

Paradise Lost
(Abridged)
By John Milton

BOOK 1

THE ARGUMENT

This first Book proposes, first in brief, the whole Subject, *Mans disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was plac't*: Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the *Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent*; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many Legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his Crew into the great Deep. Which action past over, the Poem hasts into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, describ'd here, not in the Center (for Heaven and Earth may be suppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accurst) but in a place of utter darkness, fittest call'd Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning Lake, thunder-struck and astonisht, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in Order and Dignity lay by him; they confer of thir miserable fall. Satan awakens all his Legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; They rise, thir Numbers, array of Battel, thir chief Leaders nam'd, according to the Idols known afterwards in Canaan and the Countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his Speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new World and new kind of Creature to be created, according to an ancient Prophesie or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible Creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this Prophesie, and what to determin thereon he refers to a full Councel. What his Associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the Palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the Deep: The infernal Peers there sit in Councel.

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of *Eden*, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat, [5]
Sing Heav'nly Muse¹, that on the secret top
Of *Oreb*, or of *Sinai*², didst inspire
That Shepherd³, who first taught the chosen Seed,
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of *Chaos*: Or if *Sion Hill*⁴ [10]
Delight thee more, and *Siloe's Brook*⁵ that flow'd
Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' *Aonian Mount*⁶, while it pursues [15]
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread [20]

¹ Refers to the Holy Spirit, paralleling classical invocations of the Muses in Greek and Roman epics.

² References Mount Horeb and Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments.

³ Refers to Moses, who led the Israelites out of Egypt.

⁴ Another name for Mount Zion, the site of Jerusalem and the Temple, which was central to Jewish worship and later symbolized God's divine presence and kingdom. In *Paradise Lost*, invoking Zion aligns Milton's epic with biblical history, reinforcing his claim that his poem follows in the tradition of sacred literature.

⁵ A reference to the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem, a site mentioned in the Bible where Jesus healed a blind man (John 9:7). The pool was historically associated with divine inspiration and purification, making it a fitting source for the "Heav'nly Muse" Milton invokes.

⁶ Refers to Mount Helicon in Greece, home of the Muses.

Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
 And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark
 Illumin, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great Argument
 I may assert Eternal Providence, [25]
 And justifie the wayes of God to men⁷.
 Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view
 Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause
 Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,
 Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off [30]
 From thir Creator, and transgress his Will
 For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?
 Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
 Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile
 Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd [35]
 The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host
 Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in Glory above his Peers,
 He trusted to have equal'd the most High, [40]
 If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
 Against the Throne and Monarchy of God
 Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie [45]
 With hideous ruine and combustion down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In Adamantine Chains⁸ and penal Fire,
 Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.
 Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night [50]
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
 Confounded though immortal: But his doom
 Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain [55]
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
 Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
 At once as far as Angels kenn he views
 The dismal Situation waste and wilde, [60]
 A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round
 As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames

⁷ Theodicy, the justification of God's goodness despite the existence of evil.

⁸ A reference to unbreakable chains; associated with divine punishment in Christian and Greek traditions.

No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace [65]
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed
 With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd [70]
 For those rebellious, here thir Prison ordain'd
 In utter darkness, and thir portion set
 As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n
 As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole⁹.
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell! [75]
 There the companions of his fall, o'rewhelm'd
 With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns, and weltring by his side
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
 Long after known in *Palestine*, and nam'd [80]
*Beelzebub*¹⁰. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
 And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
 If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
 From him, who in the happy Realms of Light [85]
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine
 Myriads though bright: If he Whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,
 Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd [90]
 In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest
 From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his Thunder: and till then who knew
 The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those,

⁹ This phrase emphasizes the vast separation between Heaven and Hell but also reflects numerological symbolism found in biblical and literary traditions. The number three has long been associated with divine completeness, seen in the Christian Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) and Christ's three days in the tomb before resurrection (Matthew 12:40). However, in infernal contexts, three often signifies rebellion and inversion, as seen in Dante's *Inferno* (14th century), where Hell's structure is built around multiples of three, reinforcing divine justice even in damnation. Milton follows this tradition, making Satan's fall last nine days (three times three), symbolizing the finality of his exile. The number six, in contrast, is associated with human imperfection rather than Hell itself; while 666 (Revelation 13:18) represents the "number of the Beast", the individual six was traditionally tied to the creation of humankind on the sixth day (Genesis 1:26-31). Unlike three and nine, six does not consistently appear as a symbolic number for Hell in classical or biblical texts, though later Christian eschatology emphasized its connection to evil.

¹⁰ Beelzebub appears in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kings 1:2-3, 6, 16) as a Philistine deity, "Baal-Zebub" ("Lord of the Flies"), worshiped in Ekron. In early Jewish traditions, he was considered a false god, but by the intertestamental period (circa 200 BCE – 100 CE), texts like the Testament of Solomon and the Book of Enoch began associating Beelzebub with demonic power. The shift into Christian demonology occurred particularly in the Greek and Latin traditions of the early Church Fathers (2nd–5th centuries CE), where he was interpreted as one of the chief demons opposing God. By the medieval period (12th–15th centuries), Beelzebub had become a major figure in Catholic demonology, often depicted as either Satan's second-in-command (as in *Paradise Lost*) or even synonymous with Satan himself (as in some later folk traditions). The *Dictionnaire Infernal* (1818) solidified his position as a high-ranking infernal power. Milton's portrayal aligns with this later Christian tradition, making Beelzebub a central figure in the infernal hierarchy.

Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage [95]
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind
 And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,
 That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along [100]
 Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
 In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost? [105]
 All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield:
 And what is else not to be overcome?
 That Glory never shall his wrath or might [110]
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,
 Who from the terrour of this Arm so late
 Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath [115]
 This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods
 And this Empyrean substance¹¹ cannot fail,
 Since through experience of this great event
 In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,
 We may with more successful hope resolve [120]
 To wage by force or guile eternal Warr
 Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.
 So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain, [125]
 Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.
 O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,
 That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to Warr
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds [130]
 Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual King;
 And put to proof his high Supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,

¹¹ The term "ethereal" refers to a substance beyond the physical world, often associated with the highest and purest form of existence in medieval cosmology and Christian theology. In *Paradise Lost*, angels and demons are composed of this celestial material, a refined, incorruptible essence distinct from earthly matter. Raphael later explains (Book 5) that such beings can assume various forms, shifting between spiritual and corporeal states, and that their true nature is beyond human comprehension. Milton acknowledges that the entire epic—though depicting battles, councils, and tangible landscapes—must be framed in human terms to be understood, since the reality of divine existence surpasses sensory perception. This aligns with Neoplatonic and scholastic thought, where higher beings are imagined in ways accessible to the limited human mind.

Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat [135]
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns, [140]
 Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
 But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now
 Of force believe Almighty, since no less
 Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours) [145]
 Have left us this our spirit and strength intire
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 By right of Warr, what e're his business be [150]
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,
 Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;
 What can it then avail though yet we feel
 Strength undiminisht, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment? [155]
 Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.
 Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,
 To do ought good never will be our task,
 But ever to do ill our sole delight, [160]
 As being the contrary to his high will
 Whom we resist. If then his Providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,
 And out of good still to find means of evil; [165]
 Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from thir destind aim.
 But see the angry Victor hath recall'd
 His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit [170]
 Back to the Gates of Heav'n: The Sulphurous Hail
 Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid
 The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice
 Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,
 Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage, [175]
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.

Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde, [180]
 The seat of desolation, voyd of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there, [185]
 And reassembling our afflicted Powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire Calamity,
 What reinforcement we may gain from Hope, [190]
 If not what resolution from despare.
 Thus Satan talking to his nearest Mate
 With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides
 Prone on the Flood, extended long and large [195]
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or *Earth-born*¹², that warr'd on *Jove*,
Briareos or *Typhon*¹³, whom the Den
 By ancient *Tarsus* held, or that Sea-beast [200]
*Leviathan*¹⁴, which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:
 Him haply slumbring on the *Norway* foam
 The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,
 Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell, [205]
 With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind
 Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night
 Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delays:
 So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
 Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence [210]
 Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought [215]
 Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
 How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn

¹² The Titans from Greek mythology, who rebelled against Zeus.

¹³ Giants from Greek mythology who fought the gods.

¹⁴ A biblical sea monster from Job 41.

On Man by him seduc't, but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. [220]
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool
 His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames
 Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld
 In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid Vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight [225]
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land
 He lights, if it were Land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force [230]
 Of subterranean wind transports a Hill
 Torn from *Pelorus*¹⁵, or the shatter'd side
 Of thundring *Ætna*¹⁶, whose combustible
 And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,
 Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds, [235]
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,
 Both glorying to have scap't the *Stygian* flood
 As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength, [240]
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.
 Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,
 Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
 That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he [245]
 Who now is Sovran¹⁷ can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: fardest from him is best
 Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream
 Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields
 Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail [250]
 Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
 Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings
 A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
 The mind is its own place, and in it self
 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. [255]
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less then he
 Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least

¹⁵ A reference to a mountain in Sicily.

¹⁶ Mount Etna, a volcano associated with the punishment of Typhon.

¹⁷ A term for sovereign, referring to God's supreme authority. The word choice emphasizes God's ultimate power and the fallen angels' inability to truly challenge His rule, even in their defiant rhetoric.

We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: [260]
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss [265]
 Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy Mansion, or once more
 With rallied Arms to try what may be yet
 Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? [270]
 So *Satan* spake, and him *Beelzebub*
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those Armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld,
 If once they hear that voyce, thir liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft [275]
 In worst extreame, and on the perilous edge
 Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Thir surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lye
 Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire, [280]
 As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.
 He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend
 Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, [285]
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb
 Through Optic Glass the *Tuscan* Artist¹⁸ views
 At Ev'ning from the top of *Fesole*,
 Or in *Valdarno*¹⁹, to descry new Lands, [290]
 Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.
 His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine
 Hewn on *Norwegian* hills, to be the Mast
 Of some great Ammiral²⁰, were but a wand,
 He walkt with to support uneasie steps [295]
 Over the burning Marle, not like those steps
 On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach

¹⁸ Galileo, the astronomer who observed the moon and planets.

¹⁹ Locations in Italy where Galileo worked.

²⁰ A reference to an admiral's flagship; Milton compares Satan's spear to a ship's mast.

Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd [300]
 His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't
 Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks
 In *Vallombrosa*, where th' *Etrurian* shades
 High overarch't imbowr; or scatterd sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce Winds *Orion*²¹ arm'd [305]
 Hath vex't the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew
Busiris and his *Memphian* Chivalry²²,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
 The Sojourners of *Goshen*²³, who beheld
 From the safe shore thir floating Carkases [310]
 And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,
 Under amazement of thir hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep
 Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates, [315]
 Warriors, the Flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can sieze
 Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
 After the toyl of Battel to repose
 Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find [320]
 To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds
 Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood
 With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon [325]
 His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n. [330]
 They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceave the evil plight [335]
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd
 Innumerable....

²¹ A constellation associated with storms in ancient mythology.

²² *Busiris* is an Egyptian pharaoh in Greek legend, and "*Memphian*" refers to Memphis, Egypt. This passage alludes to Pharaoh's army drowning in the Red Sea.

²³ The Israelites, who lived in Goshen, Egypt, before the Exodus.

Summary of Book 1, Lines 340–798 (Skipped)

This section describes the mustering of the fallen angels as they gather around Satan to plan their next move. The passage begins with a comparison to the biblical plague of locusts in Egypt, illustrating the vast number of demons swarming in Hell. As they assemble, their leader, Satan, stands proud despite his fall, rallying his troops with a speech full of defiance and determination.

Milton then lists several major demons who were once angels but later became the gods of various pagan religions. These include:

- Moloch, associated with child sacrifice.
- Chemos (or Chemosh), the god of the Moabites.
- Baal and Ashtaroth, widely worshiped in the ancient Middle East.
- Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines.
- Belial, the embodiment of lawlessness and corruption.
- Mammon, the spirit of greed, who leads the demons in mining Hell for gold.
- Mulciber (Hephaestus/Vulcan), the divine blacksmith, who builds Pandemonium.

The demons construct Pandemonium, a grand palace and gathering place for their council. This infernal capital rises instantly, built from Hell's resources in a display of both vanity and power. Once completed, the fallen angels, initially massive in size, shrink down miraculously to fit inside its halls. Milton uses this as an eerie image of demonic adaptability.

The section ends with the fallen angels assembling in Pandemonium, preparing to hold their first council to decide their course of action.

For Extended Learning, Consider Reading:

Lines 376–405 (The naming of pagan gods and their corrupting influence)

Lines 490–505 (Description of Belial and his role in moral corruption)

Lines 670–730 (The construction of Pandemonium, Milton's vision of Hell's capital)

Lines 785–798 (The demons shrinking to fit inside Pandemonium, a striking and surreal moment)

BOOK 2

THE ARGUMENT

The Consultation begun, Satan debates whether another Battel be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade: A third proposal is prefer'd, mention'd before by Satan, to search the truth of that Prophetie or Tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature equal or not much inferiour to themselves, about this time to be created: Thir doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan thir chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honourd and applauded. The Councel thus ended, the rest betake them several wayes and to several imployments, as thir inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell Gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are op'nd, and discover to him the great Gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new World which he sought.

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far
Outshon the wealth of Ormus and of Ind²⁴,
Or where the gorgeous East²⁵ with richest hand
Shows on her Kings Barbaric²⁶ Pearl and Gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd [5]
To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain Warr with Heav'n, and by success untaught
His proud imaginations thus displaid. [10]

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial vertues rising²⁷, will appear [15]
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of Heav'n
Did first create your Leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight, [20]
Hath bin achiev'd of merit, yet this loss
Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne
Yielded with full consent. The happier state

²⁴ Ormus refers to the Persian Gulf trade hub, famous for its wealth, while Ind (India) was associated with vast riches in early modern European imagination. Milton uses these references to emphasize the opulence of Satan's throne, contrasting material wealth with his spiritual downfall.

²⁵ A common trope in Renaissance literature, the "gorgeous East" represents the exotic luxury of Asia. Milton evokes this imagery to stress the grandeur of Satan's counterfeit majesty in Hell, mirroring the splendor of Eastern monarchs.

²⁶ The term barbaric does not imply savagery but instead refers to non-Greek, non-Roman cultures, often associated with immense wealth. The phrase highlights the richness of Satan's domain, but with a hollow, counterfeit quality compared to Heaven's glory.

²⁷ Satan frames the fall as a form of transformation rather than defeat. The phrase recalls Christian resurrection theology, where suffering leads to greater glory. However, this is a perverse inversion—Satan falsely claims that rebellion has elevated him.

In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw [25]
 Envy from each inferior; but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Formost to stand against the Thunderers²⁸ aim
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain? where there is then no good [30]
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
 From Faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
 Precedence, none²⁹, whose portion is so small
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more. With this advantage then [35]
 To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,
 More then can be in Heav'n, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper then prosperity
 Could have assur'd us; and by what best way, [40]
 Whether of open Warr or covert guile,
 We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

Summary of *Paradise Lost*, Book 2, Lines 43–648

After Satan's speech, the fallen angels debate their next move.

1. **Moloch**³⁰ urges immediate war against God, believing they have nothing to lose. His reckless plan is dismissed as futile.
2. **Belial**³¹ argues for passive endurance, suggesting they wait in the hope that God's wrath will lessen. He offers no real solution, only avoidance.
3. **Mammon**³² rejects both war and submission, advocating instead for building a kingdom in Hell where they can rule themselves.
4. **Beelzebub**³³ presents the winning idea: rather than attacking Heaven, they should corrupt God's new creation—mankind—as an act of revenge.

²⁸ A classical epithet for Jove (Jupiter), here applied to God, reinforcing Milton's use of classical epic conventions while subtly distinguishing the true divine power from pagan mythology. Satan may be brave enough to insult God, but he still capitalized His Name.

²⁹ In Heaven, rank led to rivalry, but in Hell, there is no point in competition since all are equally doomed. This reflects Satan's rhetorical strategy: redefining defeat as a kind of unity.

³⁰ A Canaanite deity associated with child sacrifice (Leviticus 18:21, 1 Kings 11:7). His preference for open war reflects his cruel and bloodthirsty nature.

³¹ A figure in biblical tradition, associated with worthlessness and lawlessness (Deuteronomy 13:13, 2 Corinthians 6:15). Milton presents him as an advocate of passive resistance, though his reasoning is rooted in cowardice and deception.

³² The personification of greed, deriving from the Bible (Matthew 6:24). Mammon's argument reflects the idea that the fallen should make the best of their condition, aligning with Renaissance materialist philosophy.

³³ Originally a Philistine deity (2 Kings 1:2), later transformed into a demonic figure in Christian tradition. By the Middle Ages, especially in medieval Catholic and Protestant demonology, Beelzebub was often equated with Satan or considered his second-in-command.

