspired, the Oracle pronounced  
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth  
Mellifluous streams, that watered all the schools  
Of Academics old and new, with those  
Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect  
Epicurean, and the Stoic severe. 280

These here revolve, or, as thou likest, at home,  
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;  
These rules will render thee a king complete  
Within thyself, much more with empire joined."  
To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:--  
"Think not but that I know these things; or, think  
I know them not, not therefore am I short  
Of knowing what I ought. He who receives  
Light from above, from the Fountain of Light,  
No other doctrine needs, though granted true; 290  
But these are false, or little else but dreams,  
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.

The first and wisest of them all professed  
To know this only, that he nothing knew;  
The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits;  
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;  
Others in virtue placed felicity,  
But virtue joined with riches and long life;  
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;  
The Stoic last in philosophic pride, 300  
By him called virtue, and his virtuous man,  
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing,  
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,  
As fearing God nor man, contemning all  
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life--  
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can;  
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,  
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.

Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,  
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310  
And how the World began, and how Man fell,  
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?  
Much of the Soul they talk, but all awry;

And in themselves seek virtue; and to themselves  
All glory arrogate, to God give none;  
Rather accuse him under usual names,  
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite  
Of mortal things. Who, therefore, seeks in these  
True wisdom finds her not, or, by delusion  
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320  
An empty cloud. However, many books,  
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads  
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not

A spirit and judgment equal or superior,  
 (And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)  
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains,  
 Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself,  
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys  
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,  
 As children gathering pebbles on the shore. 330  
 Or, if I would delight my private hours  
 With music or with poem, where so soon  
 As in our native language can I find  
 That solace? All our Law and Story strewed  
 With hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscribed,  
 Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon  
 That pleased so well our victor's ear, declare  
 That rather Greece from us these arts derived--  
 Ill imitated while they loudest sing  
 The vices of their deities, and their own, 340  
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating  
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.  
 Remove their swelling epithetes, thick-laid  
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,  
 Thin-sown with aught of profit or delight,  
 Will far be found unworthy to compare  
 With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,  
 Where God is praised aright and godlike men,  
 The Holiest of Holies and his Saints  
 (Such are from God inspired, not such from thee); 350  
 Unless where moral virtue is expressed  
 By light of Nature, not in all quite lost.  
 Their orators thou then extoll'st as those  
 The top of eloquence--statists indeed,  
 And lovers of their country, as may seem;  
 But herein to our Prophets far beneath,  
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching  
 The solid rules of civil government,  
 In their majestic, unaffected style,  
 Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome. 360  
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,  
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,  
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;  
 These only, with our Law, best form a king."  
 So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now  
 Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),  
 Thus to our Saviour, with stern brow, replied:--  
 "Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,  
 Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught  
 By me proposed in life contemplative 370  
 Or active, tended on by glory or fame,  
 What dost thou in this world? The Wilderness  
 For thee is fittest place: I found thee there,  
 And thither will return thee. Yet remember  
 What I foretell thee; soon thou shalt have cause

To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus  
Nicely or cautiously, my offered aid,  
Which would have set thee in short time with ease  
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,  
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380  
When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.

Now, contrary--if I read aught in heaven,  
Or heaven write aught of fate--by what the stars  
Voluminous, or single characters  
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,  
Sorrows and labours, opposition, hate,  
Attends thee; scorns, reproaches, injuries,  
Violence and stripes, and, lastly, cruel death.  
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,  
Real or allegoric, I discern not; 390  
Nor when: eternal sure--as without end,  
Without beginning; for no date prefixed  
Directs me in the starry rubric set."

So saying, he took (for still he knew his power  
Not yet expired), and to the Wilderness  
Brought back, the Son of God, and left him there,  
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,  
As daylight sunk, and brought in luring Night,  
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,  
Privation mere of light and absent day. 400

Our Saviour, meek, and with untroubled mind  
After hisaerie jaunt, though hurried sore,  
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,  
Wherever, under some concourse of shades,  
Whose branching arms thick intertwined might shield  
From dews and damps of night his sheltered head;  
But, sheltered, slept in vain; for at his head  
The Tempter watched, and soon with ugly dreams  
Disturbed his sleep. And either tropic now 410

'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven; the clouds  
From many a horrid rift abortive poured  
Fierce rain with lightning mixed, water with fire,  
In ruin reconciled; nor slept the winds  
Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad  
From the four hinges of the world, and fell  
On the vexed wilderness, whose tallest pines,  
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,  
Bowed their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,  
Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,  
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st 420

Unshaken! Nor yet staid the terror there:  
Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round  
Environed thee; some howled, some yelled, some shrieked,  
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou  
Sat'st unappalled in calm and sinless peace.  
Thus passed the night so foul, till Morning fair  
Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice grey,

Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar  
 Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds,  
 And griesly spectres, which the Fiend had raised 430  
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.  
 And now the sun with more effectual beams  
 Had cheered the face of earth, and dried the wet  
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,  
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,  
 After a night of storm so ruinous,  
 Cleared up their choicest notes in bush and spray,  
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn.  
 Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,  
 Was absent, after all his mischief done, 440  
 The Prince of Darkness; glad would also seem  
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;  
 Yet with no new device (they all were spent),  
 Rather by this his last affront resolved,  
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage  
 And mad despite to be so oft repelled.  
 Him walking on a sunny hill he found,  
 Backed on the north and west by a thick wood;  
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,  
 And in a careless mood thus to him said:-- 450  
 "Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,  
 After a dismal night. I heard the wrack,  
 As earth and sky would mingle; but myself  
 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them,  
 As dangerous to the pillared frame of Heaven,  
 Or to the Earth's dark basis underneath,  
 Are to the main as inconsiderable  
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze  
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone.  
 Yet, as being oftentimes noxious where they light 460  
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,  
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,  
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,  
 They oft fore-signify and threaten ill.  
 This tempest at this desert most was bent;  
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.  
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject  
 The perfect season offered with my aid  
 To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong  
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way 470  
 Of gaining David's throne no man knows when  
 (For both the when and how is nowhere told),  
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordained, no doubt;  
 For Angels have proclaimed it, but concealing  
 The time and means? Each act is rightliest done  
 Not when it must, but when it may be best.  
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find  
 What I foretold thee--many a hard assay  
 Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,

Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold; 480  
 Whereof this ominous night that closed thee round,  
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies,  
 May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign."  
 So talked he, while the Son of God went on,  
 And staid not, but in brief him answered thus:--  
 "Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm  
 Those terrors which thou speak'st of did me none.  
 I never feared they could, though noising loud  
 And threatening nigh: what they can do as signs  
 Betokening or ill-boding I contemn 490  
 As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;  
 Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,  
 Obtrud'st thy offered aid, that I, accepting,  
 At least might seem to hold all power of thee,  
 Ambitious Spirit! and would'st be thought my God;  
 And storm'st, refused, thinking to terrify  
 Me to thy will! Desist (thou art discerned,  
 And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest."  
 To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:--  
 "Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born! 500  
 For Son of God to me is yet in doubt.  
 Of the Messiah I have heard foretold  
 By all the Prophets; of thy birth, at length  
 Announced by Gabriel, with the first I knew,  
 And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,  
 On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.  
 From that time seldom have I ceased to eye  
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,  
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;  
 Till, at the ford of Jordan, whither all 510  
 Flocked to the Baptist, I among the rest  
 (Though not to be baptized), by voice from Heaven  
 Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.  
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view  
 And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn  
 In what degree or meaning thou art called  
 The Son of God, which bears no single sense.  
 The Son of God I also am, or was;  
 And, if I was, I am; relation stands:  
 All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought 520  
 In some respect far higher so declared.  
 Therefore I watched thy footsteps from that hour,  
 And followed thee still on to this waste wild,  
 Where, by all best conjectures, I collect  
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy.  
 Good reason, then, if I beforehand seek  
 To understand my adversary, who  
 And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;  
 By parle or composition, truce or league,  
 To win him, or win from him what I can. 530  
 And opportunity I here have had

To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee  
Proof against all temptation, as a rock  
Of adamant and as a centre, firm  
To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,  
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,  
Have been before contemned, and may again.  
Therefore, to know what more thou art than man,  
Worth naming the Son of God by voice from Heaven,  
Another method I must now begin." 540

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing  
Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,  
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,  
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,  
The Holy City, lifted high her towers,  
And higher yet the glorious Temple reared  
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount  
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:  
There, on the highest pinnacle, he set  
The Son of God, and added thus in scorn:-- 550

"There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright  
Will ask thee skill. I to thy Father's house  
Have brought thee, and highest placed: highest is best.  
Now shew thy progeny; if not to stand,  
Cast thyself down. Safely, if Son of God;  
For it is written, 'He will give command  
Concerning thee to his Angels; in their hands  
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time  
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.'" 560

To whom thus Jesus: "Also it is written,  
'Tempt not the Lord thy God.'" He said, and stood;  
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.  
As when Earth's son, Antaeus (to compare  
Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove  
With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foiled, still rose,  
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,  
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined,  
Throttled at length in the air expired and fell,  
So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,  
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride 570  
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall;

And, as that Theban monster that proposed  
Her riddle, and him who solved it not devoured,  
That once found out and solved, for grief and spite  
Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep,  
So, strook with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,  
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought  
Joyless triumphals of his hoped success,  
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,  
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580  
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe  
Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,  
Who on their plummy vans received Him soft

From his uneasy station, and upbore,  
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;  
Then, in a flowery valley, set him down  
On a green bank, and set before him spread  
A table of celestial food, divine  
Ambrosial fruits fetched from the Tree of Life,  
And from the Fount of Life ambrosial drink, 590  
That soon refreshed him wearied, and repaired  
What hunger, if aught hunger, had impaired,  
Or thirst; and, as he fed, Angelic quires  
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory  
Over temptation and the Tempter proud:--

"True Image of the Father, whether throned  
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light  
Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrined  
In fleshly tabernacle and human form,  
Wandering the wilderness--whatever place, 600  
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing  
The Son of God, with Godlike force endued  
Against the attempter of thy Father's throne  
And thief of Paradise! Him long of old  
Thou didst debel, and down from Heaven cast  
With all his army; now thou hast avenged  
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing  
Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,  
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.

He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610  
In paradise to tempt; his snares are broke.  
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,  
A fairer Paradise is founded now  
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,  
A Saviour, art come down to reinstall;  
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,  
Of tempter and temptation without fear.

But thou, Infernal Serpent! shalt not long  
Rule in the clouds. Like an autumnal star,  
Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down 620  
Under his feet. For proof, ere this thou feel'st  
Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound)

By this repulse received, and hold'st in Hell  
No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues  
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe  
To dread the Son of God. He, all unarmed,  
Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,  
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul--  
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly, 630  
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,  
Lest he command them down into the Deep,  
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.  
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both Worlds,  
Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work  
Now enter, and begin to save Mankind."

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,  
Sung victor, and, from heavenly feast refreshed,  
Brought on his way with joy. He, unobserved,  
Home to his mother's house private returned.

END.

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John Milton



## Paradise Regained: The First Book

I, who erewhile the happy Garden sung  
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing  
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,  
By one man's firm obedience fully tried  
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foiled  
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,  
And Eden raised in the waste Wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who led'st this glorious Eremite  
Into the desert, his victorious field  
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence  
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,  
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,  
And bear through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,  
With prosperous wing full summed, to tell of deeds  
Above heroic, though in secret done,  
And unrecorded left through many an age:  
Worthy to have not remained so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice  
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried  
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand  
To all baptized. To his great baptism flocked  
With awe the regions round, and with them came  
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deemed  
To the flood Jordan&mdash;came as then obscure,  
Unmarked, unknown. But him the Baptist soon  
Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore  
As to his worthier, and would have resigned  
To him his heavenly office. Nor was long  
His witness unconfirmed: on him baptized  
Heaven opened, and in likeness of a Dove  
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice  
From Heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.  
That heard the Adversary, who, roving still  
About the world, at that assembly famed  
Would not be last, and, with the voice divine  
Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted man to whom  
Such high attest was given a while surveyed  
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,  
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air  
To council summons all his mighty Peers,  
Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involved,  
A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,  
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:&mdash;

"O ancient Powers of Air and this wide World  
(For much more willingly I mention Air,  
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,  
Our hated habitation), well ye know  
How many ages, as the years of men,  
This Universe we have possessed, and ruled  
In manner at our will the affairs of Earth,  
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve  
Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since

With dread attending when that fatal wound  
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve  
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven  
 Delay, for longest time to Him is short;  
 And now, too soon for us, the circling hours  
 This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we  
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound  
 (At least, if so we can, and by the head  
 Broken be not intended all our power  
 To be infringed, our freedom and our being  
 In this fair empire won of Earth and Air)&mdash;  
 For this ill news I bring: The Woman's Seed,  
 Destined to this, is late of woman born.  
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause;  
 But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying  
 All virtue, grace and wisdom to achieve  
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.  
 Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim  
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all  
 Invites, and in the consecrated stream  
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so  
 Purified to receive him pure, or rather  
 To do him honour as their King. All come,  
 And he himself among them was baptized&mdash;  
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive  
 The testimony of Heaven, that who he is  
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt. I saw  
 The Prophet do him reverence; on him, rising  
 Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds  
 Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head  
 A perfect Dove descend (whate'er it meant);  
 And out of Heaven the sovraign voice I heard,  
 'This is my Son beloved,&mdash;in him am pleased.'  
 His mother, than, is mortal, but his Sire  
 He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven;  
 And what will He not do to advance his Son?  
 His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,  
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the Deep;  
 Who this is we must learn, for Man he seems  
 In all his lineaments, though in his face  
 The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.  
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge  
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate,  
 But must with something sudden be opposed  
 (Not force, but well-couched fraud, well-woven snares),  
 Ere in the head of nations he appear,  
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on Earth.  
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook  
 The dismal expedition to find out  
 And ruin Adam, and the exploit performed  
 Successfully: a calmer voyage now  
 Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once

Induces best to hope of like success."

He ended, and his words impression left  
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,  
Distracted and surprised with deep dismay  
At these sad tidings. But no time was then  
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:  
Unanimous they all commit the care  
And management of this man enterprise  
To him, their great Dictator, whose attempt  
At first against mankind so well had thrived  
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march  
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,  
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,  
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.  
So to the coast of Jordan he directs  
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,  
Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,  
This man of men, attested Son of God,  
Temptation and all guile on him to try&mdash;  
So to subvert whom he suspected raised  
To end his reign on Earth so long enjoyed:  
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfilled  
The purposed counsel, pre-ordained and fixed,  
Of the Most High, who, in full frequency bright  
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:&mdash;  
"Gabriel, this day, by proof, thou shalt behold,  
Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth  
With Man or men's affairs, how I begin  
To verify that solemn message late,  
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure  
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,  
Great in renown, and called the Son of God.  
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be  
To her a virgin, that on her should come  
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest  
O'ershadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown,  
To shew him worthy of his birth divine  
And high prediction, henceforth I expose  
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay  
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts  
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng  
Of his Apostasy. He might have learnt  
Less overweening, since he failed in Job,  
Whose constant perseverance overcame  
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.  
He now shall know I can produce a man,  
Of female seed, far abler to resist  
All his solicitations, and at length  
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell&mdash;  
Winning by conquest what the first man lost  
By fallacy surprised. But first I mean  
To exercise him in the Wilderness;

There he shall first lay down the rudiments  
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth  
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes.  
By humiliation and strong sufferance  
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,  
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;  
That all the Angels and aethereal Powers—  
They now, and men hereafter—may discern  
From what consummate virtue I have chose  
This perfect man, by merit called my Son,  
To earn salvation for the sons of men."

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven  
Admiring stood a space; then into hymns  
Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved,  
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand  
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:—

"Victory and triumph to the Son of God,  
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,  
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!  
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure  
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,  
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,  
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.  
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell,  
And, devilish machinations, come to nought!"

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tuned.  
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days  
Lodged in Bethabara, where John baptized,  
Musing and much revolving in his breast  
How best the mighty work he might begin  
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first  
Publish his godlike office now mature,  
One day forth walked alone, the Spirit leading  
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse  
With solitude, till, far from track of men,  
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,  
He entered now the bordering Desert wild,  
And, with dark shades and rocks environed round,  
His holy meditations thus pursued:—

"O what a multitude of thoughts at once  
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider  
What from within I feel myself, and hear  
What from without comes often to my ears,  
Ill sorting with my present state compared!  
When I was yet a child, no childish play  
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set  
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,  
What might be public good; myself I thought  
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,  
All righteous things. Therefore, above my years,  
The Law of God I read, and found it sweet;  
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew

To such perfection that, ere yet my age  
 Had measured twice six years, at our great Feast  
 I went into the Temple, there to hear  
 The teachers of our Law, and to propose  
 What might improve my knowledge or their own,  
 And was admired by all. Yet this not all  
 To which my spirit aspired. Victorious deeds  
 Flamed in my heart, heroic acts&mdash;one while  
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;  
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,  
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,  
 Till truth were freed, and equity restored:  
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first  
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,  
 And make persuasion do the work of fear;  
 At least to try, and teach the erring soul,  
 Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware  
 Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.  
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,  
 By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,  
 And said to me apart, 'High are thy thoughts,  
 O Son! but nourish them, and let them soar  
 To what highth sacred virtue and true worth  
 Can raise them, though above example high;  
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.  
 For know, thou art no son of mortal man;  
 Though men esteem thee low of parentage,  
 Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules  
 All Heaven and Earth, Angels and sons of men.  
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth  
 Conceived in me a virgin; he foretold  
 Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne,  
 And of thy kingdom there should be no end.  
 At thy nativity a glorious quire  
 Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung  
 To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,  
 And told them the Messiah now was born,  
 Where they might see him; and to thee they came,  
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st;  
 For in the inn was left no better room.  
 A Star, not seen before, in heaven appearing,  
 Guided the Wise Men thither from the East,  
 To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;  
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,  
 Affirming it thy star, new-graven in heaven,  
 By which they knew thee King of Israel born.  
 Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warned  
 By vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake,  
 Before the altar and the vested priest,  
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.'  
 This having heart, straight I again revolved  
 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ

Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes  
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake  
I am&mdash;this chiefly, that my way must lie  
Through many a hard assay, even to the death,  
Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,  
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'  
Full weight must be transferred upon my head.  
Yet, neither thus disheartened or dismayed,  
The time prefixed I waited; when behold  
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard,  
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come  
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!  
I, as all others, to his baptism came,  
Which I believed was from above; but he  
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaimed  
Me him (for it was shewn him so from Heaven)&mdash;  
Me him whose harbinger he was; and first  
Refused on me his baptism to confer,  
As much his greater, and was hardly won.  
But, as I rose out of the laving stream,  
Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence  
The Spirit descended on me like a Dove;  
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,  
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounced me his,  
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone  
He was well pleased: by which I knew the time  
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,  
But openly begin, as best becomes  
The authority which I derived from Heaven.  
And now by some strong motion I am led  
Into this wilderness; to what intent  
I learn not yet. Perhaps I need not know;  
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals."

So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,  
And, looking round, on every side beheld  
A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades.  
The way he came, not having marked return,  
Was difficult, by human steps untrod;  
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts  
Accompanied of things past and to come  
Lodged in his breast as well might recommend  
Such solitude before choicest society.

