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PARADISE LOST.

Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods  
First hunter then.







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 Raphaël, that I should much conide;  
 But solemn and sublime; whom, not to offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."  
 He ended: and the archangel 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 Melibœan,<sup>1</sup> or the grain  
 Of Sarra,<sup>2</sup> worn by kings and heroes old  
 In time of truce; Iris had dipped the woof:  
 His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime  
 In manhood where youth ended: by his side,  
 As in a glistering zodiac, 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 mayst repent,  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 Mayst 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."

<sup>1</sup> So called from a city of The.saly, famous for the *ostrum*, or purple-fish, there caught.

<sup>2</sup> *i. e.* the Tyrian purple.



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:

“ Oh, 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  
 At 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; him 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 footstep trace?  
 For though I fled him angry, yet, recalled  
 To life prolonged and promised race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts<sup>1</sup>  
 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

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 22, sqq.



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 mayst 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 slept'st, while she to life was formed"

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:  
 "Ascend; I follow thee, safe guide, the path  
 Thou lead'st 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,<sup>1</sup> seat of Cathaian Can,

<sup>1</sup> He first takes a view of Asia, and there of the northern parts  
 "the destined walls" not yet in being, but designed to be (which is to  
 be understood of all the rest) "of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,"  
 the principal city of Cathay, a province of Tartary, the ancient seat of  
 the Chams; "and Samarchand by Oxus," the chief city of Zagathaians



And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's 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 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 maritime 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,  
 Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;

Tartary, near the river Oxus; "Temir's throne," the birthplace and royal residence of Tamerlane; and from the northern he passes to the eastern and southern parts of Asia; "to Paquin," or Pekin, of "Sinæan kings," the royal city of China, the country of the ancient Sinæ, mentioned by Ptolemy, "and thence to Agra and Lahor," two great cities in the empire "of the great Mogul, down to the golden Chersonese," that is, Malacca, the most southern promontory of the East Indies, so called on account of its riches, to distinguish it from the other Chersoneses, or peninsulas; "or where the Persian in Ecbatan sat," Ecbatana, formerly the capital city of Persia; "or since in Hispahan," the capital city at present; "or where the Russian Ksar," the Czar of Muscovy; "in Mosco," the metropolis of all Russia; "or the Sultan in Bizance," the Grand Signior in Constantinople, formerly Byzantium; "Turchestan-born," as the Turks came from Turchestan, a province of Tartary; he reckons these to Asia, as they are adjoining, and great part of their territories lie in Asia. He passes now into Africa; "nor could his eye not ken the empire of Negus," the Upper Ethiopia, or the land of the Abyssinians, subject to one sovereign, styled in their own language Negus or king, and by the Europeans Prester John; "to his utmost port Ercoco," or Erquico, on the Red Sea, the north-east boundary of the Abyssinian empire; "and the less maritime kings," the lesser kingdoms on the sea coast; "Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind," all near the line in Zanguebar, a great region of the Lower Ethiopia, on the eastern or Indian sea, and subject to the Portuguese; "and Sofala, thought Ophir," another kingdom and city on the same sea, mistaken by Purchas and others for Ophir, whence Solomon brought gold; "to the realm of Congo," a kingdom in the lower Ethiopia, on the western shore, as the others were on the eastern; "and Angola farthest south," another kingdom south of Congo; "or thence from Niger flood," the river Niger, that divides Negroland into two parts; "to Atlas mount" in the most western parts of Africa; "the kingdoms of Almansor," the countries over which Almansor was king, namely, "Fez and Sus, Marocco and



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<sup>1</sup> 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,  
 E'en 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 landmark stood,  
 Rustic, of grassy sord;<sup>2</sup> thither anon

Algiers, and Tremisen," all kingdoms in Barbary. After Africa he comes to Europe: "on Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway the world:" the less is said of Europe as it is so well known. "In spirit perhaps he also saw," he could not see it otherwise, as America was on the opposite side of the globe; "rich Mexico," in North America, "the seat of Montezume," who was subdued by the Spanish general Cortes; "and Cusco in Peru," in South America, "the richer seat of Atabalipa," the last emperor subdued by the Spanish general Pizarro; "and yet unspoiled Guiana," another country of South America, not then invaded and spoiled; "whose great city," namely Manhoa, "Geryon's sons," the Spaniards, from Geryon, an ancient king of Spain, "call El Dorado," or the golden city, on account of its richness and extent. And thus he surveys the four different parts of the world, but, it must be confessed, more with an ostentation of learning, than with any additional beauty to the poem.—*Newton*.