Summary Cont.

The council agrees, but when the dangerous mission is proposed, no one volunteers—until **Satan steps forward**, securing his dominance among them. With the decision made, the demons disperse, engaging in battles, races, and philosophical debates to pass the time. Satan, meanwhile, begins his journey toward **the gates of Hell**, where he will soon encounter **Sin and Death**, the monstrous guardians barring his way.

Key Theme: The demons shift from open rebellion to deception, choosing corruption over direct conflict.

As Satan approaches the great gates of Hell, he is met with a terrifying sight—two monstrous figures standing guard, their grotesque forms revealing the dark consequences of his own past transgressions.

...Before the Gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd Woman³⁴ to the waste, and fair, [650]
But ended foul in many a scaly fould
Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung [655]
A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her woomb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd
Within unseen. Farr less abhorrd than these
Vex'd Scylla³⁵ bathing in the Sea that parts [660]
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag³⁶, when call'd
In secret, riding through the Air she comes
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland Witches, while the labouring Moon [665]
Eclipses at thir charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night, [670]
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat

³⁴ These allegorical figures embody the consequences of Satan's rebellion. Sin, his daughter and lover, is born from his head, an inversion of Athena's birth from Zeus in Greek mythology. Death, their incestuous offspring, represents the ultimate product of disobedience.

³⁵ A sea monster from Homer's *Odyssey*, used as a comparison to Sin's grotesque form.

³⁶ A reference to witches and demonology, particularly associated with Lapland sorcery in early modern European folklore.

The Monster moving onward came as fast [675]
With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valu'd he nor shun'd
And with disdainful look thus first began. [680]

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated Front athwart my way
To yonder Gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave askt of thee: [685]
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n.

To whom the Goblin full of wrauth reply'd,
Art thou that Traitor Angel, art thou hee,
Who first broke peace in Heav'n and Faith, till then [690]
Unbrok'n, and in proud rebellious Arms
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's Sons
Conjur'd against the highest, for which both Thou
And they outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste Eternal dayes in woe and pain? [695]
And reck'n'st thou thy self with Spirits of Heav'n,
Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
Where I reign King, and to enrage thee more,
Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings, [700]
Least with a whip of Scorpions I pursue
Thy lingring, or with one stroke of this Dart
Strange horror seise thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grieslie terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatning, grew tenfold [705]
More dreadful and deform: on th' other side
Incenst with indignation Satan stood
Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiucus³⁷ huge
In th' Artick Sky, and from his horrid hair [710]
Shakes Pestilence and Warr. Each at the Head
Level'd his deadly aime; thir fatall hands
No second stroke intend, and such a frown

³⁷ A constellation associated with serpents and healing in Greek mythology. Here, Satan's burning presence is likened to a comet, a traditional omen of doom.

Each cast at th' other, as when two black Clouds
With Heav'ns Artillery fraught, come rattling on [715]
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hov'ring a space, till Winds the signal blow
To join thir dark Encounter in mid air:
So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at thir frown, so matcht they stood; [720]
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the Snakie Sorceress that sat
Fast by Hell Gate, and kept the fatal Key, [725]
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only Son? What fury O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal Dart
Against thy Fathers head? and know'st for whom; [730]
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
What e're his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids,
His wrath which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest [735]
Forbore, then these to her Satan return'd:

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee, [740]
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why
In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st
Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable then him and thee. [745]

T' whom thus the Portress of Hell Gate reply'd;
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul, once deemd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd [750]
In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprisd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie swumm

In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide, [755]
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
 Then shining Heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd
 Out of thy head I sprung; amazement seisd
 All th' Host of Heav'n back they recoild affraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a Sign [760]
 Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing
 Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st [765]
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,
 And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remaind
 (For what could else) to our Almighty Foe
 Cleer Victory, to our part loss and rout [770]
 Through all the Empyrean: down they fell
 Driv'n headlong from the Pitch of Heaven, down
 Into this Deep, and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this powerful Key
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep [775]
 These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. [780]
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy [785]
 Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal Dart
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death;
 Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd
 From all her Caves, and back resounded Death.
 I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems, [790]
 Inflam'd with lust then rage) and swifter far,
 Mee overtook his mother all dismaid,
 And in embraces forcible and foule
 Ingendring with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry [795]
 Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv'd
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite

To me, for when they list into the womb
That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw
My Bowels, thir repast; then bursting forth [800]
A fresh with conscious terrours vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my Son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his Parent would full soon devour [805]
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involvd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
But thou O Father, I forewarn thee, shun [810]
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright Arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the suttler Fiend his lore [815]
Soon learnd, now milder, and thus answerd smooth.
Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy Sire,
And my fair Son here showst me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change [820]
Befalln us unforeseen, unthought of, know
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly Host
Of Spirits that in our just pretenses arm'd [825]
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandring quest a place foretold [830]
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the Purlieues of Heav'n, and therein plac't
A race of upstart Creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd, [835]
Least Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broiles: Be this or aught
Then this more secret now design'd, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death [840]

Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom Air, imbalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.
He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death [845]
Grinn'd horrible a gastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd, and blest his mawe
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoyc'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire.

The key of this infernal Pit by due, [850]
And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful King
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These Adamantine³⁸ Gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'rmatcht by living might. [855]
But what ow I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful Office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nlie-born, [860]
Here in perpetual agonie and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed:
Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey [865]
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall Reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. [870]

Thus saying, from her side the fatal Key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the Gate rouling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge Porcullis high up drew,
Which but her self not all the Stygian powers [875]
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every Bolt and Bar
Of massie Iron or sollid Rock with ease
Unfast'ns: on a sudden op'n flie
With impetuous recoile and jarring sound [880]

³⁸ The gates of Hell are described as being made of adamant, an unbreakable mythical metal appearing in classical and biblical literature, emphasizing their impenetrability.

Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges grate
 Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She op'nd, but to shut
 Excel'd her power; the Gates wide op'n stood,
 That with extended wings a Bannerd Host [885]
 Under spread Ensigns marching might pass through
 With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoak and ruddy flame.
 Before thir eyes in sudden view appear [890]
 The secrets of the hoarie deep, a dark
 Illimitable Ocean without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, & highth,
 And time and place are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, Ancestors of Nature, hold [895]
 Eternal Anarchie, amidst the noise
 Of endless Warrs, and by confusion stand.
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions fierce
 Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring
 Thir embryon Atoms; they around the flag [900]
 Of each his faction, in thir several Clanns,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the Sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring Winds, and poise [905]
 Thir lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
 Hee rules a moment; Chaos Umpire sits,
 And by decision more imbroiles the fray
 By which he Reigns: next him high Arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wilde Abyss, [910]
 The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,
 Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
 But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain [915]
 His dark materials to create more Worlds,
 Into this wild Abyss the warie fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
 Pondering his Voyage: for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his eare less peal'd [920]
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small) then when Bellona storms,
 With all her battering Engines bent to rase
 Som Capital City; or less then if this frame

Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements [925]
 In mutinie had from her Axle torn
 The stedfast Earth. At last his Sail-broad Vannes
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak
 Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League
 As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides [930]
 Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuitie: all unawares
 Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops
 Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance [935]
 The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud
 Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him
 As many miles aloft: that furie stay'd,
 Quencht in a Boggy Syrtis, neither Sea,
 Nor good dry Land: nigh founderd on he fares, [940]
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and Saile.
 As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness
 With winged course ore Hill or moarie Dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspi³⁹, who by stelth [945]
 Had from his wakeful custody purloind
 The guarded Gold: So eagerly the fiend
 Ore bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
 And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies: [950]
 At length a universal hubbub wilde
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd
 Borne through the hollow dark assaults his eare
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plyes,
 Undaunted to meet there what ever power [955]
 Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the neerest coast of darkness lyes
 Bordering on light; when strait behold the Throne
 Of Chaos⁴⁰, and his dark Pavillion spread [960]
 Wide on the wasteful Deep; with him Enthron'd
 Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The Consort of his Reign; and by them stood

³⁹ A reference to ancient Greek mythology, where the Arimaspians were a legendary one-eyed people who lived near the gold-guarding Gryphons (Griffins) of Scythia (a region north of the Black Sea). According to Herodotus (5th century BCE), the Arimaspians were constantly at war with the Gryphons, trying to steal their treasure. Milton uses this myth to describe Satan's frantic journey through Chaos, comparing his desperate, unsteady movement to an Arimaspians thief fleeing from an enraged Gryphon—emphasizing both the peril and lawlessness of Chaos.

⁴⁰ In Greek cosmogony, Chaos and Night (Nyx) are primal forces preceding creation. Milton aligns them with Satan, portraying his journey as a return to the formless void.

Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon⁴¹; Rumor next and Chance, [965]
And Tumult and Confusion all imbroild,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers
And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no Spy, [970]
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your Realm, but by constraint
Wandring this darksome Desart, as my way
Lies through your spacious Empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek [975]
What readiest path leads where your gloomie bounds
Confine with Heav'n; or if som other place
From your Dominion won, th' Ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound, direct my course; [980]
Directed no mean recompence it brings
To your behoof, if I that Region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey) and once more [985]
Erect the Standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old
With faultring speech and visage incompos'd
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art, [990]
That mighty leading Angel, who of late
Made head against Heav'ns King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard, for such a numerous Host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, [995]
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n Gates
Poured out by millions her victorious Bands
Pursuing. I upon my Frontieres here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
That little which is left so to defend [1000]
Encroacht on still through our intestine broiles
Weakning the Scepter of old Night: first Hell
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;

⁴¹ A mysterious and ancient deity, appearing in late antiquity and Renaissance occult traditions. Milton uses it to emphasize the dark, unknowable forces of Chaos.

Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World
 Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain⁴² [1005]
 To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions fell:
 If that way be your walk, you have not farr;
 So much the neerer danger; go and speed;
 Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply, [1010]
 But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacritie and force renew'd
 Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire
 Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock
 Of fighting Elements, on all sides round [1015]
 Environ'd wins his way; harder beset
 And more endanger'd, then when Argo pass'd
 Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling Rocks⁴³:
 Or when Ulysses on the Larbord shunn'd
 Charybdis⁴⁴, and by th' other whirlpool steard. [1020]
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee;
 But hee once past, soon after when man fell,
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n, [1025]
 Pav'd after him a broad and beat'n way
 Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf
 Tamely endur'd a Bridge⁴⁵ of wondrous length
 From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe
 Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse [1030]
 With easie intercourse pass to and fro
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good Angels guard by special grace.
 But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n [1035]

⁴² A reference to Homer's *Iliad* (8.19-27), where Zeus speaks of a golden chain linking Heaven and Earth. Here, it symbolizes the fragile connection between God's new creation and the cosmic order.

⁴³ A reference to Jason and the Argonauts, a band of heroes from Greek mythology who sailed aboard the ship *Argo* in search of the Golden Fleece. One of their most dangerous trials was navigating the Symplegades, or Clashing Rocks, a pair of massive, shifting stones at the entrance to the Bosphorus, the strait connecting the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara (modern-day Turkey). In *Paradise Lost*, Milton likens Satan's passage through the turbulent void of Chaos to Jason's perilous voyage, drawing a parallel between Satan and the archetypal epic hero. However, while Jason's journey was a noble quest for divine favor, Satan's journey is one of deceit and destruction, subverting the traditional heroic narrative.

⁴⁴ A reference to Homer's *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus (Ulysses in Latin) must navigate past Charybdis, a monstrous whirlpool, and Scylla, a multi-headed sea monster. The phrase "on the larboard (port) side" indicates that Odysseus avoided Charybdis by steering toward Scylla instead, choosing the lesser of two dangers. Milton compares Satan's hazardous journey through Chaos to Odysseus's famous trial, reinforcing Satan's role as a dark parody of the epic hero.

⁴⁵ Once Satan makes his way, Sin and Death later construct a bridge, metaphorically linking Hell and Earth. This reflects Augustinian theology, where evil, once introduced, perpetuates itself.

Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night
 A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
 Her fardest verge, and Chaos to retire
 As from her outmost works a brok'n foe
 With tumult less and with less hostile din, [1040]
 That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light
 And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds
 Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn;
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air, [1045]
 Weighs his spread wings, at leasure to behold
 Farr off th' Empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermind square or round,
 With Opal Towrs and Battlements adorn'd
 Of living Sapphire, once his native Seat; [1050]
 And fast by hanging in a golden Chain⁴⁶
 This pendant world, in bigness as a Starr
 Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies. [1055]

BOOK 3

THE ARGUMENT

God sitting on his Throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shews him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own Justice and Wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withstood his Tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduc't. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man; but God again declares, that Grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to God-head, and therefore with all his Progeny devoted to death must dye, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his Punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a Ransome for Man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all Names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the Angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to thir Harps in full Quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while Satan alights upon the bare Convex of this Worlds outermost Orb; where wandring he first finds a place since call'd The Lymbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the Gate of Heaven, describ'd ascending by staires, and the waters above the Firmament that flow about it: His passage thence to the Orb of the Sun; he finds there Uriel the Regent of that Orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new Creation and Man whom God had plac't here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on Mount Niphates.

⁴⁶ The image of Earth hanging in a golden chain reinforces its smallness in contrast to the vast cosmos, a theme found in Renaissance astronomy and theology.

All that of me can die, yet that debt paid⁴⁷,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsom grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted Soule
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;
 But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue [250]
 My Vanquisher, spoild of his vanted spoile;
 Death his deaths wound shall then receive⁴⁸, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
 I through the ample Air in Triumph high
 Shall lead Hell Captive maugre Hell⁴⁹, and show [255]
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
 Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my Foes,
 Death last, and with his Carcass glut the Grave:
 Then with the multitude of my redeemd [260]
 Shall enter Heaven long absent, and returne,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd,
 And reconcilement; wrauth shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence Joy entire. [265]

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shon
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will [270]
 Of his great Father. Admiration seisd
 All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
 Wondring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd:

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
 Found out for mankind under wrauth, O thou [275]
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear,
 To me are all my works, nor Man the least
 Though last created, that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
 By loosing thee a while, the whole Race lost. [280]
 Thou therefore whom thou only canst redeem,
 Thir Nature also to thy Nature joyn;
 And be thy self Man among men on Earth,

⁴⁷ A reference to the theological concept of substitutionary atonement, where Christ pays for humanity's sins.

⁴⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 – Paul's proclamation of Christ's triumph over death: "O death, where is thy sting?"

⁴⁹ Harrowing of Hell – A belief that Christ descended into Hell to free the righteous souls before ascending.

Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed⁵⁰,
 By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room [285]
 The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son.
 As in him perish all men⁵¹, so in thee
 As from a second root shall be restor'd,
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guiltie all his Sons, thy merit [290]
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Thir own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfie for Man, be judg'd and die, [295]
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His Brethren, ransomd with his own dear life.
 So Heav'nly love shall outdoo Hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeeme,
 So dearly to redeem what Hellish hate [300]
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroyes
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou by descending to assume
 Mans Nature, less'n or degrade thine owne⁵².
 Because thou hast, though Thron'd in highest bliss [305]
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 God-like fruition, quitted all to save
 A World from utter loss, and hast been found
 By Merit more then Birthright Son of God⁵³,
 Found worthiest to be so by being Good, [310]
 Farr more then Great or High; because in thee
 Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds,
 Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt Reign [315]
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal King, all Power
 I give thee, reign for ever⁵⁴, and assume
 Thy Merits; under thee as Head Supream
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce: [320]
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide⁵⁵
 In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell;

⁵⁰ Virgin Birth – Refers to Christ's miraculous conception by the Virgin Mary.

⁵¹ Romans 5:12-21 – Adam as the first root of sin, Christ as the second root of redemption.

⁵² Kenosis – The theological concept from Philipppians 2:6-8, where Christ humbles himself without losing divinity.

⁵³ Merit vs. Birthright – Christ's worthiness is proven through his actions, contrasting Satan's false claim to merit in Book 5.

⁵⁴ Messianic Kingship – Christ's eternal rule, echoing Daniel 7:14.

⁵⁵ Philipppians 2:10 – "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth."

When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
 Shalt in the Sky appeer, and from thee send
 The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaime [325]
 Thy dread Tribunal: forthwith from all Windes
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past Ages to the general Doom
 Shall hast'n, such a peal shall rouse thir sleep.
 Then all thy Saints assembl'd, thou shalt judge [330]
 Bad men and Angels, they arraignd shall sink
 Beneath thy Sentence; Hell her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
 The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring⁵⁶
 New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell⁵⁷ [335]
 And after all thir tribulations long
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
 Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,
 For regal Scepter then no more shall need, [340]
 God shall be All in All. But all ye Gods⁵⁸,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
 Adore the Son, and honour him as mee.