Full forty days he passed&mdash;whether on hill  
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night  
Under the covert of some ancient oak  
Or cedar to defend him from the dew,  
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;  
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,  
Till those days ended; hungered then at last  
Among wild beasts. They at his sight grew mild,  
Nor sleeping him nor waking harmed; his walk  
The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm;

The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.  
 But now an aged man in rural weeds,  
 Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray eye,  
 Or withered sticks to gather, which might serve  
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,  
 To warm him wet returned from field at eve,  
 He saw approach; who first with curious eye  
 Perused him, then with words thus uttered spake:&mdash;  
 "Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place,  
 So far from path or road of men, who pass  
 In troop or caravan? for single none  
 Durst ever, who returned, and dropt not here  
 His carcass, pined with hunger and with droughth.  
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,  
 For that to me thou seem'st the man whom late  
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford  
 Of Jordan honoured so, and called thee Son  
 Of God. I saw and heard, for we sometimes  
 Who dwell this wild, constrained by want, come forth  
 To town or village nigh (nighest is far),  
 Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,  
 What happens new; fame also finds us out."  
 To whom the Son of God:&mdash;"Who brought me hither  
 Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek."  
 "By miracle he may," replied the swain;  
 "What other way I see not; for we here  
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured  
 More than the camel, and to drink go far&mdash;  
 Men to much misery and hardship born.  
 But, if thou be the Son of God, command  
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;  
 So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve  
 With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste."  
 He ended, and the Son of God replied:&mdash;  
 "Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written  
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st),  
 Man lives not by bread only, but each word  
 Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed  
 Our fathers here with manna? In the Mount  
 Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank;  
 And forty days Eliah without food  
 Wandered this barren waste; the same I now.  
 Why dost thou, then, suggest to me distrust  
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?"  
 Whom thus answered the Arch-Fiend, now undisguised:&mdash;  
 "'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate  
 Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,  
 Kept not my happy station, but was driven  
 With them from bliss to the bottomless Deep&mdash;  
 Yet to that hideous place not so confined  
 By rigour unconniving but that oft,  
 Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy

Large liberty to round this globe of Earth,  
 Or range in the Air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens  
 Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.  
 I came, among the Sons of God, when he  
 Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,  
 To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;  
 And, when to all his Angels he proposed  
 To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud,  
 That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,  
 I undertook that office, and the tongues  
 Of all his flattering prophets glibbed with lies  
 To his destruction, as I had in charge:  
 For what he bids I do. Though I have lost  
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost  
 To be beloved of God, I have not lost  
 To love, at least contemplate and admire,  
 What I see excellent in good, or fair,  
 Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense.  
 What can be then less in me than desire  
 To see thee and approach thee, whom I know  
 Declared the Son of God, to hear attent  
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?  
 Men generally think me much a foe  
 To all mankind. Why should I? they to me  
 Never did wrong or violence. By them  
 I lost not what I lost; rather by them  
 I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell  
 Copartner in these regions of the World,  
 If not disposer&mdash;lend them oft my aid,  
 Oft my advice by presages and signs,  
 And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,  
 Whereby they may direct their future life.  
 Envy, they say, excites me, thus to gain  
 Companions of my misery and woe!  
 At first it may be; but, long since with woe  
 Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof  
 That fellowship in pain divides not smart,  
 Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load;  
 Small consolation, then, were Man adjoined.  
 This wounds me most (what can it less?) that Man,  
 Man fallen, shall be restored, I never more."  
 To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:&mdash;  
 "Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies  
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end,  
 Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come  
 Into the Heaven of Heavens. Thou com'st, indeed,  
 As a poor miserable captive thrall  
 Comes to the place where he before had sat  
 Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,  
 Ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunned,  
 A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,  
 To all the host of Heaven. The happy place



Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy&mdash;  
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing  
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable;  
 So never more in Hell than when in Heaven.  
 But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King!  
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear  
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?  
 What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem  
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him  
 With all inflictions? but his patience won.  
 The other service was thy chosen task,  
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;  
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.  
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth! all oracles  
 By thee are given, and what confessed more true  
 Among the nations? That hath been thy craft,  
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.  
 But what have been thy answers? what but dark,  
 Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,  
 Which they who asked have seldom understood,  
 And, not well understood, as good not known?  
 Who ever, by consulting at thy shrine,  
 Returned the wiser, or the more instruct  
 To fly or follow what concerned him most,  
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?  
 For God hath justly given the nations up  
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell  
 Idolatrous. But, when his purpose is  
 Among them to declare his providence,  
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,  
 But from him, or his Angels president  
 In every province, who, themselves disdaining  
 To approach thy temples, give thee in command  
 What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say  
 To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,  
 Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st;  
 Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.  
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrenched;  
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse  
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceased,  
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice  
 Shalt be enquired at Delphos or elsewhere&mdash;  
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.  
 God hath now sent his living Oracle  
 Into the world to teach his final will,  
 And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell  
 In pious hearts, an inward oracle  
 To all truth requisite for men to know."  
 So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,  
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,  
 Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned:&mdash;  
 "Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,

And urged me hard with doings which not will,  
But misery, hath wrested from me. Where  
Easily canst thou find one miserable,  
And not enforced oft-times to part from truth,  
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,  
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?  
But thou art placed above me; thou art Lord;  
From thee I can, and must, submit, endure  
Cheek or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.  
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,  
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,  
And tunable as sylvan pipe or song;  
What wonder, then, if I delight to hear  
Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire  
Virtue who follow not her lore. Permit me  
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),  
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.  
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,  
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest  
To tread his sacred courts, and minister  
About his altar, handling holy things,  
Praying or vowing, and voutsafed his voice  
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet  
Inspired: disdain not such access to me."

To whom our Saviour, with unaltered brow:—  
"Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,  
I bid not, or forbid. Do as thou find'st  
Permission from above; thou canst not more."

He added not; and Satan, bowing low  
His gray dissimulation, disappeared,  
Into thin air diffused: for now began  
Night with her sullen wing to double-shade  
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;  
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

John Milton

## Paradise Regained: The Fourth Book

Perplexed and troubled at his bad success  
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,  
Discovered in his fraud, thrown from his hope  
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric  
That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve,  
So little here, nay lost. But Eve was Eve;  
This far his over-match, who, self-deceived  
And rash, beforehand had no better weighed  
The strength he was to cope with, or his own.  
But—as a man who had been matchless held  
In cunning, over-reached where least he thought,  
To salve his credit, and for very spite,  
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,  
And never cease, though to his shame the more;  
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage-time,  
About the wine-press where sweet must is poured,  
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;  
Or surging waves against a solid rock,  
Though all to shivers dashed, the assault renew,  
(Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end—  
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse  
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,  
Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,  
And his vain importunity pursues.  
He brought our Saviour to the western side  
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold  
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,  
Washed by the southern sea, and on the north  
To equal length backed with a ridge of hills  
That screened the fruits of the earth and seats of men  
From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst  
Divided by a river, off whose banks  
On each side an Imperial City stood,  
With towers and temples proudly elevate  
On seven small hills, with palaces adorned,  
Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,  
Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,  
Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes  
Above the highth of mountains interposed—  
By what strange parallax, or optic skill  
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass  
Of telescope, were curious to enquire.  
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke:—  
"The city which thou seest no other deem  
Than great and glorious Rome, Queen of the Earth  
So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched  
Of nations. There the Capitol thou seest,  
Above the rest lifting his stately head  
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel  
Impregnable; and there Mount Palatine,  
The imperial palace, compass huge, and high  
The structure, skill of noblest architects,

With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,  
 Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires.  
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like  
 Houses of gods—so well I have disposed  
 My aerie microscope—thou may'st behold,  
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs  
 Carved work, the hand of famed artificers  
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.  
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see  
 What conflux issuing forth, or entering in:  
 Praetors, proconsuls to their provinces  
 Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;  
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power;  
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;  
 Or embassies from regions far remote,  
 In various habits, on the Appian road,  
 Or on the AEmilian—some from farthest south,  
 Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,  
 Meroe, Nilotic isle, and, more to west,  
 The realm of Bocchus to the Blackmoor sea;  
 From the Asian kings (and Parthian among these),  
 From India and the Golden Chersoness,  
 And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,  
 Dusk faces with white silken turbants wreathed;  
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;  
 Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians north  
 Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.  
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay—  
 To Rome's great Emperor, whose wide domain,  
 In ample territory, wealth and power,  
 Civility of manners, arts and arms,  
 And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer  
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,  
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,  
 Shared among petty kings too far removed;  
 These having shewn thee, I have shewn thee all  
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.  
 This Emperor hath no son, and now is old,  
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired  
 To Capreae, an island small but strong  
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there  
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;  
 Committing to a wicked favourite  
 All public cares, and yet of him suspicious;  
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,  
 Endued with regal virtues as thou art,  
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,  
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne,  
 Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,  
 A victor-people free from servile yoke!  
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power  
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.

Aim, therefore, at no less than all the world;  
 Aim at the highest; without the highest attained,  
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,  
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will."  
 To whom the Son of God, unmoved, replied:&mdash;  
 "Nor doth this grandeur and majestic shew  
 Of luxury, though called magnificence,  
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,  
 Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell  
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts  
 On citron tables or Atlantic stone  
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read),  
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,  
 Chios and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,  
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, imbossed with gems  
 And studs of pearl&mdash;to me should'st tell, who thirst  
 And hunger still. Then embassies thou shew'st  
 From nations far and nigh! What honour that,  
 But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear  
 So many hollow compliments and lies,  
 Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk  
 Of the Emperor, how easily subdued,  
 How gloriously. I shall, thou say'st, expel  
 A brutish monster: what if I withal  
 Expel a Devil who first made him such?  
 Let his tormentor, Conscience, find him out;  
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free  
 That people, victor once, now vile and base,  
 Deservedly made vassal&mdash;who, once just,  
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquered well,  
 But govern ill the nations under yoke,  
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all  
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown  
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity;  
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured  
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed;  
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,  
 And from the daily Scene effeminate.  
 What wise and valiant man would seek to free  
 These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,  
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free?  
 Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit  
 On David's throne, it shall be like a tree  
 Spreading and overshadowing all the earth,  
 Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash  
 All monarchies besides throughout the world;  
 And of my Kingdom there shall be no end.  
 Means there shall be to this; but what the means  
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell."  
 To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied:&mdash;  
 "I see all offers made by me how slight  
 Thou valu'st, because offered, and reject'st.

Nothing will please the difficult and nice,  
Or nothing more than still to contradict.  
On the other side know also thou that I  
On what I offer set as high esteem,  
Nor what I part with mean to give for naught,  
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,  
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give  
(For, given to me, I give to whom I please),  
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else—;  
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,  
And worship me as thy superior Lord  
(Easily done), and hold them all of me;  
For what can less so great a gift deserve?"

Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain:—;  
"I never liked thy talk, thy offers less;  
Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter  
The abominable terms, impious condition.  
But I endure the time, till which expired  
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,  
The first of all commandments, 'Thou shalt worship  
The Lord thy God, and only Him shalt serve.'  
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound  
To worship thee, accursed? now more accursed  
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,  
And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.  
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given!  
Permitted rather, and by thee usurped;  
Other donation none thou canst produce.  
If given, by whom but by the King of kings,  
God over all supreme? If given to thee,  
By thee how fairly is the Giver now  
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost  
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame  
As offer them to me, the Son of God—;  
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,  
That I fall down and worship thee as God?  
Get thee behind me! Plain thou now appear'st  
That Evil One, Satan for ever damned."

To whom the Fiend, with fear abashed, replied:—;  
"Be not so sore offended, Son of God—;  
Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men—;  
If I, to try whether in higher sort  
Than these thou bear'st that title, have proposed  
What both from Men and Angels I receive,  
Tetrarchs of Fire, Air, Flood, and on the Earth  
Nations besides from all the quartered winds—;  
God of this World invoked, and World beneath.  
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold  
To me most fatal, me it most concerns.  
The trial hath indamaged thee no way,  
Rather more honour left and more esteem;  
Me naught advantaged, missing what I aimed.

Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,  
 The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more  
 Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.  
 And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined  
 Than to a worldly crown, addicted more  
 To contemplation and profound dispute;  
 As by that early action may be judged,  
 When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st  
 Alone into the Temple, there wast found  
 Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant  
 On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,  
 Teaching, not taught. The childhood shews the man,  
 As morning shews the day. Be famous, then,  
 By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,  
 So let extend thy mind o'er all the world  
 In knowledge; all things in it comprehend.  
 All knowledge is not couched in Moses' law,  
 The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;  
 The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach  
 To admiration, led by Nature's light;  
 And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,  
 Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st.  
 Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,  
 Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?  
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute  
 Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?  
 Error by his own arms is best evinced.  
 Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,  
 Westward, much nearer by south-west; behold  
 Where on the AEgean shore a city stands,  
 Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil—  
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts  
 And Eloquence, native to famous wits  
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,  
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.  
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,  
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird  
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;  
 There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound  
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites  
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rows  
 His whispering stream. Within the walls then view  
 The schools of ancient sages—his who bred  
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,  
 Lyceum there; and painted Stoa next.  
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power  
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit  
 By voice or hand, and various-measured verse,  
 AEolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,  
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,  
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer called,  
 Whose poem Phoebus challenged for his own.

Thence what the lofty grave Tragedians taught  
 In chorus or iambic, teachers best  
 Of moral prudence, with delight received  
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat  
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,  
 High actions and high passions best describing.  
 Thence to the famous Orators repair,  
 Those ancient whose resistless eloquence  
 Wielded at will that fierce democracy,  
 Shook the Arsenal, and fulminated over Greece  
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.  
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,  
 From heaven descended to the low-roofed house  
 Of Socrates—see there his tenement—  
 Whom, well inspired, the Oracle pronounced  
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth  
 Mellifluous streams, that watered all the schools  
 Of Academics old and new, with those  
 Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect  
 Epicurean, and the Stoic severe.  
 These here revolve, or, as thou likest, at home,  
 Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;  
 These rules will render thee a king complete  
 Within thyself, much more with empire joined."  
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:—  
 "Think not but that I know these things; or, think  
 I know them not, not therefore am I short  
 Of knowing what I ought. He who receives  
 Light from above, from the Fountain of Light,  
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true;  
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,  
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.  
 The first and wisest of them all professed  
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;  
 The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits;  
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;  
 Others in virtue placed felicity,  
 But virtue joined with riches and long life;  
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;  
 The Stoic last in philosophic pride,  
 By him called virtue, and his virtuous man,  
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing,  
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,  
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all  
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life—  
 Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can;  
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,  
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.  
 Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,  
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,  
 And how the World began, and how Man fell,  
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?



Much of the Soul they talk, but all awry;  
 And in themselves seek virtue; and to themselves  
 All glory arrogate, to God give none;  
 Rather accuse him under usual names,  
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite  
 Of mortal things. Who, therefore, seeks in these  
 True wisdom finds her not, or, by delusion  
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,  
 An empty cloud. However, many books,  
 Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads  
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not  
 A spirit and judgment equal or superior,  
 (And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)  
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains,  
 Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself,  
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys  
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,  
 As children gathering pebbles on the shore.  
 Or, if I would delight my private hours  
 With music or with poem, where so soon  
 As in our native language can I find  
 That solace? All our Law and Story strewed  
 With hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscribed,  
 Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon  
 That pleased so well our victor's ear, declare  
 That rather Greece from us these arts derived&mdash;  
 Ill imitated while they loudest sing  
 The vices of their deities, and their own,  
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating  
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.  
 Remove their swelling epithetes, thick-laid  
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,  
 Thin-sown with aught of profit or delight,  
 Will far be found unworthy to compare  
 With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,  
 Where God is praised aright and godlike men,  
 The Holiest of Holies and his Saints  
 (Such are from God inspired, not such from thee);  
 Unless where moral virtue is expressed  
 By light of Nature, not in all quite lost.  
 Their orators thou then extoll'st as those  
 The top of eloquence&mdash;statists indeed,  
 And lovers of their country, as may seem;  
 But herein to our Prophets far beneath,  
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching  
 The solid rules of civil government,  
 In their majestic, unaffected style,  
 Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.  
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,  
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,  
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;  
 These only, with our Law, best form a king."

So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now  
 Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),  
 Thus to our Saviour, with stern brow, replied:—  
 "Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,  
 Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught  
 By me proposed in life contemplative  
 Or active, tended on by glory or fame,  
 What dost thou in this world? The Wilderness  
 For thee is fittest place: I found thee there,  
 And thither will return thee. Yet remember  
 What I foretell thee; soon thou shalt have cause  
 To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus  
 Nicely or cautiously, my offered aid,  
 Which would have set thee in short time with ease  
 On David's throne, or throne of all the world,  
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,  
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.  
 Now, contrary—if I read aught in heaven,  
 Or heaven write aught of fate—by what the stars  
 Voluminous, or single characters  
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell,  
 Sorrows and labours, opposition, hate,  
 Attends thee; scorns, reproaches, injuries,  
 Violence and stripes, and, lastly, cruel death.  
 A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,  
 Real or allegoric, I discern not;  
 Nor when: eternal sure—as without end,  
 Without beginning; for no date prefixed  
 Directs me in the starry rubric set."

So saying, he took (for still he knew his power  
 Not yet expired), and to the Wilderness  
 Brought back, the Son of God, and left him there,  
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,  
 As daylight sunk, and brought in luring Night,  
 Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,  
 Privation mere of light and absent day.  
 Our Saviour, meek, and with untroubled mind  
 After hisaerie jaunt, though hurried sore,  
 Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,  
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades,  
 Whose branching arms thick intertwined might shield  
 From dews and damps of night his sheltered head;  
 But, sheltered, slept in vain; for at his head  
 The Tempter watched, and soon with ugly dreams  
 Disturbed his sleep. And either tropic now  
 'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven; the clouds  
 From many a horrid rift abortive poured  
 Fierce rain with lightning mixed, water with fire,  
 In ruin reconciled; nor slept the winds  
 Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad  
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell  
 On the vexed wilderness, whose tallest pines,

Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,  
 Bowed their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,  
 Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,  
 O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st  
 Unshaken! Nor yet staid the terror there:  
 Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round  
 Environed thee; some howled, some yelled, some shrieked,  
 Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou  
 Sat'st unappalled in calm and sinless peace.  
 Thus passed the night so foul, till Morning fair  
 Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice grey,  
 Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar  
 Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds,  
 And griesly spectres, which the Fiend had raised  
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.  
 And now the sun with more effectual beams  
 Had cheered the face of earth, and dried the wet  
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,  
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,  
 After a night of storm so ruinous,  
 Cleared up their choicest notes in bush and spray,  
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn.  
 Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,  
 Was absent, after all his mischief done,  
 The Prince of Darkness; glad would also seem  
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;  
 Yet with no new device (they all were spent),  
 Rather by this his last affront resolved,  
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage  
 And mad despite to be so oft repelled.  
 Him walking on a sunny hill he found,  
 Backed on the north and west by a thick wood;  
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,  
 And in a careless mood thus to him said:—  
 "Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,  
 After a dismal night. I heard the wrack,  
 As earth and sky would mingle; but myself  
 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them,  
 As dangerous to the pillared frame of Heaven,  
 Or to the Earth's dark basis underneath,  
 Are to the main as inconsiderable  
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze  
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone.  
 Yet, as being oftentimes noxious where they light  
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,  
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,  
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,  
 They oft fore-signify and threaten ill.  
 This tempest at this desert most was bent;  
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.  
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject  
 The perfect season offered with my aid

To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong  
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way  
Of gaining David's throne no man knows when  
(For both the when and how is nowhere told),  
Thou shalt be what thou art ordained, no doubt;  
For Angels have proclaimed it, but concealing  
The time and means? Each act is rightliest done  
Not when it must, but when it may be best.  
If thou observe not this, be sure to find  
What I foretold thee—many a hard assay  
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,  
Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold;  
Whereof this ominous night that closed thee round,  
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,  
May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign."