<sup>1</sup> Or eye-bright.

<sup>2</sup> Sward, sward, turf.



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 strewed,  
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites 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 had 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? Oh, sight  
 Of terror, 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 saw'st, 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 mayst know  
 What misery the inabstinence of Eve  
 Shall bring on men.” Immediately a place



Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark ;  
 A lazar-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, colic pangs,  
 Demoniac frenzy, moping 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 :

“ Oh, 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 not 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 ungoſſerved 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 likenneſs, 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 eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence  
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
Till many years over thy head return:  
So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop  
Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease  
Gathered, not 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." Michaël replied:

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st  
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 under ground); 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 music 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 saw'st so pleasant, were the tents  
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear



Of arts that polish life, inventors 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 saw'st, that seemed  
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
 Yet empty of all good, wherein consists  
 Woman's domestic honour and chief praise,  
 Bred only and completed to the taste  
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,  
 To dress, and trol the tongue, and roll the eye;  
 To these that sober race of men,<sup>1</sup> 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,  
 Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which  
 The world, ere long, a world<sup>2</sup> of tears must weep"

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:  
 "Oh, pity and shame, that they, who to live well  
 Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread  
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!  
 But still I see the tenor 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 superior 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;<sup>3</sup>  
 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,

<sup>1</sup> See Gen. vi. 2. The sons of Seth are meant.

<sup>2</sup> There is the same jingle in ix. 11.

"That brought into this world a world of woe."

<sup>3</sup> Enterprise.



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 gigantic deeds.  
 In other part the sceptred 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, of religion, truth, and peace,  
 And judgment 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: "Oh, 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 saw'st;  
 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 heroic 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<sup>1</sup>  
 Of triumph, to be styled great conquerors,  
 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<sup>2</sup> from thee, whom thou beheld'st<sup>3</sup>  
 The only 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 balmy cloud with wingéd steeds,  
 Did, as thou saw'st, 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<sup>3</sup> 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 befell,  
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair  
 Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.  
 At length a reverend sire<sup>4</sup> 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 judgments 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 height;

<sup>1</sup> Bentley reads "glory won or triumph." Newton explains the passage to mean, *to overcome, to subdue, to spoil, shall be held the highest pitch of glory*, and "shall be done for glory of triumph."

<sup>2</sup> Enoch. See Jude 14, sqq.

<sup>3</sup> *i. e.* Which behold thou, directing thine eyes to them.

Noah. See 2 Peter ii. 5; 1 Peter iii. 19, 20.



Smeared 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.  
 Meanwhile 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 ceiling 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 stood'st at last,  
 Though comfortless; as when a father mourns  
 His children, all in view destroyed at once,  
 And scarce to the angel uttered'st thus thy plaint

"Oh, 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 desert: 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 saw'st  
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 waste,  
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 practise 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 allurement, custom, and a world  
Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,  
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 wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,  
 To save himself and household from amidst  
 A world devote to universal wreck.  
 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 hornéd 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,<sup>1</sup> 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<sup>2</sup> 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 stopped  
 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

<sup>1</sup> Orca, a large sea animal.

<sup>2</sup> A vessel is said to "hull," when all her sails are lowered, and she  
 ports to and fro.



An olive-leaf he brings, pacific 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 archangel : “ Dexterously thou aim’st ;  
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  
O’er 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.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues from the flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,  
 Though bent on speed, so here the archangel 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 judgment 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 sovereignty,  
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:  
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.<sup>1</sup>  
 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 abhorr'st  
 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 judgment 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,

<sup>1</sup> We need scarcely point out the bent of Milton's anti-royal position in this passage.



Wearing 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<sup>1</sup> (Oh, 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 Chaldæa, 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 Sichem, and the neighbouring plain  
 Of Moreh; there, by promise, he receives  
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
 From Hamath 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

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Josh. xxiv. 2. It will be quite unnecessary to point out the number of scriptural references in the following passage.



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 grandchild, 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 judgments 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 murrain die;  
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,  
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,  
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian 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<sup>1</sup> 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 towards 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 find  
 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

<sup>1</sup> Break to pieces.