Summary of *Paradise Lost*, Book 3 (Lines 344–742)

After the Son of God offers himself as a sacrifice to redeem mankind, the scene shifts from Heaven to Satan's journey through the cosmos. Satan has finally escaped Hell and Chaos and now approaches the new creation.

As he flies toward Earth, he surveys the vast universe, filled with stars and celestial wonders. His journey mirrors that of an explorer or conqueror, but his admiration is tinged with envy and malice. Satan eventually lands on the outer edge of the world, which appears to him as a boundless continent floating in space.

Satan's Arrival and the "Paradise of Fools" (Lines 440–497)

While wandering, Satan encounters a strange realm known as the **Paradise of Fools**—a limbo-like space where the souls of misguided religious figures and philosophers drift aimlessly. These include monks, pilgrims, and scholars who pursued false glory, superstition, or misguided knowledge. Milton satirizes those who sought salvation through external rituals rather than genuine faith, showing them being blown about helplessly, their relics and indulgences scattered by the wind.

Satan Reaches the Stairway to Heaven (Lines 498–540)

⁵⁶ 2 Peter 3:10 – The apocalyptic destruction and renewal of the world by fire.

⁵⁷ Revelation 21:1 – The vision of a new, redeemed creation.

⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:28 – The final unity between God and all creation.

Satan eventually spots a **golden stairway** leading from Earth up to Heaven. This celestial bridge is reminiscent of **Jacob's Ladder** from the Bible, where angels ascend and descend between the divine and mortal realms. However, Satan cannot enter Heaven through this path; he is an exile, forever barred from divine presence.

Satan's Encounter with Uriel (Lines 540–742)

Determined to find his way to Earth and corrupt mankind, Satan decides to **disguise himself** as a lesser angel. He takes the form of a young cherub, making himself appear innocent and devoted. With this deception, he approaches **Uriel**, the angel stationed on the Sun.

Satan pretends to be an eager celestial being, expressing admiration for God's creation and a desire to see mankind. Uriel, the **angel of sharpest sight**, is deceived—Milton emphasizes that even wisdom can be tricked when it does not suspect deceit. Uriel, believing Satan to be sincere, points out the location of **Paradise**, where Adam and Eve dwell.

With his false humility successful, Satan departs, flying toward Earth and landing on **Mount Niphates**, ready to begin his mission of corruption.

BOOK 4

THE ARGUMENT

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprize which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despare; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and scituation is discribed, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a Cormorant on the Tree of life, as highest in the Garden to look about him. The Garden describ'd; Satans first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at thir excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work thir fall; overhears thir discourse, thence gathers that the Tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his Temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of thir state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a Sun-beam warns Gabriel, who had in charge the Gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escap'd the Deep, and past at Noon by his Sphere in the shape of a good Angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the Mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to thir rest: thir Bower describ'd; thir Evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his Bands of Night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong Angels to Adams Bower, least the evill spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom question'd, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hinder'd by a Sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O For that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalyps, heard cry in Heaven aloud⁵⁹,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men⁶⁰,
Wo to the inhabitants on Earth! that now, [5]
While time was, our first-Parents had bin warnd
The coming of thir secret foe, and scap'd
Haply so scap'd his mortal snare; for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The Tempter ere th' Accuser of man-kind, [10]
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first Battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoycing in his speed, though bold,
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth [15]
Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest,
And like a devillish Engine back recoiles
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stirr
The Hell within him, for within him Hell [20]
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell

⁵⁹ The Apocalypse (Revelation 12:12) – John's vision of a voice warning mankind after Satan's fall: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath."

⁶⁰ Revelation 12:9 – Satan as the Dragon, cast down from heaven to deceive the world.

One step no more then from himself can fly⁶¹
 By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair
 That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be [25]
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his grievd look he fixes sad,
 Sometimes towards Heav'n and the full-blazing Sun,
 Which now sat high in his Meridian Towre: [30]
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou that with surpassing Glory crownd,
 Look'st from thy sole Dominion like the God
 Of this new World⁶²; at whose sight all the Starrs
 Hide thir diminisht heads; to thee I call, [35]
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams⁶³
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;
 Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down [40]
 Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless King:
 Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was⁶⁴
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. [45]
 What could be less then to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher [50]
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burthensome, still paying, still to ow;
 Forgetful what from him I still receivd,
 And understood not that a grateful mind [55]
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once

⁶¹ Infernal Paradox – Echoes Mephistopheles in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*: "Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it."

⁶² Helios/Apollo – The sun as a divine ruler, similar to Apollo's role in Greek myth, a parallel to Satan's former splendor.

⁶³ Satan as Milton's Achilles – Parallels Achilles' invocation of the Sun in *The Iliad* (Book 22), before his duel with Hector.

⁶⁴ Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* – This text wrestles with the problem of divine justice, arguing that God's foreknowledge does not negate free will. In Book 4, Lady Philosophy explains that while providence governs all, individuals remain morally responsible for their choices. Milton echoes this in Satan's lament, where he acknowledges God's justice yet still curses fate, refusing to accept his own culpability (lines 42-43). Unlike Boethius, who ultimately reconciles divine order with human agency, Satan distorts Boethian logic—blaming his fall on destiny rather than his own ambition—trapping himself in eternal self-pity and defiance.

Indebted and dischargd; what burden then?⁶⁵
 O had his powerful Destiny ordaind
 Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
 Then happie; no unbounded hope had rais'd [60]
 Ambition. Yet why not? som other Power
 As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
 Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
 Fell not, but stand unshak'n, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. [65]
 Hadst thou the same free Will and Power to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
 But Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his Love accurst, since love or hate,
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe. [70]
 Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I flie
 Infinite wrauth, and infinite despaire?⁶⁶
 Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell⁶⁷; [75]
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep
 Still threatning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
 O then at last relent: is there no place
 Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left? [80]
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Then to submit, boasting I could subdue [85]
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vaine,
 Under what torments inwardly I groane:
 While they adore me on the Throne of Hell,
 With Diadem and Sceptre high advanc'd [90]
 The lower still I fall, onely Supream
 In miserie; such joy Ambition findes.
 But say I could repent and could obtaine
 By Act of Grace my former state; how soon
 Would high recall high thoughts, how soon unsay [95]

⁶⁵ Augustine's Grace vs. Debt Paradox – Milton echoes the paradox of divine grace from Confessions: true love owes infinitely but is never burdened.

⁶⁶ Virgilian Echo – Reminiscent of Dido's lament in Aeneid 4, "Infelix Dido," when she realizes she has doomed herself.

⁶⁷ For Milton and many Protestants, Heaven and divine light were internal states rather than external places. They rejected the need for an intermediary, such as the Pope or the institutional Church, emphasizing instead a direct, personal connection with God. Similarly, Satan's declaration suggests that Hell is not merely a physical location but a state of being—just as Heaven and divine illumination are internal conditions rather than imposed external realities.

What feign'd submission swore: ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have peirc'd so deep:
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse [100]
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase deare
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher; therefore as farr
 From granting hee, as I from begging peace:
 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead [105]
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this World⁶⁸.
 So farewell Hope, and with Hope farewell Fear,
 Farewell Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
 Evil be thou my Good⁶⁹; by thee at least [110]
 Divided Empire with Heav'ns King I hold
 By thee, and more then half perhaps will reigne;
 As Man ere long, and this new World shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envie and despair, [115]
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betraid
 Him counterfet, if any eye beheld.
 For heav'nly mindes from such distempers foule
 Are ever cleer. Whereof hee soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calme, [120]
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first
 That practis'd falshood under saintly shew,
 Deep malice to conceale, couch't with revenge:
 Yet not anough had practis'd to deceive
 Uriel once warnd; whose eye pursu'd him down [125]
 The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
 Saw him disfigur'd, more then could befall
 Spirit of happie sort⁷⁰: his gestures fierce
 He mark'd and mad demeanour, then alone,
 As he suppos'd all unobserv'd, unseen. [130]
 So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, Crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound the champain head
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairie sides [135]

⁶⁸ The Replacement Motif – Satan, like Cain in Genesis 4, resents being replaced, much like Cain envied Abel.

⁶⁹ Anti-Beatrice Moment – Satan's inverse of Dante's ascension through divine love, choosing evil as his highest principle.

⁷⁰ Isaiah 14:12 – Echoes the fall of Lucifer: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"

With thicket overgrown, grottesque and wilde,
 Access deni'd; and over head up grew
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and Pine, and Firr, and branching Palm
 A Silvan Scene, and as the ranks ascend [140]
 Shade above shade, a woodie Theatre
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher then thir tops
 The verdurous wall of paradise up sprung:
 Which to our general Sire gave prospect large
 Into his neather Empire neighbouring round. [145]
 And higher then that Wall a circling row
 Of goodliest Trees loaden with fairest Fruit,
 Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue
 Appeerd, with gay enameld colours mixt:
 On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams [150]
 Then in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,
 When God hath showrd the earth; so lovely seemd
 That Lantskip: And of pure now purer aire
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive [155]
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
 Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past [160]
 Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow
 Sabeian Odours from the spicie shoare
 Of Arabie the blest⁷¹, with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League
 Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles. [165]
 So entertaind those odorous sweets the Fiend
 Who came thir bane, though with them better pleas'd
 Then Asmodeus with the fishie fume,
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the Spouse
 Of Tobits Son⁷², and with a vengeance sent [170]
 From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage Hill
 Satan had journied on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,
 As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth [175]
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplext

⁷¹ Solomonic Allusion (1 Kings 10:1-2) – The Queen of Sheba brought Solomon spices and gold from Arabia, linking Eden's richness to biblical wisdom.

⁷² Tobit 6:17 – Asmodeus, the demon of lust, was exorcised with fish organs in the Apocryphal Book of Tobit, tying Satan to destructive temptation.

All path of Man or Beast that past that way:
 One Gate there only was, and that look'd East
 On th' other side: which when th' arch-fellon saw
 Due entrance he disdaind, and in contempt, [180]
 At one slight bound high over leap'd all bound
 Of Hill or highest Wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling Wolfe,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eve [185]
 In hurdl'd Cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o're the fence with ease into the Fould:
 Or as a Thief bent to unhoord the cash
 Of some rich Burgher, whose substantial dores,
 Cross-barrd and bolted fast, fear no assault, [190]
 In at the window climbs, or o're the tiles;
 So clomb this first grand Thief into Gods Fould:
 So since into his Church lewd Hirelings climbe⁷³.
 Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
 The middle Tree and highest there that grew, [195]
 Sat like a Cormorant⁷⁴; yet not true Life
 Thereby regaind, but sat devising Death
 To them who liv'd; nor on the vertue thought
 Of that life-giving Plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had bin the pledge [200]
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to thir meanest use.
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views [205]
 To all delight of human sense expos'd
 In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,
 A Heaven on Earth, for blissful Paradise
 Of God the Garden was⁷⁵, by him in the East
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretchd her Line [210]
 From Auran Eastward to the Royal Towrs
 Of Great Seleucia, built by Grecian Kings,
 Or where the Sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soile
 His farr more pleasant Garden God ordaind; [215]
 Out of the fertil ground he caus'd to grow

⁷³ John 10:1 – Christ warns against thieves who enter the sheepfold, a veiled attack on corrupt clergy.

⁷⁴ Hugin and Munin (Odin's Ravens) – The cormorant, a bird of prey, recalls Norse mythology, where ravens symbolize knowledge, twisted here into Satan's deceit.

⁷⁵ Epic of Gilgamesh – Resembles Gilgamesh's garden of the gods, an ancient prototype for Paradise.

All Trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming Ambrosial Fruit
 Of vegetable Gold; and next to Life [220]
 Our Death the Tree of Knowledge grew fast by,
 Knowledge of Good bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a River large,
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggie hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulft, for God had thrown [225]
 That Mountain as his Garden mould high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous Earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
 Rose a fresh Fountain, and with many a rill
 Waterd the Garden; thence united fell [230]
 Down the steep glade, and met the neather Flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appeers,
 And now divided into four main Streams,
 Runs divers, wandring many a famous Realme
 And Country whereof here needs no account, [235]
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
 How from that Saphire Fount the crisped Brooks,
 Rowling on Orient Pearl and sands of Gold,
 With mazie error under pendant shades
 Ran Nectar, visiting each plant, and fed [240]
 Flours worthy of Paradise which not nice Art
 In Beds and curious Knots, but Nature boon
 Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine,
 Both where the morning Sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc't shade [245]
 Imbround the noontide Bowrs: Thus was this place,
 A happy rural seat of various view;
 Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme,
 Others whose fruit burnisht with Golden Rinde
 Hung amiable, Hesperian Fables true, [250]
 If true⁷⁶, here only, and of delicious taste:
 Betwixt them Lawns, or level Downs, and Flocks
 Grasing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
 Or palmie hilloc, or the flourie lap
 Of som irriguous Valley spred her store, [255]
 Flours of all hue, and without Thorn the Rose:
 Another side, umbrageous Grots and Caves
 Of coole recess, o're which the mantling vine
 Layes forth her purple Grape, and gently creeps

⁷⁶ Garden of the Hesperides – References the Greek myth of the golden apples, suggesting Eden is the true source of all paradise myths.

Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall [260]
 Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,
 That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd,
 Her chrystal mirror holds, unite thir streams.
 The Birds thir quire apply; aires, vernal aires,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune [265]
 The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
 Led on th' Eternal Spring. Not that faire field
 Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flours
 Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis [270]
 Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian Spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian Ile [275]
 Girt with the River Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
 Hid Amalthea and her Florid Son
 Young Bacchus from his Stepdame Rhea's eye;
 Nor where Abassin Kings thir issue Guard, [280]
 Mount Amara, though this by som suppos'd
 True Paradise under the Ethiop Line⁷⁷
 By Nilus head, enclosd with shining Rock,
 A whole days journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian Garden, where the Fiend [285]
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
 Of living Creatures new to sight and strange:
 Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native Honour clad
 In naked Majestie seemd Lords of all, [290]
 And worthie seemd, for in thir looks Divine
 The image of thir glorious Maker shon,
 Truth, wisdom, Sanctitude severe and pure,
 Severe but in true filial freedom plac't;
 Whence true authority in men; though both [295]
 Not equal, as thir sex not equal seemd;
 For contemplation hee and valour formd,
 For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,
 Hee for God only, shee for God in him:
 His fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd [300]
 Absolute rule; and Hyacinthin Locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung

⁷⁷ Prester John's Kingdom – Amara was a legendary paradise linked to the medieval myth of Prester John, a Christian king hidden in Africa.

Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 Shee as a vail down to the slender waste
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore [305]
 Disheveld, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
 As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway⁷⁸,
 And by her yielded, by him best receivd,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, [310]
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceald,
 Then was not guiltie shame, dishonest shame
 Of natures works, honor dishonorable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubl'd all mankind [315]
 With shews instead, meer shews of seeming pure⁷⁹,
 And banisht from mans life his happiest life,
 Simplicities and spotless innocence.
 So passd they naked on, nor shund the sight
 Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill: [320]
 So hand in hand they passd, the lovliest pair
 That ever since in loves embraces met,
 Adam the goodliest man of men since borne
 His Sons, the fairest of her Daughters Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green [325]
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh Fountain side
 They sat them down, and after no more toil
 Of thir sweet Gardning labour then suffic'd
 To recommend coole Zephyr, and made ease
 More easie, wholsom thirst and appetite [330]
 More grateful, to thir Supper Fruits they fell,
 Nectarine Fruits which the compliant boughes
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
 On the soft downie Bank damaskt with flours:
 The savourie pulp they chew, and in the rinde [335]
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems
 Fair couple, linkt in happie nuptial League,
 Alone as they. About them frisking playd [340]
 All Beasts of th' Earth, since wilde, and of all chase
 In Wood or Wilderness, Forrest or Den;
 Sporting the Lion rampd, and in his paw
 Dandl'd the Kid; Bears, Tygers, Ounces, Pardes

⁷⁸ Ephesians 5:22-23 – The Pauline doctrine of marriage, symbolizing Eve's willing submission to Adam.

⁷⁹ Plato's Republic – Plato's concept of shadows vs. reality, connecting Milton's critique of hypocrisy with philosophical idealism.

Gambold before them, th' unwieldy Elephant [345]
 To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreathd
 His Lithe Proboscis; close the Serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His breaded train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass [350]
 Coucht, and now fild with pasture gazing sat,
 Or Bedward ruminating; for the Sun
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
 To th' Ocean Iles, and in th' ascending Scale
 Of Heav'n the Starrs that usher Evening rose: [355]
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length faild speech recoverd sad.