So talked he, while the Son of God went on,  
And staid not, but in brief him answered thus:—

"Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm  
Those terrors which thou speak'st of did me none.  
I never feared they could, though noising loud  
And threatening nigh: what they can do as signs  
Betokening or ill-boding I contemn  
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;  
Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,  
Obtrud'st thy offered aid, that I, accepting,  
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,  
Ambitious Spirit! and would'st be thought my God;  
And storm'st, refused, thinking to terrify  
Me to thy will! Desist (thou art discerned,  
And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest."

To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:—

"Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born!  
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt.  
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold  
By all the Prophets; of thy birth, at length  
Announced by Gabriel, with the first I knew,  
And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,  
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.  
From that time seldom have I ceased to eye  
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,  
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;  
Till, at the ford of Jordan, whither all  
Flocked to the Baptist, I among the rest  
(Though not to be baptized), by voice from Heaven  
Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.  
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view  
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn  
In what degree or meaning thou art called  
The Son of God, which bears no single sense.  
The Son of God I also am, or was;  
And, if I was, I am; relation stands:  
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought

In some respect far higher so declared.  
Therefore I watched thy footsteps from that hour,  
And followed thee still on to this waste wild,  
Where, by all best conjectures, I collect  
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.  
Good reason, then, if I beforehand seek  
To understand my adversary, who  
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;  
By parole or composition, truce or league,  
To win him, or win from him what I can.  
And opportunity I here have had  
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee  
Proof against all temptation, as a rock  
Of adamant and as a centre, firm  
To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,  
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,  
Have been before contemned, and may again.  
Therefore, to know what more thou art than man,  
Worth naming the Son of God by voice from Heaven,  
Another method I must now begin."

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing  
Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,  
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,  
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,  
The Holy City, lifted high her towers,  
And higher yet the glorious Temple reared  
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount  
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:  
There, on the highest pinnacle, he set  
The Son of God, and added thus in scorn:—  
"There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright  
Will ask thee skill. I to thy Father's house  
Have brought thee, and highest placed: highest is best.  
Now shew thy progeny; if not to stand,  
Cast thyself down. Safely, if Son of God;  
For it is written, 'He will give command  
Concerning thee to his Angels; in their hands  
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time  
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.'"

To whom thus Jesus: "Also it is written,  
'Tempt not the Lord thy God.'" He said, and stood;  
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.  
As when Earth's son, Antaeus (to compare  
Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove  
With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foiled, still rose,  
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,  
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined,  
Throttled at length in the air expired and fell,  
So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,  
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride  
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall;  
And, as that Theban monster that proposed

Her riddle, and him who solved it not devoured,  
 That once found out and solved, for grief and spite  
 Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep,  
 So, strook with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,  
 And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought  
 Joyless triumphals of his hoped success,  
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,  
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.  
 So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe  
 Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,  
 Who on their plummy vans received Him soft  
 From his uneasy station, and upbore,  
 As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;  
 Then, in a flowery valley, set him down  
 On a green bank, and set before him spread  
 A table of celestial food, divine  
 Ambrosial fruits fetched from the Tree of Life,  
 And from the Fount of Life ambrosial drink,  
 That soon refreshed him wearied, and repaired  
 What hunger, if aught hunger, had impaired,  
 Or thirst; and, as he fed, Angelic quires  
 Sung heavenly anthems of his victory  
 Over temptation and the Tempter proud:—  
 "True Image of the Father, whether throned  
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light  
 Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrined  
 In fleshly tabernacle and human form,  
 Wandering the wilderness—whatever place,  
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing  
 The Son of God, with Godlike force endued  
 Against the attempter of thy Father's throne  
 And thief of Paradise! Him long of old  
 Thou didst delude, and down from Heaven cast  
 With all his army; now thou hast avenged  
 Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing  
 Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,  
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.  
 He never more henceforth will dare set foot  
 In paradise to tempt; his snares are broke.  
 For, though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,  
 A fairer Paradise is founded now  
 For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,  
 A Saviour, art come down to reinstall;  
 Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,  
 Of tempter and temptation without fear.  
 But thou, Infernal Serpent! shalt not long  
 Rule in the clouds. Like an autumnal star,  
 Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down  
 Under his feet. For proof, ere this thou feel'st  
 Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound)  
 By this repulse received, and hold'st in Hell  
 No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues

Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe  
To dread the Son of God. He, all unarmed,  
Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,  
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul&mdash;  
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,  
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,  
Lest he command them down into the Deep,  
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.  
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both Worlds,  
Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work  
Now enter, and begin to save Mankind."

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,  
Sung victor, and, from heavenly feast refreshed,  
Brought on his way with joy. He, unobserved,  
Home to his mother's house private returned.

THE END

John Milton

## Paradise Regained: The Second Book

Meanwhile the new-baptized, who yet remained  
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen  
Him whom they heard so late expressly called  
Jesus Messiah, Son of God, declared,  
And on that high authority had believed,  
And with him talked, and with him lodged&mdash;I mean  
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,  
With others, though in Holy Writ not named&mdash;  
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,  
So lately found and so abruptly gone,  
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,  
And, as the days increased, increased their doubt.  
Sometimes they thought he might be only shewn,  
And for a time caught up to God, as once  
Moses was in the Mount and missing long,  
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels  
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.  
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care  
Sought lost Eliah, so in each place these  
Nigh to Bethabara&mdash;in Jericho  
The city of palms, AEnon, and Salem old,  
Machaerus, and each town or city walled  
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,  
Or in Peraea&mdash;but returned in vain.  
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,  
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,  
Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),  
Close in a cottage low together got,  
Their unexpected loss and plaints outbreathed:&mdash;  
"Alas, from what high hope to what relapse  
Unlooked for are we fallen! Our eyes beheld  
Messiah certainly now come, so long  
Expected of our fathers; we have heard  
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth.  
'Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand;  
The kingdom shall to Israel be restored.'  
Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turned  
Into perplexity and new amaze.  
For whither is he gone? what accident  
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire  
After appearance, and again prolong  
Our expectation? God of Israel,  
Send thy Messiah forth; the time is come.  
Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress  
Thy Chosen, to what highth their power unjust  
They have exalted, and behind them cast  
All fear of Thee; arise, and vindicate  
Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke!  
But let us wait; thus far He hath performed&mdash;  
Sent his Anointed, and to us revealed him  
By his great Prophet pointed at and shown  
In public, and with him we have conversed.



Let us be glad of this, and all our fears  
Lay on his providence; He will not fail,  
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall  
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence:  
Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return."

Thus they out of their complaints new hope resume  
To find whom at the first they found unsought.  
But to his mother Mary, when she saw  
Others returned from baptism, not her Son,  
Nor left at Jordan tidings of him none,  
Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,  
Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised  
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad:&mdash;

"Oh, what avails me now that honour high,  
To have conceived of God, or that salute,  
'Hail, highly favoured, among women blest!'  
While I to sorrows am no less advanced,  
And fears as eminent above the lot  
Of other women, by the birth I bore:  
In such a season born, when scarce a shed  
Could be obtained to shelter him or me  
From the bleak air? A stable was our warmth,  
A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly  
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king  
Were dead, who sought his life, and, missing, filled  
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem.  
From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth  
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life  
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,  
Little suspicious to any king. But now,  
Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,  
By John the Baptist, and in public shewn,  
Son owned from Heaven by his Father's voice,  
I looked for some great change. To honour? no;  
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,  
That to the fall and rising he should be  
Of many in Israel, and to a sign  
Spoken against&mdash;that through my very soul  
A sword shall pierce. This is my favoured lot,  
My exaltation to afflictions high!  
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest!  
I will not argue that, nor will repine.  
But where delays he now? Some great intent  
Conceals him. When twelve years he scarce had seen,  
I lost him, but so found as well I saw  
He could not lose himself, but went about  
His Father's business. What he meant I mused&mdash;  
Since understand; much more his absence now  
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.  
But I to wait with patience am inured;  
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things  
And sayings laid up, pretending strange events."

Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind  
 Recalling what remarkably had passed  
 Since first her Salutation heard, with thoughts  
 Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:  
 The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,  
 Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,  
 Into himself descended, and at once  
 All his great work to come before him set&mdash;  
 How to begin, how to accomplish best  
 His end of being on Earth, and mission high.  
 For Satan, with sly preface to return,  
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone  
 Up to the middle region of thick air,  
 Where all his Potentates in council sate.  
 There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,  
 Solicitous and blank, he thus began:&mdash;  
 "Princes, Heaven's ancient Sons, AEthereal Thrones&mdash;  
 Daemonian Spirits now, from the element  
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called  
 Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath  
 (So may we hold our place and these mild seats  
 Without new trouble!)&mdash;such an enemy  
 Is risen to invade us, who no less  
 Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell.  
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote  
 Consenting in full frequency was impowered,  
 Have found him, viewed him, tasted him; but find  
 Far other labour to be undergone  
 Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men,  
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,  
 However to this Man inferior far&mdash;  
 If he be Man by mother's side, at least  
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,  
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,  
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.  
 Therefore I am returned, lest confidence  
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise  
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure  
 Of like succeeding here. I summon all  
 Rather to be in readiness with hand  
 Or counsel to assist, lest I, who erst  
 Thought none my equal, now be overmatched."  
 So spake the old Serpent, doubting, and from all  
 With clamour was assured their utmost aid  
 At his command; when from amidst them rose  
 Belial, the dissolutes Spirit that fell,  
 The sensualest, and, after Asmodai,  
 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advised:&mdash;  
 "Set women in his eye and in his walk,  
 Among daughters of men the fairest found.  
 Many are in each region passing fair  
 As the noon sky, more like to goddesses

Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,  
 Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues  
 Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild  
 And sweet allayed, yet terrible to approach,  
 Skilled to retire, and in retiring draw  
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.  
 Such object hath the power to soften and tame  
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,  
 Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,  
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead  
 At will the manliest, resolute'st breast,  
 As the magnetic hardest iron draws.  
 Women, when nothing else, beguiled the heart  
 Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,  
 And made him bow, to the gods of his wives."  
 To whom quick answer Satan thus returned:—  
 "Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st  
 All others by thyself. Because of old  
 Thou thyself doat'st on womankind, admiring  
 Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,  
 None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.  
 Before the Flood, thou, with thy lusty crew,  
 False titled Sons of God, roaming the Earth,  
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,  
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.  
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,  
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,  
 In wood or grove, by mossy fountain-side,  
 In valley or green meadow, to waylay  
 Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,  
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,  
 Or Amydone, Syrinx, many more  
 Too long—then lay'st thy scapes on names adored,  
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,  
 Satyr, or Faun, or Silvan? But these haunts  
 Delight not all. Among the sons of men  
 How many have with a smile made small account  
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorned  
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent!  
 Remember that Pellean conqueror,  
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East  
 He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;  
 How he surnamed of Africa dismissed,  
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.  
 For Solomon, he lived at ease, and, full  
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aimed not beyond  
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;  
 Thence to the bait of women lay exposed.  
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far  
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,  
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment  
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,

Though of this age the wonder and the fame,  
 On whom his leisure will voutsafe an eye  
 Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,  
 As sitting queen adored on Beauty's throne,  
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt  
 To enamour, as the zone of Venus once  
 Wrought that effect on Jove (so fables tell),  
 How would one look from his majestic brow,  
 Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,  
 Discountenance her despised, and put to rout  
 All her array, her female pride deject,  
 Or turn to reverent awe! For Beauty stands  
 In the admiration only of weak minds  
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes  
 Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,  
 At every sudden slighting quite abashed.  
 Therefore with manlier objects we must try  
 His constancy&mdash;with such as have more shew  
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise  
 (Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wrecked);  
 Or that which only seems to satisfy  
 Lawful desires of nature, not beyond.  
 And now I know he hungers, where no food  
 Is to be found, in the wide Wilderness:  
 The rest commit to me; I shall let pass  
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay."  
 He ceased, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;  
 Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band  
 Of Spirits likest to himself in guile,  
 To be at hand and at his beck appear,  
 If cause were to unfold some active scene  
 Of various persons, each to know his part;  
 Then to the desert takes with these his flight,  
 Where still, from shade to shade, the Son of God,  
 After forty days' fasting, had remained,  
 Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:&mdash;  
 "Where will this end? Four times ten days I have passed  
 Wandering this woody maze, and human food  
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite. That fast  
 To virtue I impute not, or count part  
 Of what I suffer here. If nature need not,  
 Or God support nature without repast,  
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure?  
 But now I feel I hunger; which declares  
 Nature hath need of what she asks. Yet God  
 Can satisfy that need some other way,  
 Though hunger still remain. So it remain  
 Without this body's wasting, I content me,  
 And from the sting of famine fear no harm;  
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed  
 Me hungering more to do my Father's will."  
 It was the hour of night, when thus the Son

Communed in silent walk, then laid him down  
 Under the hospitable covert nigh  
 Of trees thick interwoven. There he slept,  
 And dreamed, as appetite is wont to dream,  
 Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.  
 Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,  
 And saw the ravens with their horny beaks  
 Food to Elijah bringing even and morn&mdash;  
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought;  
 He saw the Prophet also, how he fled  
 Into the desert, and how there he slept  
 Under a juniper&mdash;then how, awaked,  
 He found his supper on the coals prepared,  
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,  
 And eat the second time after repose,  
 The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:  
 Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,  
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.  
 Thus wore out night; and now the harald Lark  
 Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry  
 The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song.  
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose  
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;  
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.  
 Up to a hill anon his steps he reared,  
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,  
 If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;  
 But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw&mdash;  
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,  
 With chaunt of tuneful birds resounding loud.  
 Thither he bent his way, determined there  
 To rest at noon, and entered soon the shade  
 High-roofed, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,  
 That opened in the midst a woody scene;  
 Nature's own work it seemed (Nature taught Art),  
 And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt  
 Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs. He viewed it round;  
 When suddenly a man before him stood,  
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,  
 As one in city or court or palace bred,  
 And with fair speech these words to him addressed:&mdash;  
 "With granted leave officious I return,  
 But much more wonder that the Son of God  
 In this wild solitude so long should bide,  
 Of all things destitute, and, well I know,  
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,  
 As story tells, have trod this wilderness:  
 The fugitive Bond-woman, with her son,  
 Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief  
 By a providing Angel; all the race  
 Of Israel here had famished, had not God  
 Rained from heaven manna; and that Prophet bold,

Native of Thebez, wandering here, was fed  
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.  
Of thee those forty days none hath regard,  
Forty and more deserted here indeed."

To whom thus Jesus:—"What conclud'st thou hence?  
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none."

"How hast thou hunger then?" Satan replied.

"Tell me, if food were now before thee set,  
Wouldst thou not eat?" "Thereafter as I like  
the giver," answered Jesus. "Why should that  
Cause thy refusal?" said the subtle Fiend.

"Hast thou not right to all created things?  
Owe not all creatures, by just right, to thee  
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,  
But tender all their power? Nor mention I  
Meats by the law unclean, or offered first  
To idols—those young Daniel could refuse;  
Nor proffered by an enemy—though who  
Would scruple that, with want oppressed? Behold,  
Nature ashamed, or, better to express,  
Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purveyed  
From all the elements her choicest store,  
To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord  
With honour. Only deign to sit and eat."

He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,  
Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld,  
In ample space under the broadest shade,  
A table richly spread in regal mode,  
With dishes piled and meats of noblest sort  
And savour—beasts of chase, or fowl of game,  
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,  
Grisamber-steamed; all fish, from sea or shore,  
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,  
And exquisitest name, for which was drained  
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.  
Alas! how simple, to these cates compared,  
Was that crude Apple that diverted Eve!  
And at a stately sideboard, by the wine,  
That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood  
Tall stripling youths rich-clad, of fairer hue  
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more,  
Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood,  
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades  
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,  
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seemed  
Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since  
Of faery damsels met in forest wide  
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,  
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore.  
And all the while harmonious airs were heard  
Of chiming strings or charming pipes; and winds  
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fanned

From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.  
 Such was the splendour; and the Tempter now  
 His invitation earnestly renewed:—  
 "What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?  
 These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict  
 Defends the touching of these viands pure;  
 Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,  
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,  
 Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.  
 All these are Spirits of air, and woods, and springs,  
 Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay  
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord.  
 What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat."  
 To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:—  
 "Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?  
 And who withholds my power that right to use?  
 Shall I receive by gift what of my own,  
 When and where likes me best, I can command?  
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,  
 Command a table in this wilderness,  
 And call swift flights of Angels ministrant,  
 Arrayed in glory, on my cup to attend:  
 Why shouldst thou, then, obtrude this diligence  
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find?  
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do?  
 Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,  
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles."  
 To whom thus answered Satan, male-content:—  
 "That I have also power to give thou seest;  
 If of that power I bring thee voluntary  
 What I might have bestowed on whom I pleased,  
 And rather opportunely in this place  
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,  
 Why shouldst thou not accept it? But I see  
 What I can do or offer is suspect.  
 Of these things others quickly will dispose,  
 Whose pains have earned the far-fet spoil." With that  
 Both table and provision vanished quite,  
 With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard;  
 Only the importune Tempter still remained,  
 And with these words his temptation pursued:—  
 "By hunger, that each other creature tames,  
 Thou art not to be harmed, therefore not moved;  
 Thy temperance, invincible besides,  
 For no allurements yields to appetite;  
 And all thy heart is set on high designs,  
 High actions. But wherewith to be achieved?  
 Great acts require great means of enterprise;  
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,  
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself  
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home,  
 Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit.

Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire  
 To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?  
 What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,  
 Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,  
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?  
 Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms.  
 What raised Antipater the Edomite,  
 And his son Herod placed on Juda's throne,  
 Thy throne, but gold, that got him puissant friends?  
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,  
 Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap&mdash;  
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me.  
 Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;  
 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,  
 While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want."  
 To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:&mdash;  
 "Yet wealth without these three is impotent  
 To gain dominion, or to keep it gained&mdash;  
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth,  
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolved;  
 But men endued with these have oft attained,  
 In lowest poverty, to highest deeds&mdash;  
 Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad  
 Whose offspring on the throne of Juda sate  
 So many ages, and shall yet regain  
 That seat, and reign in Israel without end.  
 Among the Heathen (for throughout the world  
 To me is not unknown what hath been done  
 Worthy of memorial) canst thou not remember  
 Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?  
 For I esteem those names of men so poor,  
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn  
 Riches, though offered from the hand of kings.  
 And what in me seems wanting but that I  
 May also in this poverty as soon  
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?  
 Extol not riches, then, the toil of fools,  
 The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt  
 To slacken virtue and abate her edge  
 Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.  
 What if with like aversion I reject  
 Riches and realms! Yet not for that a crown,  
 Golden in shew, is but a wreath of thorns,  
 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights,  
 To him who wears the regal diadem,  
 When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;  
 For therein stands the office of a king,  
 His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,  
 That for the public all this weight he bears.  
 Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules  
 Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king&mdash;  
 Which every wise and virtuous man attains;



And who attains not, ill aspires to rule  
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,  
Subject himself to anarchy within,  
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.  
But to guide nations in the way of truth  
By saving doctrine, and from error lead  
To know, and, knowing, worship God aright,  
Is yet more kingly. This attracts the soul,  
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;  
That other o'er the body only reigns,  
And oft by force—; which to a generous mind  
So reigning can be no sincere delight.  
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought  
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down  
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.  
Riches are needless, then, both for themselves,  
And for thy reason why they should be sought—;  
To gain a sceptre, ofttest better missed."