To mortal ear is dreadful ; they beseech  
 That Moses might report to them his will,  
 And terror 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 foretell,  
 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 zodiac representing  
 The heavenly fires ;<sup>1</sup> 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 Ajalon,  
 Till Israel overcome !' so called 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,  
 Enlight'ner 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"

<sup>1</sup>That the seven lamps signified the seven planets, and that therefore the lamps stood slopewise, as it were to express the obliquity of the zodiac, is the gloss of Josephus, from whom probably our author borrowed it.—*Newton*.



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 moral 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.  
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,  
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sin  
 National interrupt their 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 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 saw'st  
 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 dissension springs;  
 Men who attend the altar, and should most  
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings  
 Upon the temple itself: at last they seize  
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons,  
 Then lose it to a stranger,<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> Herod.



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 re-cure,  
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,  
 Seized 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<sup>1</sup> 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:

<sup>1</sup> Bentley prefers "their."



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 archangel Michaël; then paused,  
 As at the world's great period; and our sire,  
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:

"Oh, 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 reascend, 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 wondrous 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 enrolled, 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  
Bestruck with slanderous darts, and works of faith  
Rarely to 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 amplier 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,<sup>1</sup> 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."

<sup>1</sup> The very words of St. Peter, 2 Peter, iii. 13:—"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This notion of the heavens and earth being renewed after the conflagration, and made the habitation of angels and just men made perfect, was very pleasing to our author, as it was to Dr. Burnet, and must be to every one of a fine and exalted imagination; and Milton has enlarged upon it in several parts of his works, and particularly in this poem, iii. 333, &c., r. 638 vi. 65, 900, xii. 462.—*Newton.*



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 knew'st 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;<sup>1</sup> 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:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.* this height of vision, this hill of prophecy and prediction.

<sup>2</sup> Milton's poem ends very nobly. The last speeches of Adam and the archangel are full of moral and instructive sentiments. The sleep that fell upon Eve, and the effects it had in quieting the disorders of her mind, produce the same kind of consolation in the reader, who cannot peruse the last beautiful speech which is ascribed to the mother of mankind, without a secret pleasure and satisfaction. The following lines, which conclude the poem, rise in a most glorious blaze of poetical images and expressions.—*Adelison.*



“ Whence thou return’st, and whither went’st, 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 archangel stood, and from the other hill  
 To their fixed station, all in bright array,  
 The cherubim descended; on the ground,  
 Gliding météorous,<sup>1</sup> as evening mist,  
 Risen from a river, o’er the marish<sup>2</sup> 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 Lybian 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:

Heliodorus, in his Ethiopics, acquaints us that the motion of the gods differs from that of mortals, as the former do not stir their feet nor proceed step by step, but slide o’er the surface of the earth by an uniform swimming of the whole body. The reader may observe with how poetical a description Milton has attributed the same kind of motion to the angels who were to take possession of Paradise.—  
*Addison.*

An old word for marsh, of the French *marais*, and of the Latin *mariscus*, rushes commonly growing there. The word occurs in  
 . Maccab. ix. 42.



Some natural tears they dropped, 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.



## Paradise Regained.<sup>1</sup>

### BOOK I.

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 ledst this glorious eremite<sup>2</sup>  
 Into the desert, his victorious field,  
 Against the spiritual foe, and brought him thence,  
 By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,  
 As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,  
 And bear through height or depth of nature's bounds,  
 With prosperous wing full summed,<sup>3</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> "Paradise Regained," observes Jortin, "has not met with the approbation that it deserves. It has not the harmony of numbers, the sublimity of thought, and the beauties of diction, which are in 'Paradise Lost' It is composed in a lower and less striking style. A style suited to the subject. Artful sophistry, false reasoning, set off in the most specious manner, and refuted by the Son of God with strong unaffected eloquence, is the peculiar excellence of this poem. Satan there defends a bad cause with great skill and subtlety, as one thoroughly versed in that craft."

<sup>2</sup> The same as our "hermit."

<sup>3</sup> So in Paradise Lost, vii. 421:—"They summed their pens." The term is properly applied to a hawk in full feather.



Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand,  
 To all baptized:<sup>1</sup> 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  
 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;<sup>2</sup> and them amidst,  
 With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:

“O ancient powers of air<sup>3</sup> 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<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.* to such as were baptized, since by John's baptism they were prepared for the reception of the Gospel.

<sup>2</sup> Milton probably uses this term with a sly reference to the meetings of the Pope and his Cardinals, under the same name.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Eph. ii. 2; vi. 13

<sup>4</sup> Awaiting.