O Hell! what doe mine eyes with grief behold,
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc't
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, [360]
 Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them Divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that formd them on thir shape hath pourd. [365]
 Ah gentle pair, yee little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
 Happie, but for so happie ill secur'd [370]
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heav'n
 Ill fenc't for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
 As now is enterd; yet no purpos'd foe
 To you whom I could pittie thus forlorne
 Though I unpittied: League with you I seek, [375]
 And mutual amitie so streight, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
 Accept your Makers work; he gave it me, [380]
 Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest Gates,
 And send forth all her Kings; there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous ofspring; if no better place, [385]
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
 On you who wrong me not for him who wrongd.

And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I doe, yet public reason just,
Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg'd, [390]
By conquering this new World, compels me now
To do what else though damnd I should abhorre.

So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,
The Tyrants plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his loftie stand on that high Tree [395]
Down he alights among the sportful Herd
Of those fourfooted kindes, himself now one,
Now other, as thir shape servd best his end
Neerer to view his prey, and unespi'd
To mark what of thir state he more might learn [400]
By word or action markt: about them round
A Lion now he stalkes with fierie glare,
Then as a Tyger, who by chance hath spi'd
In some Purlieu two gentle Fawnes at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft [405]
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
Gript in each paw: when Adam first of men
To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
Turnd him all eare to hear new utterance flow. [410]

Sole partner and sole part of all these joyes,
Dearer thy self then all⁸⁰; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample World
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite, [415]
That rais'd us from the dust and plac't us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can performe
Aught whereof hee hath need, hee who requires
From us no other service then to keep [420]
This one, this easie charge, of all the Trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that onely Tree
Of knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life,
So neer grows Death to Life, what ere Death is, [425]
Som dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowst
God hath pronounc't it death to taste that Tree,
The only sign of our obedience left

⁸⁰ Homeric Love – Echoes Hector's farewell to Andromache in The Iliad 6, where he calls her dearer than his homeland.

Among so many signes of power and rule
 Conferd upon us, and Dominion giv'n [430]
 Over all other Creatures that possess
 Earth, Aire, and Sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easie prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights: [435]
 But let us ever praise him, and extoll
 His bountie, following our delightful task
 To prune these growing Plants⁸¹, and tend these Flours,
 Which were it toilsom, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve repli'd. O thou for whom [440]
 And from whom I was formd flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my Guide
 And Head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For wee to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks, I chiefly who enjoy [445]
 So farr the happier Lot, enjoying thee
 Præeminent by so much odds, while thou
 Like consort to thy self canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awak't, and found my self repos'd [450]
 Under a shade of flours, much wondring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
 Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread
 Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd [455]
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperient thought, and laid me downe
 On the green bank, to look into the cleer
 Smooth Lake, that to me seemd another Skie.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite, [460]
 A Shape within the watry gleam appeard
 Bending to look on me, I started back,
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
 Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt [465]
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
 What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow staies [470]

⁸¹ A subtle allusion to Virgil's *Georgics*, where pruning symbolizes both care and the limits of human power over nature.

Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
 Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare
 Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human Race: what could I doe, [475]
 But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
 Till I espi'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,
 Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,
 Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd, [480]
 Thou following cryd'st aloud, Return faire Eve,
 Whom fli'st thou? whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, neerest my heart
 Substantial Life, to have thee by my side [485]
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;
 Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seisd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excelld by manly grace [490]
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general Mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half imbracing leand
 On our first Father, half her swelling Breast [495]
 Naked met his under the flowing Gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her Beauty and submissive Charms
 Smil'd with superior Love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the Clouds⁸² [500]
 That shed May Flowers; and press'd her Matron lip
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turnd
 For envie, yet with jealous leer maligne
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plained.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two [505]
 Imparadis't in one anothers arms⁸³
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy thir fill
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least, [510]

⁸² Homeric Zeus – Echoes Zeus and Hera in The Iliad 14, where Zeus seduces Hera in a golden cloud.

⁸³ Dante's Francesca and Paolo (Inferno 5) – Like Satan, Francesca views lovers in bliss with torment, embodying jealousy of lost grace.

Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines;
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd'n? [515]
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord
 Envie them that? can it be sin to know,
 Can it be death? and do they onely stand
 By Ignorance, is that thir happie state,
 The proof of thir obedience and thir faith? [520]
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Thir ruine! Hence I will excite thir minds
 With more desire to know⁸⁴, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with designe
 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt [525]
 Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This Garden, and no corner leave unspi'd;
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet [530]
 Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by Fountain side,
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
 What further would be learnt. Live while ye may,
 Yet happie pair; enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.⁸⁵ [535]

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began
 Through wood, through waste, o're hill, o're dale his roam.

⁸⁴ Promethean Sin – Satan, like Prometheus, tempts humanity with forbidden knowledge, an inversion of divine wisdom.

⁸⁵ Horace's Carpe Diem – A mockery of Horatian wisdom, where Satan twists the ideal of fleeting joy into impending doom.

Summary of *Paradise Lost*, Book 4 (Lines 539–End)

Satan Observes Adam and Eve (539–609)

After spying on Adam and Eve, Satan hides and listens to their conversation. Adam praises their paradise and acknowledges God's one command: they must not eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Eve recalls her first moments of existence—awakening beside a clear lake, seeing her own reflection, and being gently led to Adam by God. Adam reassures her of their love and partnership.

Satan's Growing Envy and Malice (610–735)

Satan, watching them, is tormented by their happiness. He envies their innocence and love but convinces himself that their joy will not last. He resolves to lead them into sin, reasoning that their fall will make them more like him—suffering, resentful, and separated from God.

As night falls, Adam and Eve prepare for sleep, expressing gratitude to God for their paradise. Milton describes their bower, a secluded and sacred garden retreat, where they embrace in innocent love before sleeping.

Satan is Discovered (736–1015)

Meanwhile, the angel Uriel, suspecting Satan's presence, warns Gabriel, the leader of the angelic guard in Eden. Gabriel orders two angels, Ithuriel and Zephon, to search for intruders. They find Satan lurking near Eve, disguised as a toad, whispering temptations into her dreams. When they touch him with a spear, he instantly returns to his true form.

The angels confront Satan, accusing him of trespassing in Eden. Satan, still proud and defiant, initially tries to argue but soon realizes he is outmatched. Gabriel warns him that he will be cast back into Hell if he stays. At that moment, a divine sign appears in the sky—God's golden scales, which tilt against Satan, symbolizing his inevitable defeat. Realizing he has no chance, Satan flees Eden, murmuring in frustration as he disappears into the night.

Book 5: Raphael's Arrival and Warning

- Adam and Eve wake in the morning, refreshed and joyful. Eve shares a troubling dream in which a voice tempts her to eat from the forbidden tree.
- God, seeing Satan's increasing threat, sends the archangel **Raphael** to warn Adam and teach him about obedience and free will.
- Raphael arrives and shares a meal with Adam, discussing the importance of gratitude and obedience to God.
- **Raphael begins recounting the celestial history**, explaining how Satan rebelled against God out of pride and ambition.

Raphael's Warning About Free Will (*Lines 519–540*)

This passage captures Raphael's warning to Adam about **free will, obedience, and the nature of sin**. He emphasizes that God made humans free, but with that freedom comes responsibility.

O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him plac't or nearer tending
Each in thir several active Spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aerie, last the bright consummate flow'r
Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs and thir fruit
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual, give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding, whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive or intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.

Book 6: The War in Heaven

- Raphael continues the story of **Satan's rebellion and the War in Heaven**.
- Satan, once called Lucifer, convinced many angels to follow him, claiming they should be equal to God.
- The faithful angels, led by **Michael and Gabriel**, wage war against Satan's forces for two days.
- On the third day, **the Son of God enters the battle**, riding a divine chariot. He single-handedly defeats the rebels and casts them out of Heaven into Hell.
- Raphael warns Adam that **Satan still seeks revenge and will try to corrupt humankind**.

The Son of God Ends the War in Heaven (*Lines 803–826*)

This passage **depicts the climax of the War in Heaven**, when the Son of God enters the battlefield, ending Satan's rebellion with divine force.

So spake the Son, and into terrour chang'd
His count'nance too severe to be beheld
And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies.
At once the Four spread out thir starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot rowld, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
He on his impious Foes right onward drove,
Gloomie as Night; under his burning wheels
The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout,
All but the Throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand Thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in thir souls infix'd
Plagues; they astonisht all resistance lost,
All courage; down thir idle weapons drop'd;
O're shields and helmes, and helmed heads he rode
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.

Book 7: The Creation of the World

- Adam, curious about the world, asks Raphael how creation began.
- Raphael recounts how **God sent the Son to create the universe** after Satan's fall.
- The Son **shaped chaos into order**, forming the heavens, earth, sun, moon, and stars in six days.
- The climax is the creation of **Adam and Eve**, who are made in God's image to rule over Earth.

The Creation of the World (*Lines 232–254*)

This passage **describes the moment when God, through the Son, brings order to the chaos and creates the world.**

Let there be Light, said God, and forthwith Light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native East
To journie through the airie gloom began,
Sphear'd in a radiant Cloud, for yet the Sun
Was not; shee in a cloudie Tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the Light was good;
And light from darkness by the Hemisphere
Divided: Light the Day, and Darkness Night
He nam'd. Thus was the first Day Eev'n and Morn.
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the Celestial Quires, when Orient Light
Exhaling first from Darkness they beheld;
Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal Orb they fill'd,
And touch't thir Golden Harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works, Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first dawn'd.

Book 8: Adam and Eve's Relationship & Free Will

- Adam, eager for knowledge, asks Raphael about celestial movements and the nature of the stars.
- Raphael gently warns him that some knowledge is beyond human comprehension and encourages him to focus on **obedience and love for God**.
- Adam shares his **first memories**—his awakening, his wonder at creation, and how God created Eve to be his partner.
- He expresses his deep **love for Eve**, though he acknowledges that she is more emotional and requires guidance.
- **Raphael warns Adam again about temptation**, telling him to be on guard against pride and desire beyond God's will.

Eve's Creation, Awareness, and Key Points

When Eve sees her reflection (lines 457-480) in the water and is momentarily enamored with herself before God leads her to Adam.

That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak't, and found my self repos'd
Under a shade of flours, much wondring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread
Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc't thought, and laid me downe
On the green bank, to look into the cleer
Smooth Lake, that to me seemd another Skie.
As I bent down to look, just opposite,
A Shape within the watry gleam appeerd
Bending to look on me, I started back,
It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks
Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self.

Eve's first moment of self-awareness in *Paradise Lost* is significantly different from the biblical account in *Genesis 2:18-25*, where Eve is created directly from Adam's rib while he sleeps and is immediately presented to him. In the biblical narrative, Eve's first encounter is with Adam, and she recognizes him as her natural partner:

Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."
(Genesis 2:22-23, NIV)

Milton, however, alters this sequence dramatically by inserting a moment of solitude, self-reflection, and self-love for Eve before she ever meets Adam. She awakens alone, sees her reflection in a pool of water, and becomes enchanted by the image, only to be called away by a divine voice directing her toward Adam. This divergence from the biblical text adds a new layer of psychological complexity and thematic depth to her character.

The Significance of Eve's Awareness in *Paradise Lost*

Milton's addition of Eve's reflection scene serves several key purposes:

1. Eve's Unique Self-Awareness

- Unlike Adam, who is created and immediately acknowledges God's authority, Eve first perceives herself in isolation, forming an early sense of self that is untethered from divine hierarchy.
- This moment prefigures her later susceptibility to flattery and deception, as she is already inclined to see herself as an object of admiration.

2. Narcissus and the Danger of Self-Love

- Milton's portrayal of Eve looking at her reflection evokes the myth of Narcissus from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in which a youth falls in love with his own image and wastes away, unable to break his gaze.
- Though Eve is ultimately led away from self-absorption by God's voice, the association with Narcissus foreshadows her later vulnerability to Satan's flattery, which appeals to her vanity.

3. Gender and Hierarchy

- In the biblical account, Eve's relationship to Adam is clear from the outset: she is created *for* him. In *Paradise Lost*, however, her initial attraction is to her own image, not to Adam.
- This subtle shift suggests that Eve does not instinctively see herself as secondary to Adam, but must be *taught* her place. When she first sees Adam, she even considers returning to her reflection, implying an initial reluctance to embrace the biblical hierarchy of male authority.

4. Milton's Theological Perspective on Free Will

- By giving Eve a moment of autonomous reflection before she is guided to Adam, Milton highlights the theme of free will, reinforcing the idea that both Adam and Eve must actively choose obedience to God's order.
- Eve's hesitation suggests a natural inclination toward independence, which later manifests in her decision to separate from Adam in Book 9—making her more susceptible to Satan's temptation.

Relevant Scholarship on This Scene

- Diane Kelsey McColley (*Milton's Eve*): McColley argues that Milton's Eve is not a passive creation but a thinking, feeling being with her own inner life. The reflection scene, in her view, adds depth to Eve by giving her a distinct experience of self-discovery, which makes her later choices more psychologically complex.
- Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (*The Madwoman in the Attic*): They interpret this moment as evidence of Eve's proto-feminist consciousness—a brief glimpse of female autonomy that is quickly redirected into male subordination.
- Stanley Fish (*Surprised by Sin*): Fish sees this moment as foreshadowing the Fall, since Eve's brief love of her own image represents an early stage of the disobedience that will lead her to seek knowledge (and power) apart from Adam and God.

Book 9 (Beginning): The Lead-Up to the Fall

- Milton dramatically shifts the tone, stating that the story now turns tragic.
 - Satan, after escaping the angelic guards, returns to Eden and carefully plots his next move.
 - He sneaks back in by possessing the body of a serpent and hides, waiting for the right moment to tempt Eve.
 - Meanwhile, Adam and Eve prepare for their daily work in the Garden. Eve suggests that they work separately for efficiency, believing they are strong enough to resist temptation.
 - Adam, reluctant, warns Eve that they are stronger together and that Satan may try to attack them alone.
 - Eve, displaying pride and independence, insists that she can handle herself and that if they are truly virtuous, they should not have to live in fear.
 - Adam ultimately consents, but reluctantly, foreshadowing disaster.
-

BOOK 9

THE ARGUMENT

Satan having compast the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by Night into Paradise, enters into the Serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the Morning go forth to thir labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alledging the danger, lest that Enemy, of whom they were forewarn'd, should attempt her found alone: Eve loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make tryal of her strength; Adam at last yields: The Serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other Creatures. Eve wondring to hear the Serpent speak, asks how he attain'd to human speech and such understanding not till now; the Serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain Tree in the Garden he attain'd both to Speech and Reason, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that Tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden: The Serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she pleas'd with the taste deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not, at last brings him of the Fruit, relates what perswaded her to eat thereof: Adam at first amaz'd, but perceiving her lost, resolves through vehemence of love to perish with her; and extenuating the trespass, eats also of the Fruit: The Effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover thir nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

[Lines 1-204 Omitted for the sake of time]

Adam, well may we labour still to dress [205]
This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour,
Our pleasant task enjoyn'd, but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint⁸⁶; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, [210]
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wilde. Thou therefore now advise
Or hear what to my minde first thoughts present,
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind [215]
The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct
The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I
In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt
With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon:
For while so near each other thus all day [220]
Our taske we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our dayes work brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of Supper comes unearn'd. [225]

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
Sole Eve, Associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living Creatures deare,

⁸⁶ Echoes Hesiod's *Works and Days*, where agricultural labor is both a divine punishment and an essential part of human existence.

Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts imployd
 How we might best fulfill the work which here [230]
 God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
 In Woman, then to studie houshold good,
 And good workes in her Husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd [235]
 Labour, as to debarr us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from Reason flow,
 To brute deni'd, and are of Love the food, [240]
 Love not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksom toile, but to delight
 He made us, and delight to Reason joyn'd.
 These paths & Bowers doubt not but our joynt hands
 Will keep from Wilderness with ease, as wide [245]
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
 Assist us: But if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.
 For solitude somtimes is best societie,
 And short retirement urges sweet returne. [250]
 But other doubt possesses me, least harm
 Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou knowst
 What hath bin warn'd us, what malicious Foe
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame [255]
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
 Hopeless to circumvent us joynd, where each
 To other speedie aide might lend at need; [260]
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealtie from God, or to disturb
 Conjugal Love, then which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envie more;
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side [265]
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
 The Wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her Husband staies,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.

To whom the Virgin Majestie of Eve, [270]
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,

With sweet austere composure thus reply'd,

Offspring of Heav'n and Earth, and all Earths Lord,
That such an Enemie we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informd I learne, [275]
And from the parting Angel over-heard
As in a shadie nook I stood behind,
Just then returnd at shut of Evening Flours.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therfore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe [280]
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such,
As wee, not capable of death or paine,
Can either not receive, or can repell.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain inferrs [285]
Thy equal fear that my firm Faith and Love
Can by his fraud be shak'n or seduc't;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy brest
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?