John Milton

## Paradise Regained: The Third Book

So spake the Son of God; and Satan stood  
A while as mute, confounded what to say,  
What to reply, confuted and convinced  
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;  
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,  
With soothing words renewed, him thus accosts:—

"I see thou know'st what is of use to know,  
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;  
Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words  
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart  
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.  
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,  
Thy counsel would be as the oracle  
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems  
On Aaron's breast, or tongue of Seers old  
Infallible; or, wert thou sought to deeds  
That might require the array of war, thy skill  
Of conduct would be such that all the world  
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist  
In battle, though against thy few in arms.  
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide?  
Affecting private life, or more obscure  
In savage wilderness, wherefore deprive  
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself  
The fame and glory—glory, the reward  
That sole excites to high attempts the flame  
Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure  
Æthereal, who all pleasures else despise,  
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,  
And dignities and powers, all but the highest?  
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe. The son  
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these  
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held  
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down  
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quelled  
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.  
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,  
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.  
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,  
The more he grew in years, the more inflamed  
With glory, wept that he had lived so long  
Inglorious. But thou yet art not too late."

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:—  
"Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth  
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect  
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.  
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,  
The people's praise, if always praise unmixed?  
And what the people but a herd confused,  
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol  
Things vulgar, and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise?  
They praise and they admire they know not what,

And know not whom, but as one leads the other;  
 And what delight to be by such extolled,  
 To live upon their tongues, and be their talk?  
 Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise—  
 His lot who dares be singularly good.  
 The intelligent among them and the wise  
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is raised.  
 This is true glory and renown—when God,  
 Looking on the Earth, with approbation marks  
 The just man, and divulges him through Heaven  
 To all his Angels, who with true applause  
 Recount his praises. Thus he did to Job,  
 When, to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,  
 As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,  
 He asked thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'  
 Famous he was in Heaven; on Earth less known,  
 Where glory is false glory, attributed  
 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.  
 They err who count it glorious to subdue  
 By conquest far and wide, to overrun  
 Large countries, and in field great battles win,  
 Great cities by assault. What do these worthies  
 But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave  
 Peaceable nations, neighbouring or remote,  
 Made captive, yet deserving freedom more  
 Than those their conquerors, who leave behind  
 Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,  
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;  
 Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,  
 Great benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,  
 Worshipped with temple, priest, and sacrifice?  
 One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;  
 Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,  
 Rowling in brutish vices, and deformed,  
 Violent or shameful death their due reward.  
 But, if there be in glory aught of good;  
 It may be means far different be attained,  
 Without ambition, war, or violence—  
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,  
 By patience, temperance. I mention still  
 Him whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,  
 Made famous in a land and times obscure;  
 Who names not now with honour patient Job?  
 Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)  
 By what he taught and suffered for so doing,  
 For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now  
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.  
 Yet, if for fame and glory aught be done,  
 Aught suffered—;if young African for fame  
 His wasted country freed from Punic rage—;  
 The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,  
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.

Shall I seek glory, then, as vain men seek,  
Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but His  
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am."

To whom the Tempter, murmuring, thus replied:&mdash;  
"Think not so slight of glory, therein least  
Resembling thy great Father. He seeks glory,  
And for his glory all things made, all things  
Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven,  
By all his Angels glorified, requires  
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,  
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption.  
Above all sacrifice, or hallowed gift,  
Glory he requires, and glory he receives,  
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,  
Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declared;  
From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts."

To whom our Saviour fervently replied:  
"And reason; since his Word all things produced,  
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,  
But to shew forth his goodness, and impart  
His good communicable to every soul  
Freely; of whom what could He less expect  
Than glory and benediction&mdash;that is, thanks&mdash;  
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense  
From them who could return him nothing else,  
And, not returning that, would likeliest render  
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?  
Hard recompense, unsuitable return  
For so much good, so much beneficence!  
But why should man seek glory, who of his own  
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs  
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame&mdash;  
Who, for so many benefits received,  
Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false,  
And so of all true good himself despoiled;  
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take  
That which to God alone of right belongs?  
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,  
That who advances his glory, not their own,  
Them he himself to glory will advance."

So spake the Son of God; and here again  
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck  
With guilt of his own sin&mdash;for he himself,  
Insatiable of glory, had lost all;  
Yet of another plea bethought him soon:&mdash;

"Of glory, as thou wilt," said he, "so deem;  
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.  
But to a Kingdom thou art born&mdash;ordained  
To sit upon thy father David's throne,  
By mother's side thy father, though thy right  
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part  
Easily from possession won with arms.

Judaea now and all the Promised Land,  
 Reduced a province under Roman yoke,  
 Obeys Tiberius, nor is always ruled  
 With temperate sway: oft have they violated  
 The Temple, oft the Law, with foul affronts,  
 Abominations rather, as did once  
 Antiochus. And think'st thou to regain  
 Thy right by sitting still, or thus retiring?  
 So did not Machabeus. He indeed  
 Retired unto the Desert, but with arms;  
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevailed  
 That by strong hand his family obtained,  
 Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurped,  
 With Modin and her suburbs once content.  
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal  
 And duty—zeal and duty are not slow,  
 But on Occasion's forelock watchful wait:  
 They themselves rather are occasion best—  
 Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free  
 Thy country from her heathen servitude.  
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify,  
 The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign—  
 The happier reign the sooner it begins.  
 Rein then; what canst thou better do the while?"  
 To whom our Saviour answer thus returned:—  
 "All things are best fulfilled in their due time;  
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said.  
 If of my reign Prophetic Writ hath told  
 That it shall never end, so, when begin  
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed—  
 He in whose hand all times and seasons rowl.  
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first  
 Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,  
 By tribulations, injuries, insults,  
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,  
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting  
 Without distrust or doubt, that He may know  
 What I can suffer, how obey? Who best  
 Can suffer best can do, best reign who first  
 Well hath obeyed—just trial ere I merit  
 My exaltation without change or end.  
 But what concerns it thee when I begin  
 My everlasting Kingdom? Why art thou  
 Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition?  
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,  
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?"  
 To whom the Tempter, inly racked, replied:—  
 "Let that come when it comes. All hope is lost  
 Of my reception into grace; what worse?  
 For where no hope is left is left no fear.  
 If there be worse, the expectation more  
 Of worse torments me than the feeling can.

I would be at the worst; worst is my port,  
 My harbour, and my ultimate repose,  
 The end I would attain, my final good.  
 My error was my error, and my crime  
 My crime; whatever, for itself condemned,  
 And will alike be punished, whether thou  
 Reign or reign not&mdash;though to that gentle brow  
 Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,  
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,  
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,  
 Would stand between me and thy Father's ire  
 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell)  
 A shelter and a kind of shading cool  
 Interposition, as a summer's cloud.  
 If I, then, to the worst that can be haste,  
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best?  
 Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,  
 That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their King!  
 Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detained  
 Of the enterprise so hazardous and high!  
 No wonder; for, though in thee be united  
 What of perfection can in Man be found,  
 Or human nature can receive, consider  
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent  
 At home, scarce viewed the Galilean towns,  
 And once a year Jerusalem, few days'  
 Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?  
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,  
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts&mdash;  
 Best school of best experience, quickest in sight  
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.  
 The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever  
 Timorous, and loth, with novice modesty  
 (As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom)  
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous.  
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit  
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes  
 The monarchies of the Earth, their pomp and state&mdash;  
 Sufficient introduction to inform  
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,  
 And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know  
 How best their opposition to withstand."  
 With that (such power was given him then), he took  
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.  
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet  
 A spacious plain outstretched in circuit wide  
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,  
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between  
 Fair champaign, with less rivers interveined,  
 Then meeting joined their tribute to the sea.  
 Fertil of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;  
 With herds the pasture thronged, with flocks the hills;

Huge cities and high-towered, that well might seem  
 The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large  
 The prospect was that here and there was room  
 For barren desert, fountainless and dry.  
 To this high mountain-top the Tempter brought  
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began:—  
 "Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,  
 Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,  
 Cut shorter many a league. Here thou behold'st  
 Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,  
 Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on  
 As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,  
 And oft beyond; to south the Persian bay,  
 And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth:  
 Here, Nineveh, of length within her wall  
 Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,  
 Of that first golden monarchy the seat,  
 And seat of Salmanassar, whose success  
 Israel in long captivity still mourns;  
 There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,  
 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice  
 Judah and all thy father David's house  
 Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,  
 Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,  
 His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there;  
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shews,  
 And Hecatompylos her hunderd gates;  
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,  
 The drink of none but kings; of later fame,  
 Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,  
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there  
 Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,  
 Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.  
 All these the Parthian (now some ages past  
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first  
 That empire) under his dominion holds,  
 From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.  
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view  
 Of his great power; for now the Parthian king  
 In Ctesiphon hath gathered all his host  
 Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild  
 Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid  
 He marches now in haste. See, though from far,  
 His thousands, in what martial equipage  
 They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,  
 Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit—  
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;  
 See how in warlike muster they appear,  
 In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings."  
 He looked, and saw what numbers numberless  
 The city gates outpoured, light-armed troops  
 In coats of mail and military pride.

In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,  
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice  
 Of many provinces from bound to bound&mdash;  
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,  
 And Margiana, to the Hyrcanian cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;  
 From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains  
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south  
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.  
 He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,  
 How quick they wheeled, and flying behind them shot  
 Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face  
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;  
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown.  
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor, on each horn,  
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,  
 Chariots, or elephants indorsed with towers  
 Of archers; nor of labouring pioners  
 A multitude, with spades and axes armed,  
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,  
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay  
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke:  
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,  
 And waggons fraught with utensils of war.  
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,  
 When Agrican, with all his northern powers,  
 Besieged Albracea, as romances tell,  
 The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win  
 The fairest of her sex, Angelica,  
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,  
 Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemane.  
 Such and so numerous was their chivalry;  
 At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presumed,  
 And to our Saviour thus his words renewed:&mdash;  
 "That thou may'st know I seek not to engage  
 Thy virtue, and not every way secure  
 On no slight grounds thy safety, hear and mark  
 To what end I have brought thee hither, and shew  
 All this fair sight. Thy kingdom, though foretold  
 By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou  
 Endeavour, as thy father David did,  
 Thou never shalt obtain: prediction still  
 In all things, and all men, supposes means;  
 Without means used, what it predicts revokes.  
 But say thou wert possessed of David's throne  
 By free consent of all, none opposite,  
 Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope  
 Long to enjoy it quiet and secure  
 Between two such enclosing enemies,  
 Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these  
 Thou must make sure thy own: the Parthian first,  
 By my advice, as nearer, and of late



Found able by invasion to annoy  
 Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,  
 Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,  
 Maugre the Roman. It shall be my task  
 To render thee the Parthian at dispose,  
 Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league.  
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,  
 That which alone can truly reinstall thee  
 In David's royal seat, his true successor&mdash;  
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those Ten Tribes  
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve  
 In Habor, and among the Medes dispersed:  
 The sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost  
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old  
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,  
 This offer sets before thee to deliver.  
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore  
 To their inheritance, then, nor till then,  
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,  
 From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond,  
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Caesar not need fear."  
 To whom our Saviour answered thus, unmoved:&mdash;  
 "Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm  
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,  
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,  
 Before mine eyes thou hast set, and in my ear  
 Vented much policy, and projects deep  
 Of enemies, of aids, battles, and leagues,  
 Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.  
 Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else  
 Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne!  
 My time, I told thee (and that time for thee  
 Were better farthest off), is not yet come.  
 When that comes, think not thou to find me slack  
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need  
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome  
 Luggage of war there shewn me&mdash;argument  
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.  
 My brethren, as thou call'st them, those Ten Tribes,  
 I must deliver, if I mean to reign  
 David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway  
 To just extent over all Israel's sons!  
 But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then  
 For Israel, or for David, or his throne,  
 When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride  
 Of numbering Israel&mdash;which cost the lives  
 of threescore and ten thousand Israelites  
 By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal  
 To Israel then, the same that now to me.  
 As for those captive tribes, themselves were they  
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off  
 From God to worship calves, the deities

Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,  
And all the idolatries of heathen round,  
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;  
Nor in the land of their captivity  
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought  
The God of their forefathers, but so died  
Impenitent, and left a race behind  
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce  
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,  
And God with idols in their worship joined.  
Should I of these the liberty regard,  
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,  
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreformed,  
Headlong would follow, and to their gods perhaps  
Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve  
Their enemies who serve idols with God.  
Yet He at length, time to himself best known,  
Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call  
May bring them back, repentant and sincere,  
And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,  
While to their native land with joy they haste,  
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,  
When to the Promised Land their fathers passed.  
To his due time and providence I leave them."  
So spake Israel's true King, and to the Fiend  
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.  
So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

John Milton

## Psalm 01

Done into Verse, 1653.

Bless'd is the man who hath not walk'd astray  
In counsel of the wicked, and ith'way  
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat  
Of scorers hath not sate. But in the great  
Jehovahs Law is ever his delight,  
And in his law he studies day and night.  
He shall be as a tree which planted grows  
By watry streams, and in his season knows  
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall.  
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.  
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd  
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand  
In judgment, or abide their tryal then  
Nor sinners in th'assembly of just men.  
For the Lord knows th'upright way of the just  
And the way of bad men to ruine must.

John Milton

## Psalm 02

Done Aug. 8. 1653. Terzetti.

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations  
Muse a vain thing, the Kings of th'earth upstand  
With power, and Princes in their Congregations  
Lay deep their plots together through each Land,  
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear.  
Let us break off; say they, by strength of hand  
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,  
Their twisted cords: he who in Heaven doth dwell  
Shall laugh, the Lord shall scoff them, then severe  
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell  
And fierce ire trouble them; but I saith hee  
Anointed have my King (though ye rebell)  
On Sion my holi' hill. A firm decree  
I will declare; the Lord to me hath say'd  
Thou art my Son I have begotten thee  
This day, ask of me, and the grant is made;  
As thy possession I on thee bestow  
Th'Heathen, and as thy conquest to be sway'd  
Earths utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low  
With Iron Sceptir bruis'd, and them disperse  
Like to a potters vessel shiver'd so.  
And now be wise at length ye Kings averse  
Be taught ye Judges of the earth; with fear  
Jehovah serve and let your joy converse  
With trembling; Kiss the Son lest he appear  
In anger and ye perish in the way  
If once his wrath take fire like fuel sere.  
Happy all those who have in him their stay.

John Milton

## Psalm 03

Aug. 9.  
When He Fled From Absalom.

Lord how many are my foes  
How many those  
That in arms against me rise  
Many are they  
That of my life distrustfully thus say,  
No help for him in God there lies.  
But thou Lord art my shield my glory,  
Thee through my story  
Th' exalter of my head I count  
Aloud I cry'd  
Unto Jehovah, he full soon reply'd  
And heard me from his holy mount.  
I lay and slept, I wak'd again,  
For my sustain  
Was the Lord. Of many millions  
The populous rout  
I fear not though incamping round about  
They pitch against me their Pavillions.  
Rise Lord, save me my God for thou  
Hast smote ere now  
On the cheek-bone all my foes,  
Of men abhor'd  
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;  
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

John Milton

## Psalm 04

Aug. 10. 1653.

Answer me when I call  
God of my righteousness;  
In straits and in distress  
Thou didst me disinthrall  
And set at large; now spare,  
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prai'r.

Great ones how long will ye  
My glory have in scorn  
How long be thus forlorn  
Still to love vanity,  
To love, to seek, to prize  
Things false and vain and nothing else but lies?

Yet know the Lord hath chose  
Chose to himself a part  
The good and meek of heart  
(For whom to chuse he knows)  
Jehovah from on high  
Will hear my voyce what time to him I crie.

Be aw'd, and do not sin,  
Speak to your hearts alone,  
Upon your beds, each one,  
And be at peace within.  
Offer the offerings just  
Of righteousness and in Jehovah trust.

Many there be that say  
Who yet will shew us good?  
Talking like this worlds brood;  
But Lord, thus let me pray,  
On us lift up the light  
Lift up the favour of thy count'nance bright.

Into my heart more joy  
And gladness thou hast put  
Then when a year of glut  
Their stores doth over-cloy  
And from their plenteous grounds  
With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.

In peace at once will I  
Both lay me down and sleep  
For thou alone dost keep  
Me safe where ere I lie  
As in a rocky Cell  
Thou Lord alone in safety mak'st me dwell.

John Milton

## Psalm 05

Aug. 12. 1653.

Jehovah to my words give ear  
My meditation waigh  
The voyce of my complaining hear  
My King and God for unto thee I pray.  
Jehovah thou my early voyce  
Shalt in the morning hear  
Ith'morning I to thee with choyce  
Will rank my Prayers, and watch till thou appear.  
For thou art not a God that takes  
In wickedness delight  
Evil with thee no biding makes  
Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.  
All workers of iniquity  
Thou wilt destroy that speak a ly  
The bloodi' and guileful man God doth detest.  
But I will in thy mercies dear  
Thy numerous mercies go  
Into thy house; I in thy fear  
Will towards thy holy temple worship low.  
Lord lead me in thy righteousness  
Lead me because of those  
That do observe if I transgress,  
Set thy wayes right before, where my step goes.  
For in his faltring mouth unstable  
No word is firm or sooth  
Their inside, troubles miserable;  
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.  
God, find them guilty, let them fall  
By their own counsels quell'd;  
Push them in their rebellions all  
Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd;  
Then all who trust in thee shall bring  
Their joy, while thou from blame  
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing  
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.  
For thou Jehovah wilt be found  
To bless the just man still,  
As with a shield thou wilt surround  
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

John Milton



## Psalm 06

Aug. 13. 1653.

Lord in thine anger do not reprehend me  
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;  
Pity me Lord for I am much deject  
Am very weak and faint; heal and amend me,  
For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,  
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore  
And thou O Lord how long? turn Lord, restore  
My soul, O save me for thy goodness sake  
For in death no remembrance is of thee;  
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?  
Wearied I am with sighing out my dayes.  
Nightly my Couch I make a kind of Sea;  
My Bed I water with my tears; mine Eie  
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark  
Ith' mid'st of all mine enemies that mark.  
Depart all ye that work iniquitie.  
Depart from me, for the voice of my weeping  
The Lord hath heard, the Lord hath heard my prai'r  
My supplication with acceptance fair  
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.  
Mine enemies shall all be blank and dash't  
With much confusion; then grow red with shame,  
They shall return in hast the way they came  
And in a moment shall be quite abash't.

John Milton

## Psalm 07

Aug. 14. 1653.

Upon The Words Of Chush The Benjamite Against Him.

Lord my God to thee I flie  
Save me and secure me under  
Thy protection while I crie  
Least as a Lion (and no wonder)  
He hast to tear my Soul asunder  
Tearing and no rescue nigh.

Lord my God if I have thought  
Or done this, if wickedness  
Be in my hands, if I have wrought  
Ill to him that meant me peace,  
Or to him have render'd less,  
And fre'd my foe for naught;

Let th'enemy pursue my soul  
And overtake it, let him tread  
My life down to the earth and roul  
In the dust my glory dead,  
In the dust and there out spread  
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise Jehovah in thine ire  
Rouze thy self amidst the rage  
Of my foes that urge like fire;  
And wake for me, their furi' assuage;  
Judgment here thou didst ingage  
And command which I desire.

So th' assemblies of each Nation  
Will surround thee, seeking right,  
Thence to thy glorious habitation  
Return on high and in their sight.  
Jehovah judgeth most upright  
All people from the worlds foundation.

Judge me Lord, be judge in this  
According to my righteousness  
And the innocence which is  
Upon me: cause at length to cease  
Of evil men the wickedness  
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,  
Since thou art the just God that tries  
Hearts and reins. On God is cast  
My defence, and in him lies  
In him who both just and wise  
Saves th' upright of Heart at last.

God is a just Judge and severe,  
And God is every day offended;  
If th' unjust will not forbear,  
His Sword he whets, his Bow hath bended  
Already, and for him intended  
The tools of death, that waits him near.