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 :  
 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,  
 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 sovran voice I heard,  
 ' This is my Son beloved, in him am pleased.'  
 His mother then 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,<sup>1</sup> 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)

Our author favours the opinion of Ignatius and others, who believed  
 that the devil, though he might know Jesus to be some extraordinary  
 son, yet knew him not to be the Messiah, the Son of God ; and the  
 words of the devil, " if thou be the Son of God," seem to express his  
 uncertainty concerning that matter.—*Newton.*



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 main 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,<sup>1</sup>  
 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,  
 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

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the habit of sorcerers and necromancers, who are represented in some prints as girded about the middle with the skins of snakes and serpents.



The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest  
 O'ershadow her: this man born and now up-grown,  
 To show 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 apostacy: he might have learned  
 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,  
 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 ethereal 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,<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> Battle, not necessarily between two parties, but for *duellum*, or *bellum*.



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 :

"Oh, 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 ; 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 height sacred virtue and true worth  
Can raise them, though above example high;  
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sir,  
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 the 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 heard, 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; 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 shown 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,  
 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 belovéd 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, 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

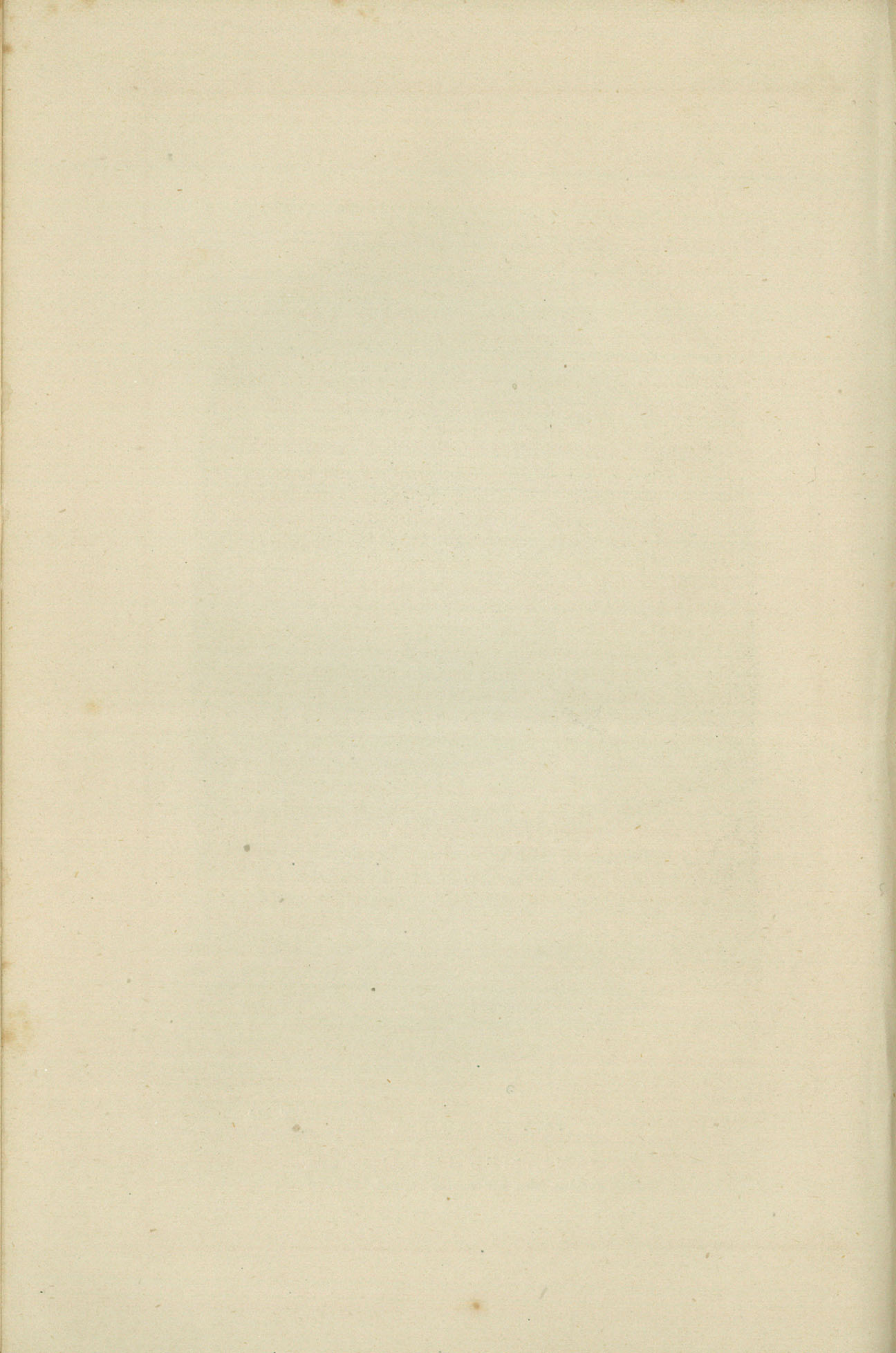




PARADISE REGAINED.