To whom with healing words Adam replyd. [290]
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve,
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our Foe. [295]
For hee who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd
Not incorruptible of Faith, not prooff
Against temptation: thou thy self with scorne
And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, [300]
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The Enemie, though bold, will hardly dare,
Or daring, first on mee th' assault shall light. [305]
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Suttle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels nor think superfluous others aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every Vertue, in thy sight [310]
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reacht

Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel [315]
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy Vertue tri'd.

So spake domestick Adam in his care
And Matrimonial Love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her Faith sincere, [320]
Thus her reply with accent sweet renewd.

If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit strait'nd by a Foe,
Suttle or violent, we not endu'd
Single with like defence, wherever met, [325]
How are we happie, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: onely our Foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integritie: his foul esteeme
Sticks no dishonor on our Front, but turns [330]
Foul on himself; then wherefore shund or feard
By us? who rather double honour gaine
From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
Favour from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is Faith, Love, Vertue unassaid [335]
Alone, without exterior help sustaind?
Let us not then suspect our happie State
Left so imperfet by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Fraile is our happiness, if this be so, [340]
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.

To whom thus Adam fervently repli'd.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them, his creating hand
Nothing imperfet or deficient left [345]
Of all that he Created, much less Man,
Or aught that might his happie State secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm. [350]
But God left free the Will, for what obeyes
Reason, is free, and Reason he made right
But bid her well beware⁸⁷, and still erect,

⁸⁷ Alludes to Augustine's doctrine of the *Recta Ratio* (Right Reason), which can be perverted by pride and false wisdom.

Least by some faire appeering good surpris'd
 She dictate false, and misinforme the Will [355]
 To do what God expresly hath forbid,
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoynes,
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since Reason not impossibly may meet [360]
 Some specious object by the Foe subornd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warnd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoide
 Were better, and most likelie if from mee [365]
 Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancie, approve
 First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
 But if thou think, trial unsought may finde [370]
 Us both securer then thus warnd thou seemst,
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence, relie
 On what thou hast of vertue, summon all,
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine. [375]

So spake the Patriarch of Mankinde, but Eve
 Persisted, yet submiss, though last, repli'd.

With thy permission then, and thus forewarnd
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touchd onely, that our trial, when least sought, [380]
 May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar'd,
 The willinger I goe, nor much expect
 A Foe so proud will first the weaker seek,
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.
 Thus saying, from her Husbands hand her hand [385]
 Soft she withdrew, and like a Wood-Nymph light
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's Train⁸⁸,
 Betook her to the Groves, but Delia's self
 In gate surpass'd and Goddess-like deport,
 Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver arm'd, [390]
 But with such Gardning Tools as Art yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire had form'd, or Angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,

⁸⁸ Oreads and Dryads are Greek nymphs tied to trees and forests. "Delia" refers to Artemis, the virgin huntress, whose train of nymphs also swore chastity, ironically contrasting Eve's role as a wife.

Likeliest she seemd, Pomona when she fled
 Vertumnus⁸⁹, or to Ceres in her Prime, [395]
 Yet Virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his Eye pursu'd
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick returne
 Repeated, shee to him as oft engag'd [400]
 To be returnd by Noon amid the Bowre,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or Afternoons repose.
 O much deceav'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse! [405]
 Thou never from that houre in Paradise
 Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;
 Such ambush hid among sweet Flours and Shades
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back [410]
 Despoild of Innocence, of Faith, of Bliss.
 For now, and since first break of dawne the Fiend,
 Meer Serpent in appearance, forth was come,
 And on his Quest, where likeliest he might finde
 The onely two of Mankinde, but in them [415]
 The whole included Race, his purposd prey.
 In Bowre and Field he sought, where any tuft
 Of Grove or Garden-Plot more pleasant lay,
 Thir tendance or Plantation for delight,
 By Fountain or by shadie Rivulet [420]
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate, he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood, [425]
 Half spi'd, so thick the Roses bushing round
 About her glowd, oft stooping to support
 Each Flour of slender stalk, whose head though gay
 Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold,
 Hung drooping unsustaind, them she upstaies [430]
 Gently with Mirtle band, mindless the while,
 Her self, though fairest unsupported Flour,
 From her best prop so farr, and storm so nigh.
 Neerer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
 Of stateliest Covert, Cedar, Pine, or Palme, [435]

⁸⁹ In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Pomona is a nymph who rejects suitors until Vertumnus, disguised as an old woman, persuades her. The parallel to Eve suggests her own persuasion into temptation.

Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
 Among thick-wov'n Arborets and Flours
 Imborderd on each Bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious then those Gardens feign'd
 Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd [440]
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes Son,
 Or that, not Mystic, where the Sapient King
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian Spouse.
 Much hee the Place admir'd, the Person more.
 As one who long in populous City pent, [445]
 Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy the Aire,
 Forth issuing on a Summers Morn to breathe
 Among the pleasant Villages and Farmes
 Adjoynd, from each thing met conceaves delight,
 The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine, [450]
 Or Dairie, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance with Nymphlike step fair Virgin pass,
 What pleasing seemd, for her now pleases more,
 She most, and in her look summs all Delight.
 Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold [455]
 This Flourie Plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus earlie, thus alone; her Heav'nly forme
 Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,
 Her graceful Innocence, her every Aire
 Of gesture or lest action overawd [460]
 His Malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
 That space the Evil one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remaind
 Stupidly good, of enmitie disarm'd, [465]
 Of guile, of hate, of envie, of revenge;
 But the hot Hell that always in him burnes,
 Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon [470]
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me, with what sweet
 Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us, hate, not love, nor hope [475]
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying, other joy

To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles, behold alone [480]
 The Woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her Husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage hautie, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould, [485]
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and paine
 Infeebl'd me, to what I was in Heav'n.
 Shee fair, divinely fair, fit Love for Gods,
 Not terrible, though terrour be in Love [490]
 And beautie, not approacht by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger, under shew of Love well feign'd,
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the Enemie of Mankind, enclos'd
 In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward Eve [495]
 Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,
 Circular base of rising foulds, that tour'd
 Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head
 Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes; [500]
 With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect
 Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass
 Floted redundant: pleasing was his shape,
 And lovely, never since of Serpent kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd [505]
 Hermione and Cadmus⁹⁰, or the God
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transformd
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline⁹¹ was seen,
 Hee with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio the highth of Rome. With tract oblique [510]
 At first, as one who sought access, but feard
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
 As when a Ship by skilful Stearsman wrought
 Nigh Rivers mouth or Foreland, where the Wind
 Veres oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Saile; [515]
 So varied hee, and of his tortuous Train
 Curld many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,

⁹⁰ A reference to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book 4), where Cadmus and his wife Hermione are transformed into serpents. This parallels Satan's own transformation into a snake.

⁹¹ Ammonian Jove (Zeus Ammon) was worshiped in Libya, while Capitoline Jove (Jupiter) was the chief god of Rome. This links Satan's shifting form to pagan deities, reinforcing his deceptive nature.

To lure her Eye; shee busied heard the sound
 Of rusling Leaves, but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the Field, [520]
 From every Beast, more duteous at her call,
 Then at Circean call⁹² the Herd disguis'd.
 Hee boulder now, uncall'd before her stood;
 But as in gaze admiring: Oft he bowd
 His turret Crest, and sleek enamel'd Neck, [525]
 Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turnd at length
 The Eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
 Of her attention gaind, with Serpent Tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal Air, [530]
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.

Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole Wonder, much less arm
 Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze [535]
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feard
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore [540]
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
 Where universally admir'd; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except, [545]
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
 A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd
 By Angels numberless, thy daily Train.

So glaz'd the Tempter, and his Proem tun'd;
 Into the Heart of Eve his words made way, [550]
 Though at the voice much marveling; at length
 Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake.
 What may this mean? Language of Man pronounc't
 By Tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest?
 The first at lest of these I thought deni'd [555]
 To Beasts, whom God on thir Creation-Day
 Created mute to all articulat sound;

⁹² Circe, the sorceress in The Odyssey, turns men into beasts. Here, the reference inverts the myth: instead of beasts becoming men, Satan (a beast) speaks with deceptive human reason.

The latter I demurre, for in thir looks
Much reason, and in thir actions oft appeers.
Thee, Serpent, sottlest beast of all the field [560]
I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight? [565]
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful Tempter thus reply'd.
Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve,
Easie to mee it is to tell thee all
What thou commandst and right thou shouldst be obeyd: [570]
I was at first as other Beasts that graze
The trodden Herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food, nor aught but food discern'd
Or Sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till on a day roaving the field, I chanc'd [575]
A goodly Tree farr distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixt,
Ruddie and Gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughes a savorie odour blow'n,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense, [580]
Then smell of sweetest Fenel or the Teats
Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Eevn,
Unsuckt of Lamb or Kid, that tend thir play.
To satisfie the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair Apples, I resolv'd [585]
Not to deferr; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful perswaders, quick'nd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keene.
About the mossie Trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require [590]
Thy utmost reach or Adams: Round the Tree
All other Beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the Tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill [595]
I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
At Feed or Fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceave
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of Reason in my inward Powers, and Speech [600]

Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to Speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in Heav'n,
Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good; [605]
But all that fair and good in thy Divine
Semblance, and in thy Beauties heav'nly Ray
United I beheld; no Fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compel'd
Mee thus, though importune perhaps, to come [610]
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
Sovran of Creatures, universal Dame.

So talk'd the spirited sly Snake; and Eve
Yet more amaz'd unwarie thus reply'd.

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt [615]
The vertue of that Fruit, in thee first prov'd:
But say, where grows the Tree, from hence how far?
For many are the Trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice, [620]
As leaves a greater store of Fruit untoucht,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to thir provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her Bearth.

To whom the wilie Adder, blithe and glad. [625]
Empress, the way is readie, and not long,
Beyond a row of Myrtles, on a Flat,
Fast by a Fountain, one small Thicket past
Of blowing Myrrh and Balme; if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. [630]

Lead then, said Eve. Hee leading swiftly rowld
In tangles, and made intricate seem strait,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Bright'ns his Crest, as when a wandring Fire
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night [635]
Condenses, and the cold invirons round,
Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends
Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way [640]

To Boggs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Poole,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour farr.
So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve our credulous Mother, to the Tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe; [645]
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to mee, though Fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose vertue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. [650]
But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that Command
Sole Daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to our selves, our Reason is our Law.

To whom the Tempter guilefully repli'd. [655]
Indeed? hath God then said that of the Fruit
Of all these Garden Trees ye shall not eate,
Yet Lords declar'd of all in Earth or Aire?

To whom thus Eve yet sinless. Of the Fruit
Of each Tree in the Garden we may eate, [660]
But of the Fruit of this fair Tree amidst
The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eate
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die.

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The Tempter, but with shew of Zeale and Love [665]
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuats disturbd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of som great matter to begin.
As when of old som Orator renound [670]
In Athens or free Rome, where Eloquence
Flourishd, since mute, to som great cause addrest,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay [675]
Of Preface brooking through his Zeal of Right.
So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown
The Tempter all impassiond thus began.

O Sacred, Wise, and Wisdom-giving Plant,

Mother of Science, Now I feel thy Power [680]
 Within me cleere, not onely to discerne
 Things in thir Causes, but to trace the wayes
 Of highest Agents, deemd however wise.
 Queen of this Universe⁹³, doe not believe
 Those rigid threats of Death; ye shall not Die: [685]
 How should ye? by the Fruit? it gives you Life
 To Knowledge, By the Threatner? look on mee,
 Mee who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
 And life more perfet have attaind then Fate
 Meant mee, by ventring higher then my Lot. [690]
 Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
 Is open? or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty Trespass, and not praise
 Rather your dauntless vertue, whom the pain
 Of Death denounc't, whatever thing Death be, [695]
 Deterred not from atchieving what might leade
 To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil;
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunnd?
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; [700]
 Not just, not God; not feard then, nor obeyd:
 Your feare it self of Death removes the feare.
 Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
 Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
 His worshippers; he knows that in the day [705]
 Ye Eate thereof, your Eyes that seem so cleere,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Op'nd and cleerd, and ye shall be as Gods,
 Knowing both Good and Evil⁹⁴ as they know.
 That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man, [710]
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet,
 I of brute human, yee of human Gods.
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on Gods, death to be wisht,
 Though threat'nd, which no worse then this can bring. [715]
 And what are Gods that Man may not become
 As they, participating God-like food?
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds;

⁹³ An echo of the Marian title Regina Mundi (Queen of the World), though here applied to Eve in a way that foreshadows her fall, contrasting the Virgin Mary's redemptive role.

⁹⁴ Directly from Genesis 3:5, but also aligns with Gnostic traditions where knowledge (*gnosis*) is framed as a liberating force. Milton simultaneously critiques and repurposes this interpretation.

I question it, for this fair Earth I see, [720]
Warm'd by the Sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: If they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of Good and Evil in this Tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies [725]
Th' offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this Tree
Impart against his will if all be his?
Or is it envie, and can envie dwell
In Heav'nly breasts? these, these and many more [730]
Causes import your need of this fair Fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.

He ended, and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too easie entrance won:
Fixt on the Fruit she gaz'd, which to behold [735]
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his perswasive words, impregn'd
With Reason, to her seeming, and with Truth;
Mean while the hour of Noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell [740]
So savorie of that Fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Sollicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to her self she mus'd.

Great are thy Vertues, doubtless, best of Fruits. [745]
Though kept from Man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The Tongue not made for Speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise hee also who forbids thy use, [750]
Conceales not from us, naming thee the Tree
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it inferrs the good
By thee communicated, and our want: [755]
For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions binde not. But if Death [760]
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then

Our inward freedom? In the day we eate
 Of this fair Fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
 How dies the Serpent? hee hath eat'n and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns, [765]
 Irrational till then. For us alone
 Was death invented? or to us deni'd
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
 For Beasts it seems: yet that one Beast which first
 Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy [770]
 The good befall'n him, Author unsuspect,
 Friendly to man, farr from deceit or guile.
 What fear I then, rather what know to feare
 Under this ignorance of good and Evil,
 Of God or Death, of Law or Penaltie? [775]
 Here grows the Cure of all, this Fruit Divine,
 Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste,
 Of vertue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both Bodie and Mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour [780]
 Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
 Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
 Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,
 That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk
 The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for Eve [785]
 Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd,
 In Fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fansied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledg, nor was God-head from her thought. [790]
 Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
 And knew not eating Death: Sate at length,
 And hight'nd as with Wine, jocond and boon,
 Thus to her self she pleasingly began.

O Sovran, vertuous, precious of all Trees [795]
 In Paradise, of operation blest
 To Sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd⁹⁵,
 And thy fair Fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created; but henceforth my early care,
 Not without Song, each Morning, and due praise [800]
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;

⁹⁵ A veiled allusion to Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, where Sapience (Wisdom) is misunderstood and maligned in the fallen world.

Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know;
Though others envie what they cannot give; [805]
For had the gift bin theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remaind
In ignorance, thou op'nst Wisdoms way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire. [810]
And I perhaps am secret; Heav'n is high,
High and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his Spies [815]
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appeer? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with mee, or rather not,
But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power [820]
Without Copartner? so to add what wants
In Femal Sex, the more to draw his Love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesireable, sometime
Superior: for inferior who is free? [825]
This may be well: but what if God have seen
And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve, [830]
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the Tree her step she turnd,
But first low Reverence don, as to the power [835]
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd
From Nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest Flours a Garland to adorne [840]
Her Tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As Reapers oft are wont thir Harvest Queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd;
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, [845]

Misgave him; hee the faulting measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That Morn when first they parted; by the Tree
Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
Scarse from the Tree returning; in her hand [850]
A bough of fairest fruit that downie smil'd,
New gatherd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
To him she hasted, in her face excuse
Came Prologue, and Apologie to prompt,
Which with bland words at will she thus addrest. [855]

Hast thou not wonderd, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have misst, and thought it long, depriv'd
Thy presence, agonie of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
Mean I to trie, what rash untri'd I sought, [860]
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath bin the cause, and wonderful to heare:
This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Op'ning the way, but of Divine effect [865]
To open Eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath bin tasted such: the Serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as wee, or not obeying,
Hath eat'n of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatn'd, but thenceforth [870]
Endu'd with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with mee
Persuasively hath so prevaild, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond, opener mine Eyes [875]
Dimm erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. [880]
Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot
May joyne us, equal Joy, as equal Love;
Least thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoyne us, and I then too late renounce
Deitie for thee, when Fate will not permit. [885]

Thus Eve with Countenance blithe her storie told;
But in her Cheek distemper flushing glowd.