(His arrows purposely made he  
For them that persecute.) Behold  
He travels big with vanitie,  
Trouble he hath conceav'd of old  
As in a womb, and from that mould  
Hath at length brought forth a Lie.

He dig'd a pit, and delv'd it deep,  
And fell into the pit he made,  
His mischief that due course doth keep,  
Turns on his head, and his ill trade  
Of violence will undelay'd  
Fall on his crown with ruine steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise  
According to his justice raise  
And sing the Name and Deitie  
Of Jehovah the most high.

John Milton

## Psalm 08

Aug. 14. 1653.

O Jehovah our Lord how wondrous great  
And glorious is thy name through all the earth?  
So as above the Heavens thy praise to set  
Out of the tender mouths of latest bearth,

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou  
Hast founded strength because of all thy foes  
To stint th'enemy, and slack th'avengers brow  
That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.

When I behold thy Heavens, thy Fingers art,  
The Moon and Starrs which thou so bright hast set,  
In the pure firmament, then saith my heart,  
O What is man that thou remembrest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot  
That him thou visit'st and of him art found;  
Scarce to be less then Gods, thou mad'st his lot,  
With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O're the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,  
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet,  
All Flocks, and Herds, by thy commanding word,  
All beasts that in the field or forrest meet.

Fowl of the Heavens, and Fish that through the wet  
Sea-paths in shoals do slide. And know no dearth.  
O Jehovah our Lord how wondrous great  
And glorious is thy name through all the earth.

John Milton

## Psalm 80

Thou Shepherd that dost Israel keep  
Give ear in time of need,  
Who ledest like a flock of sheep  
Thy loved Josephs seed,  
That sitt'st between the Cherubs bright  
Between their wings out-spread  
Shine forth, and from thy cloud give light,  
And on our foes thy dread.

In Ephraims view and Benjamins,  
And in Manasse's sight  
Awake\* thy strength, come, and be seen  
To save us by thy might.

\*Gnorera.

Turn us again, thy grace divine  
To us O God vouchsafe;  
Cause thou thy face on us to shine  
And then we shall be safe.

Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,  
How long wilt thou declare

Thy \*smoaking wrath, and angry brow  
Against thy peoples praire.

\*Gnashanta.

Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears,  
Their bread with tears they eat,  
And mak'st them\* largely drink the tears  
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

\*Shalish.

A strife thou mak'st us and a prey  
To every neighbour foe,  
Among themselves they \*laugh, they \*play,  
And \*flouts at us they throw.

\*Jilgnagu.

Return us, and thy grace divine,  
O God of Hosts vouchsafe  
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,  
And then we shall be safe.

A Vine from Aegypt thou hast brought,  
Thy free love made it thine,  
And drov'st out Nations proud and haut  
To plant this lovely Vine.

Thou did'st prepare for it a place  
And root it deep and fast  
That it began to grow apace,  
And fill'd the land at last.

With her green shade that cover'd all,  
The Hills were over-spread  
Her Bows as high as Cedars tall  
Advanc'd their lofty head.

Her branches on the western side  
Down to the Sea she sent,  
And upward to that river wide  
Her other branches went.

Why hast thou laid her Hedges low  
And brok'n down her Fence,  
That all may pluck her, as they go,  
With rudest violence?

The tusked Boar out of the wood  
Up turns it by the roots,  
Wild Beasts there brouze, and make their food  
Her Grapes and tender Shoots.  
Return now, God of Hosts, look down  
From Heav'n, thy Seat divine,  
Behold us, but without a frown,  
And visit this thy Vine.  
Visit this Vine, which thy right hand  
Hath set, and planted long,  
And the young branch, that for thy self  
Thou hast made firm and strong.  
But now it is consum'd with fire,  
And cut with Axes down,  
They perish at thy dreadfull ire,  
At thy rebuke and frown.  
Upon the man of thy right hand  
Let thy good hand be laid,  
Upon the Son of Man, whom thou  
Strong for thyself hast made.  
So shall we not go back from thee  
To wayes of sin and shame,  
Quick'n us thou, then gladly wee  
Shall call upon thy Name.  
Return us, and thy grace divine  
Lord God of Hosts voutsafe,  
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,  
And then we shall be safe.

John Milton

## Psalm 81

To God our strength sing loud, and clear,  
Sing loud to God our King,  
To Jacobs God, that all may hear  
Loud acclamations ring.  
Prepare a Hymn, prepare a Song  
The Timbrel hither bring  
The cheerfull Psaltry bring along  
And Harp with pleasant string.  
Blow, as is wont, in the new Moon  
With Trumpets lofty sound,  
Th'appointed time, the day wheron  
Our solemn Feast comes round.  
This was a Statute giv'n of old  
For Israel to observe  
A Law of Jacobs God, to hold  
From whence they might not swerve.  
This he a Testimony ordain'd  
In Joseph, not to change,  
When as he pass'd through Aegypt land;  
The Tongue I heard, was strange.  
From burden, and from slavish toyle  
I set his shoulder free;  
His hands from pots, and mirie soyle  
Deliver'd were by me.  
When trouble did thee sore assaile,  
On me then didst thou call,  
And I to free thee did not faile,  
And led thee out of thrall.  
I answer'd thee in \*thunder deep  
With clouds encompass'd round;  
I tri'd thee at the water steep  
Of Meriba renown'd.  
Hear O my people, heark'n well,  
I testifie to thee  
Thou antient flock of Israel,  
If thou wilt list to mee,  
Through out the land of thy abode  
No alien God shall be  
Nor shalt thou to a forein God  
In honour bend thy knee.  
I am the Lord thy God which brought  
Thee out of Aegypt land  
Ask large enough, and I, besought,  
Will grant thy full demand.  
And yet my people would not hear,  
Nor hearken to my voice;  
And Israel whom I lov'd so dear  
Mislik'd me for his choice.  
Then did I leave them to their will  
And to their wandring mind;  
Their own conceits they follow'd still  
Their own devises blind

\*Be Sether ragnam.

O that my people would be wise  
To serve me all their daies,  
And O that Israel would advise  
To walk my righteous waies.  
Then would I soon bring down their foes  
That now so proudly rise,  
And turn my hand against all those  
That are their enemies.  
Who hate the Lord should then be fain  
To bow to him and bend,  
But they, His should remain,  
Their time should have no end.  
And he would free them from the shock  
With flower of finest wheat,  
And satisfie them from the rock  
With Honey for their Meat.

John Milton



## Psalm 82

God in the \*great \*assembly stands  
Of Kings and lordly States,  
Among the gods\* on both his hands.  
He judges and debates.  
How long will ye \*pervert the right  
With \*judgment false and wrong  
Favouring the wicked by your might,  
Who thence grow bold and strong?  
\*Regard the \*weak and fatherless  
\*Dispatch the \*poor mans cause,  
And \*\*raise the man in deep distress  
By \*\*just and equal Lawes.  
Defend the poor and desolate,  
And rescue from the hands  
Of wicked men the low estate  
Of him that help demands.  
They know not nor will understand,  
In darkness they walk on,  
The Earths foundations all are \*mov'd  
And \*out of order gon.  
I said that ye were Gods, yea all  
The Sons of God most high  
But ye shall die like men, and fall  
As other Princes die.  
Rise God, \*judge thou the earth in might,  
This wicked earth \*redress,  
For thou art he who shalt by right  
The Nations all possess.

John Milton

\*Bagnadath-el

\*Bekerev.

\*Tishphetu  
gnavel.

\*Shiphtu-dal.

\*\*Hatzdiku.

\*Jimmotu.

\*Shiphta.

## Psalm 83

Be not thou silent now at length  
O God hold not thy peace,  
Sit not thou still O God of strength  
We cry and do not cease.  
For lo thy furious foes now \*swell  
And \*storm outrageously,  
And they that hate thee proud and fill  
Exalt their heads full hie.  
Against thy people they \*contrive  
\*Their Plots and Counsels deep,  
\*Them to ensnare they chiefly strive  
\*Whom thou dost hide and keep.  
Come let us cut them off say they,  
Till they no Nation be  
That Israels name for ever may  
Be lost in memory.  
For they consult \*with all their might,  
And all as one in mind  
Themselves against thee they unite  
And in firm union bind.  
The tents of Edom, and the brood  
Of scornful Ishmael,  
Moab, with them of Hagers blood  
That in the Desart dwell,  
Gedal and Ammon there conspire,  
And hateful Amalec,  
The Philistims, and they of Tyre  
Whose bounds the sea doth check.  
With them great Asshur also bands  
And doth confirm the knot,  
All these have lent their armed hands  
To aid the Sons of Lot.  
Do to them as to Midian bold  
That wasted all the Coast.  
To Sisera, and as is told  
Thou didst to Jabins hoast,  
When at the brook of Kishon old  
They were repulst and slain,  
At Endor quite cut off, and rowl'd  
As dung upon the plain.  
As Zeb and Oreb evil sped  
So let their Princes speed  
As Zeba, and Zalmunna bled  
So let their Princes bleed.  
For they amidst their pride have said  
By right now shall we seize  
Gods houses, and will now invade  
\*Their stately Palaces.

\*Jehemajun.

\*Jagnarimu.  
\*Sod.

\*Jithjagnatsu gnal.  
\*Tsephuneca.

\*Lev jachdau.

\*Neoth Elohim bears both.

As when an aged wood takes fire  
Which on a sudden straiies,  
The greedy flame runs hier and hier  
Till all the mountains blaze,  
So with thy whirlwind them pursue,  
And with thy tempest chase;  
\*And till they \*yield thee honour due,  
Lord fill with shame their face.  
Asham'd and troubl'd let them be,  
Troubl'd and sham'd for ever,  
Ever confounded, and so die  
With shame, and scape it never.  
Then shall they know that thou whose name  
Jehova is alone,  
Art the most high, and thou the same  
O're all the earth art one.

John Milton

\*They seek thy  
Name. Heb.

## Psalm 84

How lovely are thy dwellings fair!  
O Lord of Hoasts, how dear  
The pleasant Tabernacles are!  
Where thou do'st dwell so near.  
My Soul doth long and almost die  
Thy Courts O Lord to see,  
My heart and flesh aloud do crie,  
O living God, for thee.  
There ev'n the Sparrow freed from wrong  
Hath found a house of rest,  
The Swallow there, to lay her young  
Hath built her brooding nest,  
Ev'n by thy Altars Lord of Hoasts  
They find their safe abode,  
And home they fly from round the Coasts  
Toward thee, My King, my God  
Happy, who in thy house reside  
Where thee they ever praise,  
Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,  
And in their hearts thy waies.  
They pass through Baca's thirstie Vale,  
That dry and barren ground  
As through a fruitfull watry Dale  
Where Springs and Showrs abound.  
They journey on from strength to strength  
With joy and gladsom cheer  
Till all before our God at length  
In Sion do appear.  
Lord God of Hoasts hear now my praier  
O Jacobs God give ear,  
Thou God our shield look on the face  
Of thy anointed dear.  
For one day in thy Courts to be  
Is better, and mere blest  
Then in the joyes of Vanity,  
A thousand daies at best.  
I in the temple of my God  
Had rather keep a dore,  
Then dwell in Tents, and rich abode  
With Sin for evermore  
For God the Lord both Sun and Shield  
Gives grace and glory bright,  
No good from him shall be with-held  
Whose waies are just and right.  
Lord God of Hoasts that raign 'st on high,  
That man is truly blest  
Who only on thee doth relie.  
And in thee only rest.

John Milton

## Psalm 85

Thy Land to favour graciously  
Thou hast not Lord been slack,  
Thou hast from hard Captivity  
Returned Jacob back.  
Th' iniquity thou didst forgive  
That wrought thy people woe,  
And all their Sin, that did thee grieve  
Hast hid where none shall know.  
Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,  
And calmly didst return  
From thy \*fierce wrath which we had prov'd  
Far worse then fire to burn.  
God of our saving health and peace,  
Turn us, and us restore,  
Thine indignation cause to cease  
Toward us, and chide no more.  
Wilt thou be angry without end,  
For ever angry thus  
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend  
From age to age on us?  
Wilt thou not \* turn, and hear our voice  
And us again \* revive ,  
That so thy people may rejoyce  
By thee preserv'd alive.  
Cause us to see thy goodness Lord,  
To us thy mercy shew  
Thy saving health to us afford  
And lift in us renew.  
And now what God the Lord will speak  
I will go strait and hear,  
For to his people he speaks peace  
And to his Saints full dear,  
To his dear Saints he will speak peace,  
But let them never more  
Return to folly, but surcease  
To trespass as before.  
Surely to such as do him fear  
Salvation is at hand  
And glory shall ere long appear  
To dwell within our Land.  
Mercy and Truth that long were miss'd  
Now joyfully are met  
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd  
And hand in hand are set.  
Truth from the earth like to a flwr  
Shall bud and blossom then,  
And Justice from her heavenly bow  
Look down on mortal men.  
The Lord will also then bestow  
Whatever thing is good  
Our Land shall forth in plenty throw  
Her fruits to be our food.

\*Heb. The burning  
heat of thy  
wrath.

\* Heb. Turn to  
quicken us.

Before him Righteousness shall go  
His Royal Harbinger,  
Then \* will he come, and not be slow  
His footsteps cannot err.

John Milton

\*Heb. He will set his  
steps to the way.

## Psalm 86

Thy gracious ear, O Lord, encline,  
O hear me I thee pray,  
For I am poor, and almost pine  
With need, and sad decay.  
Preserve my soul, for \*I have trod  
Thy waies, and love the just,  
Save thou thy servant O my God  
Who still in thee doth trust.  
Pity me Lord for daily thee  
I call; 4 O make rejoyce  
Thy Servants Soul; for Lord to thee  
I lift my soul and voice,  
For thou art good, thou Lord art prone  
To pardon, thou to all  
Art full of mercy, thou alone  
To them that on thee call.  
Unto my supplication Lord  
Give ear, and to the crie  
Of my incessant praiers afford  
Thy hearing graciously.  
I in the day of my distress  
Will call on thee for aid;  
For thou wilt grant me free access  
And answer, what I pray'd.  
Like thee among the gods is none  
O Lord, nor any works  
Of all that other Gods have done  
Like to thy glorious works.  
The Nations all whom thou hast made  
Shall come, and all shall frame  
To bow them low before thee Lord,  
And glorifie thy name.  
For great thou art, and wonders great  
By thy strong hand are done,  
Thou in thy everlasting Seat  
Remainest God alone.  
Teach me O Lord thy way most right,  
I in thy truth will hide,  
To fear thy name my heart unite  
So shall it never slide.  
Thee will I praise O Lord my God  
Thee honour, and adore  
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad  
Thy name for ever more.  
For great thy mercy is toward me,  
And thou hast free'd my Soul  
Eev'n from the lowest Hell set free  
From deepest darkness foul.  
O God the proud against me rise  
And violent men are met  
To seek my life, and in their eyes  
No fear of thee have set.

Heb. I am good, loving,  
a doer of good and  
holy things

But thou Lord art the God most mild  
Readiest thy grace to shew,  
Slow to be angry, and art stil'd  
Most mercifull, most true.  
O turn to me thy face at length,  
And me have mercy on,  
Unto thy servant give thy strength,  
And save thy hand-maids Son.  
Some sign of good to me afford,  
And let my foes then see  
And be asham'd, because thou Lord  
Do'st help and comfort me.

John Milton



## Psalm 87

Among the holy Mountains high  
Is his foundation fast,  
There Seated in his Sanctuary,  
His Temple there is plac't.  
Sions fair Gates the Lord loves more  
Then all the dwellings faire  
Of Jacobs Land, though there be store,  
And all within his care.  
City of God, most glorious things  
Of thee abroad are spoke;  
I mention Egypt, where proud Kings  
Did our forefathers yoke,  
I mention Babel to my friends,  
Philistia full of scorn,  
And Tyre with Ethiops utmost ends,  
Lo this man there was born:  
But twise that praise shall in our ear  
Be said of Sion last  
This and this man was born in her,  
High God shall fix her fast.  
The Lord shall write it in a Scrowle  
That ne're shall be out-worn  
When he the Nations doth enrowle  
That this man there was born.  
Both they who sing, and they who dance  
With sacred Songs are there,  
In thee fresh brooks, and soft streams glance  
And all my fountains clear.

John Milton

## Psalm 88

Lord God that dost me save and keep,  
All day to thee I cry;  
And all night long, before thee weep  
Before thee prostrate lie.  
Into thy presence let my praier  
With sighs devout ascend  
And to my cries, that ceaseless are,  
Thine ear with favour bend.  
For cloy'd with woes and trouble store  
Surcharg'd my Soul doth lie,  
My life at death's uncherful dore  
Unto the grave draws nigh.  
Reck'n'd I am with them that pass  
Down to the dismal pit  
I am a \*man, but weak alas  
And for that name unfit.  
From life discharg'd and parted quite  
Among the dead to sleep  
And like the slain in bloody fight  
That in the grave lie deep.  
Whom thou rememberest no more,  
Dost never more regard,  
Them from thy hand deliver'd o're  
Deaths hideous house hath barr'd.  
Thou in the lowest pit profound'  
Hast set me all forlorn,  
Where thickest darkness hovers round,  
In horrid deeps to mourn.  
Thy wrath from which no shelter saves  
Full sore doth press on me;  
\*Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,  
\*And all thy waves break me  
Thou dost my friends from me estrange,  
And mak'st me odious,  
Me to them odious, for they change,  
And I here pent up thus.  
Through sorrow, and affliction great  
Mine eye grows dim and dead,  
Lord all the day I thee entreat,  
My hands to thee I spread.  
Wilt thou do wonders on the dead,  
Shall the deceas'd arise  
And praise thee from their loathsom bed  
With pale and hollow eyes ?  
Shall they thy loving kindness tell  
On whom the grave hath hold,  
Or they who in perdition dwell  
Thy faithfulness unfold?  
In darkness can thy mighty hand  
Or wondrous acts be known,  
Thy justice in the gloomy land  
Of dark oblivion?

\* Heb. A man without manly strength.

\*The Heb. bears both.

But I to thee O Lord do cry  
E're yet my life be spent,  
And up to thee my praier doth hie  
Each morn, and thee prevent.  
Why wilt thou Lord my soul forsake,  
And hide thy face from me,  
That am already bruis'd, and \*shake  
With terror sent from thee;  
Bruz'd, and afflicted and so low  
As ready to expire,  
While I thy terrors undergo  
Astonish'd with thine ire.  
Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow  
Thy threatnings cut me through.  
All day they round about me go,  
Like waves they me persue.  
Lover and friend thou hast remov'd  
And sever'd from me far.  
They fly me now whom I have lov'd,  
And as in darkness are.

John Milton

\*Heb. Prae Concussione.

## Psalm CXXXVI

Let us with a gladsome mind  
Praise the Lord for he is kind;  
For his mercies aye endure,  
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his Name abroad,  
For of gods he is the God;  
For his, &c.

O let us his praises tell,  
That doth the wrathful tyrants quell;  
For his, &c.

That with his miracles doth make  
Amazèd Heaven and Earth to shake;  
For his, &c.

That by his wisdom did create  
The painted heavens so full of state;  
For his, &c.

That did the solid Earth ordain  
To rise above the watery plain;  
For his, &c.

That by his all-commanding might,  
Did fill the new-made world with light;  
For his, &c.

And caused the golden-tressèd Sun  
All the day long his course to run;  
For his, &c.

The hornèd Moon to shine by night  
Amongst her spangled sisters bright;  
For his, &c.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand,  
Smote the first-born of Egypt land;  
For his, &c.