Among wild beasts; they at his sight grew mild,  
Nor sleeping, him, nor waking harmed.







The fiery serpent fled, and noxious worm,  
 The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.  
 But now an aged man<sup>1</sup> in rural weeds,  
 Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray ewe.  
 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:

“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 dropped not here  
 His carcass, pined with hunger and with drouth  
 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: “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,<sup>2</sup> to thirst inured  
 More than the camel,<sup>3</sup> and to drink go far,  
 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;

As the Scripture is entirely silent about what personage the tempter assumed, the poet was at liberty to indulge his own fancy, and nothing, I think, could be better conceived for his present purpose, or more likely to prevent suspicion of fraud. The poet might, perhaps, take the hint from a design of David Kirkboon's, where the devil is represented addressing himself to our Saviour, under the appearance of an old man.—*Thyer*.

<sup>2</sup> Although this word is used both by Chaucer and Spenser to signify a stock or clump, still the sense seems to require “shrubs,” as is proposed by *Thyer*.

<sup>3</sup> On the endurance of thirst by the camel, see *Plin. H. N. viii, 26*. *Taverner* says that it will ordinarily live without drink eight or nine days.



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  
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount  
Moses was forty days, nor ate nor drank;  
And forty days Elijah 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  
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 Uzzéan 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,<sup>1</sup> 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<sup>2</sup>  
Thy wisdom, and behold thy Godlike deeds?"

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Kings, xxii. 19, sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Attentively.



Men generally think me such 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; 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 men 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,  
 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.  
 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?  
 Whoever, 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 inquired at Delphos<sup>1</sup> or elsewhere,  
 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:

"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;

<sup>1</sup> More rightly "Delphi," but the mistake is a common one.



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  
 Check 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 tuneable 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 vouchsafed 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 wings to double-shade  
 The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;  
 And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

## BOOK II.

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,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a great mistake of the poet. All that the people could collect from the declarations of John the Baptist, and the voice from Heaven, was, that he was a great prophet, and this was all they did in fact collect; they were uncertain whether he was their promised Messiah.—Warburton.



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,  
 Began to doubt, and doubted many days,  
 And as the days increased, increased their doubt.  
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,  
 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 Elijah,<sup>1</sup> so in each place these  
 Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho  
 The city of palms,<sup>2</sup> Ænon, and Salem old,<sup>3</sup>  
 Machærus,<sup>4</sup> and each town or city walled  
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,  
 Or in Peræa; 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,<sup>5</sup>  
 Close in a cottage low together got,  
 Their unexpected loss and plaints out-breathed:

“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,

<sup>1</sup> See 2 Kings ii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxiv. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Milton, probably, takes this for the Salem, of which Melchizedek was king. See, however, Kitto's Cyclop. v. ii. p. 323.

<sup>4</sup> A castle in the mountain district of Peræa.

So, Spenser's Calendar:—

“A shepherd's boy, no better do him call.”



Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come ;  
 Behold the kings of the earth how they oppress  
 Thy chosen, to what height 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,  
 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 :

" 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 shown,  
 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, 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  
 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, portending 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;  
 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 sat;  
 There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,  
 Solicitous and blank he thus began:

“Princes, Heaven's ancient sons, ethereal thrones,  
 Demonian spirits now, from the element  
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called  
 Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath,<sup>1</sup>  
 So may we hold our place, and these mild seats  
 Without new trouble; such an enemy

<sup>1</sup> The ancients believed that there were demons, visible and invisible, in all parts of the four elements. See, Alcinous, *Doctr. Plat.* § 5. Mich. Psellus, *Dial. de Dæm.* p. 41, 45, &c. Apul. *de Des Soer.*



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<sup>1</sup> was empowered,  
 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<sup>2</sup> by mother's side at least,  
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,<sup>3</sup>  
 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 over-matched."