On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal Trespass don by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and Blank, while horror chill [890]
Ran through his veins, and all his joynts relax'd;
From his slack hand the Garland wreath'd for Eve
Down drop'd, and all the faded Roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke. [895]

O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all Gods works, Creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be formd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, [900]
Defac't, deflourd, and now to Death devote?
Rather how hast thou yeelded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred Fruit forbidd'n! som cursed fraud
Of Enemie hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown, [905]
And mee with thee hath ruind, for with thee
Certain my resolution is to Die;
How can I live without thee, how forgoe
Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly joyn'd,
To live again in these wilde Woods forlorn? [910]
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another Rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,
Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State [915]
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbd
Submitting to what seemd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his Words to Eve he turnd. [920]

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventurous Eve
And peril great provok't, who thus hath dar'd
Had it been onely coveting to Eye
That sacred Fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under banne to touch. [925]
But past who can recall, or don undoe?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate, yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not Die, perhaps the Fact

Is not so hainous now, foretasted Fruit,
 Profan'd first by the Serpent, by him first [930]
 Made common and unhallowd ere our taste;
 Nor yet on him found deadly, he yet lives,
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gaines to live as Man
 Higher degree of Life, inducement strong
 To us, as likely tasting to attaine [935]
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be
 But to be Gods, or Angels Demi-gods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
 Though threatning, will in earnest so destroy
 Us his prime Creatures, dignifi'd so high, [940]
 Set over all his Works, which in our Fall,
 For us created, needs with us must faile,
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour loose,
 Not well conceav'd of God, who though his Power [945]
 Creation could repeate, yet would be loath
 Us to abolish, least the Adversary
 Triumph and say; Fickle their State whom God
 Most Favors, who can please him long; Mee first
 He ruind, now Mankind; whom will he next? [950]
 Matter of scorne, not to be given the Foe,
 However I with thee have fixt my Lot,
 Certain to undergoe like doom, if Death
 Consort with thee, Death is to mee as Life;
 So forcible within my heart I feel [955]
 The Bond of Nature draw me to my owne,
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
 Our State cannot be severd, we are one,
 One Flesh; to loose thee were to loose my self.

So Adam, and thus Eve to him repli'd. [960]
 O glorious trial of exceeding Love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high!
 Ingaging me to emulate, but short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attaine,
 Adam, from whose deare side I boast me sprung, [965]
 And gladly of our Union heare thee speak,
 One Heart, one Soul in both; whereof good prooff
 This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
 Rather then Death or aught then Death more dread
 Shall separate us, linkt in Love so deare, [970]
 To undergoe with mee one Guilt, one Crime,

If any be, of tasting this fair Fruit,
Whose vertue, for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion hath presented
This happie trial of thy Love, which else [975]
So eminently never had bin known.
Were it I thought Death menac't would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not perswade thee, rather die
Deserted, then oblige thee with a fact [980]
Pernicious to thy Peace, chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful Love unequald; but I feel
Farr otherwise th' event, not Death, but Life
Augmented, op'nd Eyes, new Hopes, new Joyes, [985]
Taste so Divine, that what of sweet before
Hath toucht my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of Death deliver to the Windes.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy [990]
Tenderly wept, much won that he his Love
Had so enobl'd, as of choice to incurr
Divine displeasure for her sake, or Death.
In recompence (for such compliance bad
Such recompence best merits) from the bough [995]
She gave him of that fair enticing Fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat
Against his better knowledge, not deceav'd,
But fondly overcome with Femal charm.
Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again [1000]
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,
Skie lowr'd, and muttering Thunder, som sad drops
Wept at compleating of the mortal Sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate [1005]
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe
Him with her lov'd societie, that now
As with new Wine intoxicated both
They swim in mirth, and fansie that they feel
Divinitie within them breeding wings [1010]
Wherewith to scorne the Earth: but that false Fruit
Farr other operation first displaid,
Carnal desire enflaming, hee on Eve
Began to cast lascivious Eyes, she him

As wantonly repaid; in Lust they burne: [1015]
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move,

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of Sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And Palate call judicious; I the praise [1020]
Yeild thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful Fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd, [1025]
For this one Tree had bin forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh't, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious Fare;
For never did thy Beautie since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd [1030]
With all perfections, so enflame my sense
With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now
Then ever, bountie of this vertuous Tree.

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood [1035]
Of Eve, whose Eye darted contagious Fire.
Her hand he seisd, and to a shadie bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbowl'd
He led her nothing loath; Flours were the Couch,
Pansies, and Violets, and Asphodel, [1040]
And Hyacinth, Earths freshest softest lap.
There they thir fill of Love and Loves disport
Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seale,
The solace of thir sin, till dewie sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with thir amorous play. [1045]
Soon as the force of that fallacious Fruit,
That with exhilerating vapour bland
About thir spirits had plaid, and inmost powers
Made erre, was now exhal'd, and grosser sleep
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams [1050]
Encumberd, now had left them, up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found thir Eyes how op'nd, and thir minds
How dark'nd; innocence, that as a veile
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gon, [1055]
Just confidence, and native righteousness

And honour from about them, naked left
 To guiltie shame hee cover'd, but his Robe
 Uncover'd more⁹⁶, so rose the Danite strong
 Herculean Samson from the Harlot-lap [1060]
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
 Shorn of his strength, They destitute and bare
 Of all thir vertue: silent, and in face
 Confounded long they sate, as struck'n mute,
 Till Adam, though not less then Eve abasht, [1065]
 At length gave utterance to these words constraind.

O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give eare
 To that false Worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfet Mans voice, true in our Fall,
 False in our promis'd Rising; since our Eyes [1070]
 Op'nd we find indeed, and find we know
 Both Good and Evil, Good lost, and Evil got,
 Bad Fruit of Knowledge, if this be to know,
 Which leaves us naked thus, of Honour void,
 Of Innocence, of Faith, of Puritie, [1075]
 Our wonted Ornaments now soild and staind,
 And in our Faces evident the signes
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face [1080]
 Henceforth of God or Angel, earst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes
 Will dazle now this earthly, with thir blaze
 Insufferably bright. O might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade [1085]
 Obscur'd, where highest Woods impenetrable
 To Starr or Sun-light⁹⁷, spread thir umbrage broad,
 And brown as Evening: Cover me ye Pines,
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more. [1090]
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The Parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen,
 Some Tree whose broad smooth Leaves together sowl, [1095]
 And girded on our loyns, may cover round

⁹⁶ Invokes the biblical curse in Genesis 3:7 but also recalls Samson in *Judges* 16:20, who, after being shorn of his strength by Delilah, is exposed and humiliated.

⁹⁷ Evokes Dante's *Inferno*, where the dark forest represents a state of spiritual confusion and despair.

Those middle parts, that this new commer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsel'd hee, and both together went
Into the thickest Wood, there soon they chose [1100]
The Figtree, not that kind for Fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan spreads her Armes
Braunching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended Twigs take root, and Daughters grow [1105]
About the Mother Tree, a Pillard shade
High overarch't, and echoing Walks between;
There oft the Indian Herdsman shunning heate
Shelters in coole, and tends his pasturing Herds
At Loopholes cut through thickest shade: Those Leaves [1110]
They gatherd, broad as Amazonian Targe⁹⁸,
And with what skill they had, together sowl,
To gird thir waste, vain Covering if to hide
Thir guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike
To that first naked Glorie. Such of late [1115]
Columbus found th' American so girt⁹⁹
With featherd Cincture, naked else and wilde
Among the Trees on Iles and woodie Shores.
Thus fenc't, and as they thought, thir shame in part
Coverd, but not at rest or ease of Mind, [1120]
They sate them down to weep, nor onely Teares
Raind at thir Eyes, but high Winds worse within
Began to rise, high Passions, Anger, Hate,
Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore
Thir inward State of Mind, calm Region once [1125]
And full of Peace, now tost and turbulent:
For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sovran Reason claimd [1130]
Superior sway: From thus distemperd brest,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alterd stile,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewd.

Would thou hadst heark'nd to my words, and stai'd
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange [1135]
Desire of wandring this unhappie Morn,

⁹⁸ The *targe* (shield) of the Amazons, referencing their mythic strength but here ironically used for concealment rather than battle.

⁹⁹ A striking historical allusion to European encounters with Indigenous peoples, comparing their dress to Adam and Eve's futile attempt at modesty.

I know not whence possessd thee; we had then
Remaind still happie, not as now, despoild
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve [1140]
The Faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to faile.

To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame thus Eve.
What words have past thy Lips, Adam severe,
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will [1145]
Of wandring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happ'nd thou being by,
Or to thy self perhaps: hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake; [1150]
No ground of enmitie between us known,
Why hee should mean me ill, or seek to harme.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a liveless Rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head [1155]
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst?
Too facil then thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou bin firm and fixt in thy dissent, [1160]
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with mee.

To whom then first incenst Adam repli'd,
Is this the Love, is this the recompence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, exprest
Immutable when thou wert lost, not I, [1165]
Who might have liv'd and joyd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather Death with thee:
And am I now upbraided, as the cause
Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more? [1170]
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking Enemie
That lay in wait; beyond this had bin force,
And force upon free Will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure [1175]
Either to meet no danger, or to finde
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err'd in overmuch admiring

What seemd in thee so perfet, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue [1180]
That errour now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in Women overtrusting
Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brook,
And left to her self, if evil thence ensue, [1185]
Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of thir vain contest appeer'd no end.

BOOK 10

THE ARGUMENT

Mans transgression known, the Guardian Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve thir vigilance, and are approv'd, God declaring that The entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the Transgressors, who descends and gives Sentence accordingly; then in pity cloaths them both, and reascends. Sin and Death sitting till then at the Gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathie feeling the success of Satan in this new World, and the sin by Man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confin'd in Hell, but to follow Satan thir Sire up to the place of Man: To make the way easier from Hell to this World to and fro, they pave a broad Highway or Bridge over Chaos, according to the Track that Satan first made; then preparing for Earth, they meet him proud of his success returning to Hell; thir mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium, in full of assembly relates with boasting his success against Man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transform'd with himself also suddenly into Serpents, according to his doom giv'n in Paradise; then deluded with a shew of the forbidden Tree springing up before them, they greedily reaching to take of the Fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final Victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his Angels to make several alterations in the Heavens and Elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fall'n condition heavily bewailes, rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists and at length appeases him: then to evade the Curse likely to fall on thir Ofspring, proposes to Adam violent wayes which he approves not, but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late Promise made them, that her Seed should be reveng'd on the Serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek Peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

MEanwhile the hainous and despightfull act¹⁰⁰
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
Hee in the Serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her Husband shee, to taste the fatall fruit,
Was known in Heav'n; for what can scape the Eye [5]
Of God All-seeing, or deceive his Heart
Omniscient, who in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the minde
Of Man, with strength entire, and free will arm'd¹⁰¹,
Complete to have discover'd and repulst [10]
Whatever wiles of Foe or seeming Friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd
The high Injunction not to taste that Fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurr'd, what could they less, the penaltie, [15]
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste
Th' Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad¹⁰²
For Man, for of his state by this they knew,

¹⁰⁰ The "hainous and despightfull act" refers to the Fall of Man, emphasizing Satan's deception of Eve and Adam's subsequent sin. The phrase "was known in Heav'n" underscores God's omniscience, aligning with Psalms 33:13-15: "The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man."

¹⁰¹ The concept of "free will" is central to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, reflecting Christian theology, particularly *De Doctrina Christiana*, where Milton rejects predestination. Milton asserts that Adam and Eve were "arm'd" with reason and strength, capable of resisting temptation.

¹⁰² The "Angelick Guards" returning to Heaven mirrors the fallen angels' expulsion from it. There's a contrast between their sadness for humanity and Satan's triumphal return to Hell.

Much wondring how the suttel Fiend had stoln [20]
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From Earth arriv'd at Heaven Gate, displeas'd
All were who heard, dim sadness did not spare
That time Celestial visages, yet mixt
With pitie, violated not thir bliss¹⁰³. [25]
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes
Th' ethereal People ran, to hear and know
How all befell: they towards the Throne Supream
Accountable made haste to make appear
With righteous plea, thir utmost vigilance, [30]
And easily approv'd; when the most High
Eternal Father from his secret Cloud,
Amidst in Thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Assembl'd Angels, and ye Powers return'd
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismaid, [35]
Nor troubl'd at these tidings from the Earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this Tempter cross'd the Gulf from Hell.
I told ye then he should prevail and speed [40]
On his bad Errand, Man should be seduc't
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no Decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his Fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse [45]
His free Will, to her own inclining left
In eevn scale. But fall'n he is, and now
What rests but that the mortal Sentence pass
On his transgression Death denounc't that day,
Which he presumes already vain and void, [50]
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By some immediate stroak; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bountie scorn'd.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee [55]
Vicegerent Son¹⁰⁴, to thee I have transferr'd
All Judgement whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell.
Easie it might be seen that I intend

¹⁰³ Celestial beings feel sadness but retain their divine bliss—this reflects *Aquinas' Summa Theologica*, which describes how angels, being pure intellect, do not feel sorrow in a human sense.

¹⁰⁴ The "Vicegerent Son" is Jesus, prefiguring his role in the New Testament. "Mercie colleague with Justice" echoes Psalm 85:10, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Mercie colleague with Justice, sending thee
Mans Friend his Mediator, his design'd [60]
Both Ransom and Redeemer voluntarie¹⁰⁵,
And destin'd Man himself to judge Man fall'n.

So spake the Father, and unfoulding bright
Toward the right hand his Glorie, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded Deitie; he full [65]
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd milde.

Father Eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in Heav'n and Earth to do thy will
Supream, that thou in mee thy Son belov'd [70]
Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On Earth these thy transgressors, but thou knowst,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on mee must light,
When time shall be, for so I undertook
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtaine [75]
Of right, that I may mitigate thir doom
On me deriv'd, yet I shall temper so
Justice with Mercie, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor Train, where none [80]
Are to behold the Judgement, but the judg'd,
Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and Rebel to all Law
Conviction to the Serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant Seat he rose [85]
Of high collateral glorie: him Thrones and Powers,
Princedomes, and Dominations ministrant
Accompanied to Heaven Gate, from whence
Eden and all the Coast in prospect lay.
Down he descended strait; the speed of Gods [90]
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the Sun in Western cadence low
From Noon, and gentle Aires due at thir hour
To fan the Earth now wak'd, and usher in
The Eevning coole, when he from wrauth more coole [95]
Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both

¹⁰⁵ Christ as "Mediator" and "Redeemer voluntarie" reflects 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

To sentence Man¹⁰⁶: the voice of God they heard
Now walking in the Garden, by soft windes
Brought to thir Ears, while day declin'd, they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among [100]
The thickest Trees, both Man and Wife, till God
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.

Where art thou Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude, [105]
Where obvious dutie erewhile appear'd unsaught:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth.
He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first
To offend, discount'nanc't both, and discompos'd; [110]
Love was not in thir looks¹⁰⁷, either to God
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despaire,
Anger, and obstinacie, and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam fault'ring long, thus answer'd brief. [115]

I heard thee in the Garden, and of thy voice
Affraid, being naked, hid my self. To whom
The gracious Judge without revile repli'd.

My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoyc't, how is it now become [120]
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the Tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?

To whom thus Adam sore beset repli'd.
O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand [125]
Before my Judge, either to undergoe
My self the total Crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her Faith to me remaines,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame [130]
By my complaint; but strict necessitie
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint

¹⁰⁶ God's approach to judge Adam and Eve parallels Genesis 3:8-9, where God "walks in the garden in the cool of the day" and asks Adam, "Where art thou?"

¹⁰⁷ Adam and Eve's response echoes their shift from innocence to guilt, with "Love was not in thir looks" reflecting how sin distorts relationships—both with God and between themselves.

Least on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd; though should I hold my peace, yet thou [135]
Wouldst easily detect what I conceale.
This Woman whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill, [140]
And what she did, whatever in it self,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
Shee gave me of the Tree, and I did eate.

To whom the sovran Presence thus repli'd.
Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey¹⁰⁸ [145]
Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou did'st resigne thy Manhood, and the Place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection farr excell'd [150]
Hers in all real dignitie: Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy Love, not thy Subjection, and her Gifts
Were such as under Government well seem'd,
Unseemly to beare rule¹⁰⁹, which was thy part [155]
And person, hadst thou known thy self aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:
Say Woman, what is this which thou hast done?

To whom sad Eve with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge [160]
Bold or loquacious, thus abasht repli'd.

The Serpent me beguil'd and I did eate.

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To Judgement he proceeded on th' accus'd
Serpent though brute, unable to transferre [165]

¹⁰⁸This rebuke mirrors Genesis 3:12: "*And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*" Adam shifts blame to Eve instead of taking responsibility for his own sin. Milton presents Adam's failure as one of improper obedience—he followed Eve rather than God.

¹⁰⁹This reflects 1 Timothy 2:12: "*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*" Milton, influenced by 17th-century Protestant ideals, reinforces traditional gender hierarchies, portraying Adam as divinely intended to be the leader while Eve is meant to be subordinate.

The Guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his Creation; justly then accurst,
As vitiated in Nature: more to know
Concern'd not Man (since he no further knew) [170]
Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
To Satan first in sin his doom apply'd
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

Because thou hast done this, thou art accurst [175]
Above all Cattle, each Beast of the Field;
Upon thy Belly groveling thou shalt goe,
And dust shalt eat all the dayes of thy Life.
Between Thee and the Woman I will put
Enmitie, and between thine and her Seed¹¹⁰; [180]
Her Seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.

So spake this Oracle, then verifi'd
When Jesus son of Mary second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like¹¹¹ Lightning down from Heav'n,
Prince of the Aire; then rising from his Grave [185]
Spoild Principalities and Powers, triumpht
In open shew, and with ascension bright
Captivity led captive through the Aire,
The Realm it self of Satan long usurpt,
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; [190]
Eevn hee who now foretold his fatal bruise,
And to the Woman thus his Sentence turn'd.

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiplie
By thy Conception; Children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth, and to thy Husbands will [195]
Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc'd.
Because thou hast heark'nd to the voice of thy Wife,
And eaten of the Tree concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying: Thou shalt not eate thereof, [200]
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake¹¹², thou in sorrow

¹¹⁰ The curse on the serpent—"thou bruise his heel"—is the Protoevangelium (Genesis 3:15), the first biblical prophecy of Christ's victory over Satan.

¹¹¹ Echoes Luke 10:18, where Christ says, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." This foreshadows the ultimate defeat of Satan at the end of time.

¹¹² The curse upon Adam echoes Genesis 3:17-19, where labor is imposed upon humanity as a consequence of sin. The phrase "Thorns also and Thistles" is biblical imagery for suffering and hardship.

Shalt eate thereof all the days of thy Life;
Thorns also and Thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid, and thou shalt eate th' Herb of th' Field,
In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, [205]
Till thou return unto the ground, for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy Birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust returne¹¹³.

So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,
And th' instant stroke of Death denounc't that day [210]
Remov'd farr off; then pittying how they stood
Before him naked to the aire, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
As when he wash'd his servants feet so now [215]
As Father of his Familie he clad
Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts, or slain,
Or as the Snake with youthful Coate repaid;
And thought not much to cloath his Enemies:
Nor hee thir outward onely with the Skins [220]
Of Beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his Robe of righteousness¹¹⁴,
Araying cover'd from his Fathers sight.
To him with swift ascent he up returnd¹¹⁵,
Into his blissful bosom reasum'd [225]
In glory as of old, to him appeas'd
All, though all-knowing, what had past with Man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.
Meanwhile ere thus was sin'd and judg'd on Earth,
Within the Gates of Hell sate Sin and Death, [230]
In counterview within the Gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Farr into Chaos, since the Fiend pass'd through,
Sin opening, who thus now to Death began.

O Son, why sit we here each other viewing [235]
Idlely, while Satan our great Author thrives
In other Worlds, and happier Seat provides
For us his ofspring deare?¹¹⁶ It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,

¹¹³ "Dust thou art, and to dust return" directly quotes Genesis 3:19, emphasizing mortality.

¹¹⁴ Echoes Isaiah 61:10, "He has clothed me with garments of salvation."

¹¹⁵ Christ as the "second Adam" (*1 Corinthians 15:45*) offers redemption where the first Adam failed.

¹¹⁶ Sin and Death's reaction to Satan's return mirrors classical epics where monsters guard the underworld (*Virgil's Aeneid, Inferno*).

Ere this he had return'd, with fury driv'n [240]
 By his Avengers, since no place like this
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and Dominion giv'n me large
 Beyond this Deep; whatever draws me on, [245]
 Or sympathie, or som connatural force
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite
 With secret amity things of like kinde
 By secretest conveyance. Thou my Shade
 Inseparable must with mee along: [250]
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.
 But least the difficultie of passing back
 Stay his return perhaps over this Gulfe
 Impassable, Impervious, let us try
 Adventrous work, yet to thy power and mine [255]
 Not unagreeable, to found a path
 Over this Maine from Hell to that new World
 Where Satan now prevailes, a Monument
 Of merit high to all th' infernal Host,
 Easing thir passage hence, for intercourse, [260]
 Or transmigration, as thir lot shall lead¹¹⁷.
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meager Shadow answerd soon.
 Goe whither Fate and inclination strong [265]
 Leads thee, I shall not lag behinde, nor erre
 The way, thou leading, such a sent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savour of Death from all things there that live:
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest [270]
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid,

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
 Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock
 Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,
 Against the day of Battel, to a Field, [275]
 Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur'd
 With sent of living Carcasses design'd
 For death, the following day, in bloodie fight.
 So sented the grim Feature, and upturn'd

¹¹⁷ The construction of a bridge from Hell to Earth by Sin and Death mimics Xerxes' bridging of the Hellespont (*Herodotus* 7.33-36), portraying Satan as a conqueror.

His Nostril wide into the murkie Air, [280]
 Sagacious of his Quarry from so farr.
 Then Both from out Hell Gates into the waste
 Wide Anarchie of Chaos damp and dark
 Flew divers, and with Power (thir Power was great)
 Hovering upon the Waters; what they met [285]
 Solid or slimie, as in raging Sea
 Tost up and down, together crowded drove
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell.
 As when two Polar Winds blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian Sea, together drive [290]
 Mountains of Ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
 Beyond Petsora Eastward, to the rich
 Cathaian Coast. The aggregated Soyle
 Death with his Mace petrific, cold and dry,
 As with a Trident smote, and fix't as firm [295]
 As Delos floating once; the rest his look
 Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,
 And with Asphaltic slime; broad as the Gate,
 Deep to the Roots of Hell the gather'd beach
 They fasten'd, and the Mole immense wrought on [300]
 Over the foaming deep high Arch¹¹⁸, a Bridge
 Of length prodigious joyning to the Wall
 Immovable of this now fenceless world
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell. [305]
 So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
 Xerxes, the Libertie of Greece to yoke,
 From Susa his Memnonian Palace high
 Came to the Sea, and over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joyn'd, [310]
 And scourg'd with many a stroak th' indignant waves¹¹⁹.
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous Art
 Pontifical, a ridge of pendent Rock
 Over the vext Abyss, following the track
 Of Satan, to the self same place where hee [315]
 First lighted from his Wing, and landed safe
 From out of Chaos to the out side bare
 Of this round World: with Pinns of Adamant
 And Chains they made all fast, too fast they made
 And durable; and now in little space [320]
 The confines met of Empyrean Heav'n

¹¹⁸ The infernal bridge "high archt" recalls the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:4), symbolizing defiance against God.

¹¹⁹ Recalls Herodotus 7.35, where the Persian king flogged the Hellespont for resisting his army.

And of this World, and on the left hand Hell
 With long reach interpos'd; three sev'ral wayes
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now thir way to Earth they had descri'd, [325]
 To Paradise first tending, when behold
 Satan in likeness of an Angel bright
 Betwixt the Centaure and the Scorpion stearing
 His Zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:
 Disguis'd he came, but those his Children dear [330]
 Thir Parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
 Hee after Eve seduc't, unminded slunk
 Into the Wood fast by, and changing shape
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded [335]
 Upon her Husband, saw thir shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them terrifi'd
 Hee fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present, fearing guiltie what his wrauth [340]
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
 By Night, and listening where the hapless Paire
 Sate in thir sad discourse, and various plaint,
 Thence gatherd his own doom, which understood
 Not instant, but of future time. With joy [345]
 And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd,
 And at the brink of Chaos, neer the foot
 Of this new wondrous Pontifice, unhop't
 Met who to meet him came, his Ofspring dear.
 Great joy was at thir meeting, and at sight [350]
 Of that stupendious Bridge his joy encreas'd.
 Long hee admiring stood, till Sin, his faire
 Inchanting Daughter, thus the silence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
 Thy Trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own, [355]
 Thou art thir Author and prime Architect:
 For I no sooner in my Heart divin'd,
 My Heart, which by a secret harmonie
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
 That thou on Earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks [360]
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt
 Though distant from thee Worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee with this thy Son;
 Such fatal consequence unites us three:

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds, [365]
Nor this unvoyageable Gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast atchiev'd our libertie, confin'd
Within Hell Gates till now, thou us impow'rd
To fortifie thus farr, and overlay [370]
With this portentous Bridge the dark Abyss.
Thine now is all this World, thy vertue hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy Wisdom gain'd
With odds what Warr hath lost, and fully aveng'd
Our foile in Heav'n; here thou shalt Monarch reign, [375]
There didst not; there let him still Victor sway,
As Battel hath adjudg'd, from this new World
Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
And henceforth Monarchie with thee divide
Of all things parted by th' Empyreal bounds, [380]
His Quadrature, from thy Orbicular World,
Or trie thee now more dang'rous to his Throne.

Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answerd glad.
Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both,
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the Race [385]
Of Satan (for I glorie in the name,
Antagonist of Heav'ns Almighty King)
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th' Infernal Empire, that so neer Heav'ns dore
Triumphal with triumphal act have met, [390]
Mine with this glorious Work, and made one Realm
Hell and this World, one Realm, one Continent
Of easie thorough-fare. Therefore while I
Descend through Darkness, on your Rode with ease
To my associate Powers, them to acquaint [395]
With these successes, and with them rejoyce,
You two this way, among these numerous Orbs
All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell and Reign in bliss, thence on the Earth
Dominion exercise and in the Aire, [400]
Chiefly on Man, sole Lord of all declar'd,
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My Substitutes I send ye, and Create
Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might
Issuing from mee: on your joynt vigor now [405]
My hold of this new Kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.

If your joynt power prevailes, th' affaires of Hell
No detriment need feare, goe and be strong.

So saying he dismiss'd them, they with speed [410]
Thir course through thickest Constellations held
Spreading thir bane; the blasted Starrs lookt wan,
And Planets, Planet-strook, real Eclips
Then sufferd. Th' other way Satan went down
The Causey to Hell Gate; on either side [415]
Disparted Chaos over built exclaimd,
And with rebounding surge the barrs assaild,
That scorn'd his indignation: through the Gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
And all about found desolate; for those [420]
Appointed to sit there, had left thir charge,
Flown to the upper World; the rest were all
Farr to the inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandæmonium, Citie and proud seate
Of Lucifer, so by allusion calld, [425]
Of that bright Starr to Satan paragond.
There kept thir Watch the Legions, while the Grand
In Council sate, solicitous what chance
Might intercept thir Emperour sent, so hee
Departing gave command, and they observ'd. [430]
As when the Tartar from his Russian Foe
By Astracan over the Snowie Plaines
Retires, or Bactrian Sophi from the hornes
Of Turkish Crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The Realm of Aladule, in his retreat [435]
To Tauris or Casbeen. So these the late
Heav'n-banisht Host, left desert utmost Hell
Many a dark League, reduc't in careful Watch
Round thir Metropolis, and now expecting
Each hour thir great adventurer from the search [440]
Of Forrein Worlds: he through the midst unmarkt,
In shew Plebeian Angel militant
Of lowest order, past; and from the dore
Of that Plutonian Hall, invisible
Ascended his high Throne, which under state [445]
Of richest texture spred, at th' upper end
Was plac't in regal lustre. Down a while
He sate, and round about him saw unseen:
At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head
And shape Starr bright appeer'd, or brighter, clad [450]

With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter: All amaz'd
 At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng
 Bent thir aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Thir mighty Chief returnd: loud was th' acclaime¹²⁰: [455]
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting Peers,
 Rais'd from thir dark Divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention won.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers, [460]
 For in possession such, not onely of right,
 I call ye and declare ye now, returnd
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal Pit
 Abominable, accurst, the house of woe, [465]
 And Dungeon of our Tyrant: Now possess,
 As Lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard
 With peril great atchiev'd. Long were to tell
 What I have don, what sufferd, with what pain [470]
 Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toild out my uncouth passage, forc't to ride [475]
 Th' untractable Abyse, plung'd in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wilde,
 That jealous of thir secrets fiercely oppos'd
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproare
 Protesting Fate supream; thence how I found [480]
 The new created World, which fame in Heav'n
 Long had foretold, a Fabrick wonderful
 Of absolute perfection, therein Man
 Plac't in a Paradise, by our exile
 Made happie: Him by fraud I have seduc'd [485]
 From his Creator, and the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an Apple; he thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up
 Both his beloved Man and all his World,
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, [490]
 Without our hazard, labour, or allarme,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over Man

¹²⁰ The scene of Satan's triumphant return, only to be met with hissing, reverses traditional triumphal entries, like Caesar's return to Rome.

To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
 True is, mee also he hath judg'd, or rather
 Mee not, but the brute Serpent in whose shape [495]
 Man I deceav'd: that which to mee belongs,
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Mee and Mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
 His Seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
 A World who would not purchase with a bruise, [500]
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
 Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,
 But up and enter now into full bliss.

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
 Thir universal shout and high applause [505]
 To fill his eare, when contrary he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn; he wonderd, but not long
 Had leasure, wondring at himself
 more; [510]
 His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
 His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell
 A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,
 Reluctant, but in vaine: a greater power [515]
 Now rul'd him, punisht in the shape he sin'd,
 According to his doom: he would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue
 To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to Serpents all as accessories [520]
 To his bold Riot¹²¹: dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the Hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and taile,
 Scorpion and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
 Cerastes hornd, Hydrus, and Ellops drear, [525]
 And Dipsas (not so thick swarm'd once the Soil
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the Isle
 Ophiusa) but still greatest hee the midst,
 Now Dragon grown, larger then whom the Sun
 Ingenderd in the Pythian Vale on slime, [530]
 Huge Python, and his Power no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain; they all
 Him follow'd issuing forth to th' open Field,

¹²¹ His transformation into a serpent reflects Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the myth of Cadmus turning into a snake.

Where all yet left of that revolted Rout
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array, [535]
 Sublime with expectation when to see
 In Triumph issuing forth thir glorious Chief;
 They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
 Of ugly Serpents; horror on them fell,
 And horrid sympathie; for what they saw, [540]
 They felt themselvs now changing; down thir arms,
 Down fell both Spear and Shield, down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
 Catcht by Contagion, like in punishment,
 As in thir crime. Thus was th' applause they meant, [545]
 Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from thir own mouths. There stood
 A Grove hard by, sprung up with this thir change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Thir penance, laden with Fruit like that [550]
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Us'd by the Tempter: on that prospect strange
 Thir earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
 For one forbidden Tree a multitude
 Now ris'n, to work them funder woe or shame; [555]
 Yet parcht with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
 But on they rould in heaps, and up the Trees
 Climbing, sat thicker then the snakie locks
 That curld Megæra: greedily they pluck'd [560]
 The Frutage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Neer that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd¹²²;
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceav'd; they fondly thinking to allay
 Thir appetite with gust, instead of Fruit [565]
 Chewd bitter Ashes, which th' offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugd as oft,
 With hatefulest disrelish writh'd thir jaws
 With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell [570]
 Into the same illusion, not as Man
 Whom they triumph'd once lapst. Thus were they plagu'd
 And worn with Famin, long and ceasless hiss,
 Till thir lost shape, permitted, they resum'd,
 Yearly enjoynd, some say, to undergo [575]
 This annual humbling certain number'd days,

¹²² The fruit turning to ashes echoes the biblical destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24).

To dash thir pride, and joy for Man seduc't.
 However some tradition they dispers'd
 Among the Heathen of thir purchase got,
 And Fabl'd how the Serpent, whom they call'd [580]
 Ophion with Eurynome¹²³, the wide-
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
 Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driv'n
 And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.
 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair [585]
 Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in power before,
 Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
 On his pale Horse: to whom Sin thus began. [590]

Second of Satan sprung, all conquering Death,
 What thinkst thou of our Empire now, though earnd
 With travail difficult, not better farr
 Then stil at Hels dark threshold to have sate watch,
 Unnam'd, undreaded, and thy self half starv'd? [595]

Whom thus the Sin-born Monster answerd soon.
 To mee, who with eternal Famin pine,
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven,
 There best, where most with ravin I may meet;
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems [600]
 To stuff this Maw, this vast unhide-bound Corps.

To whom th' incestuous Mother thus repli'd.
 Thou therefore on these Herbs, and Fruits, and Flours
 Feed first, on each Beast next, and Fish, and Fowle,
 No homely morsels, and whatever thing [605]
 The Sithe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd,
 Till I in Man residing through the Race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several wayes, [610]
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature
 Sooner or later; which th' Almightye seeing,
 From his transcendent Seat the Saints among,
 To those bright Orders utterd thus his voice. [615]

¹²³ The reference to *Ophion and Eurynome* alludes to Orphic mythology, where Ophion is a primeval serpent, reinforcing the theme of deceptive power.

See with what heat these Dogs of Hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder World, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that State, had not the folly of Man
Let in these wastful Furies, who impute [620]
Folly to mee, so doth the Prince of Hell
And his Adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem
To gratifie my scornful Enemies, [625]
That laugh, as if transported with some fit
Of Passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I call'd and drew them thither
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth [630]
Which mans polluting Sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
With suckt and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at last [635]
Through Chaos hurld, obstruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jawes.
Then Heav'n and Earth renewd shall be made pure
To sanctitie that shall receive no staine:
Till then the Curse pronounc't on both precedes. [640]

He ended, and the Heav'nly Audience loud
Sung Halleluia, as the sound of Seas,
Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy Decrees on all thy Works;
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son, [645]
Destin'd restorer of Mankind, by whom
New Heav'n and Earth shall to the Ages rise,
Or down from Heav'n descend. Such was thir song,
While the Creator calling forth by name
His mightie Angels gave them several charge, [650]
As sorted best with present things. The Sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the Earth with cold and heat
Scarce tollerable, and from the North to call
Decrepit Winter, from the South to bring [655]
Solstitial summers heat. To the blanc Moone
Her office they prescrib'd, to th' other five

Thir planetarie motions and aspects
 In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,
 Of noxious efficacie, and when to joyne [660]
 In Synod unbenigne, and taught the fixt
 Thir influence malignant when to showre,
 Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous: To the Winds they set
 Thir corners, when with bluster to confound [665]
 Sea, Aire, and Shoar, the Thunder when to rowle
 With terror through the dark Aereal Hall.
 Some say he bid his Angels turne ascanse
 The Poles of Earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the Suns Axle; they with labour push'd [670]
 Oblique the Centric Globe: Som say the Sun
 Was bid turn Reines from th' Equinoctial Rode
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the Seav'n
 Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan Twins
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amaine [675]
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorne, to bring in change
 Of Seasons to each Clime; else had the Spring
 Perpetual smil'd on Earth with vernant Flours,
 Equal in Days and Nights, except to those [680]
 Beyond the Polar Circles; to them Day
 Had unbenighted shon, while the low Sun
 To recompence his distance, in thir sight
 Had rounded still th' Horizon, and not known
 Or East or West, which had forbid the Snow [685]
 From cold Estotiland, and South as farr
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted Fruit
 The Sun, as from Thyestean Banquet, turn'd
 His course intended; else how had the World
 Inhabited, though sinless, more then now, [690]
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heate?
 These changes in the Heav'ns, though slow, produc'd
 Like change on Sea and Land, sideral blast,
 Vapour, and Mist, and Exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and Pestilent: Now from the North [695]
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shoar
 Bursting thir brazen Dungeon, armd with ice
 And snow and haile and stormie gust and flaw,
 Boreas and Cæcias and Argestes loud
 And Thrascias rend the Woods and Seas upturn; [700]
 With adverse blast up-turns them from the South

Notus and Afer black with thundrous Clouds
 From Serralliona; thwart of these as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent Windes
 Eurus and Zephir with thir lateral noise, [705]
 Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from liveless things; but Discord first
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
 Death introduc'd through fierce antipathie:
 Beast now with Beast gan war, and Fowle with Fowle, [710]
 And Fish with Fish; to graze the Herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of Man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
 Glar'd on him passing: these were from without
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw [715]
 Alreadie in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandond, but worse felt within,
 And in a troubl'd Sea of passion tost,
 Thus to disburd'n sought with sad complaint.

O miserable of happie! is this the end [720]
 Of this new glorious World, and mee so late
 The Glory of that Glory, who now becom
 Accurst of blessed, hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
 Of happiness: yet well, if here would end [725]
 The miserie, I deserv'd it, and would beare
 My own deservings; but this will not serve;
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
 Delightfully, Encrease and multiply¹²⁴, [730]
 Now death to hear! for what can I encrease
 Or multiplie, but curses on my head?
 Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse
 My Head, Ill fare our Ancestor impure, [735]
 For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
 Shall be the execration; so besides
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from mee
 Shall with a fierce reflux on mee redound,
 On mee as on thir natural center light [740]
 Heavie, though in thir place. O fleeting joyes
 Of Paradise, deare bought with lasting woes!
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my Clay

¹²⁴ "Increase and multiply" is inverted—what was once a divine blessing (Genesis 1:28) now seems a curse.

To mould me Man, did I sollicite thee
 From darkness to promote me, or here place [745]
 In this delicious Garden?¹²⁵ as my Will
 Concurd not to my being, it were but right
 And equal to reduce me to my dust,
 Desirous to resigne, and render back
 All I receav'd, unable to performe [750]
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
 Sufficient penaltie, why hast thou added
 The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
 Thy Justice seems; yet to say truth, too late, [755]
 I thus contest; then should have been refusd
 Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:
 Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
 Then cavil the conditions? and though God
 Made thee without thy leave, what if thy Son [760]
 Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
 Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
 That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
 But Natural necessity begot. [765]
 God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
 To serve him, thy reward was of his grace,
 Thy punishment then justly is at his Will.
 Be it so, for I submit, his doom is fair,
 That dust I am, and shall to dust returne: [770]
 O welcom hour whenever! why delays
 His hand to execute what his Decree
 Fixd on this day? why do I overlive,
 Why am I mockt with death, and length'nd out
 To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet [775]
 Mortalitie my sentence, and be Earth
 Insensible, how glad would lay me down
 As in my Mothers lap! There I should rest
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
 Would Thunder in my ears, no fear of worse [780]
 To mee and to my ofspring would torment me
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, least all I cannot die,
 Least that pure breath of Life, the Spirit of Man
 Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish [785]
 With this corporeal Clod; then in the Grave,

¹²⁵ Adam questions divine justice, echoing the Book of Job, where suffering prompts theological reflection.

Or in some other dismal place who knows
 But I shall die a living Death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath
 Of Life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life [790]
 And sin? the Bodie properly hath neither.
 All of me then shall die: let this appease
 The doubt, since humane reach no further knows.
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,
 Is his wrauth also? be it, man is not so, [795]
 But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
 Wrath without end on Man whom Death must end?
 Can he make deathless Death? that were to make
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself
 Impossible is held, as Argument [800]
 Of weakness, not of Power. Will he, draw out,
 For angers sake, finite to infinite
 In punisht man, to satisfie his rigour
 Satisfi'd never; that were to extend
 His Sentence beyond dust and Natures Law, [805]
 By which all Causes else according still
 To the reception of thir matter act,
 Not to th' extent of thir own Spheare. But say
 That Death be not one stroak, as I suppos'd,
 Bereaving sense, but endless miserie [810]
 From this day onward, which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without me, and so last
 To perpetuitie; Ay me, that fear
 Comes thundring back with dreadful revolution
 On my defensless head; both Death and I [815]
 Am found Eternal, and incorporate both,
 Nor I on my part single, in mee all
 Posteritie stands curst: Fair Patrimonie
 That I must leave ye, Sons; O were I able
 To waste it all my self, and leave ye none! [820]
 So disinherited how would ye bless
 Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
 For one mans fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
 If guiltless? But from mee what can proceed,
 But all corrupt, both Mind and Will deprav'd, [825]
 Not to do onely, but to will the same
 With me? how can they then acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him after all Disputes
 Forc't I absolve: all my evasions vain
 And reasonings, though through Mazes, lead me still [830]

But to my own conviction: first and last
On mee, mee onely, as the sourse and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrauth. Fond wish! couldst thou support
That burden heavier then the Earth to bear [835]
Then all the World much heavier, though divided
With that bad Woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
And what thou fearest, alike destroyes all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future, [840]
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O Conscience, into what Abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud [845]
Through the still Night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholsom and cool, and mild, but with black Air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil Conscience represented
All things with double terror: On the ground [850]
Outstretcht he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his Creation, Death as oft accus'd
Of tardie execution, since denounc't
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,
Said hee, with one thrice acceptable stroke [855]
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
Justice Divine not hast'n to be just?
But Death comes not at call, Justice Divine
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
O Woods, O Fountains, Hillocks, Dales and Bowrs, [860]
With other echo late I taught your Shades
To answer, and resound farr other Song.
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sate, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd: [865]
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou Serpent, that name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thy self as false
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour Serpentine may shew [870]
Thy inward fraud, to warn all Creatures from thee
Henceforth; least that too heav'nly form, pretended

To hellish falshood, snare them. But for thee
I had persisted happie, had not thy pride
And wandring vanitie, when lest was safe, [875]
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen
Though by the Devil himself, him overweening
To over-reach, but with the Serpent meeting
Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee, [880]
To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a shew
Rather then solid vertu, all but a Rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, [885]
More to the part sinister from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as supernumerarie
To my just number found. O why did God,
Creator wise, that peopl'd highest Heav'n
With Spirits Masculine, create at last [890]
This noveltie on Earth, this fair defect
Of Nature, and not fill the World at once
With Men as Angels without Feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? this mischief had not then befall'n, [895]
And more that shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on Earth through Femal snares,
And straight conjunction with this Sex: for either
He never shall find out fit Mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake, [900]
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perversness, but shall see her gaind
By a farr worse, or if she love, withheld
By Parents, or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, alreadie linkt and Wedlock-bound [905]
To a fell Adversarie, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamitie shall cause
To Humane life, and houshold peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd, but Eve
Not so repulst, with Tears that ceas'd not flowing, [910]
And tresses all disorderd, at his feet
Fell humble, and imbracing them, besaught
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n

What love sincere, and reverence in my heart [915]
I beare thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappilie deceav'd; thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress, [920]
My onely strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joyning,
As joyn'd in injuries, one enmitie [925]
Against a Foe by doom express assign'd us,
That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not
Thy hatred for this miserie befall'n,
On me alreadie lost, mee then thy self
More miserable; both have sin'd, but thou [930]
Against God onely, I against God and thee,
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence from thy head remov'd may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe, [935]
Mee mee onely just object of his ire.

She ended weeping, and her lowlie plight,
Immovable till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented [940]
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Creature so faire his reconcilment seeking,
His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aide;
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost, [945]
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwarie, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou knowst not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thy self; alas,
Beare thine own first, ill able to sustaine [950]
His full wrauth whose thou feelst as yet lest part,
And my displeasure bearest so ill. If Prayers
Could alter high Decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited, [955]
Thy frailtie and infirmer Sex forgiv'n,

To me committed and by me expos'd.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive
In offices of Love, how we may light'n [960]
Each others burden in our share of woe;
Since this days Death denounc't, if ought I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac't evill,
A long days dying to augment our paine,
And to our Seed (O hapless Seed!) deriv'd. [965]

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, repli'd.
Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can finde,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event
Found so unfortunate; nevertheless, [970]
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regaine
Thy Love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet brest are ris'n, [975]
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain woe, devourd [980]
By Death at last, and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our Loines to bring
Into this cursed World a woful Race,
That after wretched Life must be at last [985]
Food for so foule a Monster, in thy power
It lies, yet ere Conception to prevent
The Race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, Childless remaine:
So Death shall be deceav'd his glut, and with us two [990]
Be forc'd to satisfie his Rav'nous Maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From Loves due Rites, Nuptial imbraces sweet,
And with desire to languish without hope, [995]
Before the present object languishing
With like desire, which would be miserie
And torment less then none of what we dread,
Then both our selves and Seed at once to free

From what we fear for both, let us make short, [1000]
 Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
 With our own hands his Office on our selves¹²⁶;
 Why stand we longer shivering under feares,
 That shew no end but Death, and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing, [1005]
 Destruction with destruction to destroy.

She ended heer, or vehement despaire
 Broke off the rest; so much of Death her thoughts
 Had entertaind, as di'd her Cheeks with pale.
 But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd, [1010]
 To better hopes his more attentive minde
 Labouring had rais'd, and thus to Eve repli'd.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee somthing more sublime
 And excellent then what thy minde contemnes; [1015]
 But self-destruction therefore saught, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee¹²⁷, and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end [1020]
 Of miserie, so thinking to evade
 The penaltie pronounc't, doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire then so
 To be forestall'd; much more I fear least Death
 So snatcht will not exempt us from the paine [1025]
 We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
 Of contumacie will provoke the highest
 To make death in us live: Then let us seek
 Some safer resolution, which methinks
 I have in view, calling to minde with heed [1030]
 Part of our Sentence, that thy Seed shall bruise
 The Serpents head¹²⁸; piteous amends, unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand Foe
 Satan, who in the Serpent hath contriv'd
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head [1035]
 Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
 By death brought on our selves, or childless days
 Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our Foe

¹²⁶ Eve contemplates suicide as a way to escape suffering, mirroring Sophocles' Ajax, where the hero seeks self-destruction after disgrace.

¹²⁷ Adam rejects suicide, reinforcing Christian doctrine against self-destruction.

¹²⁸ "Thy Seed shall bruise the Serpents head" directly connects to Christ's eventual victory, tying back to Genesis 3:15.

Shall scape his punishment ordain'd, and wee
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. [1040]
 No more be mention'd then of violence
 Against our selves, and wilful barrenness,
 That cuts us off from hope, and savours onely
 Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke [1045]
 Laid on our Necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd
 Without wrauth or reviling; wee expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by Death that day, when lo, to thee [1050]
 Pains onely in Child-bearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth, soon recompenc't with joy,
 Fruit of thy Womb: On mee the Curse aslope
 Glanc'd on the ground, with labour I must earne
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had bin worse; [1055]
 My labour will sustain me; and least Cold
 Or Heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath unbesaught provided, and his hands
 Cloath'd us unworthie, pitying while he judg'd;
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear [1060]
 Be open, and his heart to pitie incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 Th' inclement Seasons, Rain, Ice, Hail and Snow,
 Which now the Skie with various Face begins
 To shew us in this Mountain, while the Winds [1065]
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
 Of these fair spreading Trees; which bids us seek
 Som better shroud, som better warmth to cherish
 Our Limbs benumm'd, ere this diurnal Starr
 Leave cold the Night, how we his gather'd beams [1070]
 Reflected, may with matter sere foment,
 Or by collision of two bodies grinde
 The Air attrite to Fire, as late the Clouds
 Justling or pusht with Winds rude in thir shock
 Tine the slant Lightning, whose thwart flame driv'n down [1075]
 Kindles the gummie bark of Firr or Pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from farr,
 Which might supplie the Sun: such Fire to use,
 And what may else be remedie or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, [1080]
 Hee will instruct us praying, and of Grace
 Beseeching him, so as we need not fear

To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home. [1085]
What better can we do, then to the place
Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the Air [1090]
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek¹²⁹.
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seem'd and most severe, [1095]
What else but favor, grace, and mercie shon?

So spake our Father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confess'd [1100]
Humbly thir faults, and pardon beg'd, with tears
Watering the ground, and with thir sighs the Air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

¹²⁹ Adam and Eve "prostrate" themselves, echoing Daniel 9:3-4, where Daniel prays for forgiveness. Their tears symbolize genuine repentance, setting up the *Paradise Regained* theme.

Summary of Books 11 & 12

After Adam and Eve's repentance in Book 10, their prayers reach Heaven, and the Son intercedes for them. God, in His mercy, decides not to destroy humanity outright but decrees that Adam and Eve must leave Paradise and face the hardships of the fallen world.

Michael the Warrior

To carry out this decree, God sends Michael, a mighty warrior-angel, who is very different from Raphael, Adam's earlier visitor. Unlike Raphael, who came as a wise and friendly teacher, Michael is a being of absolute authority, a militant figure of judgment. His presence is imposing, not warm:

*"Nor wanted in his grasp what seem'd both spear
And shield: now dreadful deeds might have ensued,
Nor only Paradise in this commotion,
But all the world to chaos might have gone." (Book 11.241–244)*

Michael arrives, radiant and severe, armed for battle, his very presence enforcing God's decree. Unlike Raphael, who encouraged open discussion, Michael speaks with finality. There is no debate; he has come to execute judgment.

He puts Adam into a vision-like trance and shows him the future of mankind—a long, painful history of sin, war, and redemption. These visions cover Cain and Abel, Noah, Babel, Abraham, and, most importantly, the coming of Christ, who will ultimately restore what Adam has lost.

While Adam is humbled and grieved, Michael assures him that faith and obedience will allow humanity to regain God's grace.

The Final Departure from Paradise

When the visions end, Adam and Eve awaken to a changed world. The Earth is no longer warm and welcoming—it is hostile, subject to storms and toil.

Michael leads them to the eastern gate of Eden, where a massive sword of fire blocks their return. Adam and Eve, now clothed in skins, walk forward together. Their relationship is no longer one of blame but of shared suffering and hope.

Milton's closing lines capture the bittersweet finality of their exile:

*"They looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they 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." (Book 12.641–649)*

Adam and Eve shed tears, but wipe them away—their faith, rather than Paradise, must now guide them. Together, hand in hand, they leave the only home they have known, stepping into a vast, uncertain world.