And, in despite of Pharao fell,  
He brought from thence his Israel;  
For his, &c.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain  
Of the Erythræan main;  
For his, &c.

The floods stood still, like walls of glass,  
While the Hebrew bands did pass;  
For his, &c.

But full soon they did devour  
The tawny King with all his power;  
For his, &c.

His chosen people he did bless  
In the wasteful Wilderness;  
For his, &c.

In bloody battail he brought down  
Kings of prowess and renown;  
For his, &c.

He foiled bold Seon and his host,  
That ruled the Amorrean coast;  
For his, &c.

And large-limbed Og he did subdue,  
With all his over-hardy crew;  
For his, &c.

And to his servant Israel  
He gave their land, therein to dwell;  
For his, &c.

He hath, with a piteous eye,  
Beheld us in our misery;  
For his, &c.

And freed us from the slavery  
Of the invading enemy;  
For his, &c.

All living creatures he doth feed,  
And with full hand supplies their need;  
For his, &c.

Let us, therefore, warble forth  
His mighty majesty and worth;  
For his, &c.

That his mansion hath on high,  
Above the reach of mortal eye;  
For his, &c.

John Milton

## Samson Agonistes

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on;  
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade.  
There I am wont to sit, when any chance  
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,  
Daily in the common prison else enjoined me,  
Where I, a prisoner chained, scarce freely draw  
The air, imprisoned also, close and damp,  
Unwholesome draught. But here I feel amends—  
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,  
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
This day a solemn feast the people hold  
To Dagon, their sea-idol, and forbid  
Laborious works. Unwillingly this rest  
Their superstition yields me; hence, with leave  
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease—  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm  
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone  
But rush upon me thronging, and present  
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.  
Oh, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold  
Twice by an Angel, who at last, in sight  
Of both my parents, all in flames ascended  
From off the altar where an offering burned,  
As in a fiery column charioting  
His godlike presence, and from some great act  
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?  
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed  
As of a person separate to God,  
Designed for great exploits, if I must die  
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,  
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze,  
To grind in brazen fetters under task  
With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,  
Put to the labour of a beast, debased  
Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I  
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver!  
Ask for this great Deliverer now, and find him  
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,  
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.  
Yet stay; let me not rashly call in doubt  
Divine prediction. What if all foretold  
Had been fulfilled but through mine own default?  
Whom have I to complain of but myself,  
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,  
Under the seal of silence could not keep,  
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,  
O'ercome with importunity and tears?  
O impotence of mind in body strong!

But what is strength without a double share  
 Of wisdom? Vast, unwieldly, burdensome,  
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
 By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,  
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command.  
 God, when he gave me strength, to shew withal  
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.  
 But peace! I must not quarrel with the will  
 Of highest dispensation, which herein  
 Haply had ends above my reach to know.  
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
 And proves the source of all my miseries—  
 So many, and so huge, that each apart  
 Would ask a life to wail. But, chief of all,  
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!  
 Blind among enemies! O worse than chains,  
 Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!  
 Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,  
 And all her various objects of delight  
 Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased.  
 Inferior to the vilest now become  
 Of man or worm, the vilest here excel me:  
 They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed  
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,  
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,  
 In power of others, never in my own—  
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,  
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse  
 Without all hope of day!  
 O first-created Beam, and thou great Word,  
 "Let there be light, and light was over all,"  
 Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?  
 The Sun to me is dark  
 And silent as the Moon,  
 When she deserts the night,  
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.  
 Since light so necessary is to life,  
 And almost life itself, if it be true  
 That light is in the soul,  
 She all in every part, why was the sight  
 To such a tender ball as the eye confined,  
 So obvious and so easy to be quenched,  
 And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,  
 That she might look at will through every pore?  
 Then had I not been thus exiled from light,  
 As in the land of darkness, yet in light,  
 To live a life half dead, a living death,  
 And buried; but, O yet more miserable!  
 Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;  
 Buried, yet not exempt,  
 By privilege of death and burial,

From worst of other evils, pains, and wrongs;  
 But made hereby obnoxious more  
 To all the miseries of life,  
 Life in captivity  
 Among inhuman foes.  
 But who are these? for with joint pace I hear  
 The tread of many feet steering this way;  
 Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare  
 At my affliction, and perhaps to insult—  
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.  
 Chor. This, this is he; softly a while;  
 Let us not break in upon him.  
 O change beyond report, thought, or belief!  
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,  
 With languished head unpropt,  
 As one past hope, abandoned,  
 And by himself given over,  
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds  
 O'er-worn and soiled.  
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,  
 That heroic, that renowned,  
 Irresistible Samson? whom, unarmed,  
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;  
 Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid;  
 Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,  
 And, weaponless himself,  
 Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery  
 Of brazen shield and spear, the hammered cuirass,  
 Chalybean-tempered steel, and frock of mail  
 Adamantean proof:  
 But safest he who stood aloof,  
 When insupportably his foot advanced,  
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,  
 Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite  
 Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned  
 Their plated backs under his heel,  
 Or grovelling soiled their crested helmets in the dust.  
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,  
 The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,  
 A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,  
 In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day:  
 Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore,  
 The gates of Azza, post and massy bar,  
 Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old—  
 No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so—  
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.  
 Which shall I first bewail—  
 Thy bondage or lost sight,  
 Prison within prison  
 Inseparably dark?  
 Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)  
 The dungeon of thyself; thy soul



(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)  
 Imprisoned now indeed,  
 In real darkness of the body dwells,  
 Shut up from outward light  
 To incorporate with gloomy night;  
 For inward light, alas!  
 Puts forth no visual beam.  
 O mirror of our fickle state,  
 Since man on earth, unparalleled,  
 The rarer thy example stands,  
 By how much from the top of wondrous glory,  
 Strongest of mortal men,  
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.  
 For him I reckon not in high estate  
 Whom long descent of birth,  
 Or the sphere of fortune, raises;  
 But them whose strength, while virtue was her mate,  
 Might have subdued the Earth,  
 Universally crowned with highest praises.  
 Sams. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air  
 Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.  
 Chor. He speaks: let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,  
 The glory late of Israel, now the grief!  
 We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown.  
 From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,  
 To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,  
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,  
 Salve to thy sores: apt words have power to swage  
 The tumours of a troubled mind,  
 And are as balm to festered wounds.  
 Sams. Your coming, friends, revives me; for I learn  
 Now of my own experience, not by talk,  
 How counterfeit a coin they are who "friends"  
 Bear in their superscription (of the most  
 I would be understood). In prosperous days  
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,  
 Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,  
 How many evils have enclosed me round;  
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,  
 Blindness; for, had I sight, confused with shame,  
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,  
 Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwrecked  
 My Vessel trusted to me from above,  
 Gloriously rigged, and for a word, a tear,  
 Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God  
 To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,  
 Am I not sung and proverbied for a fool  
 In every street? Do they not say, "How well  
 Are come upon him his deserts"? Yet why?  
 Immeasurable strength they might behold  
 In me; of wisdom nothing more than mean.  
 This with the other should at least have paired;

These two, proportioned ill, drove me transverse.  
 Chor. Tax not divine disposal. Wisest men  
 Have erred, and by bad women been deceived;  
 And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.  
 Deject not, then, so overmuch thyself,  
 Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides.  
 Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder  
 Why thou should'st wed Philistian women rather  
 Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,  
 At least of thy own nation, and as noble.  
 Sams. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleased  
 Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed  
 The daughter of an Infidel. They knew not  
 That what I motioned was of God; I knew  
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urged  
 The marriage on, that, by occasion hence,  
 I might begin Israel's deliverance—  
 The work to which I was divinely called.  
 She proving false, the next I took to wife  
 (O that I never had! found wish too late!)  
 Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,  
 That specious monster, my accomplished snare.  
 I thought it lawful from my former act,  
 And the same end, still watching to oppress  
 Israel's oppressors. Of what now I suffer  
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself,  
 Who, vanquished with a peal of words, (O weakness!)  
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.  
 Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke  
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,  
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness;  
 Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.  
 Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer  
 On Israel's governors and heads of tribes,  
 Who, seeing those great acts which God had done  
 Singly be me against their conquerors,  
 Acknowledged not, or not at all considered,  
 Deliverance offered. I, on the other side,  
 Used no ambition to commend my deeds;  
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer.  
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem

John Milton

## Samson Agonistes (excerpts)

[Samson's Opening Speech]

A little onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on;  
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade,  
There I am wont to sit, when any chance  
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,  
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me,  
Where I a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw  
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,  
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,  
The breath of Heav'n fresh-blowing, pure and sweet,  
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
This day a solemn feast the people hold  
To Dagon, their sea-idol, and forbid  
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest  
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave  
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease;  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm  
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,  
But rush upon me thronging, and present  
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.  
O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold  
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight  
Of both my parents all in flames ascended  
From off the altar, where an off'ring burn'd,  
As in a fiery column charioting  
His godlike presence, and from some great act  
Of benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?  
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd  
As of a person separate to God,  
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die  
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,  
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;  
To grind in brazen fetters under task  
With this Heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious strength  
Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd  
Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I  
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;  
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,  
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.  
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt  
Divine prediction; what if all foretold  
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,  
Whom have I to complain of but myself?  
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,  
Under the seal of silence could not keep,  
But weakly to a woman must reveal it  
O'ercome with importunity and tears.

O impotence of mind, in body strong!  
But what is strength without a double share  
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,  
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,  
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.  
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal  
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.  
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will  
Of highest dispensation, which herein  
Haply had ends above my reach to know:  
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
And proves the source of all my miseries;  
So many, and so huge, that each apart  
Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,  
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!  
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,  
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!  
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,  
And all her various objects of delight  
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,  
Inferior to the vilest now become  
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me:  
They creep, yet see, I, dark in light, expos'd  
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,  
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,  
In power of others, never in my own;  
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,  
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse  
Without all hope of day!  
O first created Beam, and thou great Word,  
"Let there be light, and light was over all,"  
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?  
The sun to me is dark  
And silent as the moon,  
When she deserts the night,  
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.  
Since light so necessary is to life,  
And almost life itself, if it be true  
That light is in the soul,  
She all in every part, why was the sight  
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd?  
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd,  
And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,  
That she might look at will through every pore?  
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,  
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,  
To live a life half dead, a living death,  
And buried; but O yet more miserable!  
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;  
Buried, yet not exempt

By privilege of death and burial  
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;  
But made hereby obnoxious more  
To all the miseries of life,  
Life in captivity  
Among inhuman foes.  
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear  
The tread of many feet steering this way;  
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare  
At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,  
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

...

[Chorus, Manoah, Samson]

CHORUS.

Just are the ways of God,  
And justifiable to men;  
Unless there be who think not God at all:  
If any be, they walk obscure;  
For of such doctrine never was there school,  
But the heart of the fool,  
And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,  
As to his own edicts found contradicting,  
Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,  
Regardless of his glory's diminution;  
Till by their own perplexities involv'd  
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,  
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' interminable,  
And tie him to his own prescript,  
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,  
And hath full right to exempt  
Whom so it pleases him by choice  
From national obstruction, without taint  
Of sin, or legal debt;  
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means,  
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause  
To set his people free,  
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,  
Against his vow of strictest purity,  
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,  
Unclean, unchaste.

Down, Reason, then; at least vain reasonings down;  
Though Reason here aver  
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:

Unchaste was subsequent, her stain, not his.

But see, here comes thy reverend sire,  
With careful step, locks white as down,  
Old Manoa: advise  
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

SAMSON.

Ay me, another inward grief awak'd,  
With mention of that name renews th' assault.

MANOA.

Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,  
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,  
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,  
My son, now captive, hither hath inform'd  
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age  
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

CHORUS.

As signal now in low dejected state,  
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

MANOA.

O miserable change! is this the man,  
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,  
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength  
Equivalent to angels' walk'd their streets,  
None offering fight; who single combatant  
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array,  
Himself an army, now unequal match  
To save himself against a coward arm'd  
At one spear's length. O ever failing trust  
In mortal strength! and oh, what not in man  
Deceivable and vain! Nay what thing good  
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?  
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness  
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a son,  
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy;  
Who would be now a father in my stead?  
O wherefore did God grant me my request,  
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?  
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt  
Our earnest prayers, then giv'n with solemn hand  
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?  
For this did the Angel twice descend? for this  
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant;  
Select, and sacred, glorious for a while,  
The miracle of men: then in an hour  
Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,  
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,  
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?

Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once  
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err  
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall  
Subject him to so foul indignities,  
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

...

[Chorus, Manoh, Samson, Dalilah]

SAMSON.

His pardon I implore; but as for life,  
To what end should I seek it? when in strength  
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes  
With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts  
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,  
Full of divine instinct, after some proof  
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond  
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,  
Fearless of danger, like a petty god  
I walk'd about, admir'd of all, and dreaded  
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.  
Then swoll'n with pride into the snare I fell  
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,  
Softn'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;  
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge  
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap  
Of a deceitful concubine who shore me  
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,  
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,  
Shav'n, and disarm'd among my enemies.

CHORUS.

Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,  
Which many a famous warrior overturns,  
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing ruby  
Sparkling out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,  
Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,  
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

SAMSON.

Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd  
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure,  
With touch ætherial of Heav'n's fiery rod  
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying  
Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envied them the grape  
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

CHORUS.

O madness, to think use of strongest wines  
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,  
When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear

His mighty champion, strong above compare,  
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

SAMSON.

But what avail'd this temperance, not complete  
Against another object more enticing?  
What boots it at one gate to make defence,  
And at another to let in the foe,  
Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,  
Now blind, disheartn'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,  
To what can I be useful, wherein serve  
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,  
But to sit idle on the household hearth,  
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,  
Or pitied object, these redundant locks  
Robustious to no purpose clust'ring down,  
Vain monument of strength; till length of years  
And sedentary numbness craze my limbs  
To a contemptible old age obscure?  
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,  
Till vermin or the draff of servile food  
Consume me, and oft-invocated death  
Hast'n the welcome end of all my pains.

MANOA.

Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift  
Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them?  
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,  
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn.  
But God, who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer  
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay  
After the brunt of battle, can as easy  
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,  
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;  
And I persuade me so; why else this strength  
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?  
His might continues in thee not for naught,  
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

SAMSON.

All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,  
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,  
Nor th' other light of life continue long,  
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:  
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,  
My hopes all flat; Nature within me seems  
In all her functions weary of herself;  
My race of glory run, and race of shame,  
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

MANOA.

Believe not these suggestions which proceed



From anguish of the mind and humours black,  
That mingle with thy fancy. I however  
Must not omit a father's timely care  
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance  
By ransom or how else: meanwhile be calm,  
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

SAMSON.

O that torment should not be confin'd  
To the body's wounds and sores,  
With maladies innumerable  
In heart, head, breast, and reins;  
But must secret passage find  
To th' inmost mind,  
There exercise all his fierce accidents,  
And on her purest spirits prey,  
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,  
With answerable pains, but more intense,  
Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not only pain me  
As a ling'ring disease,  
But finding no redress, ferment and rage,  
Nor less than wounds immedicable  
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,  
To black mortification.  
Thoughts, my tormentors, arm'd with deadly stings  
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,  
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise  
Dire inflammation which no cooling herb  
Or med'cinal liquor can assuage,  
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.  
Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o'er  
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure;  
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,  
And sense of Heav'n's desertion.

I was his nursling once and choice delight,  
His destin'd from the womb,  
Promis'd by heavenly message twice descending.  
Under his special eye  
Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;  
He led me on to mightiest deeds  
Above the nerve of mortal arm  
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies;  
But now hath cast me off as never known,  
And to those cruel enemies,  
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,  
Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss  
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated  
The subject of their cruelty, or scorn.  
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;

Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;  
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,  
No long petition, speedy death,  
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

CHORUS.

Many are the sayings of the wise  
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd,  
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;  
And to the bearing well of all calamities,  
All chances incident to man's frail life  
Consolatories writ  
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,  
Lenient of grief and anxious thought;  
But with th<sup>t</sup> afflicted in his pangs their sound  
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune  
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,  
Unless he feel within  
Some source of consolation from above;  
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,  
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our Fathers, what is man!  
That thou towards him with hand so various,  
Or might I say contrarious,  
Temper'st thy providence through his short course:  
Not evenly, as thou rul'st  
The Angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,  
Irrational and brute.  
Nor do I name of men the common rout,  
That wand'ring loose about  
Grow up and perish, as the summer fly,  
Heads without name no more remember'd;  
But such as thou has solemnly elected,  
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd  
To some great work, thy glory,  
And people's safety, which in part they effect:  
Yet toward these thus dignifi'd, thou oft  
Amidst their highth of noon,  
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand with no regard  
Of highest favours past  
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit  
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,  
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high,  
Unseemly falls in human eye,  
Too grievous for the trespass or omission,  
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword  
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses  
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd:  
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,

And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.  
If these they scape, perhaps in poverty  
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,  
Painful diseases and deform'd,  
In crude old age;  
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suff'ring  
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,  
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,  
For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,  
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.  
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?  
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn  
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land?  
Female of sex it seems,  
That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,  
Comes this way sailing  
Like a stately ship  
Of Tarsus, bound for th' isles  
Of Javan or Gadire  
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,  
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,  
Court'd by all the winds that hold them play,  
An amber scent of odorous perfume  
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;  
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem,  
And now at nearer view, no other certain  
Than Dalila thy wife.

SAMSON.

My wife! my traitress! let her not come near me.

CHORUS.

Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,  
About t' have spoke, but now, with head declin'd  
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,  
And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,  
Wetting the borders of her silk'n veil;  
But now again she makes address to speak.

DALILAH.

With doubtful feet and wavering resolution  
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,  
Which to have merited, without excuse,  
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears  
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew  
In the perverse event than I foresaw)  
My penance hath not slack'n'd, though my pardon  
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection

Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt  
Hath led me on desirous to behold  
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate.  
If aught in my ability may serve  
To light'n what thou suffer'st, and appease  
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,  
Though late, yet in some part to recompense  
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAMSON.

Out, out hyena! these are thy wonted arts,  
And arts of every woman false like thee,  
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,  
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,  
And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,  
Confess, and promise wonders in her change,  
Not truly penitent, but chief to try  
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,  
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:  
Then with more cautious and instructed skill  
Again transgresses, and again submits;  
That wisest and best men, full oft beguil'd,  
With goodness principl'd not to reject  
The penitent, but ever to forgive,  
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,  
Entangl'd with a pois'nous bosom-snake,  
If not by quick destruction soon cut off  
As I by thee, to ages an example.

...

[Chorus, Harapha, Samson]

CHORUS.

Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear  
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue  
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,  
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look  
Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.  
Comes he in peace? What wind hath blown him hither  
I less conjecture than when first I saw  
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:  
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

SAMSON.

Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

CHORUS.

His fraught we soon shall know, he now arrives.

HARAPHA.

I come not Samson, to condole thy chance,  
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,  
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;  
Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd  
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old  
That Kiriathaim held: thou knowst me now  
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard  
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd  
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,  
That I was never present on the place  
Of those encounters, where we might have tri'd  
Each other's force in camp or listed field;  
And now am come to see of whom such noise  
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,  
If thy appearance answer loud report.

SAMSON.

The way to know were not to see but taste.

HARAPHA.

Dost thou already single me; I thought  
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee? O that fortune  
Had brought me to the field where thou art fam'd  
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw;  
I should have forc'd thee soon wish other arms,  
Or left thy carcase where the ass lay thrown:  
So had the glory of prowess been recover'd  
To Palestine, won by a Philistine  
From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st  
The highest name for valiant acts; that honour  
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,  
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

SAMSON.

Boast not of what thou would'st have done, but do  
What then thou would'st, thou seest it in thy hand.

HARAPHA.