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:

"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 breast,  
 As the magnetic hardest iron draws.

Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> Some would place a comma after man

<sup>3</sup> i. e. He is adorned.



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'dst on womankind, admiring  
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace;  
None are, thou think'st, but taken<sup>1</sup> 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 Amymone, Syrinx, many more  
Too long, then lay'st thy 'scapes on names adored,  
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,  
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? 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<sup>2</sup> conqueror,  
A youth, how all the beauties of the east  
He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;  
How he surnamed of Africa<sup>3</sup> 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,

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, Thou thinkest there are none who are not taken, *i. e.* who are able to resist.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander the Great, born at Pella, in Macedonia. His contumace towards the queen and daughters of Darius, when they were taken prisoners after the battle of Assus, is set forth by Q. Curt. iii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Scipio Africanus, Liv. xxvi. 50. Valer. Max. iv. 3.



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 vouchsafe 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,<sup>1</sup> 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, with such as have more show  
 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,

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to Homer, Il. xiv., where Juno borrows the girdle of Venus:—

"She said, with awe divine the queen of love  
 Obeyed the sister and the wife of Jove:  
 And from her fragrant breast the zone unbraced,  
 With various skill and high embroidery graced.  
 In this was every art, and every charm  
 To win the wisest, and the coldest warm;  
 Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,  
 The kind deceit, the still reviving fire;  
 Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,  
 Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes."—



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:

"Where will this end? Four times ten days I've 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,  
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they  
 He saw the prophet also how he fled [brought  
 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<sup>1</sup> a guest with Daniel at his pulse.  
 Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark  
 Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry

<sup>1</sup> Sympson would read "was a guest."



The morn's approach, and greet her with his song:<sup>1</sup>  
 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;  
 Thither he bent his way, determined there  
 To rest at noon, and entered soon the shade  
 High roofed, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,<sup>2</sup>  
 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:  
 "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,<sup>3</sup> 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 prophct bold,  
 Native of Thebez,<sup>4</sup> wandering here was fed

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer, Knight's Tale, 1493—

"The besy larke, the messenger of day,  
 Saleweth in hire song the morwe gray;  
 And firy Phebus riseth up so bright,  
 That all the Orient laugeth of the sight."

<sup>2</sup> An Italian expression, cf. Par. Lost, ix. 1088.

<sup>3</sup> A strange substitution of the son's name for that of the father; for, from Gen. xxv. 13, it appears that Nebaioth was the son of Ishmael.

<sup>4</sup> *i. e.* Tishbe, or Thisbe, the birthplace of Elijah. I shall not enter into details, but will merely observe that Milton is mistaken (perhaps



Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:  
Of thee these 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, not 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,<sup>1</sup> 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,  
Gris-amber-steamed;<sup>2</sup> all fish from sea or shore,  
Freshet, or purling brook, of shell or fin,  
And exquisitest name,<sup>3</sup> for which was drained  
Pontus, and Lucrine Bay, and Afric coast.

intentionally) in making the desert in which Hagar wandered, where the Israelites were fed with manna, and where Elijah retreated, the scene of the temptation; such a latitude is, however, quite pardonable.

<sup>1</sup> The following episode in the temptation is due to Milton's imagination. As usual, it labours under his common error of too redundant learning and detail.

<sup>2</sup> A condiment much more common in Queen Elizabeth's time than our own.

<sup>3</sup> The Romans gave the most extravagant names to fish of exquisite taste, such as *cerebrum Jovis*, *clypeus Minervæ*, etc.



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<sup>1</sup> 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 fairy damsels met in forest wide  
 By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,  
 Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore:<sup>2</sup>  
 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<sup>3</sup> 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 a 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:

<sup>1</sup> Milton keeps to the *eastern* character in describing the appointments of this banquet.

<sup>2</sup> Here Milton's learning is terribly in advance of his judgment. His taste for exhausting his whole reading, whether apposite or not, does serious mischief.

<sup>3</sup> Forbids.



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 malcontent:  
 "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<sup>1</sup> spoil." With that  
 Both table and provision vanished quite  
 With sound of harpies' wings,<sup>2</sup> 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,  
 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<sup>3</sup> brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:  
 What raised Antipater the Edomite,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fetched.