To combat with a blind man I disdain,  
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

SAMSON.

Such usage as your honourable lords  
Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,  
Who durst not with their whole united powers  
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,  
Nor in the house with chamber ambushes  
Close-banded durst attack me, no not sleeping,  
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold,  
Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me.  
Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd  
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,

Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;  
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet  
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,  
Vant-brass and greaves, and gauntlet, add thy spear,  
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield:  
I only with an oak'n staff will meet thee,  
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron,  
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,  
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,  
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath to boast  
Again in safety what thou would'st have done  
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

HARAPHA.

Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms  
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,  
Their ornament and safety, had not spells  
And black enchantments, some magician's art  
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from Heaven  
Feign'dst at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair,  
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs  
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back  
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffl'd porcupines.

SAMSON.

I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;  
My trust is in the living God who gave me  
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd  
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,  
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,  
The pledge of my unviolated vow.  
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,  
Go to his temple, invoke his aid  
With solemnest devotion, spread before him  
How highly it concerns his glory now  
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,  
Which I to be the power of Israel's God  
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,  
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,  
With th' utmost of his godhead seconded:  
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow  
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

HARAPHA.

Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be,  
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off  
Quite from his people, and delivered up  
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them  
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee  
Into the common prison, there to grind  
Among the slaves and asses thy comrades,  
As good for nothing else, no better service

With those thy boist'rous locks, no worthy match  
For valour to assail, nor by the sword  
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,  
But by the barber's razor best subdu'd.

SAMSON.

All these indignities, for such they are  
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,  
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me  
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon  
Whose ear is ever open; and his eye  
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;  
In confidence whereof I once again  
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,  
By combat to decide whose god is God,  
Thine or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

HARAPHA.

Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting  
He will accept thee to defend his cause,  
A murthurer, a revolter, and a robber.

SAMSON.

Tongue-doughty giant, how dost thou prove me  
these?

HARAPHA.

Is not thy nation subject to our lords?  
Their magistrates confess'd it, when they took thee  
As a league-breaker and deliver'd bound  
Into our hands: for had'st thou not committed  
Notorious murder on those thirty men  
At Askalon, who never did thee harm,  
Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes?  
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,  
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,  
To others did no violence nor spoil.

SAMSON.

Among the daughters of the Philistines  
I chose a wife, which argu'd me no foe;  
And in your city held my nuptial feast:  
But your ill-meaning politician lords,  
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,  
Appointed to await me thirty spies,  
Who threat'ning cruel death, constrain'd the bride  
To wring from me and tell to them my secret,  
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.  
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,  
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,  
I us'd hostility, and took their spoil  
To pay my underminers in their coin.

My nation was subjected to your lords?  
It was the force of conquest; force with force  
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.  
But I a private person, whom my country  
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd  
Single rebellion and did hostile acts.  
I was no private but a person rais'd  
With strength sufficient and command from Heav'n  
To free my country; if their servile minds  
Me their deliverer sent would not receive,  
But to their masters gave me up for nought,  
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.  
I was to do my part from Heav'n assign'd,  
And had perform'd it if my known offence  
Had not disabl'd me, not all your force:  
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant,  
Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,  
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,  
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

HARAPHA.

With thee, a man condemn'd, a slave enroll'd,  
Due by the law to capital punishment?  
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMSON.

Can'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,  
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?  
Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd;  
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

HARAPHA.

O Baal-zebub! can my ears unus'd  
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

SAMSON.

No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand  
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,  
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

HARAPHA.

This insolence other kind of answer fits.

SAMSON.

Go baffl'd coward, lest I run upon thee,  
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,  
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,  
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down  
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

HARAPHA.

By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament



These braveries, in irons loaden on thee.

CHORUS.

His giantship is gone somewhat crestfall'n,  
Stalking with less unconsci'nable strides,  
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

SAMSON.

I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood,  
Though fame divulge him father of five sons  
All of gigantic size, Goliah chief.

CHORUS.

He will directly to the lords, I fear,  
And with malicious counsel stir them up  
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

SAMSON.

He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight  
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise  
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,  
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd.  
Much more affliction than already felt  
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;  
If they intend advantage of my labours,  
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping  
With no small profit daily to my owners.  
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove  
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,  
The worst that he can give, to me the best.  
Yet so it may fall out, because their end  
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine  
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHORUS.

Oh how comely it is and how reviving  
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd,  
When God into the hands of their deliverer  
Puts invincible might  
To quell the mighty of the Earth, th' oppressor,  
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men,  
Hardy and industrious to support  
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue  
The righteous and all such as honour truth;  
He all their ammunition  
And feats of war defeats  
With plain heroic magnitude of mind  
And celestial vigour arm'd;  
Their armouries and magazines contemns,  
Renders them useless, while  
With winged expedition  
Swift as the lightning glance he executes

His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd  
Lose their defence distracted and amaz'd.  
But patience is more oft the exercise  
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,  
Making them each his own deliverer,  
And victor over all  
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.  
Either of these is in thy lot,  
Samson, with might endu'd  
Above the sons of men; but sight bereav'd  
May chance to number thee with those  
Whom patience finally must crown.  
This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,  
Labouring thy mind  
More than the working day thy hands;  
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,  
For I descry this way  
Some other tending; in his hand  
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,  
Comes on amain, speed in his look.  
By his habit I discern him now  
A public officer, and now at hand.  
His message will be short and voluble.

OFFICER.

Ebrews, the pris'ner Samson here I seek.

CHORUS.

His manacles remark him, there he sits.

OFFICER.

Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say;  
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,  
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;  
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,  
And now some public proof thereof require  
To honour this great feast, and great assembly;  
Rise therefore with all speed and come along,  
Where I will see thee heart'n'd and fresh clad  
To appear as fits before th' illustrious lords.

SAMSON.

Thou knowst I am an Ebrew, therefore tell them,  
Our law forbids at their religious rites  
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

OFFICER.

This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

SAMSON.

Have they not sword-players, and ev'ry sort  
Of gymnastic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,

Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,  
But they must pick me out with shackles tir'd,  
And over-labour'd at their public mill,  
To make them sport with blind activity?  
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels  
On my refusal to distress me more,  
Or make a game of my calamities?  
Return the way thou cam'st; I will not come.

OFFICER.

Regard thyself, this will offend them highly.

SAMSON.

Myself? my conscience and internal peace.  
Can they think me so broken, so debas'd  
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever  
Will condescend to such absurd commands?  
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,  
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief  
To shew them feats, and play before their god  
The worst of all indignities, yet on me  
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.

OFFICER.

My message was impos'd on me with speed,  
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

SAMSON.

So take it with what speed thy message needs.

OFFICER.

I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

SAMSON.

Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

CHORUS.

Consider, Samson; matters now are strain'd  
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break;  
He's gone, and who knows how he may report  
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?  
Expect another message more imperious,  
More lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.

SAMSON.

Shall I abuse this consecrated gift  
Of strength, again returning with my hair  
After my great transgression, so requite  
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin  
By prostituting holy things to idols;  
A Nazarite in place abominable  
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon?

Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,  
What act more execrably unclean, profane?

CHORUS.

Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines,  
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

SAMSON.

Not in their idol worship, but by labour  
Honest and lawful to deserve my food  
Of those who have me in their civil power.

CHORUS.

Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

SAMSON.

Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds;  
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,  
Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.  
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,  
I do it freely; venturing to displease  
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,  
Set God behind: which in his jealousy  
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.  
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee  
Present in temples at idolatrous rites  
For some important cause, thou needst not doubt.

CHORUS.

How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

SAMSON.

Be of good courage, I begin to feel  
Some rousing motions in me which dispose  
To something extraordinary my thoughts.  
I with this messenger will go along,  
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour  
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.  
If there be aught of presage in the mind,  
This day will be remarkable in my life  
By some great act, or of my days the last.

CHORUS.

In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

OFFICER.

Samson, this second message from our lords  
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,  
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,  
And dar'st thou at our sending and command  
Dispute thy coming? come without delay;  
Or we shall find such engines to assail

And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,  
Though thou wert firmlier fast'nd than a rock.

SAMSON.

I could be well content to try their art,  
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious;  
Yet knowing their advantages too many,  
Because they shall not trail me through their streets  
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.  
Masters' commands come with a power resistless  
To such as owe them absolute subjection;  
And for a life who will not change his purpose?  
(So mutable are all the ways of men)  
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply  
Scandalous or forbidden in our law.

OFFICER.

I praise thy resolution, doff these links:  
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords  
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

SAMSON.

Brethren farewell, your company along  
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them  
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight  
Of me as of a common enemy,  
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them  
I know not. Lords are lordliest in their wine;  
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd  
With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd:  
No less the people on their holy-days  
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable;  
Happ'n what may, of me expect to hear  
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy  
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself;  
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

...

[Messenger, Manoah, Chorus]

MESSENGER.

Occasions drew me early to this city,  
And as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,  
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd  
Through each high street: little I had dispatch'd  
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day  
Samson should be brought forth to shew the people  
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;  
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded  
Not to be absent at that spectacle.  
The building was a spacious theatre  
Half round on two main pillars vaulted high,

With seats where all the lords and each degree  
 Of sort, might sit in order to behold,  
 The other side was op'n, where the throng  
 On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand;  
 I among these aloof obscurely stood.  
 The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice  
 Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,  
 When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately  
 Was Samson as a public servant brought,  
 In their state livery clad; before him pipes  
 And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,  
 Both horse and foot before him and behind,  
 Archers, and slingers, cataphracts and spears.  
 At sight of him the people with a shout  
 Rifted the air clamouring their god with praise,  
 Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.  
 He patient but undaunted, where they led him  
 Came to the place, and what was set before him  
 Which without help of eye, might be assay'd,  
 To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd  
 All with incredible, stupendous force,  
 None daring to appear antagonist.  
 At length for intermission sake they led him  
 Between the pillars; he his guide requested  
 (For so from such as nearer stood we heard)  
 As over-tir'd to let him lean a while  
 With both his arms on those two massy pillars  
 That to the arched roof gave main support.  
 He unsuspecting led him; which when Samson  
 Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,  
 And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,  
 Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd.  
 At last with head erect thus cried aloud,  
 "Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd  
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,  
 Not without wonder or delight beheld.  
 Now of my own accord such other trial  
 I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,  
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold."  
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,  
 As with the force of winds and waters pent,  
 When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars  
 With horrible convulsion to and fro;  
 He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came and drew  
 The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder  
 Upon the heads of all who sate beneath,  
 Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,  
 Their choice nobility and flower, not only  
 Of this but each Philistian city round,  
 Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.  
 Samson with these immix'd, inevitably  
 Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;

The vulgar only scap'd who stood without.

CHORUS.

O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!  
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd  
The work for which thou wast foretold  
To Israel, and now ly'st victorious  
Among thy slain self-kill'd,  
Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold  
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd  
Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more  
Than all thy life had slain before.

SEMICHORUS.

While their hearts were jocund and sublime,  
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,  
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,  
Chaunting their idol, and preferring  
Before our living Dread who dwells  
In Silo his bright sanctuary:  
Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent,  
Who hurt their minds,  
And urg'd them on with mad desire  
To call in haste for their destroyer;  
They only set on sport and play  
Unweetingly importun'd  
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.  
So fond are mortal men  
Fall'n into wrath divine,  
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,  
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,  
And with blindness internal struck.

SEMICHORUS.

But he, though blind of sight,  
Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,  
With inward eyes illuminated  
His fiery virtue rous'd  
From under ashes into sudden flame,  
And as an ev'ning dragon came,  
Assailant on the perched roosts,  
And nests in order rang'd  
Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle  
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.  
So virtue giv'n for lost,  
Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,  
Like that self-begott'n bird  
In the Arabian woods embost,  
That no second knows nor third,  
And lay erewhile a holocaust,  
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,  
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most

When most unactive deem'd,  
And though her body die, her fame survives,  
A secular bird, ages of lives.

MANOA.

Come, come, no time for lamentation now,  
Nor much more cause: Samson hath quit himself  
Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd  
A life heroic, on his enemies  
Fully reveng'd; hath left them years of mourning,  
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor  
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel  
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them  
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;  
To himself and father's house eternal fame;  
And which is best and happiest yet, all this  
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,  
But favouring and assisting to the end.  
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.  
Let us go find the body where it lies  
Soak'd in his enemies' blood, and from the stream  
With layers pure and cleansing herbs wash off  
The clotted gore. I with what speed the while  
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)  
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends  
To fetch him hence and solemnly attend  
With silent obsequy and funeral train  
Home to his father's house. There will I build him  
A monument, and plant it round with shade  
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,  
With all his trophies hung, and acts enroll'd  
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.  
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,  
And from his memory inflame their breasts  
To matchless valour, and adventures high;  
The virgins also shall on feastful days  
Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing  
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,  
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

CHORUS.

All is best, though we oft doubt,  
What th' unsearchable dispose  
Of Highest Wisdom brings about,  
And ever best found in the close.  
Oft he seems to hide his face,  
But unexpectedly returns  
And to his faithful champion hath in place  
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns



And all that band them to resist  
His uncontrollable intent.  
His servants he with new acquist  
Of true experience from this great event  
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,  
And calm of mind, all passion spent.

John Milton

## **Song on May Morning**

Now the bright morning-star, Day's harbinger,  
Comes dancing from the East, and leads with her  
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws  
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.  
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire  
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire!  
Woods and groves are of thy dressing;  
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.  
Thus we salute thee with our early song,  
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

John Milton

## Sonnet 01

I

O Nightingale, that on yon bloomy Spray  
Warbl'st at eeven, when all the Woods are still,  
Thou with fresh hope the Lovers heart dost fill,  
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May,  
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of Day,  
First heard before the shallow Cuckoo's bill  
Portend success in love; O if Jove's will  
Have linkt that amorous power to thy soft lay,  
Now timely sing, ere the rude Bird of Hate  
Foretell my hopeles doom in som Grove ny:  
As thou from yeer to yeer hast sung too late  
For my relief; yet hadst no reason why,  
Whether the Muse, or Love call thee his mate,  
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

John Milton

## Sonnet 02

II

Donna leggiadra il cui bel nome honora  
L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,  
Ben e colui d'ogni valore scarco  
Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora,  
Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora  
De suoi atti soavi giamai parco,  
E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,  
La onde l' alta tua virtu s'infiora.  
Quando tu vaga parli, O lieta canti  
Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,  
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi ed a gli orecchi  
L'entrata, chi di te si truova indegno;  
Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti  
Che'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

John Milton

## Sonnet 03

III

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera  
L'avezza giovinetta pastorella  
Va bagnando l'herbetta strana e bella  
Che mal si spande a disusata spera  
Fuor di sua natia alma primavera,  
Cosi Amor meco insu la lingua snella  
Desta il fior novo di strania favella,  
Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,  
Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso  
E'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno  
Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso  
Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.  
Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e'l duro seno  
A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

John Milton

### **Sonnet 03: Canzone**

Ridonsi donne e giovani amorosi  
M' occostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,  
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana  
Verseggiando d'amor, e conie t'osi ?  
Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana  
E de pensieri lo miglior t' arrivi;  
Cosi mi van burlando, altri rivi  
Altri lidi t' aspettan, & altre onde  
Nelle cui verdi sponde  
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma  
L'immortal guiderdon d 'eterne frondi  
Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?  
Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi  
Dice mia Donna, e'l suo dir, e il mio cuore  
Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

John Milton

## Sonnet 04

IV

Diodati, e te'l diro con meraviglia,  
Quel ritroso io ch'amor spreggiar solea  
E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridea  
Gia caddi, ov'huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.  
Ne treccie d'oro, ne guancia vermiglia  
M' abbaglian si, ma sotto nova idea  
Pellegrina bellezza che'l cuor bea,  
Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia  
Quel sereno fulgor d' amabil nero,  
Parole adorne di lingua piu d'una,  
E'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemispero  
Traviar ben puo la faticosa Luna,  
E degil occhi suoi auventa si gran fuoco  
Che l'incerar gli oreechi mi fia poco.

John Milton

## Sonnet 05

V

Per certo i bei vostr'occhi Donna mia  
Esser non puo che non fian lo mio sole  
Si mi percuoton forte, come ci suole  
Per l'arene di Libia chi s'invia,  
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne senti pria)  
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,  
Che forsi amanti nelle lor parole  
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:  
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela  
Scosso mi il petto, e poi n'uscendo poco  
Quivi d' attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;  
Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco  
Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose  
Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

John Milton



## Sonnet 06

VI

Giovane piano, e semplicetto amante  
Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,  
Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono  
Faro divoto; io certo a prove tante  
L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,  
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;  
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,  
S'arma di se, e d' intero diamante,  
Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,  
Di timori, e speranze al popol use  
Quanto d'ingegno, e d' alto valor vago,  
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:  
Sol troverete in tal parte men duro  
Ove amor mise l' insanabil ago.

John Milton

## Sonnet 07

VII

How soon hath Time the suttle thief of youth,  
Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth yeer!  
My hasting dayes flie on with full career,  
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th,  
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,  
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,  
And inward ripenes doth much less appear,  
That som more timely-happy spirits indu'th.  
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow.  
It shall be still in strictest measure eev'n,  
To that same lot, however mean, or high,  
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n;  
All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
As ever in my great task Masters eye.

John Milton

## Sonnet 08

VIII

Captain or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,  
Whose chance on these defenceless dores may sease,  
If ever deed of honour did thee please,  
Guard them, and him within protect from harms,  
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms  
That call Fame on such gentle acts as these,  
And he can spread thy Name o're Lands and Seas,  
What ever clime the Suns bright circle warms.  
Lift not thy spear against the Muses Bowre,  
The great Emathian Conqueror bid spare  
The house of Pindarus, when Temple and Towre  
Went to the ground: And the repeated air  
Of sad Electra's Poet had the power  
To save th' Athenian Walls from ruine bare.

Notes:

Camb. autograph supplies title, When the assault was intended to the city.

3 If deed of honour did thee ever please, 1673.

John Milton

## Sonnet 09

IX

Lady that in the prime of earliest youth,  
Wisely hath shun'd the broad way and the green,  
And with those few art eminently seen,  
That labour up the Hill of heav'nly Truth,  
The better part with Mary and with Ruth,  
Chosen thou hast, and they that overween,  
And at thy growing vertues fret their spleen,  
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.  
Thy care is fixt and zealously attends  
To fill thy odorous Lamp with deeds of light,  
And Hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure  
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastfull friends  
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,  
Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

Note: 5 with Ruth] the Ruth 1645.

John Milton

## Sonnet 10

X

Daughter to that good Earl, once President  
Of Englands Counsel, and her Treasury,  
Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,  
And left them both, more in himself content,  
Till the sad breaking of that Parlament  
Broke him, as that dishonest victory  
At Chaeronea, fatal to liberty  
Kil'd with report that Old man eloquent,  
Though later born, then to have known the dayes  
Wherin your Father flourisht, yet by you  
Madam, me thinks I see him living yet;  
So well your words his noble vertues praise,  
That all both judge you to relate them true,  
And to possess them, Honour'd Margaret.

Note: Camb. autograph supplies title, To the Lady Margaret Ley.

John Milton

## Sonnet 11

XI

A Book was writ of late call'd Tetrachordon;  
And wov'n close, both matter, form and stile;  
The Subject new: it walk'd the Town a while,  
Numbring good intellects; now seldom por'd on.  
Cries the stall-reader, bless us! what a word on  
A title page is this! and some in file  
Stand spelling fals, while one might walk to Mile-  
End Green. Why is it harder Sirs then Gordon,  
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?  
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek  
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.  
Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,  
Hated not Learning wors then Toad or Asp;  
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and King Edward Greek.

Note: Camb. Autograph supplies title, On the Detraction which followed my writing certain Treatises.

John Milton

## Sonnet 12

XII. On the same.

I did but prompt the age to quit their cloggs  
By the known rules of antient libertie,  
When strait a barbarous noise environs me  
Of Owles and Cuckoes, Asses, Apes and Doggs.  
As when those Hinds that were transform'd to Froggs  
Raild at Latona's twin-born progenie  
Which after held the Sun and Moon in fee.  
But this is got by casting Pearl to Hoggs;  
That bawle for freedom in their senceless mood,  
And still revolt when truth would set them free.  
Licence they mean when they cry libertie;  
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;  
But from that mark how far they roave we see  
For all this wast of wealth, and loss of blood.

John Milton

## Sonnet 13

XIII

To Mr. H. Lawes, on his Aires.

Harry whose tuneful and well measur'd Song  
First taught our English Musick how to span  
Words with just note and accent, not to scan  
With Midas Ears, committing short and long;  
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,  
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;  
To after age thou shalt be writ the man,  
That with smooth aire couldst humor best our tongue  
Thou honour'st Verse, and Verse must send her wing  
To honour thee, the Priest of Phoebus Quire  
That tun'st their happiest lines in Hymn or Story  
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher  
Then his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing  
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

Note: 9 send] lend Cambridge Autograph MS.

John Milton



## Sonnet 14

XIV

When Faith and Love which parted from thee never,  
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,  
Meekly thou didst resign this earthy load  
Of Death, call'd Life; which us from Life doth sever  
Thy Works and Alms and all thy good Endeavour  
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;  
But as Faith pointed with her golden rod,  
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.  
Love led them on, and Faith who knew them best  
Thy hand-maids, clad them o're with purple beams  
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,  
And speak the truth of thee on glorious Theams  
Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid thee rest  
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

Note: Camb. Autograph supplies title, On the Religious  
Memory of Catherine Thomson, my Christian Friend, deceased  
16 Decemb., 1646.

John Milton

## Sonnet 15

XV

On The Late Massacher In Piemont

Avenge O lord thy slaughter'd Saints, whose bones  
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,  
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old  
When all our Fathers worship't Stocks and Stones,  
Forget not: in thy book record their groanes  
Who were thy Sheep and in their antient Fold  
Slayn by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd  
Mother with Infant down the Rocks. Their moans  
The Vales redoubl'd to the Hills, and they  
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
O're all th'Italian fields where still doth sway  
The triple Tyrant: that from these may grow  
A hunder'd-fold, who having learnt thy way  
Early may fly the Babylonian wo.

John Milton

## Sonnet 16

XVI

When I consider how my light is spent,  
E're half my days, in this dark world and wide,  
And that one Talent which is death to hide,  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my Soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, least he returning chide,  
Doth God exact day-labour, light deny'd,  
I fondly ask; But patience to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts, who best  
Bear his milde yoaK, they serve him best, his State  
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o're Land and Ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and waite.

John Milton

## Sonnet 17

XVII

Lawrence of vertuous Father vertuous Son,  
Now that the Fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help wast a sullen day; what may be Won  
From the hard Season gaining: time will run  
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire  
The frozen earth; and cloth in fresh attire  
The Lillie and Rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attick tast, with Wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the Lute well toucht, or artfull voice  
Warble immortal Notes and Tuskan Ayre?  
He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

## Sonnet 18

XVIII

Cyriack, whose Grandsire on the Royal Bench  
Of Brittish Themis, with no mean applause  
Pronounc't and in his volumes taught our Lawes,  
Which others at their Barr so often wrench:  
To day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench  
In mirth, that after no repenting drawes;  
Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause,  
And what the Swede intend, and what the French.  
To measure life, learn thou betimes, and know  
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;  
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,  
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,  
That with superfluous burden loads the day,  
And when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

John Milton

## Sonnet 19

XIX

When I consider how my light is spent,  
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest He returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask; But patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state  
Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

## Sonnet 20

XX

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will run  
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?  
He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

## Sonnet 21

XXI

Cyriac, whose grandsire on the royal bench  
Of British Themis, with no mean applause  
Pronounced and in his volumes taught our laws,  
Which others at their bar so often wrench;  
Today deep thoughts resolve with me to drench  
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;  
Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause,  
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.  
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know  
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;  
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,  
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,  
That with superfluous burden loads the day,  
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

John Milton



## Sonnet 22

XXII

Cyriac, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,  
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,  
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;  
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,  
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not  
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, Friend, t' have lost them overplied  
In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask  
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

John Milton

## Sonnet 23

XXIII

Methought I saw my late espoused saint  
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,  
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,  
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.  
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint  
Purification in the Old Law did save,  
And such, as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in Heav'n without restraint,  
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:  
Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.  
But O, as to embrace me she inclined,  
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

John Milton

## Sonnet to the Nightingale

O nightingale that on yon blooming spray  
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,  
Thou with fresh hopes the Lover's heart dost fill,  
While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May.  
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of Day,  
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,  
Portend success in love. O if Jove's will  
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,  
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate  
Foretell my hopeless doom, in some grove nigh;  
As thou from year to year hast sung too late  
For my relief, yet had'st no reason why.  
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,  
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

John Milton

## **Sonnet VII: How soon hath Time, the Subtle Thief of Youth**

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,  
Stol'n on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!  
My hasting days fly on with full career,  
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.  
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth  
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;  
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,  
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.  
Yet it be less or more, or soon or slow,  
It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n  
To that same lot, however mean or high,  
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n:  
All is, if I have grace to use it so  
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

John Milton

## **Sonnet X: Daughter to that good Earl**

<i>To the Lady Margaret Ley</i>

Daughter to that good Earl, once President  
Of England's Council, and her Treasury,  
Who lived in both, unstained with gold or fee,  
And left them both, more in himself content,  
Till sad the breaking of that Parliament  
Broke him, as that dishonest victory  
At Chaeronea, fatal to liberty,  
Killed with report that old man eloquent.  
Though later born than to have known the days  
Wherein your father flourished, yet by you,  
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;  
So well your words his noble virtues praise,  
That all both judge you to relate them true,  
And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

John Milton

## Sonnet XIX: When I Consider How my Light is Spent

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

## **Sonnet XVI: Cromwell, our chief of men**

<i>To the Lord General Cromwell

On the Proposals of Certain Ministers of the Committee  
for the Propagation of the Gospel</i>

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud  
Not of war only, but detractions rude,  
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,  
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,  
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud  
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,  
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,  
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,  
And Worcester's laureate wreath. Yet much remains  
To conquer still; peace hath her victories  
No less renowned than war: new foes arise,  
Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains:  
Help us to save free conscience from the paw  
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

John Milton

### **Sonnet XVIII: On the Late Massacre in Piemont**

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones  
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,  
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones;  
Forget not: in thy book record their groans  
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd  
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans  
The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they  
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway  
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow  
A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way  
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton



## **Sonnet XX: Lawrence, of virtuous father**

<i>To Mr Lawrence</i>

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will run  
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?  
He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

## Sonnet XXII: To Cyriack Skinner

Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear  
To outward view of blemish or of spot,  
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;  
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of sun or moon or star throughout the year,  
Or man or woman. Yet I argue not  
Against Heav'n's hand or will, not bate a jot  
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied  
In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe talks from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask  
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

John Milton

### **The Fifth Ode Of Horace. Lib. I**

Quis multa gracilis te puer in Rosa  
Rendred almost word for word without Rhyme according to the  
Latin Measure, as near as the Language permit.

WHAT slender Youth bedew'd with liquid odours  
Courts thee on Roses in some pleasant Cave,  
Pyrrha for whom bind'st thou  
In wreaths thy golden Hair,  
Plain in thy neatness; O how oft shall he  
On Faith and changed Gods complain: and Seas  
Rough with black winds and storms  
Unwonted shall admire:  
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all Gold,  
Who alwayes vacant, alwayes amiable  
Hopes thee; of flattering gales  
Unmindfull. Hapless they  
To whom thou untry'd seem'st fair. Me in my vow'd  
Picture the sacred wall declares t' have hung  
My dank and dropping weeds  
To the stern God of Sea.

[The Latin text follows.]

John Milton

## The Hymn

It was the winter wild,  
While the heaven-born Child  
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;  
Nature in awe to Him  
Had doffed her gaudy trim,  
With her great Master so to sympathize:  
It was no season then for her  
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair  
She woos the gentle air  
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinful blame,  
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw,  
Confounded that her Maker's eyes  
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;  
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding  
Down through the turning sphere,  
His ready harbinger,  
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;  
And waving wide her myrtle wand,  
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

Nor war, or battle's sound  
Was heard the world around:  
The idle spear and shield were high uphung,  
The hooked chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood,  
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sov'reign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,  
Wherein the Prince of Light  
His reign of peace upon the earth began:  
The winds with wonder whist  
Smoothly the waters kist,  
Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean,  
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars with deep amaze  
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,  
Bending one way their precious influence,  
And will not take their flight,  
For all the morning light,  
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;  
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,

Until their Lord Himself bespoke, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom  
Had given day her room,  
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,  
And hid his head for shame,  
As his inferior flame  
The new-enlightened world no more should need;  
He saw a greater sun appear  
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,  
Or ere the point of dawn,  
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;  
Full little thought they then  
That the mighty Pan  
Was kindly come to live with them below;  
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet  
Their hearts and ears did greet,  
As never was by mortal finger strook,  
Divinely-warbled voice  
Answering the stringed noise,  
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:  
The air such pleasure loth to lose,  
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature that heard such sound,  
Beneath the hollow round  
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,  
Now was almost won  
To think her part was done,  
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;  
She knew such harmony alone  
Could hold all heav'n and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight  
A globe of circular light,  
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;  
The helmed Cherubim,  
And sworded Seraphim,  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
While the Creator great  
His constellations set,

And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the welt'ring waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,  
Once bless our human ears,  
If ye have power to touch our senses so;  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time,  
And let the base of heav'n's deep organ blow;  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort to th' angelic symphony.

For if such holy song  
Enwrap our fancy long,  
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,  
And speckled Vanity  
Will sicken soon and die,  
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;  
And Hell itself will pass away,  
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea Truth and Justice then  
Will down return to men,  
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,  
Mercy will sit between,  
Throned in celestial sheen,  
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;  
And Heav'n, as at some festival,  
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No,  
This must not yet be so,  
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy  
That on the bitter cross  
Must redeem our loss;  
So both Himself and us to glorify;  
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep  
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang  
As on mount Sinai rang,  
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:  
The aged Earth aghast,  
With terror of that blast,  
Shall from the surface to the centre shake;  
When at the world's last session,  
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His throne.

And then at last our bliss  
Full and perfect is,  
But now begins; for from this happy day

The old Dragon under ground,  
In straiter limits bound,  
Not half so far casts his usurped sway;  
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,  
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,  
No voice or hideous hum  
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.  
Apollo from his shrine  
Can no more divine,  
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
No nightly trance or breathed spell  
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,  
And the resounding shore,  
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;  
From haunted spring, and dale  
Edged with popular pale,  
The parting genius is with sighing sent;  
With flow'r-inwoven tresses torn  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,  
And on the holy hearth,  
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;  
In urns and altars round,  
A drear and dying sound  
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;  
And the chill marble seems to sweat,  
While each peculiar Pow'r forgoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim  
Forsake their temples dim,  
With that twice-battered God of Palestine;  
And mooned Ashtaroth,  
Heav'n's queen and mother both,  
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;  
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,  
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch fled,  
Hath left in shadows dread  
His burning idol all of blackest hue;  
In vain with cymbals' ring  
They call the grisly king,  
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen

In Memphian grove or green,  
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud:  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest,  
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;  
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark  
The sable stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped ark.

He feels from Juda's land  
The dreaded Infant's hand,  
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
Nor all the gods beside  
Longer dare abide,  
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,  
Can in His swaddling bands control the damned crew.

So when the sun in bed,  
Curtained with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,  
The flocking shadows pale  
Troop to th' infernal jail,  
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave;  
And the yellow-skirted Fayses  
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

But see, the Virgin blest  
Hath laid her Babe to rest,  
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:  
Heav'n's youngest-teemed star

Hath fixed her polished car,  
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;  
And all about the courtly stable  
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton



## The Passion

I

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,  
Wherewith the stage of Air and Earth did ring,  
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,  
My muse with Angels did divide to sing;  
But headlong joy is ever on the wing,  
In wintry solstice like the shortened light  
Soon swallowed up in dark and long outliving night.

II

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,  
And set my Harp to notes of saddest woe,  
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,  
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,  
Which he for us did freely undergo:  
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight  
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

III

He, sovran Priest, stooping his regal head,  
That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,  
Poor fleshly Tabernacle enterèd,  
His starry front low-roofed beneath the skies:  
Oh, what a mask was there, what a disguise!  
Yet more: the stroke of death he must abide;  
Then lies him meekly down fast by his Brethren's side.

IV

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;  
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound.  
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,  
And former sufferings, otherwhere are found;  
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound:  
Me softer airs befit, and softer strings  
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V

Befriend me, Night, best Patroness of grief!  
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,  
And work my flattered fancy to belief  
That Heaven and Earth are coloured with my woe;  
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:  
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,  
And letters, where my tears have washed, a wannish white.

VI

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,  
That whirled the prophet up at Chebar flood;  
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels  
To bear me where the Towers of Salem stood,  
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood.  
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,  
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

#### VII

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock  
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,  
And here, though grief my feeble hands up-lock,  
Yet on the softened quarry would I score  
My plaining verse as lively as before;  
For sure so well instructed are my tears  
That they would fitly fall in ordered characters.

#### VIII

Or, should I thence, hurried on viewless wing,  
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,  
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring  
Would soon unbosom all their Echoes mild;  
And I (for grief is easily beguiled)  
Might think the infection of my sorrows loud  
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This Subject the Author finding to be above the years he had when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

John Milton

## To a Virtuous Young Lady

Lady! that in the prime of earliest youth  
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green,  
And with those few art eminently seen,  
That labour up the Hill of Heavenly Truth,  
The better part with Mary and with Ruth  
Chosen thou hast, and they that overween,  
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,  
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.  
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends  
To fill thy odorous Lamp with deeds of light.  
And Hope that reaps not shame; therefore be sure,  
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastful friends  
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,  
Hast gained thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

John Milton

## To Cyriack Skinner

Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench  
Of British Themis, with no mean applause,  
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,  
Which others at their bar so often wrench,  
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench  
In mirth that after no repenting draws;  
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,  
And what the Swede intend, and what the French.  
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know  
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;  
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,  
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,  
That with superfluous burden loads the day,  
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

John Milton

## **To Mr. Cyriack Skinner Upon His Blindness**

Cyriack, this three years day these eys, though clear  
To outward view, of blemish or of spot;  
Bereft of light thir seeing have forgot,  
Nor to thir idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of Sun or Moon or Starre throughout the year,  
Or man or woman. Yet I argue not  
Against heavns hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bear vp and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overply'd  
In libertyes defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe talks from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask  
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

John Milton

### **To Mr. H. Lawes on His Airs**

Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song  
First taught our English music how to span  
Words with just note and accent, not to scan  
With Midas' ears, committing short and long,  
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,  
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;  
To after age thou shalt be writ the man  
That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue.  
Thou honour'st Verse, and Verse must lend her wing  
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,  
That tunest their happiest lines in hymn or story.  
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher  
Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing,  
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

John Milton

## To Mr. Lawrence

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will run  
On smoother, till Favonius reinspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?  
He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

## To My Lord Fairfax

Fairfax, whose Name in Arms through Europe rings,  
And fills all Mouths with Envy or with Praise,  
And all her Jealous Monarchs with Amaze.  
And Rumours loud which daunt remotest Kings,  
Thy firm unshaken Valour ever brings  
Victory home, while new Rebellions raise  
Their Hydra-heads, and the false North displays  
Her broken League to Imp her Serpent Wings:  
O yet! a Nobler task awaits thy Hand,  
For what can War, but Acts of War still breed  
Till injur'd Truth from Violence be freed;  
And publick Faith be rescu'd from the Brand  
Of publick Fraud; in vain doth Valour bleed,  
While Avarice and Rapine shares the Land.

John Milton



## To Sir Henry Vane the Younger

Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,  
Than whom a better senator ne'er held  
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repelled  
The fierce Epirot and the African bold,  
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold  
The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled;  
Then to advise how war may best, upheld,  
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,  
In all her equipage; besides, to know  
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,  
What severs each, thou hast learned, which few have done.  
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:  
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans  
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

John Milton

## To Sr Henry Vane The Younger

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Then whome a better Senatour nere held  
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In peace, & reck'ns thee her eldest son.

John Milton

## **To the Lady Margaret Ley**

Daughter to that good Earl, one President  
Of England's Council and her Treasury,  
Who lived in both unstained with gold or fee,  
And left them both, more in himself content,  
Till the sad breaking of that Parliament  
Broke him, as that dishonest victory  
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,  
Killed with report that old man eloquent,  
Though later born than to have known the days  
Wherein your father flourished, yet by you,  
Madam, methinks I see him living yet:  
So well your words his noble virtues praise  
That all both judge you to relate them true  
And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

John Milton

## To the Lord Generall Cromwell May 1652

On The Proposals Of Certaine Ministers At The Committee For  
Propagation Of The Gospell

Cromwell, our cheif of men, who through a cloud  
Not of warr onely, but detractions rude,  
Guided by faith & matchless Fortitude  
To peace & truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,  
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud  
Hast reard Gods Trophies, & his work pursu'd,  
While Darwen stream with blood of Scotts imbru'd,  
And Dunbarr field resounds thy praises loud,  
And Worsters laureat wreath; yet much remains  
To conquer still; peace hath her victories  
No less renown'd then warr, new foes aries  
Threatning to bind our soules with secular chaines:  
Helpe us to save free Conscience from the paw  
Of hireling wolves whose Gospell is their maw.

John Milton

## To the Nightingale

O Nightingale! that on yon bloomy spray  
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,  
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,  
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.  
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,  
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,  
Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will  
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,  
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate  
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;  
As thou from year to year hast sung too late  
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:  
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,  
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

John Milton

## To the Same

Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,  
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,  
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;  
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,  
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied  
In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask  
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

John Milton

## Upon the Circumcision

Ye flaming Powers, and wingèd Warriors bright,  
That erst with music, and triumphant song,  
First heard by happy watchful Shepherds' ear,  
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along,  
Through the soft silence of the listening night,—  
Now mourn; and if sad share with us to bear  
Your fiery essence can distill no tear,  
Burn in your sighs, and borrow  
Seas wept from our deep sorrow,  
He who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere  
Entered the world, now bleeds to give us ease.  
Alas! how soon our sin  
Sore doth begin  
His infancy to seize!  
O more exceeding Love, or Law more just?  
Just Law indeed, but more exceeding Love!  
For we, by rightful doom remediless,  
Were lost in death, till He, that dwelt above  
High-throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust  
Emptied his glory, even to nakedness;  
And that great Covenant which we still transgress  
Intirely satisfied,  
And the full wrath beside  
Of vengeful Justice bore for our excess,  
And seals obedience first with wounding smart  
This day; but oh! ere long,  
Huge pangs and strong  
Will pierce more near his heart.

John Milton

## **When the Assault Was Intended to the City**

Captain, or colonel, or knight in arms,  
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,  
If deed of honour did thee ever please,  
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.  
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms  
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,  
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,  
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.  
Lift not thy spear against the Muse's bower;  
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare  
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower  
Went to the ground; and the repeated air  
Of sad Electra's Poet had the power  
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

John Milton