<sup>2</sup> We have a like scene in Shakspeare, in the *Tempest*, act iii., where "several strange shapes bring in a banquet," and afterwards "enters Uriel like a harpy, claps his wings upon the table, and with a quaint device the banquet vanishes."—*Newton*.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the similar pretences by which Mammon endeavours to turn aside the virtue of Sir Guyon. *Faerie Queen*, ii. 7, ll.

<sup>4</sup> *Joseph. Antiq.* xiv. l. & 14.



And his son Herod placed on Judah'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,  
 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 height of all their flowing wealth dissolved  
 But men endued with these have oft attained  
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds:  
 Gideon<sup>1</sup> and Jephtha,<sup>2</sup> and the shepherd lad,<sup>3</sup>  
 Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat  
 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,<sup>4</sup> Fabricius,<sup>5</sup> Curius,<sup>7</sup> 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,

<sup>1</sup> Judg. vi. 15.<sup>2</sup> *ib.* xi. 1.<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 70, sq.<sup>4</sup> *i. e.* Quintius Cincinnatus.<sup>5</sup> Fabricius, who withstood the large offers of King Pyrrhus to aid him in negotiating peace with the Romans, died so poor, that he was buried at the public expense.<sup>6</sup> Curius Dentatus refused the lands assigned him as the reward of his victories; and when the ambassadors of the Samnites offered him a large sum of money, as he sat roasting turnips at the fire, he refused it, declaring that he desired not to be rich, but to command those that were so.



Golden in show, 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;  
 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."

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### BOOK III.

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 council 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  
 Ethereal, 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<sup>1</sup> had brought down  
 The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey<sup>2</sup> 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:<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> Scipio was only twenty-four years old when he was sent as Proconsul into Spain, and only between twenty-eight and twenty-nine when he was chosen Consul before the usual age, and transferred the war to Africa.

<sup>2</sup> But Pompey was above forty, when he was sent against Mithridates.

<sup>3</sup> See Sueton. Jul. Cæs § 7.



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 mayst 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 over-run  
Large countries, and in fields 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,  
Rolling in brutish vices, and deformed,  
Violent or shameful death their due reward.  
But if there be in glory aught of good,  
It may by 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<sup>1</sup> 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,  
 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 show 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  
 Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?  
 Hard recompense, unsuitable return  
 For so much good, so much beneficence

<sup>1</sup> i. e. Scipio Africanus.



But why should man seek glory, who of his (v) hath  
 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  
 That which to God alone of right belongs;  
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,  
 That who advance 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,  
 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:  
 Judea 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 Maccabeus: 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<sup>1</sup> 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:

<sup>1</sup> The original country of the Maccabees.



So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify  
 The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;  
 The happier reign the sooner it begins:  
 Reign 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 roll  
 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;<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup>  
 And will alike be punished, whether thou  
 Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow  
 Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,

<sup>1</sup> Cicero de Legg. iii. :— 2. "Qui bene imperat, parv'erit aliquando necesse est; et qui modeste paret, videtur, qui aliquando imperat, lignis esse."

<sup>2</sup> i. e. whatever it be, it is for itself condemned, &c.



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,  
 Best school of best experience, quickest insight  
 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,  
 Sufficient introduction to inform  
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,  
 And regal mysteries, that thou mayst 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<sup>1</sup> at whose verdant feet  
 A spacious plain, out-stretched in circuit wide,  
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,  
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between  
 Fair champain, with less rivers interveined,

<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures are silent as to the name of the mountain; but Milton, probably, had Taurus in view; the two rivers being the Euphrates and Tigris.—See *Newton*.



Then meeting, joined their tribute to the sea :  
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine ;  
 With herds the pastures 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<sup>1</sup> 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 shows,  
 And Hecatompylos<sup>2</sup> her hundred gates ;  
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,  
 The drink of none but kings :<sup>3</sup> of later fame  
 Built by Emathian<sup>4</sup> or by Parthian hands,  
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis,<sup>5</sup> and there  
 Artaxata, Teredon,<sup>6</sup> Ctesiphon.

<sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar, who led the Jews captive twice, first in the reign of Jehoiachin, and afterwards in that of Zedekiah.

<sup>2</sup> A name applied to the capital of Parthia, from the number of her gates.

<sup>3</sup> See the curious dissertation of Jortin, in Newton's edition, and the *Universal History*, v. 5, p. 124, ed. 870.

<sup>4</sup> *i. e.* Macedonian, viz., by the successors of Alexander the Great.

<sup>5</sup> Called also Antiochus.

<sup>6</sup> A city near the Persian Bay; below the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris.