Praise for this edition

“Barbara Lewalski is the doyenne of the community of Milton scholars, but she also remains committed to the enterprise of teaching. In this exemplary edition of *Paradise Lost* both qualities are in evidence: the text is scrupulous and the scholarship rigorous, but both the introduction and the notes are accommodated to the needs of students who will be coming to the poem for the first time. This is an edition that will please students and professors alike, and its sheer quality is a tribute to Barbara Lewalski’s passion to provide readers with all the help they need to understand the greatest of all English poems.”

*Gordon Campbell, University of Leicester*

“Teachers and scholars will welcome Barbara Lewalski’s Blackwell edition of *Paradise Lost*, one not only informed by the erudition of a prominent and highly respected Miltonist but advantaged by her sound decision to reproduce the original language, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and italics of the 1674 text.”

*Edward Jones, Editor, Milton Quarterly*

“For the student or general reader, looking for an old-spelling edition that is faithful to the original punctuation, this edition has much to recommend it. Its annotation is crisp, purposeful and well judged.”

*Thomas N. Corns, University of Wales, Bangor*

“A superb teaching text. Lewalski’s edition respects Milton’s original poem and offers supremely clear introductions, bibliography and special material to guide the student reader and educated lay person alike to new discoveries in a work that, quite simply, has it all: good, evil, God, Satan, humans, angels, love, despair, war, politics, sex, duty, and sublime poetry – set in a cosmic landscape that inspires wonder and seduces new readers in every generation.”

*Sharon Achinstein, Oxford University*
Figure 1  Engraved portrait of Milton at age 62 (William Faithorne)
Note on This Edition

This is one of three volumes presenting the complete poetry and major prose of John Milton in original language and in readily accessible paperbacks. The shorter poems are edited by Stella Revard; the major prose by David Loewenstein.

Acknowledgments

Librarians at the Houghton Library at Harvard, the Beinecke Library at Yale, the John Carter Brown Library at Brown, the Henry E. Huntington Library, and the British Library have graciously made copies of the 1667 and 1674 editions of *Paradise Lost* available to me for comparison, and the director of the J. Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City made available the manuscript of Book 1. I am especially grateful to the curator of rare books at the Houghton Library for permission to use Harvard 14486.3B (1674) as copy text, and for permission to reproduce William Faithorne’s engraving of Milton at age 62 (the frontispiece to Milton’s *History of Britain*, 1670) as well as the title pages of the 1667 and 1674 editions and the illustrations to Books 2, 5, 8, 9, and 11 from the 1688 Folio edition of *Paradise Lost*. All the photographs are courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard College Library. This project profited greatly from the wise early guidance of Andrew McNeillie, then literature editor at Blackwell, the helpful oversight of his successor, Emma Bennett, and the meticulous care of the copy-editor and project manager, Janet Moth. David Loewenstein and Stella Revard, editors of the companion volumes to this one, offered useful critiques and wise counsel; Ken Hiltner served as research assistance during crucial early stages, and graduate and undergraduate students of Milton over many years have helped me determine what does and does not need commentary.
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## Chronology

### Milton’s Life

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1608</td>
<td>Dec. 9, born in Bread Street, Cheapside London, to John and Sarah Milton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1611</td>
<td>Educated by private tutors, including the Presbyterian cleric, Thomas Young.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1615</td>
<td>Brother Christopher born.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1618</td>
<td>Portrait at age 10 painted by Cornelius Janssen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>Begins to attend St. Paul’s School; friendship with Charles Diodati begins. (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1621</td>
<td>First known poems, paraphrases of Psalms 114 and 136.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1623</td>
<td>Admitted to Christ’s College, Cambridge (Feb. 12).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Historical and Literary Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1608</td>
<td>King James (“Authorized”) Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1614–20</td>
<td>Ben Jonson’s <em>Works</em> published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1615</td>
<td>Death of Shakespeare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1618</td>
<td>William Laud made Bishop of London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1621</td>
<td>Donne appointed Dean of St. Paul’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1623</td>
<td>Shakespeare’s First Folio published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1625</td>
<td>Death of James I; accession of Charles I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1626–8</td>
<td>Outbreak of plague.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Milton's Life

- Takes BA degree (March).
- Writes “On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity” (Dec.).
- Writes “L’Allegro” and “Il Penseroso” (?).
- Admitted to MA degree (July 3).
- Writes *Arcades*, entertainment for the Countess of Derby (?).
- Writes sonnet “How soon hath Time” (Dec.).
- Starts to live with his family at Hammersmith.
- Writes “On Time,” “At a Solemn Music” (?).
- *A Maske (Comus)* performed at Ludlow with music by Henry Lawes (Sept. 29).
- Moves with his family to Horton, Buckinghamshire. Begins notes on his reading in *Commonplace Book*.
- Publication of *A Maske*.
- Mother dies (April 3).
- Writes “Lycidas.”
- Begins Continental tour (May 1638); meets Grotius, Galileio, Cardinal Barberini, Manso; visits Academies in Florence and Rome; visits Vatican Library; visits Naples, Venice, and Geneva.
- Writes “Mansus,” other Latin poems.
- Learns of Charles Diodati’s death.
- Returns to England (July).
- Takes lodgings in Fleet Street.
- Begins teaching nephews Edward and John Phillips and a few others.

### Historical and Literary Events

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1629</td>
<td>Charles I dissolves Parliament.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1631</td>
<td>Galileo’s <em>Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems</em> published in Italian.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1633</td>
<td>Donne’s <em>Poems</em> and Herbert’s <em>The Temple</em> published. Laud made Archbishop of Canterbury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1634</td>
<td>Carew’s masque, <em>Coelum Britannicum</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1635</td>
<td>Trial and punishment of Puritans William Prynne, John Bastwick, and Henry Burton. Descartes, <em>Discourse on Method</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1638</td>
<td>First Bishops’ War with Scotland.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Milton’s Life

Wrote *Epitaphium Daemonis* (epitaph for Charles Diodati). Begins work on *Accidence Commenc’t Grammar, Art of Logic, Christian Doctrine* (?).

Publishes anti-episcopal tracts: *Of Reformation; Of Prelatical Episcopacy; Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defense*.

Publishes *The Reason of Church-government* and *An Apology* [for] . . . Smectymnuus

Marries Mary Powell (May?), who returns (Aug.?!) to her royalist family near Oxford.

Wrote sonnet, “Captain or Colonel” when royalist attack on London expected.

Publishes *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (Aug.).

Publishes second edition of *Doctrine and Discipline; Of Education* (June); *The Judgement of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce* (Aug.); *Areopagitica* (Nov.).

Publishes *Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion* on the divorce question.

Mary Powell returns. Moves to a large house in the Barbican.

*Poems of Mr. John Milton* published (Jan., dated 1645).

Wrote sonnet to Lawes.

Daughter Anne born (July 29).

Father dies; moves to High Holborn.

Begins writing *History of Britain* (?).

Historical and Literary Events

1640

Long Parliament convened (Nov. 3); impeachment of Laud.

George Thomason, London bookseller, begins his collection of tracts and books.

1641

Impeachment and execution of Strafford (May)

Root and Branch Bill abolishing bishops.

Irish rebellion breaks out (Oct.).

1642

Civil War begins (Aug. 22).

Royalists win Battle of Edgehill.

Closing of theaters.

1643

Westminster Assembly of Divines to reform Church.

Solemn League and Covenant subscribed.

Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*.

1644

Royalists defeated at Battle of Marston Moor (July 2).

1645

Execution of Laud.

New Model Army wins decisive victory at Naseby (June).

Edmund Waller, *Poems*.

1646

First Civil War ends.

Crashaw, *Steps to the Temple*.
### Milton’s Life

- **1648**
  - Daughter Mary born (Oct. 26).
  - Writes sonnet to Lord General Fairfax.
  - Translates Psalms 80–88.

- **1649**
  - Publishes *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (Feb.).
  - Appointed Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Council of State (March 15).
  - Publishes *Observations on Irish documents*; *Eikonoklastes* (“The Idol Smasher”) (Oct.).
  - Given lodgings in Scotland Yard.

- **1650**
  - Publishes *Defensio pro populo Anglicano* in reply to Salmasius (Feb. 24).
  - Birth of son, John (March 16).
  - Moves to Petty France, near St. James Park.
  - Milton totally blind.
  - Writes sonnet, “When I consider how my light is spent”(?) and sonnets to Cromwell and Sir Henry Vane.
  - Daughter Deborah born (May 2).
  - Mary Powell Milton dies (May 5).
  - Son John dies (June).
  - Translates Psalms 1–8.

- **1651**
### Milton’s Life

- **1655**: Writes sonnet, “Avenge O Lord thy Slaughter’d Saints.”
- **1655**: Publishes *Pro Se Defensio* (“Defense of Himself”) (Aug.).
- **1655**: Works on *Christian Doctrine*.
- **1656**: Marries Katherine Woodcock (Nov. 12).
- **1656**: Daughter Katherine born (Oct. 10).
- **1656**: Marvell appointed his assistant in Secretariat for Foreign Languages.
- **1658**: Katherine Woodcock Milton dies (Feb. 3).
- **1658**: Daughter Katherine dies (March 17).
- **1659**: New edition of Milton’s *Defensio*.
- **1660**: Publishes *A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes* (Feb.); *The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church* (Aug.).
- **1660**: In hiding (May); his books burned (Aug.); imprisoned (Oct.?); released (Dec.).
- **1661**: At work on *Paradise Lost, Christian Doctrine*.
- **1663**: Marries Elizabeth Minshull (Feb.).
- **1663**: Moves to Bunhill Fields.
- **1664**: Quaker Thomas Ellwood finds house for Milton at Chalfont St. Giles to escape plague.
- **1665**: *Paradise Lost* published.
- **1666**: Great Fire of London (Sept. 2–6).
- **1667**: Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis; Of Dramatick Poesie*.
- **1668**: Dryden made Poet Laureate.

### Historical and Literary Events

- **1655**: Massacre of the Protestant Vaudois on order of the Prince of Savoy (April).
- **1657**: “Humble Petition and Advice,” constitution establishing more conservative government.
- **1658**: Death of Oliver Cromwell (Sept. 3).
- **1659**: Richard Cromwell becomes Protector.
- **1660**: Richard Cromwell deposed by army; Rump Parliament recalled; Rump deposed and again restored.
- **1661**: Charles II restored, enters London (May).
- **1662**: Dryden, *Astraea Redux*.
- **1663**: Bunyan imprisoned (until 1671).
- **1665**: Bubonic plague kills 70,000 in London. Second Dutch War.
- **1666**: Great Fire of London (Sept. 2–6). Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*.
- **1667**: Dryden made Poet Laureate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milton’s Life</th>
<th>Historical and Literary Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>Accidence Commenc’t Grammar</em>.</td>
<td>1669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>History of Britain</em>, with William Faithorne’s engraved portrait.</td>
<td>1670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>Paradise Regained</em> and <em>Samson Agonistes</em>.</td>
<td>1671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>Art of Logic</em>.</td>
<td>1672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism and Toleration</em>; publishes new edition of <em>Poems</em> (1645).</td>
<td>1673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishes <em>Familiar Letters</em> and <em>Prolusions</em>. Publishes 2nd. edition of <em>Paradise Lost</em>. Death (Nov. 8–10?); burial at St. Giles, Cripplegate (Nov. 12).</td>
<td>1674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th (Folio) edition of <em>Paradise Lost</em>: illustrations chiefly by Juan Baptista de Medina, engraved chiefly by Michael Burghers.</td>
<td>1678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton’s <em>Letters of State</em> published, with Edward Phillips’ <em>Life of Milton</em> and four sonnets – to Fairfax, Cromwell, Vane, and Cyriack Skinner (#2) – omitted from 1673 <em>Poems</em>.</td>
<td>1688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Act passed.</td>
<td>1694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryden’s rhymed drama <em>The State of Innocence</em>, registered (published 1677).</td>
<td>1694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunyan, <em>Pilgrim’s Progress</em>.</td>
<td>1694</td>
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</tbody>
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Introduction

In the Proem to Book 9 of Paradise Lost, Milton states that he had thought long and hard about the right epic subject, “Since first this Subject for Heroic Song / Pleas’d me long choosing, and beginning late” (9.25–6). As early as 1628, as an undergraduate student at Cambridge, he had declared his desire to write epic and romance in English, in the vein of Homer and Spenser, about “Kings and Queens and Hero’s old / Such as the wise Demodocus once told / In solemn Songs at King Alcinous feast” (“At a Vacation Exercise,” ll. 47–9). He first supposed he would write an Arthuriad. In late 1638, while on his European tour, he outlined to Giovanni Battista Manso, the patron of Tasso, his hope to follow Tasso in writing a national epic, specifying as subject King Arthur and the Round Table and the early British kings battling the Saxons (“Mansus,” ll. 78–84). He reiterated that hope a year or so later, in his funeral elegy for his dear friend Charles Diodati (“Epitaphium Dæmonis,” ll. 162–8). But by 1642 he had determined that the Arthur stories lacked the basis in history that he, like Tasso, thought an epic should have, and he now proposed, in the long personal preface to the second book of his antiprelatical treatise, The Reason of Church-government, Urg’d against Prelaty, to find a likely British subject and Christian hero in some “K[ing] or Knight before the [Norman] conquest.” Alluding to the Horatian formula widely accepted in the Renaissance, that poetry should teach and delight, he framed that formula in national terms: to adorn “my native tongue” and to “advance Gods glory by the honour and instruction of my country.” To achieve that goal, he considered whether epic or drama might be “more doctrinal and exemplary to a Nation.”

He had been thinking seriously about drama. Between 1639 and 1641 he listed (in what is now known as the Trinity Manuscript) nearly one hundred possible literary projects. That list includes only one epic subject, clearly historical, “founded somewhere in Alfreds reigne”; the rest are subjects for tragedies drawn from the Bible and British history, among them four brief sketches for a tragedy on the Fall (see appendix). The two longer versions call for five acts, the Fall occurring offstage,
a mix of biblical and allegorical characters, and a “mask of all the evills of this life & world.” Milton’s nephew Edward Phillips, who was also his pupil and sometime amanuensis, saw several verses for the beginning of such a tragedy, including ten lines Milton later used in Satan’s speech on Mount Niphates (PL 4.32–41). Milton’s early reflections on the Fall as tragedy may have influenced several very dramatic scenes in the epic: Satan’s speeches to his followers, the dialogue between God and the Son in Heaven, the Satan–Abdiel debate, Adam and Eve’s marital dispute, the temptations, recriminations, and reconciliation of Adam and Eve. But at some point Milton decided that the Fall and its consequences, “all our woe,” was the great epic subject for his own times: not the celebratory founding of a great empire or nation as in the *Aeneid*, but the tragic loss of an earthly paradise and with it any possibility of founding an enduring version of the City of God on earth.

He may have begun *Paradise Lost* a year or two before the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and continued it in the years immediately following that event. At this point he could draw upon almost half a century of study, reflection, and experience. When the English Civil War broke out in 1642 Milton decided to put his large literary projects on hold so as to place his pen in the service of reforming the English church and state. In a series of treatises written over two decades he addressed himself to the fundamental reforms he thought would advance the liberties of Englishmen. Many of those reforms were far more radical than most of his compatriots could accept: removal of bishops from state and church office, church disestablishment, wide religious toleration, separation of church and state, unlicensed publications and the free circulation of ideas, reformed education along humanist lines, divorce on grounds of incompatibility, the abolition of monarchy, regicide when warranted, and republican government. A few weeks after the execution of Charles I in 1649 Milton was appointed Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the new republic and held that post under the Protectorate until 1659. His duties involved translating his government’s formal correspondence with other states, translating in conferences with foreign diplomats, and writing treatises in English and Latin defending the regicide and the new English commonwealth. He began these activities with high hopes that the English people would rally to the “Good Old Cause” of religious and political liberty, but over time he became increasingly distressed by what he saw as their “servility” in supporting a national, repressive church and seeking the restoration of the monarchy.

His private life was also replete with challenges, joys, and sorrows: anxiety about the choice of vocation, the pleasures of friendship, the deep delight of creating splendid poetry, marriage with an incompatible spouse who left him for nearly three years, the deaths of his dearest friend, two wives, and an infant son and daughter, years of worry about failing eyesight, total blindness in 1652 with his great poetry yet unwritten and his public duties still urgent. The personal crises of his marriage to Mary Powell and his blindness would have profound implications for his great epic, a poem written by a blind bard in which the tensions of marriage, as well as its
pleasures, are central. Milton poured into his epic all that he had learned and thought and experienced, about life, love, artistic creativity, religious faith, work, history, politics, man and woman, God and nature, liberty and tyranny, monarchy and republicanism, learning and wisdom.

In the Proem to Book 7 Milton refers to the circumstances in which he wrote much of Paradise Lost: “On evil dayes though fall’n, and evil tongues; / In darkness, and with dangers compast round” (ll. 26–8). In the Restoration milieu Puritan dissenters were severely repressed, and several of Milton’s regicide friends and associates were executed by the horrific method of hanging, drawing off the blood, disemboweling, and quartering. Just after Charles II returned in May 1660 Milton had reason to fear a similar fate for himself: he hid out in a friend’s house for more than three months and was then arrested and spent some weeks in prison. When that immediate danger passed he had to come to terms with his profound disappointment over the utter defeat of his political and religious ideals, with his much-reduced financial circumstances, with his daughters’ resentment over their restricted lives and limited prospects, and with the enormous problem of writing his great poem as a blind man forced to rely on ad hoc arrangements with students and friends to take down dictation. In 1665, before the poem was ready for the printer, Milton left London with his family to escape a particularly lethal visitation of the plague, settling in the country village of Chalfont St. Giles. When he returned the next year, he experienced the terror of the Great Fire of London which devastated two-thirds of the City and came within a quarter-mile of his house.

Before publication Paradise Lost had to be licensed in accordance with the Press Act of 1662. There was brief trouble with the censor, Thomas Tomkyns, who objected to lines 594–9 of Book 1, with their reference to a solar eclipse portending “change” that “perplexes Monarchs.” But in the autumn of 1667 the epic was published by Samuel Simmons, one of the few printing houses left standing after the fire. At the end of April 1667 Milton signed the first recorded formal contract assuring intellectual property rights and payments to an author: five pounds when copy was delivered, five pounds when 1,300 copies were sold from an edition of 1,500 copies, then the same sum again upon sale of 1,300 (of 1,500) copies from the second and from the third editions. These amounts compare with payments to some other early modern authors; many were paid only with a few copies of their work. In 1674, four months before Milton’s death, the second edition of Paradise Lost was published, revised from ten books to twelve.

“Things Unattempted Yet in Prose or Rhime”

Milton’s epic is pre-eminently a poem about knowing and choosing – for the Miltonic Bard, for his characters, and for the reader. It foregrounds education, a lifelong concern of Milton’s and of special importance to him after the Restoration as
a means to help produce discerning, virtuous, liberty-loving human beings and citizens. Unlike any other literary or theological treatment of the Fall story, almost half the poem is given over to the formal education of Adam and Eve, by Raphael before and by Michael after the Fall. God himself takes on the role of educator as he engages in dialogue with his Son about humankind’s fall and redemption (3.80–265) and with Adam over his request for a mate (8.357–451). Adam and Eve’s dialogues with each other involve them in an ongoing process of self-education about themselves and their world. Milton educates his readers by exercising them in imaginative apprehension, rigorous judgment, and choice. By setting his poem in relation to other great epics and works in other genres he involves readers in a critique of the values associated with those other heroes and genres, as well as with issues of politics and theology.

Milton’s allusions in the Proems and throughout the poem continually acknowledge structural and verbal debts to the great classical models for epic or epic-like poems – Homer, Virgil, Hesiod, Ovid, Lucan, Lucretius – and to such moderns as Ariosto, Tasso, Du Bartas, Camoëns, and Spenser. The reader familiar with these texts will notice many more such allusions than can be indicated in the annotations to this edition. Milton incorporates many epic topics and conventions from the Homeric and Virgilian epic tradition: an epic statement of theme, invocations both to the Muse Urania and to the great creating Spirit of God, an epic question, a beginning in medias res, a classical epic hero in Satan, a Homeric catalogue of Satan’s generals, councils in Hell and in Heaven, epic pageants and games, and supernatural powers – God, the Son, and good and evil angels. Also, a fierce battle in Heaven pitting loyal angels against the rebel forces, replete with chariot clashes, taunts and vaunts, hill-hurlings, and the single combats of heroes; narratives of past actions in Raphael’s accounts of the War in Heaven and the Creation; and Michael’s prophetic narrative of biblical history to come.

Yet the Bard claims in the opening Proem that he intends to surpass all those earlier epics, that his “adventrous Song” will soar “Above th’Aonian Mount” (1.13, 15). He clarifies what this means in the Proem to Book 9, as he takes pride in having eschewed “Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument / Heroic deem’d” and in having defined a new heroic standard, “the better fortitude / Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom” (9.28–32). He has indeed given over the traditional epic subject, wars and empire, and the traditional epic hero as the epitome of courage and battle prowess. His protagonists are a domestic pair, the scene of their action is a pastoral garden, and their primary challenge is, “under long obedience tried,” to make themselves, their marital relationship, and their garden – the nucleus of the human world – ever more perfect. In this they fail, but at length they learn to understand and identify with the new heroic standard embodied in a series of heroes of faith and especially in the “greater man,” Christ, who will redeem humankind. For this radically new epic subject, as the Proems to Books 1, 3, 7, and 9 state, Milton hopes to obtain from the divine source of both truth and creativity the illumination and collaboration necessary to
conceive a subject at once truer and more heroic than any other. He makes bold claims to originality as an author, but an author who is also a prophetic bard.

In addition to the new epic subject, Milton’s poem holds other surprises for its readers, then and now. First, and most striking, perhaps, is his splendid Satan, taken by many critics from the Romantic period to the early decades of the twentieth century as the intended or unintended hero of the poem. Milton presents him, especially in Books 1 and 2, as a figure of power, awesome size, proud and courageous bearing, regal authority, and, above all, magnificent rhetoric: this is no paltry medieval devil with grotesque physical features and a tail. He is described in terms of constant allusions to the greatest heroes – Achilles, Odysseus, Aeneas, Prometheus, and others – in regard to the usual epic traits: physical prowess, battle courage, anger, fortitude, determination, endurance, leadership, and aristeia or battle glory. Through that presentation Milton engages readers in a poem-long exploration and redefinition of heroes and heroism, often by inviting them to discover how Satan in some ways exemplifies but in essence perverts those classical models. Moreover, Satan’s moving language of defiance against tyranny and laments for loss are powerfully attractive, posing readers the difficult challenge of discerning the discrepancies between Satan’s noble words and his motives and actions. At length Milton invites readers to measure all other versions of the heroic against the self-sacrificing love of the Son of God, the moral courage of Abdiel, and the “better fortitude” of several biblical heroes of faith.

Milton’s representations of Hell, Heaven, and Eden also challenge readers’ stereotypes in his own age and ours. All these regions are in process: the physical conditions of the places are fitted to the beings that inhabit them, but the inhabitants interact with and shape their environments, creating societies in their own image. Hell is first presented in traditional terms, with the fallen angels chained on a lake of fire. But unlike Dante’s Inferno, where the damned are confined within distinct circles to endure an eternally repeated punishment suited to their particular sins, Milton presents a damned society in the making. His fallen angels rise up and begin to mine gold and gems, build a government center, Pandæmonium, hold a parliament, send Satan on a mission of exploration and conquest, investigate their spacious and varied though sterile landscape, engage in martial games and parades, perform music, compose epic poems about their own deeds, and argue hard philosophical questions about fate and free will. Their parliament in Book 2 presents an archetype of debased and manipulated political assemblies and of characteristic political rhetoric through the ages. The powerful angelic peers debate issues of war and peace in the council chamber while the common angels are reduced to pygmy size outside. Moloch, the quintessential hawk, urges perpetual war at any cost; Belial counsels peace through ignominious inaction; Mammon would build up a rival empire in Hell founded on riches and magnificent but, ironically, describes that course of action in the language of republican virtue, as a choice of “Hard liberty before the easie yoke / Of servile Pomp” (2.256–7). Then Satan sways the council to his will through the agency of his chief minister, Beelzebub. The scene closes with Satan accorded divine honors.
in an exaggerated version of the idolatry Milton had long associated with the Stuart ideology of divine kingship.

Milton’s Heaven is even more surprising: instead of the expected stasis in perfection, it is also in process, requiring the continued and active choice of good, as Raphael explains to Adam: “My self and all th’ Angelic Host that stand / In sight of God enthron’d, our happie state / Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds” (5.535–7). As a celestial city that combines courtly magnificence with the pleasures of nature, it offers an ideal of wholeness through a mix of heroic, georgic, and pastoral modes. Angelic activities include elegant hymns suited to various occasions, martial parades, defensive warfare to put down rebellion, pageantry, masque dancing, feasting, political debate, guarding Eden, and, most surprisingly, angelic sex. This representation of Heaven seems to imply an affirmative answer to Raphael’s suggestive question, “what if Earth / Be but the shaddow of Heav’n, and things therein / Each to other like, more then on earth is thought?” (5.574–6).

Underlying this conception is the philosophical monism Milton also set forth in his Latin theological treatise, De Doctrina Christiana (The Christian Doctrine), a long-term project still under preparation while Milton was composing his epic. Both treatise and poem repudiate the Neoplatonic dualism common to most seventeenth-century Christians, and to Milton himself in his early poems, which understands God and the angels to be pure spirit while humans are a mixture of spirit (the immortal soul) and gross matter (the body). Challenged, perhaps, by the powerful impact of Hobbes’ materialism which issued in determinism, and by other speculative thinkers of the period, Milton developed in treatise and poem a monist ontology according to which spirit and matter, angels and humans, differ only in degree of refinement of one corporeal substance emanating from God. Creation is ex Deo (out of God) rather than ex nihilo (out of nothing) as in most orthodox formulations. Milton’s theory held that God withdrew from the matter issuing from him so it could become mutable and subject to the free will of other beings. This concept grounds Milton’s striking description of Chaos as a region of inchoate matter comprised of constantly warring elements through which Satan flies with great difficulty and out of which the Son of God creates the universe. It also underpins Raphael’s discourse to Adam and Eve (5.469–500), which describes “one first matter” as the substance of all beings, who can move toward greater (“more spiritous and pure”) refinement or toward grosser corporeality. Raphael also invokes that principle to explain how he can eat human food, how humans may expect at length to be transformed “all to spirit” after long trial of their obedience, and how angels and humans share, proportionally, in intuitive and discursive reasoning, which differ “but in degree, of kind the same” (5.490). Milton’s monism results in an unusually fluid conception of hierarchy.

Milton’s portrayal of the Edenic garden and Adam and Eve’s prelapsarian life also challenges the assumptions of his contemporaries and of most Christian commentators on the Genesis story, as well as many readers’ assumptions about a state of innocence. Traditionally, Eden was portrayed as a garden replete with all the
beauties of nature held in perfection; God commanded Adam and Eve to tend that
garden so as to keep them from idleness, but not from any necessity. They were
not childlike but had a capacious intelligence and understanding of the natural
world; their serene life was said to be free from passion or anxiety; and most
Christian exegetes assumed that they did not remain in Eden long enough to have
sex. Milton, uniquely, undertook to imagine what an extended life in innocence might
be like, and to represent it in the four central books of his epic. His Eden is also a
lush and lovely garden with a superabundance of natural delights and a myriad of
frolicking animals, but it will revert to wilderness unless Adam and Eve continually
prop and prune the burgeoning vegetation. Their labor is pleasant but it is also abso-
lutely necessary; in Milton’s epic humans bear responsibility from the beginning to
care for and maintain the natural world. In Milton’s Eden Adam and Eve are
expected to cultivate and control their prolific garden and their own sometimes way-
ward impulses and passions, to work out their relationship to God and to each other,
and to deal with ever new challenges. These include the education provided by the
angel Raphael and the intellectual curiosity it both stimulates and assuages, the emo-
tions attending the complexities of love and sex, the problems arising from gender
hierarchy within a hierarchical universe, and the subtle temptations posed by Satan,
in dream and in serpent disguise. Such challenges are presented by Milton as com-
ponents of an ideal human life in innocence, and as preparation for a more exalted
state. He does not conceive of ideality as static perfection but associates it rather
with challenge, choice, and growth.

At the center of his epic Milton sets a richly imagined representation of prelap-
sarian love, sex, marriage, and domestic society, in which Adam and Eve experience
the fundamental challenge of any love relationship, the inevitable but potentially
creative tension between autonomy and interdependence. Milton’s most brilliant
analysis of this challenge in psychological as well as moral terms occurs in the mar-
tial dispute (9.205–386), which is without precedent in other literary versions of the
Genesis story. Here for the first time in Eden dialogue does not succeed in clarify-
ning and resolving problems. As Adam and Eve enmesh themselves in ever greater
misunderstandings the reader feels on his or her pulses the truth of this archetypal
version of those all-too-familiar scenes in which lovers or friends, by no one’s design,
exacerbate slight disagreements into great divides, leading to unwise decisions and
dire results. Neither Adam nor Eve has sinned in this exchange because there has
been no deliberate choice of evil: they sin only when they make a deliberate deci-
sion to eat the fruit. Eve’s dream and its aftermath in Book 5 underscore the poem’s
fundamental assumption that impulses, passions, and desires are not in themselves
sinful unless the will consents to the evil they may promote. But in the marital dis-
pute in Book 9 Eve’s feelings of hurt that her virtue is not thought strong enough
fuel her desire to prove herself independently, while Adam fears to offend Eve. These
emotions sabotage their dialogic exchange and result in physical separation, producing
the mounting sense of inevitability proper to tragedy.
In *Paradise Lost* contemporary assumptions about gender hierarchy are often voiced, but they strain against the ideal of companionate marriage that Milton developed in part in his divorce tracts and elaborates here. That companionate ideal is embodied in the portrayal of Adam and Eve’s shared activities: conversation, lovemaking, the work and responsibility of the garden, the education offered by the angel. Also, in the dialogue Milton imagines between Adam and God, Adam expresses his profound sense of incompleteness without an “equal” mate. Milton’s literary strategies also trouble the ideology of gender hierarchy. Eve is shown to be as much a lyric poet as Adam, perhaps more so. Their hymns and prayers are joint expressions, but Eve creates the first love lyric in Eden: the delicate, rhetorically artful, sonnet-like pastoral that begins “Sweet is the breath of Morn” (4.449–91). In the Fall sequence and its aftermath, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that Milton’s epic turns into an Eviad, casting Eve rather than Adam in the role of central protagonist. The biblical story requires that she be the object of the serpent’s temptation, but Milton’s poem goes much further: she initiates the marital colloquy about gardening separately, she engages in a lengthy and highly dramatic dialogue with Satan embodied in the serpent, she analyzes her motives and emotions in probing soliloquies before eating the fruit and before offering it to Adam. After the Fall she responds first to “prevenient grace” and so first breaks out of what would otherwise be an endless cycle of accusations and recriminations. Her moving lament, “Forsake me not thus, Adam” (10.914–36), becomes the human means to lead Adam back from the paralysis of despair to love, repentance, and reconciliation, first with his wife and then with God. Her offer to take the whole of God’s anger on herself echoes the Son’s offer in the Council in Heaven to take on himself God’s wrath for human sin, and while Eve cannot play the Son’s redemptive role she does become the first human to reach toward the new standard of human heroism. Hers is the last speech of the poem, and in it she casts herself as protagonist in both the Fall and the Redemption: “though all by mee is lost, / Such favour I unworthie am voutsaft, / By mee the Promis’d Seed shall all restore” (12.621–3). It is a remarkable claim to agency and centrality.

Milton’s epic also dramatizes political issues long important to him – monarchy, tyranny, idolatry, rebellion, liberty, republicanism, separation of church and state. The poem represents both God and Satan as monarchs and portrays Satan not only as an Oriental sultan but also as a self-styled grand rebel marshaling Milton’s own republican rhetoric from *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* against what he calls the “tyranny of heaven.” Those representations offer a poem-long exercise in how to deal with political rhetoric and how to make right discriminations. The Abdiel–Satan debates of Books 5 and 6 underscore the Miltonic principle that there can be no possible parallel between the monarchy proper to God as creator and any other king. These passages challenge readers to refuse contemporary royalist analogies between God and King Charles, or Satan and the Puritan rebels, and instead to understand that the appropriation by any monarch other than God of the imagery and accouterments of absolute kingship is idolatry. The Nimrod passage in Michael’s prophecy
(12.24–95) presents republicanism as humankind’s proper natural state, as Adam castigates that first king as a tyrant for usurping over his equals the dominion proper only to God. Michael’s prophecy also incorporates topics central to Milton’s polemics: the corruption of the church by Roman Catholic “wolves,” the misuse of civil power to force consciences, and the gift of the Spirit to all believers. Also, the poem examines contemporary political issues of exploration and colonization, representing Satan as an explorer bent on conquest and the colonization of Eden, and describing the paradisal garden in terms often used of the New World: lush, beautiful, prodigiously prolific, needing to be cultivated and tamed, a potential satellite colony for either Heaven or Hell.

Some aspects of Milton’s heterodox theological doctrines, argued forcefully in the *Christian Doctrine*, work greatly to his literary advantage in developing his epic. For one thing, he could escape the biblical literalism common among his fellow Puritans because he gave the indwelling spirit of God priority over the letter of Scripture and because from the time of his divorce tracts he insisted that the meaning of any scriptural text must accord with the overarching principles of reason, charity, and the good of humankind. Thanks to those interpretative touchstones, he could represent the Genesis Creation story in terms that leave space for contemporary or future science. In Book 7 Raphael refuses to validate a literal reading of a six-day Creation, but instead explicitly presents the Genesis narrative as an accommodation, “So told as earthly notion can receave” (7.179). And in Book 8 Raphael refuses Adam’s urgent plea to resolve the problem of planetary motion, offering instead an account of both the Ptolemaic and the Copernican systems as well as of more radical recent theories. He thereby removes that matter from the sphere of revelation and leaves it open to scientific inquiry, while also insisting that Adam give primary attention to human life and the human world: “thy being,” “this Paradise / And thy faire Eve” (8. 174, 171–2). Also, Milton imagines scenes and stories that have no textual basis in Genesis, among them the visit of Raphael to Adam and Eve, Adam’s dialogue with God about a mate, and the marital dispute between Adam and Eve. He found sanction for such invention, it seems, from the inner illumination that the “Celestial light” of God can supply (3.51): in the Proem to Book 9 he describes the nightly visits of his celestial muse who “inspires / Easie my unpremeditated Verse.”

Issues of interpretation are central to the educative issues of the poem as Milton foregrounds for his characters and his readers the problematics of interpreting God’s decrees and his works, and the place of reason and experience in probing their implications. How to reason from experience is a central element in the debate between Satan and Abdiel in Book 5 over God’s proclamation of the Son’s elevation. Against Satan’s envy-driven assertion that the Son’s elevation must involve the angels’ demotion (as in a zero-sum game), Abdiel interprets that event in the light of the angels’ historical experience of God’s goodness to them. But he refuses Satan’s inference that since the angels cannot remember their creation they must have been “self-begot, self-raised,” given that no one can recall the experience of his or her originary moment.
The issue of experience is also central when Satan tempts Eve to interpret the prohibition on the tree as an injurious withholding of knowledge from humans, and to infer from the serpent’s supposed experience of gaining reason and speech by eating the forbidden fruit that she can expect a proportional rise in the scale of being. This invitation to reason about the prohibition is a brilliant rhetorical move, original with Milton. Eve could meet it successfully by holding firm to the understanding she articulated when she arrived at the tree: that this prohibition is a positive command of God outside the domain of reason (“Sole Daughter of his voice,” 9.653). She might also recall, as Abdiel did, her previous experience of God’s goodness. Not blind obedience to the letter, or entire reliance on reason and experience, but thoughtful discrimination is called for in understanding God’s decrees.

Milton’s theological principles also enable him to portray God as an epic character, though Tasso and most other Christian epic poets and theorists thought that would be impossible and probably sacrilegious. In his Christian Doctrine Milton argued that all ideas or images of the incomprehensible God are necessarily metaphoric, but that they should correspond to the way God has presented himself in the Scriptures. Accordingly, he can present the God of Paradise Lost displaying a range of emotions (fear, wrath, scorn, dismay, love) as Jehovah does in the Hebrew Bible and its various theophanies; he also calls upon some representations of Zeus in Homer and Hesiod and Jove in Ovid. But he does not attempt to portray God as a unified, fully realized character, or, by human standards, always an attractive one. The views of God that Milton offers – debating with the Son in Book 3, presenting the Son to the angels in Book 5, sending the Son to defeat the rebel angels in Book 6, prompting the generative activities of earth in Book 7 with the Son as his agent, debating with Adam in Book 8, sending the Son to judge Adam and Eve in Book 10 – are all partial reflections seen from particular perspectives.

Milton’s antitrinitarianism and Arminianism also serve his literary project. Like adherents of the so-called Arian heresy, Milton argued in his Christian Doctrine that the Son is a subordinate deity, not omniscient or omnipotent or eternal or immutable but rather produced by an act of God’s will as the firstborn of creation, and that he enjoys whatever divine attributes he has only as God devolves them upon him. This allows Milton to portray the Son in Paradise Lost as a genuinely dramatic and heroic character, whose choices are made and whose actions are taken freely, in a state of imperfect knowledge – his condition when, in dialogue with God, he takes on his sacrificial role to save humankind (3.81–342). That dialogue also both affirms and dramatizes the belief in free will (Arminianism) which is at the heart of this poem and of much else that Milton wrote. The Father explains and defends his “high Decree” that from all eternity mandates contingency and freedom for both angels and humans, and thereby secures to both orders genuine freedom of choice, whose results he foresees but does not predetermine. Humans were made “just and right, / Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall” and the same is true of “all th’ Ethereal Powers / And Spirits, both them who stood and them who faild.” If it were not so,
God declares, the noblest acts of faith, love, and true allegiance by angels and humans would be meaningless, and “Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)” would be “Useless and vain” (3.98–109). The dialogue itself enacts the distinction between foreknowledge and predestination: the Son freely volunteers to die to save humankind, a choice the Father foreknew but did not determine.

The final segment of the poem presents Michael’s prophecy of biblical history to come as a series of examples, repeated again and again, of one or a few righteous humans standing out against, but at length overcome by, the many wicked. Michael sums up this tragic history, “so shall the World goe on, / To good malignant, to bad men benigne, / Under her own waibt groaning” until the Millennium (12.537–9). But he promises Adam “A paradise within thee, happier farr” (12.587) if Adam learns how to live in faith and charity. This has seemed to some a recipe for quietism and retreat from the political arena. But the thrust of Michael’s history is against any kind of passivity, spiritual, moral, or political, as it emphasizes the responsibility of the few just men in every age to oppose, if God calls them to do so, Nimrods, or Pharaohs, or tyrannous kings, even though – like the loyal angels in the Battle in Heaven before the Son appears – they will win no final victories until the Son’s Second Coming.

Milton offers Paradise Lost as in some sense a theodicy, an effort “To justifie the wayes of God to men” (1.26). God’s insistence on his creatures’ free will is central to showing the justice of his ways. So is the fact that, despite learning about the ravages of Sin and Death throughout history, Adam is able to proclaim the goodness of God’s ways as the meaning of the messianic promises becomes clear to him. But, as a poet, Milton’s theodicy is less a matter of theological argument or doctrine than of the imaginative vision the entire poem presents of human life, human love, and the human condition as good, despite the tragedy of the Fall and all our woe. That may seem a quixotic affirmation from a poet who endured the agony of total blindness throughout his most creative years and who experienced the utter defeat of the political cause to which he gave twenty years of his life. But it arises from the ideas of human freedom, moral responsibility, and capacity for growth and change that the entire poem dramatizes.

Milton’s poignant, quiet, wonderfully evocative final lines are elegiac in substance and tone, conjoining loss and consolation. Prophecy and providence provide part of that consolation, but the emphasis falls upon the comforts and challenges of Adam and Eve’s loving union as they go forth “hand in hand” to live out all that has been foreseen:

Some natural tears they drop’d, but wip’d them soon;
The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand, with wandring steps and slow,
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.
"Answerable Style"

Seeking an “answerable style” for his “great Argument,” Milton produced rushing, enjambed, blank-verse lines that propel us along with few pauses for line endings or full stops, marked by elevated diction and complex syntax and by sonorities and sound patternings that make a magnificent music. He was clearly at pains to create an epic language suited to his exalted subject, a sublime high style of remarkable range whose energy and power will engulf us from the beginning. This style is created in part by dense allusiveness to classical myths, to biblical, historical, and literary names and stories, and to geographical places, ancient and contemporary, which import into the poem our associations with all those literary and physical worlds. Consider these three, among manifold examples: “in Ausonian land / Men call’d him Mulciber; and how he fell / From Heav’n, they fabl’d, thrown by angry Jove / Sheer o’re the Chrystal Battlements: from Morn / To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve, / A Summers day” (1.739–44); “And all who since, Baptiz’d or Infidel / Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban, / Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond” (1.582–4); “Blind Thamyris and blind Maonides, / And Tiresias and Phineus Prophets old” (3.35–6). Parallelism often organizes such allusions into a series, sometimes couched in negatives, so as at once to invite comparisons and deny them. An example is the familiar passage describing Eden: “Not that faire field / Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flours / Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis / Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain / To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove / Of Daphne by Orontes, and th’ inspir’d / Castalian Spring, might with this Paradise / Of Eden strive” (4.268–75). Moreover, the often euphonious names in such passages echo in pervasive sound patterns of assonance, consonance, and repetition, helping to create a distinctive music while avoiding full rhyme, save in about 200 lines.

Milton devised for his poem a flexible blank-verse line with (almost always) ten syllables and a masculine or strong stress at the ends of lines. But the basic iambic rhythm (five weak and five strong stresses), is constantly varied by interspersing other rhythmic feet, so that some lines contain as few as three and others as many as eight strong stresses. The lines are organized into verse paragraphs of varying length, so that the reader encounters large units of verse at once, aided in this by Milton’s characteristic light punctuation. Milton also employs great freedom in the placement of caesuras (the pauses falling within the line) and he uses enjambment constantly, so that the sense is carried over from line to line. Sometimes the natural slight pause at the end of a line offers one meaning, which is then extended or qualified by the next, rove-over line. For example, as Satan looks from Chaos toward the Empyreal heaven he sees attached to it by a golden chain “This pendant world, in bigness as a Starr / Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon” (2.1052–3). We first take an impression of the massive size of the world as we pause briefly at the end of the first line; then that impression is revised as the line roves over, and the world seems instead small and very vulnerable.
As expected in an epic style, Milton incorporates many epic similes, lengthy comparisons which develop a little story or description often drawn from nature or folklore, thereby connecting the heroic action of the poem with other arenas of life. Milton’s similes are often complex, making an explicit comparison but also inviting other associations, as in the simile relating Satan to the biblical Leviathan:

that Sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th’ Ocean stream:
Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam
The Pilot of some small night-founder’d Skiff,
Deeming some Island oft, as Sea-men tell,
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind
Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night
Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delayes:
So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay

(1.200–9)

The explicit comparison is in terms of great size, but the familiar mariner’s tale of the whale mistaken for a sheltering island foreshadows the deceptions of Satan, who attracts but then destroys the unwary.

Milton’s epic style is elevated by unusual grammatical constructions – for example, “palpable obscure” (2.406) – in which an adjective is used as a noun; the phrase prevents visualization but produces a highly evocative, almost synesthetic, effect that suggests some qualities of that indescribable place, Chaos. Also, this style is estranged from English syntactic norms by a freedom of word order common to inflected languages like Latin, as in the description of Eve discovered by Satan alone amidst her flowers: “them she upstaies / Gently with Mirtle band, mindless the while, / Her self, though fairest unsupported Flour, / From her best prop so farr and storm so nigh” (9.430–3). Or again, in this observation about the volcanic soil of Hell as Satan first lands upon it: “Such resting found the sole / Of unblest feet” (1.237–8).

Milton embeds dense layers of meaning in particular words by exploiting their Latin or Greek etymological senses. In the description of the rebel angels hurled from heaven “With hideous ruin,” “ruin” keeps its Latin etymological meaning, “falling,” along with its contemporary sense, “devastation.” Or in several descriptions of “horrid Arms” “horrid” means “terrible” but also keeps its Latin sense of “bristling” with spikes of flame. At times only the Latin sense is evoked, as when the rivers of Eden are said to run “With mazie error” (4.239): “error” here means “wandering,” not “mistake” or “fault.” Milton often plays with serious wit on the multiple meanings of a word, as in Adam’s honorific address to Eve, “Sole partner and sole part of all these joyes” (4.411), where “sole” first means “only” and then “unique,” probably with overtones of the homonym, “soul.” Later, in the throes of desperation after his
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fall, Adam invents a false etymology, deriving “evil” from Eve’s name: “O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give eare / To that false Worm” (9.1067–8).

Another distinctive characteristic of Milton’s style is his use of a series of words with the same prefix – especially “un,” as in Belial’s speech projecting the punishments the rebel angels may yet incur, “Unrespite, unpitied, unreprieved” (2.185). Or the description of the steadfast loyal angels in the Battle in Heaven, “Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain’d” (6.404) by wounds. He often coins words by using negative prefixes: “disespouse,” “inabstinence,” “disenthrone” (the OED attributes coinages of many kinds to Milton). While Milton’s diction is often polysyllabic and ornamental, he also uses simple Anglo-Saxon words to powerful effect, as in this list of Hell’s geographical features: “Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death” (2.621). Similar lists evoke Satan’s tortuous passage through the formless terrain of Chaos: “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 flyes” (2.948–50). Milton can also employ simple diction and syntax to poignant emotional effect, as in his moving account of the beauties of nature he has lost by blindness: “Thus with the Year / Seasons return, but not to me returns / Day, or the sweet approach of Ev’n or Morn, / Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose, / Or flocks, or heards, or human face divine” (3.40–4).

Into this elevated but very flexible epic style, Milton incorporated a wide range of other genres with their appropriate styles. There are several incorporated lyrics, the loveliest of which is Eve’s sonnet-like love song to Adam, a 16-line epanalepsis that begins “Sweet is the breath of morn” and ends with the same word, “without thee is sweet” (4.641–56). There are many interspersed hymns: the angels’ celebrations of God and the Son in Book 3 and of each day of Creation in Book 7, as well as the extended morning hymn of Adam and Eve beginning “These are thy glorious works, Parent of good” (5.153–208). Moloch, Belial, Mammon, and Beelzebub deliver speeches of formal deliberative oratory in the parliament in Hell, and Belial is explicitly identified as a Sophist rhetorician who “could make the worse appear / The better reason” (2.113–14). As well, God employs forensic oratory in Book 3 as he sets forth the case against fallen humankind, Satan and Abdiel engage in a formal debate in Book 5, and Satan tempts Eve with an impassioned speech in the manner of “som Orator renound / In Athens or free Rome” (9.670–732). God’s comments on the gathering forces of the rebels are ironic, even sardonic (5.719–32) and the Battle in Heaven (Book 6) contains several mock-heroic passages filled with scatological imagery and double entendre as the rebel angels present their cannon. The scene of Satan’s encounter at Hell’s Gate with his daughter-wife Sin and the product of their incestuous union, Death, sets forth their horrendous shapes and story as allegory, but it also has elements of black comedy as Satan fails to recognize his own offspring. Satan delivers a very dramatic, emotion-filled soliloquy as he confronts his guilt on Mount Niphates (4.32–133), and Adam and Eve’s marital dispute in Book 9 provides an example of dialogic, colloquial exchange. Adam utters an extended,
passionate complaint beginning with a pain-racked, despairing outcry, “O miserable of happie!” (10.720–843), and Eve delivers an elegiac lament upon learning that she must leave the garden, “O unexpected stroke, worse then of Death!” (11.268–85). If the Miltonic style is an organ sound, it is produced from a multitude of stops, even as the Miltonic epic incorporates, in accordance with Renaissance theory, a veritable encyclopedia of genres.
Textual Introduction

This text is based on the second edition of *Paradise Lost* (1674) in twelve books, Milton’s final version of the work, incorporating his last intentions for its presentation. I have used the 1674 edition both for the language and for the accidental (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, italics). On a few occasions, where warranted by obvious mistakes or probable printers’ oversights in setting revised text, I have supplied superior readings from the other sources that have some textual authority: a manuscript of Book 1 held in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City, and the first edition (1667) in ten books, with its reissues and the errata page added in 1668.

The manuscript is not in Milton’s hand (his blindness became total in 1652). It was prepared by a professional scribe and bears corrections in several hands as well as printers’ marks indicating that it was used to set Book 1 of the 1667 edition. The rest of the manuscript no longer survives. One of the hands is that of Milton’s nephew and former pupil Edward Phillips, who claims in his *Life* of Milton that he made corrections “as to the Orthography and Pointing” when he came from time to time to visit his uncle. Yet spelling and punctuation in the manuscript are quite inconsistent: Edward visited only occasionally, and Milton could not oversee his copyist’s script. So there is no reason to privilege the manuscript in making editorial decisions or to seek Milton’s preferred usages from it, though I defer to it in a few places in Book 1.

The 1667 edition presents *Paradise Lost* in a ten-book format, rather than the twelve books that Virgilian epic precedent would dictate. Milton was resisting the Virgilian mode adopted by Dryden and many others in the early years of the Restoration to celebrate Charles II as a new Augustus. The ten-book structure alludes to Lucan’s ten-book *Pharsalia* or *The Civil Wars*, widely seen as a republican epic treating the tragic defeat of the Roman republic and its heroes by Caesar. The 1667 *Paradise Lost* is an attractive quarto with a decorated capital letter beginning each book and an ornamental border across the top of the first page of each book. Line numbers mark off each ten lines of the poem, enclosed within a double border on the outside edge.
of each page. There is no front matter – no dedicatory or commendatory poems, no epistles from author or publisher. The simplicity may reflect Milton’s own disposition to avoid the apparatus of courtly publication, or the hesitancy others might have felt in associating themselves with the still notorious Milton. The name of the printer, Samuel Simmons, does not appear on the first title page (Figure 2), perhaps because Simmons’ earlier publication of radical treatises, including Milton’s divorce tracts, might have strengthened the association with radicalism that Milton’s own

Figure 2  First title page to Paradise Lost, 1667
name or initials would evoke. Seven different title pages exist for this first edition, two of them with very minor variations. These were not new editions but new issues, that is, the same printed sheets, with some press corrections in the various states, are bound with the new title pages. The first title page lists three different booksellers and the reissues in 1667, 1668, and 1669 list three more. Such distribution would make the book more widely available and promote sales of a book that sold slowly.

In 1668 Simmons added to the fourth issue his own name and fourteen pages of preliminary matter to help readers better understand the content and form of the poem. His address to the "Courteous Reader" indicates that he solicited from Milton an Argument “for the satisfaction of many that have desired it,” as well as “a reason of that which stumbled many others, why the Poem Rimes not.” Milton provided a fairly detailed argument for each of the ten books, all printed together at the front, as well as a vigorous defense of his use of blank verse, and an errata sheet; these were reprinted in the subsequent issues. As Simmons’ comment indicates, readers in the Restoration cultural milieu had come to expect rhyme, and especially heroic couplets, in the high genres – epic, tragedy, and the heroic drama then popular on the stage. By a remarkable coincidence Dryden’s essay Of Dramatick Poesie greeted the reading public shortly after August 1667, at about the same time Milton’s blank verse epic first appeared. In it, Dryden praises rhyme as the norm for modern poetry of all kinds, especially epic and tragedy, and identifies it as the verse form favored by the court. Milton’s note on “The Verse,” added in 1668, defiantly challenges not only that new poetic norm but also, by implication, the debased court culture and royalist politics associated with it. He concludes by proclaiming his blank verse “an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty restored to Heroic Poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of Riming.” The resonances of this language make Milton’s choice of blank verse a liberating act and an aesthetic complement to republican politics and culture.

The second edition (1674) is an octavo; its title page offers a poem in twelve books, “revised and augmented” by Milton, and identifies Simmons alone as printer and bookseller (Figure 3). Little new text is added, though many words and phrases are altered and there are more than 900 changes to typography, spelling, and punctuation. The twelve-book structure is produced by dividing the original Book 7 into Books 7 and 8, renumbering the following books, and dividing the original Book 10 into Books 11 and 12. Three new lines of poetry are added at the beginning of the new Book 8 and a fourth line is slightly modified; three new lines are added within Book 11 and five new lines to the beginning of Book 12. The Arguments are now printed before each book, divided and slightly revised where necessary to accommodate the twelve-book format. With this structure Milton placed his poem securely in the central Virgilian epic tradition, having decided, it seems, to reclaim that tradition and contest its appropriation by Dryden and the courtly heroic.

The book is well printed, though not so handsome as the first edition; the decorated letters are replaced simply by large capitals, and there are no ornamental
borders or page numbers. But the prefatory material now contains, in addition to Milton’s note on the verse, an engraving made by William Dolle from the engraving William Faithorne supplied for Milton’s History of Britain (1670; see Figure 1) as well as two highly laudatory commendatory poems. The first, in Latin, titled “In Paradisum Amissam Summi Poetae” and signed S.B. M.D., is by Milton’s physician friend Samuel Barrow. The second, signed A.M., is by Milton’s good friend Andrew Marvell, who comments wryly on Dryden’s effort to turn the poem into a play in couplet verse, The State of Innocence.

This edition of Paradise Lost reproduces not only the original language of the 1674 edition but also the spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and italics – features that often reflect the practices of early modern printing houses rather than authorial decisions. But precisely because we cannot always determine when such features register Milton’s preferences, an editor must either make guesses that result in an idiosyncratic text, or modernize thoroughly, or leave matters much as they are in the 1674 edition. There are several good modernized editions of Milton’s epic and that choice is defensible on the grounds that the accidentals cannot be ascribed directly to Milton and that modern spelling and punctuation make the poem more immediately accessible to the contemporary reader. Yet much is lost by modernizing. For one thing, the characteristic light punctuation of the 1674 edition builds up and maintains an energetic, pulsating tempo that pushes the reader through the verse paragraphs. In Milton’s and many other early modern texts, the uses of colon, semicolon, and comma serve more to differentiate the heaviness of the pause than, as now, to clarify the syntax. Supplying modern punctuation often breaks rhythmic patterns readers are intended to hear and can learn pretty quickly how to read. Also, such modernizing may force a single reading where the lighter punctuation accommodates others.

An example may be taken from the following long sentence in Book 7, variously modernized by editors:

80 But since thou hast voutsaf’t
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above Earthly thought, which yet concern’d
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem’d,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate

85 What may no less perhaps availe us known,
How first began this Heav’n which we behold
Distant so high, with moving Fires adornd
Innumerable, and this which yeelds or fills
All space, the ambient Aire wide interfus’d

90 Imbracing round this florid Earth, what cause
Mov’d the Creator in his holy Rest
Through all Eternitie so late to build
In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon
Absolv’d, if unforbid thou maist unfould
What wee, not to explore the secrets askè
Of his Eternal Empire, but the more
To magnifie his works, the more we know.

Two recent editors supply a colon at line 85, and so divide this long sentence into four distinct parts; in one case, question marks following “Earth” (l. 90) and “Absolv’d” (l. 94) make two separate sentences of the segments preceding, with capital letters supplied to the words following (“What,” “If”). In the other case, question marks follow “Earth” (l. 90) and “know” (l. 97) making two separate sentences of those preceding segments. But the lightly punctuated original does not require either reading. The verb “relate” (l. 84) may instead introduce three topics for comment: How did the world begin. What moved the Creator to begin it. How long did the Creation take. One editor supplies parentheses around “which . . . seemd” (ll. 82–3), placing that line and a half in a strong subordination not necessarily intended. In this long sentence, modernizing punctuation disrupts the flowing rhythm and dictates single readings where the original leaves open other interpretative possibilities.

Many editors keep most of the original light punctuation in order to retain those long, flowing Miltonic sentences, but modernize orthography freely. Yet this passage illustrates how some characteristic spellings and contractions impact pronunciation and thereby the rhythm and sound qualities of the lines. “Voutsaf ’t” is pronounced differently than its modern equivalent, “vouched,” and the contractions “Heav’n,” “interfus’d,” “Mov’d,” and “Absolv’d” (as with many such contractions in this poem) suggest giving a shorter time value to the final syllable than does the modernized “ed” form. Other entirely characteristic spellings and contractions that manifestly affect pronunciation and rhythm are: “sovran,” “shew,” “thir,” “bin,” “hight,” “counterfet,” “adventrous,” “falln,” “wandering,” “know st,” “seduc’t,” “scatter’d,” “giv’n,” “ras’d,” “equal’d,” “awak ning,” “hard nd,” “tour’d” (towered), and “Lantskip” (landscape). Also, some elisions clearly affect rhythm: “th’ Ethereal” is sometimes modernized as “the ethereal” (1.45), “th’ Omnipotent” as “the omnipotent” (5.616), and “th’ Arch-Enemy” as “the arch-enemy” (1.81). Admittedly, such characteristic usages are not always consistent in the 1674 edition, and too much can be made of some distinctions (the difference between “me” and “mee,” “we” and “wee” does not serve as once thought to mark unstressed and stressed syllables). Also, some modernized spellings do not make much difference, for example “unfould/unfold”; “magnifie/magnify.” Nevertheless, many usages are unusual enough and frequent enough to be identified as Milton’s rhythmic and verbal preferences, and these can only become part of the reading experience of the poem by respecting the accidentals of the 1674 edition.
The copy text for this edition is Harvard copy 14486.3B, which includes the second state of signatures B, C, D, and R; the second state seems to represent Milton’s or the compositor’s preferences and corrections, and most copies contain these pages. The copy text has been compared with Harvard 14486.3A, Harvard Aldrich 155.10.7, Huntington 105639 (Wing #M2144), Harris Francis Fletcher’s collations (in his photographic facsimile edition of Milton’s poems Fletcher identified and examined 59 copies of the 1674 edition), and, for the first state, John Carter Brown Library T70. The copy text has also been compared with the 1667 edition (Harvard 14486.2.5) and the errata page added in 1668, as well as with the manuscript of Book 1 in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library.

Punctuation and orthography in the copy text have been followed in most cases. When a reading is used from the manuscript or from the 1667 edition, or when I have supplied an emendation, these are noted in the textual apparatus. Differences in the two editions and the manuscript are indicated when they affect meaning, but not simple variants in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or printers’ characters. Printing irregularities and obvious typesetting errors are silently corrected; for notation of these readers should consult Fletcher. In the 1674 edition most proper names are both capitalized and italicized and many other important words are capitalized; I retain these features, however much or little Milton may have had to do with them, as they may signal intended emphasis and, as in many early modern texts, they sometimes do suggest allegorical or quasi-allegorical meaning. On a few occasions where the compositor failed to italicize names customarily italicized, I have supplied italics and noted that fact in the textual apparatus. Line numbers are given in 1667 but not in 1674; they are added here.

My goal is to provide useful annotations without swamping the poetic text with a burdensome apparatus, and without dictating the interpretation of particular passages. Accordingly, unfamiliar words or words that have changed meaning are glossed in the margin to indicate their most obvious sense; readers with a knowledge of Latin, Greek, and other languages will often be aware of etymological meanings it has not been possible to register. Also, while I have annotated names, places, and many allusions, I have not attempted to find and cite every biblical or literary echo; to do so would produce an apparatus longer than Milton’s poem. Nor, except in a few cases of unusual difficulty, have I supplied readings of passages where Milton’s syntactical complexities may cause some difficulties. Such syntactical practices are components of the poem’s style that I do not want to blunt by paraphrase; nor do I want to dictate one reading where others are also possible.

Illustrations

The illustrations to Books 2, 5, 8, 9, and 11 (Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) are from the 1688 Folio edition, furnished with twelve engravings, one at the beginning of
each book. Most of the drawings for the engravings are by John Baptista Medina (Books 3, 5–11); the engraver (except for the Book 4 illustration) is Michal Burghers (or Burgesse). The illustrations included here are reproduced from the 1688 Folio in the Houghton Library. The title pages for the 1667 and 1674 editions are also reproduced from copies in Houghton, as is the William Faithorne engraving of Milton’s portrait prefacing The History of Britain.
PARADISE LOST

JOHN MILTON
Paradise Lost.

A POEM

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

The Author

JOHN MILTON.

The Second Edition
Revised and Augmented by the same Author.

LONDON,
Printed by S. Simmons next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate-street, 1674.
In Paradisum Amissam
Summi Poetæ
JOHANNIS MILTONI

Qui legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni
Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, & cunctarum primordia rerum,
Et fata, & fines continet iste liber.

Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi,
Scribitur & toto quicquid in Orbe latet.
Terræque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum
Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomumque specus.
Quæque colunt terras, Portumque & Tartara cæca,
Quæque colunt summi lucida regna Poli.

Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam,
Et sine fine Chaos, & sine fine Deus:
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.

Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futurum?
Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britannia legit.
O quantos in bella Duces! quæ protulit arma!
Quæ canit, & quanta prælia dira tuba.
Cœlestes acies! atque in certamine Cœlum!

Et quæ Cœlestes pugna deceret agros!
Quantus in ætheriis tollit se Lucifer armis!
Atque ipso graditur vix Michæle minor!
Quantis, & quam funestis concurritur iris
Dum férus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!

Dum vulsos Montes ceu Tela reciproca torquent,
Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt:
Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnæ non superesse suæ.
At simul in cœlis Messæ insignia fulgent,

Et currus animes, armaque digna Deo,
Horrendumque rote strident, & sæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, & vera tonitrua rauco
Admistis flammis insonuere Polo:

Excidit attonitis mens omnis, & impetus omnis
Et cassis dextris irrita Tela cadunt.
On the *Paradise Lost* of the most excellent poet,

John Milton

You who read *Paradise Lost*, the sublime poem of the great Milton, what do you read but the story of all things. That book contains all things and the origin of all things, and their destinies and final ends. The innermost recesses of the great universe are thrown open, and whatever lies hidden in all the world is described: the land and the expanse of the sea and the vast height of heaven and the sulphurous, flame-vomiting den of Erebus; all that dwell on earth and in the sea and in dark Tartarus, and all that dwell in the bright realms of the highest heaven; whatever is contained anywhere within any boundaries, as well as boundless Chaos and the infinite God, and even more limitless, if there is anything more without limit, the reconciling love toward mankind in Christ. Who that had hoped for such a poem could have believed it would come to be? And yet today the land of Britain reads this poem. O what leaders in war? what deeds of arms? What dreadful battles does he sing on the war-trumpet? Celestial battles and Heaven itself at war! And fighting that is fitting for the fields of Heaven! How great Lucifer rises up in his celestial armor! And strides forth scarce inferior to Michael himself! With what great and deadly anger is the battle joined, when one fiercely defends and the other assaults the stars! While they fling the uprooted mountains at each other as missiles and rain down inhuman fire from above, Olympus waits, doubtful as to which side it must yield, and fears that it may not survive its own battles. But soon as the standards of Messiah shine forth in the heavens and his living chariot and arms worthy of God, and soon as the wheels grate horribly and the fierce lightnings of the wheels burst forth from the grim eyes, and the flames flash and real thunder with intermixed fires resounds through the clangorous sky, all courage and all fighting depart from his awestruck foes and their

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42. Homer (Maeonides) was wrongly thought to have written the *Batrachomyomachia* ("Battle of the Frogs and Mice"); Virgil wrote a comic poem, *Culex* ("Gnat").

S.B. is Samuel Barrow, an eminent London physician and friend of Milton. He had been chief physician to Monk’s army in Scotland and one of his confidential advisers; he then became physician in ordinary to Charles II. The poem appeared first in the 1674 edition.
useless weapons fall from their feeble hands. They flee to their punishments and, as if Orcus were a refuge, they struggle to hide themselves in infernal darkness. Yield, writers of Rome, yield, writers of Greece and all those whom ancient or modern fame has celebrated. Whoever will read this poem will think Homer sang only of frogs, Virgil only of gnats.
On Paradise Lost

When I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In slender Book his vast Design unfold,
_Messiah_ Crown’d, Gods Reconcil’d Decree,
Rebellion Angels, the Forbidden Tree,

5 Heav’n, Hell, Earth, Chaos, All; the Argument
Held me a while misdoubting his Intent,
That he would ruine (for I saw him strong)
The sacred Truths to Fable and old Song
(So _Sampson_ groap’d the Temples Posts in spight)

10 The World o’rewhelming to revenge his sight.

Yet as I read, soon growing less severe,
I lik’d his Project, the success did fear;
Through that wide Field how he his way should find
O’re which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;

15 Lest he perplex’d the things he would explain,
And what was easie he should render vain.

Or if a Work so infinite he spann’d
Jealous I was that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,

20 And by ill imitating would excell)
Might hence presume the whole Creations day
To change in Scenes, and show it in a Play.

Pardon me, Mighty Poet, nor despise
My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.

25 But I am now convinc’d, and none will dare
Within thy Labours to pretend a share.
Thou hast not miss’d one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper dost omit:

30 But to detect their Ignorance or Theft.

That Majesty which through thy Work doth Reign
Draws the Devout, deterring the Profane.
And things divine thou treatst of in such state
As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.

35 At once delight and horrour on us seise,
Thou singst with so much gravity and ease;

18–22. The reference is to Dryden, who sought and received Milton’s permission to turn _Paradise Lost_ into an opera/play, in rhymed couplets. It was published in 1677 as _The State of Innocence_, but never performed.
And above humane flight dost soar aloft
With Plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.
The Bird nam’d from that Paradise you sing
So never flaggs, but always keeps on Wing.

Where couldst thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expence of mind?
Just Heav’n thee like Tiresias to requite
Rewards with Prophesie thy loss of sight.

Well mightst thou scorn thy Readers to allure
With tinkling Rhime, of thy own sense secure;
While the Town-Bayes writes all the while and spells,
And like a Pack-horse tires without his Bells:
Their Fancies like our Bushy-points appear,

The Poets tag them, we for fashion wear.
I too transported by the Mode offend,
And while I meant to Praise thee must Commend.
Thy Verse created like thy Theme sublime,
In Number, Weight, and Measure, needs not Rhime.

A.M.

39–40. Birds of Paradise were popularly believed to have no feet, and therefore to be always in flight.
43 *Tiresias*. Blind Theban seer prominent in the mythical history of Greece.
47–50. Marvell satirizes the fashion for rhyme which Dryden advanced through his own poems and plays and vigorously defended in his essay *Of Dramatick Poesie* (1667).
47. In Buckingham’s play *The Rehearsal*, Dryden was satirized as “Bayes,” referring to his ambition to wear the laurel crown (from the bay/laurel tree) of the designated Poet Laureate.
49 *Bushy-points*. The tassels on hose fastenings “tagged” with bits of metal at the ends. Marvell compares the constraints of rhyme to that foppish fashion, as Milton himself did when he gave Dryden permission to “Tagg my Points.”
A.M. is Milton’s friend, the poet Andrew Marvell, who served with him for a time in the Office of the Secretary for Foreign Tongues under Oliver Cromwell, and who was reportedly instrumental after the Restoration in helping Milton gain pardon for supporting the regicide and republic. This poem appeared first in the 1674 edition and again in the posthumous collected edition of Marvell’s poems, *Miscellaneous Poems*, 1681.
THE VERSE

The Measure is English Heroic Verse without Rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and Virgil in Latin; Rime being no necessary Adjunct or true Ornament of Poem or good Verse, in longer Works especially, but the Invention of a barbarous Age, to set off wretched matter and lame Meeter; grac’t indeed since by the use of some famous modern Poets, carried away by Custom, but much to thir own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse then else they would have exprest them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian, and Spanish Poets of prime note have rejected Rime both in longer and shorter Works, as have also long since our best English Tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, triveal and of no true musical delight; which consists onely in apt Numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one Verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoyded by the learned Ancients both in Poetry and all good Oratory. This neglect then of Rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar Readers, that it rather is to be esteem’d an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recover’d to Heroic Poem from the troublesom and modern bondage of Rimeing.

In the 1668 and 1669 reissues of the 1667 edition, Samuel Simmons explained in a brief address, “The Printer to the Reader,” that he had elicited from Milton the arguments to the several books and this note on the verse: “Courteous Reader, there was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, I have procur’d it, and withall a reason of that which stumbled many others, why the Poem Rimes not.”

3 barbarous Age. The Middle Ages, following the fall of Rome and the demise of classical culture.
4–5 famous modern Poets. Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser used rhymed stanzas in their heroic poems.
8. Spanish poetry is usually rhymed, but unrhymed verse was used by Joan Boscà Almugaver in Leandro (1543) and by Garcilaso de la Vega. Among Italian examples, Milton probably knew Torquato Tasso’s hexameron, Il Mondo Creato (written 1592–4).
9 best English Tragedies. Shakespeare chiefly, but also Marlowe.
10 apt Numbers. Appropriate rhythm.
11 quantity. Alludes to Greek and Latin quantitative meter, which Milton does not imitate; his direct reference is probably to the number of syllables in the poetic line, e.g., ten (usually) for his own iambic pentameter lines.
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 revoltig 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 hast 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, fittingly 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 adjoyning. 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 Council. What his Associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the Palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the Deep: The infernal Peers there sit in Council.

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
5
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,
Sing Heav’ny Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire

5–6. According to Horace, the epic poet should begin in medias res.
7. **Center.** Hell was not, as some thought, in the center of the earth.

1–26. The first Proem contains the epic statement of theme (1–5) and the invocation.
4. Christ, the second Adam.
6. See 7.1 and note. Urania, the Greek Muse of astronomy, had been made into the Muse of Christian poetry by Du Bartas and other religious poets. Here she is identified as the Muse that inspired biblical prophet-poets.
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,
In the Beginning how the Heav’ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa’s Brook that flow’d
Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th’ Aonian Mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all Temples th’ upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know’st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad’st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumin, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Argument°
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justifie° the wayes of God to men.
Say first, for Heav’n hides nothing from thy view
Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov’d our Grand Parents in that happy State,
Favour’d of Heav’n so highly, to fall off
From thir Creator, and transgress his Will
For° one restraint, Lords of the World besides?

8. Moses, thought to be the author of Genesis and the other four books of the Pentateuch, was tending sheep
on Mount Horeb (“Oreb”) when God spoke to him from a burning bush (Exod. 3:1–2); he received the
9–10 In the Beginning. Echoes Gen. 1:1; Milton thought God created the universe out of unformed matter
(“Chaos”), not out of nothing. Sion Hill. Mount Zion, associated with the biblical poet David (reputed
author of many psalms); also the site of Solomon’s Temple with its songs and ceremonies.
11–12 Siloa’s Brook. Siloah, a pool near Mount Zion (Neh. 3:15); it parallels Aganippe, the Muses’ spring.
Also Siloam, the pool where Jesus cured a blind man (John 9:1–11). Oracle. Mount Zion as site of
Divine teaching and prophecy (Isa. 2:3).
15 Aonian Mount. Mount Helicon, home of the classical Muses.
16. The line translates Ariosto, Orlando Furioso 1.2.2: “Cosa non detta in prosa mai, né in rima.”
17 Spirit. Probably the creative power of God (see Milton’s commentary on Gen. 1:2 in Christian Doctrine,
1.7), but possibly the Holy Spirit, understood in antitrinitarian terms (ch. 6).
17–22. A composite of biblical phrases (e.g., Gen. 1:2, 1 Cor. 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, and John 1:32).
Milton’s brooding image comes from the Hebrew, accurately translated in the Tremellius Latin Bible
(“incubabat”).
27. An opening question like this is an epic convention. Compare Aeneid 1.8, “Musa, mihi causas memora”
(“Tell me the cause, O Muse”).
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
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,°
when
army
equals, nobles
He trusted to have equal’d the most High,
If he oppos’d; and with ambitious aim
Against the Throne and Monarchy of God
Rais’d impious War in Heav’n and Battel proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurld headlong flaming from th’ Ethereal Skie
With hideous ruine and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,
Who durst defie th’ Omnipotent to Arms.
Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv’d him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful° eyes
That witness’d huge affliction and dismay
Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once as far as Angels kenn° he views
range of sight
The dismal Situation waste and wilde,
A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round
As one great Furnace flam’d, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv’d onely to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes

33. Compare Iliad 1.8, asking who first sowed discord among the Greeks.
34. See Rev. 12:9: “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.” The description of Satan’s fall (42–9) echoes
48. Adamant was a mythical substance of great hardness.
50. Alludes to the analogous fall of the defeated Titans in Greek myth (Hesiod, Theogony 664–735), who fell
nine days from heaven to earth and nine more into Tartarus.
66. The phrase alludes to the inscription over Dante’s Hell, “All hope abandon, you who enter here” (Inferno
3.9) and to Euripides, Troades 681, “to me even hope, that remains to all mortals, never comes.”
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed
With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum’d:
Such place Eternal Justice had prepar’d
For those rebellious, here 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 Pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o’rewhelm’d
With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and weltring by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam’d
Beezlebub. To whom th’ Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heav’n call’d Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
If thou beest he; But O how fall’n! how chang’d
From him, who in the happy Realms of Light
Cloth’d with transcendent 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
In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest
From what higth 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,
Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang’d in outward lustre, that fixt mind
And high disdain, from sence of injur’d merit,
That with the mightiest rais’d me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along

74. Milton here describes the distance from Heaven to Hell as three times the distance from the center (earth) to the outermost sphere. Cf. other descriptions of the universe at 2.1051–3 and 8.66–170.
81. The Phoenician sun god Baal (the name in Hebrew means “Lord of the Flies”); in Matt. 12:24 he is called “the prince of the devils.” Like Satan (whose name in Hebrew means “Adversary”) and the other fallen angels, he is now known by the name he will bear in Hell and as a pagan deity.
84–5. Satan’s opening words recall Aeneas’ vision of the ghost of Hector on the night of Troy’s fall, “so changed from the living Hector” (Aeneid 2.274–5).
Innumerable force of Spirits arm’d
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power oppos’d
In dubious° Battel on the Plains of Heav’n,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?

That Glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,
Who from the terroure of this Arm so late
Doubted° his Empire, that were low indeed,

That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods
And this Empyreal substance cannot fail,°
Since through experience of this great event
In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc’t,

We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal Warr
Irreconcileable, to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th’ excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav’n.

So spake th’ Apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:
And him thus answer’d soon his bold Compeer.°
O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers
That led th’ imbattelld Seraphim to Warr

Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger’d Heav’ns perpetual King;
And put to proof his high Supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire event,°

That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heav’n, and all this mighty Host

116–17 Gods. Usually angels (cf. 3.341), whose substance is “empyreal” (fiery, the substance of the highest heaven). But Satan sometimes uses “Gods” to imply a pagan pantheon (cf. 5.70–81, 9.718–30).
128–9. According to tradition there were nine orders of angels arranged hierarchically: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. The poem uses some of these titles, but does not keep the hierarchy.
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now
Of force° believe Almighty, since no less
Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength intire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice° his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls°
By right of Warr, what e're his business be
Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,
Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;
What can it then avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminisht, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereeto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.
Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable
Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his Providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from thir destind aim.
But see the angry Victor hath recall'd
His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the Gates of Heav'n: The Sulphurous Hail
Shot after us in storm, oreblown° hath laid
The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,
Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip° th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate° fury yield it from our Foe.

Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,
The seat of desolation, 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,
And reassembling our afflicted Powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend°
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire Calamity,

What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,
If not what resolution from despare.
Thus Satan talking to his neerest Mate
With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes
That sparkling blaz’d, his other Parts besides

Prone on the Flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr’d on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the Den

By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th’ Ocean stream:
Him haply° slumbring on the Norway foam
The Pilot of some small night-founder’d° Skiff,

Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind
Moors by his side under the Lee,° while Night
Invests° the Sea, and wished Morn delayes:
So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay

Chain’d on the burning Lake, nor ever thence

183–91. Five of these lines rhyme.
196 rood. An old unit of linear measure (6–8 yards), or the fourth part of an acre.
198–9. Both the Titans (led by ”Briareos,” said to have a hundred hands) and the Giants, represented by ”Typhon”
(who lived near Tarsus and was said to have a hundred serpent heads) made war on Jove. They were cast
into the underworld in punishment (Hesiod, *Theogony* 713–16, 820–85). Christian mythographers (and Milton)
often interpreted myths as analogues to the story of Satan’s rebellion and fall.
200–1. The whale, often identified with the great sea-monster and enemy of the Lord in Isa. 27:1, and the
crocodile-like dragon of Job 41:1–34, who is ”king over all the children of pride.” Both were commonly
identified with Satan.
203–8. The story of the deceived sailor and the illusory island was a commonplace (see, e.g., *Orlando Furioso*
6.37–41) often applied to Satan.
Had ris’n or heav’d his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enrag’d might see
How all his malice serv’d but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
On Man by him seduc’t, but on himself

Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour’d.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool
His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames
Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires,° and rowld
In billows, leave i’th’ midst a horrid° Vale.

Then with expanded wings he stears his flight
Aloft, incumbent° on the dusky Air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land
He lights,° if it were Land that ever burn’d
With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;

And such appear’d in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a Hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter’d side
Of thundring Ætna, whose combustible
And fewel’d entrals thence conceiving Fire,

Sublim’d° with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv’d°
With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,
Both glorying to have scap’t the Stygian° flood

As Gods, and by thir own recover’d strength,
Not by the sufferance° of supernal Power.
Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat°
That we must change for Heav’n, this mournful gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: fardest from him is best
Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream

230–7 subterranean wind. Thought to be the cause of earthquakes.  
Pelorus. Cape Faro, a promontory on the east of Sicily, near the volcanic Mount Ætna.” Cf. Aeneid 3.570–7, Virgil’s description of Etna darkening Pelorus with its smoke.
Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields

Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrours, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings
A mind not to be chang’d by Place or Time.
The mind is its own place, and in it self

Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less then° he
Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th’ Almighty hath not built

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav’n.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,

Th’ associates and copartners of our loss
Lye thus astonisht° on th’ oblivious Pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy Mansion, or once more
With rallied Arms to try what may be yet

Regaind in Heav’n, or what more lost in Hell?

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
Thus answer’d. Leader of those Armies bright,
Which but th’ Onmipotent none could have foyld,
If once they hear that voyce, thir liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge°
Of battel when it rag’d, in all assaults
Thir surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lye

Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz’d,
No wonder, fall’n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas’t when the superiour Fiend
Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield

262–3. The sentiment, and its opposite, were proverbial. Cf. Phineas Fletcher, The Purple Island, 7.10, “In heav’n they scorn’d to serve, so now in hell they reign.” See also Abdiel (PL 6.183–5).
266 oblivious pool. Suggests Lethe (forgetfulness), one of the classical rivers of Hades.
Ethereal temper, massy, ° large and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb
Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views
At Ev'ning from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands,
Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.
His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast
Of some great Ammiral,° were but a wand,
He walkt with to support uneasie steps
Over the burning Marle,° not like those steps
On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;
Nathless° he so endur'd, till on the Beach
Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd
His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans'\t
Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High overarch't imbowr;° or scattered sedge°
Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd
Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves o'rethrew
Busiris and his Memphian Chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore thir floating Carkases
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

288–91. Galileo studied the moon with a powerful telescope ("Optic Glass") which as "Artist" (artifex) he made. He did so from the hill town of Fiesole ("Fesole") outside Florence and from the valley of the Arno ("Valdarno"), in Tuscany. Milton visited him in 1638 or 1639.
292–4. Ships' masts were customarily made from "Norwegian" fir trees. Cf. Homer's comparison of Polyphemus' club to the mast of a "black ship" (Odyssey 9.322–3).
302–4 Similes comparing the numberless dead to fallen leaves are frequent in epic (e.g. Aeneid 6.309–10).
305–12. The constellation Orion (representing an armed giant) was associated with stormy weather (Amos 5:8; Aeneid 1.535, 7.719). Busiris was a mythical Egyptian pharaoh identified by Milton with the pharaoh of Exod. 14, who pursued the Israelites (formerly "Sojourners of Goshen" in Egypt) into the Red Sea; it rolled back for them but inundated the Egyptians ("Memphian Chivalry").
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the Flowr of Heav’n, once yours, now lost,  
If such astonishment as this can seize  
Eternal spirits; or have ye choos’n this place  
After the toyl of Battel to repose

Your wearyd vertue, for the ease you find  
To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav’n?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds  
Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood

With scatter’d Arms and Ensigns, till anon  
His swift pursuers from Heav’n Gates discern  
Th’ advantage, and descending tread us down  
Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.

Awake, arise, or be for ever fall’n.  
They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.

Nor did they not perceave the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd  
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod  
Of Amrams Son in Egypt evill day

Wav’d round the Coast, up call’d a pitchy cloud  
Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern Wind,  
That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like Night, and darken’d all the Land of Nile:  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen

Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell  
’Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;  
Till, as a signal giv’n, th’ uplifted Spear  
Of thir great Sultan waving to direct  
Thir course, in even ballance down they light

On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;  
A multitude, like which the populous North

315–20 Amrams Son. Moses (Exod. 6:20), who with his rod called down a plague of locusts on Egypt “so that the land was darkened” (Exod. 10:12–15; Pl. 12.184–8).

321–5 Sultan. The title of the Ottoman emperors, connoting despotism.

348–51 The barbarian invasions of Rome began with northern tribes crossing the Rhine (“Rhene”) and Danube (“Danaw”) rivers, then spreading across Spain via “Gibralter” into North Africa (“Lybian sands”).
Pour’d never from her frozen loyns, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous Sons
Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.

Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band
The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood
Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, Princely Dignities,

And Powers that earst\(^{365}\) in Heaven sat on Thrones;
Though of thir Names in heav’nly Records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras’d\(^{365}\)
By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.

Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve
Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth,
Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man,
By falsities and lyes the greatest part
Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
God thir Creator, and th’ invisible

Glory of him that made them, to transform
Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn’d
With gay\(^{370}\) Religions full of Pomp and Gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:

Then were they known to men by various Names,

And various Idols through the Heathen World.
Say, Muse, thir Names then known, who first, who last,
Rous’d from the slumber, on that fiery Couch,
At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth
Came singly\(^{380}\) where he stood on the bare strand,\(^{380}\)

While the promiscuous\(^{385}\) croud stood yet aloof?
The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell
Roaming to seek thir prey on earth, durst fix
Thir Seats long after next the Seat of God,
Thir Altars by his Altar, Gods ador’d

Among the Nations round, and durst abide

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363 **Books of Life.** Record of the names of the faithful (Rev. 3:5 and 21:27).
373. Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, and others identified the pagan gods with the fallen angels, and the belief continued to Milton’s time.
376. The catalogue of the gods here is an epic convention. Homer catalogues commanders and ships, Virgil, warriors; both begin with an invocation to the Muse (*Iliad* 2.484; *Aeneid* 7.641).
381–91. The first group of devil-idols settled in the Middle East, close neighbors of “Jehovah” whose seat was in Jerusalem (“Sion”). Milton draws many details about them from John Selden’s *De Diis Syris.*
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his Sanctuary it self thir Shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things

390 His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd,
And with thir darkness durst affront° his light.
First Moloch, horrid King besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels° loud

395 Thir childrens cries unheard, that past through fire
To his grim Idol. Him the Ammonite
Worship't in Rabba and her watry Plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such

400 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His Temple right against the Temple of God
On that opprobrious° Hill, and made his Grove
The pleasant Vally of Hinnom, Tophet thence

405 And black Gehenna call'd, the Type° of Hell.
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread° of Moabs Sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of Southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seons Realm, beyond

410 The flowry Dale of Sibna clad with Vines,
And Eleale to th' Asphaltick Pool.
Peor his other Name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim on thir march from Nile

386–7 Cherubim. Golden Cherubim adorned opposite ends of the gold cover on the Ark of the Covenant, where Jehovah was “thron’d” (2 Kgs 19:15; Ps. 80:1).

392–9 Moloch. In Hebrew, “King.” A god of the Ammonites, usually represented with a calf’s head crowned. Rabba (“city of waters”) is modern Amman in Jordan; the towns “Argob” and “Basan,” and the river “Arnon” lie east of the Dead Sea. Children were sacrificed by being placed alive in Moloch’s red-hot brazen image while “Timbrels” sounded to cover their cries (2 Kgs 23:10).

403–5 that opprobrious Hill. 1 Kgs 11:7: the Mount of Olives. Under the names “Tophet” and “Gehenna,” the “Valley of Hinnom” (2 Kgs 23:10) adjacent to Jerusalem became a “Type of Hell.” Groves throughout the Old Testament are associated with idolatry.

406–11 Chemos. Moabite fertility god, associated with the phallic god Priapus; his priests were said to defecate ritually before his shrine. Their lands (many taken from Isa. 15–16) are mentioned in these lines. Seon. Sihon, king of the Ammonites. Asphaltick Pool. The Dead Sea. “Asphaltick” refers to its deposits of bitumen.

412–14 Peor. The story of Peor seducing the Israelites in “Sittim” and the resulting “woe,” a plague killing 24,000, is told in Num. 25:1–9.
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg’d
Even to that Hill of scandal, by the Grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who from the bordring flood
Of old Euphrates to the Brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general Names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These Feminine. For Spirits when they please
Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is thir Essence pure,
Not ti’d or manacl’d with joynit or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose
Dilated or condens’t, bright or obscure,
Can execute thir aerie purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfill.
For those the Race of Israel oft forsook
Thir living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which thir heads as low
Bow’d down in Battel, sunk before the Spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call’d
Astarte, Queen of Heav’n, with crescent Horns;
To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon
Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs,
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her Temple on th’ offensive Mountain, built
By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,

415 Hill of scandal. The Mount of Olives, where Solomon built temples to Chemos and Moloch (1 Kgs 11:7).
419–21. Palestine is bordered by the “Euphrates” on the east and the “Brook” of Besor on the Egyptian border (1 Sam. 30:10).
422 Baalim and Ashtaroth. Plural forms of the sun god Baal and the moon goddess Astoreth (438; “Astarte,” “Astarte,” 439). Baal means Lord, and is used as a prefix, e.g., Baal-Peor.
439–41 Astarte. The Phoenician (“Sidonian,” from the city Sidon) original of Aphrodite, with a bull’s head above her own from which sprang “crescent Horns” (Nativity Ode, 200).
443–6 th’ offensive Mountain. The Mount of Olives where “uxorious” King Solomon, whom God gave a “large” heart, built a temple for “Astoreth” at the behest of his many wives (2 Kgs 23:13; 1 Kgs 4:29, 11:1–8).
Beguil’d by fair Idolatresses, fell
To Idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur’d
The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate
In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,

While smooth Adonis from his native Rock
Ran purple to the Sea, suppos’d with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the Love-tale
Infected Sions daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch

Ezekiel saw, when by the Vision led
His eye survay’d the dark Idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn’d in earnest, when the Captive Ark
Maim’d his brute Image, head and hands lopt off
In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,°
Where he fell flat, and sham’d his Worshipers:
Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man
And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high
Rear’d in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast

Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon
And Accaron and Gaza’s frontier bounds.
Him follow’d Rimmon, whose delightful Seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertill Banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.

He also against the house of God was bold:
A Leper once he lost and gain’d a King,
Ahaz his sottish° Conquerour, whom he drew
Gods Altar to disparage and displace

445 Beguil’d by fair Idolatresses, fell
To Idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur’d
The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate
In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,

450 While smooth Adonis from his native Rock
Ran purple to the Sea, suppos’d with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the Love-tale
Infected Sions daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch

455 Ezekiel saw, when by the Vision led
His eye survay’d the dark Idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn’d in earnest, when the Captive Ark
Maim’d his brute Image, head and hands lopt off
In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,°
Where he fell flat, and sham’d his Worshipers:
Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man
And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high
Rear’d in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast

460 In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,°
Threshold

465 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon
And Accaron and Gaza’s frontier bounds.
Him follow’d Rimmon, whose delightful Seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertill Banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.

470 He also against the house of God was bold:
A Leper once he lost and gain’d a King,
Ahaz his sottish° Conquerour, whom he drew
Gods Altar to disparage and displace

446–52 Thammuz. A Syrian god; his Greek form was “Adonis,” beloved of Aphrodite, metamorphosed into
the anemone. Annual festivals identify his death in “Lebanon” from a boar’s wound and his revival, with
the death and rebirth of vegetation. Here, “Adonis” is a Lebanese river, so named because each July it
turned blood red from iron-rich clay.

455 Ezekiel. Ezek. 8:12–16 describes women’s “dark” idolatrous rites for Thammuz in the “Porch” and men’s
worship of the sun within the Temple.

457–63. When the Philistines stole the Ark of God they placed it in the temple of their sea-god, Dagon (half-
man, half-fish) but his statute fell down and broke in pieces (1 Sam. 5:1–5).

464–6. The five chief cities of the Philistines, sites of Dagon’s worship (see Zeph. 2:4): “Azotus” (Ashdod),
“Gath,” “Ascalon,” “Accaron” (Ekron), and “Gaza” (Azza).

467–76 Rimmon. The chief Syrian god. The Syrian general Naaman was cured of leprosy when (at the prophet
Elisha’s bidding) he bathed in the river Jordan and then renounced Rimmon (2 Kgs 5:1–19); “Abbana” and
“Pharphar” are rivers of “Damascus,” the chief city of Syria. King “Ahaz” of Judah conquered Syria but then
converted to Rimmon’s cult (2 Kgs 16:7–18).
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious off’rings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appear’d
A crew who under Names of old Renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus and thir Train
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus’d°

Fanatic Egypt and her Priests, to seek
Thir wandring Gods disguis’d in brutish forms
Rather then human. Nor did Israel scape
Th’ infection when thir borrow’d Gold compos’d
The Calf in Oreb: and the Rebel King
Doubl’d that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Lik’n’ing his Maker to the Grazed Ox,
Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass’d
From Egypt marching, equal’d° with one stroke
Both her first born and all her bleating Gods.

Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood
Or Altar smoak’d; yet who more oft then hee
In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest
Turns Atheist, as did Ely’s Sons, who fill’d
With lust and violence the house of God.
In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns
And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse
Of riot° ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,
And injury and outrage: And when Night
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of Belial, flown° with insolence and wine.

477–82. The second group of devils includes gods originally driven from Olympus by the revolt of the giants and forced to wander in “brutish” (animal) forms (Ovid, Metamorphoses 5.319–31). The Egyptians later worshiped such animal-headed gods: “Osiris,” a bull; “Isis,” a cow; “Orus” (Horus), a falcon.
482–4. While Moses was receiving the Law his brother Aaron made the “Calf in Oreb” with golden ornaments ’borrow’d’ (carried out of) Egypt (Exod. 12:35); the Israelites worshiped the idol, traditionally identified with the Egyptian god Apis (Exod. 32:1–4).
484–9 Rebel King. Jeroboam led ten tribes in a revolt against Solomon’s son Rehoboam, and “doubled” Aaron’s sin by making two golden calves, one in “Bethel,” one in “Dan” (1 Kgs 12:19–30); at the Passover, “Jehovah” (Exod. 12:12) smote the Egyptian firstborn (both men and beasts) and all their gods.
490–502 Belial. Hebrew for “worthlessness.” Not a god, but phrases such as “Sons of Belial” (Judg. 19:22, 20:13, and 2 Cor. 6:15) encouraged personification. The sons of the high priest “Ely,” themselves priests, were “sons of Belial,” seizing offerings meant for God and lying with prostitutes (1 Sam. 2:12–22). Milton invites association with Restoration churches, courts, and cities.
Witness the Streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door

505 Expos’d a Matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown’d,
Th’ Ionian Gods, of Javans Issue held
Gods, yet confest later then Heav’n and Earth

510 Thir boasted Parents; Titan Heav’n’s first born
With his enormous brood, and birthright seis’d
By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove
His own and Rhea’s Son like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign’d: these first in Creet

515 And Ida known, thence on the Snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul’d the middle Air
Thir highest Heav’n; or on the Delphian Cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric Land; or who with Saturn old

520 Fled over Adria to th’ Hesperian Fields,
And ore the Celtic roam’d the utmost Isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear’d
Obscure some glimps of joy, to have found thir chief

525 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss it self; which on his count’nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais’d

530 Thir fanting courage, and dispel’d thir fears.
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound

503–5. Lot begged the Sodomites to rape his virgin daughters rather than his angel guests; no rape occurred, and the angels destroyed “Sodom” (Gen. 19:1–10, 24). At “Gibeath” (Judg. 19:22–9) an old man prevented “worse” homosexual rape by surrendering his Levite guest’s concubine to “certain sons of Belial”; she was raped all night and was found dead the next morning. The change from the biblical concubine to “a Matron” heightens the crime.

508–10. The Ionian Greeks (“Javans issue,” i.e., of the line of Noah’s grandson Javan, son of Japhet) held the Titans to be gods, supposedly the progeny of “Heav’n” (Uranus) and “Earth” (Gaea).

510–15 Titan. Titan, the firstborn, was deposed by his younger brother “Saturn” (or Cronos), who was in turn deposed by his son “Jove” (Zeus) who had been reared in secret in a cave on Mount “Ida” in “Creet” (Crete).

515–19. The Olympian gods dwelt on Mount “Olympus”; Apollo’s Pythian oracle was at Delphi (“Delphian Cliff”), high on Mount Parnassus; “Dodona” was an ancient site of Zeus’ oracle; “Doric Land”: Greece.

519–21. The defeated “Saturn” fled over the Adriatic (“Adria”) to Italy (“th’ Hesperian Fields”), to France (“Celtic lands) to roam (“the utmost Isles”) of Britain.
Of Trumpets loud and Clarions° be upreard
His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim’d
Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall:

Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld
Th’ Imperial Ensign,° which full high advanc’t
Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind
With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz’d.°
Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while

Sonorous mettal° blowing Martial sounds:
At which the universal Host upsent
A shout that tore Hells Concave,° and beyond
Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen

Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air
With Orient° Colours waving: with them rose
A Forest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms
Appear’d, and serried° Shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move

In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais’d
To hight of noblest temper Hero’s old
Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage
Deliberate valour breath’d, firm and unmov’d

With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,
Nor wanting° power to mitigate and swage°
With solemn touches, troubl’d thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they

Breathing united force with fixed thought
Mov’d on in silence to soft Pipes that charm’d
Thir painful steps o’re the burnt soyle; and now
Advanc’t in view, they stand, a horrid° Front
Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise

Of Warriers old with order’d Spear and Shield,
Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief
Had to impose: He through the armed Files

534 Azazel. Traditionally, one of the four standard-bearers of Satan’s army; a chief devil in the Book of Enoch.
543. For their “Reign” see 2.894–909, 959–70.
550–4 Phalanx. Greek battle formation consisting of footsoldiers presenting a square, impenetrable thicket of spears, usually eight ranks deep. Dorian mood. The Greek musical mode used for solemn martial music, intended to produce calm firmness (Plato, Republic 3.399A). The Spartans (“Hero’s old”) marched to battle to the Dorian music of “Flutes.”
Darts his experienc’t eye, and soon traverse° across
The whole Battalion views, thir order due,

570 Thir visages and stature as of Gods,
Thir number last he summs. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength
Glories: For never since created man,
Met such imbodyed force, as nam’d° with these

575 Could merit more then that small infantry
Warr’d on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood
Of Phlegra with th’ Heroic Race were joyn’d
That fought at Theb’s and Ilium, on each side
Mizt with auxiliar° Gods; and what resounds

580 In Fable or Romance of Uthers Son
Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;
And all who since, Baptiz’d or Infidel
Jousted in Aspromont or Montalban,
Damsco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,

585 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ’d
Thir dread commander: he above the rest

590 In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost
All her Original brightness, nor appear’d
Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th’ excess
Of Glory obscur’d: As when the Sun new ris’n

595 Looks through the Horizontal° misty Air
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon

573 never since created man. i.e., since man was created (Latin idiom).
575–9. See Iliad 3.1–6 for the war of the pygmies (with a pun on “infantry,” infants) and the “Cranes.” The
Giants fought the Olympian gods at “Phlegra” in Macedonia (Pindar, Nemian Odes 1.67–8); the Greek armies
(“Heroic Race”) fought battles at “Theb’s” and “Ilium” (Troy), aided by various gods.
580–4. Armies from romances include “British” and “Armoric knights” (from Brittany) who fought with Arthur
(“Uthers Son”); and Charlemagne’s army that defeated the Saracens at “Aspromont” (the dark mountain).
Knityjousts took place at the sites named, all from romances about chivalric wars between Christians
and Saracens: “Montalban” (the white mountain) the home of Rinaldo, “Damsco” (Damascus), “Marocco”
(Marrakesh, a sultanate in what is now Morocco), and “Trebisond” (Trabzon, a Byzantine city on the
Black Sea).
585–7. Saracens gathered at “Biserta” (Bizerte) in Tunisia to invade Spain (Boiardo, Orlando Innamorato 2.29.1–22);
Charlemagne’s rearguard, led by his best knight Roland, was massacred at Roncesvalles, near “Fontarabbia”
(Fuenterrabia, on the Spanish coast). But in no version of the story did Charlemagne himself fall.
In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds
On half the Nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes Monarchs. Dark’n’d so, yet shon
Above them all th’ Arch Angel: but his face
Deep scars of Thunder had intrench’d, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes
Of dauntless courage, and considerate° Pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn’d
For ever now to have thir lot in pain,
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerct°
Of Heav’n, and from Eternal Splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood,
Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire
Hath scath’d° the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines,
With singed top thir stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar’d
To speak; whereat thir doubl’d Ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his Peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayd,° and thrice in spight of scorn,
Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out thir way.
O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers
Matchless, but with th’ Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th’ event° was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear’d,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet beleev, though after loss,
That all these puissant° Legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav’n, shall fail to re-ascend

597–9. The censor objected to these lines, as perhaps an allusion to the eclipse on the day of Charles II’s birth, portending “change” (i.e., the Interregnum). disastrous, astrologically unfavorable (dis + astrum).
620. Satan weeping before his defeated troops recalls Agamemnon stricken with grief in similar circumstances (Iliad 9.13–14)
Self-rais’d, and repossess thir native seat?

For mee be witness all the Host of Heav’n,
If counsels different, or danger shun’d
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav’n, till then as one secure
Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,

Consent or custome, and his Regal State
Put forth at full, but still° his strength conceal’d,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own
So as not either to provoke, or dread

New warr, provok’t; our better part remains
To work in close° design, by fraud or guile
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife°
There went a fame° in Heav’n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:

Thither, if but to prey, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption,° thither or elsewhere:
For this Infernal Pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th’ Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts

Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,
For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr
Open or understood° must be resolv’d.
He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs

Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin’d hell: highly they rag’d
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash’d on thir sounding Shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the Vault of Heav’n.

There stood a Hill not far whose grisly° top
Belch’d fire and rowling° smoak; the rest entire
Shon with a glossie scurff,° undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,

668. Like Roman legions, the fallen angels applaud by beating swords on shields.
The work of Sulphur. Thither wing’d with speed
A numerous Brigad hasten’d. As when Bands
Of Pioners° with Spade and Pickax arm’d
Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,
Or cast a Rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From heav’n, for ev’n in heav’n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heav’ns pavement, trod’n Gold,
Then aught divine or holy else enjoy’d
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack’d the Center, and with impious hands
Rifl’d the bowels of thir mother Earth
For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Op’nd into the Hill a spacious wound
And dig’d out ribs° of Gold. Let none admire°
That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best
Deserve the precious bane.° And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond’ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian Kings
Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame,
And Strength and Art are easily out-done
By Spirits reprobate,° and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toyle
And hands innumerable scarce perform.

Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar’d,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc’d from the Lake, a second multitude
With wondrous Art founded° the massie Ore,
Severing each kind, and scum’d° the Bullion dross:°
A third as soon had form’d within the ground
A various mould, and from the boyling cells

674 Sulphur. This was thought to be the father of metals.
678 Mammon. An Aramaic word for riches, Mammon came to be personified and associated with the god of wealth, Plutus, and with Pluto, god of the underworld. Cf. Matt. 6:24: “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”
684 vision beatific. Scholastic term for the sight of God, the greatest joy of heaven.
By strange conveyance fill’d each hollow nook,
As in an Organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths.

710 Anon out of the earth a Fabric° huge
Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
Of Dulcet° Symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a Temple, where Pilasters° round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid

715 With Golden Architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or Freeze, with bossy° Sculptures grav’n,
The Roof was fretted° Gold. Not Babilon,
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equal’d in all thir glories, to inshrine

720 Belus or Serapis thir Gods, or seat
Thir Kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxurie. Th’ ascending pile°
Stood fixt° her stately highth, and strait° the dores
Op’ning thir brazen foulds discover wide

725 Within, her ample spaces, o’re the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendant by suttle Magic many a row
Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed
With Naphtha and Asphaltus yeilded light

730 As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter’d, and the work some praise
And some the Architect: his hand was known
In Heav’n by many a Towred structure high,
Where Scepter’d Angels held thir residence,

735 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his Hierarchie, the Orders bright.

711–12 Exhalation. Exhalations were thought to cause comets and meteors (bad omens) and pestilence (cf. 10.693–5). Pandæmonium rises to symphonic and vocal music, like Thebes to Amphion’s lyre.
714 Doric pillars. Round and fluted, Doric pillars are severe and plain. Pandæmonium combines classical architectural features with elaborate ornamentation, perhaps suggesting St. Peter’s in Rome.
715–16 Architrave. The beam that rests on top of the columns. Cornice. The part above and overhanging the frieze. Freeze. The frieze: the architectural element above the architrave on which the sculptures usually are set.
717–20 Babylon. Babylon in Assyria had temples to “Belus” (Baal); “Alcairo” (ancient Memphis, near Cairo) had temples to “Serapis” (composite of Osiris and Apis, the bull god). Both cities were famously magnificent.
728–9 Cressets. Iron baskets hung from the ceiling, holding burning pitch (“Asphaltus”); oily “Naphtha” was placed in the lamps.
Nor was his name unheard or unador’d
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land

Men call’d him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heav’n, they fabl’d, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o’re the Chrystal Battlements; from Morn
To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
A Summers day; and with the setting Sun

Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,
On Lemnos th’ Ægean Ile: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught avail’d him now
To have built in Heav’n high Towrs; nor did he scape

By all his Engins,° but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Mean while the winged Haralds by command
Of Sovran power, with awful° Ceremony
And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim

A solemn Council forthwith to be held
At Pandæmonium, the high Capital
Of Satan and his Peers:° thir summons call’d
From every Band and squared Regiment
By place° or choice° the worthiest; they anon

With hunderds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng’d, the Gates
And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall
(Though like a cover’d field, where Champions bold
Wont° ride in arm’d, and at the Soldans° chair
Defi’d the best of Panim° chivalry
To mortal combat or carreer° with Lance)
Thick swarm’d, both on the ground and in the air,
Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees
In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,

Pour forth thir populous youth about the Hive

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738–46. Hephæstus (in “Greece”), Vulcan or “Mulciber” in Italy (“Ausonian land”), was architect of the classical gods’ palaces; the story of his fall, cast out by Zeus (“angry Jove”) to land in “Lemnos” in the “Ægean” sea, is told in Iliad 1.590–4. **Zenith.** the highest point of the celestial sphere.

747 **Erring.** Milton thought the classical myths were erroneous versions of biblical stories.

756 **Pandæmonium.** Milton’s coinage, literally “all Demons,” an inversion of Pantheon, “all gods.”

768–76. Bee similes were common in epic from Homer on (Iliad 2.87–90; Aeneid 1.430–6); also, the bees’ (royalist) society was often cited in political arguments. The simile prepares for the sudden contraction of the “common” devils, enabling them to fit into the Hall of Pandæmonium (791–2).

769. The sun is in the zodiacal sign of “Taurus” (the Bull) from about April 19 to May 20.
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,
The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,
New rub’d with Baum, expatiate° and confer

Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd
Swarm’d and were straitn’d;° till the Signal giv’n.
Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd
In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons
Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room

Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race
Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faerie Elves,
Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side
Or Fountain some belated Peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon

Sits Arbitress,° and neerer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth and dance
Intent, with jocond° Music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms

Reduc’d thir shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still amidst the Hall
Of that infernal Court. But far within
And in thir own dimensions like themselves
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim

In close° recess and secret conclave sat
A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat’s,
Frequent and full. After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began.

The End of the First Book.

780–1 Pigmean Race. Pygmies were thought to live beyond the Himalayas (“the Indian Mount”).
792–4. These “Lords” retained their own size.
795 conclave. Secret assembly, often ecclesiastical.
797 Frequent. Crowded together. full. In great number.
Figure 4  Illustration to Book 2, 1688
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 Prophesie 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 Council 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 Ind, Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand Showrs on her Kings Barbaric Pearl and Gold, Satan exalted sat, by merit rais’d To that bad eminence; and from despair Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue Vain Warr with Heav’n, and by success° untaught the outcome

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav’n, For since no deep within her gulf can hold Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall’n, I give not Heav’n for lost. From this descent Celestial vertues rising, will appear

1. A typical epic convention (in e.g. Iliad 2.53–394, Aeneid 11.302–446, Tasso, Gerusalemme Liberata 2.58–90) involved councils debating war and peace, with spokesmen on each side. Infernal councils have antecedents in Tasso, Vida, Valvasone, and others.
11–12. Satan is given directions by “Chaos,” the ruler (“Power”) of “that place” (Chaos) to the created universe (“new World”).

2 Ormus. Hormuz, an island port at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, famous for pearls.
4 Barbaric. Exotic; pertaining originally to all nations except Greece and Rome.
5 merit. Desert, either good or bad. Cf. 3.309–10, 6.43.
11 Powers and Dominions. Angelic orders; “vertues” (15) were also an angelic order. Milton retains the names but not the arrangement into distinct hierarchical ranks.
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:  
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of Heav’n  
Did first create your Leader, next free choice,

With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,  
Hath bin achievd of merit, yet this loss  
Thus farr at least recover’d, hath much more  
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne  
Yielded with full consent. The happier state

In Heav’n, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Formost to stand against the Thunderers aim  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share

Of endless pain? where there is then no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From Faction; for none sure will claim in Hell  
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small  
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind

Will covet more. With this advantage then  
To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,  
More then can be in Heav’n, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper then prosperity

Could have assur’d us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open Warr or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.  

He ceas’d, and next him Moloc, Scepter’d King  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit

That fought in Heav’n; now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with th’ Eternal to be deem’d  
Equal in strength, and rather then be less  
Care’d not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse

He reck’d° not, and these words thereafter spake.  
My sentence° is for open Warr: Of Wiles,  
More unexpert,° I boast not: them let those

28 Thunderer. The attribute of Zeus (Jove) is the thunderbolt.
41. The classic Machiavellian choice for gaining or extending power. Tasso’s Satan (Gerusalemme Liberata, trans. Edward Fairfax [1600], 4.16–17) also proposes “open force, or secret guile.”
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,

55 Millions that stand in Arms, and longing wait
The Signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heav’n’s fugitives, and for thir dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious° Den of shame,
The Prison of his Tyranny who Reigns

infamous

By our delay? no, let us rather choose
Arm’d with Hell flames and fury all at once
O’re Heav’n’s high Towrs to force resistless way,
Turning our Tortures into horrid° Arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise

bristling, terrible

65 Of his Almighty Engin° he shall hear
Infernal Thunder, and for Lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels; and his Throne it self
Mixt with Tartarean Sulphur, and strange fire,

machine of war

His own invented Torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench°
Of that forgetful Lake benumm not still,

soporific drink

That in our proper° motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late
When the fierce Foe hung on our brok’n Rear°
Insulting,° and pursu’d us through the Deep,

rearguard, attacking, exulting scornfully

80 With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th’ ascent is easie then;
Th’ event° is fear’d; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction: if there be in Hell

outcome

85 Fear to be worse destroy’d: what can be worse
Then to dwell here, driv’n out from bliss, condemn’d
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise° us without hope of end

afflict

69 Tartarean. Hellish. Tartarus is the place of punishment in the classical underworld.
74 forgetful Lake. Suggests Lethe, the river of oblivion in Hades. Cf. 1.266.
75. Cf. 2.932–5.
The Vassals of his anger, when the Scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to Penance? More destroy’d then thus
We should be quite abolisht and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the hight enrag’d,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential, happier farr
Then miserable to have eternal being:
Or if our substance be indeed Divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav’n,
And with perpetual inrodes to Allarme,
Though inaccessible, his fatal Throne:
Which if not Victory is yet Revenge.
He ended frowning, and his look denounc’d
Desperate revenge, and Battel dangerous
To less then Gods. On th’ other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heav’n; he seemd
For dignity compos’d and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his Tongue
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest Counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to Nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas’d the ear,
And with perswasive accent thus began.
I should be much for open Warr, O Peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urg’d
Main reason to persuade immediate Warr,
Did not disswade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he who most excels in fact of Arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair

90–2 Scourge . . . Penance. Suggest Roman Catholic practices of mortification.
113–14 Manna. The food supplied to the Israelites in the desert, tasting of honey. For making “the worse appear / The better reason” Belial is aligned with the Sophists, mercenary teachers of rhetoric in ancient Greece, who were denounced by Plato for just this practice (Apology 19b).
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what Revenge? the Towrs of Heav’n are fill’d
With Armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep
Encamp thir Legions, or with obscure wing
Scout farr and wide into the Realm of night,
Scorning surprize. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest Insurrection, to confound
Heav’n’s purest Light, yet our great Enemy
All incorruptible would on his Throne
Sit unpolluted, and th’ Ethereal mould
Incapable of stain would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. Thus repuls’d, our final hope
Is flat° despair: we must exasperate
Th’ Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure,
To be no more; sad cure; for who would loose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike° through impotence, or unaware,
To give his Enemies thir wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel Warr, we are decreed,
Reserv’d and destin’d to Eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? is this then worst,

139 *Ethereal mould*. Heavenly substance, derived from “ether,” the fifth and purest element, supposed incorruptible.

148. Cf. Seneca, *De Consolatione Ad Marciam* 11.4–5, describing the capacity of thoughts to range through heaven and all past and future time.
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in Arms?

165 What when we fled amain,° pursu’d and strook
With Heav’ns afflicting Thunder, and besought
The Deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem’d
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain’d on the burning Lake? that sure was worse.

What if the breath that kindl’d those grim fires
Awak’d should blow them into sevenfold rage
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted° vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all

175 Her stores were open’d, and this Firmament°
Of Hell should spout her Cataracts° of Fire,
Impendent° horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Designing or exhorting glorious warr,

Caught in a ferie Tempest shall be hurl’d
Each on his rock transfixt, the sport and prey
Of racking° whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
Under yon boyling Ocean, wrapt in Chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,

180 Unrespit’d, unpitied, unrepreevd,
Ages of hopeless end;° this would be worse.
Warr therefore, open or conceal’d, alike
My voice disswades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye

185 Views all things at one view? he from heav’ns higth
All these our motions° vain, sees and derides;
Not more Almighty to resist our might
Then wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the Race of Heav’n

190 Thus trampl’d, thus expell’d to suffer here
Chains and these Torments? better these then worse
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and Omnipotent Decree,

170–4. For Belial’s questions, cf. Tasso, Gerusalemme Liberata 10.44–7. For God’s “breath that kindled” cf. Isa. 30:33, “the pile [of Hell] is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.” For God’s “red right hand” cf. Horace, Odes 1.2.1–4, Jove hurling thunderbolts with a “red right hand.”

190–1. “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision” (Ps. 2:4). Milton’s God is not passionless, but displays a range of emotions, see Christian Doctrine 1.2.
The Victors will. To suffer, as to doe,

200 Our strength is equal, nor the Law unjust
That so ordains: this was at first resolv’d,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the Spear are bold

205 And vent’rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy,° or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of thir Conquerour: This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,

210 Our Supream Foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps thus farr remov’d
Not mind us not offending, satisfi’d
With what is punish’t; whence these raging fires
Will slack’n, if his breath stir not thir flames.

215 Our purer essence then will overcome
Thir noxious vapour, or enur’d° not feel,
Or chang’d at length, and to the place conform’d
In temper° and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;

220 This horror will grow milde, this darkness light,
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future dayes may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appeers
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,

225 If we procure not to our selves more woe.
   Thus Belial with words cloath’d in reasons garb
Counsell’d ignoble ease, and peaceful sloath,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
   Either to disinthrone the King of Heav’n

230 We warr, if warr be best, or to regain
Our own right lost: him to unthrone we then
May hope when everlasting Fate shall yeild
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former vain to hope argues as vain

235 The latter: for what place can be for us

199–200. Echoing Mucius Scaevola’s famous words, when he held his hand in the fire to demonstrate Roman
fortitude (Livy, Ab Urbe Condita 2.12.10).
212 mind. Be concerned about; be aware of.
220 light. May be a noun, the opposite of darkness, or an adjective, “easy to bear.”
Within Heav’n’s bound, unless Heav’n’s Lord suprem
We overpower? Suppose he should relent
And publish Grace to all, on promise made
Of new Subjection; with what eyes could we

Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict Laws impos’d, to celebrate his Throne
With warbl’d Hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc’t Halleluiah’s; while he Lordly sits
Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes

Ambrosial° Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,
Our servile offerings. This must be our task
In Heav’n this our delight; how wearisom
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate. Let us not then pursue

By force impossible, by leave obtain’d
Unacceptable, though in Heav’n, our state
Of splendid vassalage,° but rather seek
Our own good from our selves, and from our own
Live to our selves, though in this vast recess,

Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easie yoke
Of servile Pomp. Our greatness will appeer
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse

We can create, and in what place so e’re
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labour and indurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav’n’s all-ruling Sire

Choose to reside, his Glory unobscur’d,
And with the Majesty of darkness round
Covers his Throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Must’ring thir rage, and Heav’n resembles Hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his Light

Imitate when we please? This Desart soile
Wants° not her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold;
Nor want we skill or Art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heav’n shew more?
Our torments also may in length of time

Become our Elements, these piercing Fires

252–60. Mammon echoes the Stoic stance of Horace (Epistles 1.18.107–10) but not his proposed simple lifestyle.
As soft as now severe, our temper chang’d
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful Counsels, and the settl’d State

Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
All thoughts of warr: ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish’d, when such murmur fill’d
Th’ Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had rous’d the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men o’rewatcht, whose Bark by chance
Or PINNACE anchors in a craggy Bay

After the Tempest: Such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his Sentence pleas’d,
Advising peace: for such another Field
They dreads worse then Hell: so much the fear
Of Thunder and the Sword of Michael

Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether Empire, which might rise
By pollicy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heav’n.

Which when Beelzebub perceiv’d, then whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem’d
A Pillar of State; deep on his Front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And Princely counsel in his face yet shon,

Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest Monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as Night
Or Summers Noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and Imperial Powers, off-spring of heav’n,
Ethereal Vertues; or these Titles now

278. Pain felt by the senses.
294 Michael. Traditionally, the chief of the angelic armies, cf. 6.250ff, 320ff.
306 Atlantean. Burdened statesmen were often compared to Atlas the Titan, whose rebellion Jove punished by forcing him to bear the heavens on his shoulders.
310–11. Angelic orders. See note to line 11, above.
Must we renounce, and changing stile be call’d
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing Empire; doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heav’n hath doom’d
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his Potent arm, to live exempt
From Heav’n’s high jurisdiction, in new League
Banded against his Throne, but to remaine
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov’d,
Under th’ inevitable curb, reserv’d
His captive multitude: For he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will Reign
Sole King, and of his Kingdom loose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His Empire, and with Iron Scepter rule
Us here, as with his Golden those in Heav’n.
What° sit we then projecting peace and War?
War hath determin’d us, and foil’d with loss
Irreparable; tears of peace yet none
Voutsaf’t° or sought; for what peace will be giv’n
To us enslav’d, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to° our power hostility and hate,
Untam’d reluctance,° and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want,° nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heav’n, whose high walls fear no assault or Siege,
Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprize? There is a place
(If ancient and prophetic fame° in Heav’n
Err not) another World, the happy seat
Of some new Race call’d Man, about this time

with a rod of iron.” In 1653 Milton translated Ps. 2:9 with the phrase, “With iron scepter bruised.” See
PL 5.886–7.
To be created like to us, though less
350 In power and excellence, but favour’d more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounc’d among the Gods,\(^o\) and by an Oath,
That shook Heav’n’s whol circumference, confirm’d.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
355 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,
Or substance, how endu’d,\(^o\) and what thir Power,
And where thir weakness, how attempted\(^o\) best,
By force or subtlety: Though Heav’n be shut,
And Heav’n’s high Arbitrator sit secure
360 In his own strength, this place may lye expos’d
The utmost border of his Kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Som advantagious act may be achiev’d
By sudden onset, either with Hell fire
365 To waste his whole Creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive as we were driven,
The punie habitants, or if not drive,
Seduce them to our Party, that thir God
May prove thir foe, and with repenting hand
370 Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our Confusion, and our Joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling Sons
Hurl’d headlong to partake with us, shall curse
375 Thir frail Original,\(^o\) and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain Empires. Thus Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish Counsel, first devis’d
380 By Satan, and in part propos’d: for whence,
But from the Author of all ill could Spring
So deep a malice, to confound\(^o\) the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve,\(^o\) done all to spite
385

352–3. In classical epic the heavens shake when the king of the gods (Zeus, Jove) takes an oath.
369–70. Gen. 6:7, God determining to destroy the world by flood: “And the Lord said, I will destroy man
[and all the creatures] . . . for it repenteth me that I have made them.”
383. Adam is the “root” of the human family tree.
385 The great Creatour? But thir spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas’d highly those infernal States,° and joy
Sparkl’d in all thir eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renewes.

390 Well have ye judg’d, well ended long debate,
Synod° of Gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolv’d, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spight of Fate,
Neerer our ancient Seat; perhaps in view

395 Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring Arms
And opportune excursion we may chance
Re-enter Heav’n; or else in some milde Zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav’n’s fair Light
Secure, and at the brightning Orient beam

400 Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious Air,
To heal the scarr of these corrosive Fires
Shall breathe her balme. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world, whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt° with wandring feet

405 The dark unbottom’d infinite Abyss
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth° way, or spread his aerie flight
Upborn with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive

410 The happy Ile; what strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict Senteries° and Stations° thick
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and wee now no less

415 Choice° in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
The weight of all and our last hope relies.
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense,° awaiting who appeer’d
To second, or oppose, or undertake

420 The perilous attempt; but all sat mute,

406 **palpable obscure.** Darkness so thick it can be felt (cf. Exod. 10:21).
409 **vast abrupt.** An abyss, referring to Chaos, the gulf between two created places, heaven and hell.
410 **happy Ile.** Earth, with probable allusion to the Isles of the Blessed in Greek mythology.
420. Cf. 3.217.
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In others count'nce read his own dismay
Astonisht:° none among the choice and prime
Of those Heav'n-warring Champions could be found
425 So hardie as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with Monarchal pride
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.
430 O Progeny of Heav'n, Empyreal Thrones,
With reason hath deep silence and demurr°
Seis'd us, though undismaid: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong, this huge convex° of Fire,
435 Outrageous° to devour, immures us round
Ninefold, and gates of burning Adamant
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.
These past, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential° Night receives him next
440 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he scape into whatever world,
Or unknown Region, what remains him less°
Then unknown dangers and as hard escape.
445 But I should ill become this Throne, O Peers,°
And this Imperial Sov'ranty, adorn'd
With splendor, arm'd with power, if aught propos'd
And judg'd of public moment,° in the shape
Of difficulty or danger could deterr
450 Mee from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These Royalties,° and not refuse to Reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who Reigns, and so much to him due
455 Of hazard more, as he above the rest

435–6. Hell's fiery walls have nine thicknesses that "immure" the fallen angels. Adamant. A substance of impenetrable hardness.
441 abortive gulf. Chaos is a womb in which all potential forms fragment (cf. 900ff ).
High honourd sits? Go therefore mighty Powers,
Terror of Heav’n, though fall’n; intend\textsuperscript{consider} at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell

460 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite\textsuperscript{relieve} or deceive,\textsuperscript{beguile away} or slack the pain
Of this ill Mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad
Through all the Coasts\textsuperscript{regions} of dark destruction seek

465 Deliverance for us all; this enterprize
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The Monarch, and prevented\textsuperscript{forestalled} all reply,
Prudent, least from his resolution rais’d\textsuperscript{made bold}
Others among the chief might offer now

470 (Certain to be refus’d) what erst\textsuperscript{formerly} they fear’d;
And so refus’d might in opinion stand
His Rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th’ adventure then his voice

475 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
Thir rising all at once was as the sound
Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful\textsuperscript{full of awe} reverence prone; and as a God
Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav’n:

480 Nor fail’d they to express how much they prais’d,
That for the general safety he despis’d
His own: for neither do the Spirits damn’d
Loose all thir vertue; least bad men should boast
Thir specious\textsuperscript{pretending to worth} deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or clos\textsuperscript{secret} ambition varnisht o’re with zeal.

485 Thus they thir doubtful consultations dark
Ended rejoicing in thir matchless Chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, o’respread

490 Heav’ns cheerful face, the lowring Element\textsuperscript{threatening sky}
Scowls ore the dark’nd lantskip\textsuperscript{landscape} Snow, or showre;
If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet
Extend his ev’ning beam, the fields revive,
The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds

495 Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn’d
Firm concord holds, men onely disagree
Of Creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly Grace: and God proclaiming peace,

Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel warres,
Wasting the Earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enough besides,

That day and night for his destruction waite.

The Stygian Counsel thus dissolv’d; and forth
In order came the grand infernal Peers,
Midst came th’ Antagonist of Heav’n, nor less
Alone th’ Antagonist of Heav’n, nor less

Than Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream,
And God-like imitated State; him round
A Globe of fierie Seraphim inclos’d
With bright imblazonrie° and horrent° Arms.
Then of thir Session ended they bid cry

With Trumpets regal sound the great result:
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to thir mouths the sounding Alchymie
By Haralds voice explain’d: the hollow Abyss
Heard farr and wide, and all the host of Hell

With deafning shout, return’d them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease thir minds and somwhat rais’d
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged° powers
Disband, and wandring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice

Leads him perplext, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain° while away
The irksom hours, till his great Chief return.
Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime° aloft
Upon the wing, or in swift Race contend,

As at th’ Olympian Games or Pythian° fields;
Part curb thir fierie Steeds, or shun the Goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted Brigads° form.

500  Stygian. From the river Styx, leading to Hades.
512  Globe. A compact body, often a formation of soldiers. “Seraphim” are associated with fire; saraph in Hebrew means “to burn.”
517  sounding Alchymie. Trumpets made of the goldlike alloy, brass.
530. The “Olympian” games were held at Olympia, the “Pythian” games at Delphi.
531  shun the Goal. To drive a chariot as close as possible to a turning post without hitting it.
As when to warn proud Cities warr appears
Wag’d in the troubl’d Skie, and Armies rush

To Battel in the Clouds, before each Van
Prick forth the Aerie Knights, and couch thir Spears
Till thickest Legions close; with feats of Arms
From either end of Heav’n the welkin burns.

Others with vast Typhaen rage more fell

Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar.
As when Alcides from Oechalia Crown’d
With conquest, felt th’ envenom’d robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian Pines,

And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th’ Euboic Sea. Others more milde,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes Angelical to many a Harp
Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall

By doom of Battel; and complain that Fate
Free Vertue should enthrall to Force or Chance.

Thir Song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)

Suspected Hell, and took with ravishment

The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense,)

Others apart sat on a Hill retir’d,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason’d high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate,

Firt Fate, free will, foreknowledg absolute,
And found no end, in wandring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argu’d then,

533–6. The seeming appearance of warfare in the skies, reported before several notable battles including the English Civil War, was thought to warn of the wars to come.

539–41 Typhaen rage. Typhon’s name was associated with typhoon, and meant “whirlwind.” See note to 1.198–9.

542–6 Alcides. Hercules (Alcides), wearing a poisoned (“envenom’d”) robe given to him through a deception practiced on his wife after he returned from a victory at “Oechalia,” was driven mad with pain. Wrongly suspecting his beloved companion “Lichas,” who innocently gave him the cloak, he threw him along with uprooted trees from the top of Mount “Oeta” in Thessaly into “the Euboic Sea,” the strait between Thessaly in northern Greece and the Isle of Euboia. Cf. Ovid, Metamorphoses 9.134–229.

557–65 Various classical schools are prefigured here, e.g. the Peripatetic, Epicurean, and Stoic, as well as contemporary theological debates about predestination, foreknowledge, and free will. Cf. Jesus’ denunciation of the classical schools in Paradise Regained 4.291–321.
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and Apathie, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie:
Yet with a pleasing sorcerie could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th’ obdured° brest
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.

Another part in Squadrons and gross° Bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any Clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways thir flying March, along the Banks

Of four infernal Rivers that disgorge
Into the burning Lake thir baleful° streams;
Abhorred Styx the flood of deadly hate,
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, nam’d of lamentation loud

Heard on the rufus stream; fierce Phlegeton
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Farr off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe the River of Oblivion roules
Her watrie Labyrinth, whereof who drinks,

Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen Continent
Lies dark and wilde, beat with perpetual storms
Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land

Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound° as that Serbonian Bog
Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where Armies whole have sunk: the parching Air

Burns frore,° and cold performs th’ effect of Fire.

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564 Apathie. The Stoic ideal of freedom from passion.
575–81 four infernal Rivers. These are traditional in the geography of Hell; the epithet describing each translates its Greek name.
583 Lethe. Defined here as the “River of Oblivion.” Cf. lines 74 above and 604 below.
590–1 gathers heap. In a heap, resembling the ruins of a massive old building, “ancient pile.”
592–4 Serbonian Bog. Lake Serbonis, famous for quicksands that sank armies and overwhelmed the defeated monster Typhon, lies near the city of “Damiata” (Damietta) on the Egyptian coast near the mouth of the Nile. “Mount Casius” lies between Egypt and Arabia.
Thither by harpy-footed Furies hail’d,
At certain revolutions all the damn’d
Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extrems, extrems by change more fierce,

From Beds of raging Fire to starve in Ice
Thir soft Ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immovable, infixt and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.

They ferry over this Lethean Sound

Both to and fro, thir sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to loose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so neer the brink;

But Fate withstands, and to oppose th’ attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The Ford, and of it self the water flies
All taste of living wight as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on

In confus’d march forlorn, th’ adventrous Bands
With shuddring horror pale, and eyes agast
View’d first thir lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and drearie Vaile
They pass’d, and many a Region dolorous,

O’er many a Frozen, many a fierie Alpe,
Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death,
A Universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than Fables yet have feign’d, or fear conceiv’d,
Gorgons and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,

611 Medusa. One of the three Gorgons, women with snaky hair whose look turned men to stone.
614. In Homer’s hell “Tantalus” is tormented (tantalized) by being forced to stand in the middle of a lake whose waters recede whenever he tries to slake his raging thirst (Odyssey 11.382–92).
629 Adversary. The literal meaning of “Satan” (see 1 Pet. 5:8).
Satan with thoughts inflam’d of highest design,
   Puts on swift wings, and towards the Gates of Hell
Explores° his solitary flight; som times
He scours the right hand coast, som times the left,
Now shaves° with level wing the Deep, then soars
   Up to the fiery Concave° touring° high.
As when far off at Sea a Fleet descri’d
Hangs in the Clouds, by Æquinoctial° Winds
   From the Equator
Close sailing from Bengal, or the Iles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence Merchants bring
Thir spicie Drugs;° they on the Trading Flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply stemming° nightly toward the Pole. So seem’d
Farr off the flying Fiend: at last appeer
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid Roof,
And thricе threefold the Gates; three folds were Brass,
Three Iron, three of Adamantine° Rock,
Impenetrable, impal’d° with circling fire,
Yet unconsum’d. Before the Gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
   The one seem’d Woman to the waste, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fould
Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm’d
With mortal sting: about her middle round
   A cry° of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark’d
   Pack
With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous Peal: yet, when they list,° would creep,
If aught disturb’d thir noyse, into her woomb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark’d and howl’d,
Within unseen. Farr less abhorrd than these
Vex’d Scylla bathing in the Sea that parts

630  Close sailing. Sailing close to the wind.  Bengal. Bengal, in India
639  Ternate and Tidore. Two of the Spice Islands, in the Moluccas (Indonesia).
640–2  Trading Flood. The trade route for spice merchants on the Indian “Ethiopian” Ocean, sailing from
   the Moluccas toward “the Cape” of Good Hope and the South “Pole.”
648–9. The two figures blocking Satan’s path allude to the monster Scylla and the giant whirlpool Charybdis,
   who threaten sailors passing down the Straits of Messina between Italy and Sicily (Odyssey 12.229–59).
   The identification of the two “shapes” comes at lines 760 and 787 below.
650–61. Sin is modeled on “Scylla,” a beautiful nymph whose lower parts were changed into a ring of barking
dogs when Circe, out of jealousy, poured poison into the straits between “Calabria,” the southernmost
part of Italy, and Sicily (“Trinacrian shore”) where she was bathing (Ovid, Metamorphoses 14.40–74).
   Another model is Spenser’s Errour (Faerie Queene 1.1.14–15).
655  Cerberian. Like Cerberus, the many-headed watchdog of Hades.
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call’d
In secret, riding through the Air she comes
Lur’d with the smell of infant blood, to dance

With Lapland Witches, while the labouring Moon
Eclipses at thir charms.° The other shape,
If shape it might be call’d that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,
Or substance might be call’d that shadow seem’d,

For each seem’d either; black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem’d his head
The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat

The Monster moving onward came as fast
With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.
Th’ undaunted Fiend what this might be admir’d,°
Admir’d, not fear’d; God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valu’d he nor shun’d;

And with disdainful look thus first began.
Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That dar’st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated Front° athwart my way
To yonder Gates? through them I mean to pass,

That be assured, without leave askt of thee:
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,°
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav’n.
To whom the Goblin full of wrauth reply’d,
Art thou that Traitor Angel, art thou hee,

Who first broke peace in Heav’n and Faith, till then
Unbrok’n, and in proud rebellious Arms
Drew after him the third part of Heav’ns Sons
Conjur’d° against the highest, for which both Thou
And they outcast from God, are here condemn’d

To waste Eternal dayes in woe and pain?
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,
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,
More dreadful and deform: on th’ other side
Incens’d with indignation Satan stood
Unterrifi’d, and like a Comet burn’d,
That fires the length of Ophiucus huge

In th’ Artick Sky, and from his horrid° hair
Shakes Pestilence and Warr. Each at the Head
Level’d his deadly aime; thir fatall hands
No second stroke intend, and such a frown
Each cast at th’ other, as when two black Clouds

With Heav’ns Artillery° fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hov’ring a space, till Winds the signal blow
To join thir dark Encounter in mid air:
So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell

Grew darker at thir frown, so matcht they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achiev’d, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the Snakie Sorceress that sat

Fast by Hell Gate, and kept the fatal Key,
Ris’n, and with hideous outcry rush’d between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry’d,
Against thy only Son? What fury O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal Dart

709–11 *Ophiucus*. A vast northern constellation, the Serpent Bearer. Comets were thought to predict or even cause disasters such as “Pestilence” and “Warr”; one that appeared in this constellation in 1618 was taken as an augury of the Thirty Years War. Cf. Tasso’s comparison of Argantes to a comet that threatens death “To mighty lords, to monarchs, and to kings” (Gerusalemme Liberata 7.52).

714–18. Boiardo (Orlando Innamorato 1.16.10) likens Orlando and Agrican’s encounter to a clash of thunder-clouds. The “Caspian” was notorious for storms.

722 foe. The Son will destroy “him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). He will also destroy “the last enemy . . . death” (1 Cor. 15:26).
Against thy Fathers head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
What e're his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids,
His wrath which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest
Forbore, then these to her Satan return'd:
So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented° spares to tell thee yet by deeds

What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why
In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st
Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now

Sight more detestable then him and thee.
T' whom thus the Portress of Hell Gate reply'd;
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul, once deemd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight

Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
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,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd
Out of thy head I sprung; amazement seis'd
All th' Host of Heav'n; back they recoild affraid

At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a Sign
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft

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752–8. In Greek myth, Athena sprang fully armed out of the head of Zeus, an allegory, according to some theologians, of God's generation of the Son. Sin, Death, and Satan in their various incestuous interrelations parody obscenely the relations between God and the Son, Adam and Eve (cf. 5.602–17, 8.457–77). The "left" is the sinister side.

760–87. The allegorical figures of Sin and Death are based on Jas. 1:15: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." But the incest of Sin and Death is Milton's own conception.
Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing
Becam’s enamour’d, and such joy thou took’st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv’d
A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,
And fields were fought in Heav’n; wherein remaind
(For what could else) to our Almighty Foe

Cleer Victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the Empyrean: down they fell
Driv’n headlong from the Pitch° of Heaven, down
Into this Deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful Key

Into my hand was giv’n, with charge to keep
These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my op’ning. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown

Prodigious° motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape° thus grew

Transform’d: but he my inbred enemie
Forth issu’d, brandishing his fatal Dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry’d out Death;
Hell trembl’d at the hideous Name, and sigh’d
From all her Caves, and back resounded Death.

I fled, but he pursu’d (though more, it seems,
Inflam’d with lust then rage) and swifter far,
Mee overtook his mother all dismay’d,
And in embraces forcible and foule
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot

These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv’d
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me, for when they list° into the womb
That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw

My Bowels, thir repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrours vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my Son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his Parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involvd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane,°
When ever that shall be; so Fate pronounc’d.

But thou O Father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright Arms,
Though temper’d heav’nly, for that mortal dint,°
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish’d, and the suttle Fiend his lore°
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
Befalln us unforeseen, unthought of, know
I come no enemie, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee, and all the heav’nly Host

Of Spirits that in our just pretenses° arm’d
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth° errand sole, and one for all
My self expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th’ unfounded° deep, and through the void immense

To search with wandring quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the Pourlieues° of Heav’n, and therein plac’t
A race of upstart Creatures, to supply

Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov’d,
Least Heav’n surcharg’d° with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broiles: Be this or aught
Then this more secret now design’d, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,

And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom° Air, imbalm’d°
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill’d
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas’d, for both seem’d highly pleas’d, and Death
Grinnd horrible a gasty 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 bespoke her Sire.

850 The key of this infernal Pit by due,
And by command of Heav’ns all-powerful King
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These Adamantine° Gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,

855 Fearless to be o’rmatcht by living might.
But what ow I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful Office here confin’d,

860 Inhabitant of Heav’n, and heav’nlie-born,
Here in perpetual agonie and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compasst round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed:
Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou

865 My being gav’st me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall Reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems

870 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
Thus saying, from her side the fatal Key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the Gate rouling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge Porcullis° high up drew,

875 Which but her self not all the Stygian powers°
Could once have mov’d; then in the key-hole turns
Th’ intricate wards, and every Bolt and Bar
Of massie Iron or sollid Rock with ease
Unfast’ns: on a sudden op’n flie

880 With impetuous recoile and jarring sound
Th’ infernal dores, and on thir hinges grate
Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook

864–70. Parodies the Nicene Creed, “Jesus Christ . . . who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and . . .
873 bestial train. Her yelping offspring.
877 wards. The ridges inside a lock, corresponding to the incisions on the key.
Of *Erebus*. She op’nd, but to shut
Excel’d her power; the Gates wide op’n stood,

885 That with extended wings a Bannerd Host°
Under spread Ensigns° marching might pass through
With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding° smoak and ruddy flame.

890 Before thir eyes in sudden view appear
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*

895 And *Chaos*, Ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal *Anarchie*, amidst the noise
Of endless Warrs, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions fierce
Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring

900 Thir embryon Atoms; they around the flag
Of each his Faction, in thir several Clanns,
Light-arm’d or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber’d as the Sands
Of *Barca* or *Cyrene*’s torrid soil,

905 Levied to side with warring Winds, and poise
Thir lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
Hee rules a moment; *Chaos* Umpire sits,
And by decision more imbroiles the fray
By which he Reigns: next him high Arbiter

910 *Choose* governs all. Into this wilde Abyss,
The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,

883 *Erebus*. In Greek myth, the son of Chaos. The name means darkness, and is applied to the dark space through which the dead pass into Hades.

891–6. As a cosmic place, Chaos is infinitely extended and without any order; it surrounds the created places, hell, heaven, the universe and it contains the primal matter out of which God creates. In *Christian Doctrine* 1.7, Milton argues that creation is not out of nothing but from matter originally in and then separated from God and therefore good (cf. *Pl.* 7.168–73). As mythological figures “Chaos” and “eldest Night” are the most ancient gods (Hesiod, *Theogony* 123, and *Orphic Hymns* 3.1–2). Milton allegorizes Chaos as embodiment of and anti-ruler (Anarch) of that place, along with Night, his consort.

898–903. These subatomic qualities combine in nature to form the four elements fire, earth, water, and air, but in Chaos they struggle endlessly and the atoms remain unformed, embryonic. Milton’s description owes something to Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.5–20. Atomist philosophers (e.g. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* Book 2) saw atoms as forming the universe through endless collisions, by chance.

904 *Barca* . . . *Cyrene*. Cities in the Libyan desert.

905 *Levied*. Enlisted as troops, also, raised up. *poise*. Add weight to.
Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,

Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more Worlds,
Into this 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°
With noises loud and ruinous° (to compare
Great things with small) then when Bellona storms,
With all her battering Engines bent to rase
Som Capital City; or less then if this frame°

Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements
In mutinie had from her Axle torn
The stedfast Earth. At last his Sail-broad Vannes°
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak
Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League

As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides
Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuitie: all unawares
Fluttring his pennons° vain plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour

Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff° of som tumultuous cloud
Instinct° with Fire and Nitre° hurried him
As many miles aloft: that furie stay'd,
Quencht in a Boggy Syrtis, neither Sea,

Nor good dry Land: nigh founderd° on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and Saile.
As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness
With winged course ore Hill or moarie° Dale

Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stelth
Had from his wakeful custody purloind
The guarded Gold: So eagerly the fiend

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915 to compare / Great things with small. A Virgilian formula (Eclogues 1.23; Georgics 4.176).
Bellona. Roman goddess of war.
939 Syrtis. The Syrtes were shifting sandbars and dangerous quicksands off the North African coast. Lucan describes them (Pharsalia 9.303–4) as "ambiguous between sea and land."
943–7 Gryfon. Griffins were fabulous creatures, half-eagle, half-lion, who guarded the gold of Scythia; it was stolen from them by the one-eyed "Arimaspian" people (Herodotus, 3.116).
950 And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flyes:  
955 Undaunted to meet there what ever power

Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss

960 Of Chaos, and his dark Pavilion spread

Wide on the wasteful Deep; with him Enthron’d

Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,

The Consort of his Reign; and by them stood

Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name

965 Of Demogorgon; Rumor next and Chance,

And Tumult and Confusion all imbroild,

And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T’ whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers

And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,

970 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no Spy,

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,

975 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek

What readiest path leads where your gloomie bounds

Confine° with Heav’n; or if som other place

From your Dominion won, th’ Ethereal King

Possesses lately, thither to arrive

980 I travel this profound,° direct my course;

Directed no mean recompence it brings

To your behoof,° if I that Region lost,

All usurpation thence expell’d, reduce

To her original darkness and your sway


964. Latin “Orcus” and Greek “Ades” (Hades) are names of Pluto, ruler of the underworld.

965 Demogorgon. Often taken to be the most ancient and terrible of the gods, associated with Night. In Bocaccio’s De Genealogiis Deorum he is the parent of Night and the other dark gods, Erebus, Tumult, Discord, etc.
(Which is my present journey) and once more
Erect the Standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old
With faultering speech and visage incompos'd

Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
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,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n Gates
Pour'd 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,
Encroacht on still through [y]our intestine broiles
Weakning the Scepter of old Night: first Hell
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World
Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain
To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not farr;
So much the neerer danger; go and speed;
Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply,
But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacritie and force renew'd
Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire
Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock

Of fighting Elements, on all sides round
Environ'd wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger'd, then when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus betwixt the justling Rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the Larbord shunnd

Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steard.

So he with difficulty and labour hard

1017–18. Jason and his companions sailed in the "Argo" through the "Bosporus" to the Black Sea, passing between the Symplegades, or "justling Rocks."
1019–20. Homer’s Odysseus ("Ulysses") sailing through the Straits of Messina between Italy and Sicily avoids the whirlpool of "Charybdis" and steers by the "other" monster, Scylla (not a whirlpool in Homer) who devours six of his men (Odyssey 12.55–126, 222–59).
Mov’d on, with difficulty and labour hee;
But hee once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain° at full speed

1025 Following his track, such was the will of Heav’n,
Pav’d after him a broad and beat’n way
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf
Tamely endur’d a Bridge of wondrous length
From Hell continu’d reaching th’ utmost Orbe° outermost sphere

1030 Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse
With easie intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence

1035 Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav’n
Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
Her fardest verge,° and Chaos to retire extreme boundary
As from her outmost works a brok’n foe

1040 With tumult less and with less hostile din,
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious° light
And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds° makes for
Gladly the Port, though Shrouds° and Tackle° torn;

1045 Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air,
Weighs° his spread wings, at leasure to behold holds steady
Farr off th’ Empyreal Heav’n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermind square or round,
With Opal Towrs and Battlements adorn’d

1050 Of living Saphire, once his native Seat;
And fast by hanging in a golden Chain
This pendant world,° in bigness as a Starr universe
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.
Thither full fraught° with mischievous revenge,

1055 Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies.° hastens

The End of the Second Book.
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 wandering 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.

Hail holy Light, offspring of Heav’n first-born,
Or of th’ Eternal Coeternal beam
May I express thee unblam’d? Since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light

Dwelt from Eternitie, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence° of bright essence increate.°

16 Lymbo of Vanity. In Ariosto, Orlando Furioso 34., stanzas 72–87, the Knight Astolfo flies to the Limbo of Vanity in the moon, to recover Orlando’s lost wits. Milton refers to that Limbo as the recent name (“since call’d”) of the Paradise of Fools that Satan visits.

1–55. This second Proem or invocation is a hymn to Light, addressed either as the first creature of God (“first-born,” cf. 7.243–4, where light is termed the “first of things,” and Gen.1:3) or as coeternal with God, with allusion to 1 John 1:5, “God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

unapproached. Cf. 1 Tim. 6:16: God dwells “in the light which no man can approach unto.”
Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
Whose Fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest.  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.  
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
Escap’t the Stygian Pool, though long detain’d  
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
Though utter and through middle darkness borne  
With other notes then to th’ Orphean Lyre  
I sing of Chaos and Eternal Night,  
Taught by the heav’nly Muse to venture down  
The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital Lamp; but thou  
Revisit’st not these eyes, that rowle in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veild. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
Cleer Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred Song; but chief  
Thee Sion and the flowrie Brooks beneath  
That wash thy hallowd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor somtimes forget

7 hear’st thou rather. Would you rather be called (a Latinism). 
10 Ethereal. consisting of ether, the fifth, purest element. 
11. Echoes Spenser, Faerie Queene 1.1.39, ”the world of waters wide and deepe.” 
14 Stygian Pool. The river Styx, in the classical Hades. 
17 Orphean Lyre. Orpheus, the Greek poet whose song could charm even trees and rocks, visited the under-world to win back his wife, Eurydice; one of the poems attributed to him is the so-called Orphic hymn “To Night.” Milton’s song, Christian and epic, is of another kind, “other notes.” 
19 heav’nly Muse. Urania, invoked at 1.6–16 but not named until 7.1. See note to that line. 
20–1. Echoes the Sibyl’s warning to Aeneas (Aeneid 6.126–9). 
25–6. Medical terms of Milton’s day for diseases of the eyes, one of which he thinks may have caused his blindness: “drop serene” translates gutta serena, a form of blindness in which the vision is “quencht” but the eyes retain their clear appearance (as Milton’s did); “dim suffusion” translates suffusio nigra, a disease in which the vision is “veild” as with cataracts. 
30 Sion. The mountain of scriptural inspiration, with its “flowrie Brooks” Siloa and Kidron (in contrast with Mount Parnassus and its stream, Helicon). 
32. Milton composed chiefly at night.
Those other two equal’d with me in Fate,
So were I equal’d with them in renown,

35 Blind Thamyris and blind Maenides,
And Tiresias and Phineus Prophets old.
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move
Harmonious numbers;\textsuperscript{\textit{voluntarie}} as the wakeful Bird\textsuperscript{\textit{verses / the nightingale}}
Sings darkling,\textsuperscript{\textit{in the dark}} and in shadiest Covert hid

40 Tunes her nocturnal Note. Thus with the Year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev’n or Morn,
Or sight of vernal\textsuperscript{\textit{spring}} bloom, or Summers Rose,
Or flocks, or heards, or human face divine;

45 But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful wayes of men
Cut off, and for the Book of knowledg\textsuperscript{\textit{Book of Nature}} fair
Presented with a Universal blanc
Of Natures works to mee expung’d and ras’d,\textsuperscript{\textit{erased}}

50 And wisdome at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou Celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell

55 Of things invisible to mortal sight.
   Now had the Almighty Father from above,
   From the pure Empyrean\textsuperscript{\textit{highest heaven}} where he sits
   High Thron’d above all highth, bent down his eye,
   His own works and their works at once to view:
   About him all the Sanctities\textsuperscript{\textit{angels}} of Heaven
   Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv’d
   Beatitude past utterance; on his right
   The radiant image of his Glory sat,
   His onely Son; On Earth he first beheld

35 \textit{Thamyris}. A legendary Thracian poet who was punished with blindness for boasting he could sing better than the Muses (\textit{Iliad} 2.594–600). \textit{Maenides}. Homer, said to be the son of Mæon, was often referred to by this patronymic.

36 \textit{Tiresias}. A blind Theban seer who foretold many events in the mythical history of Thebes; he also revealed Oedipus’ guilt to him. \textit{Phineus}. Thracian king said to have been blinded by the gods for revealing their counsels, but in the \textit{Second Defence} Milton denies that his blindness was a punishment. In both, blindness and prophecy are linked.

37 \textit{voluntarie}. Freely, as in a musical voluntary, added at will by the performer.

61–2. The sight of God is said to be the supreme joy of heaven, the greatest “Beatitude” (see \textit{Christian Doctrine} 1.33).

63. Cf. Heb. 1:3: “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”
Our two first Parents, yet the onely two
Of mankind, in the happie Garden plac’t,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivald love
In blissful solitude; he then survey’d

Hell and the Gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting° the wall of Heav’n on this side Night
In the dun° Air sublime,° and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet
On the bare outside of this World,° that seem’d

Firm land imbosom’d without Firmament,
Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.
Him God beholding from his prospect° high,
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
Thus to his onely Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our adversarie, whom no bounds
Prescrib’d, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heapt on him there, nor yet the main° Abyss
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems

On desperate reveng, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not farr off Heav’n, in the Precincts° of light,
Directly towards the new created World,

And Man there plac’t, with purpose to assay°
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert
For man will hark’n to his glozing° lyes,
And easily transgress the sole Command,

Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall,
Hhe and his faithless Progenie: whose fault?

73 **stoop.** Descend swiftly (a term from hawking).
75 **without Firmament.** On the outside of the firmament (the sphere of the fixed stars that encloses the universe); also, without the shelter of any firmament.
76 **Uncertain.** It is not clear whether the universe floats in water or in air.
81 **Transports.** Conveys, moves passionately. **adversarie.** The literal meaning of Satan.
84 **Wide interrupt.** Chaos, that forms a wide “Abyss” or gulf between Heaven and Hell; “interrupt” keeps its Latin meaning, broken open.
94 **sole Command.** Not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. See Gen. 3:3, “Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.”
96 **faithless Progenie.** Adam passes on to his descendants his original sin and its consequence, absence of saving faith in God.
Whose but his own? ingratitude, he had of mee
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

Such I created all th’ Ethereal Powers
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who faileth;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have givn sincere
Of true allegiance, constant Faith or Love,

Where onely what they needs must do, appeard,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoyled,

Made passive both, had servd necessitie,
Not mee. They therefore as to right belongd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Thir maker, or thir making, or thir Fate,
As if predestination over-ruld

Thir will, dispos’d by absolute Decree
Of high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov’d certain unforeknown.

So without least impulse or shadow of Fate,
Or aught by me immutable foreseen,
They trespass, Authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I formd them free, and free they must remain,

Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change
Thir nature, and revoke the high Decree
Unchangeable, Eternal, which ordain’d
Thir freedom, they themselves ordain’d thir fall.

97–102. Milton insists that God created Adam and Eve and the angels with “sufficient” power and with reason and free will to resist evil. “The matter or object of the divine plan was that angels and men alike should be endowed with free will, so that they could either fall or not fall” (Christian Doctrine 1.3).

108–9 Reason also is choice. For example, reason is meaningless unless it can eventuate in choices which are free. Cf. Areopagitica, “When God gave him reason he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing.”

111–19. Summarizes Milton’s argument in Christian Doctrine 1.3–4, that God does not predestine any to sin or damnation and that his perfect foreknowledge of events does not amount to predestination; rather, he foresees because he knows past, present, and future at once. God knows what will happen (even as humans know what is happening or has happened) but does not cause the actions of humans or angels.
The first sort\textdegree by thir own suggestion fell,

Self-tempted, self-deprav\textprime d: Man falls deceiv\textprime d
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in Mercy and Justice both,
Through Heav\textprime n and Earth, so shall my glorie excel,
But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill\textprime d
All Heav\textprime n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable\textdegree diffus\textprime d:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious, in him all his Father shon

Substantially express\textprime d, and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeard,
Love without end, and without measure Grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.
O Father, gracious was that word which clos\textprime d
Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace,
For which both Heav\textprime n and Earth shall high extoll
Thy praises, with th\textprime innumerable sound
Of Hymns and sacred Songs, wherewith thy Throne
Encompass\textprime d shall resound thee ever blest.

For should Man finally be lost, should Man
Thy creature late so lov\textprime d, thy youngest Son
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joynd
With his own folly? that be from thee farr,
That farr be from thee, Father, who art Judg

Of all things made, and judgest onely right.
Or shall the Adversarie thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine, shall he fulfill
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
Or proud return though to his heavier doom,

Yet with revenge accomplish\textprime t and to Hell
Draw after him the whole Race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thy self

\textsuperscript{136} Spirits elect. The unfallen angels. In \textit{Christian Doctrine} 1.9 Milton insists that the angels “stand by their own strength” and are called “elect” (1 Tim. 5:21) only in the sense that they are “beloved, or excellent.” Cf. PL 5.535–7.

\textsuperscript{140}. In \textit{Christian Doctrine} 1.5 Milton argues that God imparted to his Son his divine substance but not his “whole essence,” as no two beings can have the same essence.

\textsuperscript{150–5}. The Son echoes, or rather foreshadows, another mediator, Abraham, in his pleas to the Lord to spare Sodom, “That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked . . . that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. 18:25).
Abolish thy Creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glorie thou hast made?

So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be questiond and blaspheam’d without defence.

to whom the great Creatour thus reply’d.
O Son, in whom my Soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spok’n as my thoughts are, all
As my Eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav’d who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me

Freely voutsaft; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthrall’d
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,

By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall’n condition is, and to me ow
All his deliv’rance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will:

The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn’d
Thir sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th’ incensed Deitie, while offerd grace
Invites; for I will cleer thir senses dark,
What may suffice, and soft’n stonie hearts

To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
Though but endevord with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.

170–2. The Son is the agent through whom God’s power, “effectual might,” is exercised (cf. 1 Cor. 1:24), the “word” through whom his “wisdom” is made manifest and his creative will is performed (John 1:1–3). See PL 6.710–14 and 7.163–6.

174–80. After the Fall salvation is only possible through God’s grace. Reason and will are so damaged that unless God renews them humans cannot resist sin or respond to the grace offered.

183–90. Milton’s God rejects the Calvinist doctrine that he had from the beginning predestined the damnation or salvation of each soul; rather, he associates himself with the Arminian doctrine that grace sufficient for salvation is offered to all, enabling each person, if he or she so chooses, to believe and persevere. He does, however, assert the right to give special grace to some, “elect above the rest.” See Christian Doctrine 1.4.

And I will place within them as a guide
My Umpire \textit{Conscience}, whom if they will hear,
Light after light well us’d they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be hard’nd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not don; Man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealtie, and sins
Against the high Supremacie of Heav’n,
Affecting° God-head, and so loosing all,
To expiate his Treason hath naught left,
But to destruction sacred° and devote,°
He with his whole posteritie must dye,
Dye hee or Justice must; unless for him
Som other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say Heav’nly powers, where shall we find such love,
Which of ye will be mortal° to redeem
Mans mortal crime, and just th’ unjust to save,
Dwels in all Heaven charitie so deare?
He ask’d, but all the Heav’nly Quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav’n: on mans behalf
Patron° or Intercessor none appeerd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have bin lost, adjudg’d to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwels of love divine,
His dearest mediation° thus renewd.
Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,

200. By at long last withdrawing his offered grace God leaves such obdurate sinners to themselves, to become more and more hardened and blinded. See \textit{Christian Doctrine} 1.8.
212 \textit{rigid satisfaction}. Here and in \textit{Christian Doctrine} 1.16 Milton’s God paraphrases the Anselmic theory of the Atonement: “Satisfaction means that Christ . . . fully satisfied divine justice by fulfilling the Law and paying the just price on behalf of all men.”
The speediest of thy winged messengers,

To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented,\textsuperscript{°} unimplor’d unsought,
Happie\textsuperscript{°} for man, so coming; he her aid\textsuperscript{°}
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,\textsuperscript{°}

Indebted and undon, hath none to bring:
Behold mee then, mee for him, life for life
I offer, on mee let thine anger fall;
Account mee man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glorie next to thee

Freely put off, and for him lastly dye
Well pleas’d, on me let Death wreck all his rage;
Under his gloomie power I shall not long
Lie vanquisht, thou hast givn me to possess
Life in my self for ever, by thee I live,

Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsom grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted Soule
For ever with corruption there to dwell;

But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoild of his wanted spoile;
Death his deaths wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortall sting disarm’d.
I through the ample Air in Triumph high

Shall lead Hell Captive maugre\textsuperscript{°} Hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas’d, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
While by thee rais’d I ruin all my Foes,
Death last, and with his Carcass glut the Grave:

Then with the multitude of my redeemd
Shall enter Heaven long absent, and returne,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur’d,
And reconcilement; wrauth shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence Joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath’d immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shon
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice

Glad to be offer’d, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiratio\^{o} seis’d
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
My sole complacence\^{o} well thou know’st how dear,
To me are all my works, nor Man the least
Though last created, that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,

By loosing thee a while, the whole Race lost.
Thou therefore whom\^{o} thou only canst redeem,
Thir Nature also to thy Nature joyn;
And be thy self Man among men on Earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,

By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room
The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee
As from a second root shall be restor’d,
As many as are restor’d, without thee none.

His crime makes guiltie all his Sons, thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Thir own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,

Shall satisfie for Man, be judg’d and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise

286 **Head of all mankind.** Cf. 1 Cor. 11:3: “The head of every man is Christ.”
288–9. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:22: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”
290–4. Summarizes the reformed doctrine of justification by faith. The merit of Christ attributed vicariously (“imputed”) to humans frees from original sin those who renounce their own deeds, both good and bad, and hope to be saved through faith.
293 **transplanted.** Cf. Christian Doctrine 1.21, “Of Ingrafting in Christ”: “God the Father plants believers in Christ. That is to say, he makes them sharers in Christ.” The first effect is “new life and growth.”
His Brethren, ransomed 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
So easily destroy’d, and still destroyes
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou by descending to assume
Mans Nature, less’n or degrade thine owne.
Because thou hast, though Thron’d in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition,° quitted all to save
A World from utter loss, and hast been found
By Merit more then Birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being Good,
Farr more then Great or High; because in thee
Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds,
Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;
Here shalt thou sit Incarnate, here shalt Reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King; all Power
I give thee, reign for ever, and assume
Thy Merits;° under thee as Head Supream
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow; of them that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell;
When thou attended gloriously from Heav’n
Shalt in the sky appeer, and from thee send
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaime
Thy dread Tribunal: forthwith from all Windes°
The living, and forthwith the cited° dead
Of all past Ages to the general Doom
Shall hast’n, such a peal shall rouse thir sleep.

297 **ransomed.** Cf. Matt. 20:28, “The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many.”
309. A heterodox doctrine, that the Son was Son of God by merit. In Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 2.42–3 (George Sandys’ translation), Apollo says to his son, Phaeton, “by merit, as by birth, to thee is due that name.”

320. Orders of angels.
321–2. Cf. Phil. 2:10: “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”
323–32. The description of the Last Judgment draws on several biblical texts, among them Matt. 24:30–1 and 25:31–2, 1 Cor. 15:51–2, and 1 Thess. 4:17.
Then all thy Saints assembl’d, thou shalt judge
Bad men and Angels, they arraigned shall sink
Beneath thy Sentence; Hell her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav’n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,
For regal Scepter then no more shall need,
God shall be All in All. But all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
Adore the Son, and honour him as mee
No sooner had th’ Almighty ceas’t, but all
The multitude of Angels with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav’n rung
With Jubilee, and loud Hosanna’s filld
Th’eternal Regions: lowly reverent
Towards either Throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Thir Crowns inwove with Amarant and Gold,
Immortal Amarant, a Flour which once
In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life
Began to bloom, but soon for man’s offence
To Heav’n remov’d where first it grew, there grows,
And flours aloft shading the Fount of Life,
And where the river of Bliss through midst of Heavn
Rowls o’re Elisian Flours her Amber stream;
With these that never fade the Spirits elect
Bind thir resplendent locks inwreath’d with beams,
Now in loose Garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement that like a Sea of Jasper shon

330 Then all thy Saints assembl’d, thou shalt judge
Bad men and Angels, they arraigned shall sink
Beneath thy Sentence; Hell her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav’n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,
For regal Scepter then no more shall need,
God shall be All in All. But all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
Adore the Son, and honour him as mee
No sooner had th’ Almighty ceas’t, but all
The multitude of Angels with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
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330–5. For the fiery destruction and new heavens and earth, see 2 Pet. 3:12–13, and Rev. 21:1.
340–1. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:28: “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”
351 **Amarant.** In Greek, unfading, a legendary immortal flower.
350–71. Milton’s heaven draws upon imagery from Rev. 4 and 22:1–2 (thrones, harps, golden crowns, sea of jasper, angelic hymns, pure river, tree of life); other details, e.g. the “Elisian” flowers, recall classical descriptions of the Elysian Fields.
Impurpl’d with Celestial Roses smil’d.

Then Crown’d again thir gold’n Harps they took, Harps ever tun’d, that glittering by thir side Like Quivers hung, and with Praemulate° sweet Of charming symphonie they introduce Thir sacred Song, and waken raptures high;

No voice exempt,° no voice but well could joine Melodious part, such concord is in Heav’n. Thee Father first they sung Omnipotent, Immutable, Immortal, Infinite, Eternal King; thee Author of all being, Fountain of Light, thy self invisible Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit’st Thron’d inaccessible, but° when thou shad’st The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud Drawn round about thee like a radiant Shrine,

Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appeer, Yet daze Heav’n, that brightest Seraphim Approach not, but with both wings veil thir eyes. Thee next they sang of all Creation first, Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,

In whose conspicuous count’nance, without cloud Made visible, th’ Almighty Father shines, Whom else no Creature can behold; on thee Impressst the effulgence° of his Glorie abides, Transfus’d on thee his ample Spirit rests.

Hee Heav’n of Heavens and all the Powers therein By thee created, and by thee threw down Th’ aspiring Dominations: thou that day Thy Fathers dreadful Thunder didst not spare, Nor stop thy flaming Chariot wheels, that shook

373. This line is a direct quote from Joshua Sylvester’s Divine Weeks and Works (1605) 1.1.45, a translation of Du Bartas’ La Semaine (1578).
381–2. Cf. Isa. 6:2, describing the seraphim around God’s throne, “each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face.”
383–7. Cf. Col. 1:15–16: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth.” For Milton the Son is not eternal, as in Trinitarian doctrine, but is God’s first creation and the agent through whom he created all other beings. Neither is he omniscient, nor omnipotent, nor immutable, nor co-equal with the Father, but participates in those divine qualities only as the Father devolves them upon him. See Christian Doctrine 1.5.
389 ample Spirit. The power of God, not the Holy Spirit (see Christian Doctrine 1.6).
392 Dominations. An angelic order, standing here for all the rebel angels.
395 Heav’ns everlasting Frame, while o’re the necks
Thou drov’st of warring Angels disarraid.\°
Back from pursuit thy Powers° with loud acclaime
Thee only extoll’d, Son of thy Fathers might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
400 Not so on Man; him through their malice fall’n,
Father of Mercie and Grace, thou didst not doome°
So strictly, but much more to pitie encline:
No sooner did thy dear and onely Son
Perceive thee purpos’d not to doom frail Man
405 So strictly, but much more to pitie enclin’d,
He to appease thy wrauth, and end the strife
Of Mercy and Justice in thy face discern’d,
Second to thee, offerd himself to die
For mans offence. O unexampl’d° love,
410 Love no where to be found less then Divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of Men, thy Name
Shall be the copious matter of my Song
Henceforth, and never shall my Harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Fathers praise disjoine.
415 Thus they in Heav’n, above the starry Sphear,
Thir happie hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacous° Glove
Of this round World, whose first convex divides
420 The luminous inferior Orbs, enclos’d
From Chaos and th’ inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a Globe farr off
It seem’d, now seems a boundless Continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
425 Starless expos’d, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement skie;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heav’n
Though distant farr som small reflection gaines
Of glistening air less vext° with tempest loud:
430 Here walk’d the Fiend at large in spacious field.

412–15. The shift to first person suggests that Milton is quoting the angels singing as a single chorus, or that he associates himself with their song, or both.
419–22 first convex. The outermost of the ten spheres that comprise the universe. Satan “alighted” (both landed, and was illumined by the dim light reflected from heaven) and “walks” on the outer shell of that sphere.
As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowie ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a Region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of Lambs or yeanling° Kids

On Hills where Flocks are fed, flies toward the Springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren Plaines
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With Sails and Wind thir canie Waggons light:

So on this windie Sea of Land, the Fiend
Walk’d up and down alone bent on his prey,
Alone, for other Creature in this place
Living or liveless to be found was none,
None yet, but store° hereafter from the earth plenty

Up hither like Aereal vapours flew
Of all things transitorie and vain, when Sin
With vanity had filld the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built thir fond° hopes of Glorie or lasting fame, foolish

Or happiness in this or th’ other life;
All who have thir reward on Earth, the fruits
Of painful° Superstition and blind Zeal, painstaking
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, emptie as thir deeds;

All th’ unaccomplish° works of Natures hand, imperfect
Abortive,° monstrous, or unkindly° mixt, premature / unnaturally
Dissolv’d on Earth, fleet° hither, and in vain, float
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighbouring Moon, as some have dreamd;

Those argent Fields more likely habitants,
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold
Betwixt th’ Angelical and Human kinde:

431–9 Vultur. Vultures were said to be able to scent their prey across continents. Imaus. Mountain ridge extending north through Asia from modern Afghanistan to the Arctic Ocean, the regions (“bounds”) of the pillaging “roving Tartar.”

436. The rivers “Ganges” and “Hydaspes” (a tributary of the Indus) rise the mountains of northern India.

438–9 Sericana. A region in northwest China. canie Waggons. Juan Gonzales de Mendoza described these Chinese landships, made of cane or bamboo.

440–97. Milton’s Paradise of Fools (named in line 496) was inspired by Ariosto’s (less satiric) Limbo of Vanity located in the moon (Orlando Furioso 34., stanzas 72–87; cf. PL 3.459). Milton’s region is reserved for deluded followers of misplaced devotion, chiefly Roman Catholics.

461 Translated Saints. Holy patriarchs like Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs 2:11), carried to the heavens while yet alive.
Hither of ill-joyned Sons and Daughters born
First from the ancient World those Giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown’d;
The builders next of Babel on the Plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain designe
New Babels, had they wherewithall, would build:
Others came single; he who to be deem’d
A God, leap’d fondly\(^o\) into Ætna flames,
Empedocles, and hee who to enuoy
Plato’s Elysium, leap’d into the Sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryo’s and Idiots, Eremits\(^o\) and Friers
White, Black, and Grey, with all thir trumperie,\(^o\)
Here Pilgrims roam, that stray’d so farr to seek
In Golgatha him dead, who lives in Heav’n;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds\(^o\) of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis’d;
They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fixt,
And that Crystalline Sphear whose ballance weighs
The Trepidation talkt, and that first mov’d;
And now Saint Peter at Heavn’s Wicket\(^o\) seems
To wait them with his Keys, and now at foot

466 Babel. The tower, intended to reach heaven (Gen. 11:3–9), became an emblem of pride and folly.
467 Sennaar. (the Vulgate form of Shinar), the plain of Babel on which the tower of “Babel” was built.
469–73 Empedocles. A Presocratic philosopher who threw himself into “Ætna” to conceal his mortality; the volcano defeated his plan by casting up one of his sandals. Cleombrotus. A youth who drowned himself to attain the immortality promised in Plato’s Phaedo.
474–5 Embryo’s and Idiots. Those not responsible morally, but still marked by original sin so they could not enter heaven, were said by Catholic theologians to be held in Limbo. The “White” friars (“Friers”) are Carmelites, the “Black” are Dominicans, and the “Grey” Franciscans.
477 Golgatha. Golgotha, “Place of the skull,” the hill where Christ was crucified. See Luke 24:5–6, “Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.”
478–80. Some try to ensure their salvation by wearing on their deathbed the robes of various religious orders.
481–5. These souls imagine their journey through the spheres in the Ptolemaic system: the seven then known planets, the eighth sphere of the fixed stars, then the “Crystalline Sphear” (added to the Ptolemaic system to account for anomalies in astronomical observations). Its “Trepidation” (oscillation or trembling), measured by Libra (the scales, “ballance”), was much disputed (“talks”) in Milton’s time. After the tenth sphere, the Primum Mobile (“that first mov’d”) which imparts motion to all the rest, they imagine ascent to the empyreal Heaven.
Of Heav’n’s ascent they lift thir Feet, when loe
A violent cross wind from either Coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand Leagues awry
Into the devious Air; then might ye see

Cowles, Hoods and Habits with thir wearers tost
And flutterd into Raggs, then Reliques, Beads,
Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,
The sport of Winds: all these upwhirld aloft
Fly o’re the backside of the World farr off

Into a Limbo large and broad, since calld
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopl’d, and untrod;
All this dark Globe the Fiend found as he pass’d,
And long he wanderd, till at last a gleame

Of dawning light turnd thither-ward in haste
His travell’d steps; farr distant he descries
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven a Structure high,
At top whereof, but farr more rich appeerd

The work as of a Kingly Palace Gate
With Frontispiece of Diamond and Gold
Imbellisht, thick with sparkling orient Gemmes
The Portal shon, inimitable on Earth
By Model, or by shading Pencil drawn.

The Stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of Guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open Skie,

And waking cri’d, This is the Gate of Heav’n.
Each Stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav’n somtimes

490. The dress of the various religious orders.
492 Indulgences, Dispenses [dispensations], Pardons. Various grants set forth by the Roman Catholic Church that could be earned or purchased to free one from the punishment due to sin, or from some religious duty. They were seen as a scandal by the Protestant reformers. See the Pardoner’s Tale in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.
510–15 Jacob fled to “Padan-Aram” (in Syria) after cheating his brother “Esau” of their father’s blessing. En route, while sleeping in the field of “Luz” (Bethel), he dreamed of a ladder reaching to heaven on which angels ascended and descended. When he awoke he cried, “this is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:10–17).
516 mysteriously. The episode and the ladder received numerous symbolic and allegorical interpretations.
Viewless,° and underneath a bright Sea flow’d
Of Jasper, or of liquid Pearle, whereon

Who after came from Earth, sayling arriv’d,
Wafted by Angels, or flew o’re the Lake
Rapt in a Chariot drawn by fiery Steeds.
The Stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easie ascent, or aggravate

His sad exclusion from the dores of Bliss.
Direct against which op’nd from beneath,
Just o’re the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th’ Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by farr then that of after-times

Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the Promis’d Land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy Tribes,
On high behests his Angels to and fro
Pass’d frequent, and his eye with choice° regard

discriminating

From Paneas the fount of Jordans flood
To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Ægypt and the Arabian shoare;
So wide the op’ning seemd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave.

Satan from hence now on the lower stair
That scal’d by steps of Gold to Heav’n Gate
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this World at once. As when a Scout
Through dark and desart wayes with peril gone

All night; at last by break of cheerful dawne
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing Hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some forein land
First-seen, or some renown’d Metropolis

With glistering Spires and Pinnacles adorn’d,
Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams.
Such wonder seis’d, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit maligne, but much more envy seis’d

518–19. See Rev. 4:6 ("sea of glass like unto crystal").
521–2. Lazarus was "Wafted" by the angels to heaven (Luke 16:22); Elijah was "Rapt" (carried away) up to
heaven in a "Chariot" of fire drawn by "fiery Steeds" ("horses of fire," 2 Kgs 2:11).
535–7. This later opening to heaven stretched from "Paneas" (Greek name for the city of Dan) near the source
of the Jordan in the north of Canaan to "Beersaba" (Beersheba) near the Egyptian border in the south, giving
God a view of the entire land of Israel (cf. 1 Kgs 4:25).
552 though after Heaven seen. i.e., “even after having seen heaven.”
At sight of all this World beheld so faire.

Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling Canopie
Of Nights extended shade; from Eastern Point
Of Libra to the fleecie Starr that bears
Andromeda farr off Atlantic Seas

Beyond th' Horizon; then from Pole to Pole
He views in bredth, and without longer pause
Down right into the Worlds first Region throws
His flight precipitant,° and windes with ease
Through the pure marble° Air his oblique way

Amongst innumerable Starrs, that shon
Stars distant, but nigh hand seemd other Worlds,
Or other Worlds they seemd, or happy Iles,
Like those Hesperian Gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate Fields, and Groves, and flourie Vales,

Thrice happy Iles, but who dwelt happy there
He stayd not to enquire; above them all
The golden Sun in splendor likest Heaven
Allur'd his eye: Thither his course he bends
Through the calm Firmament;° but up or downe

By center, or eccentric, hard to tell
Or Longitude, where the great Luminarie°
Aloof° the vulgar° Constellations thick,
That from his Lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses Light from farr; they as they move

Thir Starry dance in numbers° that compute
Days, months, & years, towards his all-chearing Lamp
Turn swift thir various motions, or are turned
By his Magnetic beam, that gently warms
The Univers, and to each inward part

With gentle penetration, though unseen,

557–9. In the zodiac, "Libra" in the east is diametrically opposite Aries or the Ram ("the fleecie Starr") that seems to carry the constellation "Andromeda" on its back in the west, in the Atlantic below the "Horizon."

562–5 first Region. The upper air down to the Primum Mobile, the crystalline sphere and "innumerable Starrs."

566–71 other Worlds. The plurality of worlds was a topic of much speculation in Milton’s day (see 8.140–52). The gardens of the Hesperides and the Fortunate Isles ("happy Iles") of Greek mythology, were classical versions of paradise.

574–6. Satan cannot tell if he is flying up or down, or by a centric orbit that has the earth or the sun as its center, or by an eccentric orbit that does not. Nor can he tell the distance he flew measured by degrees ("Longitude") along the ecliptic, the apparent orbit of the sun around the earth.

582–3. Kepler (in 1609) theorized that the sun’s magnetism caused planetary motion.
Shoots invisible vertue° even to the deep:
So wondrously was set his Station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the Sun’s lucent Orbe

Through his glaz’d Optic Tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar’d with aught on Earth, Metal or Stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform’d
With radiant light, as glowing Iron with fire;

If mettal, part seems Gold, part Silver cleer;
If stone, Carbuncle most or Chrysolite,
Rubie or Topaz, to the Twelve that shon
In Aarons Brest-plate, and a stone besides
Imagind rather oft then elsewhere seen,

That stone, or like to that which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by thir powerful Art they binde
Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the Sea,

Draind through a Limbec to his Native forme.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth Elixir pure, and Rivers run
Potable° Gold, when with one vertuous° touch
Th’ Arch-chimic° Sun so farr from us remote

Produces with Terrestrial Humor° mixt
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazl’d, farr and wide his eye commands,

For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,

588–90. Galileo first observed sunspots through his telescope (“glaz’d Optic Tube”) in 1610.
597–8. In Exod. 28:15–21 “Aarons Brest-plate” is described as decorated with twelve different gems, corres-
ponding to the twelve tribes of Israel.
598–605. Alchemists identified the philosopher’s stone with the urim on Aaron’s breastplate (Exod. 28:30);
this stone reputedly could cure all diseases, restore paradise, and transmute base metals to gold.
Alchemists would “binde” (solidify) mercury (“Volatil Hermes,” the winged god identified with that ele-
ment) and dissolve, refine, or transform substances (identified with the shape-shifting god “Proteus”) to
their “Native forme” in a “Limbec” (alembic, the distilling apparatus of alchemists).
607 Elixir. The liquid form of the philosopher’s stone.
609–12. The sun’s rays were thought to penetrate the earth and produce precious metals and gems.
615–17. Before the Fall (and the consequent tipping of the earth’s axis or change in the path of the sun, see
10.668–89) shadows would disappear daily at noon at the “Æquator,” where the sun’s beams reach their
zenith (“Culminate”).
But all Sun-shine, as when his Beams at Noon
Culminate from th’ Æquator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall, and the Aire,

No where so cleer, sharp’nd his visual ray
To objects distant farr, whereby he soon
Saw within kenn° a glorious Angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the Sun:
His back was turnd, but not his brightness hid;

Of beaming sunnie Raies, a golden tiar°
Circl’d his Head, nor less his Locks behind
Illustrious° on his Shoulders fledge° with wings
Lay waving round; on som great charge impoy’d
He seemd, or fixt in cogitation deep.

Glad was the Spirit impure as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandring flight
To Paradise the happie seat of Man,
His journies end and our beginning woe.
But first he casts° to change his proper shape,

Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling Cherube he appeers,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil’d Celestial, and to every Limb
Suitable grace diffus’d, so well he feignd;

Under a Coronet his flowing haire
In curles on either cheek plaid, wings he wore
Of many a colourd plume sprinkl’d with Gold,
His habit fit for speed succint° and held
Before his decent° steps a Silver wand.

He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turnd,
Admonisht by his ear, and strait° was known
Th’ Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seav’n
Who in Gods presence, neerest to his Throne

Stand ready at command, and are his Eyes

visual ray. The eye was thought to emit a beam onto the object perceived.
648–53 Uriel. In Hebrew “Light [or fire] of God,” he is the angel named first among the seven who stood
before God’s “Throne” in the Apocryphal 1 Enoch 22:1. Zech. 4:10 states that “those seven . . . are the
eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth,” but Uriel is not mentioned there or any-
where else in the canonical Bible. See also Rev. 1:4.
That run through all the Heav’ns, or down to th’ Earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O’re Sea and Land: him Satan thus accostes.

Uriel, for thou of those seav’n Spirits that stand
In sight of God’s high Throne; gloriously bright,
The first art wont° his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav’n to bring,
Where all his Sons° thy Embassie attend;
And here art likeliest by supream decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his Eye
To visit oft this new Creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favour,° him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordaind,
Hath brought me from the Quire’s of Cherubim
Alone thus wandring. Brightest Seraph tell
In which of all these shining Orbes hath Man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining Orbes his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration him behold
On whom the great Creator hath bestowd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces powrd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The Universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath drivn out his Rebell Foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happie Race of Men
To serve him better: wise are all his wayes.

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv’d;
For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisie, the onely evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav’n and Earth:
And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdoms Gate, and to simplicitie
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil’d

Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held
The sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav’n;
Who to the fraudulent Imposter foule
In his uprightness answer thus returnd.
Fair Angel, thy desire which tends to know

The works of God, thereby to glorifie
The great Work-Maister, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy Empyreal Mansion thus alone,

To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
Contented with report hear onely in heav’n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;

But what created mind can comprehend
Thir number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid thir causes deep.
I saw when at his Word the formless Mass,
This worlds material mould, came to a heap:

Confusion heard his voice, and wilde uproar
Stood rul’d, stood vast infinitude confin’d;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shon, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to thir several Quarters hasted then

The cumbrous Elements, Earth, Flood, Aire, Fire,
And this Ethereal quintessence of Heav’n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That rowled orbicular, and turnd to Starrs
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;

Each had his place appointed, each his course,
The rest in circuit walles this Universe.
Look downward on that Globe whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is Earth the seat of Man, that light

His day, which else as th’ other Hemisphere
Night would invade, but there the neighbouring Moon
(So call that opposite fair Starr) her aide

695–8. Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* locates virtue in the mean between excess and privation, but Uriel exempts the glorification of God from that dictum.

705–7. No creature, including the angels and even the Son, know the “secret purposes, the knowledge of which the Father has reserved to himself alone” (*Christian Doctrine* 1.5)


716. The fifth element (“quintessence,” ether) of which the incorruptible heavenly bodies were made.

721 The rest. The stars that form the sphere of the fixed stars, enclosing “this Universe.”
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav’n;
With borrowed light her countenance triform
Hence° fills and empties to enlighten th’ Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adams abode, those loftie shades his Bowre.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.
Thus said, he turnd, and Satan bowing low,
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from the Ecliptic,° sped with hop’d success,
Throws his steep flight in many an Aerie wheele,
Nor staid, till on Niphates top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

730 triform. Refers to the moon’s phases, but also to the ancient poets’ description of the moon’s triple nature:
Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, Hecate in hell.
742 Niphates. A mountain on the border between Armenia and Assyria.
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 situation is describ’d, overlaps 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 aloud, Then when the Dragon, put to second rout, Came furious down to be reveng’d on men,

Woe to the inhabitants on Earth! that now, 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


1–5. John of Patmos heard a cry warning of the “great dragon . . . called the Devil, and Satan” (Rev. 12:9) when he and his angels were put to “second rout” in a second war in heaven: “Woe to the inhabiteres of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down among you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. 12:12).

Satan, now first inflam’d with rage, came down,

10 The Tempter ere° th’ Accuser of man-kind,
To wreck° on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first Battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold,
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,

15 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
Now rowling,° boiles in his tumultuous brest,
And like a devillish Engine° back recoiles
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubl’d thoughts, and from the bottom stirr

20 The Hell within him, for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
One step no more then from himself can fly
By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair
That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie

25 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev’d look he fixes sad,
Sometimes towards Heav’n and the full-blazing Sun,

30 Which now sat high in his Meridian Towre:°
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 World; at whose sight all the Starrs

35 Hide thir diminisht heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;

40 Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down
Warring in Heav’n against Heav’ns matchless King:

20–3. See note to lines 75–8.
27–8 Eden. The name derives from the Hebrew word for "delight."
32–41. Milton’s nephew Edward Phillips wrote in his “Life of Milton” that these beginning lines of Satan’s soliloquy were written several years before the poem was begun, intended then as the beginning of a tragedy on the Fall. See Appendix A for Milton’s sketches for such a tragedy. Cf. Aeschylus’ tragedy, Prometheus Bound, 88–112.
32–113. Compare Satan’s soliloquy with Adam’s after the Fall (10.720–844).
37. See John 3:20: “Every one that doeth evil hateth the light.”
Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less then to afford him praise,
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov’d ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high

I disdain subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burthensome, still paying, still to ow;
Forgetful what from him I still receivd,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg’d; what burden then?
O had his powerful Destiny ordaind
Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
Then happie; no unbounded hope had rais’d
Ambition. Yet why not? som other Power
As great might have aspir’d, and me though mean
Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshak’n, from within

Or from without, to all temptations arm’d.
Hadst thou the same free Will and Power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heav’ns free Love dealt equally to all?
Be then his Love accurst, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay curs’d be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I flie
Infinite wrauth, and infinite despaire?

Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav’n.

43. Compare Satan’s claim at 5.857–61.
73 Me miserable! A Latinism, me miserum!
75–8. Contrast Satan’s boast at 1.254–5 and compare Marlowe’s Mephistopheles in Dr. Faustus 1.3.76, “Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.”
O then at last relent: is there no place

80 Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc’d
With other promises and other vaunts

Then to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th’ Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
How dearly I abide° that boast so vaine,
Under what torments inwardly I groane;
While they adore me on the Throne of Hell,

90 With Diadem° and Sceptre high advanc’d
crown
The lower still I fall, onely Suprem
In miserie; such joy Ambition findes.
But say I could repent and could obtaine
By Act of Grace my former state; how soon
Would higth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign’d submission swore: ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent° and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have peirc’d so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase deare
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as farr
From granting hee, as I from begging peace:

100 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead
Of us out-cast, exil’d, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this World.
So farwel Hope, and with Hope farwel Fear,
Farwel Remorse: all Good to me is lost;

Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least
110 Divided Empire with Heav’ns King I hold
By thee, and more then half perhaps will reigne;°
govern
As Man ere long, and this new World shall know.
Thrice chang’d with pale,° ire, envie and despair,
Which marrd his borrow’d visage, and betraid

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94 Act of Grace. The legal term for a formal pardon; unmerited favor of God.
110. See Isa. 5:20: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.”
Him counterfet, if any eye beheld.
For heav'nly mindes from such distempers foule
Are ever cleer. Whereof hee soon aware,

120 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calme,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practisd° falshood under saintly shew,
Deep malice to conceale, couch't° with revenge:
Yet not anough had practisd to deceive

125 Uriel once warnd; whose eye pursu'd him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount°
Saw him disfigur'd, more then could befall
Spirit of happie sort: his gestures fierce
He markd and mad demeanour, then alone,

130 As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes,
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, Crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound the champain head

135 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairie sides
With thicket overgrown, grottesque° and wilde,
Access deni'd; and over head up grew
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and Pine, and Firr, and branching Palm,

140 A Silvan Scene, and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woodie Theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher then thir tops
The verdurous wall of paradise up sprung:
Which to our general Sire gave prospect large

145 Into his neather Empire neighbouring round.
And higher then that Wall a circling row
Of goodliest Trees loaden with fairest Fruit,
Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue
Appeerd, with gay enameld° colours mixt:

118 distempers. Disorders arising from an imbalance of the four humors.
132–49. Paradise (paradisios, garden) is a delightful ("delicious") garden in a plateau ("champain head") on
top of a steep, densely wooded hill situated in the east of the land of Eden, between the upper Tigris and
133–6. A Freudian reading interprets the garden as an image of the female body, with its "mound" sugges-
tive of the mons veneris, as in Spenser’s Garden of Adonis (Faerie Queene 3.6.43).
140–2 Silvan Scene. Echoes "silvus scæna," Aeneid 1.164. As in a Greek amphitheater, the trees are set row
on row.
On which the Sun more glad impress’d his beams
Then in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,\(^\text{1}\) When God hath showrd the earth; so lovely seemd
That Lantskip:\(^\text{2}\) And of pure now purer aire
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires

Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales\(^\text{3}\) Fanning thir odoriferous\(^\text{4}\) wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile

Beyond the Cape of Hope,\(^\text{5}\) and now are past
Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow
Sabean Odours from the spicie shoare
Of Arabie the blest, with such delay
Well pleas’d they slack thir course, and many a League

Chear’d with the grateful\(^\text{6}\) smell old Ocean smiles.
So entertaing those odorous sweets the Fiend
Who came thir bane,\(^\text{7}\) though with them better pleas’d
Then Asmodeus with the fishie fume,
That drove him, though enamourd, from the Spouse

Of Tobits Son, and with a vengeance\(^\text{8}\) sent
From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.
Now to th’ ascent of that steep savage\(^\text{9}\) Hill
Satan had journied on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwin’d,

As one continu’d brake,\(^\text{10}\) the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplext\(^\text{11}\)
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

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\(^1\) See Orlando Furioso 34.51, Ariosto’s Paradise, where “from flowers, fruits and grass the breezes stole / The varied perfumes.”

\(^2\) Mozambic. Mozambique, off the southeast coast of Africa, noted for its fertility.

\(^3\) Saba, the biblical Sheba (1 Kgs 10:1–13).

\(^4\) Arabia Felix, modern Yemen (incorporating Sheba, above), and noted for the “sweet odors of myrrh and other odoriferous plants” that waft out to sea (Diodorus Siculus, Library of History 3.44).

\(^5\) old Ocean. The Titan Oceanus.

\(^6\) The Apocryphal book of Tobit (chapters 6–8) tells of Tobias, “Tobits Son,” who married Sara in “Media” and avoided the fate of her previous seven husbands (killed on their wedding night by her demon lover “Asmodeus”) by following the instructions of the angel Raphael to burn the heart and liver of a fish, producing a fishy smell (“fishie fume”) to drive him off. Asmodeus then fled to Egypt where Raphael “bound” him.
Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt,
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
In hurld°'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,
Pens of woven reeds

Cross-barrd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o're the tiles;
So clomb this first grand Thief into Gods Fould:
So since into his Church lewd Hirelings climbe.
Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,

The middle Tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a Cormorant; yet not true Life
Thereby regained, but sat devising Death
To them who liv'd; nor on the vertue° thought
Of that life-giving Plant, but only us'd

For prospect,° what well us'd had bin the pledge
Of 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
To all delight of human sense expos'd
In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,
A Heaven on Earth, for blissful Paradise
Of God the Garden was, by him in the East

Of Eden planted; Eden stretchd her Line
From Auran Eastward to the Royal Towrs

193 lewd Hirelings. Base men interested only in money. Milton would have clergy support themselves, doing away with tithes or state support. See his Considerations touching the Likeliest means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church (1659), the condemnation of “hireling wolves” in his sonnet “To the Lord Cromwell,” and “Lycidas,” 113–21.

194 Tree of Life. Cf. Gen. 2:9: “And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

209–10. Cf. Gen. 2:8: “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.”

211 Auran. The province of Haran or Hauran on the eastern border of Israel.
Of Great Seleucia, built by Grecian Kings,
Or where the Sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soile

His farr more pleasant Garden God ordaind;
Out of the fertil ground he caus’d to grow
All Trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
High eminent, blooming Ambrosial° Fruit

Of vegetable Gold; and next to Life
Our Death the Tree of knowledge grew fast by,
Knowledge of Good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a River large,
Nor chang’d his course, but through the shaggie hill

Pass’d underneath ingulf’d, for God had thrown
That Mountain as his Garden mould° high rais’d
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous Earth with kindly° thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh Fountain, and with many a rill

Waterd the Garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the neather Flood,
Which from his darksom passage now appeers,
And now divided into four main Streams,
Runs divers, wandring many a famous Realme

And Country whereof here needs no account,
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that Saphire Fount the crisped° Brooks,
Rowling on Orient° Pearl and sands of Gold,
With mazie error under pendant shades

Ran Nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flours worthy of Paradise which not nice° Art
In Beds and curious Knots, but Nature boon

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212–14 Great Seleucia. A powerful city on the Tigris, south of Baghdad, built by Seleucus Nicator, Alexander the Great’s general (“Grecian Kings”) as seat of government for his Syrian empire. Called “Great” to distinguish it from other cities with the same name, it marks the eastern boundary of Eden. Telassar. The ancient name of Seleucia, mentioned in the Old Testament twice as a place where the Assyrians destroyed “the Children of Eden” (2 Kgs 19:12 and Isa. 37:12).

221–2. See Christian Doctrine 1.10: “It was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil from the event, for since it was tasted, not only do we know evil, but we do not even know good except through evil.”

223 a River large. The Tigris, identified at 9.71.

229–35. Cf. Gen. 2:10: “a river went out of Eden to water the garden: and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.”

239 mazie error. Meandering as in a maze (“error” here keeps its Latin sense, errare, wandering).

242 curious Knots. Flower beds laid out in intricate regular designs, associated with Tudor garden art. boon. Bountiful.
Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine,
Both where the morning Sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc’ct shade
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 burnish with Golden Rinde
Hung amiable, Fables true,
If true, 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,
Flours of all hue, and without Thorn the Rose:
Another side, umbrageous Grots and Caves
Of coole recess, o’re which the mantling vine
Layes forth her purple Grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,
That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd,
Her chrystal mirror holds, unite thir streams.
The Birds thir quire apply; aires, vernal aires,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Led on th’ Eternal Spring. Not that faire field
Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flours
Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis
Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th’ inspir’d
Castalian Spring, might with this Paradise

245 Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine,
Both where the morning Sun first warmly smote
245 The open field, and where the unpierc’t shade
250 Hung amiable, Fables true,

247 seat. Like a country estate, with a variety of prospects (“various view”).
250–1 Hesperian Fables. By contrast to the feigned golden apples of the Hesperides (fabled paradisal islands in the Western Ocean) Eden has “true” golden apples.
266–7 Universal Pan. The wood-god “Pan” was taken as a symbol of “Universal” nature since his name in Greek means “all.”
268–72 Enna. A lovely meadow in Sicily from which “Proserpin” was kidnapped by “gloomie Dis” (Pluto); her mother “Ceres” sought her throughout the world.
272–5 Grove / Of Daphne. A laurel grove on the river “Orontes” in Syria, whose “inspir’d / Castalian Spring” was named for the Muses’ fountain near Parnassus and was said to bestow prophetic powers.
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian Ile
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,
Mount Amara, though this by som suppos'd
True Paradise under the Ethiop Line
By Nilus° head, enclosd with shining Rock,
A whole days journy high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian Garden,° where the Fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living Creatures new to sight and strange:
Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native Honour clad
In naked Majestie seemd Lords of all,
And worthie seemd, for in thir looks Divine
The image of thir glorious Maker shon,
Truth, wisdome, Sanctitude severe° and pure,
Severe but in true filial freedom plac't;
Whence true autoritie in men; though both
Not equal, as thir sex not equal seemd;
For contemplation hee and valour formd,
For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,
Hee for God only, shee for God in him:
His fair large Front° and Eye sublime° declar'd
Absolute rule; and Hyacinthin Locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
Shee as a vail down to the slender waste

275–9 Nyseian Ile. Nysa in the river "Triton" in Tunisia was where "Ammon," an Egyptian god, identified with Jupiter ("Jove") and with Noah's son "Cham" (Ham) hid the nymph "Amalthea" and his child by her, "Bacchus," from his wife "Rhea."

280–4 Mount Amara. At the source of the Nile ("Nilus head") at the Equator ("Ethiop Line"), in splendid palaces amid paradisal gardens, the "Abassin" (Abyssinian) kings kept their sons ("issue") to avoid sedition. Peter Heylyn, in his Cosmographie (1652), said it was "a dayes journey high," and that "some have taken (but mistaken) it for the place of Paradise" (4.64).

301 Hyacinthin. Curled. Cf. Odysseus' hair that "hung down like hyacinthine petals" shining like "gold on silver" (Odyssey 6.231–2).

302–8. See 1 Cor. 11:14–15: "if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him . . . But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." The AV glosses "covering" to indicate that "she is under the power of her husband." Royalists were often derided by Puritans for their long hair. Compare Eve's "Disheveld" and "wanton" ringlets to nature in Eden (4.236–43).
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Disheveld, but in wanton\(^\circ\) ringlets wav’d
As the Vine curles her tendrils, which impli’d
Subjection, but requir’d with gentle sway,\(^\circ\)
And by her yielded, by him best receivd,

Yielded with coy\(^\circ\) submission, modest pride,
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious\(^\circ\) parts were then conceald,
Then was not guiltie shame, dishonest\(^\circ\) shame
Of natures works, honor dishonorable,

Sin-bred, how have ye troubl’d all mankind
With shews instead, meer shews of seeming pure,
And banisht from mans life his happiest life,
Simplicitie and spotless innocence.
So passd they naked on, nor shund the sight

Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they passd, the lovliest pair
That ever since in loves imbraces met,
Adam the goodliest\(^\circ\) man of men since borne
His Sons, the fairest of her Daughters Eve.

Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh Fountain side
They sat them down, and after no more toil
Of thir sweet Gardning labour then suffic’d
To recommend coole Zephyr, and made ease

More easie, wholsom thirst and appetite
More grateful, to thir Supper Fruits they fell,
Nectarine\(^\circ\) Fruits which the compliant boughes
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
On the soft downie Bank damaskt\(^\circ\) with flours:

The savourie pulp they chew, and in the rinde
Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose,\(^\circ\) nor endearing smiles
Wanted,\(^\circ\) nor youthful dalliance as beseems
Fair couple, linkt in happie nuptial League,

Alone as they. About them frisking playd
All Beasts of th’ Earth, since wilde, and of all chase\(^\circ\)
In Wood or Wilderness, Forrest or Den;
Sporting the Lion rampd,\(^\circ\) and in his paw

329 Zephyr. God of the west wind, hence, to make a cool breeze welcome.
Dandl’d the Kid; Bears, Tygers, Ounces, Pards lynxes / leopards

Gambold before them, th’ unwieldy Elephant
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
Couched, and now fild with pasture gazing sat,
Or Bedward ruminating for the Sun
Declin’d was hasting now with prone carreer To th’ Ocean Iles, and in th’ ascending Scale

Of Heav’n the Starrs that usher Evening rose:
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length faild speech recoverd sad.
O Hell! what doe mine eyes with grief behold,
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc’t
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not Spirits, yet to heav’nly Spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them Divine resemblance, and such grace

The hand that formd them on thir shape hath pour’d.
Ah gentle pair, yee little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;

Happie, but for so happie ill secur’d
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heav’n
Ill fenc’t for Heav’n to keep out such a foe
As now is enterd; yet no purpos’d foe
To you whom I could pittie thus forlorne

Though I unpittied: League with you I seek,
And mutual amitie so streight, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such

344. See Isa. 11:6: “The leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together.”
348 Insinuating moving sinuously, twisting. Gordian twine. cords as convoluted as the Gordian knot which Alexander the Great had to cut with his sword.
361–5. See Ps. 8:5: “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”
Accept your Makers work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest Gates,
And send forth all her Kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits,° to receive

Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for° him who wrongd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I doe, yet public reason just,

Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg’d,
By conquering this new World, compels me now
To do what else though damnd I should abhorre.
So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,
The Tyrants plea, excus’d his devilish deeds.

Then from his loftie stand on that high Tree
Down he alights among the sportful Herd
Of those fourfooted kindes, himself now one,
Now other, as thir shape servd best his end
Neerer to view his prey, and unespi’d

To mark what of thir state he more might learn
By word or action markt: about them round
A Lion now he stalkes with fierie glare,
Then as a Tyger, who by chance hath spi’d
In some Purlieu° two gentle Fawnes at play,

Strait couches close, then rising changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
Whence rushing he might surest 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.

Sole° partner and sole° part of all these joyes,
Dearer thy self then all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample World
Be infinitely good, and of his good

Kings. Cf. Isaiah’s prophecy of the fall of Babylon (Isa. 14:9) promising to stir up to “meet thee at thy coming . . . all the chief ones of the earth . . . all the kings of the nations.” The reference suggests that Hell is (and will be) populated by kings. Some of the fallen angels bear monarchical titles: Princedoms, Dominations, Thrones, etc.

389–94. Satan is cast as a Machiavellian politician and tyrant, appealing to reason of state ("public reason"), "Honour and Empire," and "necessitie, / The Tyrants plea" to justify evil deeds.

402–8. When Satan inhabits them, the future predators foreshadow their natures after the Fall. **couchant.** Lying close to the ground, ready to pounce.
As liberal and free as infinite,
That rais’d us from the dust and plac’t us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can performe
Aught whereof hee hath need, hee who requires
From us no other service then to keep
This one, this easie charge, of all the Trees
In Paradise that 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,
Som dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowst
God hath pronounc’t it death to taste that Tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signes of power and rule
Conferr’d upon us, and Dominion giv’n
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:
But let us ever praise him, and extoll
His bountie, following our delightful task
To prune these growing Plants, and tend these Flours,
Which were it toilsom, yet with thee were sweet.
To whom thus Eve repli’d. O thou for whom
And from whom I was formd flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end,° my Guide
And Head, what thou hast said is just and right.
For wee to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks, I chiefly who enjoy
So farr the happier Lot, enjoying thee
Praeminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thy self canst no where find.

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423–7. See Gen. 2:16–17: “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”
430–2. See Gen. 1:26: “And God said, Let us make man in our image . . . and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle . . . , and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”
443 Head. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:3: “the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”
447 by so much odds. By such a large difference.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak’t, and found my self repos’d
Under a shade of founs, 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 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
Mine eyes till now, and pin’d with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow staies
Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
Whose image thou art, him thou 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,
But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
Till I espi’d thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,
Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,
Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd,
Thou following cryd’st aloud, Return 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

449–91. Compare Adam’s account of his creation and marriage to Eve (8.250–520).
456–76. Eve’s experience parallels, with significant differences, the story of Narcissus, who fell in love with his own reflection and pined away; he was then transformed into the flower bearing his name (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.402–510).
475 **Mother of human Race.** Cf. Gen. 3:20, “Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.”
Substantial Life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual° solace dear;
Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half: with that thy gentle hand
Seisd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excelld by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
So spake our general Mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreprov’d,
And meek surrender, half imbracing leand
On our first Father, half her swelling Breast
Naked met his under the flowing Gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
Both of her Beauty and submissive Charms
Smil’d with superior Love, as Jupiter

On Juno smiles, when he impregns° the Clouds
That shed May Flowers; and press’d her Matron lip
With kisses pure: aside the Devil turnd
For envie, yet with jealous leer maligne
Ey’d them askance, and to himself thus plaind.°
Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
Imparadis’t in one anothers arms
The happier Eden, shall enjoy thril
Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still° unfulfill’d with pain of longing pines;
Yet let me not forget what I have gain’d
From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call’d,
Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd’n?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord
Envie° them that? can it be sin to know,
Can it be death? and do they onely stand
By Ignorance, is that thir happie state,
The proof of thir obedience and thir faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Thir ruine! Hence I will excite thir minds

499–501. In Iliad 14.346–51 Zeus ("Jupiter"), god of the sky, and Hera ("Juno"), goddess of the air, make love
under a cloud; their union was sometimes allegorized as a union of aether and air. Milton’s Jupiter impregnates
the clouds with the seeds of flowers that grow after rain.
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with designe
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This Garden, and no corner leave unspi’d;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wandring Spirit of Heav’n, by Fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir’d, from him to draw
What further would be learnt. Live while ye may,
Yet happie pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.
So saying, his proud step he scornful turn’d,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o’re hill, o’re dale his roam
Mean while in utmost Longitude, where Heav’n
With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting Sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern Gate of Paradise
Leveld his eeven Rayes: it was a Rock
Of Alablaster, pil’d up to the Clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from Earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggie cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climbe.
Betwixt these rockie Pillars Gabriel sat
Chief of th’ Angelic Guards, awaiting night;
About him exercis’d Heroic Games
Th’ unarmed Youth of Heav’n, but nigh at hand
Celestial Armourie, Shields, Helmes, and Speares,
Hung high with Diamond flaming, and with Gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the Eeven
On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting Starr
In Autumn thwart’s the night, when vapors fir’d
Impress the Air, and shews the Mariner
From what point of his Compass to beware

544–5 Alablaster. White, translucent marble veined with colors.
557–61 thwart’s. Passes over, obstructs. vapors fir’d. Combustible exhalations from the earth, thought to cause shooting stars, which would foretell storms, “Impetuous winds.”
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.

Gabriel, to thee thy course by Lot hath giv’n
Charge and strict watch that to this happie place
No evil thing approach or enter in;
This day at hight of Noon came to my Spheare

A Spirit, zealous, as he seem’d, to know
More of th’ Almighty works, and chiefly Man
Gods latest Image: I describ’d° his way
Bent all on speed, and markt his Aerie Gate;°
But in the Mount that lies from Eden North,

Where he first lighted, soon discernd his looks
Alien from Heav’n, with passions foul obscur’d:
Mine eye pursu’d him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him; one of the banisht crew
I fear, hath ventur’d from the deep, to raise

New troubles; him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged Warriour thus returnd:
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfet sight,
Amid the Suns bright circle where thou sitst,
See farr and wide: in at this Gate none pass

The vigilance° here plac’t, but such as come
Well known from Heav’n; and since Meridian hour°
No Creature thence: if Spirit of other sort,
So minded, have oreleapt these earthie bounds
On purpose, hard thou knowst it to exclude

Spiritual substance with corporeal barr.
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tellst, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis’d hee, and Uriel to his charge

Returnd on that bright beam, whose point now rais’d
Bore him slope downward to the Sun now fall’n
Beneath th’ Azores; whither the prime Orb,°
Incredible how swift, had thither rowl’d°
Diurnal,° or this less volubil° Earth

By shorter flight to th’ East, had left him there
Arraying with reflected Purple and Gold
The Clouds that on his Western Throne attend:
Now came still Evning on, and Twilight gray

592–5. Here and elsewhere Milton describes the cosmos in both Ptolemaic and Copernican terms.
Had in her sober Liverie all things clad;
Silence accompanied, for Beast and Bird,
They to thir grassie Couch, these to thir Nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful Nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleas’d: now glow’d the Firmament
With living Saphirs: Hesperus that led
The starrie Host, rode brightest, till the Moon
Rising in clouded Majestie, at length
Apparent Queen unvaild her peerless light,
And o’er the dark her Silver Mantle threw.
When Adam thus to Eve: Fair Consort, th’ hour
Of night, and all things now retir’d to rest
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night to men
Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
Our eye-lids; other Creatures all day long
Rove idle unimploid, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his Dignitie,
And the regard of Heav’n on all his waies;
While other Animals unactive range,
And of thir doings God takes no account.
To morrow ere fresh Morning streak the East
With first approach of light, we must be ris’n,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flourie Arbors, yonder Allies green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands then ours to lop thir wanton growth:
Those Blossoms also, and those dropping Gumms,
That lie bestrowne unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Mean while, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve with perfet beauty adornd.
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst
Unargu’d I obey; so God ordains,
God is thy Law, thou mine: to know no more
Is womans happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time,
All seasons and thir change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun
When first on this delightful Land he spreads
His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flour,
Glistring with dew; fragrant the fertil earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evning milde, then silent Night
With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,
And these the Gemms of Heav’n, her starrie train:

But neither breath of Morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, floure,
Glistring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful Evning mild, nor silent Night
With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon,
Or glittering Starr-light without thee is sweet.
But wherfore all night long shine these, for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general Ancestor repli’d.

Daughter of God and Man, accomplisht Eve,
those have thir course to finish, round the Earth,
By morrow Evning, and from Land to Land
In order, though to Nations yet unborn,
Ministring light prepar’d, they set and rise;

Least total darkness should by Night regaine
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In Nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heate
Of various influence foment and warme,

Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Thir stellar vertue on all kinds that grow
On Earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the Suns more potent Ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,

Shine not in vain, nor think, though men were none,
That heav’n would want spectators, God want praise;

641–56. This embedded love lyric, replete with striking rhetorical figures of circularity and repetition, displays Eve’s poetic talents. It is constructed as an epanalepsis, a figure which begins and ends with the same word (“Sweet / sweet”) after intervening matter.
670–3 Temper. Heal or refresh by restoring the proper balance of elements or humors. The stars were thought to have their own occult influence, and also to moderate that of the sun.
Millions of spiritual Creatures walk the Earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: how often from the steep
Of echoing Hill or Thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note
Singing thir great Creator: oft in bands

While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With Heav’nly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joint, thir songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.

Thus talking hand in hand alone they pass’d
On to thir blissful Bower; it was a place
Chos’n by the sovran Planter, when he fram’d
All things to mans delightful use; the roofe
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and Mirtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub
Fenc’d up the verdant wall; each beauteous flour,
Iris all hues, Roses, and Gessamin°
Rear’d high thir flourisht° heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the Violet,
Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay
Broiderd the ground, more colour’d then with stone
Of costliest Emblem:° other Creature here

Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With Flowers, Garlands, and sweet-smelling Herbs
Espoused Eve deckt first her Nuptial Bed,
And heav’nly Quires the Hymenæan sung,

Divide the night. Mark the watches of the night; also, perform musical divisions, elaborate melodic passages.

sovran Planter. See Gen. 2:8: “God planted a garden eastward in Eden.”

pan or Silvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With Flowers, Garlands, and sweet-smelling Herbs

Hymenæan. Wedding song. Hymen was the classical god of marriage.
What day the genial° Angel to our Sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorn’d,
More lovely then Pandora, whom the Gods
Endow’d with all thir gifts, and O too like
In sad event,° when to the unwiser Son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar’d
Mankind with her faire looks, to be aveng’d
On him who had stole Jove’s authentic° fire.

Thus at thir shadie Lodge arriv’d, both stood,
Both turnd, and under op’n Skie ador’d
The God that made both Skie, Air, Earth and Heav’n
Which they beheld, the Moons resplendent Globe
And starrie Pole:° Thou also mad’st the Night,

Maker Omnipotent, and thou the Day,
Which we in our appointed work imployd
Have finisht happie in our mutual help
And mutual love, the Crown of all our bliss
Ordain’d by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis’d from us two a Race
To fill the Earth, who shall with us extoll
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,

And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other Rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into thir inmost bowre
Handed° they went; and eas’d° the putting off

These troublesom disguises which wee wear,
Strait side by side were laid, nor turnd I weene°
Adam from his fair Spouse, nor Eve the Rites
Mysterious° of connubial Love refus’d:

714–19 Pandora. Pandora (Greek, “all gifts”) was an artificial woman, molded of clay, bestowed by the gods on Epimetheus (“afterthought”), brother of Prometheus (“forethought”), who angered the gods by stealing Jove’s fire for man. She brought a box that foolish Epimetheus (“the unwiser Son / Of Japhet”) opened, releasing all the ills of the human race, leaving only hope trapped inside. The brothers were sons of the Titan Iapetos, who was often identified with Japhet, the third son of Noah. The Eve–Pandora parallel was often noted.

724–5. See Ps. 74:16: “The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.”

736–8 Rites. Like many Puritans, Milton objected to set forms of prayer, so Adam and Eve pray spontaneously, therefore sincerely, though paradoxically they pray together, “unanimous.”
Whatever Hypocrites austerely talk
Of puritie and place and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to som, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase, who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and Man?

Haile wedded Love, mysterious Law, true source
Of human ofspring, sole proprietie,°
only exclusive possession
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driv’n from men
Among the bestial herds to raunge, by thee

Founded in Reason, Loyal, Just, and Pure,
Relations dear, and all the Charities°
loves, affections
Of Father, Son, and Brother first were known.
Farr be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,

Perpetual Fountain of Domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefil’d and chaste pronounc’t,
Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us’d.
Here Love his golden shafts imploies, here lights
His constant Lamp, and waves his purple wings,

Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of Harlots, loveless, joyless, unindeard,°
lacking affection
Casual fruition, nor in Court Amours
Mixt Dance, or wanton Mask, or Midnight Bal,
Or Serenate, which the starv’d Lover sings

To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These lulld by Nightingales imbraceing slept,

744—9. 1 Tim. 4:1–3, applied by Protestants to the Roman Church, warns that “in the latter times some shall depart from the faith . . . Forbidding to marry.” Cf. 1 Cor. 7:9, “But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn,” and Gen. 1:28: “And God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”

750–75. An embedded epithalamium (wedding song originally sung outside the bridal chamber). The Bard takes on the role of celebrator singing outside Adam and Eve’s bower as they prepare for sex and sleep, though this couple’s wedding night took place at some earlier time.


762 Saints and Patriarchs. Many of them were married.

763. The “golden shafts” (arrows) of Cupid (Love) were said to produce true love; his lead-tipped arrows, hate.

768 Mixt Dance. Men and women dancing together. wanton Mask. The ostentatious entertainments of the Stuart court.

769–70 Serenate. Milton imagines a Petrarchan serenade (night song) by a lover perishing from the cold (“starv’d”) his “proud” lady exudes by her refusals of love (a typical Petrarchan conceit).
And on thir naked limbs the flourie roof
Showrd Roses, which the Morn repair'd.° Sleep on
Blest pair; and O yet happiest if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.
Now had night measur'd with her shaddowie Cone
Half way up Hill this vast Sublunar Vault,
And from thir Ivorie Port the Cherubim
Forth issuing at th' accustomd hour stood armd
To thir night watches in warlike Parade,
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.
Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast° the South
With strictest watch; these other wheel° the North,
Our circuit meets full West. As flame they part
Half wheeling to the Shield,° half to the Spear.°
From these, two strong and suttle Spirits he calld
That neer him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
Ithuriel and Zephon, with wingd speed
Search through this Garden, leave unsearcht no nook,
But chiefly where those two fair Creatures Lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harme.
This Evenning from the Sun's decline arriv'd
Who° tells of som infernal Spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
The barrs of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.
So saying, on he led his radiant Files,
Daz'ling the Moon; these to the Bower direct
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of Eve;
Assaying by his Devilish art to reach
The Organs of her Fancie, and with them forge
Illusions as he list,° Phantasms and Dreams,
Or if, inspiring° venom, he might taint

776–7. The conical shadow cast by the earth has moved "Half way up Hill," i.e., halfway between the horizon and the zenith, so it is 9 p.m.
778 Ivorie Port. The source of false dreams in Homer (Odyssey 6.562–5), dreams whose message is never accomplished.
782 Uzziel. Hebrew, "Strength of God." Cabbalistic tradition identified him as one of the seven angels before God's throne.
802 Organs. Instruments. Fancie. The faculty that forms mental images.
Th’ animal Spirits that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from Rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemperd, discontented thoughts,
Vaine hopes, vaine aimes, inordinate desires
Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.

Ithuriel with his Spear
Touch’d lightly; for no falshood can endure
Touch of Celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
Discoverd and surpriz’d. As when a spark

Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder, laid
Fit for the Tun som Magazin to store
Against a rumord Warr, the Smuttie graine
With sudden blaze diffus’d, inflames the Aire:
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.

Back stept those two fair Angels half amaz’d
So sudden to behold the grieslie King;
Yet thus, unmovd with fear, accost him soon.
Which of those rebell Spirits adjudg’d to Hell
Com’st thou, escap’d thy prison, and transform’d,

Why satst thou like an enemie in waite
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
Know ye not then said Satan, fill’d with scorn,
Know ye not mee? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soare;

Not to know mee argues your selves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.

Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminisht brightness, to be known
As when thou stoodst in Heav’n upright and pure;
That Glorie then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee, and thou resembl’st now

Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foule.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account

animal Spirits. The highest of the three kinds of fine vapors produced in the human body: ascending from the blood to the brain, they convey sense data from past experiences, and issue through nerves to impart motion to the body.

Celestial temper. Ithuriel’s spear “tempered” (prepared) in celestial ether.
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.
So spake the Cherube, and his grave rebuke

Severe in youthful beautie, added grace
Invincible: abasht the Devil stood,
And felt how awful° goodness is, and saw
Vertue in her shape how lovly, saw, and pin’d°
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ’d

His lustre visibly impar’d; yet seem’d
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the Sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glorie will be wonn,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,

Will save us trial what the least can doe
Single° against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend repli’d not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud Steed reind, went hautie on,
Chaumping his iron curb: to strive or flie

He held it vain; awe from above had quell’d
His heart, not else dismai’d. Now drew they nigh
The western Point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron joind
Awaiting next command. To whom thir Chief

Gabriel from the Front thus call’d aloud.

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimps discerne
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,°
And with them comes a third of Regal port,°

But faded splendor wan; who by his gate
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.°

He scarce had ended, when those two approach’d
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch’t.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.

Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib’d
To thy transgressions, and disturb’d the charge°

Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right

half-rounding. Completing the circle of the garden, half having swung left, half right.
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Imploi’d it seems to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.

*Gabriel*, thou hadst in Heav’n th’ esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question askt
Puts me in doubt. Lives ther who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,

Though thither doom’d? Thou wouldst thy self, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompence
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;

To thee no reason; who knowst only good,
But evil hast not tri’d: and wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer barr
His Iron Gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was askt.

The rest is true, they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harme.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov’d,
Disdainfully half smiling thus repli’d.
O loss of one in Heav’n to judge of wise,

Since Satan fell, whom follie overthrow,
And now returns him from his prison scap’t,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicenc’t from his bounds in Hell prescrib’d;

So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to scape his punishment.

So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrauth,
Which thou incurrst by flying, meet thy flight
Seavenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,

Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok’t.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled, or thou then they

896 object. Put forward as an objection.
904–5 O loss. Irony, i.e., O what a loss to Heaven to lose such a judge of wisdom as Satan, whose folly led to his downfall.
920 Less hardie to endure? courageous Chief,
    The first in flight from pain, had’st thou alleg’d
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
    To which the Fiend thus answerd frowning stern.
925 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
    Insulting Angel, well thou knowst I stood°
Thy fiercest, when in Battel to thy aide
The blasting volied Thunder made all speed
And seconded thy else not dreaded Spear.
930 But still thy words at random,° as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behooves
From° hard assaies° and ill successes past
A faithful Leader, not to hazard all
Through wayes of danger by himself untri’d,
935 I therefore, I alone first undertook
    To wing the desolate Abyss, and spie
This new created World, whereof in Hell
Fame° is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Powers
940 To settle here on Earth, or in mid Aire;
    Though for possession put° to try once more
What thou and thy gay° Legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve thir Lord
High up in Heav’n, with songs to hymne his Throne,
945 And practis’d distances to cringe, not fight.
    To whom the warriour Angel, soon repli’d.
To say and strait unsay, pretending first
Wise to flie pain, professing next the Spie,
Argues no Leader but a lyar trac’t,°
950 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
    O sacred name of faithfulness profan’d!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Armie of Fiends, fit body to fit head;
Was this your discipline and faith ingag’d,
955 Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to th’ acknowledg’d Power supream?
And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem

940 mid Aire. Satan will become “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2).
945 cringe. Satan contemptuously parallels the angels’ courtly deference, keeping various “distances” before God’s throne, with keeping a safe distance from battle.
Patron° of liberty, who more then thou advocate
Once fawn’d, and cring’d, and servilly ador’d
Heav’ns awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope
To dispossess him, and thy self to reigne?
But mark what I arreede° thee now, avant;° advise / be gone
Flie thither whence thou fledst: if from this houre
Within these hallowd limits thou appeer,

Back to th’ infernal pit I drag thee chaind,
And Seale thee so, as henceforth not to scorne
The facil° gates of hell too slightly barrd.
So threatn’d hee, but Satan to no threats
gave heed, but waxing° more in rage repli’d.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chaines,
Proud limitarie Cherube, but ere then
Farr heavier load thy self expect to feel
From my prevailing arme, though Heavens King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy Compeers,
Us’d to the yoak, draw’st his triumphant wheels
In progress° through the rode of Heav’n Star-pav’d.

While thus he spake, th’ Angelic Squadron bright
crescent formation
Thir Phalanx, and began to hemm him round
With ported Spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
anxious
Her bearded Grove of ears, which way the wind
Swayes them; the careful° Plowman doubting stands

Least on the threshing floore his hopeful sheaves
called to arms
Collecting all his might dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov’d:
His stature reacht the Skie, and on his Crest
Sat horror Plum’d; nor wanted in his graspe

What seemd both Spear and Shield: now dreadful deeds
Might have ensu’d, nor onely Paradise
In this commotion, but the Starrie Cope° vault

958–60. See 5.617, 660–71, for Satan’s behavior on the day of the Son’s exaltation.
971 limitarie. Frontier guard, also one of limited authority.
980 ported Spears. Held slantways in front.
981 Ceres. Roman goddess of agriculture, here a metonymy for grain.
unremov’d. immovable.
Of Heav’n perhaps, or all the Elements
At least had gon to rack, disturbd and torne
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
Th’ Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
Hung forth in Heav’n his golden Scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion signe,
Wherein all things created first he weighd,
The pendulous round Earth with balanc’t Aire
In counterpoise, now ponder’s all events,
Battels and Realms: in these he put two weights
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kickt the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know’st mine,
Neither our own but giv’n; what follie then
To boast what Arms can doe, since thine no more
Then Heav’n permits, nor mine, though doubld now
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
And read thy Lot in yon celestial Sign
Where thou art weigh’d, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend lookt up and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

The End of the Fourth Book.

997–8 golden Scales. The constellation Libra (the Scales) is between Virgo (identified with “Astrea,” goddess of Justice, who fled the earth at the end of the Golden Age) and Scorpio.

1002–3. In several classical epic similes the fates of opposing heroes are weighed in scales by the gods: cf. Iliad 8.69–72, where the destiny of the Greeks is weighed against that of the Trojans, and Virgil, Aeneid 12.725–7, where Aeneas’ fate is weighed against that of Turnus. See also Isa. 40:12: God “hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.”

1004 kickt the beam. i.e., of the scales: the battle desired by Satan proved lighter.

1012. See Dan. 5:27, God’s warning to King Belshazzar, “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”
BOOK 5
THE ARGUMENT

Morning approach’t, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: They come forth to thir day labours: Thir Morning Hymn at the Door of thir Bower. God to render Man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand; who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance describ’d, his coming discern’d by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his Bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; thir discourse at Table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates at Adams request who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his Legions after him to the parts of the North, and there incited them to rebel with him, perswading all but only Abdiel a Seraph, who in Argument diswades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now Morn her rosie steps in th’ Eastern Clime
Advancing, sow’d the earth with Orient° Pearle,
When Adam wak’t, so customd, for his sleep
Was Aerie light from pure digestion bred,
And temperat vapors bland,° which th’ only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora’s fan,
Lightly dispers’d, and the shrill Matin° Song
Of Birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwak’nd Eve
With Tresses discompos’d, and glowing Cheek,
As through unquiet rest: he on his side
Leaning half-rais’d, with looks of cordial° Love
Hung over her enamour’d, and beheld
Beautie, which whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar Graces;° then with voice
Milde, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,

13 diswades. To advise or exhort (a person) against.
6. Rustling leaves and foaming streams (“fuming rills”) are stirred by the morning breezes (“fan”) of “Aurora,” goddess of the dawn.
16 Zephyrus. God of the west wind. Flora. Goddess of flowers. They were consorts in Ovid, Fasti 5.197–207.
Cf. Botticelli, Primavera.
Her hand soft touching, whisperd thus. Awake
My fairest, my espous’d, my latest found,
Heav’ns last best gift, my ever new delight,

20 Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us, we lose the prime,<sup>°</sup> to mark how spring
Our tended Plants, how blows<sup>°</sup> the Citron Grove,
What drops the Myrrhe, and what the balmie Reed,<sup>°</sup>
How Nature paints her colours, how the Bee

Sits on the Bloom extracting liquid sweet.

Such whispering wak’d her, but with startl’d eye
On Adam, whom imbracing, thus she spake.

O Sole<sup>°</sup> in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My Glorie, my Perfection, glad I see

Thy face, and Morn return’d, for I this Night,
Such night till this I never pass’d, have dream’d,
If dream’d, not as I oft am wont,<sup>°</sup> of thee,
Works of day pass’t, or morrows next designe,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind

Knew never till this irksom night; methought
Close at mine ear one call’d me forth to walk
With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,
Why sleepst thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields

To the night-warbling Bird,<sup>°</sup> that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labor’d song; now reignes
Full Orb’d the Moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowie sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard; Heav’n wakes with all his eyes,<sup>°</sup>
Natures desire,

In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still<sup>°</sup> to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;

Whom to behold but thee, Natures desire,
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment

And on, methought, alone I pass’d through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the Tree
Of interdicted Knowledge: fair it seem’d,

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17–25. Adam’s morning love song (aubade) works variations on Song of Solomon 2:10–12: “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away... The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come.” Compare Satan’s serenade at 5.38–47.

41 <sup>love-labor’d</sup>. Produced by love and for love.

Much fairer to my Fancie then by day:
And as I wondering lookt, beside it stood

55 One shap’d and wing’d like one of those from Heav’n
By us oft seen; his dewie locks distill’d
Ambrosia;° on that Tree he also gaz’d;
And O fair Plant, said he, with fruit surcharg’d,°
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,

Nor God,° nor Man; is Knowledge so despis’d?
Or envie, or what reserve° forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer’d good, why else set here?
This said he paus’d not, but with ventrous Arme

65 He pluckt, he tasted; mee damp horror chil’d
At such bold words vouch’t° with a deed so bold:
But he thus overjoy’d, O Fruit Divine,
Sweet of thy self, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidd’n here, it seems, as onely fit

70 For God’s, yet able to make Gods of Men:
And why not Gods of Men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant growes,
The Author not impair’d,° but honourd more?
Here, happie Creature, fair Angelic Eve,

75 Partake thou also; happie though thou art,
Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods
Thy self a Goddess, not to Earth confind,
But somtimes in the Air, as wee, somtimes

80 Ascend to Heav’n, by merit thine, and see
What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluckt; the pleasant savourie° smell

85 So quick’nd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Fortwith up to the Clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The Earth out stretcht immense, a prospect wide
And various: wondring at my flight and change

90 To this high exaltation; suddenly
My Guide was gon, and I, me thought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O how glad I wak’d
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her Night
Related, and thus Adam answerd sad.°
95 Best Image of my self and dearer half,  
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
Affects me equally; nor can I like  
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear;  
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,  

strange, unpleasant

100 Created pure. But know that in the Soule  
Are many lesser Faculties that serve  
Reason as chief; among these Fansie next  
Her office holds; of all external things,  
Which the five watchful Senses represent,°  

fancy, imagination

105 She forms Imaginations,° Aerie shapes,  
Which Reason joyning or disjoyning, frames  
All what we affirm or what deny, and call  
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
Into her private Cell° when Nature rests.  

bring into the mind

110 Oft in her absence mimic Fansie wakes  
To imitate her; but misjoyning shapes,  
Wilde work produces oft, and most in dreams,  
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.°  
Som such resemblances methinks I find  

recent

115 Of our last Eevnings talk, in this thy dream,  
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
Evil into the mind of God or Man  
May come and go, so unapprov’d,° and leave  
No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope  

not sanctioned, not acted on

120 That what in sleep thou didst abhorr to dream,  
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.  
Be not disheart’nd then, nor cloud those looks  
That wont° to be more chearful and serene  
Then when fair Morning first smiles on the World,  

are accustomed

125 And let us to our fresh imployments rise  
Among the Groves, the Fountains, and the Flours  
That open now thir choicest bosom’d° smells  
Reservd from night, and kept for thee in store.  
So cheard he his fair Spouse, and she was cheard,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip’d them with her haire;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in thir Chrystal sluce, hee ere they fell
Kiss’d as the gracious signs of sweet remorse

And pious° awe, that feared to have offended.  
So all was cleared, and to the Field they haste.
But first from under shadie arbourous roof,°
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring,° and the Sun, who scarce up risen

With wheels yet hov’ring o’re the Ocean brim,
Shot paralel to the earth his dewie ray,
Discovering° in wide Lantskip° all the East
Of Paradise and Edens happie Plains,
Lowly they bow’d adoring, and began

Thir Orisons,° each Morning duly paid
In various style, for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted° they to praise
Thir Maker, in fit strains pronounc’t or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence

Flowd from thir lips, in Prose or numerous° Verse,
More tuneable° then needed Lute or Harp
To add more sweetness, and they thus began.
These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almightie, thine this universal Frame,°

Thus wondrous fair; thy self how wondrous then!
Unspeakable,° who sitst above these Heavens
To us invisible or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works, yet these declare°
Thy goodness beyond thought, and Power Divine:

Speak yee who best can tell, ye Sons of light,
Angels, for yee behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, Day without Night,
Circle his Throne rejoicing, yee in Heav’n,
On Earth joyn all ye Creatures to extoll

Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

140 wheels. Helios, or Sol, god of the sun, was imagined to drive the chariot of the sun from east to west.
146–52 various style. Adam and Eve employ many forms of speech and song that harmonize together in
“fit strains” but are at the same time spontaneous and ecstatic, expressing “holy rapture.” Milton, like other
Puritans, disapproved of set liturgical forms.
153–208. Their morning hymn works variations on Psalms 148, 104, and 19, as well as the canticle Bene dicite.
Fairest of Starrs, last in the train of Night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crownest the smiling Morn
With thy bright Circlet, praise him in thy Spheare

While day arises, that sweet hour of Prime.
Thou Sun, of this great World both Eye and Soule,
Acknowledge him thy Greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb’st,
And when high Noon hast gain’d, and when thou fallst.

Moon, that now meetst the orient Sun, now fli’st
With the fixt Starrs, fixt in thir Orb that flies,
And yee five other wandring Fires that move
In mystic Dance not without Song, resound
His praise, who out of Darkness call’d up Light.

Aire, and ye Elements the eldest birth
Of Natures Womb, that in quaternion° run
Perpetual Circle, multiform; and mix
And nourish all things, let your ceasless change
Varie to our great Maker still° new praise.

Ye Mists and Exhalations that now rise
From Hill or steaming Lake, duskie or grey,
Till the Sun paint your fleecie skirts with Gold,
In honour to the Worlds great Author rise,
Whether to deck with Clouds th’ uncolourd skie,

Or wet the thirstie Earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise ye Winds, that from four Quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every Plant, in sign of Worship wave.

Fountains and yee, that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Joyn voices all ye living Souls; ye Birds,
That singing up to Heaven Gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise;

166–8. Venus, the morning star, is the last star to disappear at dawn and (as Hesperus) the first to appear in the evening.
176–8 **Orb that flies.** The orb of the “fixt Starrs” revolves, though the stars remain “fixt” in place. **five other wandring Fires.** The other planets besides the moon and sun, already mentioned, are Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus (or earth), which change positions. These motions produce the music of the spheres, audible to unfallen humans.
180–3. The four elements – earth, water, air, fire – are the “eldest birth” of nature, and “nourish” all things by their “ceasless change” and orderly interactions.
Yee that in Waters glide, and yee that walk
The Earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
Witness if I be silent, Morn or Eeven,
To Hill, or Valley, Fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my Song, and taught his praise.

Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still to give us onely good; and if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to thir thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm.
On to thir mornings rural work they haste
Among sweet dewes and flours; where any row
Of Fruit-trees overwoodie reach'd too farr
Thir pamper'd boughes, and needed hands to check

Fruitless imbraces: or they led the Vine
To wed her Elm; she spous'd about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dowr th' adopted Clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus imploid beheld

With pittie Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deign'd
to travel with Tobias, and secur'd
His marriage with the seavetimes-wedded Maid.

Raphael, said hee, thou hear'st what stir on Earth
Satan from Hell scap't through the darksom Gulf
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair, how he designes
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend

Converse with Adam, in what Bowre or shade
Thou find'st him from the heat of Noon retir'd,
To respit his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happie state,


221–3 Raphael. In Hebrew, "Health of God." He was the advisor of "Tobias" in winning his wife (see 4.168–71 and note), and told him how to cure Tobit's blindness (Apocrypha: Tobit 11:7–14). In cabbalism he is one of the four angels (with Gabriel, Michael, and Uriel) in charge of the four corners of the earth.

229–30. God spoke to Moses, "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Exod. 33:11).
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free Will, his Will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warne him to beware
He swerve not too secure:° tell him withall
His danger, and from whom, what enemie

Late falln himself from Heav’n, is plotting now
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence, no, for that shall be withstood,
But by deceit and lies; this let him know,
Least wilfully transgressing he pretend°

Surprisal, unadmonisht, unforewarnd.
So spake th’ Eternal Father, and fulfilld
All Justice: nor delaid the winged Saint°
After his charge receivd; but from among
Thousand Celestial Ardors, where he stood

Vaild with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
Flew through the midst of Heav’n; th’ angelic Quries
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th’ Empyreal° road; till at the Gate
Of Heav’n arriv’d, the gate self-opend wide

On golden Hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sov’ran Architect had fram’d.
From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Starr interpos’d, however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining Globes,

Earth and the Gard’n of God, with Cedars crownd
Above all Hills. As when by night the Glass°
Of Galileo, less assur’d, observes
Imagind Lands and Regions in the Moon:
Or Pilot from amidst the Cyclades

Delos or Samos first appeering kenns°
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone° in flight
He speeds, and through the vast Ethereal Skie
Saiiples between worlds and worlds, with steddie wing

249 Ardors. Spirits (angels) burning in love, from the Latin ardere, “to burn.”
264–6 Cyclades. A circular group of islands in the south Aegean sea. The two islands a “Pilot” might see as “spots” from within the archipelago are “Delos” (the traditional center but famous for having floated adrift) and “Samos,” outside the group, off the coast of Asia Minor.
266–76. Raphael's descent is an epic topos, modeled on the descents of Virgil's Mercury (Aeneid 4.238–58) and Tasso’s Michael (Gerusalemme Liberata 9.60–2).
Now on the polar windes, then with quick Fann° 
flutter
Winnows the buxom° Air; till within soare° 
yielding / highest flight
Of Towring Eagles, to all the Fowles he seems
A Phænix, gaz’d by all, as that sole Bird
When to enshrine his reliques in the Sun’s
Bright Temple, to Ægyptian Theb’s he flies.

At once on th’ Eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A Seraph wingd; six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments° Divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling° o’re his brest

With regal Ornament; the middle pair
Girt like a Starrie Zone° his waste, and round
Skirted his loines and thighs with downie Gold
And colours dipt in Heav’n; the third his feet
Shaddowd from either heele with featherd maile°
plumage like armor

Skie-tinctur’d grain.° Like Maia’s son he stood,
dye
And shook his Plumes, that Heav’ly fragrance filld
The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the Bands
Of Angels under watch; and to his state,°
rank
And to his message high in honour rise;

For on som message high they guessd him bound.
Thir glittering Tents he passd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through Groves of Myrrhe,
And flouring Odours, Cassia, Nard, and Balme;
A Wilderness of sweets; for Nature here

Wantond° as in her prime, and plaid° at will
revelled / sported
Her Virgin Fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wilde above Rule or Art; enormous° bliss.
immense, beyond rule

Adam discernd, as in the dore he sat

Phænix. A mythical, unique bird (“sole”) who lived five hundred years, was consumed by fire, and was
reborn from the ashes which it then carried to the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis in Egypt (“Ægyptian
Theb’s”).

proper shape. Modeled on the description of the Seraphim in Isa. 6:2; “each one had six wings; with
twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”

Maia’s son. Mercury, messenger of the gods.

Cassia. A cinnamon. Nard. Spikenard. Balme. Balsam. All were used to make perfumed
ointments.

Raphael’s visit to Adam is modeled on Abraham’s entertainment of three angels: “[Abraham] sat
in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by
him.” He and his wife Sarah prepared a meal for the angels, but most Christian commentators agreed that
these angels, being spirits, ate only in show (Gen. 18:1–8).
Of his coole Bowre, while now the mounted Sun
   Shot down direct his fervid Raies to warme
Earths inmost womb, more warmth then Adam needs;
   And Eve within, due° at her hour prepar’d
For dinner savourie fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milkie stream,
   Berrie or Grape: to whom thus Adam call’d.
   Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those Trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another Morn
   Ris’n on mid-noon; som great behest from Heav’n
To us perhaps he brings, and will voutsafe°
This day to be our Guest. But goe with speed,
   And what thy stores contain, bring forth and poure
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
   Our Heav’nly stranger; well we may afford
Our givers thir own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestowd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertil growth, and by disburd’ning grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.
   To whom thus Eve. Adam, earths hallowd mould,°
Of God inspir’d,° small store will serve, where store,
   All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
But I will haste and from each bough and break,
   Each Plant and juiciest Gourd° will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel guest, as hee
Beholding shall confess that here on Earth
God hath dispenst his bounties as in Heav’n.
   So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to chuse for delicacie best,
   What order, so contriv’d as not to mix
Tastes, not well joynd, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld° with kindliest° change,

304–7. Eve prepared sweet drinks (“nectarous draughts”) from juices (“milkie stream”) of “Berrie or Grape,” to be enjoyed “between” courses of “savourie fruits.”
322 **small store**. Reserve. **store**. Abundance.
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever Earth all-bearing Mother yields
In India° East or West, or middle shoare

340 In Pontus or the Punic Coast, or where
Alcinous reign’d, fruit of all kindes, in coate,
Rough, or smooth rin’d, or bearded husk, or shell
She gathers, Tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the Grape

345 She crushes, inoffensive moust, and meathes
From many a berrie, and from sweet kernels prest
She tempers° dulcet° creams, nor these to hold
Wants° her fit vessels pure, then strews the ground
With Rose and Odours from the shrub unfum’d.

350 Mean while our Primitive° great Sire, to meet
His god-like Guest, walks forth, without more train°
Accompani’d then with his own compleat
Perfections, in himself was all his state,°
More solemn then the tedious pomp that waits

355 On Princes, when thir rich Retinue long
Of Horses led, and Grooms besmeard with Gold
Dazles the croud, and sets them all agape.
Neerer his presence Adam though not awd,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,

360 As to a superior Nature, bowing low,
    Thus said. Native of Heav’n, for other place
    None can then Heav’n such glorious shape contain;
    Since by descending from the Thrones above,
    Those happie places thou hast deignd a while
    To want,° and honour these, voutsafe with us

365 To want,° and honour these, voutsafe with us
    Two onely, who yet by sov’ran gift possess
    This spacious ground, in yonder shadie Bowre
    To rest, and what the Garden choicest bears
    To sit and taste, till this meridian° heat

370 Be over, and the Sun more coole decline.

339–41 middle shoare. “Pontus,” the south coast of the Black Sea, was famous for nuts and fruits; the “Punic” (Carthaginian) coast of North Africa on the Mediterranean, was famous for figs; the garden of Alcinous in the mythical island of Scheria is described in Odyssey 7.113–28 as perpetually fruitful.

345 inoffensive moust. Unfermented grape juice. meathes. Meads, honey-sweetened drinks.

349 unfum’d. Naturally scented, not needing to be burned as incense.

354–7 tedious pomp. The showy display of kings like Charles II whose pageantry “Dazles the croud” but falls far short of the “solemn” natural majesty of Adam.
Whom thus the Angelic Vertue answerd milde.

Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heav’n
To visit thee; lead on then where thy Bowre
Oreshades; for these mid-hours, till Evening rise
I have at will. So to the Silvan Lodge
They came, that like Pomona’s Arbour smil’d
With florets deck’t° and fragrant smells; but Eve
Undeckt, save with her self more lovely fair
Then Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign’d
Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from Heav’n; no vaile
Shee needed, Vertue-proof,° no thought infirme
Altered her cheek. On whom the Angel Haile
Bestowd, the holy salutation us’d
Haile Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb
Shall fill the World more numerous with thy Sons
Then with these various fruits the Trees of God
Have heap’d this Table. Rais’d of grassie terf
Thir Table was, and mossie seats had round,
And on her ample Square from side to side
All Autumn pil’d, though Spring and Autumn here
Danc’d hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest Dinner coole; when thus began
Our Authour.° Heav’nly stranger, please to taste
These bounties which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfet good unmeasur’d out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus’d

371 Vertue. One of the traditional nine orders of angels in the scheme of Dionysius the Areopagite: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, Angels. Milton uses these titles freely, in the Protestant manner, without regard to this hierarchical order. Some angels are given more than one title: Raphael is called “Vertue” here, “Seraph” at line 277, and “Arch-Angel” at 7.41.

378 Pomona. Roman goddess of fruit trees.

381–2 three. On “Mount Ida,” Venus, Juno, and Minerva “naked strove” for the apple of discord inscribed “for the fairest.” Paris awarded the prize to Aphrodite (“the fairest Goddess”) in return for the love of Helen, which led to her rape and the Trojan War.

385–8. Cf. the angel’s words to Mary announcing that she would bear a son, Jesus (Luke 1:28): “Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.” For Mary as “second Eve” see PL 10.183.

398–400 our Nourisher. Cf. Jas. 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.”
The Earth to yield; unsavourie food perhaps
To spiritual Natures; only this I know,
That one Celestial Father gives to all.
To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found
No ingrateful° food: and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances° require
As doth your Rational; and both contain
Within them every lower facultie
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustaine and fed; of Elements
The grosser feeds the purer, Earth the Sea,
Earth and the Sea feed Air, the Air those Fires°
Ethereal, and as lowest first the Moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg’d
Vapours not yet into her substance turnd.
Nor doth the Moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist Continent to higher Orbes.
The Sun that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental° recompence
In humid exhalations, and at Even
Sups with the Ocean: though in Heav’n the Trees
Of life ambrosial° frutage bear, and vines
Yield Nectar, though from off the boughs each Morn

404–500. Raphael’s discourse and dialogue about the nature of things recall Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* (“Of the Nature of Things”), often termed a philosophic epic; Raphael chooses a brief version of that genre for his exposition.

404–13. As a monist who believed that all creation is of “one first matter” (472; see also *Christian Doctrine* 1.7), Milton denied the more common (dualistic) idea that angels are pure spirits (who would not eat or have any experiences pertaining to the senses); he held instead that angels are of a very highly refined material substance.

412 *concoct, digest, assimilate.* The three stages of digestion.

414–26 *The grosser feeds the purer.* That all features of the natural world require sustenance from creatures below them in the scale of being was a commonplace (Cf. Pliny, *Natural History* 2.9). Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia* (1617), has an engraving that shows the sun supping with the ocean (1.5–6).

418–20 *spots.* Raphael describes moonspots as undigested vapors not yet assimilated to the moon’s substance.

427–30. “Nectar” and “ambrosia” are the drink and food of the classical gods; Milton adds “pearly grain,” like the manna showered on the Israelites in the desert (Cf. Exod. 16:14).
We brush mellifluous° Dewes, and find the ground  
sweet, honey-flowing

Cover’d with pearly grain: yet God hath here  
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste  
Think not I shall be nice.° So down they sat,
And to thir viands fell, nor seemingly°  
finicky, fastidious

The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss  
Of Theologians, but with keen dispatch  
Of real hunger, and concoctive° heate  
To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires  
Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire

eye

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Of sooty coal the Empiric° Alchimist  
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn  
Metals of drossiest Ore to perfet Gold  
As from the Mine. Mean while at Table Eve  
Ministerd naked, and thir flowing cups

With pleasant liquors crown’d:° O innocence  
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
Then had the Sons of God excuse to have bin  
Enamour’d at that sight; but in those hearts  
Love unlibidinous° reign’d, nor jealousie  
without lust

Was understood, the injur’d Lovers Hell.  
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic’d  
Not burd’nd Nature, sudden mind arose  
In Adam, not to let th’ occasion pass  
Given him by this great Conference to know

Of things above his World, and of thir being  
Who dwell in Heav’n, whose excellence he saw  
Transcend his own so farr, whose radiant forms  
Divine effulgence,° whose high Power so far  
shining

Exceeded human, and his wary speech

Thus to th’ Empyreal Minister he fram’d.  
Inhabitant with God, now know I well

in mist. The usual explanation ("common gloss") of orthodox theologians was that when angels appeared to humans they took bodies of air. See lines 299–300 above, and note.

transubstantiate. In common theological use, the Roman Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine of the eucharist are in their substance transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Milton vigorously denied that doctrine, describing as a true transubstantiation the angels’ transformation of earthly food into their more highly refined substance. The residue ("what redounds") passes out as vapor through the pores ("transpires") – the angelic form of excretion.

Sons of God. A patristic tradition identifies them with angels (as here) though they are usually said to be human sons of Seth, as in 11.621–2. Gen. 6:2 tells of their marriage to the daughters of men.
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast voutsaf’t
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heav’n’s high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?
To whom the winged Hierarch° repli’d.
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav’d from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indu’d with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin’d, more spiritous, and pure,
As neerer to him plac’t or neerer tending
Each in thir several active Spheres assignd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds°
Proportiond to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aerie, last the bright consummate° floure
Spirits odorous breathes: flours and thir fruit
Mans nourishment, by gradual scale sublim’d
To vital Spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual, give both life and sense,
Fansie and understanding, whence the Soule
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or Intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,

469–79. Milton held that the universe was created out of Chaos, not out of nothing (ex nihilo), the orthodox position. The primal matter of Chaos had its origin in God, who subsequently created all things from that matter (see 7.168–73). This materialist monism denies sharp distinctions between angels and men, spirit and matter, all being of one substance with different degrees of refinement. The universe Raphael describes is hierarchical but also dynamic and striving, as beings become increasingly spiritual (“spiritous”) or increasingly gross depending on their moral choices (see Christian Doctrine 1.7).

479–87. The plant figure provides an illustration of the dynamism of being in Milton’s universe, and further explains why Raphael can eat the fruit. That fruit is transformed into various orders of “spirits”: “vital,” fluids in the blood sustaining life; “animal,” produced from the vital spirits and controlling sensation and motion; and “intellectual,” spirits controlling the faculties of the soul – fancy, understanding, and reason. The soul derives her being from the spirits and so is material.

483 sublim’d. Raised to a higher state, an alchemical term referring to the change of a solid into a gas.

488–90 Discursive, or Intuitive. According to the traditional dualist assumption, angels are pure spirits whose intuition (immediate apprehension of truth) is absolutely distinct from human reason (which involved combining data and arguing from premises to conclusions). Milton makes the distinction only relative, “Differing but in degree.”
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance; time may come when men
With Angels may participate, and find

No inconvenient Diet, nor too light Fare:
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit,
Improv’d by tract of time, and wing’d ascend
Ethereal, as wee, or may at choice

Here or in Heav’nly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire
Whose progenie you are. Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happie state

Can comprehend, incapable of more.
To whom the Patriarch of mankind repli’d.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set

From center to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution joind, if ye be found
Obedient? can we want obedience then

To him, or possibly his love desert
Who form’d us from the dust, and plac’d us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the Angel. Son of Heav’n and Earth,

Attend: That thou art happie, owe to God;
That thou continu’st such, owe to thy self,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv’n thee; be advis’d.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;

And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power, ordain’d thy will

509 scale of Nature. The “Chain of Being” extending from God down to the lowest element of creation (see, e.g., Macrobius, In Somnium Scipionis 1.14.15).
520–43. Cf. 3.93–128.
By nature free, not over-rul’d by Fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntarie service he requires,
Not our necessitated, such with him
Findes no acceptance, nor can find, for how
Can hearts, not free, be tri’d whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By Destinie, and can no other choose?

My self and all th’ Angelic Host that stand
In sight of God enthron’d, our happie state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety° none; freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And som are fall’n, to disobedience fall’n,
And so from Heav’n to deepest Hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss into what woe!
To whom our great Progenitor. Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted eare,
Divine instructor, I have heard, then when
Cherubic Songs° by night from neighbouring Hills
Aereal Music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our maker, and obey him whose command
Single, is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assur’d me, and still assure: though what thou tellst
Hath past in Heav’n, som doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of Sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the Sun
Hath finisht half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great Zone° of Heav’n.
Thus Adam made request, and Raphael
After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoinst me, O prime° of men,

530 Worthy of Sacred silence. Translates Horace, Odes 2.13.29, referring to songs sung by Alcaeus and Sappho in Hades; their words are “sacro digna silentio.”

563 High matter. Raphael’s account of the war in Heaven is an epic device, a narrative of past action; it is also a mini-epic itself, with traditional battles, challenges, and single combats. As an “epic” poet treating sacred matter, Raphael confronts a narrative challenge similar to Milton’s own.
Sad task and hard, for how shall I relate
To human sense th’ invisible exploits
Of warring Spirits; how without remorse
The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfet while they stood; how last unfould
The secrets of another world, perhaps

Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispenc’t, and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By lik’ning spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best, though what if Earth

Be but the shaddow of Heav’n, and things therein
Each to other like, more then on earth is thought?
As yet this World was not, and Chaos wilde
Reignd where these Heav’ns now rowl, where Earth now rests
Upon her Center pois’d, when on a day

(For Time, though in Eternitie, appli’d
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future) on such day
As Heav’ns great Year brings forth, th’ Empyreal Host
Of Angels by Imperial summons call’d,

Innumerable before th’ Almighties Throne
Forthwith from all the ends of Heav’n appeerd
Under thir Hierarchs in orders bright
Ten thousand thousand Ensignes high advanc’d,
Standards and Gonfalons twixt Van and Reare

Stream in the Aire, and for distinction serve
Of Hierarchies, of Orders, and Degrees;
Or in thir glittering Tissues bear imblaz’d
Holy Memorials, acts of Zeale and Love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in Orbes

Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within Orb, the Father infinite,

571–6. Raphael first explains his narrative strategy in terms of the traditional notion of “accommodation,” couching spiritual matters in “corporal” terms that humans can understand; but he then extends the Platonic idea that earth is a shadow of heaven (Republic 10.397B–598D) to suggest that the two realms are more similar than earthly thinkers have supposed.

580–2. Countering a long philosophical tradition, Milton asserts the existance of time and motion in Heaven, before the creation of the universe (see Christian Doctrine 1.7).

583 Great Year. The cycle completed when all the heavenly bodies simultaneously return to their original positions (see, e.g., Plato, Timaeus 39d). A common estimate of that cycle was 36,000 earth years.

By whom in bliss imbosom’d sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming Mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye Angels, Progenie of Light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
Hear my Decree, which unrevok’t shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My onely Son, and on this holy Hill

Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint;
And by my Self have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heav’n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great Vice-gerent° Reign abide

United as one individual° Soule
For ever happie: him who disobeyes
Mee disobeyes, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter° darkness, deep ingulft, his place

Ordaind without redemption, without end.
So spake th’ Omnipotent, and with his words
All seemed well pleas’d, all seem’d, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn° dayes, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred Hill,

Mystical dance, which yonder starrie Spheare°
Of Planets and of fixt° in all her Wheeles
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv’d,° yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem,

And in thir motions harmonie Divine
So smooths her charming tones, that Gods own ear
Listen’s delighted. Eevning now approach’d
(For wee have also our Eevning and our Morn,

603–5: Cf. Ps. 2:7: “I will declare the decree . . . Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” This episode refers to the exaltation of the Son as King, not his actual begetting, since he is elsewhere described as “of all Creation first” (3.383), and as God’s agent in creating the angels and everything else (5.835–8).
606. Cf. Col. 2:10: “Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.”
607–8 by my Self have sworn. At Gen. 22:16, God swears by himself to bless Abraham. See Phil. 2:9–11:
“God also hath highly exalted him . . . That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven,
and things in earth, and things under the earth” (cf. Isa. 45:23).
620–7 Mystical dance. The “intricate” dance of the angels produces “harmonie Divine,” like the “intricate” movements of the stars and the planets in both circular and noncircular (“Eccentric”) orbits that produce the music of the spheres according to the Pythagorean theory.
Wee ours for change delectable, not need
630 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in Circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil’d
With Angels Food, and rubied Nectar flows
In Pearl, in Diamond, and massie Gold,
635 Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of Heav’n.
On flours repos’d, and with fresh flourrets crownd,
They eate, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortalitie and joy, secure
Of surfet where full measure onely bounds
640 Excess, before th’ all bounteous King, who showrd
With copious hand, rejoycing in thir joy.
Now when ambrosial° Night with Clouds exhal’d
From that high mount of God, whence light & shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heav’n had changd
645 To grateful° Twilight (for Night comes not there
In darker veile) and roseat° Dews dispos’d
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest,
Wide over all the Plain, and wider farr
Then all this globous Earth in Plain out spred,
650 (Such are the Courts of God). Th’ Angelic throng
Disperst in Bands and Files thir Camp extend
By living Streams among the Trees of Life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden reard,
Celestial Tabernacles, where they slept
655 Fannd with coole Winds, save those who in thir course°
Melodious Hymns about the sovran Throne
Alternate all night long: but not so wak’d
Satan, so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heav’n; he of the first,
660 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power,
In favour and præeminence, yet fraught
With envie against the Son of God, that day
Honourd by his great Father, and proclaimd
Messiah King anointed, could not beare
665 Through pride that sight, & thought himself impaird.°

658–9 former name. Traditionally understood to be Lucifer: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning” (Isa. 14:12). The poem claims that his former name was blotted from the books of life (see PL 1.361–5).
664 Messiah. In Hebrew the name means “anointed.”
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the duskie houre
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv’d
With all his Legions to dislodge,° and leave

670 Unworshipt, unobey’d the Throne supream
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awak’ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleepst thou, Companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eye-lids? and remembrest what Decree

675 Of yesterday, so late hath past the lips
Of Heav’ns Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? new Laws thou seest impos’d;

680 New Laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new Counsels, to debate°
What doubtful may ensue; more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those Myriads which we lead the chief;

685 Tell them that by command, ere yet dim Night
Her shadowie Cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me thir Banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The Quarters of the North, there to prepare

690 Fit entertainment to receive our King
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the Hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give Laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus’d

695 Bad influence into th’ unwarie brest
Of his Associate; hee together calls,
Or several one by one, the Regent Powers,
Under him Regent, tells, as he was taught,
That the most High commanding, now ere Night,

700 Now ere dim Night had disincumberd Heav’n,
The great Hierarchal Standard was to move;

671 next subordinate. His original name in Heaven is also lost, but he will come to be known as Beelzebub (2.299–300).

673 Sleepst thou. In many epics a voice awakens heroes or villains from sleep and lures them to rash or adventurous acts.

689 North. The traditional site of Lucifer’s throne. See Isa. 14:13: “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . . in the sides of the north.”
Tells the suggested° cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies° to sound°
Or taint integritie; but all obey’d

705 The wonted° signal, and superior voice
er=customary
Of thir great Potentate;° for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heav’n;
His count’nce, as the Morning Starr that guides
The starrie flock, allur’d them, and with lyes

710 Drew after him the third part of Heav’ns Host:
Mean while th’ Eternal eye, whose sight discernes
Abstrusest° thoughts, from forth his holy Mount
And from within the golden Lamps that burne
Nightly before him, saw without thir light

715 Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spred
Among the sons of Morn,° what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high Decree;
And smiling to his onely Son thus said.
   Son, thou in whom my glory I behold

720 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,
Neerly° it now concerns us to be sure
Of our Omnipotence, and with what Arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of Deitie or Empire, such a foe

725 Is rising, who intends to erect his Throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious North;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try°
In battel, what our Power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw

730 With speed what force is left, and all impoy
In our defense, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our Sanctuarie, our Hill.
   To whom the Son with calm aspect and clee
Light’ning Divine, ineffable, serene,

735 Made answer. Mightie Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laugh’st at thir vain designs and tumults vain,

708 Morning Starr. An allusion to Satan as Lucifer, compared to the star Venus or Hesperus which bore the name Lucifer when it appeared as the first star in the morning (see notes to lines 166 and 658 above).
710 third part. Cf. Rev. 12:4: “And his [the dragon’s] tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.”
735–7. Cf. Ps. 2:4: “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”
Matter to mee of Glory, whom thir hate
Illustrates,° when they see all Regal Power
Giv’n me to quell thir pride, and in event°
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
Thy Rebels, or be found the worst in Heav’n.
So spake the Son, but Satan with his Powers°
Far was advanc’t on winged speed, an Host

Innumerable as the Starrs of Night,
Or Starrs of Morning, Dew-drops, which the Sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flouer.
Regions they pass’d, the mightie Regencies°
Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones

In thir triple Degrees, Regions to° which
All thy Dominion, Adam, is no more
Then what this Garden is to all the Earth,
And all the Sea, from one entire globose°
Stretcht into Longitude,° which having pass’d

At length into the limits° of the North
They came, and Satan to his Royal seat
High on a Hill, far blazing, as a Mount
Rais’d on a Mount, with Pyramids and Towrs
From Diamond Quarries hew’n, and Rocks of Gold,

The Palace of great Lucifer, (so call
That Structure in the Dialect of men
Interpreted) which not long after, he
Affecting° all equality with God,
In imitation of that Mount whereon

Messiah was declar’d in sight of Heav’n,
The Mountain of the Congregation call’d;
For thither he assembl’d all his Train,
Pretending so commanded to consult
About the great reception of thir King,

Thither to come, and with calumnious Art
Of counterfeted truth thus held thir ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
If these magnific Titles yet remain

741 dextrous. Skillful, but also with the Latin meaning of “right hand,” in reference to the Son at God’s right hand (606 above).
750. See note to line 371, above.
766 Mountain of the Congregation. Cf. Isa. 14:13–14, where Lucifer is quoted, “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: . . . I will be like the most High.”
Not merely titular, since by Decree

Another now hath to himself ingross't° monopolized
All Power, and us eclips under the name
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult how we may best

With what may be devis’d of honours new
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endur’d,
To one and to his image now proclaim’d?

But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds and teach us to cast off this Yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend
The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know your selves

Natives and Sons of Heav’n possesst before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for Orders and Degrees
Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume

Monarchie over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendor less,
In freedome equal? or can introduce
Law and Edict on us, who without law
Erre not, much less for this to be our Lord,

And look for adoration to th’ abuse
Of those Imperial Titles which assert
Our being ordain’d to govern, not to serve?

Thus farr his bold discourse without controule°

Had audience,° when among the Seraphim

Abdiel, then whom none with more zeale ador’d
The Deitie, and divine commands obei’d,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeale severe
The current of his fury thus oppos’d.

787–802. Compare Milton’s republican theory, stated in the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates: “No man who knows ought, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were borne free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were by privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey: and that they liv’d so” (until Adam’s sin necessitated magistrates and laws, though sovereign power always remained with the people). Cf. Adam’s natural republicanism, when learning of the first king, Nimrod (PL 12.64–71).

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!

Words which no eare ever to hear in Heav’n
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate
In place thy self so high above thy Peeres.
Canst thou with impious obloquie° condemne
The just Decree of God, pronounc’t and sworn,

That to his only Son by right endu’d
With Regal Scepter, every Soule in Heav’n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? unjust thou saist
Flatly unjust, to binde with Laws the free,

And equal over equals to let Reigne,
One over all with unsucceeded° power.
Shalt thou give Law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of libertie, who made
Thee what thou art, and formd the Pow’rs of Heav’n

Such as he pleas’d, and circumscrib’d thir being?
Yet by experience taught we know how good,
And of our good, and of our dignitie
How provident he is, how farr from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt

Our happie state under one Head more neer
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals Monarch Reigne:
Thy self though great and glorious dost thou count,
Or all Angelic Nature joind in one,

Equal to him begotten Son, by whom
As by his Word the mighty Father made
All things, ev’n thee, and all the Spirits of Heav’n
By him created in thir bright degrees,°
Crownd them with Glory, and to thir Glory nam’d

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
Essential Powers, nor by his Reign obscur’d,
But more illustrious made, since he the Head

ingrate. Cf. 3.97.
822–5. Cf. Rom. 9:20: “O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”
833–40. Cf. Col. 1:16: “For by him [the Son, the image of God] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him.” Milton believed that God created the Son “the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15), who then created the angels; as Abdiel argues, there can be no equality between Creator and creature.
One of our number thus reduc’t becomes,
His Laws our Laws, all honour to him done
845 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hast’n to appease
Th’ incensed Father, and th’ incensed Son,
While Pardon may be found in time besought.
So spake the fervent Angel, but his zeale

850 None seconded, as out of season judg’d,
Or singular and rash, whereat rejoic’d
Th’ Apostat, and more haughty thus repli’d.
That we were formd then saist thou? and the work
Of secondarie hands, by task transferd

855 From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
Doctrin which we would know whence learnt: who saw
When this creation was? rememberst thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;

860 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais’d
By our own quick’ning power, when fatal course°
Had circl’d his full Orbe, the birth mature
Of this our native Heav’n, Ethereal Sons.
Our puissance° is our own, our own right hand

865 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address,° and to begirt° th’ Almighty Throne
Beseeking or besieging. This report,

870 These tidings carrie to th’ anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.
He said, and as the sound of waters deep
Hoarce murmur echo’d to his words applause
Through the infinite Host, nor less for that

875 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone
Encompass’d round with foes, thus answerd bold.
O alienate from God, O spirit accurst,
Forsak’n of all good; I see thy fall
Determind, and thy hapless crew involv’d

880 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spred

843 reduc’t. Suggests something like an incarnation of the Son for the angels.
856–9. Cf. 8.250–1, 276–82, Adam’s comment on his recollection of origins; also cf. 4.43–5.
875 Seraph. Hebrew, “to burn.”
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubl’d how to quit the yoke
Of Gods Messiah; those indulgent Laws
Will not now be voutsaf’t, other Decrees

Against thee are gon forth without recall;
That Golden Scepter which thou didst reject
Is now an Iron Rod to bruise and breake
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
Yet not for thy advise or threats I fly

These wicked Tents devoted,° least the wrauth
Impendent,° raging into sudden flame
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His Thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learne,

When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.

So spake the Seraph Abdiel faithful found,
Among the faithless, faithful only hee;
Among innumerable false, unmov’d,
Unshak’n, unseduc’d, unterrifi’d

His Loyaltie he kept, his Love, his Zeale;
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
Though single. From amidst them forth he passd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he susteind

Superior, nor of violence fear’d aught;
And with retorted° scorn his back he turn’d
On those proud Towrs to swift destruction doom’d.

The End of the Fifth Book.

882–8. Abdiel speaks as an inspired prophet.
887 Iron Rod. See 2.327–8 and note.
889–93. Cf. Moses’ warning to the Israelites not to join Korah’s rebellion: “Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men . . . lest ye be consumed in all their sins” (Num. 16:26). Cf. also Heb. 12:29: “For our God is a consuming fire.”
Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his Angels. The first Fight described: Satan and his Powers retire under Night: He calls a Council, invents devilish Engines, which in the second dayes Fight put Michael and his Angels to some disorder; but, they at length pulling up Mountains overwhelm’d both the force and Machins of Satan: Yet the Tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserv’d the glory of that Victory: Hee in the Power of his Father coming to the place, and causing all his Legions to stand still on either side, with his Chariot and Thunder driving into the midst of his Enemies, pursues them unable to resist towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepar’d for them in the Deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

All night the dreadless Angel unpursu’d
Through Heav’n’s wide Champain held his way, till Morn,
Wak’t by the circling Hours, with rosie hand
Unbarr’d the gates of Light. There is a Cave

Within the Mount of God, fast by his Throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heav’n
Grateful vicissitude, like Day and Night;
Light issues forth, and at the other dore

Obsequious darkness enters, till her houre
to veile the Heav’n, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here; and now went forth the Morn
Such as in highest Heav’n, arrayd in Gold
Empyrean, from before her vanisht Night,

Shot through with orient Beams: when all the Plain
Coverd with thick embatteld Squadrons bright,
Chariots and flaming Armes, and fierie Steeds
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
Warr he perceav’d, warr in procinct, and found

3 devilish Engines. Artillery, cannon.

2–3 Morn. Aurora, goddess of the dawn. Hours. daughters of Jove who control the seasons and guard the gates of Heaven. rosie hand. echoes the Homeric formula “rosy-fingered dawn” (Iliad 1.477).

4–14. Hesiod’s cave in the abyss where Night and Day alternate (Theogony 744–57), here relocated “fast by” (next to) God’s throne.
20 Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported: gladly then he mixt
Among those friendly Powers who him receav’d
With joy and acclamations loud, that one
That of so many Myriads fall’n, yet one
25 Return’d not lost: On to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supream; from whence a voice
From midst a Golden Cloud thus milde was heard.
   Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
30 The better fight, who single hast mainta인
Against revolted multitudes the Cause
Of Truth, in word mightier then they in Armes;
And for the testimonie of Truth hast born
Universal reproach, far worse to beare
35 Then violence: for this was all thy care
To stand approv’d in sight of God, though Worlds
Judg’d thee perverse: the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
40 Then scornd thou didst depart, and to subdue
By force, who reason for thir Law refuse,
Right reason for thir Law, and for thir King
Messiah, who by right of merit Reigns.
   Go Michael of Celestial Armies Prince,
45 And thou in Military prowess next
   Gabriel, lead forth to Battel these my Sons°
Invincible, lead forth my armed Saints
By Thousands and by Millions rang’d for fight;
Equal in number to that Godless crew
50 Rebellious, them with Fire and hostile Arms
Fearless assault, and to the brow° of Heav’n

29–30 **Servant of God.** Literal translation of the Hebrew name Abdiel. Echoes the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:21), “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” **better fight.** Cf. 1 Tim. 6:12, “Fight the good fight of faith.”
42 **Right reason.** True, upright reason, translating the Stoic and Scholastic *recta ratio*.
43 **by right of merit.** See 3.309 and 2.5–6.
44 **Michael.** Hebrew, “Who is like God”; in Jewish and patristic tradition he is prince of the angels. Cf. Rev. 12:7–9 for his role in the battle in Heaven.
46 **Gabriel.** Hebrew, “Strength of God.”
49 **Equal in number.** As one-third of the angels rebelled, God sends out only an equal number of those who remained loyal.
Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss,
Into thir place of punishment, the Gulf
Of Tartarus,° which ready opens wide

55 His fiery Chaos to receive thir fall.
So spake the Sovran voice, and Clouds began
To darken all the Hill, and smoak to rowl
In duskie wreathes, reluctant° flames, the signe
Of wrauth awak’t: nor with less dread the loud

60 Ethereal Trumpet from on high gan° blow:
At which command the Powers Militant,
That stood for Heav’n, in mighty Quadraté° joyn’d
Of Union irresistible, mov’d on
In silence thir bright Legions, to the sound

65 Of instrumental Harmonie that breath’d
Heroic Ardor to advent’rous deeds
Under thir God-like Leaders, in the Cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious° Hill,

70 Nor streit’ning° Vale, nor Wood, nor Stream divides
Thir perfet ranks; for high above the ground
Thir march was, and the passive Air upbore
Thir nimble tread, as when the total kind
Of Birds in orderly array on wing

75 Came summond over Eden to receive
Thir names of thee; so over many a tract
Of Heav’n they march’d, and many a Province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene:° at last
Farr in th’ Horizon to the North appeer’d

80 From skirt to skirt° a fierie Region, strecht
In battailous° aspect, and neerer view
Bristl’d with upright beams° innumerable
Of rigid Spears, and Helmets throng’d, and Shields
Various, with boastful Argument° portraid,

85 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on
With furious expedition;° for they weend°
That self same day by fight, or by surprize
To win the Mount of God, and on his Throne

64–6 instrumental Harmonie. Cf. 1.549–53, where the fallen angels march to music by flutes and recorders in the Dorian mode, also prompting to heroic action.

To set the envier of his State, the proud
Aspirer, but thir thoughts prov’d fond° and vain
In the mid way: though strange to us it seemd
At first, that Angel should with Angel warr,
And in fierce hosting° meet, who wont° to meet
So oft in Festivals of joy and love

Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire
Hymning th’ Eternal Father: but the shout
Of Battel now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst exalted as a God

Th’ Apostate in his Sun-bright Chariot sate
Idol of Majesty Divine, enclos’d
With Flaming Cherubim, and golden Shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous Throne, for now
’Twill Host and Host but narrow space was left,

A dreadful intervall, and Front to Front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudie Van,°
On the rough edge° of battel ere it joyn’d,
Satan with vast and haughtie strides advanc’t,

Came towring, armd in Adamant and Gold;
Abdiel that sight endur’d not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O Heav’n! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and realtie°
Remain not; wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where Vertue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest; though to sight° unconquerable?
His puissance,° trusting in th’ Almighty’s aide,

I mean to try, whose Reason I have tri’d°
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he who in debate of Truth hath won,
Should win in Arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foule,

When Reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that Reason overcome.
So pondering, and from his armed Peers

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105 intervall. Latin, intervallum, the space between two armed camps.
110 Adamant. A mythical substance of great hardness.
Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more obstruction
Incens’t, and thus securely him defi’d. confidently
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reacht
The highth of thy aspiring unoppos’d,
The Throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandond at the terror of thy Power
Or potent tongue; fool, not to think how vain
Against th’ Omnipotent to rise in Arms;
Who out of smallest things could without end
Have rais’d incessant Armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitarie hand
Reaching beyond all limit at one blow
Unaided could have finisht thee, and whelmd
Thy Legions under darkness; but thou seest
All are not of thy Train; there be who Faith
Prefer, and Pietie to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seemd in thy World erroneous to dissent
From all: my Sect thou seest, now learn too late
How few somtimes may know, when thousands err.
Whom the grand foe with scornful eye askance
Thus answerd. Ill for thee, but in wisht houre
Of my revenge, first sought for thou returnst
From flight, seditious Angel, to receave
Thy merited reward, the first assay trial, attack
Of this right hand provok’t, since first that tongue
Inspir’d with contradiction durst oppose
A third part of the Gods, in Synod met
Thir Deities to assert, who while they feel
Vigour Divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comst
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win

145–8 dissent. Puritans who refused to adhere to the national church after the Restoration were termed dissenters. Sect. A term used by adherents of the Church of England and by Presbyterians to smear those who separated from the national church. Abdiel’s terms align him with those Puritan schismatics – Baptists, Quakers, Socinians, and others – whom Milton often defended in his prose tracts; like them Abdiel claims that truth may reside with a single “dissenter” or sect of a few.
152–6 seditious. Treasonous. Satan’s language aligns him with those Anglicans after the Restoration who denounced dissenters as traitors, with Presbyterians who look to a “Synod” (a Presbyterian assembly) to define truth, and with conformists of all stripes who think truth is confirmed by numbers (“A third part of the Gods”).
From me som Plume,° that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswerd least thou boast) to let thee know;
At first I thought that Libertie and Heav’n
To heav’ly Soules had bin all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministring Spirits, train’d up in Feast and Song;
Such hast thou arm’d, the Minstrelsie of Heav’n,
Servilitie with freedom to contend,
As both thir deeds compar’d this day shall prove.
   To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern repli’d.
Apostat, still thou errst, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav’st° it with the name
Of Servitude to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excells
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th’ unwise, or him who hath rebell’d
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thy self not free, but to thy self enthral’d;
Yet leudly° dar’st our ministring upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell thy Kingdom, let mee serve
In Heav’n God ever blest, and his Divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey’d,
Yet Chains in Hell, not Realms expect: mean while
From mee retournd, as erst° thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious Crest receive.
   So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud Crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his Shield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoild; the tenth on bended knee

163 Unanswerd least thou boast. i.e., lest you boast that I did not answer your argument.
167–9 Ministring. Satan’s contemptuous pun links the angels’ service (“ministring”), which he terms “Servilitie,” with the street songs of minstrels (“Minstrelsie of Heav’n”).
174–81 Nature. Abdiel cites a “natural law” principle set forth by Aristotle and by Milton in the Second Defense, that when one man excels all the rest in worthiness he should rule.
178–81 servitude. See 12.90–101. Milton often invoked the principle that tyrants are enslaved to their own passions.
183–4. Cf. Satan’s words at 1.263.
His massie Spear upstaid; as if on Earth
Winds under ground or waters forcing way
Sidelong, had push’t a Mountain from his seat
Half sunk with all his Pines. Amazement seis’d
The Rebel Thrones, but greater rage to see

Thus foil’d thir mightiest, ours joy fill’d, and shout,
Presage of Victorie and fierce desire
Of Battel: whereat Michael bid sound
Th’ Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast° of Heaven
It sounded, and the faithful Armies rung°

Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze
The adverse Legions, nor less hideous joyn’d
The horrid shock: now storming furie rose,
And clamour such as heard in Heav’n till now
Was never, Arms on Armour clashing bray’d°

Horrible discord, and the madding° Wheeles
Of brazen Chariots rag’d; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery Darts in flaming volies flew,
And flying vaulted either Host with fire.

So under fierie Cope° together rush’d
Both Battels maine,° with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage; all Heav’n
Resounded, and had Earth bin then, all Earth
Had to her Center shook. What wonder? when

Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could weild
These Elements, and arm him with the force
Of all thir Regions: how much more of Power
Armie against Armie numberless to raise

Dreadful combustion° warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, thir happie Native seat;
Had not th’ Eternal King Omnipotent
From his strong hold of Heav’n high over-rul’d
And limited thir might; though numberd such°

As each divided Legion might have seemd
A numerous Host, in strength each armed hand

Winds under ground. The supposed cause of earthquakes.
Rebel Thrones. Here as elsewhere Milton uses the name of one angelic order to stand for all. But the term is politically suggestive, linking monarchs with rebellion against God. Cf. 12.36, Michael’s comment that the first king, Nimrod, derived his name from "Rebellion."
A Legion; led in fight, yet Leader seemd
Each Warriour single as in Chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway°
Of Battel, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim Warr; no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argu’d fear; each on himself reli’d,
As° onely in his arm the moment° lay
Of victorie; deeds of eternal fame
Were don, but infinite: for wide was spred
That Warr and various; somtimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main° wing
Tormented° all the Air; all Air seemd then
Conflicting Fire: long time in even scale
The Battel hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shewn, and met in Armes
No equal, raunging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus’d, at length
Saw where the Sword of Michael smote, and fell’d
Squadrons at once, with huge two-handed sway
Brandisht aloft the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos’d the rockie Orb
Of tenfold Adamant, his ample Shield
A vast circumference: At his approach
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toile
Surceas’d, and glad as hoping here to end
Intestine° War in Heav’n, the arch foe subdu’d
Or Captive drag’d in Chains, with hostile frown
And visage all enflam’d first thus began.
Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam’d in Heav’n, now plenteous, as thou seest
These Acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thy self
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb’d
Heav’ns blessed peace, and into Nature brought
Miserie, uncreated till the crime

232–5. i.e., they had leaders, yet each single warrior seemed like a commander-in-chief, skilled in all military operations.
Of thy Rebellion? how hast thou instill’d
270 Thy malice into thousands, once upright
   And faithful, now prov’d false. But think not here
To trouble Holy Rest; Heav’n casts thee out
From all her Confines. Heav’n the seat of bliss
Brooks° not the works of violence and Warr.
   endures

Hence then, and evil go with thee along
Thy ofspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle° broiles,
Ere this avenging Sword begin thy doome,
Or som more sudden vengeance wing’d from God

Precipitate thee with augmented paine.

So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus
The Adversarie. Nor think thou with wind
Of airie threats to aw whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turnd the least of these

To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquisht, easier to transact with mee
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? erre not° that so shall end
   don’t falsely suppose
The strife which thou call’st evil, but wee style

The strife of Glorie: which we mean to win,
Or turn this Heav’n it self into the Hell
Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
And join him nam’d Almighty to thy aid,

I flie not, but have sought thee farr and nigh.

They ended parle,° and both address° for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on Earth conspicuous, that may lift

Human imagination to such higth
Of Godlike Power: for likest Gods they seemd,
Stood they or mov’d, in stature, motion, arms
Fit to decide the Empire of great Heav’n.
Now wav’d thir fierie Swords, and in the Aire

Made horrid Circles; two broad Suns thir Shields
Blaz’d opposite, while expectation stood
In horror; from each hand with speed retir’d

282 Adversarie. Literal translation of the Hebrew name Satan.
Where erst° was thickest fight, th’ Angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind

310 Of such commotion, such as to set forth
Great things by small, if Natures concord broke,
Among the Constellations warr were sprung,
Two Planets rushing from aspect maligne
Of fiercest opposition in mid Skie,

315 Should combat, and thir jarring Sphears confound.
Together both with next to Almighty Arme,
Uplifted imminent one stroke they aim’d
That might determine,° and not need repeate,
As not of power,° at once; nor odds° appeerd

320 In might or swift prevention;° but the sword
Of Michael from the Armorie of God
Was giv’n him temper’d so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan with steep force to smite

325 Descending, and in half cut sheere, nor staid,
But with swift wheele reverse, deep entring shar’d°
All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,
And writh’ d him to and fro convolv’d;° so sore°
The griding° sword with discontinuous° wound

330 Pass’d through him, but th’ Ethereal substance clos’d
Not long divisible, and from the gash
A stream of Nectarous humor issuing flow’d
Sanguin, such as Celestial Spirits may bleed,
And all his Armour stain’d ere while so bright.

335 Forthwith on all sides to his aide was run
By Angels many and strong, who interpos’d
Defence, while others bore him on thir Shields
Back to his Chariot; where it stood retir’d
From off the files of warr; there they him laid

340 Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbl’d by such rebuke, so farr beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.

310–15 to set forth / Great things by small. A Virgilian formula, here introducing an epic simile comparing the single combat of Satan and Michael (“great things”) with war among the planets (“small” by comparison), prompted by the clash of two planets from opposed positions causing a “malign” influence and throwing into discord the music of the spheres (“jarring Sphears”).

330–3 Nectarous humor. The fluid angels bleed because they drink nectar; cf. the ichor that flows from Aphrodite’s wound, which also heals itself promptly (Iliad 5.339–42). Sanguin. Blood red.
Yet soon he heal’d; for Spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In Entrailes, Heart or Head, Liver or Reines;°
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in thir liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more then can the fluid Aire:
All Heart they live, all Head, all Eye, all Eare,
All Intellect, all Sense, and as they please,
They Limb themselves, and colour, shape or size
Assume, as likes° them best, condense or rare.
Mean while in other parts like deeds deservd
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce Ensignes pierc’d the deep array
Of Moloc furious King, who him defi’d
And at his Chariot wheeles to drag him bound
Threatn’d, nor from the Holic One of Heav’n
Refrein’d his tongue blasphemous; but anon
Down clov’n to the waste, with shatterd Armes
And uncouth° paine fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a Rock of Diamond Armd,
Vanquish’d Adramelec, and Asmadai,
Two potent Thrones, that to be less then Gods
Disdain’d, but meaner thoughts learnd in thir flight,
Mangl’d with gastly wounds through Plate and Maile,
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy°
The Atheist crew, but with redoubld blow
Ariel and Arioc, and the violence
Of Ramiel scorcht and blasted overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and thir names
Eternize here on Earth; but those elect
Angels contented with thir fame in Heav’n
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort
In might though wondrous and in Acts of Warr,

355–6 might of Gabriel. Mighty Gabriel (Homeric diction).  Ensignes. Banners, which identify the
several divisions of troops.  array. Thick rows of troops.
365. Adramelec. King of fire, the Babylonian sun god worshiped in Samaria with human sacrifice (2 Kgs 17:31).
Asmadai. Asmodeus, creature of judgment, the evil spirit of the Apocryphal book of Tobit (see PL 4.168).
fornicating with women in 1 Enoch 6:7. All three names are used of good and bad angels in rabbinical
and demonological texts.
Nor of Renown less eager, yet by doome
Cancel’d from Heav’n and sacred memorie,

Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from Truth divided and from Just,
Illaudable, unworthy of praise naught merits but dispraise
And ignominie, yet to glorie aspires
Vain glorious, and through infamie seeks fame:

Therfore Eternal silence be thir doome.

And now thir Mightiest quelled, the battel swerv’d, army fell back
With many an inrode gor’d; deformed rout
Enter’d, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shiverd armour strow’n, and on a heap

Chariot and Charioter lay overturnnd
And fierie foaming Steeds; what stood, recoyld those who
Orewearied, through the faint Satanic Host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris’d,
Then first with fear surpris’d and sense of paine

Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear or flight or paine.
Far otherwise th’ inviolable Saints angels
In Cubic Phalanx cube formation firm advanc’entire,

Invulnerable, impenetrably arm’d:
Such high advantages thir innocence
Gave them above thir foes, not to have sinnd,
Not to have disobei’d; in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious not liable, unable to be pain’d

By wound, though from thir place by violence mov’d.

Now Night her course began, and over Heav’n
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos’d,
And silence on the odious dinn of Warr:
Under her Cloudie covert both retir’d,

Victor and Vanquisht: on the foughten field
Michael and his Angels prevalent victorious
Encamping, plac’d in Guard thir Watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on th’ other part
Satan with his rebellious disappeard,

Far in the dark dislodg’d, and void of rest,

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383 **Ignominie.** Literally, namelessness (Latin).

393 **Defensive scarce.** Scarcely able to defend themselves.
His Potentates to Council call’d by night;  
And in the midst thus undismai’d began.  
O now in danger tri’d, now known in Armes  
Not to be overpowerd, Companions deare,  

420  Found worthy not of Libertie alone,  
Too mean pretense,\(^\circ\) but what we more affect,\(^\circ\)  
Honour, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne,  
Who have sustaind one day in doubtful° fight  
(And if one day, why not Eternal dayes?)  

425  What Heavens Lord had powerfullest to send  
Against us from about his Throne, and judg’d  
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,  
Of future° we may deem him, though till now  

430  Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm’d,  
Some disadvantage we endur’d and paine,  
Till now not known, but known as soon contemnd,  
Since now we find this our Empyreal form  
Incapable of mortal injurie  

435  Imperishable, and though pierc’d with wound,  
Soon closing, and by native vigour heal’d.  
Of evil then so small as easie think  
The remedie; perhaps more valid° Armes,  
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  

440  May serve to better us, and worse° our foes,  
Or equal what between us made the odds,  
In Nature none: if other hidden cause  
Left them Superior, while we can preserve  
Unhurt our mindes, and understanding sound,  

445  Due search and consultation will disclose.  

He sat; and in th’ assembly next upstood  
Nisroc, of Principalities the prime;  
As one he stood escap’t from cruel fight,  
Sore toild, his riv’n° Armes to havoc hewn,  

450  And cloudie in aspect thus answering spake.  
Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard

416. Nocturnal councils called by an army defeated in a battle are common in epic.  
441–2 made the odds. Gave them the advantage, since “Nature” gives them none.  
For Gods, and too unequal work we find
Against unequal arms to fight in paine,
Against unpaind, impassive;° from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what availes
Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss° the hands
Of Mightiest. Sense of pleasure we may well

Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect miserie, the worst
Of evils, and excessive, overturnes
All patience. He who therefore can invent

With what more forcible we may offend°
Our yet unwounded Enemies, or arme
Our selves with like defence, to me° deserves
No less then for deliverance what we owe.

Where to with look compos’d Satan repli’d.

Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believst so main° to our success, I bring;
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this Ethereous mould° whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heav’n, adornd

With Plant, Fruit, Flour Ambrosial, Gemms & Gold,
Whose Eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind° from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spiritous and fierie spume, till toucht

With Heav’ns ray, and temperd they shoot forth
So beauteous, op’ning to the ambient° light.
These in th’ dark Nativitie the Deep
Shall yield us pregnant with infernal° flame,
Which into hallow Engins° long and round

Thick-rammd, at th’ other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate shall send forth

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468. i.e., We would owe such a one our deliverance.
477–82 spiritous and fiery spume. See below, lines 511–12, “Sulphurous and Nitrous Foame”; these “dark and crude” materials touched by “Heav’n’s ray” become all the “beauteous” features of Heaven’s landscape (474–5). Satan proposes to mine these elements in their “dark Nativitie.”
485–6 Thick-rammd. Compactly packed. bore. The touch-hole into which gunpowder is poured to serve as fuse for the charge. Dilated and infuriate. Exploding violently. Cannon and gunpowder were often described as originating in hell.
From far with thundring noise among our foes
Such implements of mischief as shall dash
To pieces, and overwhelm whatever stands

490 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd
The Thunderer of his only\textsuperscript{°} dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour, yet ere dawne,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd

495 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.
He ended, and his words thir drooping chere\textsuperscript{°}
Enlightn'd, and thir languisht hope reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd,\textsuperscript{°} and each, how hee
To be th' inventor miss'd, so ease it seem'd

500 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible: yet haply\textsuperscript{°} of thy Race
In future dayes, if Malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With dev'lish machination might devise

505 Like instrument to plague the Sons of men
For sin, on warr and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from Counsell to the work they flew,
None arguing stood, innumerable hands
Were ready, in a moment up they turnd

510 Wide the Celestial soile, and saw beneath
Th' originals\textsuperscript{°} of Nature in thir crude
Conception; Sulphurous and Nitrous\textsuperscript{°} Foame
They found, they mingl'd, and with suttle Art,
Concocted\textsuperscript{°} and adusted\textsuperscript{°} they reduc'd

515 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd:
Part hidd'n veins diggd up (nor hath this Earth
Entrails unlike) of Mineral and Stone,
Whereof to found thir Engins and thir Balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed

520 Provide, pernicious\textsuperscript{°} with one touch to fire.
So all ere day-spring,\textsuperscript{°} under conscious\textsuperscript{°} Night

493. i.e., we will achieve ("effect") our "wish."

515 blackest grain. Gunpowder; its ingredients are saltpeter and sulphur (512).

516–20 Part. Some of them cast ("found") cannon and cannonballs ("Engins" and "Balls") sending a message of destruction ("missive ruin"), with a play on missile. part. Some "Provide" the kindling ("incentive reed") to ignite ("fire") the cannon.
Secret they finish’d, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unespi’d.
Now when fair Morn Orient° in Heav’n appeard
      | East
Up rose the Victor Angels, and to Arms
The matin° Trumpet Sung: in Arms they stood
Of Golden Panoplie,° refulgent° Host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning Hills
Lookd round, and Scouts each Coast light-armed scoure,
Each quarter, to descrie the distant foe,
Where lodg’d, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in alt:° him soon they met
      | halt
Under spred Ensignes° moving nigh, in slow
But firm Battalion; back with speediest Sail
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid Aire aloud thus cri’d.
      | battle flags
Arme, Warriours, Arme for fight, the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day, fear not his flight; so thick a Cloud
He comes, and settl’d in his face I see
Sad° resolution and secure:° let each
His Adamantine° coat gird well, and each
Fit well his Helme, gripe fast his orbed Shield,
Born eevn° or high, for this day will pour down,
      | military baggage
If I conjecture aught, no drizling showr,
But ratling storm of Arrows barbd with fire.
So warnd he them aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;°
Instant without disturb they took Allarm,
And onward move Embattelld;° when behold
Not distant far with heavie pace the Foe
Approaching gross° and huge; in hollow Cube
      | compact
Training° his devilish Enginrie, impal’d°
On every side with shaddowing Squadrons Deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview° both stood
      | mutual view
A while, but suddenly at head appeerd
Satan: And thus was heard Commanding loud.
Vanguard, to Right and Left the Front unsoild;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek

549 without disturb. Without loss of composure. took Allarm. Responded to the call to arms.
Peace and composure, and with open brest
Stand readie to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt, however witness Heauen,
Heav’n witness thou anon, while we discharge

Freely our part; yee who appointed stand
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended; when to Right and Left the Front

Divided, and to either Flank retir’d.
Which to our eyes discovered new and strange,
A triple mounted row° of Pillars laid
On Wheels (for like to Pillars most they seem’d
Or hollow’d bodies made of Oak or Firr

With branches lopt, in Wood or Mountain fell’d)
Brass, Iron, Stonie mould,° had not thir mouthes
With hideous orifice gap’t on us wide,
Portending hollow° truce; at each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a Reed

Stood waving tipt with fire; while we suspense,°
Collected stood within our thoughts amus’d,°
Not long, for sudden all at once thir Reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent° appli’d
With nicest° touch. Immediate in a flame,

But soon obscur’d with smoak, all Heav’n appeard,
From those deep throated Engins belcht, whose roar
Embowed° with outrageous noise the Air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foule
Thir devilish glut, chain’d Thunderbolts and Hail

Of Iron Globes, which on the Victor Host
Level’d, with such impetuous furie smote,
That whom they hit, none on thir feet might stand,

560–7. The passage is full of puns, e.g., “Peace” (and piece, a weapon); “composure” (settlement of disputes and construction [of weapons]); “brest” (heart/the forward line of a military formation); “overture” (offer to negotiate/opening, the bore of the cannon); “discharge . . . charge” (perform our duty/fire our explosives); “appointed” (chosen/equipped); “touch” (state/ignite, touch off); “propound” (propose/crush by beating).

576–90. These lines contain numerous debased puns relating to bodily functions, e.g., “mouthes,” “orifice,” “behind,” “narrow vent,” “deep throated,” “belcht,” “Embowed,” “entrails,” “disgorging,” “glut,” “Iron Globes.”

589 chain’d Thunderbolts. Chain shot, cannonballs linked together.
Though standing else as Rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel rowl’d;
The sooner for thir Arms, unarm’d they might
Have easily as Spirits evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foule dissipation° follow’d and forc’t rout;
Nor serv’d it to relax thir serried° files.

What should they do? if on they rusht, repulse
Repeated, and indecent° overthow
Doubl’d, would render them yet more despis’d,
And to thir foes a laughter; for in view
Stood rankt of Seraphim another row
Of Thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorr’d. Satan beheld thir plight,
And to his Mates thus in derision call’d.

Ere while they fierce were coming, and when wee,
To entertain them fair with open Front
And Brest, (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, strait they chang’d thir minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries° fell,
As they would dance, yet for a dance they seemd
Somwhat extravagant and wilde, perhaps
For joy of offerd peace: but I suppose
If our proposals once again were heard
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesom mood.
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg’d home,
Such as we might perceive amus’d them all,
And stumbl’d many, who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They shew us when our foes walk not upright.

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611–12. More puns: “entertain” (welcome/engage an enemy); “open Front” (candid face/front rank of troops);
“Brest” (heart/forward line of a military company).
613 composition. Another pun (truce/composition of gunpowder).
621–7. Belial puns on “terms of weight” (solid negotiating terms/heavy cannonballs); “amus’d” (held their
attention/bewildered them); “stumbl’d” (nonplussed/tripped up); “understand” (comprehend/support); “walk
not upright” (deal dishonestly/cannot stand on their feet).
So they among themselves in pleasant\textsuperscript{o} veine
Stood scoffing, hightn’d in thir thoughts beyond

630 All doubt of Victorie, eternal might
To match with thir inventions they presum’d
So easie, and of his Thunder made a scorn,
And all his Host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble; but they stood not long,

635 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac’d)
Thir Arms away they threw, and to the Hills

640 (For Earth hath this variety from Heav’n
Of pleasure situate in Hill and Dale)
Light as the Lightning glimps they ran, they flew,
From thir foundations loosing to and fro
They pluckt the seated\textsuperscript{o} Hills with all thir load,

645 Rocks, Waters, Woods, and by the shaggy tops
Up lifting bore them in thir hands: Amaze,\textsuperscript{o}
Be sure, and terroure seis’d the rebel Host,
When coming towards them so dread\textsuperscript{o} they saw
The bottom of the Mountains upward turn’d,

650 Till on those cursed Engins triple-row
They saw them whelm’d, and all thir confidence
Under the weight of Mountains buried deep,
Themselves invaded\textsuperscript{o} next, and on thir heads
Main\textsuperscript{o} Promontories flung, which in the Air

655 Came shadowing, and opprest\textsuperscript{o} whole Legions arm’d,
Thir armor help’d thir harm, crush’t in and bruis’d
Into thir substance pent,\textsuperscript{o} which wrought them pain
Implacable,\textsuperscript{o} and many a dolorous groan,
Long strugling underneath, ere they could wind

660 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest in imitation to like Armes
Betook them, and the neighbouring Hills uptore;
So Hills amid the Air encounterd Hills

665 Hurl’d to and fro with jaculation\textsuperscript{o} dire,
That under ground they fought in dismal shade;

643–6. The hurling of “Hills” as missiles is taken from the war between the Olympian gods and the Titans in Hesiod’s \textit{Theogony} 713–20.
Infernal noise; Warr seem’d a civil° Game
To° this uproar; horrid confusion heapt
Upon confusion rose: and now all Heav’n
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspred,
Had not th’ Almighty Father where he sits
Shrin’d in his Sanctuarie of Heav’n secure,
Consulting° on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis’d:\°
That his great purpose he might so fulfill,
To honour his Anointed Son aveng’d
Upon his enemies, and to declare°
All power on him transferr’d: whence to his Son
Th’ Assessor° of his Throne he thus began.
Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov’d,
Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by Deitie I am,
And in whose hand what by Decree I doe,
Second Omnipotence, two dayes are past,
Two dayes, as we compute the dayes of Heav’n,
Since Michael and his Powers went forth to tame
These disobedient; sore hath been thir fight,
As likeliest was, when two such Foes met arm’d;
For to themselves I left them, and thou knowst,
Equal in thir Creation they were form’d,
Save what sin hath impair’d, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly,° for I suspend thir doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found:
Warr wearied hath perform’d what Warr can do,
And to disorder’d rage let loose the reines,
With Mountains as with Weapons arm’d, which makes
Wild work in Heav’n, and dangerous to the maine.°
Two dayes are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain’d it, and thus farr
Have suffer’d,° that the Glorie may be thine
Of ending this great Warr, since none but Thou
Can end it. Into thee such Vertue and Grace

684 Second Omnipotence. Two omnipotences are a logical impossibility. Cf. John 5:19, “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do,” a text Milton cites in Christian Doctrine 1.5, to argue that the Son derives all power from the Father.
Immense I have transfus’d, that all may know

In Heav’n and Hell thy Power above compare,
And this perverse Commotion govern’d thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things, to be Heir and to be King
By Sacred Unction,° thy deserved right.

Go then thou Mightiest in thy Fathers might,
Ascend my Chariot, guide the rapid Wheeles
That shake Heav’ns basis,° bring forth all my Warr,
My Bow and Thunder, my Almighty Arms
Gird on, and Sword upon thy puissant Thigh;
Pursue these sons of Darkness, drive them out
From all Heav’ns bounds into the utter° Deep:
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed King.
He said, and on his Son with Rayes direct
Shon full, he all his Father full exprest
Ineffably° into his face receiv’d,
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake.
O Father, O Supream of heav’ny Thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou alwayes seekst
To glorifie thy Son, I alwayes thee,
As is most just; this I my Glorie account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me well pleas’d, declarst thy will
Fulfill’d, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Scepter and Power, thy giving, I assume,
And gladier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be All in All, and I in thee
For ever, and in mee all whom thou lov’st:
But whom thou hat’st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
Armd with thy might, rid heav’n of these rebell’d,
To thir prepar’d ill Mansion driven down
To chains of darkness, and th’ undying Worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt.

731–3. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:24, 28: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God . . .
then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (See PL 3.339–41).
739 undying Worm. Cf. Mark 9:44: “[Hell is] Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”
Whom to obey is happiness entire.
Then shall thy Saints unmixt, and from th' impure
Farr separate, circling thy holy Mount
Unfeigned Halleluiahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.
So said, he o’er his Scepter bowing, rose
From the right hand of Glorie where he sate,
And the third sacred Morn began to shine
Dawning through Heav’n: forth rush’d with whirl-wind sound

The Chariot of Paternal Deitie,
Flashing thick flames, Wheele within Wheele undrawn,
It self instinct° with Spirit, but convoyd
By four Cherubic shapes, four Faces each
Had wondrous, as with Starrs thir bodies all
And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the wheels
Of Beril, and careering° Fires between;
Over thir heads a chrystal Firmament,
Whereon a Saphir Throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the showrie Arch°
Hee in Celestial Panoplie all armd
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended, at his right hand Victorie
Sate Eagle-wing’d, beside him hung his Bow
And Quiver with three-bolted Thunder stor’d,
And from about him fierce Effusion° rowld
Of smoak and bickering° flame, and sparkles dire;
Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
He onward came, farr off his coming shon,
And twentieth thousand (I thir number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen:
Hee on the wings of Cherub rode sublime°
On the Chrystallin Skie, in Saphir Thron’d.

750–61 Chariot of Paternal Deitie. The Son’s living chariot, with its four-faced Cherubim – the faces being man, lion, ox (or cherub), and eagle – is taken from Ezek. 1 and 10. See especially 10:12, “And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had.”

751 Undrawn. Moving by its own power.

755 And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the wheels
756 animated by
760 moving back and forth
765 copious emission
765 rainbow
770 lifted up

762–4 Victorie. Milton’s personification is based on Nike, the winged Greek goddess of victory, and on Jove’s bird, the eagle. three-bolted Thunder. Jove’s weapon is the three-forked thunderbolt.

Illustrious° farr and wide, but by his own
First seen, them unexpected joy surpriz’d,
When the great Ensign of Messiah blaz’d
Aloft by Angels born, his Sign in Heav’n:
Under whose Conduct Michael soon reduc’d°
His Armie, circumfus’d° on either Wing,
Under thir Head imbodied all in one.
Before him Power Divine his way prepar’d;
At his command the uprooted Hills retir’d
Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
Obsequious,° Heav’n his wonted face renew’d,
And with fresh Flourrets Hill and Valley smil’d.
This saw his hapless Foes but stood obdur’d,°
And to rebellious fight rallied thir Powers
Insensate,° hope conceiving from despair.
In heav’nly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?
But to convince the proud what Signs availe,
Or Wonders move th’ obdurate to relent?
They hard’nd more by what might most reclame,
Grieving° to see his Glorie, at the sight
Took envie, and aspiring to his highth,
Stood reimbattell’d fierce, by force or fraud
Weening° to prosper, and at length prevaile
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last, and now
To final Battel drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his Host on either hand thus spake.
Stand still in bright array ye Saints, here stand
Ye Angels arm’d, this day from Battel rest;
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous Cause,
And as ye have receivd, so have ye don
Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs,
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints;
Number to this dayes work is not ordain’d
Nor multitude, stand onely and behold

"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord which he will shew to you to day."
808 Vengeance is his. Cf. Rom. 12:19, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”
Gods indignation on these Godless pourd
By mee, not you but mee they have despis’d,
Yet envied; against mee is all thir rage,
Because the Father, t’ whom in Heav’n supream
Kingdom and Power and Glorie appertains,
Hath honourd me according to his will.
Therefore to mee thir doom he hath assig’n’d;
That they may have thir wish, to trie with mee
In Battel which the stronger proves, they all,
Or I alone against them, since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excells;
Nor other strife with them do I voutsafe.°
So spake the Son, and into terrour chang’d
His count’nance too severe to be beheld
And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies.
At once the Four spred out thir Starrie wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the Orbes
Of his fierce Chariot rowld, as with the sound
Of torrent Floods, or of a numerous Host.
Hee on his impious Foes right onward drove,
Gloomie° as Night; under his burning Wheeles
The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout,
All but the Throne it self of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv’d; in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand Thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in thir Soules infix’d
Plagues; they astonisht° all resistance lost,
All courage; down thir idle weapons drop’d;
O’re Shields and Helmes, and helmed heads he rode
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wisht the Mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag’d Foure,
Distinct° with eyes, and from the living Wheels,

Kingdom and Power and Glorie. Cf. Matt. 6:13, “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.”
the Four. The Four “Cherubic shapes” of line 753.
Mountains ... shelter. Cf. Rev. 6:16, the cry of the damned to the mountains, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”
See lines 753 and 827.
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes,  
One Spirit in them rul’d, and every eye
Glar’d lightning, and shot forth pernicious\(^{\circ}\) fire  
destructive

Among th’ accurst, that witherd all thir strength,  
And of thir wonted\(^{\circ}\) vigour left them drain’d,  
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall’n.
accustomed

Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check’d  
His Thunder in mid Volie,\(^{\circ}\) for he meant  
salvo

Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav’n:  
The overthrown he rais’d, and as a Heard  
Of Goats or timorous flock together throng’d  
Drove them before him Thunder-struck, pursu’d  
With terrors and with furies to the bounds

And Chrystal wall of Heav’n, which op’n’ing wide,  
Rowld\(^{\circ}\) inward, and a spacious Gap disclos’d  
Into the wastful\(^{\circ}\) Deep; the monstrous sight  
Strook them with horror backward, but far worse  
Urg’d them behind; headlong themselves they threw
turned desolate

Down from the verge of Heav’n, Eternal wrauth  
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard th’ unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
Heav’n ruining\(^{\circ}\) from Heav’n and would have fled  
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
falling

Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.  
Nine dayes they fell; confounded Chaos roard,  
And felt tenfold confusion in thir fall  
Through his wilde Anarchie, so huge a rout\(^{\circ}\)  
Incumberd\(^{\circ}\) him with ruin: Hell at last
defeated army burdened

Yawning receavd them whole, and on them clos’d,  
Hell thir fit habitation fraught with fire  
Unquenchable, the house of woe and paine.  
Disburnd Heav’n rejoic’d, and soon repaird  
Her mural\(^{\circ}\) breach, returning whence it rowld.
in the wall

Sole Victor from th’ expulsion of his Foes  
\textit{Messiah} his triumphal Chariot turnd:  
To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood

\textbf{853.} Cf. Hesiod’s Zeus, who put forth all his strength against the Titans (\textit{Theogony} 687–9).

\textbf{856–7} \textbf{Heard / Of Goats.} In the parable of the sheep and the goats, the latter were sent “into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:33, 41).

\textbf{871.} In Hesiod’s \textit{Theogony} (720–5) the Titans fell nine days from heaven to earth, and nine more days from earth to Tartarus.
Eye witnesses of his Almighty Acts,
With Jublie° advanc’d; and as they went,
Shaded with branching Palme, each order bright,
Sung Triumph, and him sung Victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him Dominion giv’n,
Worthiest to Reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid Heav’n, into the Courts
And Temple of his mightie Father Thron’d
On high: who into Glorie him receav’d,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
Thus measuring things in Heav’n by things on Earth
At thy request, and that thou maist beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal’d
What might have else to human Race bin hid;
The discord which befel, and Warr in Heav’n
Among th’ Angelic Powers,° and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell’d
With Satan, hee who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereavd of happiness thou maist partake
His punishment, Eternal miserie;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite don against the most High,
Thee once to gaine Companion of his woe.
But list’n not to his Temptations, warne
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard
By terrible Example the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

The End of the Sixth Book.
BOOK 7
THE ARGUMENT

Raphael at the request of Adam relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his Angels out of Heaven, declar’d his pleasure to create another World and other Creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with Glory and attendance of Angels to perform the work of Creation in six dayes: the Angels celebrate with Hymns the performance thereof, and his reascent into Heaven.

Descend from Heav’n Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call’d, whose Voice divine
Following, above th’ Olympian Hill I soare,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.

The meaning, not the Name I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell’st, but Heav’nlie borne,
Before the Hills appeerd, or Fountain flow’d,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy Sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th’ Almighty Father, pleas’d
With thy Celestial Song. Up led by thee
Into the Heav’n of Heav’ns I have presum’d,
An Earthlie Guest, and drawn Empyreal Aire,
Thy tempring; with like safetie guided down
Return me to my Native Element:
Least from this flying Steed unrein’d, (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower Clime)
Dismounted, on th’ Aleian Field I fall
20 Erroneous there to wander and forlorne.
Half yet remaines unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible Diurnal Spheare;
Standing on Earth, not rapt\(^\circ\) above the Pole,
More safe I Sing with mortal voice, unchang’d
25 To hoarse or mute, though fall’n on evil dayes,
On evil dayes though fall’n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compast round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit’st my slumbers Nightly, or when Morn
30 Purples the East: still govern thou my Song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive farr off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the Race
Of that wilde Rout that tore the Thracian Bard
35 In Rhodope, where Woods and Rocks had Eares
To rapture, till the savage clamor dround
Both Harp and Voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her Son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art Heav’nlie, shee an empty dreame.
40 Say Goddess, what ensu’d when Raphael,
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn’d
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostasie,\(^\circ\) by what befell in Heaven
To those Apostates, least the like befall
45 In Paradise to Adam or his Race,
Charg’d not to touch the interdicted\(^\circ\) Tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,

22 **Diurnal Spheare.** The universe, which seems to rotate daily, is the scene for the remainder of the epic.
25–8. After the Restoration of Charles II (May 1660) until the passage of the Act of Oblivion (August 1660), Milton was in danger of death and dismemberment (like Orpheus, lines 34–5). Several of his republican colleagues were hanged, drawn, and quartered for their part in the revolution and regicide.
29–30. Milton’s early biographers report that he composed at night or in the early hours of the morning, then waited for a scribe to take down his dictation.
32–7 **Thracian Bard.** Orpheus, the archtypal poet, whose “Harp and Voice” charmed even “Woods and Rocks,” but were drowned out by the Bacchantes, a “wilde Rout” of screaming women who murdered and dismembered him in the “Rhodope” mountains in Thrace, and threw his body parts into the river Hebrus (cf. “Lycidas,” 58–63). Milton fears that a similar “barbarous dissonance” unleashed by the Restoration royalists will drown his voice and threaten his life.
37–8 **Muse.** Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, was the mother of Orpheus.
40–50. The second epic question (paralleling 1.27–33), signals that Book 7 is the beginning, structurally, of the poem’s second half; Virgil makes a similar gesture in Book 7 of the *Aeneid.*
So easily obeyd amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please thir appetite,

Though wandring. He with his consorted\textsuperscript{°} Eve 
The storie heard attentive, and was fill’d
With admiration,\textsuperscript{o} and deep Muse\textsuperscript{o} to heare
Of things so high and strange, things to thir thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heav’n,

And Warr so neer the Peace of God in bliss
With such confusion: but the evil soon
Driv’n back redounded\textsuperscript{°} as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With Blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal’d\textsuperscript{°}

The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
Led on, yet\textsuperscript{o} sinless, with desire to know
What neerer might concern him, how this World
Of Heav’n and Earth conspicuous\textsuperscript{o} first began,
When, and whereof created, for what cause,

What within Eden or without was done
Before his memorie, as one whose drouth\textsuperscript{o}
Yet scarce allay’d still eyes the current\textsuperscript{o} streame,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his Heav’nly Guest.

Great things, and full of wonder in our eares,
Farr differing from this World, thou hast reveal’d
Divine interpreter, by favour sent
Down from the Empyrean to forewarne
Us timely of what might else have bin our loss,

Unknown, which human knowledg could not reach:
For which to the infinitly Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receave with solemne purpose to observe
Immutably his sovran will, the end\textsuperscript{o}

Of what we are. But since thou hast voutsaf’t\textsuperscript{o}
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above Earthly thought, which yet concernd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate

What may no less perhaps availe us known,
How first began this Heav’n which we behold
Distant so high, with moving Fires\textsuperscript{o} adornd

Innumerable, and this which yeelds or fills
All space, the ambient Aire wide interfus’d
Imbracing round this florid° Earth, what cause
Mov’d the Creator in his holy Rest
Through all Eternitie so late to build
In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon
Absolv’d,° if unforbid thou maist unfould
What wee, not to explore the secrets aske
Of his Eternal Empire, but the more
To magnifie° his works, the more we know.
And the great Light of Day yet wants to run
Much of his Race though steep, suspens° in Heav’n
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he heares,
And longer will delay to heare thee tell
His Generation,° and the rising Birth
Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:
Or if the Starr of Eevning° and the Moon
Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring
Silence, and Sleep listning to thee will watch°
Or we can bid his absence, till thy Song
End, and dismiss thee ere the Morning shine.
Thus Adam his illustrious Guest besought:
And thus the Godlike Angel answerd milde.
This also thy request with caution askt
Obtain: though to recount Almightie works
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorifie the Maker, and inferr°
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing, such Commission from above
I have receav’d, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions° hope

88–9 **ambient Aire.** The surrounding air “yeelds” to solids or “fills” the spaces between them. *interfus’d.* *Interfusus,* poured between (Latin).
90–3. Adam’s question about God’s actions before the Creation was often cited by theologians as an example of presumptuous and dangerous speculation, especially when, as here, it implies mutability in God. But in Milton’s Eden error that is not deliberate is not sinful.
98–106. Pleas to continue a story are common in epic, see *Odyssey* 11.372–6, where Alcinous urges Odysseus to continue speaking until dawn.
103 **Deep.** Chaos, invisible (“unapparent”) because dark and without form.
Things not reveal’d, which th’ invisible King,
Onely Omniscient, hath supprest in Night,
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:

Anough is left besides to search and know.
But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her Temperance over Appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain,
Oppresses else with Surfet, and soon turns

Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Winde.

Know then, that after *Lucifer* from Heav’n
(So call him, brighter once amidst the Host
Of Angels, then that Starr the Starrs among)
Fell with his flaming Legions through the Deep

Into his place, and the great Son returnd
Victorious with his Saints, th’ Omnipotent

Eternal Father from his Throne beheld
Thir multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious Foe hath fail’d, who thought

All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deitie supream, us dispossesst,
He trusted to have seis’d, and into fraud°

Drew many, whom thir place knows here no more;

Yet farr the greater part have kept, I see,
Thir station, Heav’n yet populous retaines
Number sufficient to possess her Realmes
Though wide, and this high Temple to frequent
With Ministeries due and solemn Rites:

But least his heart exalt him in the harme
Already done, to have dispeopl’d Heav’n
My damage fondly° deem’d, I can repaire
That detriment, if such it be to lose

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125 Knowledge is as food. A commonplace. Cf. Davanant, *Gondibert* (1651): “For though books serve
as diet for the mind, / If knowledge, early got, self-value breeds, / By false digestion it is turned to wind,
/ And what would nourish on the eater feeds” (2.8.22–5).

131–3 *Lucifer*. Now known as Satan, he is brighter among the angels than the morning star of that name is
among the other stars.

135 *us dispossesst*. Once he had dispossessed us (a Latinism).

142 *thir place*. Echoes Job 7:10, about the dead: “He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his
place know him any more.”

144 greater part. Cf. Satan’s conflicting representations of the numbers of the rebels (1.633, 6.156. 9.141–2)
and see 2.692.
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another World, out of one man a Race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till by degrees of merit rais’d
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tri’d,
And Earth be chang’d to Heav’n, & Heav’n to Earth,
One Kingdom, Joy and Union without end.
Mean while inhabit laxe,° ye Powers of Heav’n,
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform, speak thou, and be it don:
My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
I send along, ride forth, and bid the Deep
Within appointed bounds be Heav’n and Earth,
Boundless the Deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I uncircumscrib’d my self retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, Necessitie and Chance
Approach not mee, and what I will is Fate.
So spake th’ Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the Acts of God, more swift

154 in a moment. See below, 176–8.
156–9 under long obedience tri’d. Cf. Raphael’s explanation of how man was intended to improve (5.469–503). See Areopagitica on human nature and life in Eden: “many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress, foolish tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing . . . God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object, ever almost in his eyes; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did he creat passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly temper’d are the very ingredients of vertu?”
163–5. Milton’s God identifies himself as Creator and the Son as his agent, speaking his creating word; cf. Christian Doctrine 1.5: “The Son . . . was the first of the whole creation, by whom afterwards all other things were made.” The “Spirit” probably means the power of God, as Christian Doctrine 1.7 indicates.
168–73. Milton’s God creates out of Chaos, not out of nothing (ex nihilo) as most theologians held. The matter of Chaos emanated from God, and because God fills “Infinitude” Chaos (“the Deep”) is infinite. God chooses when to “retire” or restrict his “goodness” (active power) to the empyreal heavens, leaving Chaos subject to “Chance” and to other agents. God also freely chooses when to put forth that “goodness” into Chaos and create heaven, the universe, and all creatures from it; his power is limited neither by “Necessitie” nor “Chance,” which are causes of creation in some ancient philosophy (cf. Christian Doctrine 1.7; PL 2.955–1009, 10.282–305).
176–9. Raphael explains the principle of accommodation, whereby God’s acts, which are “Immediate” and so described in some commentary on Genesis, are translated into the narrative terms humans can understand, here, a six-day Creation. This principle allows an escape from biblical literalism. Cf. the Creation account given by Uriel to Satan disguised as a Cherub (3.705–21).
Then time or motion, but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion° can receive.

Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav’n
When such was heard declar’d the Almighty’s will;
Glorie they sung to the most High, good will
To future men, and in thir dwellings peace:
Glorie to him whose just avenging ire

Had driven out th’ ungodly from his sight
And th’ habitations of the just; to him
Glorie and praise, whose wisdom had ordain’d
Good out of evil to create, in stead
Of Spirits maligne a better Race to bring

Into thir vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to Worlds° and Ages infinite.
So sang the Hierarchies;° Mean while the Son
On his great Expedition now appeer’d,
Girt with Omnipotence, with Radiance crown’d

Of Majestie Divine, Sapience° and Love
Immense, and all his Father in him shon.
About his Chariot numberless were pour’d°
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
And Vertues, winged Spirits, and Chariots wing’d,

From the Armoury of God, where stand of old
Myriads between two brazen Mountains lodg’d
Against° a solemn day, harvest at hand,
Celestial Equipage;° and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them Spirit liv’d,

Attendant on thir Lord: Heav’n op’nd wide
Her ever during° Gates, Harmonious sound
On golden Hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glorie in his powerful Word
And Spirit coming to create new Worlds.

On heav’nly ground they stood, and from the shore
They view’d the vast immeasurable Abyss
Outrageous° as a Sea, dark, wasteful,° wilde,

182–3. Cf. Luke 2:14, the angels’ song at the birth of Jesus: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

199–201 Chariots wing’d. Cf. Zech. 6:1, “behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains . . . of brass.”

205–9 Harmonious sound. Cf. 2.880–1, and 565–8 below and note.
Up from the bottom turn’d by furious windes
And surging waves, as Mountains to assault

Heav’ns highth, and with the Center mix the Pole.
   Silence, ye troubl’d waves, and thou Deep, peace,
Said then th’ Omnific° Word, your discord end:
   Nor staid, but on the Wings of Cherubim
Uplifted, in Paternal Glorie rode

Farr into Chaos, and the World unborn;
   For Chaos heard his voice: him all his Traine
Follow’d in bright procession to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
   Then staid the fervid° Wheeles, and in his hand

He took the golden Compasses, prepar’d
   In Gods Eternal store, to circumscribe
This Universe, and all created things:
   One foot he center’d, and the other turn’d
Round through the vast profunditie obscure,

And said, thus farr extend, thus farr thy bounds,
   This be thy just° Circumference, O World.°
Thus God the Heav’n created, thus the Earth,
   Matter unform’d and void: Darkness profound
Cover’d th’ Abyss: but on the watrie calme

His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspred,
   And vital vertue° infus’d, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid Mass, but downward purg’d
The black tartareous cold Infernal dregs
Adverse to life: then founded,° then conglob’d°

Like things to like, the rest to several place
   Disparted,° and between spun out the Air,
And Earth self ballanc’t on her Center hung.
   Let ther be Light, said God, and forthwith Light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure

225 golden Compasses. Wisdom, in Prov. 8:27, declares, “When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.”

233–5 Matter unform’d and void. Cf. Gen. 1:2, “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Cf. PL 1.21–2.


243. God’s creating words, here and later, are quoted almost exactly from Gen. 1 (cf. chapters 1 and 2), but Milton freely elaborates the creatures’ responses.

244 Ethereal. Ether was thought to be a fifth element or “quintessence,” the substance of the celestial bodies above the moon.
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’d thir Golden Harps, and hymning prais’d
God and his works, Creatour him they sung,

Both when first Eveving was, and when first Morn.

Again, God said, let ther be Firmament
Amid the Waters, and let it divide
The Waters from the Waters: and God made
The Firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,

Transparent, Elemental Air, diffus’d
In circuit to the uttermost convex°
Of this great Round:° partition firm and sure,
The Waters underneath from those above
Dividing: for as Earth, so he the World

Built on circumfluous° Waters calme, in wide
Crystallin Ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos farr remov’d, least fierce extreames
Contiguous might distemper° the whole frame:
And Heav’n° he nam’d the Firmament: So Eev’n

And Morning Chorus sung the second Day.
The Earth was form’d, but in the Womb as yet

Eev’n and Morn. One twenty-four-hour period measured from sundown to sundown, in the Jewish manner.

Firmament. The space between the earth and the outer shell ("uttermost convex") of the universe, filled with transparent air; it is the visible "Heav’n" or sky (274), not the ethereal heaven where God and the angels reside. The "Waters underneath" are the oceans on which the earth rests; the waters "above" are the "circumfluous Waters," comprising a "Crystallin Ocean" that surrounds the outer shell of the universe; "Chaos" is thereby "farr remov’d" from creation.

Earth is at first an "Embryo" enveloped in a "Womb . . . / Of Waters"; then she is herself the "great Mother" made ready ("Fermented") to conceive and bear every other creature. Milton draws on Lucretius, De Rerum Natura (2.991–8), for the concept of earth as Magna Mater and also on Ovid’s account of Creation (Metamorphoses 1.1–51).
Of Waters, Embryon° immature involv’d,°
Appeard not: over all the face of Earth
Main° Ocean flow’d, not idle, but with warme
Prolific humour° soft’ning all her Globe,
Fermented the great Mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial° moisture, when God said
Be gather’d now ye Waters under Heav’n
Into one place, and let dry Land appeer.
Emergent, and thir broad bare backs upheave
Into the Clouds, thir tops ascend the Skie:
So high as heav’d the tumid° Hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of Waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance,° uprowld
As drops on dust conglobing° from the drie;
Part rise in crystal Wall, or ridge direct,°
For haste; such flight the great command impress’d
On the swift flouds: as Armies at the call
Of Trumpet (for of Armies thou hast heard)
Troop to thir Standard, so the watrie throng,
Wave rowling° after Wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture,° if through Plaine,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them Rock or Hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With Serpent errour° wandring, found thir way,
And on the washie Oose deep Channels wore;
Easie, e’re God had bid the ground be drie,
All but within those banks, where Rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw thir humid traine.°
The dry Land, Earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated Waters he call’d Seas:
And saw that it was good, and said, Let th’ Earth
Put forth the verdant Grass, Herb yielding Seed,
And Fruit Tree yielding Fruit after her kind;
Whose Seed is in her self upon the Earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn’d,
Brought forth the tender Grass, whose verdure clad
Her Universal Face with pleasant green,
Then Herbs of every leaf, that sudden flour’d
Op’ning thir various colours, and made gay
Her bosom smelling sweet: and these scarce blown,° blossomed
Forth flourish’t thick the clustring Vine, forth crept
The swelling Gourd, up stood the cornie Reed
Embattell’d in her field: and the humble° Shrub,
low-growing
And Bush with frizl’d hair implicit:° last
tangled branches
Rose as in Dance the stately Trees, and spred° put forth
adorned
Thir branches hung with copious Fruit; or gemm’d°
Thir blossoms: with high woods the hills were crownd,
With tufts the vallies and each fountain side,
With borders long the Rivers. That Earth now
Seem like to Heav’n, a seat where Gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain’d
Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground
None was, but from the Earth a dewie Mist
Went up and waterd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field, which e’re it was in the Earth
God made, and every Herb, before it grew
On the green stemm; God saw that it was good.
So Eev’n and Morn recorded the Third Day.
Again th’ Almighty spake: Let there be Lights
High in th’ expanse of Heaven° to divide
the sky
The Day from Night; and let them be for Signes,
For Seasons, and for Dayes, and circling Years,
And let them be for Lights as I ordaine
Thir Office in the Firmament of Heav’n
To give Light on the Earth; and it was so.
And God made two great Lights, great for thir use
To Man, the greater to have rule by Day,
in turns
The less by Night alterne:° and made the Starrs,
And set them in the Firmament of Heav’n
To illuminate the Earth, and rule the Day
In thir vicissitude,° and rule the Night,
alternation
And Light from Darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great Work, that it was good:
For of Celestial Bodies first the Sun

321–2 cornie Reed. Stalks bearing grain; they appear as a forest of spears uplifted by a battalion ("Embattell’d"). Cf. 4.980–3.
331–7. Cf. Gen. 2:5–6: "[God made] every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."
A mightie Spheare he fram’d, unlightsom first,
Though of Ethereal° Mould: then form’d the Moon
Globose, and every magnitude of Starrs,
And sowd with Starrs the Heav’n thick as a field:
Of Light by farr the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudie Shrine, and plac’d
In the Suns Orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid Light, firm to retaine
Her gather’d beams, great Palace now of Light.
Hither as to thir Fountain other Starrs
Repairing, in thir gold’n Urns draw Light,
And hence the Morning Planet guilds her horns;
By tincture° or reflection they augment
Thir small peculiar,° though from human sight
So farr remote, with diminution seen.
First in the East his glorious Lamp was seen,
Regent of Day, and all th’ Horizon round
Invested with bright Rayses, jocond° to run
His Longitude through Heav’n’s high rode: the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc’d
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the Moon,
But opposite in leveld° West was set
His mirror, with full face borrowing her Light
From him, for other light she needed none
In that aspect,° and still that distance keepes
Till night, then in the East her turn she shines,
Revolvd on Heav’n’s great Axle, and her Reign
With thousand lesser Lights dividual° holds,
With thousand thousand Starres, that then appeer’d
Spangling the Hemisphere: then first adornd
With thir bright Luminaries that Set and Rose,
Glad Eevning and glad Morn crownd the fourth day.
And God said, let the Waters generate

360 cloudie Shrine. The “cloudie Tabernacle” (248 above) where light had been stored.
366 Morning Planet. probably Venus, which Galileo’s telescope found to be crescent-shaped (“guilds her horns”) in her first quarter. The 1667 edition has “his horns” which would refer to Lucifer, who was named by Raphael as the brightest star at 7.131 and is designated as the morning star in the Nativity Ode, 74. The change accommodates Galileo’s finding.
373 Longitude. Course round the ecliptic, from east to west (not the modern use of the term).
374–5 Pleiades. Seven daughters of Atlas, transformed to a cluster of stars known as the Seven Sisters; they rise in the spring and are thought to shed fertility (“sweet influence”) into the earth. Cf. Job 38:31, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades.”
Reptil with Spawn abundant, living Soule:
And let Fowle flie above the Earth, with wings

Reptil with Spawn abundant, living Soule:
And let Fowle flie above the Earth, with wings

And God created the great Whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by thir kindes,
And every Bird of wing after his kinde;

And saw that it was good, and bless’d them, saying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the Seas
And Lakes and running Streams the waters fill;
And let the Fowle be multiply’d on the Earth.
Forthwith the Sounds and Seas, each Creek and Bay

With Frie° innumerable swarame, and Shoales
Of Fish that with thir Finns and shining Scales
Glide under the green Wave, in Sculles that oft
Bank the mid Sea: part single or with mate
Graze the Sea weed thir pasture, and through Groves

Of Coral stray, or sporting with quick glance
Show to the Sun thir wav’d° coats dropt° with Gold,
Or in thir Pearlie shells at ease, attend°
Moist nutriment, or under Rocks thir food
In jointed Armour watch: on smooth° the Seale,

And bended° Dolphins play: part huge of bulk
Wallowing unweildie, enormous in thir Gate
Tempest° the Ocean: there Leviathan
Hugest of living Creatures, on the Deep
Stretcht like a Promontorie sleeps or swimmes,

And seems a moving Land, and at his Gilles
Draws in, and at his Trunck spouts out a Sea.
Mean while the tepid Caves, and Fens and shoares
Thir Brood as numerous hatch, from the Egg that soon
Bursting with kindly° rupture forth disclos’d

Thir callow young, but featherd soon and fledge
They summ’d thir Penns, and soaring th’ air sublime°
With clang° despis’d the ground, under a cloud

388 Reptil. All creatures that crawl or creep. They are the first animate creatures, having a “living Soule.”
402–3. The fishes’ darting motions resemble boats (“Sculles”) oared now on one side, now on the other; as they turn they seem to form a “Bank” within the sea.
412 Leviathan. The great whale (cf. 1.200–8).
420–1 callow. Unfeathered, but soon they have full plumage (“fledge”) and the wing feathers (“summ’d thir Penns”) needed for flight.
422–3 despis’d. Looked down upon (the literal meaning); the ground seemed to be under a cloud of birds.
In prospect; there the Eagle and the Stork
On Cliffs and Cedar tops thir Eyries build:

Part loosely\(^{o}\) wing the Region,\(^{o}\) part more wise
In common, rang’d in figure wedge\(^{o}\) thir way,
Intelligent\(^{o}\) of seasons, and set forth
Thir Aierie Caravan high over Sea’s
Flying, and over Lands with mutual wing

Easing thir flight; so stears the prudent Crane
Her annual Voyage, born on Winde; the Aire,
Floats,\(^{o}\) as they pass, fann’d with unnumber’d plumes:
From Branch to Branch the smaller Birds with song
Solac’d the Woods, and spred thir painted wings

Till Ev’n, nor then the solemn Nightingal
Ceas’d warbling, but all night tun’d her soft layes:
Others on Silver Lakes and Rivers Bath’d
Thir downie Brest; the Swan with Arched neck
Between her white wings mantling proudly, Rowes

Her state with Oarie feet: yet oft they quit
The Dank,\(^{o}\) and rising on stiff Pennons,\(^{o}\) towre\(^{o}\)
The mid Aereal Skie: Others on ground
Walk’d firm; the crested Cock whose clarion\(^{o}\) sounds
The silent hours, and th’ other\(^{o}\) whose gay Traine
Adorns him, colour’d with the Florid hue
Of Rainbows and Starrie Eyes. The Waters thus
With Fish replenisht, and the Aire with Fowle,
Ev’n ing and Morn solemniz’d the Fift day.

The Sixt, and of Creation last arose
With Eevning Harps and Mattin,\(^{o}\) when God said,
Let th’ Earth bring forth Soul living in her kinde,
Cattel\(^{o}\) and Creeping things, and Beast of the Earth,
Each in their kinde. The Earth obey’d, and strait
Op’ning her fertile Woomb teem’d\(^{o}\) at a Birth

Innumereous\(^{o}\) living Creatures, perfet formes,
Limb’d and full grown: out of the ground up rose
As from his Laire the wilde Beast where he wonns\(^{o}\)
In Forrest wilde, in Thicket, Brake, or Den;
Among the Trees in Pairs they rose, they walk’d:

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429–30 **mutual wing.** Birds were thought to support each other when they fly in formation.
438–40. The swan’s outstretched ("mantling") wings seem to form a cloak; it resembles a monarch on a royal barge ("state"), rowing itself with its "Oarie" feet.
The Cattle in the Fields and Meddowes green:
Those rare and solitarie, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad Herds upsprung.
The grassie Clods now Calv’d, now half appeer’d
The Tawnie Lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from Bonds,
And Rampant shakes his Brinded main; the Ounce,
The Libbard, and the Tyger, as the Moale
Rising, the crumbl’d Earth above them threw
In Hillocks; the swift Stag from under ground
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
Behemoth biggest born of Earth upheav’d
His vastness: Fleec’t the Flocks and bleating rose,
As Plants: ambiguous between Sea and Land
The River Horse and scale Crocodile.

At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or Worme; those waw’d thir limber fans
For wings, and smallest Lineaments exact
In all the Liveries dect of Summers pride
With spots of Gold and Purple, azure and green:
These as a line thir long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of Nature; some of Serpent kinde
Wondrous in length and corpulence involv’d
Thir Snakie fouls, and added wings. First crept
The Parsimonious Emmet, provident
Of future, in small room large heart enclos’d,
Pattern of just equalitie perhaps
Hereafter, join’d in her popular Tribes
Of Commonaltie: swarming next appeer’d

460–2 Those. The wild beasts who come forth “in Pairs” and spread out (“rare”) at wide intervals. these. Domestic cattle, who come forth “in flocks” and “broad Herds,” and at once find pasture.
471 Behemoth. A huge biblical beast (Job. 40:15–24), often identified with the elephant.
474 River Horse. Translates the Greek hippopotamus.
476 Worme. Any creeping creature, including serpents.
485–9 Parsimonious Emmet. The thrifty ant, with its capacious intellect (“large heart”) will become the symbol of a frugal and self-governing republic (“Pattern of just equalitie”), with the “popular” (populous, plebeian) tribes of common people (“Commonaltie”) joining in rule. In The Ready and Easy Way, Milton makes ant colonies a symbol “of a frugal and self governing democratice or Commonwealth; safer and more thriving in the joint providence and counsel of many industrious equals, then under the single domination of one imperious Lord.”
489–92 Deliciously. Bees here suggest delightful ease but become a symbol of monarchy associated with Hell (1.768–75).
The Female Bee that feeds her Husband Drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen Cells
With Honey stor’d: the rest are numberless,
And thou thir Natures know’st, & gav’st them Names,
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown

The Serpent suttl’st Beast of all the field,
Of huge extent somtimes, with brazen Eyes
And hairie Main terrific,° though to thee
terrifying
Not noxious,° but obedient at thy call.
𝗵𝗮𝗿𝗺𝗳𝘂𝗹
Now Heav’n in all her Glorie shon, and rowld

Her motions, as the great first-Movers hand
First wheeld thir course; Earth in her rich attire
Consummate° lovly smil’d; Aire, Water, Earth,
complete, perfect
By Fowl, Fish, Beast, was flown, was swum, was walkt
Frequent;° and of the Sixt day yet remain’d;
in throns, abundantly

There wanted yet the Master work, the end°
opurpose
Of all yet don; a Creature who not prone
And Brute as other Creatures, but endu’d
With Sanctitie of Reason, might erect
His Stature, and upright with Front° serene
brow, face
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with Heav’n,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart and voice and eyes
Directed in Devotion, to adore

And worship God Supream, who made him chief
Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (For where is not hee
Present) thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now Man in our image, Man

In our similitude, and let them rule

495–7 hairie Main. Evokes the sea serpents (Aeneid 2.203–11) who emerged from the sea to destroy Laocoon
and his sons, and so was instrumental in the fall of Troy.
508–9 erect. Both “stand erect” and “elevate his condition.” His erect stance was understood to signify that
he was intended for Heaven; see 8.257–61.
511 Magnanimous. Noble, great-souled. correspond. Both “be in harmony with” and “communicate
with.”
Bible comments that humans were created “after God in righteousnes & true holines, meaning by these two
wordes all perfection, as wisdome, truth, innocencie, power.” Commenting on Gen. 1:27, “So God cre-
amen in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them,” Milton
in Tetrachordon defines the divine image in man as “Wisdom, Purity, Justice, and rule over all creatures.”
Over the Fish and Fowle of Sea and Aire,
Beast of the Field, and over all the Earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he formd thee, Adam, thee O Man

Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath’d
The breath of Life; in his own Image hee
Created thee, in the Image of God
Express, and thou becam’st a living Soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort

Female for Race; then bless’d Mankinde, and said,
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth,
Subdue it, and throughout Dominion hold
Over Fish of the Sea, and Fowle of the Aire,
And every living thing that moves on the Earth.

Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence as thou know’st
He brought thee into this delicious Grove,
This Garden, planted with the Trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;

And freely all thir pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th’ Earth yields,
Varietie without end; but of the Tree
Which tasted works knowledge of Good and Evil,
Thou mai’st not; in the day thou eat’st, thou di’st;

Death is the penaltie impos’d, beware,
And govern well thy appetite, least sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
Here finish’d hee, and all that he had made
View’d, and behold all was entirely good;

So Ev’n and Morn accomplish’t the Sixt day:
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return’d
Up to the Heav’n of Heav’ns his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created World

Th’ addition of his Empire, how it shew’d
In prospect from his Throne, how good, how faire,
Answering his great Idea. Up he rode
Followd with acclamation and the sound

524–8. Cf. Gen. 2:7: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
557 Idea. Eternal archetype or pattern, as in Plato; concept in the mind of God.
Symphonious of ten thousand Harpes that tun’d° performed
Angelic harmonies: the Earth, the Aire Resounded, (thou remember’st for thou hearest) The Heav’ns and all the Constellations rung, The Planets in thir stations list’ning stood, While the bright Pomp° ascended jubilant. triumphal procession

Open, ye everlasting Gates, they sung, Open, ye Heav’ns, your living dores; let in The great Creator from his work return’d Magnificent, his Six days work, a World; Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deigne

To visit oft the dwellings of just Men Delighted, and with frequent intercourse° going back and forth Thither will send his winged Messengers On errands of supernal° Grace. So sung heavenly The glorious Train ascending: He through Heav’n,

That open’d wide her blazing° Portals, led radiant To Gods Eternal house direct the way, A broad and ample rode, whose dust is Gold And pavement Starrs, as Starrs to thee appeer, Seen in the Galaxie, that Milkie way

Which nightly as a circling Zone° thou seest belt Pouder’d° with Starrs. And now on Earth the Seventh scattered thickly Eev’n ing arose in Eden, for the Sun Was set, and twilight from the East came on, Forerunning Night; when at the holy mount

Of Heav’n’s high-seated top, th’ Impereal Throne Of Godhead, fixt for ever firm and sure, The Filial Power arriv’d, and sate him down With his great Father, for he° also went the Father Invisible, yet staid (such priviledge

Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordain’d, Author and end of all things, and from work Now resting, bless’d and hallowd the Seav’nth day, As resting on that day from all his work, But not in silence holy kept; the Harp

Had work and rested not, the solemn Pipe, And Dulcimer, all Organs° of sweet stop, wind instruments All sounds on Fret by String or Golden Wire

565–7. Cf. Ps. 24:7: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.” See lines 205–9 above.

Temper’d° soft Tunings,° intermixt with Voice Choral° or Unison; of incense Clouds

Temper’d soft Tunings,° intermixt with Voice harmonized / sounds Choral° or Unison; of incense Clouds in parts

Fuming from Golden Censers hid the Mount.

Creation and the Six dayes acts they sung,
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy power; what thought can measure thee or tongue Relate thee; greater now in thy return

Then from the Giant Angels; thee that day
Thy Thunders magnifi’d; but to create
Is greater then created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy Empire? easily the proud attempt

Of Spirits apostat and thir Counsels vaine
Thou hast repeld, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seekes
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves

To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat’st more good.
Witness this new-made World, another Heav’n
From Heaven Gate not far, founded in view
On the cleer Hyaline, the Glassie Sea;

Of amplitude almost immense,° with Starr’s
Numerous, and every Starr perhaps a World
Of destind habitation; but thou know’st
Thir seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth with her nether Ocean circumfus’d,°

Thir pleasant dwelling place. Thrice happie men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc’t,
Created in his Image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his Works, on Earth, in Sea, or Air,

And multiply a Race of Worshippers

600 **Golden Censers**. Incense burners, cf. Rev. 8:3–4: “another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints . . . And the smoke of the incense . . . ascended up before God.”

605 **Giant Angels**. This allusion to the Giants’ revolt against Jove implies that the Greek myth is a classical type or version of the angels’ rebellion.

618–20 **Hyaline**. From the Greek for glass (Rev. 4:6, “a sea of glass like unto crystal”). The universe is constructed (“founded”) on this sea, the “Crystallin Ocean” above the firmament (see line 271 above), as opposed to the “nether Ocean” (624), the earth’s seas.
Holy and just: thrice happy if they know
Thir happiness, and persevere upright.
So sung they, and the Empyrean rung,
With Halleluiahs: Thus was Sabbath kept.

And thy request think now fulfill’d, that ask’d
How first this World and face of things° began,
And what before thy memorie was don
From the beginning, that posteritie
Inform’d by thee might know; if else thou seek’st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.

The End of the Seventh Book.

631–2. Contrast Virgil, Georgics 2.458–9, on the happiness of farmers who live in harmony with an abundant nature: “O happy husbandmen! too happy, should they come to know their blessings!”

634 Halleluiahs. Hebrew, Praise the Lord.
Figure 6  Illustration to Book 8, 1688 (John Baptista Medina)
BOOK 8
THE ARGUMENT

Adam inquires concerning celestial Motions, is doubtfully answer’d, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents, and still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remember’d since his own Creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and Nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the Angel thereupon; who after admonitions repeated departs.

The Angel ended, and in Adams Eare
So Charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixt to hear;
Then as new wak’t thus gratefully repli’d.

What thanks sufficient, or what recompence
Equal have I to render thee, Divine
Hystorian, who thus largely hast allayd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and voutsaf’t
This friendly condescension to relate

Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glorie attributed to the high
Creator; something yet of doubt remaines,
Which onely thy solution can resolve.

When I behold this goodly Frame, this World
Of Heav’n and Earth consisting, and compute,
Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a graine,
An Atom, with the Firmament compar’d
And all her numberd Starrs, that seem to rowle

Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Thir distance argues and thir swift return
Diurnal meerly to officiate light
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,

1 doubtfully. Ambiguously.

14. Introducing Raphael’s prototype of astronomical treatises, notably Galileo’s Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems (Italian, 1632; Latin and English trans., 1635). Adam stands in the place of Galileo’s Sagredo, an intelligent inquirer who seeks to be informed about the movement of the planets, while Raphael takes on the role, first, of the Ptolemaic apologist (Simplicio), then of the Copernican (Salviati).

15–38. Relying on his senses, Adam assumes the universe is Ptolemaic, but finds logical difficulties in that system. Cf. Eve’s question at 4:657–8, and Adam’s answer.
One day and night; in all thir vast survey

Useless besides, reasoning I oft admire,° wonder
How Nature wise and frugal could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many nobler Bodies to create,
Greater so manifold° to this one use,

For aught appeers,° and on thir Orbs impose
Such restless revolution day by day
Repeated, while the sedentarie° Earth,
That better might with farr less compass° move,
Serv’d by more noble then her self, attaines

Her end without least motion, and receaves,
As Tribute such a sumless° journey brought
Of incorporeal° speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness Number failes.

So spake our Sire, and by his count’nance seemd

Perceaving where she sat retir’d in sight,
With lowliness Majestic from her seat,
And Grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her Fruits and Flours,
To visit° how they prosper’d, bud and bloom,
Her Nurserie;° they at her coming sprung
And toucht by her fair tendance gladlier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her eare

Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv’d,
Adam relating, she sole Auditress;
Her Husband the Relater she preferr’d
Before the Angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; hee, she knew would intermix

Grateful° digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal Caresses, from his Lip
Not Words alone pleas’d her. O when meet now
Such pairs, in Love and mutual Honour joyn’d?
With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went;

Not unattended, for on her as Queen

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52–7 preferr’d. The emphasis on Eve’s choice indicates that she is not bound by Paul’s prohibition in 1 Cor. 14:35, “If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church,” but observes this hierarchical decorum for her own pleasure.
A pomp° of winning Graces waited still,° retinue / continually
And from about her shot Darts of desire
Into all Eyes to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now to Adam’s doubt propos’d

65 Benevolent and facil° thus repli’d.
easy, affable
To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav’n
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works, and learne
His Seasons, Hours, or Dayes, or Months, or Yeares:

70 This to attain, whether Heav’n move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reck’n right, the rest
From Man or Angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann’d° by them who ought examined

75 Rather admire;° or if they list to try
Conjecture, he his Fabric° of the Heav’ns
Edifice, frame
Hath left to thir disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at thir quaint° Opinions wide° ingenious / wide of the mark
Hereafter, when they come to model Heav’n

80 And calculate° the Starrs, how they will weild° predict the motions of / direct
The mightie frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appeerances, how gird the Sphear With Centric and Eccentric scrib’d o’re,
Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb:

85 Alreadie by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy ofspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heav’n such journies run,
Earth sitting still, when she alonereceaves

61 Graces. The attendants of Venus.
62–3 Darts of desire. The Petrarchan language identifies Eve’s graces as prompting desire, but the next line redefines that desire in non-sexual terms.
71–5 the rest. Presumably, God’s purposes and designs throughout the whole universe (“His secrets”) – as opposed to the specific factual issue, “whether Heav’n move or Earth” (70), which may be blamelessly searched but which “Imports not” to a proper admiration of God’s “wondrous Works” (68).
82 save appeerances. Find ways of explaining discrepancies between their astronomical theories and the observed movements of the heavenly bodies.
83–4 Eccentric. Off-center. In the Ptolemaic system, observed irregularities in the motion of heavenly bodies were first explained by hypothesizing orbits with the earth off-center, then by adding “Epicycles,” which were smaller orbits whose centers ride on fixed points on the circumferences of the main orbits, and carry the planets. The Copernican system also had some recourse to epicycles.
90  The benefit: consider first, that Great
    Or Bright imferers° not Excellence: the Earth
    Though, in comparison of Heav’n, so small,
    Nor glistening,° may of solid good containe
    More plenty then the Sun that barren shines,
95  Whose vertue on it self workes no effect,
    But in the fruitful Earth; there first receavd
    His beams, unactive° else, thir vigour find.
    Yet not to Earth are those bright Luminaries
    Officious,° but to thee Earths habitant.
100  And for the Heav’ns wide Circuit, let it speak
    The Makers high magnificence, who built
    So spacious, and his Line stretcht out so farr;
    That Man may know he dwells not in his own;
    An Edifice too large for him to fill,
105  Lodg’d in a small partition, and the rest
    Ordain’d for uses to his Lord best known.
    The swiftness of those Circles° attribute,
    Though numberless,° to his Omnipotence,
    That to corporeal substances could adde
110  Speed almost Spiritual;° mee thou thinkest not slow,
    Who since the Morning hour set out from Heav’n
    Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv’d
    In Eden, distance inexpressible
    By Numbers that have name. But this I urge,
115  Admitting Motion in the Heav’ns, to shew
    Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov’d;
    Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
    To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.
    God to remove his wayes from human sense,
120  Plac’d Heav’n from Earth so farr, that earthly sight,
    If it presume, might erre in things too high,
    And no advantage gaine. What if the Sun
    Be Center to the World,° and other Starrs
    By his attractive vertue° and their own
125  Incited, dance about him various rounds?°

90. Raphael here begins his rationale for the Ptolemaic system.
117–18 Not that I so affirm. Raphael refuses to “reveal” astronomical truth to Adam, leaving that matter open to human scientific speculation. He suggests that Adam’s Ptolemaic assumptions result from his earth-bound perspective, and implies that angels from their perspective see the cosmos in other terms.
122–58 Raphael now argues the case for Copernican astronomy and introduces still more advanced scientific notions that Adam had not imagined – multiple universes and other inhabited planets.
Thir wandring course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest, and what if sev’nth to these
The Planet Earth, so stedfast though she seem,

Insensibly three different Motions move?
Which else to several Spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov’d contrarie with thwart obliquities,
Or save the Sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and Diurnal rhomb suppos’d,

Invisible else above all Starrs, the Wheele
Of Day and Night; which needs not thy beleefe,
If Earth industrious of her self fetch Day
Travelling East, and with her part averse
From the Suns beam meet Night, her other part

Still luminous by his ray. What if that light
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous° aire,
To the terrestrial Moon° be as a Starr
Enlightning her by Day, as she by Night
This Earth? reciprocal, if Land be there,

Feilds and Inhabitants: Her spots thou seest
As Clouds, and Clouds may rain, and Rain produce
Fruits in her soft’nd Soile, for some to eate
Allotted there; and other Suns perhaps
With thir attendant Moons thou wilt descrie

Communicating Male and Femal Light,
Which two great Sexes animate the World,

wandring. Elliptical. The word planet comes from the Greek word for wanderer.
Progressive. Moving west to east. retrograde. Moving east to west (contrary to the order of the zodiac signs).
six. The six planets we see move: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and the moon. Raphael suggests that “the Planet Earth” rather than the sun may be the “sev’nth,” moving imperceptibly (“Insensibly”).
three different Motions. According to Copernicus the three motions are daily rotation, annual revo-
lution around the sun, and “motion in declination” to align the earth’s axis always with the same point in the celestial sphere.
thwart obliquities. Irregular and “contrarie” paths that cross each other, which, if the earth doesn’t rotate, you must “else” ascribe to the planets (131).

rhomb. Greek, wheel. The invisible tenth or outer sphere (Primum Mobile), “suppos’d” by Ptolemaic astronomers to revolve every twenty-four hours (“Nocturnal and Diurnal”) carrying the planets with it; this concept is necessary if you would “save the Sun his labour,” but if the earth rotates it “needs not thy beleefe.”
Moons. Planets “attendant” upon a sun; they exchange reflected light reciprocally but also have some “peculiar” light of their own (7.368). Galileo had discovered four of the moons of Jupiter.

Male and Femal Light. The sun and moon had long been gendered, through association of the sun with Apollo and the moon with Diana; here their light is imagined to be a sexually active force, “perhaps” endowing the several planets with life (“animate”).
Stor’d in each Orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in Nature unpossest  
By living Soule, desert and desolate,  
Onely to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each Orb a glimps of Light, conveyd so farr  
Down to this habitable,° which returns  
Light back to them, is obvious° to dispute.  
But whether thus these things, or whether not,  
Whether the Sun predominant in Heav’n  
Rise on the Earth, or Earth rise on the Sun,  
Hee from the East his flaming rode begin,  
Or Shee from West her silent course advance  
With inoffensive° pace that spinning sleeps  
On her soft Axle, while she paces Eev’n,  
And beares thee soft with the smooth Air along,  
Sollicit° not thy thoughts with matters hid,  
Leave them to God above, him serve and feare;  
Of other Creatures, as him pleases best,  
Wherever plac’t, let him dispose: joy thou  
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise  
And thy faire Eve; Heav’n is for thee too high  
To know what passes there; be lowlie wise:  
Think onely what concernes thee and thy being;  
Dream not of other Worlds, what Creatures there  
Live, in what state, condition or degree,  
Contented that thus farr hath been reveal’d  
Not of Earth onely but of highest Heav’n.  
To whom thus Adam cleerd of doubt, repli’d.  
How fully hast thou satisfi’d me, pure  
Intelligence° of Heav’n, Angel serene,  
And freed from intricacies, taught to live  
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts  
To interrupt the sweet of Life, from which  
God hath bid dwell farr off all anxious cares,  
And not molest us, unless we our selves  
Seek them with wandring thoughts, and notions vain.  
But apt the Mind or Fancie is to roave  
Uncheckt, and of her roaming is no end;

152. Bruno and Descartes were among those who accepted the idea that suns, planets, and moons were inhabited; Kepler rejected the idea.
Till warn’d, or by experience taught, she learne,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and suttle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime Wisdom, what is more, is fume,° vapor
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,° foolish irrelevance
And renders us in things that most concerne
Unpractis’d, unprepar’d, and still to seek.° always seeking
Therefore from this high pitch° let us descend summit
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful, whence haply° mention may arise perhaps
Of somthing not unseasonable to ask
By sufferance,° and thy wonted° favour deign’d. permission / usual
Thee I have heard relating what was don
Ere my remembrance: now hear mee relate
My Storie, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And Day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
How suttly to detaine thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond,° were it not in hope of thy reply: foolish
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav’n,
And sweeter thy discourse is to my eare
Then Fruits of Palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the houre
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant, but thy words with Grace Divine
Imbu’d, bring to thir sweetness no satietie.
To whom thus Raphael answer’d heav’lly meek.
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour’d
Inward and outward both, his image faire:
Speaking or mute all comliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion formes,
Nor less think wee in Heav’n of thee on Earth
Then of our fellow servant, and inquire
Gladly into the wayes of God with Man:
For God we see hath honour’d thee, and set
On Man his Equal Love: say therefore on;
For I that Day was absent, as befell,° as it happened

Bound on a voyage uncouth° and obscure,
Farr on excursion toward the Gates of Hell;
Squar’d° in full Legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issu’d forth a spie,
Or enemie, while God was in his work,

Least hee incenst at such eruption bold,
 Destruction with Creation might have mixt.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state,° as Sovran King, and to enure°

Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
The dismal Gates, and barricado’d° strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise, other then the sound of Dance or Song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.

Glad we return’d up to the coasts of Light
Ere Sabbath Eev’ning: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas’d with thy words no less then thou with mine.

So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.

For Man to tell how human Life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc’d me. As new wak’t from soundest sleep
Soft on the flourie herb° I found me laid

In Balmie° Sweat, which with his Beames the Sun
Soon dri’d, and on the reaking° moisture fed.
Strait toward Heav’n my wondring Eyes I turnd,
And gaz’d a while the ample Skie, till rais’d
By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,

As thitherward endevoring, and upright
Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
Hill, Dale, and shadie Woods, and sunnie Plaines,
And liquid Lapse° of murmuring Streams; by these,
Creatures that livd, and movd, and walk’d, or flew,

Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil’d,
With fragrance and with joy my heart oreflow’d.
My self I then perus’d, and Limb by Limb

230–1. Cf. Satan’s inability to remember his creation (5.859–63) and the very different inference he draws from that fact.
Survey’d, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:

But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I tri’d, and forthwith spake,
My Tongue obey’d and readily could name
What e’er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, faire Light,
And thou enlight’nd Earth, so fresh and gay.

Ye Hills and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plaines,
And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of my self; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power præeminent;

Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier then I know.

This happie Light, when answer none return’d,
On a green shadie Bank profuse of Flours
Pensive I sate me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz’d
My droused sense, untroubl’d, though I thought

I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my Head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov’d
My fancy to believe I yet had being,

And liv’d: One came, methought, of shape Divine,
And said, thy Mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,
First Man, of Men innumerable ordain’d
First Father, call’d by thee I come thy Guide
To the Garden of bliss, thy seat prepar’d.

So saying, by the hand he took me rais’d,
And over Fields and Waters, as in Aire
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up

271–3. Many exegetes speculated that Adam spontaneously spoke Hebrew; Milton in his Art of Logic did not specify the language but wrote that it was “without doubt divinely given.” Adam’s ability to name the creatures was taken to indicate his intuitive understanding of their natures.

273–82. Adam instinctively works out the central principles of natural theology: that there is a Creator and that he should be adored.

292 at my Head a dream. In the Iliad (2.20) a dream sent by Zeus in the guise of Nestor stands at Agamemnon’s head. Compare Eve’s dream (4.800–9, 5.30–93).
A woodie Mountain; whose high top was plaine,
A Circuit wide, enclos’d, with goodliest Trees
Planted, with Walks, and Bowers, that what I saw
Of Earth before scarce pleasant seemd. Each Tree
Load’n with fairest Fruit, that hung to the Eye
Tempting, stirr’d in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eate; whereat I wak’d, and found
Before mine Eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively° shadowd: Here had new begun
My wandring, had not hee who was my Guide
Up hither, from among the Trees appeer’d
Presence Divine. Rejoycing, but with aw
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: he rear’d me, and Whom thou soughtst I am,
Said mildly, Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To Till and keep,° and of the Fruit to eate:
Of every Tree that in the Garden growes
Eate freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the Tree whose operation° brings
Knowledg of good and ill, which I have set
The Pledge of thy Obedience and thy Faith,
Amid the Garden by the Tree of Life,
Remember what I warne thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
The day thou eat’sth thereof, my sole command
Transgrest, inevitably thou shalt dye;
From that day mortal, and this happie State
Shalt loose, expell’d from hence into a World
Of woe and sorrow. Sternly he pronounc’d
The rigid interdiction,° which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine eare, though in my choice
Not to incur; but soon his cleer aspect°
Return’d and gracious purpose° thus renew’d.
Not onely these fair bounds, but all the Earth
To thee and to thy Race I give; as Lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in Sea, or Aire, Beast, Fish, and Fowle.
In signe whereof each Bird and Beast behold

After thir kindes; I bring them to receave
From thee thir Names, and pay thee fealtie
With low subjection; understand the same
Of Fish within thir watry residence,
Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Thir Element to draw the thinner Aire.
As thus he spake, each Bird and Beast behold
Approaching two and two, These° cowring° low
With blandishment, each Bird stoop’d on his wing.
I nam’d them, as they pass’d, and understood
Thir Nature, with such knowledg God endu’d
My sudden apprehension: but in these
I found not what me thought I wanted still;
And to the Heav’nly vision thus presum’d.°

O by what Name, for thou above all these,
Above mankinde, or aught then mankinde higher,
Surpassest farr my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this Universe,
And all this good to man, for whose well being
So amply, and with hands so liberal
Thou hast provided all things: but with mee
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?
Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more bright’nd, thus repli’d.

What call’st thou solitude, is not the Earth
With various living creatures, and the Aire
Replenisht,° and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee, know’st thou not
Thir language and thir wayes, they also know,
And reason not contemptibly; with these
Find pastime, and beare rule; thy Realm is large.
So spake the Universal Lord, and seem’d
So ordering. I with leave of speech implor’d,
And humble deprecation° thus repli’d.

351. blandishment. Flattering gestures. stagger’d. Bowed.
352–4. Adam has already named the sun and features of the earth (272–3); here he names, and thereby under-
stands by intuition (“sudden apprehension”), all living creatures.
357–60. Adam cannot name, and thereby indicates that he cannot understand, God, except as God reveals
himself.
Let not my words offend thee, Heav’nly Power,

380 My Maker, be propitious\(^\circ\) while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,\(^\circ\)

And these inferiour farr beneath me set?

Among unequals what societie\(^\circ\)

Can sort,\(^\circ\) what harmonie or true delight?

385 Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv’n and receiv’d; but in disparitie
The one intense, the other still remiss

Cannot well suite with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak

390 Such as I seek, fit to participate\(^\circ\)
All rational delight, wherein the brute

Cannot be human consort; they rejoice

Each with thir kinde, Lion with Lioness;

So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin’d;

395 Much less can Bird with Beast, or Fish with Fowle
So well converse,\(^\circ\) nor with the Ox the Ape;

Wors then can Man with Beast, and least of all.

Whereto th’ Almighty answer’d, not displeas’d.

A nice\(^\circ\) and subtle happiness I see

discriminating

400 Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy Associates, Adam, and wilt taste

No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitarie.

What think’st thou then of mee, and this my State,

Seem I to thee sufficiently possest
discriminating

405 Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all Eternitie, for none I know

Second to mee or like, equal much less.

How have I then with whom to hold converse

Save with the Creatures which I made, and those

410 To me inferiour, infinite descents
Beneath what other Creatures are to thee?

He ceas’d, I lowly answer’d. To attaine

The highth and depth of thy Eternal wayes

All human thoughts come short, Supream of things;

415 Thou in thy self art perfet, and in thee

384–8 harmonie. As with poorly matched musical instruments, Adam’s string is too taut (“intense”) and the animals’ string is too slack (“remiss”) to be in harmony (“suite”).

402 pleasure. “Eden” is Hebrew for “pleasure.”

415–17 perfet. God is absolutely perfect, man is perfect only “in degree,” relatively.
Is no deficience found; not so is Man,
But° in degree, the cause of his desire except
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace° his defects. No need that thou alleviate, assuage

Shouldst propagat, already infinite;
And through all numbers absolute, though One;
But Man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his Image multipli’d,

In unitie° defective, which requires singleness
Collateral° love, and dearest amitie.
Thou in thy secretie° although alone, mutual
Best with thy self accompanied, seek’st not seclusion
Social communication, yet so pleas’d,

Canst raise thy Creature to what highth thou wilt
Of Union or Communion, deifi’d;
I by conversing cannot these erect satisfaction, pleasure
From prone, nor in thir ways complacence° find.
Thus I embold’nd spake, and freedom us’d

Permissive,° and acceptance found, which gain’d allowed
This answer from the gracious voice Divine.
Thus farr to try thee, Adam, I was pleas’d,
And finde thee knowing not of Beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam’d, but of thy self,

Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My Image, not imparted to the Brute,
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet° for thee unsuitable
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
And be so minded still; I, ere thou spak’st,

Knew it not good for Man to be alone,
And no such companie as then thou saw’st
Intended thee, for trial onely brought,

421. God, though One, contains all numbers.
423 single imperfection. The imperfection of being alone; humans need to perfect themselves through social intercourse (“by number”).
431 deifi’d. Made, by grace, able to rise to “Union or Communion” with God.
437 try. God has played the role of a Socratic teacher, offering Adam erroneous formulations and thereby prodding him to discover for himself essential truths about human nature.
444–50. Cf. Gen. 2:18: “And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” Milton’s gloss on “help meet” in Tetrachordon, “God as it were not satisfy’d with the naming of a help, goes on describing another self, a second self, a very self it self;” and God’s words in the epic, “Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,” reinforce Milton’s ideal of companionate marriage. These words even seem to posit gender equality, by contrast to the hierarchy affirmed elsewhere.
To see how thou could’st judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur’d,

450 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy hearts desire.

Hee ended, or I heard no more, for now
My earthly° by his Heav’nly overpowerd,
Which it had long stood under,° streind to the highth

455 In that celestial Colloquie sublime,
As with an object that excels° the sense,
Dazl’d and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call’d
By Nature as in aide, and clos’d mine eyes.

460 Mine eyes he clos’d, but op’n left the Cell
Of Fancie my internal sight, by which
Abstract° as in a transe methought I saw;
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;

465 Who stooping op’n’d my left side, and took
From thence a Rib, with cordial spirits warme,
And Life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill’d up and heal’d:
The Rib he formd and fashond with his hands;

470 Under his forming hands a Creature grew,
Manlike, but different Sex, so lovly faire,
That what seemd fair in all the World, seemd now
Mean, or in her summ’d up, in her containd
And in her looks, which from that time infus’d

475 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her Aire° inspir’d°
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
Shee disappeerd, and left me dark, I wak’d
To find her, or for ever to deplore

480 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not farr off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adornd
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow
To make her amiable;° On she came,

460–1 Cell / Of Fancie. Cf. Adam’s explanation of the role of Fancy to Eve (5.100–13).
465 left side. Some commentators explained that the left side is nearest the heart; others pointed to the left
as the “sinister” side, foreshadowing Eve’s role in the Fall.
466 cordial spirits. The so-called “vital spirits” that the heart distributes throughout the body.
478–520. Cf. Eve’s version of these events (4.467–91).
Led by her Heav’nly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
Of nuptial Sanctity and marriage Rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heav’n in her Eye,
In every gesture dignitie and love.

I overjoyd could not forbear° aloud.
This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill’d
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benigne,
Giver of all things faire, but fairest this
Of all thy gifts, nor envious.° I now see

Bone of my Bone, Flesh of my Flesh, my Self
Before me; Woman is her Name, of Man
Extracted; for this cause he shall forgoe
Father and Mother, and to his Wife adhere;
And they shall be one Flesh, one Heart, one Soule.

She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,
Yet Innocence and Virgin Modestie,
Her vertue and the conscience° of her worth,
That would be woo’d, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious,° not obtrusive,° but retir’d,

The more desirable, or to say all,
Nature her self, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn’d;
I follow’d her, she what was Honour knew,
And with obsequious° Majestie approv’d

My pleaded reason. To the Nuptial Bowre
I led her blushing like the Morn: all Heav’n,
And happie Constellations on that houre
Shed thir selectest influence; the Earth
Gave sign of gratulation,° and each Hill;

Joyous the Birds; fresh Gales° and gentle Aires°
Whisper’d it to the Woods, and from thir wings
Flung Rose, flung Odours from the spicie Shrub,
Disporting,° till the amorous Bird of Night°
Sung Spousal, and bid haste the Eevning Starr

495–9. Cf. Gen. 2:23–4: “And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be
called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,
and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”
519–20 Eevning Starr. The rising of Hesperus was the signal among the ancients for lighting the “bridal
Lamp” and conducting the bride to the bridegroom.
520 On his Hill top, to light the bridal Lamp.
    Thus I have told thee all my State,° and brought
    My Storie to the sum of earthly bliss
    Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
    In all things else delight indeed, but such
525 As us’d or not, works in the mind no change,
    Nor vehement desire, these delicacies
    I mean of Taste, Sight, Smell, Herbs, Fruits and Flours,
    Walks, and the melodie of Birds; but here
    Farr otherwise, transported° I behold,
530 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
    Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
    Superiour and unmov’d, here onely weake
    Against the charm of Beauties powerful glance.
    Or° Nature faild in mee, and left some part
535 Not proof° enough such Object to sustain,°
    Or from my side subducting,° took perhaps
    More then enough; at least on her bestow’d
    Too much of Ornament, in outward shew
    Elaborate, of inward less exact.°
540 For well I understand in the prime end
    Of Nature her th’ inferiour, in the mind
    And inward Faculties, which most excell,
    In outward also her resembling less
    His Image who made both, and less expressing
545 The character of that Dominion giv’n
    O’re other Creatures; yet when I approach
    Her loveliness, so absolute° she seems
    And in her self compleat, so well to know
    Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
550 Seems wisest, vertuousest, discreetest,° best;
    All higher knowledge in her presence falls
    Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her
    Looses discount’nanc’t, and like folly shewes;
    Authority and Reason on her waite,
555 As one intended first, not after made
    Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness thir seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard Angelic plac’t.

To whom the Angel with contracted brow.

Accuse not Nature, she hath don her part;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
Of Wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her nigh,

By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thy self perceav’st.
For what admir’st thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,

Not thy subjection: weigh with her thy self;
Then value: Oft times nothing profits more
Then self esteem, grounded on just and right
Well manag’d; of that skill the more thou know’st,
The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,

And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou maist love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.

But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
Is propagated seem such dear delight
Beyond all other, think the same voutsaf’t
To Cattel and each Beast; which would not be
Therein enjoy’d were worthy to subdue

The Soule of Man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her societie thou findst
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true Love consists not; love refines

The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat

557 Greatness of mind. Intellectual excellence and also magnanimity.
574 Head. See 1 Cor. 11:3, “The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”
585 passion. Most commentators on Genesis agreed that Adam and Eve did not feel passion before the Fall. Raphael seems to indicate that they should not (588–9) but he may not understand the human condition fully, or he may mean simply that passions, which clearly Adam and Eve do feel in the state of innocence, must not overthrow reason. See Areopagitica: “Wherefore did he creat passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly temper’d are the very ingredients of vertu?”
In Reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heav’’nly Love thou maist ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause
Among the Beasts no Mate for thee was found.

To whom thus half abash’t Adam repli’d.
Neither her out-side formd so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kindes
(Though higher of the genial° Bed by far;
And with mysterious reverence I deem)

So much delights me as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies° that daily flow
From all her words and actions mixt with Love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign’d
Union of Mind, or in us both one Soule;

Harmonie to behold in wedded pair
More grateful then harmonious sound to the eare.
Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foild,°
Who meet with various objects, from the sense

Variously representing; yet still free
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam’st me not, for love thou saist
Leads up to Heav’n, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;

Love not the heav’nly Spirits, and how thir Love
Express they, by looks onely, or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate° touch?
To whom the Angel with a smile that glow’d
Celestial rosie red, Loves proper hue,

Answer’d. Let it suffice thee that thou know’st
Us happie, and without Love no happiness.

591–2 scale. Raphael summarizes the Neoplatonic ladder of love (see Plato, Symposium 211C–D), by which humans may move from sensual love to higher stages of human love, and ultimately to love of the Good, or God.

598–600. Adam takes respectful issue with Raphael’s apparent denigration of human sex in his account of the Neoplatonic ladder. mysterious. At Eph. 5:31–2 Paul speaks of the marital union (“one flesh”) as a “great mystery,” as it reflects the union of Christ and the Church.

609–10. i.e., “various objects, variously represented to me by my senses.”

619. Red is the color traditionally associated with Seraphim, who burn with ardor. Raphael’s smile also glows with friendship for Adam, and appreciation of his perceptive inference about angelic sex. Given the monism Raphael explains in Book 5 (469–500) and demonstrates by eating human food, Raphael has to be made to qualify his apparent Neoplatonic dualism in seeming so sharply to separate physical and spiritual love.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy’st
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence,° and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joynt, or limb, exclusive barrs:
Easier then Air with Air, if Spirits embrace,
Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure
Desiring; nor restrain’d conveyance° need
As Flesh to mix with Flesh, or Soul with Soul.

But I can now no more; the parting Sun
Beyond the Earths green Cape and verdant Isles
Hesperian sets, my Signal to depart.
Be strong, live happie, and love, but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest Passion sway
Thy Judgment to do aught, which else free Will
Would not admit; thine and of all thy Sons
The weal or woe in thee is plac’t; beware.
I in thy persevering shall rejoyce,
And all the Blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own Arbitrement° it lies.
Perfet within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.
So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow’d with benediction. Since° to part,
Go heavenly Guest, Ethereal° Messenger,
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore.
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension,° and shall be honour’d ever

With grateful Memorie: thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return.
So parted they, the Angel up to Heav’n
From the thick shade, and Adam to his Bowre.

The End of the Eighth Book.

631 Earths green Cape. Cape Verde near Dakar and the islands off that coast are the westernmost ("Hesperian") points of Africa.
634–5. Cf. 1 John 5:3: “this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.”
Figure 7  Illustration to Book 9, 1688 (John Baptista Medina)
Satan having compassed 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 wondering 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.

No more of talk where God or Angel Guest
With Man, as with his Friend, familiar us’d
To sit indulgent,° and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while

Venial° discourse unblam’d: I now must change
Those Notes to Tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: On the part of Heav’n
Now alienated, distance and distaste,°

Anger and just rebuke, and judgement giv’n,
That brought into this World a world of woe,
Sinne and her shadow Death, and Miserie

16 amaz’d. Stunned.

1–47. In this fourth Proem, Milton does not invoke the Muse but testifies (21–2) to her customary nightly visits, “unimplor’d.”
1–6. The Miltonic Bard declares a shift in mode from the pastoral of “rural repast” and eclogue (which here includes georgic labor, physical and intellectual) to “Tragic.”
Deaths Harbinger: Sad task, yet argument°
Not less but more Heroic then the wrauth

15 Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu’d
Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous’d,
Or Neptun’s ire or Juno’s, that so long
Perplex’d° the Greek and Cytherea’s Son;

20 If answerable° style I can obtaine
Of my Celestial Patroness, who deignes
Her nightly visitation unimplor’d,
And dictates to me slimebring, or inspires
Ease my unpremeditated Verse:

Since first this Subject for Heroic Song
Pleas’d me long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous° by Nature to indite°
Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument
Heroic deem’d, chief maistrie° to dissect

With long and tedious havoc° fab’ld Knights
In Battels feign’d; the better fortitude
Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe Races and Games,
Or tilting Furniture, emblazon’d Shields,

Impresses quaint, Caparisons and Steeds;
Bases and tinsel Trappings, gorgious Knights
At Joust and Torneament; then marshal’d Feast

13–19. The Bard proposes that the tragedy of the Fall surpasses the tragic element in several classical epics: “Achilles” pursuing the fleeing (“Fugitive”) Hector (“his Foe”) three times around “Troy Wall” before killing him; “Turnus” fighting and then killed by Aeneas, who had received as wife Turnus’ betrothed (“Lavinia disespous’d”); Odysseus (“the Greek”) tormented by “Neptun’s ire” for blinding his son Polyphemus; and Aeneas (“Cytherea’s [Venus’s] Son” plagued by “Juno’s” anger because Venus had been judged by Paris to be more beautiful than Juno or Minerva.

21 Celestial Patroness. Urania, named in 7.1.

22–4 dictates to me slumbering. Milton’s verses seem to pour forth directly (“unpremeditated”) from the Muse’s inspiration; they are the product of a lifetime of study, thought, and experience. Milton’s nephew, Edward Phillips, reports that Milton often awoke in the morning with lines of poetry fully formed and ready to be dictated to an amanuensis.


30–1 Battels feign’d. Milton disparages the customary subjects of epic and romance, with allusion to the Arthurian matter he once considered as subject for a national epic, but then rejected as merely fables.

34–7. Milton now rejects several familiar elements of contemporary romantic epics (Ariosto, Tasso, Spenser).


Caparisons. Ornamental coverings or armor for horses.

Bases. Cloth coverings for horses.

tinsel Trappings. Coverings over the harness or saddle of horses, ornamented with gold or silver threads.

37 marshal’d Feast. Well ordered, with guests arranged according to rank.
Serv’d up in Hall with Sewers,° and Seneshals;°
The skill of Artifice or Office mean,
Not that which justly gives Heroic name
To Person or to Poem. Mee of these
Nor skil’d nor studious, higher Argument
Remaines, sufficient of it self to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climat, or Years damp my intended wing
Deprest, and much they may, if all be mine,
Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear.
The Sun was sunk, and after him the Starr
Of Hesperus, whose Office is to bring
Twilight upon the Earth, short Arbiter°
Twixt Day and Night, and now from end to end
Nights Hemisphere had veild the Horizon round:
When Satan who late° fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv’d°
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On mans destruction, maugre° what might hap
Of heavier° on himself, fearless return’d.
By Night he fled, and at Midnight return’d
From compassing the Earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel Regent of the Sun descri’d°
His entrance, and forwarnd the Cherubim
That kept thir watch; thence full of anguish driv’n,
The space of seven continu’d Nights he rode
With darkness, thrice the Equinoctial Line
He circl’d, four times cross’d the Carr of Night
From Pole to Pole, traversing each Colure;
On the eighth return’d, and on the Coast averse°
From entrance or Cherubic Watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,

44–6 That name. The designation, heroic poem. age too late. The Restoration era might well be un receptive to this poem. cold / Climat. Milton long believed that England’s climate was less amenable to epic poetry than the warmth of the Mediterranean region. Years. His own advanced age (he was in his fifties when writing the poem). damp. Benumb. intended wing / Deprest. Purposed poetic flights held down, kept from soaring.
49–50 Hesperus. The evening star, actually the planet Venus.
62–6. By circling the globe from east to west at the equator (“Equinoctial Line”) for three nights and then longitudinally for four nights over the north and south poles (“From Pole to Pole”) Satan can remain in darkness (“rode / With darkness”), keeping himself always in the earth’s shadow, ahead of the advancing edge of the sun’s light. Carr of Night. The earth’s shadow, imagined as a chariot driven by the goddess, Night. Colure. The colures were two great circles intersecting at right angles at the poles.
Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wraught the change,
Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a Gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a Fountain by the Tree of Life;
In with the River sunk, and with it rose

Satan involv’d in rising Mist, then sought
Where to lie hid; Sea he had searcht and Land
From Eden over Pontus, and the Poole
Maotis, up beyond the River Ob;
Downward as far Antartic; and in length

West from Orontes to the Ocean barr’d
At Darien, thence to the Land where flowes
Ganges and Indus: thus the Orb he roam’d
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Consider’d every Creature, which of all

Most opportune might serve his Wiles, and found
The Serpent suttlest Beast of all the Field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv’d, his final sentence chose
Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of fraud, in whom

To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for in the wilie Snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native suttletie
Proceeding, which in other Beasts observ’d

Doubt might beget of Diabolic pow’r
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv’d, but first from inward griefe
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour’d:
O Earth, how like to Heav’n, if not preferr’d

More justly, Seat worthier of Gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God after better worse would build?

Now not. No longer existing.
Tigris. Cf. Gen. 2:10, one of the four rivers that flowed out of the garden (“Paradise”).
77–82. A reprise of Satan’s journey in geographical terms. In his north–south circles he passed the Black Sea (“Pontus”), thence to the Sea of Azov in Russia (“Maotis”), then beyond the River Obi (“Ob”) in Siberia, which flows into the Arctic Ocean, then south to Antarctica (“Antartic”). His westward circles bring him from the Syrian river “Orontes” flowing into the Mediterranean Sea, then across the Atlantic which is “barr’d” at the Isthmus of Panama (“Darien”), then across the Pacific and Asia to India, where the “Ganges” and “Indus” rivers flow.
86. The serpent is so described in Gen. 3:1.
Terrestrial Heav’n, danc’t round by other Heav’ns
That shine, yet bear thir bright officious° Lamps,
Light above Light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concentrating all thir precious beams
Of sacred influence: As God in Heav’n
Is Center, yet extends to all, so thou
Centring° receav’st from all those Orbs; in thee,

Not in themselves, all thir known vertue appeers
Productive in Herb, Plant, and nobler birth
Of Creatures animate with gradual° life
Of Growth, Sense, Reason, all summ’d up in Man.
With what delight could I have walkt thee round,

If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of Hill, and Vallie, Rivers, Woods and Plaines,
Now Land, now Sea, and Shores with Forrest crownd,
Rocks, Dens, and Caves; but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Bane,° and in Heav’n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav’n

To dwell, unless by maistring Heav’n’s Supræme;
Nor hope to be my self less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:°
For onely in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyd,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linkt in weal° or woe,

To mee shall be the glorie sole among
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marr’d
What he Almighty styl’d, six Nights and Days
Continu’d making, and who knows how long
Before had bin contriving, though perhaps

Not longer then since I in one Night freed

105–7. Cf. the different views of the cosmos held by Eve (4.657–8), Adam (8.15–38), and Raphael (8.98–9, 114–78).
From servitude inglorious welnigh half
Th’ Angelic Name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: hee to be aveng’d,
And to repaire his numbers thus impair’d,

Whether such vertue spent of old now faild
More Angels to Create, if they at least
Are his Created, or to spite us more,
Determin’d to advance into our room
A Creature form’d of Earth, and him endow,

Exalted from so base original,
With Heav’ly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat,
Him Lord pronounc’d, and, O indignitie!

Subjected to his service Angel wings,
And flaming Ministers to watch and tend
Thir earthy Charge: Of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and prie

In every Bush and Brake, where hap may finde
The Serpent sleeping, in whose mazie foulds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I who erst contended
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constraind

Into a Beast, and mixt with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the hight of Deitie aspir’d;
But what will not Ambition and Revenge
Descend to? who aspires must down as low

As high he soard, obnoxious first or last
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on it self recoiles;
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim’d,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next

Provokes my envie, this new Favorite
Of Heav’n, this Man of Clay, Son of despite,

141–2. Cf. the conflicting estimates of the rebel numbers at 1.632–3, 2.692, and 6.156. Cf. Rev. 12:3–4, the casting down of “the third part of the stars of heaven.”
146–7 his Created. Cf. 5.853–63 and 4.43.
151 spoils. Goods seized from a defeated enemy.
156 flaming Ministers. Cf. Heb. 1:7: “Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire.”
166 imbrute. Satan embodying his “essence” in a snake parodies the Son becoming “incarnate” as man.
Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais’d
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
    So saying, through each Thicket Danck or Drie,
180 Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
His midnight search, where soonest he might finde
The Serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In Labyrinth of many a round self-rowld,°
His head the midst, well stor’d with suttle wiles:
185 Not yet in horrid Shade° or dismal Den,
Nor nocent° yet, but on the grassie Herbe
Fearless unfeard he slept: in at his Mouth
The Devil enterd, and his brutal° sense,
In heart or head, possessing soon inspir’d
190 With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturbd not, waiting close ° th’ approach of Morn.
Now when as sacred Light began to dawne
In Eden on the humid Flours, that breathd
Thir morning incense, when all things that breath,
195 From th’ Earths great Altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his Nostrils fill
With grateful° Smell, forth came the human pair
And joind thir vocal Worship to the Quire
Of Creatures wanting° voice, that done, partake
200 The season, prime° for sweetest Sents and Aires:°
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Thir growing work: for much thir work outgrew
The hands dispatch of two Gardning so wide.
And Eve first to her Husband thus began.
205 Adam, well may we labour still° to dress
This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour,
Our pleasant task enjoyn’d,° but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious° by restraint; what we by day
210 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton° growth derides
Tending to wilde. Thou therefore now advise
Or hear what to my minde first thoughts present,
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
215 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The Woodbine° round this Arbour, or direct

183 Labyrinth. Home of the monstrous Minotaur.
190 act intelligential. Power of intelligent action.
The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I
In yonder Spring⁰ of Roses intermixt
With Myrtle, find what to redress⁰ till Noon:

For while so near each other thus all day
Our taske we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits⁰
Our dayes work brought to little, though begun

Early, and th’ hour of Supper comes unearn’d.
To whom mild answer Adam thus return’d.
Solo⁰ Eve, Associate solo,⁰ to me beyond
Compare above all living Creatures deare,
Well hast thou motion’d,⁰ well thy thoughts imploy’d

How we might best fulfill the work which here
God hath assign’d us, nor of me shalt pass
Unprais’d: for nothing lovelier can be found
In Woman, then to studie houshold good,
And good workes in her Husband to promote.

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos’d
Labour, as to debarr us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,⁰
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from Reason flow,

To brute deni’d, and are of Love the food,
Love not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksom toile, but to delight
He made us, and delight to Reason joyn’d.
These paths & Bowers doubt not but our joynt hands

Will keep from Wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: But if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.
For solitude somtimes is best societie,

And short retirement urges sweet returne.
But other doubt possesses me, least harm
Befall thee sever’d from me; for thou knowst
What hath bin warn’d us, what malicious Foe
Envying our happiness, and of his own

231–4. Adam’s praises invite comparison with the qualities of a virtuous wife set forth in Prov. 31, especially verses 27–8: “She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us joynd, where each
To other speedie aide might lend at need;
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealtie° from God, or to disturb
Conjugal Love, then which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy’d by us excites his envie more;
Or° this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, 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,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austeer composure thus reply’d.
Ofspring of Heav’n and Earth, and all Earths Lord,
That such an Enemie we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informd I learne,
And from the parting Angel over-heard
As in a shadie nook I stood behind,
Just then returnd at shut of Evening Flours.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therfore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
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 receave, or can repell.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain inferrs°
Thy equal fear that my firm Faith and Love
Can by his fraud be shak’n or seduc’t;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy brest
Adam, misthought° of her to thee so dear?
To whom with healing words Adam replyd.
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve,
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire: unblemished
Not diffident° of thee do I dissuade distrustful
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid

295 Th’ attempt it self, intended by our Foe.
For hee who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses° bespatters
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos’d
Not incorruptible of Faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thy self with scorne

300 And anger wouldst resent the offer’d wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem° not then, do not misinterpret
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The Enemie, though bold, will hardly dare,

305 Or daring, first on mee th’ assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;° disdain
Suttle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels nor think superfluous others aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receave

310 Access° in every Vertue, in thy sight increase
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reacht° outwitted
Would utmost vigor raise, and rais’d unite.

315 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy Vertue tri’d.
So spake domestick Adam in his care
And Matrimonial Love; but Eve, who thought

320 Less° attributed to her Faith sincere, too little
Thus her reply with accent sweet renewd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit strait’nd° by a Foe, confined
Suttle or violent, we not endu’d

325 Single with like° defence, wherever met, equal
How are we happie, still° in fear of harm? always

309–12. In Renaissance Neoplatonism, love (and especially the sight of the beloved) inspired the lover to virtue.
322–41. Compare and contrast Areopagitica: “I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister’d vertue, unexercis’d & unbreath’d, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortall garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is triall, and triall is by what is contrary.”
But harm precedes not sin: onely our Foe
Tempting affronts° us with his foul esteem
Of our integritie: his foul esteeme

330 Sticks no dishonor on our Front,° but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shund or feared
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
Alone, without exterior help sustain’d?
Let us not then suspect our happie State
Left so imperfet by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single° or combin’d.

340 Fraile is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden thus expos’d.
To whom thus Adam fervently° repli’d.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain’d them, his creating hand

345 Nothing imperfet or deficient left
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:

350 Against his will he can receave no harme.
But God left free the Will, for what obeyes
Reason, is free, and Reason he made right,
But bid her well beware, and still erect,°
Least by some faire appeering good surpris’d

355 She dictate false, and misinforme the Will
To do what God expressly 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,

360 Since Reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious° object by the Foe subornd,°
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warnd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoide

349–56 Reason he made right. Right Reason, a classical concept accommodated to Christian (Scholastic) philosophy, is the God-given power to apprehend truth and the moral law. See Christian Doctrine 1.4: “Reason has been implanted in all, by which they may of themselves resist bad desires.” Also, cf. PL 5.520–9.
Were better, and most likely if from mee
Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve° thy constancie, approve°
First thy obedience; th’ other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?

But if thou think, trial unsought may finde
Us both securer° then thus warn’d thou seemst,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocencie, relie
On what thou hast of vertue, summon all,
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the Patriarch of Mankinde, but Eve
Persisted, yet submiss,° though last, repli’d.
With thy permission then, and thus forewarnd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words

Touch’d onely, that our trial, when least sought,
May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar’d,
The willinger I goe, nor much expect
A Foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
So bent,° the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her Husband’s hand her hand
Soft she withdrew, and like a Wood-Nymph light
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia’s Traine,
Betook her to the Groves, but Delia’s self
In gate° surpass’d and Goddess-like deport,°

Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver armd,
But with such Gardning Tools as Art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire had formd, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona thus adorn’d,
Likest she seemd, Pomona when she fled

Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her Prime,
Yet Virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his Eye pursu’d

365 light. Light-footed, quick, but with overtones of fickle or frivolous.  Oread. A mountain-nymph.

392 Guiltless of fire. Without experience of fire, unneeded in Paradise. So Eve’s gardening tools are necessarily “rude.” A possible allusion also to the guilt of Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven.

393–6 Pales. Goddess of flocks and pastures.  Pomona. Goddess of fruit-trees; she was chased by the wood-god “Vertumnus” in many guises, before surrendering to him.  Ceres. Goddess of harvests, in the springtime (“Prime”) of life before she was impregnated by “Jove” with “Proserpina,” whose abduction by Pluto to Hades brought winter to the world.
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick returne
Repeated, shee to him as oft engag’d
To be returnd by Noon amid the Bowre,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or Afternoons repose.
O much deceav’d, much failing,° hapless° Eve,
Of thy presum’d return! event perverse!
Thou never from that houre in Paradise
Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush hid among sweet Flours and Shades
Waited with hellish rancour imminent°
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil of Innocence, of Faith, of Bliss.
For now, and since first break of dawne the Fiend,
Meer Serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his Quest, where likeliest he might finde
The onely two of Mankinde, but in them
The whole included Race, his purposd prey.
In Bowre and Field he sought, where any tuft
Of Grove or Garden-Plot more pleasant lay,
Thir tendance° or Plantation for delight,
By Fountain or by shadie Rivulet
He sought them both, but wish’d his hap° might find
Eve separate, he wish’d, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc’d, when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood,
Half spi’d, so thick the Roses bushing round
About her glowd, oft stooping to support
Each Flour of slender stalk, whose head though gay
Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold,
Hung drooping unsustaind, them she upstaises
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,
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
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,
Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy° the Aire,
Forth issuing on a Summers Morn to breathe
Among the pleasant Villages and Farmes
Adjoynd, from each thing met conceaves delight,

The smell of Grain, or tedded° Grass, or Kine,°
Or Dairie, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with Nymphlike step fair Virgin pass,
What pleasing seemd, for° her now pleases more,
She most, and in her look summs all Delight.

Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold
This Flourie Plat,° the sweet recess° of Eve
Thus earlie, thus alone; her Heav’ny forme
Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,
Her graceful Innocence, her every Aire°

Of gesture or lest action overawd
His Malice, and with rapine sweet bereav’d
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the Evil one abstracted° stood
From his own evil, and for the time remaind

Stupidly good,° of enmitie disarm’d,
Of guile, of hate, of envie, of revenge;
But the hot Hell that alwayes in him burnes,
Though in mid Heav’n, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees

440–1 reviv’d Adonis. The Garden of Adonis was a beautiful pleasure garden named for the lovely youth loved by Venus, killed by a boar, and, in some versions of the myth, revived and enjoyed by Venus in that garden (cf. Faerie Queene 3.6.29–46). Alcinous. The Phæacian king who entertained “Laertes Son” Odysseus in magnificent gardens (Odyssey 7.112–35).

442–3 Sapient King. Solomon, noted for his wisdom (sapience) entertained “fair Egyptian Spouse,” the queen of Sheba, in a lovely garden (S. of S. 6:2) that was real, not mythic (“Mystic”) as the others were.

461 rapine sweet. From Latin rapere, to seize, the root of both “rape” and “rapture,” underscoring the paradox of the ravisher (temporarily) ravished. bereav’d. Took from.
Of pleasure not for him ordain’d: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating,° thus excites.
Thoughts, whither have ye led me, with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported° to forget
welcoming

What hither brought us, hate, not love, nor hope
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying, other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
entranced

Occasion which now smiles, behold alone
The Woman, opportune° to all attempts,
open, exposed
Her Husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage hautie,° and of limb
exalted

Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould,°
Foe not informidable, exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debas’d, and paine
in comparison with
Infeeb’ld me, to° what I was in Heav’n.
Shee fair, divinely fair, fit Love for Gods,
terrifying / awe

Not terrible,° though terour° be in Love
And beautie, not° approacht by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under shew of Love well feign’d,
The way which to her ruin now I tend.
unless

So spake the Enemie of Mankind, enclos’d

In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward Eve
Address’d his way, not with indented° wave,
undulating, zigzagging
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,
Circular base of rising foulds, that tour’d°
towered
Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head

Crested aloft, and Carbuncle° his Eyes;
deep red
With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect
Amidst his circling Spires,° that on the grass
coils
Floted redundant:° pleasing was his shape,
in swelling waves
And lovely, never since of Serpent kind

Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang’d
Hermione and Cadmus, or the God

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505–7 Cadmus. The legendary founder of Thebes, and his wife Harmonia (“Hermione”) were changed to serpents when they went to “Illyria” (Albania) in old age. the God. Aesculapius, god of healing, sometimes came forth as a serpent from his temple in “Epidaurus” – erect, crested, and with gilded folds like Satan’s serpent (Ovid, Metamorphoses 15.622–744).
In *Epidaurus*; nor to which transformd
*Ammonian Jove*, or *Capitoline* was seen,
Hee with *Olympias*, this with her who bore
510 *Scipio* the hight of *Rome*. With tract° oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but feard
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a Ship by skilful Stearman wrought°
Nigh Rivers mouth or Foreland, where the Wind
worked (sailed)
515 Veres oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Saile;
So varied hee, and of his tortuous Traine°
twisting tail
Curld many a wanton° wreath in sight of Eve,
luxuriant, sportive
To lure her Eye; shee busied heard the sound
Of rusling Leaves, but minded not, as us’d
520 To such disport before her through the Field,
From every Beast, more duteous at her call,
Then at *Circean* call the Herd disguis’d.
Hee boulder now , uncall’d before her stood;
But as in gaze admiring: Oft he bowd
525 His turret Crest, and sleek enamel’d° Neck,
multicolored, jewel-like
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
530 Organic, or impulse of vocal Air;
His fraudulent temptation thus began.
Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole Wonder, much less arm
Thy looks, the Heav’n of mildness, with disdain,
535 Displeas’d that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Inspatiate, I thus single, nor have feard
Thy awful° brow, more awful thus retir’d.
inspiring awe
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
540 By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admir’d; but here
In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow° to discerne
545 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
A Goddess among Gods, ador’d and serv’d
By Angels numberless, thy daily Train.°
So gloz’d° the Tempter, and his Proem° tun’d;
550 Into the Heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marveling; at length
Not unamaz’d she thus in answer spake.
What may this mean? Language of Man pronounc’t
By Tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest?
555 The first at lest of these I thought deni’d
To Beasts, whom God on thir Creation-Day
Created mute to all articulat sound;
The latter I demurre,° for in thir looks
Much reason, and in thir actions oft appeers.
560 Thee, Serpent, suttlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endu’d;°
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam’st thou speakable° of mute, and how
to me so friendly grown above the rest
565 Of brutal kind,° that daily are in sight?
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.
To whom the guileful Tempter thus reply’d.
Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve,
Easie to mee it is to tell thee all
570 What thou commandst and right thou shouldst be obeyd:
I was at first as other Beasts that graze
The trodden Herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food, nor aught but food discern’d
Or Sex, and apprehended nothing high:
575 Till on a day roaming the field, I chanc’d
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,
580 Grateful° to appetite, more pleas’d my sense
Then smell of sweetest Fenel, or the Teats
Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Eevn,
Unsuckt of Lamb or Kid, that tend thir play.
To satisfie the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair Apples, I resolv’d
Not to deferr; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quick’nd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg’d me so keene.
About the mossie Trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adams: Round the Tree
All other Beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the Tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar’d° not, for such pleasure till that hour
At Feed or Fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceave
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of Reason in my inward Powers, and Speech
Wanted° not long, though to this shape retain’d.
Thenceforth to Speculations high or deep
I turnd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Considerd all things visible in Heav’n,
Or Earth, or Middle,° all things fair and good;
But all that fair and good in thy Divine
Semblance, and in thy Beauties heav’nlly Ray
United I beheld; no Fair° to thine
Equivalent or second, which compel’d
Mee thus, though importune° perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar’d
Sovran of Creatures, universal Dame.°
So talk’d the spirited sly Snake; and Eve

581–2 sweetest Fenel. According to Pliny serpents ate fennel to aid in shedding their skins and to sharpen
their eyesight; folklore had it that they drank the milk of sheep and goats.
585 fair Apples. Genesis does not identify the forbidden fruit as apples, but that identification became con-
ventional, probably because in Latin malum means both apple and evil (malus).
599–604 to degree. To bring on by degrees “Of Reason.” There is no precedent in Genesis or the inter-
pretative tradition for Satan’s argument by analogy based on the snake’s supposed experience of attaining to
reason and speech by eating the forbidden fruit.
606–12. Satan continues his Petrarchan language of courtship.
613 spirited. Both inspired by and possessed by an evil spirit, Satan.
Yet more amaz’d unwarie thus reply’d.

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The vertue° of that Fruit, in thee first prov’d.:°
But say, where grows the Tree, from hence how far?
For many are the Trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet° unknown

To us, in such aboundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of Fruit untoucht,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to thir provision,° and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her Bearth.°

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

Lead then, said Eve. Hee leading swiftly rowld
In tangles, and 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
Condenses, and the cold invirons round,°
Kindl’d through agitation to a Flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends
Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
Misleads th’ amaz’d Night-wanderer from his way
To Boggs and Mires, 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;
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.

629 blowing. Blossoming trees that exude the aromatic gums, “Myrrh” and “Balme” (balsam).
634–42 wandring Fire. Will-o’-the-wisp, phosphorescent marsh gas, composed (“compact”) of an oily (“unctuous”) exhalation kindled through friction (“agitation”) to a “Flame.” Often mistaken for “evil Spirits,” such fires frightened and misled the bewildered (“amaz’d”) “Night-wanderer” into “Boggs and Mires.”
But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch; 
God so commanded, and left that Command 
Sole Daughter of his voice; the rest, we live 
Law to our selves, our Reason is our Law.

To whom the Tempter guilefully repli’d.

Indeed? hath God then said that of the Fruit 
Of all these Garden Trees ye shall not eate, 
Yet Lords declar’d of all in Earth or Aire?

To whom thus Eve yet° sinless. Of the Fruit

Of each Tree in the Garden we may eate, 
But of the Fruit of this fair Tree amidst 
The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eate 
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die.

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold

The Tempter, but with shew of Zeale and Love 
To Man, and indignation at his wrong, 
New part° puts on, and as to passion mov’d,

Fluctuat° disturb’d, yet comely and in act 
Rais’d, as of som great matter to begin.

As when of old som Orator renound 
In Athens or free Rome, where Eloquence 
Flourishd, since mute, to som great cause addrest, 
Stood in himself collected, while each part, 
Motion,° each act won audience ere the tongue,°

Somtimes in higth° began, as no delay 
Of Preface brooking through his Zeal of Right.

So standing, moving, or to higth upgrown 
The Tempter all impassiond thus began.

653–4 Daughter of his voice. A Hebraism, Bath Kol, daughter of a voice. This is God’s “Sole” direct commandment; otherwise their unfallen “Reason” leads them to understand and follow the moral “Law” of nature.

659–63. Cf. Gen. 3:1–3: “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” Eve’s formulation indicates her “sufficient” understanding of the prohibition.

668–9 act / Rais’d. Drawn up to full dignity.

670–2 som Orator renound. Like the Athenian Demosthenes or the Roman Cicero, defending liberty “som great cause.” free Rome. Rome when it was a republic. since mute. Such oratory no longer exists, presumably because such love of liberty (in monarchical Europe, and now including England) no longer exists.

675–8 brooking. Allowing; Satan omits the usual rhetorical practice of beginning with a “Preface” and rising by stages to “higth” of style, but rather begins his speech at once in an “impassion’d” high style (“to higth upgrown”).
O Sacred, Wise, and Wisdom-giving Plant,
Mother of Science,\(^6\) Now I feel thy Power
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 Universe, doe not believe
Those rigid threats of Death; ye shall not Die:
How should ye? by the Fruit? it gives you Life
To\(^5\) Knowledge. By the Threatner? look on mee,
Mee who have touch’d and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfet have attaind then Fate
Meant mee, by ventring higher then my Lot.
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? or will God incense\(^6\) his ire
For such a petty Trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless vertue,\(^6\) whom the pain\(^6\)
Of Death denounc’t,\(^6\) whatever thing Death be,
Detterd 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;
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
Ye Eate thereof, your Eyes that seem so cleere,
Yet are but dim, shall perfetly be then
Op’nd and cleerd, and ye shall be as Gods,
Knowing both Good and Evil as they know.
That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man,
Internal Man, is but proportion meet,
\(^6\) ye shall not Die. Cf. Gen. 3:4, “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.”
\(^6\) Fate. As often before, Satan ascribes ultimate agency to Fate rather than God.
\(^6\) whatever thing Death be. Satan has of course met Death (2.781–814; cf. 4.425–7).
\(^6\) Be real. Theologians normally defined evil as a privation of or turning away from
good; on that assumption Satan argues that evil has no real existence.
\(^6\) Gods. Satan often equivocates with the term suggesting the angels’ equality with God; throughout this
passage he explicitly describes them as a pantheon of gods (cf. 718–19).
\(^6\) proportion meet. Satan invites Adam and Eve to aspire to divinity based on analogy with the supposed
experience of the snake.
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.
And what are Gods that Man may not become
As they, participating God-like food?
The Gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;

I question it, for this fair Earth I see,
Warm’d by the Sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: If they all things, who enclos’d
Knowledge of Good and Evil in this Tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains

Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
Th’ offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this Tree
Impart against his will if all be his?
Or is it envie, and can envie dwell

In Heav’nly breasts? these, these and many more
Causes import your need of this fair Fruit.

Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.
Hesended, and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too easie entrance won:

Fixt on the Fruit she gaz’d, which to behold
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive 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
So savorie of that Fruit, which with desire,
Incliable now grown to touch or taste,
Sollicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to her self she mus’d.

713–15. Satan perverts the Pauline concept of death to sin (Col. 3:3, 9–10): “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. . . . ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”
729–30. An echo of Virgil’s comment on Juno’s anger (Aeneid 1.11), “Can so much anger dwell in heavenly hearts.”
735–40 eager appetite. Cf. Gen. 3:6: “the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.”
744 Pausing a while. The pause makes Eve’s action a matter of willed choice, not merely impulsive.
Great are thy Vertues,° doubtless, best of Fruits,
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,
Conceales not from us, naming thee the Tree
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it inferrs° the good

By thee communicated, and our want:°
For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain° then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?

Such prohibitions binde not. But if Death
Bind us with after-bands,° what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eate
Of this fair Fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the Serpent? hee hath eat’n and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deni’d
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv’d?
For Beasts it seems: yet that one Beast which first
Hath tasted, envies° not, but brings with joy
The good befall’n him, Author unsuspect,°
Friendly to man, farr from deceit or guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to feare
Under this ignorance of good and Evil,

Of God or Death, of Law or Penaltie?
Here grows the Cure of all, this Fruit Divine,
Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste,
Of vertue° to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both Bodie and Mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck’d, she eat:

745–81. See Christian Doctrine, ch. 11, on the two parts of sin, evil desire and evil action.
781 eat. Ate, an accepted past tense, pronounced “et.”
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk

The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for Eve
Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd,
In Fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fansied so, through expectation high

Of knowledge, nor was God-head from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg’d without restraint,
And knew not eating Death: Satiate at length,
And hight’nd as with Wine, jocond° and boon,°
Thus to her self she pleasingly began.

O Sovran, vertuous,° precious of all Trees
In Paradise, of operation blest
To Sapience,° hitherto obscur’d, infam’d,°
And thy fair Fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,

Not without Song, each Morning, and due praise
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer’d free to all;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know;

Though others envie what they cannot give;
For had the gift bin theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remaind
In ignorance, thou op’nst Wisdoms way,

And giv’st access, though secret° she retire.
And I perhaps am secret; Heav’n is high,
High and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch

Our great Forbidder, safe with all his Spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort°
Shall I appeer? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake

804 Gods. Like Satan, Eve now refers to a pantheon of gods.
Full happiness with mee, or rather not,
But keep the odds° of Knowledge in my power
Without Copartner? so to add what wants°
In Femal Sex, the more to draw his Love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesireable, somtime
Superior: for inferior who is free?
This may be well: but what if God have seen,
And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think. Confirm’d then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.
So saying, from the Tree her step she turnd,
But first low Reverence don, as to the power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus’d
Into the plant sciential° sap, deriv’d
From Nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest Flours a Garland to adorne
Her Tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As Reapers oft are wont thir Harvest Queen.
Great joy he promis’d to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay’d;
Yet oft his heart, divine of° somthing ill,
Misgave him; hee the faultring measure° felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That Morn when first they parted; by the Tree
Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
Scarce from the Tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit that downie smil’d,
New gatherd, and ambrosial° smell diffus’d.
To him she hasted, in her face excuse
Came Prologue, and Apologie to prompt,
Which with bland° words at will she thus addrest.
Hast thou not wonderd, Adam, at my stay?

835–7 low Reverence. Eve’s idolatry of the “power” within the tree recalls the idolatrous reverence the rebel angels offered to Satan (2.477–9).
833–4 excuse. Eve’s expression as she approached Adam first registered “excuse,” like the “Prologue” in a play, and “Apologie” (justification, self-defense) served as prompter to her speech.
Thee I have misst, and thought it long, depriv’d
Thy presence, agonie of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
Mean I to trie, what rash untri’d I sought,
The 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
To open Eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath bin tasted such: the Serpent wise,
Or not restraind as wee, or not obeying,
Hath eat’n of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatn’d, but thenceforth
Endu’d with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration,° and with mee
Perswasively hath so prevaileth, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th’ effects to correspond, opener mine Eyes
Dimm erst,° dilated Spirits, ampler Heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot°
May joyne us, equal Joy, as equal Love;
Least thou not tasting, different degree°
Disjoyn the, and I then too late renounce
Deitie for thee, when Fate will not permit.
Thus Eve with Countnance blithe° her storie told;
But in her Cheek distemper flushing glowd.
On th’ other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal Trespass don by Eve, amaz’d,
Astonied° stood and Blank,° while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joynts relax’d;
From his slack hand the Garland wreath’d for Eve
Down drop’d, and all the faded Roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length

867 tasted. Proved by tasting, also, experienced, tested.
887 distemper. Disturbance of the balance of humors in the body, here causing agitation and wild excitement, marked by a hectic “flushing.”
895 First to himself he inward silence broke.
   O fairest of Creation, last and best
   Of all Gods works, Creature in whom excell’d
   Whatever can to sight or thought be form’d,
   Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!

900 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,
   Defac’t, deflour’d, 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

905 Of Enemie hath beguil’d thee, yet unknown,
   And mee with thee hath ruind, for with thee
   Certain my resolution is to Die;
   How can I live without thee, how forgoe
   Thy sweet Converse° and Love so dearly joyn’d,

910 To live again in these wildef Woods forlorn?
   Should God create another Eve, and I
   Another Rib afford, yet loss of thee
   Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
   The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,

915 Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State
   Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.
   So having said, as one from sad dismay
   Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb’d
   Submitting to what seem’d remediless,

920 Thus in calm mood his Words to Eve he turnd.
   Bold deed thou hast presum’d, adventrous Eve
   And peril great provok’t, who thus hath dar’d
   Had it been onely coveting to Eye
   That sacred Fruit, sacred° to abstinence,

925 Much more to taste it under banne to touch.
   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,

930 Profan’d first by the Serpent, by him first
   Made common and unhallow’d ere our taste;

914–15. Adam echoes Gen. 2:23–4: “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: ... Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Cf. 8.495 above.
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

935 To us, as likely tasting to attaine
Proportional ascent, which cannot be
But to be Gods, or Angels Demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy

940 Us his prime Creatures, dignifi’d so high,
Set over all his Works, which in our Fall,
For us created, needs with us must faile,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour loose,

945 Not well conceav’d of God, who though his Power
Creation could repeate, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, least the Adversary°
Triumph and say; Fickle their State whom God
Most Favors, who can please him long; Mee first

950 He ruind, now Mankind; whom will he next?
Matter of scorne, not to be given the Foe,
However I with thee have fixt my Lot,
Certain° to undergoe like doom, if Death
Consort° with thee, Death is to mee as Life;

955 So forcible within my heart I feel
The Bond of Nature draw me to my owne,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our State cannot be severd, we are one,
One Flesh; to loose thee were to loose my self.

960 So Adam, and thus Eve to him repli’d.
O glorious trial of exceeding° Love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Ingaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attaine,

965 Adam, from whose deare side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our Union heare thee speak,
One Heart, one Soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv’d,
Rather then Death or aught° then Death more dread

970 Shall separate us, linkt in Love so deare,
To undergoe with mee one Guilt, one Crime,

946–50. Cf. the Son’s plea at 3.156–64.
If any be, of tasting this fair Fruit,
Whose vertue,° for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion hath presented
975 This happie trial of thy Love, which else
So eminently never had bin known.
Were it° I thought Death menac’t would ensue°
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not perswade thee, rather die
980 Deserted, then oblige° thee with a fact°
Pernicious to thy Peace, chiefly assur’d
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful Love unequald; but I feel
Farr otherwise th’ event,° not Death, but Life
985 Augmented, op’nd Eyes, new Hopes, new Joyes,
Taste so Divine, that what of sweet before
Hath toucht my sense, flat seems to° this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of Death deliver to the Windes.
990 So saying, she embrac’d him, and for joy
Tenderly wept, much won that he his Love
Had so enobl’d, as of choice to incurr
Divine displeasure for her sake, or Death.
In recompence (for such compliance bad°
995 Such recompence best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing Fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupl’d not to eat
Against his better knowledge, not deceav’d,
But fondly° overcome with Femal charm.
1000 Earth trembl’d from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,
Skie lowr’d° and muttering Thunder, som sad drops
Wept at compleating of the mortal Sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
1005 Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate°
Her former trespass fear’d, the more to soothe

974–5 Direct, or by occasion. The direct or indirect “good” of tasting the fruit has been the “happie trial” of Adam’s love.
997–9. Cf. 1 Tim. 2:14: “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgres-
sion.”
1003–4 Sin / Original. The theological doctrine that all Adam’s descendants are stained by Adam’s sin and thereby subject to physical death and (unless saved by grace) to damnation. Cf. Christian Doctrine 1.11.
Him with her lov’d societie, that now
As with new Wine intoxicated both
They swim in mirth, and fansie that they feel

Divinitie within them breeding wings
Wherewith to 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:
Till Adam thus ’gan Eve to dalliance° move.
Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant,° of Sapience° no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,

And Palate call judicious; I the praise
Yeild thee, so well this day thou hast purvey’d.°
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain’d
From this delightful Fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be

In things to us forbidden, it might be wish’d,
For this one Tree had bin forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh’t, now let us play,°
As meet° is, after such delicious Fare;
For never did thy Beautie since the day

I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn’d
With all perfections, so enflame my sense
With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now
Then ever, bountie of this vertuous Tree.

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy°

Of amorous intent, well understood
Of Eve, whose Eye darted contagious Fire.
Her hand he seis’d, and to a shadie bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbown’d
He led her nothing loath; Flours were the Couch,
Pansies, and Violets, and Asphodel,
And Hyacinth, Earths freshest softest lap.
There they thir fill of Love and Loves disport
Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seale,

1026 ten. Looks forward to the Mosaic covenant, with its ten commandments.
1029–32. Echoes Zeus’ amorous invitation to Hera (Iliad 14.314–28), and also Paris to Helen (Iliad 3.441–6).
The solace of thir sin, till dewie sleep
1045 Oppress'd them, wearied with thir amorous play.

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
1050 Bred of unkindly° fumes, with conscious° dreams
Encumberd, now had left them, up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found thir Eyes how op'nd, and thir minds
How dark'nd; innocence, that as a veile
1055 Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gon,
Just confidence, and native righteousness
And honour from about them, naked left
To guiltie shame: hee cover'd, but his Robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong
1060 Herculean Samson from the Harlot-lap
Of Philistine 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,
1065 Till Adam, though not less then Eve abasht,
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,
1070 False in our promis’d Rising; since our Eyes
Op’nd we find indeed, and find we know
Both Good and Evil, Good lost, and Evil got,
Bad Fruit of Knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of Honour void,
1075 Of Innocence, of Faith, of Puritie,
Our wonted° Ornaments now soild and staind,

1058–9 hee. “shame” now “cover’d” them, but revealed (“Uncover’d”) their guilt.
1059–62 Danite. Samson, of the tribe of Dan, told the Philistine “Harlot” “Dalilah” that the secret of his great
strength lay in his hair; she sheared it off while he slept, and when he awoke he was easily captured by
his enemies and blinded.
1067 Eve, in evil hour. Adam’s bitter pun suggests a false etymology for Eve’s name and repudiates the actual
etymology, “life,” which Adam will later reaffirm (11.159–61).
1071–3. Adam, like most commentators, derives the tree’s name, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,
from its effect. Cf. Christian Doctrine 1.10: “since Adam tasted it, we not only know evil, but we know
good only by means of evil.”
And in our Faces evident the signes
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first

Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, earst° with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav’nly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly, with thir blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here

In solitude live savage, in some glade
Obscur’d, where highest Woods impenetrable
To Starr or Sun-light, spread thir umbrage° broad,
And brown as Evening: Cover me ye Pines,
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs

Hide me, where I may never see them more.
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The Parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious,° and unseemliest seen,

Some Tree whose broad smooth Leaves together sowd,
And girded on our loyns, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new commer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsel’d hee, and both together went
Into the thickest Wood, there soon they chose
The Figtree, not that kind for Fruit renown’d,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan spreds her Armes
Braunching so broad and long, that in the ground

The bended Twigs take root, and Daughters grow
About the Mother Tree, a Pillard° shade
High overarch’t, and echoing Walks between;
There oft the Indian Herdsman shunning heate
Shelters in coole, and tends his pasturing Herds

At Loopholes cut through thickest shade: Those Leaves
They gatherd, broad as Amazonian Targe,

1078–80 **concupiscence.** The theological term for the unruly human passions and desires seen as one effect of the Fall, and causing an abundance ("store") of evils. "Shame" is the "last" evil, the "first" is the "foul concupiscence" that produces it.

1095–1110 **broad smooth leaves.** The banyan, or Indian fig tree, has small leaves, but the account Milton draws on from Gerard’s *Herbal* (1597) contains the several details related in these lines. "Malabar" and "Decan" (Deccan) are in southern India.

1111 **Amazonian Targe.** Shield of the Amazons, female warriors of Greek myth.
And with what skill they had, together sowd,
To gird thir waste, vain Covering if to hide
Thir guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike
To that first naked Glorie. Such of late
*Columbus* found th’ American so girt
With featherd Cincture,\(^{°}\) naked else and wilde
Among the Trees on Iles and woodie Shores.
Thus fenc’t, and as they thought, thir shame in part
Coverd, but not at rest or ease of Mind,
They sate them down to weep, nor onely Teares
Raind at thir Eyes, but high Winds worse within
Began to rise, high Passions, Anger, Hate,
Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore
Thir inward State of Mind, calm Region once
And full of Peace, now tost and turbulent:
For Understanding rul’d not, and the Will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sovran Reason claimd
Superior sway: From thus distemperd brest,
*Adam*, estrang’d\(^{°}\) in look and alterd stile,\(^{°}\)
Speech intermitted\(^{°}\) thus to *Eve* renewd.
Would thou hadst heark’nd to my words, and stai’d
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wandring this unhappie Morn,
I know not whence possessd thee; we had then
Remaind still happie, not as now, despoild
Of all our good, sham’d, naked, miserable.
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve\(^{°}\)
The Faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to faile.
To whom soon mov’d with touch of blame thus *Eve.*
What words have past thy Lips, *Adam* severe,
Imput’st thou that to my default, or will
Of wandring, as thou call’st it, which who knows

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1120–31. The immediate psychological effects of the Fall are seen in the subjection of reason and will to the lower faculties of sensual appetite.

1136, 1144 *wandring, severe.* Both words now take on their fallen meanings. In unfallen Eden wandering is blameless (4.234, 8.312); at 4.293–4 “severe” means “austerely simple”; here it means “harsh.”

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 discernd
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmitie between us known,
Why hee should mean me ill, or seek to harme.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a liveless Rib.

Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst?
Too facil° then thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.

Hadst thou bin firm and fixt in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgress’d, nor thou with mee.
To whom then first incenst Adam repli’d,
Is this the Love, is this the recompence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, exprest
Immutable° when thou wert lost, not I,
Who might have liv’d and joyd° immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather Death with thee:
And am I now upbraided, as the cause
Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?
I warn’d thee, I admonish’d thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking Enemie
That lay in wait; beyond this had bin force,
And force upon free will hath here no place.

But confidence then bore thee on, secure°
Either to meet no danger, or to finde
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err’d in overmuch admiring
What seemd in thee so perfet, that I thought

No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th’ accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in Women overtrusting
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook,

And left to her self, if evil thence ensue,
Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.
   Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of thir vain contest appeer’d no end.

*The End of the Ninth Book.*
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 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 foretells 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 condole-ment 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 act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
Hee in the Serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her Husband shee, to taste the fatall fruit,
Was known in Heav’n; for what can scape the Eye
Of God All-seeing, or deceave his Heart
Omniscient, who in all things wise and just,
Hinder’d not Satan to attempt the minde
Of Man, with strength entire,° and free will arm’d,
Complete° to have discover’d and repulst

2 approve. Make proof of. approved. Pronounced good.
6 sympathie. Influence at a distance.
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,
15 Incurr’d, what could they less, the penaltie,
And manifold in sin, deserv’d to fall.
Up into Heav’n from Paradise in haste
Th’ Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad
For Man, for of his state by this° they knew,
20 Much wondering how the suttle Fiend had stoln
Entrance unseen. Soon as th’ unwelcome news
From Earth arriv’d at Heaven Gate, displeas’d
All were who heard, dim sadness did not spare
That time Celestial visages, yet mixt
25 With pitie, violated not thir bliss.
About the new-arriv’d, in multitudes
Th’ ethereal People ran, to hear and know
How all befell: they towards the Throne Supream
Accountable made haste to make appear
30 With righteous plea, thir utmost vigilance,
And easily approv’d; when the most High
Eternal Father from his secret Cloud,
Amidst in Thunder utter’d thus his voice.
Assembl’d Angels, and ye Powers return’d
35 From unsuccessful charge, be not dismaid,
Nor troubl’d at these tidings from the Earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this Tempter cross’d the Gulf from Hell.
40 I told ye then he should prevail and speed°
On his bad Errand, Man should be seduc’t
And flatter’d out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no Decree of mine
Concurring° to necessitate his Fall,
45 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free Will, to her own inclining left

16 manifold in sin. Having multiple sins. In Christian Doctrine 1.11 Milton suggests that no sin “can be named, which was not included in this one act.”
29 Accountable. Liable to be called to answer for how they fulfilled their duties (guarding Paradise).
31 easily approv’d. Their plea of “utmost vigilance” was readily accepted.
38–9 Foretold so lately. Cf. 3.80–96.
43–7 no Decree of mine. Cf. 3.96–128.
In even scale. But fall’n he is, and now
What rests but that the mortal Sentence pass
On his transgression, Death denoun’d that day,
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear’d,
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bountie scorn’d.

But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee
Vicegerent Son, to thee I have transferr’d
deputy ruler
All Judgement, whether in Heav’n, or Earth, or Hell.
Ease it might be seen that I intend
Mercie colleague with Justice, sending thee

Mans Friend, his Mediator, his design’d
Both Ransom and Redeemer voluntarie,
And destin’d Man himself to judge Man fall’n.
So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his Glorie, on the Son

Blaz’d forth unclouded Deitie; he full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Express’d, and thus divinely answer’d milde.
Father Eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in Heav’n and Earth to do thy will

Supream, that thou in mee thy Son belov’d
Mayst ever rest well pleas’d. I go to judge
On Earth these thy transgressors, but thou knowst,
Whoever judg’d, the worst on mee must light,
When time shall be, for so I undertook

Before thee; and not repenting, this obtaine
Of right, that I may mitigate thir doom
On me deriv’d, yet I shall temper so
Justice with Mercie, as may illustrate most


50 Forbearance no acquittance. God’s restraint (“Forbearance”) in exacting punishment does not “acquit”
Adam of the punishment due. “Omittance is not quittance” was a proverb.

54. i.e., my justice must not be “scorn’d” as my generosity (“bountie”) has been.

56–7 All Judgement. Cf. John 5:22: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

60–1 Mediator. Cf. Christian Doctrine 1.15, “The mediatorial office of Christ is that whereby . . . he voluntarily performed, and continues to perform, on behalf of man, whatever is requisite for obtaining reconciliation with God, and eternal salvation.”

70 Son belov’d. Cf. Matt. 3:17: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.

Attendance none shall need, nor Train,° where none Are to behold the Judgement, but the judg’d, Those two; the third best absent is condemn’d, Convict° by flight, and Rebel to all Law Conviction° to the Serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant Seat he rose Of high collateral° glorie: him Thrones and Powers, Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant° Accompanied to Heaven Gate, from whence Eden and all the Coast° in prospect lay.

Down he descended strait; the speed of Gods Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing’d. Now was the Sun in Western cadence° low From Noon, and gentle Aires due at thir hour To fan the Earth now wak’d, and usher in The Eevning coole when he from wrauth more coole Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both To sentence Man: the voice of God they heard Now walking in the Garden, by soft windes Brought to thir Ears, while day declin’d, they heard, And from his presence hid themselves among The thickest Trees, both Man and Wife, till God Approaching, thus to Adam call’d aloud. Where art thou Adam, wont° with joy to meet My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,

Not pleas’d, thus entertaind with solitude, Where obvious° dutie erewhile appear’d unsought: Or come I less conspicuous, or what change Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth. He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first To offend, discount’nanc’t both, and discompos’d; Love was not in thir looks, either to God Or to each other, but apparent° guilt, And shame, and perturbation, and despaire, Anger, and obstinacie, and hate, and guile.

Whence Adam faultring long, thus answer’d brief.

90–1 **strait.** Immediate; cf. Raphael’s journey from heaven to earth (8.110–14).
92–102. Cf. Gen. 3:8: “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.”
I heard thee in the Garden, and of thy voice
Affraid, being naked, hid my self. To whom
The gracious Judge without revile\textsuperscript{°} repli’d.
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear’d,
\textit{But still\textsuperscript{°} rejoyc’t, how is it now become}
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the Tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?
To whom thus \textit{Adam} sore beset repli’d.

\textit{O Heav’\textsuperscript{n}! in evil strait this day I stand}
Before my Judge, either to undergoe
My self the total Crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her Faith to me remaines,
\textit{I should conceal, and not expose to blame}
By my complaint; but strict necessitie
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint
Least on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
\textit{Devolv’d;\textsuperscript{°} though should I hold my peace, yet thou}
Wouldst easily detect what I conceale.
This Woman whom thou mad’st to be my help,
And gav’st me as thy perfet gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,
\textit{That from her hand I could suspect no ill,}
And what she did, whatever in it self,
Her doing seem’d to justifie the deed;
\textit{Shee gave me of the Tree, and I did eate.}
To whom the sovran Presence thus repli’d.

\textit{Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey}
Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,
\textit{Superior, or but\textsuperscript{°} equal, that to her}
Thou did’st resigne thy Manhood, and the Place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
\textit{And for thee, whose perfection farr excell’d}

\textsuperscript{121–3. Cf. Gen. 3:11, “And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?”}
\textsuperscript{137–43. Compare Adam’s speech in Gen. 3:12, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”}
\textsuperscript{148–50 of thee, / And for thee. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:8–9, “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.”}
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,

155 Unseemly to beare rule, which was thy part
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,

160 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abasht repli’d.
The Serpent me beguil’d and I did eate.
Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To Judgement he proceeded on th’ accus’d

165 Serpent though brute, unable to transferre
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

170 Concern’d not Man (since he no further knew)
Nor alter’d his offence; yet God at last
To Satan first in sin his doom apply’d
Though in mysterious terms, judg’d as then best:
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

175 Because thou hast done this, thou art accurst
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

180 Enmitie, and between thine and her Seed;
Her Seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.
So spake this Oracle, then verifi’d

157–62. Cf. Gen. 3:13, “And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.”
165–7. i.e., the serpent was “unable” to “transferre” his own “Guilt” in being “polluted” to Satan, who made him his “instrument.”
169–70 more to know. Adam and Eve cannot now understand the terms of the judgment on the serpent.
175–8. Cf. Gen. 3:14, which these lines closely paraphrase.
179–81. Cf. Gen. 3:15: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This is the “protoevangelium,” or judgment of Satan in the serpent, that contains the promise of the redeemer, the woman’s “Seed.” Adam and Eve do not fully understand it until 12.429–33, 598–605.
When Jesus son of Mary second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like Lightning down from Heav’n,

Prince of the Aire; then rising from his Grave
Spoild° Principalities and Powers, triumpht

In open shew, and with ascention bright
Captivity led captive through the Aire,
The Realm it self of Satan long usurpt,

Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
Eevn hee who now foretold his fatal bruise,
And to the Woman thus his Sentence turn’d.
Thy sorrow I will greatly multiplie
By thy Conception; Children thou shalt bring

In sorrow forth, and to thy Husbands will
Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc’d.

Because thou hast heark’nd to the voice of thy Wife,
And eaten of the Tree concerning which

I charg’d thee, saying: Thou shalt not eate thereof,
Curs’d is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
Shalt eate thereof all the days of thy Life;
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,
Till thou return unto the ground, for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy Birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust returne.

So judg’d he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,

And th’ instant stroke of Death denounc’ t° that day

185–8 Prince of the Aire. Cf. Eph. 2:2, where Satan is called “prince of the power of the air”; Col. 2:15, which states that Christ, “having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them”; and Eph. 4:8, declaring that when Christ “ascended up on high, he led captivity captive.”

193–6. Cf. Gen. 3:16: “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”
In Christian Doctrine 1.10 Milton claimed that after the Fall the husband’s power over his wife was increased.

197–208. Cf. Gen. 3:17–19: “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”
Remov’d farr off; then pittyng 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
As Father of his Familie he clad
Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts, or° slain,
Or as the Snake with youthful Coate repaid;
And thought not much° to cloath his Enemies:

Nor hee thir outward onely with the Skins
Of Beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his Robe of righteousness,
Araying cover’d from his Fathers sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return’d,

Into his blissful bosom reassum’d
In glory as of old, to him appeas’d
All, though all-knowing, what had past with Man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.
Meanwhile ere thus was sin’d and judg’d on Earth,

Within the Gates of Hell sate Sin and Death,
In counterview° within the Gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous° flame
Farr into Chaos, since the Fiend pass’d through,
Sin opening, who thus now to Death began.

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

Ere this he had return’d, with fury driv’n
By his 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,
Or sympathie,° or som connatural° force
Powerful at greatest distance to unite

222–3. Cf. Isa. 61:10: “he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.”
With secret amity things of like kinde
By secretest conveyance. ° Thou my Shade

Inseparable must ° with mee along:
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But least the difficultie of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this Gulfe
Impassable, Impervious, ° let us try

Adventrous work, yet to thy power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found ° a path
Over this Maine ° from Hell to that new World
Where Satan now prevails, a Monument
Of merit high to all th’ infernal Host,

Easing thir passage hence, for intercourse, °
Or transmigration, ° as thir lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new felt attraction and instinct.
Whom thus the meager ° Shadow answerd soon.

Goe whither Fate and inclination strong
Leads thee, I shall not lag behinde, nor erre °
The way, thou leading, such a sent I draw °
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of Death from all things there that live:

Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.

So saying, with delight he snuff’d ° the smell
Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,

Against ° the day of Battel, to a Field,
Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur’d
With sent of living Carcasses design’d °
For death, the following day, in bloodie fight.
So sented the grim Feature ° and upturn’d

His Nostril wide into the murkie Air,
Sagacious ° of his Quarry from so far.
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
Solid or slimie, as in raging Sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling ° towards the mouth of Hell.
As when two Polar Winds blowing adverse °
Upon the Cronian Sea, together drive
Mountains of Ice, that stop th’ imagin’d way
Beyond Petsora Eastward, to the rich
Cathaian Coast. The aggregated Soyle
Death with his Mace petrific,° cold and dry,
As with a Trident smote, and fix’t as firm
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,
And with Asphaltic slime,° broad as the Gate,
Deep to the Roots of Hell the gather’d beach°
They fasten’d, and the Mole° immense wraught on
Over the foaming deep high Archt, a Bridge
Of length prodigious joyning to the Wall°
Immovable of this now fenceless° world
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easie, inoffensive° down to Hell.
So, if great things to small may be compar’d,
Xerxes, the Libertie of Greece to yoke,
From Susa his Memnonian Palace high
Came to the Sea, and over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joyn’d,
And scourg’d with many a stroak th’ indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous Art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent Rock
Over the vext° Abyss, following the track
Of Satan, to the self same place where hee
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
The confines° met of Empyrean Heav’n

290–3 Cronian Sea. The Arctic Ocean.
th’imagin’d way. The northeast passage from Pechora
("Petsora"), a river in Siberia, to north China (Cathay) which Henry Hudson looked for in 1608 but could only imagine because it was blocked by ice.
294–6 Mace petrific. Death’s materials are the “cold and dry” elements. His mace is associated with Neptune’s “Trident,” which was said to have “fix’t” the “floating” Greek island “Delos.”
297 Gorgonian rigor. The Gorgon Medusa turned to stone anything she looked upon.
306 great things to small. A familiar Virgilian formula.
307–11. The Persian king “Xerxes” ordered the sea whipped when it destroyed the bridge of ships he built over the Hellespont (joining “Europe with Asia”), so as to invade Greece. Susa. The biblical Shusan, Xerxes’ winter residence, was founded by the mythical Prince Memnon (“Memnonian Palace”).
313 Pontifical. Bridge-building, with a pun on “papal.” The pope had the title Pontifex Maximus.
And of this World, and on the left hand Hell
With long reach interpos’d; three sev’ral wayes
In sight, to each of these three places led.

And now thir way to Earth they had descri’d,
To Paradise first tending, when behold
Satan in likeness of an Angel bright
Betwixt the Centaure and the Scorpion stearing
His Zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:

Disguis’d he came, but those his Children dear
Thir Parent soon discern’d, though in disguise.
Hee after Eve seduc’t, unminded slunk
Into the Wood fast by, and changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act

By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her Husband, saw thir shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them terrifi’d
Hee fled, not hoping to escape, but shun

The present, fearing guiltie what his wrauth
Might suddenly inflict; that past, return’d
By Night, and 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
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return’d,
And at the brink of Chaos, neer the foot
Of this new wondrous Pontifice, unhop’t
Met who to meet him came, his Ofspring dear.

Great joy was at thir meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendious Bridge his joy encreas’d.
Long hee admiring stood, till Sin, his faire
Inchanting Daughter, thus the silence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,

323–4 three sev’ral wayes. The golden staircase or chain linking the universe to Heaven (3.510–18); the new bridge linking it to Hell; and the passage through the spheres down to earth (3:526–9).
328–9. Satan steered between Sagittarius (“the Centaure”) and Scorpio, thereby passing through Anguis, the constellation of the Serpent.
342–3 listening. Satan evidently heard the “discourse” and “plaints” of Adam and Eve at 10.720–1096), which thus precede his return to Hell; he also concluded that his own “doom” was “of future time.”
355 Trophies. Objects or persons captured in battle displayed in the triumphs accorded Roman generals and emperors who won great military victories; here, the bridge itself is a trophy of victory.
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
Now also evidence, but straight I felt
Though distant from thee Worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee with this thy Son;
Such fatal consequence° unites us three:

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable Gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast atchiev’d our libertie, confin’d
Within Hell Gates till now, thou us impow’rd
To fortifie thus Farr, and overlay
With this portentous° Bridge the dark Abyss.
Thine now is all this World, thy vertue° hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy Wisdom gain’d
With odds° what Warr hath lost, and fully aveng’d

Our foile° in Heav’n; here thou shalt Monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still Victor sway,
As Battel hath adjudg’d, from this new World
Retiring, by his own doom° alienated,
And henceforth Monarchie with thee divide

Of all things parted by th’ Empyreal bounds,
His Quadrature, from thy Orbicular World,
Or trie° thee now more dang’rous to his Throne.
Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answerd glad.
Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both,

High proof ye now have giv’n to be the Race
Of Satan (for I glorie in the name,
Antagonist of Heav’ns Almighty King)
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th’ infernal Empire, that so neer Heav’ns dore

Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine with this glorious Work, 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
395  To my associate Powers, them to acquaint
    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
400  Dominion exercise and in the Aire,
    Chiefly on Man, sole Lord of all declar’d,
Him first make sure your thrall,° and lastly kill.
My Substitutes I send ye, and Create
Plenipotent° on Earth, of matchless might
405  Issuing from mee: on your joynt vigor now
    My hold of this new Kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death expos’d by my exploit.
If your joynt power prevailes, th’ affaires of Hell
No detriment° need feare, goe and be strong.
410  So saying he dismiss’d them, they with speed
    Thir course through thickest Constellations held
Spreading thir bane;° the blasted° Starrs lookt wan,
And Planets, Planet-strook, real Eclips
Then sufferd. Th’ other way Satan went down
415  The Causey° to Hell Gate; on either side
        Disparted° Chaos over built° exclaimd,
And with rebounding surge the barrs assaild,
That scorn’d his indignation: through the Gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass’d,
420  And all about found desolate; for those
    Appointed to sit there, had left thir charge,
Flown to the upper World; the rest were all
Farr to the inland retir’d, about the walls
Of Pandæmonium, Citie and proud seate
425  Of Lucifer, so by allusion calld,
    Of that bright Starr to Satan paragond.°
There kept thir Watch the Legions, while the Grand

413–14 Planet-strook. The planets, stricken as by the malign influence of an adverse planet, suffered not merely a temporary but a “real Eclips,” a permanent loss of light.
424–6 Pandæmonium. Literally “place of all demons”; it is termed the “seate” of ”Lucifer” (Satan’s name before his fall), in allusion to and comparison with the morning star named Lucifer (the light-bringer).
427 the Grand. “the grand infernal Peers” (cf. 2.507).
In Council sate, sollicitous what chance
Might intercept thir Emperor sent, so hee
Departing gave command, and they observ’d.

As when the Tartar from his Russian Foe
By Astracan over the Snowie Plaines
Retires, or Bactrian Sophi from the horns
Of Turkish Crescent, leaves all waste beyond

The Realm of Aladule, in his retreate
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
Of Forrein Worlds: he through the midst unmarkt,
In shew Plebeian Angel militant
Of lowest order, past; and from the dore
Of that Plutonian Hall, invisible

Ascended his high Throne, which under state
Of richest texture spred, at th’ upper end
Was plac’t in regal lustre. Down a while
He sate, and round about him saw unseen:
At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head
And shape Starr bright appeer’d, or brighter, clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng

Thir mighty Chief return’d: loud was th’ acclaime:
Forth rush’d in haste the great consulting Peers,
Rais’d from thir dark Divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approach’d him, who with hand

429–39 the Tartar. The simile compares the fallen angels’ withdrawal from other regions of Hell to guard their metropolis to Tartars retreating before attacking Russians and to Persians retreating before attacking Turks. Astracan. A Tartar region near the mouth of the Volga, annexed by Ivan the Terrible in 1556. Bactrian Sophi. Persian Shah (Bactria, modern Afghanistan, was a province of Persia). Turkish Crescent. Refers both to the Turkish battle formations and to their emblem. Realm of Aladule. Armenia, whose last Persian ruler before the Turkish conquest, named Aladule, was forced to retreat before the Turks to Tabriz (“Tauris”) in northwest Persia (Iran) or to Kazvin (“Casbeen”), north of Tehran.


444 Plutonian. Infernal, from Pluto, the classical god who rules the underworld.

453 Stygian. Of the river Styx in Hades, the river of hate.
Silence, and with these words attention won.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
For in possession such, not onely of right,
I call ye and declare ye now, returnd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal Pit

Abominable, accurst, the house of woe,
And Dungeon of our Tyrant: Now possess,
As Lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven
Little inferiour, by my adventure hard
With peril great atchiev’d. Long were to tell

What I have don, what sufferd, with what paine
Voyag’d 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

Told out my uncouth° passage, forc’t to ride
Th’ untractable Abysse, 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 supreame; thence how I found
The new created World, which fame° in Heav’n
Long had foretold, a Fabrick° wonderful
Of absolute perfection, therein Man
Plac’t in a Paradise, by our exile

Made happie: Him by fraud I have seduc’d
From his Creator, and the more to increase
Your wonder, with an Apple; he thereat
Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv’n up
Both his beloved Man and all his World,

To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or allarme,°
To range in, and to dwell, and over Man
To rule, as over all he should have rul’d.
True is, mee also he hath judg’d, or rather

Mee not, but the brute Serpent in whose shape

460–1. Satan declares that his followers now hold their titles “in possession” (de facto), by reason of his conquest of earth, not only “of right” (de jure) – a common legal distinction.

480. Protesting both to and against Fate.
Man I deceav’d: that which to mee belongs,
Is enmity, which he will put between
Mee and Mankinde; I am to bruise his heel;
His Seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A World who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th’ account
Of my performance: What 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
To fill his eare, when contrary he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wonderd, but not long
Had leasure, wondring at himself now more;
His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vaine, a greater power
Now rul’d him, punisht in the shape he sin’d,
According to his doom: he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue
To forked tongue, for now were all transform’d
Alike, to Serpents all as accessories
To his bold Riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the Hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and taile,
Scorpion and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
Cerastes hornd, Hydrus, and Ellops drear,
And Dipsas (not so thick swarm’d once the Soil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the Isle

500 bliss. Ironically, the final word of Satan’s triumphal speech rhymes with and prepares for the “hiss” that will soon greet him (508).
511–47. The scene recalls Dante’s vivid description of the thieves metamorphosed into snakes (Inferno 24–5).
527–8 Gorgon. Medusa. Ovid explains that the blood dropping from her severed head as Persius flew with it over Libya accounts for the abundance of snakes in that country (Metamorphoses 4.617–20). Milton’s catalogue of snakes recalls Lucan’s enumeration of the serpents that sprang from Medusa’s blood (Pharsalia 9.697–733). Ophiusa. Greek, “full of serpents,” the name given to several islands, including Rhodes.
Ophiusa) but still greatest hee the midst,
Now Dragon grown, larger then whom the Sun

530 Ingenderd in the Pythian Vale on slime,
Huge Python, and his Power no less he seem’d
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him follow’d issuing forth to th’ open Field,
Where all yet left of that revolted Rout

535 Heav’n-fall’n, in station° stood or just array,°
Sublime° with expectation when to see
In Triumph issuing forth thir glorious Chief;
They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
Of ugly Serpents; horror on them fell,

540 And horrid sympathic;° for what they saw,
They felt themselvs now changing;° down thir arms,
Down fell both Spear and Shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renew’d, and the dire form
Catcht by Contagion, like in punishment,

545 As in thir crime. Thus was th’ applause they meant,
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

550 Thir penance,° laden with fair Fruit, like that
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

555 Now ris’n, to work them furder woe or shame;
Yet parcht with scalding thurst 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

560 That curld Megæra: greedily they pluck’d
The Frutage fair to sight, like that which grew

528–32 Dragon. Associated with Satan, cf. Rev. 12:9. Python. A gigantesic serpent engendered from the slime left by Deucalion’s flood; Apollo slew him and appropriated the “Pythian Vale” and shrine at Delphi (Metamorphoses 1.438–47), a narrative sometimes read as type of Christ’s victory over the “Dragon” Satan.

559–60 Megœra. One of the three Furies with snaky hair, goddesses of vengeance.

561–70 bituminous Lake. The Dead Sea, where “Sodom,” the evil city destroyed by fire and brimstone (“flamed”) once stood (Gen. 19:24). Apples reputedly grew nearby, which looked good but dissolved into ashes when touched. Milton’s scene also evokes the myth of Tantalus, from whom water and fruit receded every time he reached for them to assuage his raging hunger and thirst (Odyssey 11.582–92). Cf. the curse on the serpent, “dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life” (Gen. 3:14).
Neer that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam’d;
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceav’d; they fondly° thinking to alay

565 Thir appetite with gust,° instead of Fruit
Chewd bitter Ashes, which th’ offended taste
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayd,°
Hunger and thirst constraining, drugd° as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writh’d thir jaws

570 With soot and cinders fill’d; so oft they fell
Into the same illusion, not as Man
Whom they triumph’d° once lapst. Thus were they plagu’d
And worn with Famin, long and ceasless hiss,
Till thir lost shape, permitted, they resum’d,

575 Yearly enjoynd, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain number’d days,
To dash thir pride, and joy for Man seduc’t.
However some tradition they dispers’d
Among the Heathen of thir purchase° got,

580 And Fabl’d how the Serpent, whom they calld
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide-
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driv’n
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

585 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arriv’d, Sin there in power before,
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet

590 On his pale Horse: to whom Sin thus began.
Second of Satan sprung, all conquering Death,
What thinkst thou of our Empire now, though earn’d

574–6 lost shape. God permitted them to resume their shape as fallen angels, but turned them to serpents in an “annual humbling.”

578–84 some tradition. The Titan “Ophion” (whose name means “Serpent”) and his wife “Eurynome” (the wide-ruling or “wide- / Encroaching”) ruled Olympus until driven away by “Saturn” and his wife “Ops”; they in turn were overthrown by “Dictæan Jove,” who lived in Crete on Mount Dicte. Milton suggests that these myths represent versions of the fallen angels’ story transmitted by them to “the Heathen.”

586–8. Sin was “in power” in Eden in the actual sins of Adam and Eve; now Sin will dwell “in body,” as a “Habitual” physical presence in all creatures, due to original sin.

589–90 pale Horse. Cf. Rev. 6:8, “Behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.” Death is “not mounted yet” because that action is predicted for the Last Days.
With travail° difficult, not better farr
Then stil at Hels dark threshold to have sate watch,
Unnam’d, undreaded, and thy self half starv’d?
Whom thus the Sin-born Monster answerd soon.
To mee, who with eternal Famin pine,
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven,
There best, where most with ravin° I may meet;
Prey
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
To stuff this Maw, this vast unhide-bound Corps.
To whom th’ incestuous Mother thus repli’d.
Thou therefore on these Herbs, and Fruits, and Flours
Feed first, on each Beast next, and Fish, and Fowle,
No homely° morsels, and whatever thing
The Sithe of Time mowes down, devour unspár’d,
Till I in Man residing through the Race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.
This said, they both betook them several wayes,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later; which th’ Almightie seeing,
From his transcendent Seat the Saints among,
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
Folly to mee, so doth the Prince of Hell
And his Adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heav’nly, and conniving° seem
To gratifie my scornful Enemies,
That laugh, as if transported with some fit
Of Passion, I to them had quitted° all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I call’d and drew them thither

601 unhide-bound Corps. Death’s hunger is such that he can never fill out his skin, so his “hide” does not cling close to his bones.
606 Sithe of Time. A familiar emblem shows Time (and Death) as a mower with a scythe.
620 wastful Furies. Avenging classical deities (the Eumenides), here, Sin and Death,
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draf\textsuperscript{o} and filth
Which mans polluting Sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till cramm\’d and gorg\’d, nigh burst
With suckt and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son,

Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at last
Through Chaos hurld, obstruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jawes.
Then Heav\’n and Earth renewd shall be made pure
To sanctitie that shall receive no staine:

Till then the Curse pronounc\’t on both precedes.\textsuperscript{o}
He ended, and the Heav\’ny 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\textsuperscript{o} thee? Next, to the Son,
Destin\’d restorer of Mankind, by whom
New Heav\’n and Earth shall to the Ages rise,
Or down from Heav\’n descend. Such was thir song,
While the Creator calling forth by name

His mightie Angels gave them several charge,\textsuperscript{o}
As sorted\textsuperscript{o} best with present things. The Sun
Had first his precept\textsuperscript{o} so to move, so shine,
As might affect the Earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the North to call

Decrepit Winter, from the South to bring
Solstitial summers heat. To the blanc\textsuperscript{o} Moone
Her office they prescrib\’d, to th\’ other five
Thir planetarie motions and aspects\textsuperscript{o}
In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,

Of noxious efficacie, and when to joyne
In Synod\textsuperscript{o} unbenigne, and taught the fixt\textsuperscript{o}
Thir influence malignant when to showre,
Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous:° To the Winds they set
Thir corners, when with bluster to confound
Sea, Aire, and Shoar, the Thunder when to rowle
With terror through the dark Aereal Hall.
Some say he bid his Angels turne ascanse
The Poles of Earth twice ten degrees and more
From the Suns Axe; they with labour push’d
Oblique the Centric Globe:° Som say the Sun
Was bid turn Reines from th’ Equinoctial Rode
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the Seav’n
Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan Twins
675 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amaine
By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorne, to bring in change
Of Seasons to each Clime;° else had the Spring
Perpetual smi’d on Earth with vernant° Flours,
Equal in Days and Nights, except to those
Beyond the Polar Circles; to them Day
Had unbenighted° shon, while the low Sun
To recompenсе his distance, in thir sight
Had rounded still° th’ Horizon, and not known
680 Or° East or West, which had forbid the Snow
From cold Estotiland, and South as farr
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted Fruit
The Sun, as from Thyesteан” Banquet, turn’d
His course intended; else how had the World
Inhabited, though sinless, more then now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heate?
These changes in the Heav’n’s, though slow, produc’d
Like change on Sea and Land, sideral blast,°

664–5 Winds. Often shown on early maps as blowing from the four “corners” of the earth.
668–80. The poem offers both a Copernican and a Ptolemaic explanation of the shifts made in the cosmos so as to change the prelapsarian eternal spring, when the sun’s orbit was parallel to the equator, “Equinoctial Rode.” The Copernican explanation (offered first) proposes that the axis of the earth, “the Centric Globe,” is now tilted and the “Poles” turned “ascanse” (668–71). The Ptolemaic explanation is that the plane of the sun’s orbit is tilted (671–8) so that the sun journeys from Aries through the zodiac. In spring and summer it passes a like declination (“Like distant breadth”) through “Taurus” and the Pleiades (“the Seav’n / Atlantick Sisters”), Gemini (“the Spartan Twins”), and Cancer (“the Tropic Crab”). Then at full speed (“down amaine”) it moves in late summer and autumn through “Leo,” Virgo (“the Virgin”), and Libra (“the Scales”), to “Capricorne” in winter.
688 Thyestean. Thyestes seduced the wife of his brother Atreus, who, in revenge, served one of Thyestes’ sons to him in a “Banquet.” The sun changed its course in horror.
Vapour, and Mist, and Exhalation° hot,
Corrupt and Pestilent.° Now from the North
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shoar
Bursting thir brazen Dungeon, armd with ice
And snow and haile and stormie gust and flaw,°
Boreas and Cæcias and Argestes loud
And Thrascias rend the Woods and Seas upturn;
With adverse blast up-turns them from the South
Notus and Afer black with thundrous Clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these as fierce
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent Windes
Eurus and Zephir with thir lateral noise,
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from liveless things; but Discord first
Daughter of Sin, among th’ irrational,
Death introduc’d through fierce antipathie:
Beast now with Beast gan war, and Fowle with Fowle,
And Fish with Fish; to graze the Herb all leaving,
Devourd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of Man, but fled him, or with count’nance grim
Glar’d on him passing: these were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Alreadie in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon’d, but worse felt within,
And in a troubl’d Sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburd’n sought with sad complaint.
O miserable of happie! is this the end
Of this new glorious World, and mee so late
The Glory of that Glory, who now becom
Accurst of blessed, hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
Of happiness: yet well, if here would end

698–706 Boreas . . . Cæcias . . . Argestes . . . Thrascias. All winds that blow from the north, northeast, and northwest, bursting from the cave (“brazen Dungeon”) in which Aeolus had imprisoned the winds. “Notus and Afer” come from Sierra Leone (“Serraliona”) on the west coast of Africa. Blowing across them (“thwart”) are the “Levant” from the east and specifically the Levant region, and the “Ponent” (western) winds “Eurus” (east-southeast), “Zephir” (the west wind), “Sirocco” (southeast) and “Libecchio” (southwest).
707 Discord. The classical Discordia was the sister of Death, hence “Daughter of Sin.”
711 graze the Herb all leaving. Vegetation and fruit were the prelapsarian foods of all creatures; meat-eating began with the Fall.
720 O miserable of happie. Adam’s “sad complaint” begins with the classical formula for a tragic fall, the change from happiness to misery. Cf. Satan’s soliloquy on Mount Niphates (4.32–113).
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
multiplied

Delightfully, Encrease and multiply,
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

curse

My Head, Ill fare our Ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
Shall be the execration; so besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from mee
Shall with a fierce reflux on mee redound,

O fleeing joyes
Of Paradise, deare bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my Clay
To mould me Man, did I sollicite thee

From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious Garden? as my Will
Concurd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resigne, and render back

All I receav’d, unable to performe
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penaltie, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable

Thy Justice seems; yet to say truth, too late,
I thus contest; then should have been refusd
Those terms whatever, when they were propos’d:
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? and though God

Made thee without thy leave, what if thy Son

738–41 Mine own. Adam’s “own” curse will remain “bide upon” him, and the curses of “all” his descendants will flow back (“redound”) on him as on their “natural center”; objects at that center (“in thir place”) were thought to be weightless (“light”), but these curses will be “Heavie.”


Prove disobedient, and reprov’d, retort,  
Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not.  
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee  
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,°

But Natural necessity begot.  
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own  
To serve him, thy reward was of his grace,  
Thy punishment then justly is at his Will.  
Be it so, for I submit, his doom° is fair,  
That dust I am, and shall to dust returne:  
O welcom hour whenever! why delays  
His hand to execute what his Decree  
Fixd on this day? why do I overlive,  
Why am I mockt with death, and length’nd out  
To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet  
Mortalitie my sentence, and be Earth  
Insensible, how glad would lay me down  
As in my Mothers lap! There I should rest  
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more  
Would Thunder in my ears, no fear of worse  
To mee and to my ofspring would torment me  
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt  
Pursues me still, least all I° cannot die,  
Least that pure breath of Life, the Spirit of Man  
Which God inspir’d, cannot together perish  
With this corporeal Clod; then in the Grave,  
Or in some other dismal place who knows  
But I shall die a living Death? O thought  
Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath  
Of Life that sinn’d; what dies but what had life  
And sin? the Bodie properly hath neither.  
All of me then shall die: let this appease  
The doubt, since humane reach° no further knows.  
For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
Is his wrauth also? be it,° man is not so,  
But mortal doom’d. How can he exercise

°choice
judgment
°all of me
understanding
°even if it is

792. Adam concludes that the soul dies with the body; he has reasoned his way to part of Milton’s Mortalist heresy (Christian Doctrine 1.13) but not the rest, that both body and soul rise again on the Last Day.
794–808 man is not so. Adam intuits an axiom of Scholastic philosophy, that the action of agents is limited by the nature of the objects they act upon, so he reasons that “finite” matter cannot suffer “infinite” divine punishment.
Wrath without end on Man whom Death must end?  
Can he make deathless Death? that were to make  
Strange contradiction, which to God himself  

Impossible is held, as Argument°  
Of weakness, not of Power. Will he draw out,  
For angers sake, finite to infinite  
In punish't man, to satisfie his rigour  
Satisfi'd never; that were to extend  

His Sentence beyond dust and Natures Law,  
By which all Causes else according still  
To the reception of thir matter act,  
Not to th' extent of thir own Spheare. But say  
That Death be not one stroak, as I suppos'd,  

Bereaving° sense, but endless miserie  
From this day onward, which I feel begun  
Both in me, and without° me, and so last  
To perpetuitie; Ay me, that fear  
Comes thundring back with dreadful revolution°  

On my defensless head; both Death and I  
Am found Eternal, and incorporate° both,  
Nor I on my part single, in mee all  
Posteritie stands curst: Fair Patrimonie  
That I must leave ye, Sons; O were I able  

To waste° it all my self, and leave ye none!  
So disinherited how would ye bless  
Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind  
For one mans fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,  
If guiltless? But from mee what can proceed,  

But all corrupt, both Mind and Will deprav'd,  
Not to do onely, but to will the same  
With me? how can they 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  
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;  

799 Strange contradiction. Adam concludes, with the Scholastics and Milton himself, that God cannot do things that “imply a contradiction” (Christian Doctrine 1.2).  
832–4 On mee, mee onely. Cf. the Son’s offer to accept all humankind’s guilt (3.236–7) and Eve’s similar offer (10.935–6).
So might the wrauth. Fond° wish! couldst thou support

835 That burden heavier then the Earth to bear,
Then all the World° much heavier, though divided
With that bad Woman? Thus what thou desir'est,
And what thou feart, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable

Beyond all past example and future,
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O Conscience, into what Abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!

845 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
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

850 All things with double terror: On the Ground
Outstretcht he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his Creation, Death as oft accus'd
Of tardie execution, since denounc't°
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,

855 Said hee, with one thrice acceptable stroke
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
Justice Divine not hast'n to be just?
But Death comes not at call, Justice Divine
Mends° not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.

860 O Woods, O Fountains, Hillocks, Dales and Bowrs,
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,

865 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd:
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

870 Like his, and colour Serpentine may shew

867. Adam’s misogynistic outcry begins by reference to the patristic tradition that the name “Eve,” aspirated, means “serpent.” Raphael (5:388–91) and Adam later (11.159–61) refer to the tradition that interprets her name to mean “life”; cf. 9.1067.
Thy inward fraud, to warn all Creatures from thee
Henceforth; least that too heav’ly form, pretended°
To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
I had persisted happy, had not thy pride

And wandering vanity, when lest was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain’d
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen
Though by the Devil himself, him overweening°
To over-reach,° but with the Serpent meeting

Fool’d and beguil’d, by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side, imagin’d wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a shew
Rather then solid vertu, all but a Rib

Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister° from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as supernumerarie
To my just number found. O why did God,
Creator wise, that peop’d highest Heaven

With Spirits Masculine, create at last
This noveltie on Earth, this fair defect
Of Nature, and not fill the World at once
With Men as Angels without Feminine,
Or find some other way to generate

Mankind? this mischief had not then befall’n,
And more that shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on Earth through Femin snares,
And straight° conjunction with this Sex: for either
He never shall find out fit Mate, but such

As some misfortune brings him, or mistake,
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perversness, but shall see her gain’d
By a far worse, or if she love, withheld
By Parents, or his happiest choice too late

Shall meet, alreadie linkt and Wedlock-bound
To a fell° Adversarie, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamitie shall cause

884–6 a Rib / Crooked. A commonplace of misogynistic discourses.
887–8 supernumerarie. Some commentators claimed that Adam had thirteen ribs on the left side, so he could
spare one for the creation of Eve and still retain his “just number.”
891–2 defect / Of Nature. Aristotle (De Generatione) termed the female a defective male.
To Humane life, and houhold peace confound.
   He added not, and from her turn’d, but Eve
910 Not so repulst, with Tears that ceas’d not flowing,
   And tresses all disorderd, at his feet
   Fell humble, and imbracing them, besought
   His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.
   Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav’n
915 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
   I beare thee, and unweeting° have offended,
   Unhappilie deceav’d; thy suppliant
   I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave° me not,
   Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
920 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
   My onely strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
   Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
   While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
   Between us two let there be peace, both joyning,
925 As joyn’d in injuries, one enmitie
   Against a Foe by doom° express assign’d us,
   That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not
   Thy hatred for this miserie befall’n,
   On me alreadie lost, mee then thy self
930 More miserable; both have sin’d, but thou
   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
935 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
   Mee mee only 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 wraught
940 Commiseration; soon his heart relented
   Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
   Now at his feet submissive in distress,
   Creature so faire his reconcilement seeking,
   His counsel whom she had displeas’d, his aide;
945 As one disarm’d, his anger all he lost,
   And thus with peaceful words uprais’d her soon.

917–18. Eve assumes the posture of a classical suppliant, clasping Adam’s knees as she begs for reconciliation.
936–7 Mee mee only. Cf. Adam’s cry at 832–4 above and the Son’s offer (3.236–7).
Unwarie, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou knowst not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thy self; alas,

950 Beare thine own first, ill able to sustaine
His full wrath whose thou feelst as yet lest part,
And my displeasure bearst so ill. If Prayers
Could alter high Decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,

955 That on my head all might be visited,
Thy frailtie and infirmer Sex forgiv'n,
To me committed and by me expos'd.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive

960 In offices° of Love, how we may light’n
duties
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,

965 And to our Seed (O hapless Seed!) deriv’d.°
passed down
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, repli’d.
Adam, by sad experiment° I know
experience
How little weight my words with thee can finde,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event°
outcome

970 Found so unfortunate; nevertheless,
Restor’d by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regaine
Thy Love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide

975 What thoughts in my unquiet brest are ris’n,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,°
extravagencies, hardships
Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in° our evils, and of easier choice.
considering
If care of our descent° perplex° us most,
descendants / torment

980 Which must be born to certain woe, devourd
By Death at last, and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our Loines to bring
Into this cursed World a woful Race,

985 That after wretched Life must be at last
Food for so foule a Monster, in thy power

953 that place. The place of judgment.
It lies, yet ere Conception to prevent°
The Race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, Childless remaine:

990 So Death shall be deceav’d° his glut, and with us two
Be forc’d to satisfie his Rav’nous Maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From Loves due Rites, Nuptial imbraces sweet,

995 And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire, which would be misery
And torment less then none of what we dread,
Then both our selves and Seed at once to free

1000 From what we fear for both, let us make short,°
Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
With our own hands his Office on our selves;
Why stand we longer shivering under feares,
That shew no end but Death, and have the power,

1005 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy.
She ended heer, or vehement° despaire
Broke off the rest; so much of Death her thoughts
Had entertaind, as di’d her Cheeks with pale.

1010 But Adam with such counsel nothing° sway’d,
To better hopes his more attentive minde
Labouring had rais’d, and thus to Eve repli’d.

    Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee somthing more sublime

1015 And excellent then what thy minde contemnes;
But self-destruction therefore saught, refutes
That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overlov’d.

1020 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, 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

1025 So snatcht will not exempt us from the paine

996 present object. Eve herself, who then imagines her own frustrated desire.
1015 What thy minde contemnes. Life, which your mind seems to despise.
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, whichmethinks
1030 I have in view, calling to minde with heed
Part of our Sentence, that thy Seed shall bruise
The Serpents head; piteous amends,° unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand Foe
Satan, who in the Serpent hath contriv’d
1035 Against us this deceit; to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
By death brought on our selves, or childless days
Resolv’d, as thou proposest; so our Foe
Shall scape his punishment ordain’d, and wee
1040 Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention’d then of violence
Against our selves, and willful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and savours onely
Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,
1045 Reluctance° against God and his just yoke
Laid on our Necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judg’d
Without wrauth or reviling; wee expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
1050 Was meant by Death that day, when lo, to thee
Pains onely in Child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompenc’t with joy,
Fruit of thy Womb: On mee the Curse aslope
Glanc’d on the ground, with labour I must earne
1055 My bread; what harm? Idleness had bin worse;
My labour will sustain me; and least Cold
Or Heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbesaught provided, and his hands
Cloath’d us unworthie, pitying while he judg’d;
1060 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pitie incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th’ inclement Seasons, Rain, Ice, Hail and Snow,

1052–4. Adam echoes Elizabeth’s address to Mary, mother of Jesus, “Blessed is the fruit of thy womb” (Luke
1:42), alluding unaware to the promise about the “Seed” of the woman. 
aslope. Like a spear that
“Glanc’d” aside from its target and hit the ground.
Which now the Skie with various Face begins

To shew us in this Mountain, while the Winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering° the graceful locks°
Of these fair spreading Trees; which bids us seek
Som better shroud,° som better warmth to cherish°
Our Limbs benumm’d, ere this diurnal Starr°

Leave cold the Night, how we his gather’d beams
Reflected, may with matter sere° foment,°
Or by collision of two bodies grind
The Air attrite° to Fire, as late the Clouds
Justling or push’t with Winds rude in thir shock

Tine the slant Lightning, whose thwart flame driv’n down
Kindles the gummie bark of Firr or Pine,
And sends a comfortable heat from farr,
Which might supple° the Sun: such Fire to use,
And what may else be remedie or cure

To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
Hee will instruct us praying, and of Grace
Beseeking him, so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustain’d
By him with many comforts, till we end

In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, then to the place
Repairing where he judg’d us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears

Watering the ground, and with our sighs the Air
Frequenting,° sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign’d, and humiliation meek.
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,

When angry most he seem’d and most severe,
What else but favor, grace, and mercie shon?
So spake our Father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg’d them prostrate fell

Before him reverent, and both confess’d

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1075–8. Cf. Lucretius, De Rerum Natura 5.1091–5, for the theory that fire was discovered from lightning striking the forests. Tine. Ignite. thwart. Slanting.
1098–1104. The final six and a half lines repeat almost word for word lines 1086–92, only with changed verb tenses, as Adam’s proposed gesture of repentance is seen to be carried out in every detail.
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.

The End of the Tenth Book.
Figure 8  Illustration to Book 11, 1688 (John Baptista Medina)
BOOK 11
THE ARGUMENT

The Son of God presents to his Father the Prayers of our first Parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a Band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michaels coming down. Adam shews to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michaels approach, goes out to meet him: the Angel denounces thir departure. Eve’s Lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: The Angel leads him up to a high Hill, sets before him in vision what shall happ’n till the Flood.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying, for from the Mercie-seat above
Prevenient Grace descending had remov’d
The stonie from thir hearts, & made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath’d
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspir’d, and wing’d for Heav’n with speedier flight
Then loudest Oratorie:° yet thir port°
Not of mean suiters, nor important less
Seem’d thir Petition, then when th’ ancient Pair
In Fables old, less ancient yet then these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha to restore
The Race of Mankind drownd, before the Shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To Heav’n thir prayers
Flew up, nor miss’d the way, by envious windes
Blow’n vagabond° or frustrate:° in they pass’d
Dimentionless° through Heav’nly dores; then clad

6 denounces. Proclaims.

1 stood. May mean “remained,” or that, after prostrating themselves (10.1099) they prayed standing upright; their “port” was “Not of mean suiters” (8–9). Cf. 4.720–2.
3–5 Prevenient Grace. Grace preceding human choice, enabling the will (in bondage as a result of sin) to repent. Cf. Ezek. 11:19, “I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will given them an heart of flesh” – a proof-text for regeneration.
5–7 Unutterable. Cf. Rom. 8:26: “we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”
10–14 ancient Pair. In a Greek myth analogous to the Noah story, “Deucalion” and his wife “Pyrrha” alone survive a universal flood by building an ark. They then pray to “Themis,” goddess of justice, who tells them to restore humankind by throwing stones behind them, which turn into men and women (Metamorphoses 1.318–415).
With incense, where the Golden Altar fum’d,
By thir great Intercessor, came in sight
20 Before the Fathers Throne: Them the glad° Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See Father, what first fruits on Earth are sprung
From thy implanted Grace in Man, these Sighs
And Prayers, which in this Golden Censer° mixt
25 With Incense, I thy Priest before thee bring,
Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
Sow’n with contrition in his heart, then those
Which his own hand manuring° all the Trees
Of Paradise could have produc’t, ere fall’n

From innocence. Now therefore bend thine eare
To supplication, heare his sighs though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let mee
Interpret for him, mee his Advocate
And propitiation, all his works on mee

Good or not good ingraft, my Merit those
Shall perfet, and for these my Death shall pay.
Accept me, and in mee from these receave
The smell of peace toward Mankinde, let him live
Before thee reconcil’d, at least his days

Numberd, though sad, till Death, his doom (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse)
To better life shall yeeld him, where with mee
All my redeemd may dwell in joy and bliss,
Made one with me as I with thee am one.

To whom the Father, without Cloud, serene.
All thy request for Man, accepted Son,
Obtain, all thy request was my Decree:
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,

18 incense. Cf. Rev. 8:3, "another angel came . . . having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne."
25 Priest. In Christian Doctrine 1.15, Milton defines Christ’s priestly function as that whereby he “once offered himself to God the Father as a sacrifice for sinners, and has always made, and still continues to make intercession for us.”
33–4 Advocate / And propitiation. Cf. 1 John 2:1–2: “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins.”
34–6 ingraft. The theological term for the Son taking to himself all the “works” of humans, perfecting their good deeds by his “Merit” and by his “Death” paying the debt due God’s justice for their evil deeds.
42–4 Made one. Cf. John 17:22–3: “that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”
The Law I gave to Nature him forbids:
50 Those pure immortal Elements that know
   No gross, no unharmonious mixture foule,
   Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
   As a distemper, gross to aire as gross,
   And mortal food, as may dispose him best

55 For dissolution wrought by Sin, that first
   Distemperd° all things, and of incorrupt
   Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
   Created him endowd, with Happiness
   And Immortalitie: that fondly° lost,

60 This other serv’d but to eternize woe;
   Till I provided Death; so Death becomes
   His final remedie, and after Life
   Tri’d in sharp tribulation, and refin’d
   By Faith and faithful works, to second Life,

65 Wak’t in the renovation of the just,
   Resignes him up with Heav’n and Earth renewd.
   But let us call to Synod° all the Blest
   Through Heav’ns wide bounds; from them I will not hide
   My judgments, how with Mankind I proceed,

70 As how with peccant° Angels late they saw;
   And in thir state, though firm, stood more confirmd.
   He ended, and the Son gave signal high
   To the bright Minister that watchd, hee blew
   His Trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps

75 When God descended, and perhaps once more
   To sound at general Doom. Th’ Angelic blast
   Filld all the Regions: from thir blissful Bowrs
   Of Amaran tin Shade,° Fountain or Spring,
   By the waters of Life, where ere they sate

80 In fellowships of joy: the Sons of Light
   Hasted, resorting° to the Summons high,
   And took thir Seats; till from his Throne supream

50–5 pure immortal Elements. These themselves “purge” man as a “distemper” (“unharmonious” dis-order), and “Eject” him from Eden to a place where the air and food are more “gross,” like himself, disposing him for death, the “dissolution wrought by Sin.”

64 Faith and faithful works. Cf. Christian Doctrine 1.22: “we are justified by faith without the works of the law, but not without the works of faith” – a qualification of the reformed doctrine of Sola Fides.

65 renovation. The resurrection and renewal of body and soul at the Last Day.

74–6. A trumpet sounded on Mount “Oreb” when God delivered the Ten Commandments to Moses (Exod. 19:19); it will sound again at the Last Judgment (“general Doom”).
Th’ Almighty thus pronounced his sovran Will.
O Sons, like one of us Man is become

85 To know both Good and Evil, since his taste
Of that defended° Fruit; but let him boast
His knowledge of Good lost, and Evil got,
Happier, had suffic’d him to have known
Good by it self, and Evil not at all.

90 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions° in him, longer then they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain
Self-left. Least therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the Garden forth to Till
The Ground whence he was taken, fitter soile.
Michael, this my behest have thou in charge,

Take to thee from among the Cherubim
Thy choice of flaming Warriours, least the Fiend
Or° in behalf of Man, or to invade
Vacant possession° som new trouble raise:
Hast thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful Pair,
From hallowd ground th’ unholie, and denounce°
To them and to thir Progenie from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet least they faint°
At the sad Sentence rigorously urg’d,
For I behold them softn’d and with tears
Bewailing thir excess,° all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveale
To Adam what shall come in future dayes,

As I shall thee enlighten, intermix
My Cov’nant in the womans seed renewd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:

83–98. Several phrases in God’s speech are closely quoted from Gen. 3:22–3: “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.” Milton adds the phrase, “dream at least to live / For ever” (95–6) to signal that some of God’s statements (84–5, 94–5) are ironic.

115 As I shall thee enlighten. God, it seems, reveals the “future” events to Michael at the same time as Michael presents them to Adam (see 12:128).
And on the East side of the Garden place, 
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbes, 
Cherubic watch,° and of a Sword the flame 
Wide waving, all approach farr off to fright, 
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life: 
Least Paradise a receptacle prove 
To Spirits foule, and all my Trees thir prey, 
With whose stol’n Fruit Man once more to delude. 
He ceas’d; and th’ Archangelic Power prepar’d 
For swift descent, with him the Cohort bright 
Of watchful Cherubim; four faces each 
Had, like a double Janus, all thir shape 
Spangl’d with eyes more numerous then those 
Of Argus, and more wakeful then to drouze, 
Charm’d with Arcadian Pipe, the Pastoral Reed 
Of Hermes, or his opiate Rod. Mean while 
To resalute the World with sacred Light 
Leucothea wak’d, and with fresh dews imbalmd 
The Earth, when Adam and first Matron Eve 
Had ended now thir Orisons, and found, 
Strength added from above, new hope to spring 
Out of despaire, joy, but with fear yet linkt; 
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewd.° 
Eve, easily may Faith admit, that all 
The good which we enjoy, from Heav’n descends; 
But that from us ought° should ascend to Heav’n 
So prevalent° as to concerne the mind 
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will, 
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will Prayer, 
Or one short sigh of humane breath, up-borne 
Ev’n to the Seat of God. For since I saught 
By Prayer th’ offended Deitie to appease, 
Kneel’d and before him humbl’d all my heart, 
Methought I saw him placable° and mild, 

118–22. Cf. Gen. 3:24: “So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, 
and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” 
128–9 Cherubim; four faces each. Cf. Ezek. 1:10 and PL 6.753–6. Janus. The Roman god of door-
ways had two faces – in one version, four, corresponding to the four seasons and the four quarters of 
the earth. 
129–33 Argus. Argus, with one hundred eyes, was set by Juno to watch Jove’s mistress Io, but ”Hermes” (Mercury) 
put all of his eyes to sleep with his music (“Arcadian Pipe”) and his sleep-inducing caduceus (“opiate Rod”). 
135 Leucothea. Roman goddess of the dawn.
Bending his eare; perswasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace returnd
Home to my Brest, and to my memorie

155 His promise, that thy Seed shall bruise our Foe;
Which then not minded° in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence Haile to thee,
Eve rightly call’d, Mother of all Mankind,

160 Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live, and all things live for Man.
To whom thus Eve with sad° demeanour meek.
Ill worthie I such title should belong
To me transgressour, who for thee ordaind

165 A help, became thy snare; to mee reproach
Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I who first brought Death on all, am grac’t
The sourse of life; next favourable thou,

170 Who highly thus to entitle me voutsaf’st,
Farr other name deserving. But the Field
To labour calls us now with sweat impos’d,
Though after sleepless Night; for see the Morn,
All unconcern’d with our unrest, begins

175 Her rosie progress smiling; let us forth,
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Wherere our days work lies, though now enjoind
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsom in these pleasant Walkes?

180 Here let us live, though in fall’n state, content.
So spake, so wish’d much-humbl’d Eve, but Fate
Subscrib’d not; Nature first gave Signs, imprest
On Bird, Beast, Aire, Aire suddenly eclips’d°
After short blush of Morn; nigh in her sight

185 The Bird of Jove, stoopt from his aerie tour,
Two Birds of gayest plume before him drove:
Down from a Hill the Beast that reigns in Woods,°
First hunter then, pursu’d a gentle brace,°
Goodliest of all the Forrest, Hart and Hinde;
190 Direct to th’ Eastern Gate was bent thir flight. 
Adam observ’d, and with his Eye the chase 
Pursuing, not unmov’d to Eve thus spake. 
O Eve, some furder change awaits us nigh, 
Which Heav’n by these mute signs in Nature shews 
Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn 
Us haply° too secure° of our discharge 
Perhaps / overconfident 
From penaltie, because from death releast 
Some days; how long, and what till then our life, 
Who knows, or more then this, that we are dust, 
And thither must return and be no more. 
Why else this double object in our sight 
Of flight pursu’d in th’ Air and ore the ground 
One way the self-same hour? why in the East 
Darkness ere Dayes mid-course, and Morning light 
200 More orient° in yon Western Cloud that draws 
bright 
O’re the blew Firmament a radiant white, 
And slow descends, with somthing heav’ny fraught.°
by this time 
He err’d not, for by this° the heav’nly Bands 
Down from a Skie of Jasper lighted° now 
alighted, shone 
In Paradise, and on a Hill made alt,°
came to a halt 
A glorious Apparition, had not doubt 
And carnal° fear that day dimm’d Adams eye. 
body 
Not that more glorious, when the Angels met 
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw 
210 The field Pavilion’d with his Guardians bright; 
Nor that which on the flaming Mount appeird 
In Dothan, cover’d with a Camp of Fire, 
Against the Syrian King, who to surprize 
One man, Assassin-like had levied Warr, 
Warr unproclam’d. The Princely Hierarch 
In thir bright stand,° there left his Powers° to seise 
Possession of the Garden; hee alone, 
To find where Adam shelterd, took his way,
194–5 mute signs. Both scenes portray a regal creature (eagle, lion) driving forth a superlatively lovely pair. 
Without making a specific interpretation Adam infers that they may be “Forerunners” of God’s purpose. 
214–15 Mahanaim. “Jacob” gave this name, meaning “armies” or “camps” (“field Pavilion’d”) to a place where 
he saw an army of angels (Gen. 32:1–2). 
216–20 flaming Mount. The “Syrian King” had “levied Warr” against “Dothan” in an effort to capture Elisha 
the prophet (“One man”), but God surrounded him on a mountain with horses and chariots of fire (2 Kgs 
6:17).
Not unperceav’d of Adam, who to Eve,

While the great Visitant approach’d, thus spake.

   Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determin,° or impose
New Laws to be observ’d; for I descrie
From yonder blazing Cloud that veils the Hill

One of the heav’nly Host, and by his Gate
None of the meanest, some great Potentate
Or of the Thrones above, such Majestie
Invests him coming: yet not terrible,
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,

As Raphael, that I should much confide,
But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.
He ended; and th’ Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape Celestial, but as Man

Clad to meet Man; over his lucid° Armes
A militarie Vest of purple flow’d
Livelier then Melibœan, or the graine
Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Hero’s old
In time of Truce; Iris had dipt the wooff;

His starrie Helme unbuckl’d shew’d him prime
In Manhood where Youth ended; by his side
As in a glistering Zodiac° hung the Sword,
Satans dire dread, and in his hand the Spear.
Adam bow’d low, hee Kingly from his State°

Inclin’d not, but his coming thus declar’d.

   Adam, Heav’ns high behest no Preface needs:
Sufficient that thy Prayers are heard, and Death,
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated° of his seizure° many dayes

Giv’n thee of Grace, wherein thou may’st repent,
And one bad act with many deeds well done
Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord appeas’d
Redeem thee quite from Deaths rapacious claime;
But longer in this Paradise to dwell

Permits not; to remove thee I am come,

242–4 Melibœan. Both Meliboea in Thessaly and “Sarra” (Tyre) were famous for purple dye (“grain”). “Iris” as goddess of the rainbow (also the sign of God’s “Truce”) dyed the “wooff” (threads woven across a warp).
And send thee from the Garden forth to till
The ground whence thou wast tak’n, fitter Soile.

He added not, for Adam at the newes
Heart-strook with chillying gripe° of sorrow stood,

That all his senses bound;° Eve, who unseen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discover’d° soon the place of her retire.°

O unexpected stroke, worse then of Death!
Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave

Thee Native Soile, these happie Walks and Shades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respit° of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flours,
That never will in other Climate grow,

My early visitation, and my last
At Eev’n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first op’ning bud, and gave ye Names,
Who now shall reare ye to the Sun, or ranke
Your Tribes,° and water from th’ ambrosial Fount?

Thee lastly nuptial Bowre, by mee adornd
With what to sight or smell was sweet; from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower World, to° this obscure
And wilde, how shall we breath in other Aire

Less pure, accustomd to immortal Fruits?

Whom thus the Angel interrupted milde.
Lament not Eve, but patiently resigne
What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine;

Thy going is not lonely, with thee goes
Thy Husband, him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy native soile.

Adam by this° from the cold sudden damp°
Recovering, and his scatterd spirits returnd,

To Michael thus his humble words addressd.

Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam’d
Of them the Highest, for such of shape may seem

269–70 Native Soile. Unlike Adam, Eve was created in the “Paradise” of Eden.
277. Milton departs from Gen. 2:19–20, in which Adam alone gives names. The action of naming the flowers
(like Adam’s naming of the beasts, 8.352–5) signifies intuitive knowledge of their nature.
279 ambrosial Fount. See 4.237–40, describing the fount in Eden that “Ran Nectar.”
Prince above Princes, gently hast thou tould
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,

300 And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow and dejection and despair
Our frailtie can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess,° and onely consolation left

305 Familiar to our eyes, all places else
Inhospitable appeer and desolate,
Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can,° I would not cease

310 To wearie him with my assiduous cries:
But prayer against his absolute Decree
No more availes then breath against the winde,
Blown stifling back on him that breaths it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.

315 This most afflicts me, that departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, deprivd
His blessed count’nance; here I could frequent,
With worship, place by place where he voutsaf’d
Presence Divine, and to my Sons relate;

320 On this Mount he appeerd, under this Tree
Stood visible, among these Pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this Fountain talk’d:
So many grateful° Altars I would reare
Of grassie Terfe, and pile up every Stone

325 Of lustre from the brook, in memorie,
Or monument to Ages, and thereon
Offer sweet smelling Gumms and Fruits and Flours:
In yonder nether World where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?

330 For though I fled him angrie, yet recall’d
To life prolongd and promisd Race,° I now
descendants
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts°
distant signs
Of glory, and farr off his steps adore.
To whom thus Michael with regard benigne.

335 Adam, thou know’st Heav’n his, and all the Earth,
Not this Rock onely; his Omnipresence fills

316. Cf. Gen. 4:14, Cain’s response to his punishment: “from thy face shall I be hid.”
323–6. The patriarchs raised “Altars” wherever God appeared to them.
Land, Sea, and Aire, and every kinde that lives,
Fomented° by his virtual° power and warmd:
All th’ Earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin’d
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy Capital Seate, from whence had spred
All generations, and had hither come
From all the ends of th’ Earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee thir great Progenitor.
But this præeminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on eeven ground now with thy Sons:
Yet doubt not but in Vallie and in plaine
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a signe
Still following thee, still compassing° thee round
With goodness and paternal Love, his Face
Express, and of his steps the track Divine.
Which that thou mayst beleevе, and be confirmd
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To shew thee what shall come in future dayes
To thee and to thy Ofspring; good with bad
Expect to hear, supernal° Grace contending
With sinfulness of Men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow, equally enur’d°
By moderation either state to beare,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar’d endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This Hill; let Eve (for I have drencht her eyes)
Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak’st,
As once thou slepst, while Shee to life was formd.
To whom thus Adam gratefully repli’d.
Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path
Thou lead’st me, and to the hand of Heav’n submit,
However chast’ning, to the evil turne
My obvious° breast, arming to overcom

357–8 future dayes. Prophetic visions are a common feature of epic, e.g., Aeneas’ vision of his descendants culminating in the Roman empire (Aeneid 6.754–854).
367 drencht. Placed in her eyes a soporific liquid (drench).
By suffering, and earne rest from labour won,
If so I may attain. So both ascend
In the Visions of God: It was a Hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The Hemisphere of Earth in clearest Ken
Stretcht out to the amolest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that Hill nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the Tempter set
Our second Adam in the Wilderness,
To shew him all Earths Kingdomes and thir Glory.
His Eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern Fame, the Seat
Of mightiest Empire, from the destind Walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temirs Throne,
to Paquin of Sinæan Kings, and thence
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul
Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sate, or since
In Hispahan, or where the Russian Ksar
In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken°
Th’ Empire of Negus to his utmost Port
Ercoco and the less Maritim Kings
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,

381–4. When Satan tempted Christ (the subject of Milton’s brief epic, Paradise Regained) he took him to “an exceeding high mountain” and showed him “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them” (Matt. 4:8). Cf. Paradise Regained 3.251–4.169.
383–92. Christ, the “second Adam” (but not Adam, who is shown “nobler sights,” 411), will first view “destined” (yet to come) kingdoms in Asia: “Cambalu,” capital of Cathay (north China), ruled by such Khans as Ghenghis and Kublei, “Cathaian Can”; “Temir” (Tamburlaine), ruled “Samarchand” (Samarkand), near the “Oxus” river in modern Uzbekistan; “Paquin” (Peking, Beijing), of “Sinæan Kings” (Chinese); “Agra and Lahor” (Lahore), “Mogul” capitals in northern India and Pakistan; “golden Chersonese,” the Malay peninsula east of India, fabled for wealth.
393–6. Then Christ will see “Persian,” Russian, and Turkish kingdoms. In Persia (Iran), he will see “Ecbatan” (Hamadan), a summer residence of Persian kings, and “Hispahan” (Isfahan), which became the Persian capital in the sixteenth century. “Bizance” (Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul) was capital of the Ottoman empire and ruled by “Sultans” after falling to the Turks in 1453.
397–401. In Africa he will see Abyssinia (northern Ethiopia), empire of the “Negus” (ruler) reaching to “Ercoco” (Arkiko), a Red Sea port. Then “Mombaza” (Mombasa) and “Melind” (Malindi) in Kenya and “Quiloa” (Kilwa), an island port off the coast of Tanzania; “Sofala,” a port in Mozambique, sometimes identified with the biblical “Ophir,” from which Solomon took gold for his temple (1 Kgs 9:28); and “Congo” and “Angola” on the west coast.
400 And Sofala thought Ophir, to the Realme
Of Congo, and Angola fardest South;
Or thence from Niger Flood to Atlas Mount
The Kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
Morocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;
405 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The World: in Spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico the seat of Motezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil’d
410 Guiana, whose great Citie Geryons Sons
Call El Dorado: but to nobler sights
Michael from Adams eyes the Filme remov’d
Which that false Fruit that promis’d clearer sight
Had bred; then purg’d with Euphrasie and Rue
415 The visual Nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the Well of Life three drops instill’d.
So deep the power of these Ingredients pierc’d,
Eevn to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam now enforc’t to close his eyes,
420 Sunk down and all his Spirits became intranst:
But him the gentle Angel by the hand
Soon rais’d, and his attention thus recall’d.
Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
Th’ effects which thy original crime hath wrought
425 In some to spring from thee, who never touch’d
Th’ excepted Tree, nor with the Snake conspir’d,
Nor sinn’d thy sin, yet from that sin derive
Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds.

400–4. In North Africa, looking from the "Niger" river in west Africa flowing eastward to the Atlantic to the "Atlas" mountains in Morocco (or possibly to Mout Atlas in Mauritania), he sees the kingdom of various Muslim rulers called Al Mansur ("Almansor"), probably referring to Abu’Amir al Ma-Ma’afiri, Caliph of Cordova. That empire takes in "Fez," capital of Morocco, Tunis ("Sus"), "Algiers," and "Tremisen" (Tllemeen), part of Algeria.

406–11. Christ will see places in the New World only "in Spirit," probably because they lie on the other side of the spherical earth: "Mexico" the seat of Montezuma ("Motezume"), the last Aztec emperor; "Cusco in Peru" seat of Atahualpa ("Atabalipa"), the last Inca emperor, murdered by Pizarro; "yet unspoil’d / Guiana" (a region including Surinam, Guyana, and parts of Venezuela and Brazil) – not yet discovered and plundered by the Spanish. Its chief city, Manoa, was identified with the mythical city of gold, "El Dorado," by "Geryons Sons" (the Spanish); in Spenser’s Faerie Queene Geryon, a mythical three-headed monster killed by Hercules, is an allegory of the great power and oppression of Spain.

414 Euphrasie and Rue. Both herbs were thought to sharpen eyesight.
His eyes he op’nd, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were Sheaves
New reapt, the other part sheep-walks° and foulds;
Ith’ midst an Altar as the Land-mark° stood
Rustic, of grassie sord;° thither anon
A sweatie Reaper from his Tillage brought
First Fruits, the green Eare, and the yellow Sheaf,
Uncull’d,° as came to hand; a Shepherd next
More meek came with the Firstlings of his Flock
Choicest and best; then sacrificing, laid
The Inwards and thir Fat, with Incense strew’d,
On the cleft Wood, and all due Rites perform’d.
His Offring soon propitious° Fire from Heav’n
Consum’d with nimble glance.° and grateful° steame;
The others not, for his was not sincere;
Whereat hee inlie rag’d, and as they talk’d,
Smote him into the Midriff with a stone
That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale
Groand out his Soul with gushing bloud effus’d.
Much at that sight was
Adam in his heart
Dismai’d, and thus in haste to th’ Angel cri’d.
O Teacher, some great mischief° hath befall’n
To that meek man, who well had sacrific’d;
Is Pietie thus and pure Devotion paid?
T’ whom Michael thus, hee also mov’d, repli’d.
These two are Brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loyns; th’ unjust the just hath slain,
For envie that his Brothers Offering found
From Heav’n acceptance; but the bloodie Fact°
Will be aveng’d, and th’ others Faith approv’d
Loose no reward, though here thou see him die,
Rowling in dust and gore. To which our Sire.
Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!
But have I now seen Death? Is this the way

429–47. Milton’s version of the Cain and Abel story provides a clear reason for God’s acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice, as Gen. 4:1–16 does not. Michael does not name any of the biblical personages or places in Book 11; he sees the scenes but may not know the names these persons or places will bear.
430–1 arable. Land capable of being ploughed.          tilth. Cultivated.
434–7 A sweatie Reaper. Cain. Cf. Gen. 4:2: "And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."
441–2. Acceptable sacrifices were often consumed by "Fire from Heav’n"; Cf. Lev. 9:24 and Judg. 6:21.
455. Adam has to be told that these are his own sons, not simply descendants.
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terroour, foul and ugly to behold,

Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!

To whom thus Michael. Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the wayes that lead
To his grim Cave, all dismal, yet to sense
dreadful

More terrible at th’ entrance then within.

Some, as thou saw’st, by violent stroke shall die,
By Fire, Flood, Famin, by Intemperance more
In Meats and Drinks, which on the Earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew

Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know
What miserie th’ inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appeard, sad, noysom, dark,
don’t distressing / foul-smelling
A Lazar-house it seemd, wherein were laid

Numbers of all diseas’d, all maladies
Of gastly Spasm, or rack’ng torture, qualmes
Of heart-sick Agonie, all feavorous kinds,
Convulsions, Epilepsies, fierce Catarrhs,
Intestin Stone and Ulcer, Colic pangs,

Daemoniac Phrenzie, moaping Melancholie
And Moon-struck madness, pining Atrophie
Marasmus and wide-wasting Pestilence,
Dropsies, and Asthma’s, and Joint-racking Rheums.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans, despair

Tended the sick busiest from Couch to Couch;
And over them triumphant Death his Dart
Shook, but delaid to strike, though oft invokt
With vows, as thir chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of Rock could long

Drie-ey’d behold? Adam could not, but wept,

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477–95. This is the only non-biblical sight presented to Adam, a “Lazar-house” or hospital for leprosy and

484–8 Stone. Morbid concretion. Daemoniac Phrenzie. Manic frenzy, often attributed to posses-

Marasmus. A wasting away of the body. wide-wasting Pestilence. Plague (the Great Plague of
1665 had killed over 60,000 Londoners). Rheums. Rheumatic pains.

491. For Death’s “Dart” see 2.672, 786.
Though not of Woman born; compassion quell’d
His best of Man,° and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain’d excess,
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew’d.

O miserable Mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv’d!
Better end heer unborn. Why is life giv’n
To be thus wrested from us? rather why
Obrunted° on us thus? who if we knew
forced

What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer’d, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismist in peace. Can thus
Th’ Image of God in man created once
So goodly and erect, though faultie since,

To such unsightly sufferings be debas’t
Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,
Retaining still Divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Makers Image sake exempt?

Thir Makers Image, answerd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they villifi’d°
debased
To serve ungovern’d appetite, and took
His Image whom they serv’d, a brutish vice,
Inductive° mainly to the sin of Eve.
leading on, traceable

Therefore so abject is thir punishment,
Disfiguring not Gods likeness, but thir own,
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac’t
While they pervert pure Natures healthful rules
To loathsom sickness, worthily,° since they
deservedly

Gods Image did not reverence in themselves.
I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To Death, and mix with our connatural° dust?
sharing nature

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe
The rule of not too much, by temperance taught
In what thou eatst and drinkst, seeking from thence

496 not of Woman born. A man’s tears and softer feelings were attributed to his feminine part; Adam was created of the dust of the earth, not born of woman. Cf. Macbeth 5.8.13–18.
518 His Image. Man does not now bear God’s image but that of “ungovern’d appetite.”
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:

So maist thou live, till like ripe Fruit thou drop
Into thy Mothers lap, or be with ease
Gatherd, not harshly pluckt, for death mature:
This is old age; but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change

To witherd weak and gray; thy Senses then
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgoe,
To what thou hast, and for the Aire of youth
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reigne
A melancholly damp of cold and dry

To weigh thy Spirits down, and last consume
The Balme of Life. To whom our Ancestor.

Henceforth I flie not Death, nor would prolong
Life much, bent rather how I may be quit
Fairest and easiest of this combrous charge,

Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rendring up, and patiently attend
My dissolution. Michael repli’d,
Nor love thy Life, nor hate; but what thou livst
Live well, how long or short permit to Heav’n:

And now prepare thee for another sight.

He lookd and saw a spacious Plaine, whereon
Were Tents of various hue; by some were herds
Of Cattel grazing: others, whence the sound
Of Instruments that made melodious chime

Was heard, of Harp and Organ; and who moovd
Thir stops and chords was seen: his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions low and high
Fled and pursu’d transverse the resonant fugue.

In other part stood one who at the Forge

542–4 Aire of youth. In assigning elements and humors to the several ages, “Aire” and the sanguine (“cheerful”) temperament arising from the blood were associated with youth; earth, and the melancholy temperament produced by phlegm and black bile (“cold and dry”) were associated with age. Cf. Robert Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy (1621), 1.2.2, 1.3.5. damp. Depression of spirits.

556–97 spacious Plaine. Adam’s third vision is based on Gen. 4:20–2, of the three sons of Lamech, descendants of Cain.

557–8 Tents . . . Cattel. These identify the persons in the first part of this vision with Jabel, “the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle” (Gen. 4:20).

558–63 Instruments. Gen. 4:21 describes his brother Jubel as “father of all such as handle the harp and organ.”

563 fugue. Musical form in which one statement of the theme seems to chase another.

564–73 one who at the forge. Tubal-Cain, the third brother, was “an instructer of every artificer in brass and iron” (Gen. 4:22).
565 Labouring, two massie° clods of Iron and Brass
   Had melted (whether found where casual° fire
   Had wasted woods on Mountain or in Vale,
   Down to the veins of Earth, thence gliding hot
   To som Caves mouth, or whether washt by stream
570 From underground) the liquid Ore he dreind
   Into fit moulds prepar’d; from which he formd
   First his own Tooles; then, what might else be wrought
   Fusil° or grav’n° in mettle. After these,
But on the hether side a different sort
575 From the high neighbouring Hills, which was thir Seat,
   Down to the Plain descended: by thir guise
   Just men they seemd, and all thir study bent
   To worship God aright, and know his works
   Not hid, nor those things last which might preserve
580 Freedom and Peace to men: they on the Plain
   Long had not walkt, when from the Tents behold
   A Beavie of fair Women, richly gay°
   In Gems and wanton dress; to the Harp they sung
Soft amorous Ditties, and in dance came on:
585 The Men though grave, ey’d them, and let thir eyes
   Rove without rein, till in the amorous Net
   Fast caught, they lik’d, and each his liking chose;
   And now of love they treat° till th’ Eevning Star
   Loves Harbinger appeard; then all in heat°
590 They light the Nuptial Torch, and bid invoke
   Hymen, then first to marriage Rites invok’t;
   With Feast and Musick all the Tents resound.
   Such happy interview and fair event°
   Of love and youth not lost, Songs, Garlands, Flours,
And charming Symphonies° attach’d the heart
595 Of Adam, soon enclin’d to admit delight,
   The bent° of Nature; which he thus express’d.
   True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest,
   Much better seems this Vision, and more hope

574–80 **a different sort.** The descendants of Seth, Adam’s third son (Gen. 4:25–6). **hether side.** The Western (or hither) side, away from the east where Cain’s sons lived.

578–9 **works / Not hid.** Seth’s descendants were traditionally credited with the discovery of astronomy, a lawful science not involving the “matters hid” that Raphael warned against. Or, perhaps, a contrast to Tubal-Cain’s delving for hidden metals (cf. 1.687–8).

588–9 **Eveving Star.** Venus, planet of love.

591 **Hymen.** God of marriage.
Of peaceful dayes portends, then those two past;  
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse,  
Here Nature seems fulfilld in all her ends.  
To whom thus Michael. Judg not what is best  
By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,  
Created, as thou art, to nobler end  
Holie and pure, conformitie divine.  
Those Tents thou sawst so pleasant, were the Tents  
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his Race  
Who slew his Brother; studious they appere  
Of Arts that polish Life, Inventers rare,  
Unmindful of thir Maker, though his Spirit  
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg’d none.  
Yet they a beauteous ofspring shall beget;  
For that fair femal Troop thou sawst, that seemd  
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
Womans domestic honour and chief praise;  
Bred onely and completed° to the taste  
Of lustful appetence,° to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and troule° the Tongue, and roule the Eye.  
To these that sober Race of Men, whose lives  
Religious titl’d them the Sons of God,  
Shall yield up all thir vertue, all thir fame  
Ignobly, to the traines° and to the smiles  
Of these fair Atheists, and now swim in joy,  
(Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which  
The world erelong a world of tears must weepe.  
To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft.  
O pittie and shame, that they who to live well  
Enterd so faire, should turn aside to tread  
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!  
But still I see the tenor of Mans woe  
Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.  
From Mans effeminate slackness it begins,

613–14 **a beauteous offspring.** The “Beavie of fair Women” (582).
621–5 **Sons of God.** Like most exegetes of Gen. 6:2, Milton identifies them as the descendants of Seth; the women they wed (termed the daughters of men) are the descendants of Cain. Another tradition held that angels lay with these women (cf. 3.461–3).
625–6 **swim.** An anticipation of the Flood to come, which Adam does not yet understand.
632–3 **woe . . . Woman.** Adam produces another false etymological pun (a misogynist cliché), like his earlier pun on “Eve . . . evil” (9.1067).
635  Said th’ Angel, who should better hold his place
   By wisedome, and supeirour gifts receav’d.
   But now prepare thee for another Scene.
   He lookd and saw wide Territorie spred
   Before him, Towns, and rural works between,
640  Cities of Men with lofty Gates and Towrs,
   Concours° in Arms, fierce Faces threatening Warr,
   Giants of mightie Bone, and bould emprise;°
   Part wield thir Arms, part courb the foaming Steed,
   Single or in Array of Battel rang’d°
645  Both Horse and Foot, nor idely mustring stood;
   One way a Band select° from forage drives
   A herd of Beeves, faire Oxen and faire Kine
   From a fat° Meddow ground; or fleecy Flock,
   Ewes and thir bleating Lambs over the Plaine,
650  Thir Bootie; scarce with Life the Shepherds flye,
   But call in aide, which makes a bloody Fray;
   With cruel Tournament the Squadrons joine;
   Where Cattle pastur’d late, now scatterd lies
   With Carcasses and Arms th’ensanguind° Field
655  Deserted: Others to a Citie strong
   Lay Seige, encampt; by Batterie, Scale, and Mine,
   Assaulting; others from the wall defend
   With Dart and Jav’lin, Stones and sulfurous Fire;
   On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
660  In other part the scepter’d Haralds call
   To Council in the Citie Gates: anon
   Grey-headed men and grave, with Warriours mixt,
   Assemble, and Harangues are heard, but soon
   In factious opposition, till at last
665  Of middle Age one rising, eminent
   In wise deport, spake much of Right and Wrong,
   Of Justice, of Religion, Truth and Peace,
   And Judgment from above: him old and young

638–73 Adam’s fourth vision is of the Giant offspring of the previous marriages (683–5). Cf. Gen. 6:4: “There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.” Some details recall scenes from the shield of Achilles – siege, cattle raid, battle, assembly (Ilia 18.490–616).
665–71 one rising  Enoch, who “walked with God, and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:24). He was translated to heaven at 365 years of age, "middle Age” compared to other patriarchs (Adam 930, Seth 912).
Explored° and had seiz’d with violent hands, mocked, drove out
670 Had not a Cloud descending snatch’d him thence
Unseen amid the throng: so violence
Proceeded, and Oppression, and Sword-Law
Through all the Plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
675 Lamenting turnd full sad; O what are these,
Deaths Ministers, not Men, who thus deal Death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfould the sin of him who slew
His Brother; for of whom such massacher
680 Make they but of thir Brethren, men of men?
But who was that Just Man, whom had not Heav’n
Rescu’d, had in his Righteousness bin lost?
To whom thus Michael. These are the product
Of those ill mated Marriages thou saw’st:
685 Where good with bad were matcht, who of themselves
Abhor to joyn; and by imprudence mixt,
Produce prodigious° Births of bodie or mind. monstrous
Such were these Giants, men of high renown;
For in those dayes Might onely shall be admir’d,
690 And Valour and Heroic Vertu call’d;
To overcome in Battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human Glorie, and for Glorie done
695 Of triumph, to be styl’d great Conquerours,
Patrons of Mankind, Gods, and Sons of Gods,
Destroyers rightlier call’d and Plagues of men.
Thus Fame shall be atchiev’d, renown on Earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
700 But hee the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst
The onely righteous in a World perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset

689–99 Might only. The traditional values of epic, which Milton critiques in the Proem to Book 9.
what most merits fame. Cf. 9.31–3, “the better fortitude / Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom / Unsung.”
700–9. Jude 14 identifies Enoch as "the seventh from Adam." Some details are drawn from Jude 14–15, describing
Enoch’s prophecy of God’s pronouncing judgment with “ten thousand of his saints” on those “that
are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their
hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” The “Cloud with winged Steeds” may be
taken from Elijah’s translation to heaven (2 Kgs 2:11), often associated with Enoch’s.
With Foes for daring single to be just,
And utter odious Truth, that God would come

To judge them with his Saints: Him the most High
Rapt in a balmie Cloud with winged Steeds
Did, as thou sawst, receive, to walk with God
High in Salvation and the Climes of bliss,
Exempt from Death; to shew thee what reward

Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.

He look’d, and saw the face of things quite chang’d,
The brazen Throat of Warr had ceast to roar,
All now was turn’d to jollitie and game,

To luxurie° and riot,° feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or Adulterie, where passing° faire
Allurd them; thence from Cups to civil Broiles.
At length a Reverend Sire among them came,

And of thir doings great dislike declar’d,
And testifi’d against thir wayes; hee oft
Frequented thir Assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs° or Festivals, and to them preach’d
Conversion and Repentance, as to Souls

In prison under Judgments imminent:
But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas’d
Contending, and remov’d his Tents farr off;
Then from the Mountain hewing Timber tall,
Began to build a Vessel of huge bulk,

Measur’d by Cubit, length, and breadth, and highth,
Smeard round with Pitch, and in the side a dore
Contriv’d, and of provisions laid in large
For Man and Beast: when loe a wonder strange!
Of every Beast, and Bird, and Insect small

Came seavens, and pairs, and enter’d in, as taught
Thir order: last the Sire, and his three Sons

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703 **daring single to be just.** Cf. Abdiel at 6.30–2.
712–53. Adam’s fifth vision, of the general depravity of humans, the Flood, and Noah ("a Reverend Sire," 719) is based on Gen. 6:5–9:17. The "Sea without shoar" (750) and some other details of lines 738–53 are taken from the story of Deucalion’s Flood in *Metamorphoses* 1.262–347.
730 **Cubit.** Ancient unit of measurement, from the elbow to the fingertip; the ark was 300 by 50 by 30 cubits (Gen. 6:15).
735 **seavens, and pairs.** Cf. Gen. 7:2, “Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by seavens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.”
With thir four Wives; and God made fast the dore.
Meanwhile the Southwind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the Clouds together drove
740 From under Heav’n; the Hills to their supplie° assistance
Vapour, and Exhalation dusk° and moist,
Sent up amain;° and now the thick’nd Skie dark mist
Like a dark Ceeling stood; down rush’d the Rain
Impetuous, and continu’d till the Earth with main force
745 No more was seen; the floating Vessel swum
Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o’re the Waves, all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm’d, and them with all thir pomp
Deep under water rould; Sea cover’d Sea,
750 Sea without shoar; and in thir Palaces
Where luxurie late reign’d, Sea-monsters whelp’d
And stabl’d; of Mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom° swum imbark’t. boat
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
755 The end of all thy Ofspring, end so sad,
Depopulation; thee another Floud,
Of tears and sorrow a Floud thee also drown’d,
And sunk thee as thy Sons; till gently reard
By th’ Angel, on thy feet thou stoodst at last,
760 Though comfortless, as when a Father mourns
His Children, all in view destroyd at once;
And scarce° to th’ Angel utterdst thus thy plaint. barely able
O Visions ill foreseen! better had I
Liv’d ignorant of future, so had borne
765 My part of evil onely, each dayes lot
Anough to beare; those now, that were dispens’t° given
The burd’n of many Ages, on me light° alight
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining Birth
Abortive, to torment me ere thir being,
770 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his Childern, evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
And hee the future evil shall no less

775 In apprehension then in substance feel
Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
Man is not whom\(^{°}\) to warne: those few escapt

Famin and anguish will at last consume
Wandering that watrie Desert: I had hope

780 When violence was ceas\(t\), and Warr on Earth,
All would have then gon well, peace would have crownd
With length of happy dayes the race of man;
But I was farr deceav\(d\); for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less then Warr to waste.

785 How comes it thus? unfould, Celestial Guide,
And whether here the Race of man will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou sawst
In Triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent

790 And great exploits, but of true vertu void;
Who having spilt much blood, and don much waste
Subduing Nations, and achievd thereby
Fame in the World, high titles, and rich prey,
Shall change thir course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,

Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostil deeds in Peace.
The conquerd also, and enslav\(d\) by Warr
Shall with thir freedom lost all vertu loose
And fear of God, from whom thir pietie feign\(d\)

800 In sharp contest of Battel found no aide
Against invaders; therefore coold in zeale
Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,
Worldlie or dissolute, on what thir Lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' Earth shall bear

805 More then anough, that temperance may be tri\(d\):\(^{°}\)
So all shall turn degenerate, all depriv\(d\),
Justice and Temperance, Truth and Faith forgot;
One Man except, the onely Son of light
In a dark Age, against example good,

810 Against allurement, custom, and a World

797–806. These lines may also allude to the backsliding Puritans who betrayed the Commonwealth in 1660
and have now taken on the vices of the restored royalists.

808 One Man except. Noah.
Offended;° fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, hee of wicked wayes
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,

And full of peace, denouncing° wrauth to come
On thir impenitence; and shall returne
Of them derided, but of God observd
The one just Man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous Ark, as thou beheldst,

To save himself and houshold from amidst
A World devote° to universal rack.°
No sooner hee with them of Man and Beast
Select° for life shall in the Ark be lodg’d,
And shelterd round, but all the Cataracts°

Of Heav’n set open on the Earth shall powre
Raine day and night, all fountains of the Deep
Broke up, shall heave the Ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
Above the highest Hills: then shall this Mount

Of Paradise by might of Waves be moovd
Out of his place, pushd by the horned floud,
With all his verdure spoil’d, and Trees adrift
Down the great River to the op’ning Gulf,
And there take root an Island salt and bare,

The haunt of Seales and Orcs,° and Sea-mews° clang.
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctitie, if none be thither brought
By Men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold.

He lookd, and saw the Ark hull° on the floud,
Which now abated, for the Clouds were fled,  
Wrinkl’d the face of Deluge, as decai’d;
And the cleer Sun on his wide watrie Glass

Gaz’d hot, and of the fresh Wave largely drew,
As after thirst, which made thir flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebbe,° that stole
With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt

831 horned floud. Classical river gods were often depicted as horned.
833 the great River. The Euphrates (see Gen. 15:18). the op’ning Gulf. The Persian Gulf.
His Sluces,° as the Heav’n his windows shut.

The Ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground
Fast on the top of som high mountain fixt.
And now the tops of Hills as Rocks appeer;
With clamor thence the rapid Currents drive
Towards the retreating Sea thir furious tyde.

Forthwith from out the Arke a Raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A Dove sent forth once and agen to spie
Green Tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning, in his Bill

An Olive leafe he brings, pacific signe:
Anon drie ground appeers, and from his Arke
The ancient Sire descends with all his Train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful° to Heav’n, over his head beholds

A dewie Cloud, and in the Cloud a Bow
Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
Betok’ning peace from God, and Cov’nant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam erst° so sad
Greatly rejoyc’d, and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou who future things canst represent
As present, Heav’nly instructer, I revive
At this last sight, assur’d that Man shall live
With all the Creatures, and thir seed preserve.
Farr less I now lament for one whole World

Of wicked Sons destroyd, then I rejoice
For one Man found so perfet and so just,
That God voutsafes to raise another World
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those colourd streaks in Heavn,

Distended° as the Brow of God appeas’d,
Or serve they as a flourie verge° to binde
The fluid skirts of that same watrie Cloud,
Least it again dissolve and showr the Earth?

som high mountain. Mount Ararat (Gen. 8:4).

once and agen. Noah sent forth a “Dove” twice; the first time it failed to “spie” land, the second time it returned with an “Olive leafe” (Gen. 8:8–12), a sign of peace (“pacific signe”).

three listed colours. Bands of the primary colors, red, blue, and yellow. gay. Bright.

Cov’nant new. See below, 892–5 and note.

856–8. The language invites recognition of Noah as a type (foreshadowing) of Christ, the one “perfet” and “just” who will cause God to forget “his anger.”
To whom th' Archangel. Dextrously thou aim'st;

So willingly doth God remit his Ire,
Though late repenting him of Man deprav'd,
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole Earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each thir way; yet those remoov'd,

Such grace shall one just Man find in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
And makes a Covenant never to destroy
The Earth again by flood, nor let the Sea
Surpass his bounds, nor Rain to drown the World

With Man therein or Beast; but when he brings
Over the Earth a Cloud, will therein set
His triple-colour'd Bow, whereon to look
And call to mind his Cov'nant: Day and Night,
Seed time and Harvest, Heat and hoary Frost

Shall hold thir course, till fire purge all things new,
Both Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

The End of the Eleventh Book.

886–7. Cf. Gen. 6:6: “it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.”
892–5. This covenant marked by the rainbow – that God will not again destroy the earth by flood (Gen. 9:15–17) – is a type of the covenant of grace through which God will save humankind.
899. Cf. Gen. 8:22: “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”
900–1. The restoration of nature following the Flood is seen as a type of the renewal of all things after the final conflagration at the Last Judgment, “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Pet. 3:13).
The Angel Michael continues from the Flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain, who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension; the state of the Church till his second Coming. Adam greatly satisfied and recomforted by these Relations and Promises descends the Hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams compos’d to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery Sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking thir Stations to guard the Place.

As one who in his journey bates° at Noone, stops for refreshment
Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel paus’d
Betwixt the world destroy’d and world restor’d,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then with transition sweet new Speech resumes.
Thus thou hast seen one World begin and end;
And Man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceave
Thy mortal sight to faile; objects divine
Must needs impaire and wearie human sense:
Henceforth what is to com I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
This second sours of Men, while yet but few;
And while the dread of judgement past remains
Fresh in thir mindes, fearing the Deitie,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead thir lives and multiplie apace,
Labouring° the soile, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn wine and oyle; and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing Bullock, Lamb, or Kid,
With large Wine-offerings pour’d, and sacred Feast,
Shal spend thir dayes in joy unblam’d, and dwell

1 succeed. Follow after.

7 second stock. from Noah himself, but also as a type of Christ in whom believers are ingrafted; see 3.287–89.
9 mortal sight to faile. Adam no longer sees the visions or pageants as before, but simply listens to Michael’s narration; cf. Rom. 10:17, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Michael, however, continues to see the visions (128).
Long time in peace by Families and Tribes  
Under paternal rule; till one shall rise  
25 Of proud ambitious heart, who not content  
With fair equalitie, fraternal state,  
Will arrogate Dominion undeserv’d  
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
Concord and law of Nature from the Earth,  
Hunting (and Men not Beasts shall be his game)  
With Warr and hostile snare such as refuse  
Subjection to his Empire tyrannous:  
A mightie Hunter thence he shall be styl’d  
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav’n,  
30 Or from Heav’n claiming second Sovrantie;  
And from Rebellion shall derive his name,  
Though of Rebellion others he accuse.  
Hee with a crew, whom like Ambition joyns  
With him or under him to tyrannize,  
Marching from Eden towards the West, shall finde  
The Plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge° whirlpool  
Boiles out from under ground, the mouth of Hell;  
Of Brick, and of that stuff they cast° to build decide  
A Citie and Towre, whose top may reach to Heav’n;  
40 And get themselves a name,° least far dispersst reputation  
In foraign Lands thir memorie be lost  
Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
But God who oft descends to visit men  
Unseen, and through thir habitations walks  
To mark thir doings, them beholding soon,

24–35 one. Nimrod. Cf. Gen. 10:8–10: “And Cain begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel.” Milton identifies Nimrod as the first king, in terms that equate kingship with tyranny. He explains “before the Lord” as meaning either that he openly defied God (“despite,” 34) or that he claimed divine right (“second Sovrantie,” 35) from heaven, like the Stuart kings.

29 law of Nature. Grounded in reason, and dictating a government based on “fair equalitie, fraternal state” (26).

36–7. Drawing upon a false etymology linking the name Nimrod with the Hebrew “to rebel,” Milton associates Nimrod with kingship generally (cf. 1.484 and 6.199 for other rebel kings). The lines allude also especially to Charles I, who accused the Puritans of rebellion in the Civil War but who in Milton’s view was himself a rebel against God for usurping the absolute monarchy belonging only to God.

40–59 Plain. The plain of Shinar in ancient Babylon (“Sennaar,” 3.467). Gen. 11:4 describes the building of the “Towre” of Babel and refers to the “Citie” (Babylon). “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” Though Genesis does not directly associate Nimrod with the tower, he was traditionally made responsible for both tower and city (Gen. 10:9–10).
Comes down to see thir Citie, ere the Tower
Obstruct Heav’n Towrs, and in derision sets
Upon thir Tongues a various° Spirit to rase°
Quite out thir Native Language, and instead
divisive / obliterate
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the Builders; each to other calls
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mockt they storm; great laughter was in Heav’n

And looking down, to see the hubbub strange
And hear the din; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam’d.

Where to thus Adam fatherly displeas’d.
O execrable Son so to aspire
Above his Brethren, to himself assuming
Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv’n:
He gave us onely over Beast, Fish, Fowl
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but Man over men
He made not Lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this Usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on° Man; to God his Tower intends
Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash Armie, where thin Aire
Above the Clouds will pine° his entrails gross,
And famish him of Breath, if not of Bread?

To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr’st
That Son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting° to subdue
Rational Libertie; yet know withall,
Since thy original lapse, true Libertie
Is lost, which alwayes with right Reason dwells

62 Confusion. Taken to be the meaning of “Babel,” where God in punishment confounded the original language of humans into multiple languages (Gen. 11:9).
64–71 aspire / Above his Brethren. Adam’s response suggests that republicanism is a matter of natural law, clearly understood as such by Adam; he echoes an argument Milton often invoked to support republicanism against monarchy.
81–90 Rational Libertie. As Milton often did and as Abdiel did earlier (6.179–81), Michael links political to psychological servility, and political liberty to inner freedom, i.e., the exercise of “right Reason” and control of passions.
Twinn’d, and from her hath no dividual° being:
Reason in man obscur’d, or not obeyd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart Passions catch° the Government
From Reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore since hee permits
Within himself unworthie Powers to reign
Over free Reason, God in Judgement just
Subjects him from without to violent Lords;
Who oft as undeservedly enthral
His outward freedom: Tyrannie must be,
Though to the Tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet somtimes Nations will decline so low
From vertue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But Justice, and some fatal curse annext
Deprives them of thir outward libertie,
Thir inward lost: Witness th’ irreverent Son
Of him who built the Ark, who for the shame
Don to his Father, heard this heavie curse,
Servant of Servants, on his vitious Race.
Thus will this latter, as the former World,
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy Eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to thir own polluted wayes;
And one peculiar Nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok’d,
A Nation from one faithful man to spring:

90–101. This passage, presenting loss of liberty as often (though not always) God’s punishment for a nation’s servility, implicitly interprets the Restoration of Charles II as a divine judgment on the baseness of the English.

101–4 th’ irreverent Son. Ham, son of Noah, looked on the nakedness of his father and brought down Noah’s curse upon himself and his “vitiuous Race” (depraved descendants): “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren” (Gen. 9:25). Milton is probably thinking of the Canaanites (descendants of Ham’s son Canaan), since “Race” did not carry its modern meaning. Noah’s curse was used, however, to justify black slavery, as blacks came to be classed among Ham’s descendants.

111 one peculiar Nation. Israel, specially chosen by God, cf. Deut. 14:2, “The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself.” In Christian Doctrine 1.4 Milton notes the “national election, by which God chose the whole nation of Israel for his own people.” And, like many Puritans, he thought for a time that God had chosen England as a new Israel.

113 one faithful man. Abraham, whose name means “father of many nations.” Lines 113–51 are based on Gen. 11:27–17:9.
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in Idol-worship; O that men
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
While yet the Patriark liv’d, who scap’d the Flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship thir own work in Wood and Stone
For Gods! yet him God the most High voutsafes
To call by Vision from his Fathers house,
His kindred and false Gods, into a Land
Which he will shew him, and from him will raise
A mightie Nation, and upon him showre
His benediction so, that in his Seed
All Nations shall be blest; he straight° obeys
Not knowing to what Land, yet firm believes:
I see him, but thou canst not, with what Faith
He leaves his Gods, his Friends, and native Soile
Ur of Chaldea, passing now the Ford
To Haran, after a cumbrous Train
Of Herds and Flocks, and numerous servitude;°
Not wandring poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call’d him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains, I see his Tents
Pitcht about Sechem, and the neighbouring Plaine
Of Moreh; there by promise he receaves
Gift to his Progenie of all that Land;
From Hamath Northward to the Desert South
(Things by thir names I call, though yet unnam’d)
From Hermon East to the great Western Sea,
Mount Hermon, yonder Sea, each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shoare
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream

Jordan, true limit Eastward; but his Sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of Hills.
This ponder, that all Nations of the Earth
Shall in his Seed be blessed; by that Seed
Is meant thy great deliverer, who shall bruise

The Serpents head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier shall be reveald. This Patriarch blest,
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A Son, and of his Son a Grand-childe leaves,
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;

The Grandchilde with twelve Sons increast, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call’d
Egypt, divided by the River Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at seaven mouthes
Into the Sea: to sojourn in that Land

He comes invited by a yonger Son
In time of dearth,\(^\circ\) a Son whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that Realme
Of Pharao: there he dies, and leaves his Race
Growing into a Nation, and now grown

Suspected to\(^\circ\) a sequent\(^\circ\) King, who seeks
To stop thir overgrowth,\(^\circ\) as inmate\(^\circ\) guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills thir infant Males:
Till by two brethren (those two brethren call

Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claime
His people from enthralment, they return
With glory and spoile back to thir promis’d Land.

143–7 Mount Carmel. A mountain range near Haifa, on the Mediterranean coast of Israel. Jordan. The river was thought incorrectly to have two sources (“double-founted”), the Jor and the Dan. Senir. A ridge of Mount Hermon.

152 faithful Abraham. This is the first personal name Michael identifies; he later supplies several names of persons and places. Abraham is given the epithet “faithful” by Paul in Gal. 3:9.


155–64. Jacob’s son Joseph, the next youngest of his twelve sons, rose to a high position in Egypt and invited his father and brothers to that land to escape famine; his story is told in Gen. 37–50.

158. Adam can evidently see geographical features, but not the scenes or persons Michael sees and describes.

165–214. The story of the Israelites enslaved in Egypt and freed by “Moses” and “Aaron” is told in Exod. 1–14.

172 spoile. “jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment” (Exod. 12:35).
But first the lawless Tyrant, who denies°
To know thir God, or message to regard,
Must be compelld by Signes and Judgements dire;
To blood unshed the Rivers must be turnd,
Frogs, Lice and Flies must all his Palace fill
With loath’d intrusion, and fill all the land;
His Cattel must of Rot and Murren° die,
Botches° and blaines° must all his flesh imboss,
And all his people; Thunder mixt with Haile,
Haile mixt with fire must rend th’ Egyptian Skie
And wheel on th’ Earth, devouring where it rouls;
What it devours not, Herb, or Fruit, or Graine,
A darksom Cloud of Locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three dayes;
Last with one midnight stroke all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds°
The River-dragon tam’d at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as Ice
More hard’nd after thaw, till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissd, the Sea
Swallows him with his Host, but them lets pass
As on drie land between two christal walls,
Aw’d by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescu’d gain thir shoar:
Such wondrous power God to his Saint° will lend,
Though present in his Angel, who shall goe
Before them in a Cloud, and Pillar of Fire,
By day a Cloud, by night a Pillar of Fire,
To guide them in thir journey, and remove

Behinde them, while th’ obdurat King pursues:
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends° between till morning Watch;
Then through the Firey Pillar and the Cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his Host

And craze° thir Chariot wheels: when by command
Moses once more his potent Rod extends
Over the Sea; the Sea his Rod obeys;
On thir imbattelld ranks the Waves return,
And overwhelm thir Warr:° the Race elect°

Safe towards Canaan from the shoar advance
Through the Wilde Desert, not the readiest way,
Least entring on the Canaanite allarmd°
Warr terrifie them inexpert,° and feare
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather

Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untraind in Armes, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by thir delay
In the wide Wilderness, there they shall found

Thir government, and thir great Senate choose
Through the twelve Tribes, to rule by Laws ordaind:
God from the Mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In Thunder Lightning and loud Trumpets sound

Ordaine them Lawes; part such as appertaine
To civil Justice, part religious Rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadowes, of that destind Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what meanes he shall achieve

Mankinds deliverance. But the voice of God

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216 not the readiest way. The Israelites’ passage through the desert lasted thirty-eight years (Exod. 13:17–18).
225 great Senate. The Seventy Elders of the Sanbedrin (Num. 11:16–25), which Milton cites as a divinely ordained pattern of republican government in his Readie and Easie Way (1660).
232–3 types / And shadowes. The principle of typology, whereby persons and events in the Hebrew Bible are understood to prefigure Christ or matters pertaining to his life or to the church.
To mortal eare is dreadful; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besaught
Instructed that to God is no access

Without Mediator, whose high Office now
Moses in figure beares, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the Prophets in thir Age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus Laws and Rites

Establishd, such delight hath God in Men
Obedient to his will, that he voutsafes
Among them to set up his Tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal Men to dwell:

Of Cedar, overlaid with Gold, therein
An Ark, and in the Ark his Testimony,
The Records of his Cov’nant, over these
A Mercie-seat of Gold between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim, before him burn

Seaven Lamps as in a Zodiac representing
The Heav’ly fires; over the Tent a Cloud
Shall rest by Day, a fiery gleame by Night,
Save when they journie, and at length they come,

Promis’d to Abraham and his Seed: the rest
Were long to tell, how many Battels fought,
How many Kings destroyd, and Kingdoms won,
Or how the Sun shall in mid Heav’n stand still
A day entire, and Nights due course adjourne,

Mans voice commanding, Sun in Gibeon stand,
And thou Moon in the vale of Aialon,

236–8. Cf. the Israelites’ plea to Moses, “Speak thou with us and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exod. 20:19).

240–4 Mediator. Moses is a type (“figure”) of Christ in his role as mediator between the people and God; “all the Prophets”: in Christian typological explication, the prophets of the Hebrew Bible were read as foretelling Christ as Messiah.

247–56 Tabernacle. A portable “Sanctuary” (Exod. 25–6).


259–60 Land. Canaan; see 137–46 and note.

263–9. At Joshua’s bidding, the sun stood still in “Gibeon,” and the moon in “Aialon,” (both a few miles north of Jerusalem) “until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies,” the Amorites (Josh. 10:12–13). Israel. Isaac’s son Jacob was named Israel (“He that striveth with God”) and his descendants (“descent”) would come to be known as the Children of Israel (Gen. 32:28).
Till *Israel* overcome; so call the third
From *Abraham*, Son of *Isaac*, and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall *Canaan* win.

270  Here *Adam* interpos’d. O sent from Heav’n,
Enlightner of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveal’d, those chiefly which concerne
Just *Abraham* and his Seed: now first I finde
Mine eyes true op’ning, and my heart much eas’d,

275  Erwhile perplext with thoughts what would becom
Of mee and all Mankind; but now I see
His day, in whom all Nations shall be blést,
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidd’n knowledge by forbidd’n means.

280  This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deigne to dwell on Earth
So many and so various Laws are giv’n;
So many Laws argue° so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?

285  To whom thus *Michael*. Doubt not but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was Law given them to evince°
Thir natural pravitie,° by stirring up
Sin against Law to fight; that when they see

290  Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowie expiations weak,
The bloud of Bulls and Goats, they may conclude
Some bloud more precious must be paid for Man,
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness

295  To them by Faith imputed, they may finde
Justification towards God, and peace
Of Conscience, which the Law by Ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor Man the moral part
Perform, and not performing cannot live.

273–7 *Mine eyes true op’ning*. Adam supposes that the promise made to him pertains to Abraham’s seed, but he has yet to understand that Abraham is, in this, a type of Christ (see below, 446–50).

291–9 *shadowie expiations*. The ceremonial sacrifices of “Bulls and Goats” under the Law are types pointing to Christ’s efficacious sacrifice, which alone can win “Justification” for humankind, by Christ’s merits being “imputed,” attributed vicariously, to them through “Faith.” The theological doctrine of justification holds that fallen humans cannot perform the commandments of the Law, or appease God through ceremonial sacrifices. Cf. Gal. 2:16: “A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.”
So Law appears imperfect, and but° giv’n
With purpose to resign° them in full time
Up to a better Cov’nant, disciplin’d
From shadowie Types to Truth, from Flesh to Spirit,
From imposition of strict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace, from servil fear
To filial, works of Law to works of Faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov’d, being but the Minister
Of Law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua whom the Gentiles Jesus call,
His Name and Office bearing, who shall quell
The adversarie Serpent, and bring back
Through the worlds wilderness long wanderd man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they in thir earthly Canaan plac’t
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but° when sins
National interrupt thir public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies:
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom
The second, both for pietie renown’d
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his Regal Throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All Prophecie, That of the Royal Stock
Of David (so I name this King) shall rise
A Son, the Womans Seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All Nations, and to Kings foretold, of Kings

300–6. A more complete exposition of the theological concept of typology, according to which Judaism fore-
shadows and is perfected by Christianity, the Old Law of justice is fulfilled in the New Law of love, and
the covenant made with Moses is superseded by a “better Cov’nant,” the covenant of grace (cf. Heb. 8:6).
310–14 Jesus. The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Joshua,” who, rather than Moses, led the Children of
Israel into the promised land of Canaan, being in this a type of Christ leading his people to the heavenly
paradise.
320–34 Judges. Military leaders. The history briefly summarized here is recounted in Judges, 1 and 2 Sam.,
and 1 and 2 Kgs.
321–4 The second. The second king of Israel was David, promised by the prophet Nathan that “thy throne
shall be established for ever” (2 Sam. 7:16).
325–7 Royal Stock. The Messiah was prophesied to come of David’s lineage, and Jesus was referred to as
330 The last, for of his Reign shall be no end.
But first a long succession must ensue,
And his next Son for Wealth and Wisdom fam’d,
The clouded Ark of God till then in Tents
Wandering, shall in a glorious Temple enshrine.

335 Such follow him, as shall be registerd
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scrowle,
Whose foul Idolatries, and other faults
Heapt° to the popular° summe, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose thir Land,

340 Thir Citie, his Temple, and his holy Ark
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud Citie, whose high Walls thou saw’st
Left in confusion, Babylon thence call’d.
There in captivitie he lets them dwell

345 The space of seventie years, then brings them back,
Remembring mercie, and his Cov’nant sworn
To David, stablisht as the days of Heav’n.
Returnd from Babylon by leave of Kings
Thir Lords, whom God dispos’d, the house of God

350 They first re-edifie, and for a while
In mean estate live moderate, till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the Priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the Altar, and should most
Endeavour Peace: thir strife pollution brings

355 Upon the Temple it self: at last they seise
The Scepter, and regard not Davids Sons,°
Then loose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed King Messiah might be born

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332–4 his next Son. Solomon, noted for “Wisdom,” built a “glorious Temple” to house the Ark of the Covenant
(1 Kgs 6–7). clouded Ark. So called because “a cloud covered the tent of the congregation” which
held the Ark when the Israelites wandered in the desert (Exod. 40:34).
339–45 proud Citie. Babylon. The Babylonian captivity and the destruction of the Temple (sixth century
BCE) are recounted in 2 Kgs 25 and Jer. 39:1–10.
346–50 Cov’nant sworn. The promise to David to make “his throne as the days of heaven” (Ps. 89:29).
leave of Kings. The Persian kings Cyrus the Great, Darius, and Artaxerxes allowed the Israelites to return
from Babylon and rebuild the Temple (Ezra).
353–7 Priests dissension. Strife among the priests allowed the Selucid king Antiochus IV to sack Jerusalem
and pollute the Temple; then one of the priestly family of the Maccabees, Aristobulus I, seized the “Scepter,”
disregarding the claims of David’s dynasty.
358 stranger. Antipater the Idumean, father of Herod the Great who ruled at the time of Christ’s birth, was
procurator of Judaea from 47 BCE.
360 Barr’d of his right; yet at his Birth a Starr
   Unseen before in Heav’n proclaims him com,
   And guides the Eastern Sages,° who enquire
   His place, to offer Incense, Myrrh, and Gold;
   His place of birth a solemn° Angel tells
365 To simple Shepherds, keeping watch by night;
   They gladly thither haste, and by a Quire
   Of squadron Angel hear his Carol sung.
   A Virgin is his Mother, but his Sire
   The Power of the most High; he shall ascend
370 The Throne hereditar’ie, and bound his Reign
   With earths wide bounds, his glory with the Heav’ns.
   He ceas’d, discerning Adam with such joy
   Surcharg’d,° as had like grief bin dew’d in tears,
   Without the vent of words, which these he breathd.
375 O Prophet of glad tidings, finisher
   Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
   What oft my steddiest thoughts have searcht in vain,
   Why our great expectation should be call’d
   The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, Haile,
380 High in the love of Heav’n, yet from my Loynes
   Thou shalt proceed, and from thy Womb the Son
   Of God most High; So God with man unites.
   Needs must the Serpent now his capital° bruise
   Expect with mortal paine: say where and when
385 Thir fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victors heel.
   To whom thus Michael. Dream not of thir fight,
   As of a Duel, or the local wounds
   Of head or heel: not therefore joines the Son
   Manhood to God-head, with more strength to foil
390 Thy enemie; nor so is overcome
   Satan, whose fall from Heav’n, a deadlier bruise,
   Disabl’d not to give thee thy deaths wound:
   Which hee, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,°
   Not by destroying Satan, but his works
395 In thee and in thy Seed: nor can this be,
   But by fulfilling that which thou didst want.°

370–1. An echo of Virgil’s prophecy of Augustus (Aeneid 1.287), “imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris” (“he will bound his empire with the ocean, his glory with the stars”).
Obedience to the Law of God, impos’d
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
So only can high Justice rest appaid.°
The Law of God exact° he shall fulfill
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfill the Law; thy punishment
He shall endure by coming in the Flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death,
Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe
In his redemption, and that his obedience
Imputed becomes theirs by Faith, his merits
To save them, not thir own, though legal works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem’d,
Seis’d on by force, judg’d, and to death condemnd
A shameful and accurst, nail’d to the Cross
By his own Nation, slaine for bringing Life;
But to the Cross he nailes thy Enemies,
The Law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankinde, with him there crucifi’d,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction;° so he dies,
But soon revives, Death over him no power
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Returne, the Starres of Morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,
His death for Man, as many as offerd Life
Neglect° not, and the benefit imbrace
By Faith not void of workes: this God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy’d,

400 theirs. Your descendants’ transgressions which grow out of “thine.”
401–10. Michael restates the theological doctrine that Christ as “Saviour” will stand in place of humankind, redressing their disobedience by his perfect “obedience” and suffering the “death” that was their punishment. Humans can only be saved by Christ’s “merits” attributed to them vicariously (“Imputed”), not by their own good works even if “legal,” conforming to God’s law.
406. Cf. Gal. 3:13, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”
426–7 Faith not void of workes. Humans can obtain the “benefit” of Christ’s merits only by “Faith,” but not without the “workes” that flow from faith. Cf. 11.64 and note, and also Jas. 2:26, “faith without works is dead.”
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength
Defeating Sin and Death, his two maine armes,
And fix farr deeper in his head thir stings
Then temporal death shall bruise the Victors heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal Life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on Earth then certaine times to appeer
To his Disciples, Men who in his Life
Still follow’d him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn’d
And his Salvation, them who shall beleev
Baptizing in the profluent strame, the signe
Of washing them from guilt of sin to Life
Pure, and in mind prepar’d, if so befall,
For death, like that which the redeemer dy’d.
All Nations they shall teach; for from that day
Not onely to the Sons of Abrahams Loines
Salvation shall be Preacht, but to the Sons
Of Abrahams Faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all Nations shall be blest.
Then to the Heav’n of Heav’ns he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the aire
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The Serpent, Prince of aire, and drag in Chaines
Through all his Realme, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His Seat at Gods right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heav’n; and thence shall come,
When this worlds dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead,
To judge th’ unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receave them into bliss,
Whether in Heav’n or Earth, for then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Then this of Eden, and far happier daies.
So spake th’ Archangel Michael, then paus’d,

447–50. Michael here makes explicit the meaning of the promise offered typologically to Abraham’s seed.
454 **Prince of aire.** One of Satan’s titles; cf. Eph. 2:2, “prince of the power of the air.”
As at the Worlds great period;° and our Sire
Replete with joy and wonder thus repli’d.
O goodness infinite, goodness immense!°
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Then that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By mee done and occasiond, or rejoyce
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
To God more glory, more good will to Men
From God, and over wrauth grace shall abound.
But say, if our deliverer up to Heav’n
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among th’ unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth; who then shall guide
His people, who defend? will they not deale
Wors with his followers then with him they dealt?
Be sure they will, said th’ Angel; but from Heav’n
Hee to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell°
His Spirit within them, and the Law of Faith
Working through love, upon thir hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth, and also arme
With spiritual Armour, able to resist
Satans assaults, and quench his fierie darts,
What° Man can do against them, not affraid,
Though to the death, against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompenc’t,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Thir proudest persecuters: for the Spirit
Powrd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize° the Nations, then on all

469–78. These lines do not affirm a simple concept of felix culpa – that the Fall was fortunate in bringing humans greater happiness than they would otherwise have enjoyed – but rather, that the Fall provided God an occasion to bring still greater good out of evil. Cf. 5.496–503 for the prelapsarian plan for Adam and Eve’s growth in perfection.
486 Comforter. The Holy Spirit, who for Milton is much subordinate to both Father and Son.
489 upon thir hearts. Cf. Heb. 8:10, “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.”
491–2 spiritual Armour. Cf. Eph. 6:11–16: “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil... Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”
Baptiz’d, shall them with wondrous gifts endue\(^\circ\)
To speak all Tongues, and do all Miracles,
As did thir Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each Nation to receave
With joy the tidings brought from Heav’n: at length

Thir Ministry perform’d, and race well run,
Thir doctrine and thir story written left,
They die; but in thir room, as they forewarne,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous Wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav’n

To thir own vile advantages shall turne
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left onely in those written Records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.

Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,\(^\circ\)
Places\(^\circ\) and titles, and with these to join
Secular power, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promisd alike and giv’n

To all Believers; and from that pretense,\(^\circ\)
Spiritual Lawes by carnal\(^\circ\) power shall force
On every conscience; Laws which none shall finde
Left them inrould,\(^\circ\) or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then

But force the Spirit of Grace it self, and binde
His consort Libertie; what, but unbuild
His living Temples, built by Faith to stand,
Thir own Faith not anothers: for on Earth

\(500\) Baptiz’d, shall them with wondrous gifts endue\(\circ\)
\(501\) \textit{Speak all Tongues}. Cf. Acts. 2:4–7, where the apostles speak in many tongues.
\(502\) endow
\(505\) Thir Ministry perform’d, and race well run,
\(506\) \textit{Story written}. In the Gospels and Epistles.
\(510\) To thir own vile advantages shall turne
\(515\) Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,\(\circ\)
\(516\) \textit{Story written}. In the Gospels and Epistles.
\(517\) places\(\circ\) and titles, and with these to join
\(518\) \textit{Honors}
\(520\) To all Believers; and from that pretense,\(\circ\)
\(525\) But force the Spirit of Grace it self, and binde
\(526\) \textit{His consort Libertie}. Cf. 2 Cor. 3:17: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Milton insisted in his prose tracts that Christ’s gospel and the Spirit of God promote liberty, civil and religious.
\(527\) \textit{Living Temples}. Individual Christians, cf. 1 Cor. 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God.”
Who against Faith and Conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward Rites and specious forms
Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slandrous darts, and works of Faith
Rarely be found: so shall the World go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benigne,
Under her own weight groaning till the day

Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis’d to thy aid
The Womans seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the Clouds from Heav’n to be reveal’d
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted World, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg’d and refn’d,
New Heav’n’s, new Earth, Ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness and peace and love
To bring forth fruits Joy and eternal Bliss.

He ended; and thus Adam last reply’d.
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measur’d this transient World, the Race of time,
Till time stand fixt: beyond is all abyss,
Eternitie, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this Vessel can containe;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with feare the onely God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,

529–30 Infallible. An attack on papal claims of infallibility, asserted though not proclaimed as doctrine until 1870; the attack extends to all religious or civil leaders who attempt to impose an orthodoxy.
543–51. With the account of the Second Coming of Christ, the Last Judgment, and the renewal of all things, the meaning of the “Womans seed” destroying Satan’s works is made fully explicit. Cf. 2 Pet. 3:13, “we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth.”
Mercifull over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deemd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek; that suffering for Truths sake
Is fortitude to highest victorie,
And to the faithful Death the Gate of Life;
Taught this by his example whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.
To whom thus also th’ Angel last repli’d:
This having learnt, thou hast attained the summe
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the Starrs
Thou knewst by name, and all th’ ethereal Powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Natures works,
Or works of God in Heav’n, Aire, Earth, or Sea,
And all the riches of this World enjoydst,
And all the rule, one Empire; onely add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add Faith,
Add vertue, Patience, Temperance, add Love,
By name to come call’d Charitie, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee, happier farr.
Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of Speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see the Guards,
By mee encampt on yonder Hill, expect
Thir motion, at whose Front a flaming Sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle Dreams have calm’d
Portending good, and all her spirits compos’d
To meek submission: thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her Faith to know,
The great deliverance by her Seed to come
(For by the Womans Seed) on all Mankind.

565 weak / Subverting worldly strong. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:27: “God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”
587 paradise within thee. Compare Satan’s interior state at 4.20–2, 75.
589 Speculation. Both extensive view and theological inquiry.
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one Faith unanimous though sad,
With cause° for evils past, yet much more cheer’d
With meditation on the happie end.

He ended, and they both descend the Hill;
Descended, Adam to the Bowre where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak’t;
And thus with words not sad she him receav’d.

Whence thou returnst, and whither wentst, I know;
For God is also in sleep, and Dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and hearts distress
Weared I fell asleep: but now lead on;

In mee is no delay; with thee to goe,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to mee
Art all things under Heav’n, all places thou,
Who for my wilfull crime art banisht hence.

This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by mee is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am voutsaf’t,
By mee the Promis’d Seed shall all restore.

So spake our Mother Eve, and Adam heard

Well pleas’d, but answer’d not; for now too nigh
Th’ Archangel stood, and from the other Hill
To thir fixt Station, all in bright array
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous,° as Ev’ning Mist

Ris’n from a River o’re the marish ° glides,
And gathers ground fast at the Labourers heel
Homeward returning. High in Front advanc’t,
The brandisht Sword of God before them blaz’d
Fierce as a Comet; which with torrid heat,

And vapour° as the Libyan Air adust,°

611–13 Dreams advise. The lines suggest that Eve’s dream was also a vehicle of prophecy to her. Cf. Num. 12:6: “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.”

615–18 with thee to goe. Eve’s last love lyric in the poem invites comparison with her prelapsarian lyric (4.641–56); it also echoes Ruth’s promise to accompany her mother-in-law Naomi: “whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge” (Ruth 1:16).

621–3. In these lines Eve describes herself as the central epic protagonist of the poem, through whom “all” is lost and “all” is restored.
Began to parch that temperate Clime; whereat
In either hand the hastning Angel caught
Our lingring Parents, and to th' Eastern Gate
Led them direct, and down the Cliff as fast
To the subjected Plaine; then disappe'rd.
They looking back, all th' Eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late thir happie seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming Brand, the Gate
With dreadful Faces throng'd and fierie Armes:
Som natural tears they drop'd, but wip'd them soon;
The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.

THE END
Citations are to the 1674 and 1667 editions and to the manuscript (MS) for Book 1; citations to the Arguments are to 1674 and 1668/9. The chosen reading is listed first. I have reversed italic and roman type in the prefatory Latin poem by Samuel Barrow, in the note on the verse, and in the Arguments.

**Book 1**

*Argument*

14. hope (1674, 1668) hopes (1669)

2. Forbidden (1674, 1667) forbidd’n (MS)

71. those (1674, 1667) these (MS) / thir (1674, MS) their (1667)

82. Satan (italics supplied)

97. lustre, (MS) lustre; (1674, 1667)

128. Powers: powers (1667, 1674) The omitted comma in the MS allows an arguably better reading, i.e., many princes (“Throned Powers”) under Satan’s conduct led the embattled Seraphim.

192. Satan (italics supplied)

314. Deep (1674, 1667) deeps (MS).

362. memorial, (1667) memorall, (MS) memorial (1674)

432. those (1674, 1667) these (MS)

478. thir (1674) their (1667, MS)

504–5. “In Gibeah, when the hospitable door / Expos’d a Matron to avoid worse rape.” (1674) “In Gibeah, when hospitable Dores / Yielded thir Matrons to prevent worse rape.” (1667) “In Gibeah, when hospitable doors / Yeilded thir Matrons to avoid worse rape.” (MS)

543. Night (italics supplied to conform to usual practice in referring to the character)

603. courage (1667, 1674) valour (MS)

703. founded (MS, 1667) found out (1674). Founded (melted) is preferable; the “ribs of gold” were already found out at lines 688–90.

757. Satan (italics supplied)
Book 2

Argument

5. shall (1674) should (1668/9)

53. now (1674) now. (1667)
247. Heav’n (1674) Heav’n, (1667)
282. where (1667) were (1674). Either reading is possible but “where” suits the context better.
310. heav’n, (1667) heav’n (1674)
323. sure, (1667) sure (1674)
375. Original (1674) Originals (1667). Either is possible; the 1674 reading emphasizes Adam’s role as the source of all humankind, including Eve.
414. wee (errata sheet 1668 and 1669) we (1674, 1667)
483. thir (1667) her (1674)
527. his (1667) this (1674). “His” conforms to pronouns in the passage.
628. Gorgons and Hydra’s and Chimera’s (1674, 1667). The apostrophes are evidently a printer’s error (see the correct plural “Gorgons”).
631. towards (1674) toward (1667)
712. Level’d (1667) Level’d (1674)
801. Afresh (1667) A fresh (1674)
840. Death (italics supplied to conform to usual practice in referring to the character)
845. Death (italics supplied)
859. confin’d (1667) confin’d (1674)
894. Night (italics supplied)
973. way (1667) way, (1674)
1001. [y]our (emendation) our (1667, 1674) It is the intestine broils in heaven, resulting in the creation of hell and the universe, that have encroached on Chaos, not its own perpetual civil wars.
1024. Sin and Death (italics supplied to conform to usual practice in referring to the characters)
1039. brok’n (1667) brok’d (1674)

Book 3

Argument

2. his (1674) the (1668/9)
21. plac’t here, (1674, 1668) plac’t there, (1669)

515. Heav’n. ) Heav’n (1674) Heav’n. (1667)
592. Metal (emendation) Medal (1674, 1667)
630. impure (1674 some copies 1667) impure; (some copies 1667)
653. accostes. (some copies 1667) accostes; (some copies 1667, 1674). A period is usual before quoted speech.
No indentation in 1674 or 1667, but the usual practice in both editions is to begin a new verse paragraph when the speaker changes.

in (1674, some copies 1667) with (some copies 1667)

Book 4

Argument

find him (1674) find him out (1668/9)

grottesque (1667) gottesque (1674)

Life, (1667) Life (1674)

Power (1667) power (1674)

of (1674) on (1667).

walk (1674) walks (1667). The context supports either reading.

shadier (1667) shadie (1674). The context invites the comparative.

stood, (1667) stood (1674)

ofspring (1667) ofsspring (1674)

be sure (emendment) besure (1674, 1667)

thy (1674) the (1667)

Book 5

Argument

appearance (1674) appearing (1668/9)

Breathe (1674, 1668 errata), Breath (1667)

repli’d. (1667) replied, (1674). The period is usual before quoted speech.

all. (1667) all (1674)

evning now approach’d (1674) Evning approach’d (1667)

35–40. This passage contains three added lines and other changes from 1667. 1674 reads:

Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of Heav’n.

On flours repos’d, and with fresh flourets crownd,

They eate, they drink, and in communion sweet

Quaff immortalitie and joy, secure

Of surfet where full measure onely bounds

Excess, before th’ all bounteous King, who showrd

1667 reads:

Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of Heav’n.

They eat, they drink, and with refection sweet

Are fill’d, before th’ all bounteous King, who showrd

From this point on in Book 5 line numbers in 1667 differ by three lines from those of 1674.
650. God). Th’ Angelic | Period omitted in both editions, evidently by accident as the capital indicates.

Book 6

311. small, if | small, If (1674, 1667). The capital is clearly an error, as what follows completes the epic simile begun in line 310.

568. So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce (1667) So scoffing in ambiguous words he scarce, (1674)

620. mood. (1667) mood, (1674). The period is usual before quoted speech.

666. under ground (1667) under ground, (1674). The added comma is probably a printer’s error.

846. Wheels, (1667) Wheels (1674)

Book 7

Book 7 of the 1667 edition in ten books is divided into Books 7 and 8 in the 1674 edition, with lines 1–640 of Book 7 (1667) becoming the new Book 7 (1674).

Argument

The Argument to Book 7 (1674) contains the first half of the Argument to Book 7 as printed in 1668 and 1669.

321. swelling (Bentley’s emendation) ] smelling (1667, 1674) The emendation is widely accepted; the printer’s eye probably registered “smelling” from line 319.

322. and (1674) add (1667)

366. her (1674) his (1667) “her” would refer to Venus as the morning star, “his” to Lucifer. The change seems deliberate, not accidental.

370. First in the East his glorious Lamp (Fletcher’s plausible emendation) ] First in his East the glorious Lamp (1667, 1674). The printer evidently transposed “his” and “the.”

451. Soul (Bentley’s emendation) ] Foul (1674), Fowle (1667). The emendation is almost certainly correct, as the creation of Fowles was treated in lines 417–46. The attempted correction in 1674 mistakenly kept F for the intended S.

494. needless (emendation) ] needlest (1674, 1667), probably an error, though it could be an intended variant.

563. stations (1667) station (1674)

588. Father, for ] Father (for (1674, 1667). The parenthesis should be a comma, given the opening and closing parentheses in lines 589 and 590.

Book 8

Book 8 (1674) comprises lines 641–1290 of Book 7 in the 1667 edition.
Argument

The Argument to Book 8 (1674) contains the last half of the Argument to Book 7 as printed in 1668 and 1669.

1. *Adam* inquires (1674) *Adam* then inquires (1668/9)
2. *search* (1674) *seek* (1668/9)

1–3. added in 1674 when Book 7 (1667) was split.

4. Then as new *wak’t* thus gratefully repli’d. (1674) To whom thus *Adam* gratefully repli’d.

7. 641, 1667

269 as (7.906, 1667) and (1674)

313. *appear’d* (1674) *appear’d* (7.950, 1667)

466 *warne*, (7.1103, 1667) (1674?). There is a faint mark above the comma in all 1674 copies examined, likely foul case rather than a semicolon.

The usual line “*The end of the . . . Book*” was omitted for the 1667 Book 7.

Book 9

Argument

The Argument to Book 9 is the same as that for Book 8 as printed in 1668 and 1669.

75. *Satan* (italics supplied)

186. *Nor* (1674) *Not* (1667)

213. *hear* (1667) *bear* (1674)

272. *reply’d*. (1667) *reply’d*, (1674). The period is usual before quoted speech.

339. *combin’d*. (1667, 1674?). Possibly a comma but probably a period.

394. *Likest* (1667) *Likeliest* (1674)

581. *Fenel*, (1667) *Fenel* (1674). No comma prints in any copy of 1674, but space is left for it.

620 *abundance* (1674) *abundance* (1667)

632 *made* (1674) *make* (1667)

687 *Knowledge*. By the *Threatner*? ] *Knowledge* By the *Threatner* (1674, 1667). Question mark is almost certainly misplaced in both editions.


922. *hath* (1674) *hast* (1667)

949. *long?* (1674) *long?* (1667)

979. *thee*, (1667) *thee* (1674)

1016. *move*. (1667) *move*, (1674). The period is usual before quoted speech.

1019. *we* (1667) *me* (1674)

1058. *shame: hee* (colon added) ] *shame hee* (1674, 1667)

1059. *more*. So (1667) *more*, so (1674)

1092–3. for . . . from (1667) from . . . for (1674). The 1674 compositor evidently transposed these words in the two lines.

1098 *unclean*. (1667) *unclean*, (1674)

*The End of the Ninth Book* (1674) *The End of the Eighth Book* (1667)
Argument

The Argument to Book 10 is the same as that for Book 9 as printed in 1668 and 1669.

3. Son (1674, 1668), Angels (1669)
9. Track (1674, 1668) tract (1669) meet (1674, 1668) met (1669)
11. in full assembly (1668, 1669) in full of assembly (1674).
15. take (1674) taste (1668, 1669)

58. might (1674) may (1667)
184, 189. Satan (italics supplied)
230, 234. Sin . . . Death (italics supplied to conform to usual practice in referring to the characters)
241. Avengers (1674) Avenger (1667)
258. Satan (italics supplied)
271. aid. (1667) aid, (1674)
294. Death (italics supplied)
352. Sin (italics supplied)
397. these (1674) those (1667)
408. prevails (1674) prevale (1667)
473. sin . . . Death (italics supplied)
550. with fair Fruit (1667) with Fruit (1674)
706. Libecchio. (1667) Libecchio, (1674)
762. not. (1667) not (1674)
778. lap! ] lap? (1674, 1667). The question mark was often substituted for an exclamation point in printing houses of the period.
801. he draw out, ] he, draw out, (1674, 1667)
827. they then acquitted (1674) they acquitted (1667)
835. bear, (1667) bear (1674)
989–90. "So Death" As Patrick Hume first pointed out (1695), these words at the beginning of line 990 (1667, 1674) should perhaps have been printed at the end of line 989, which is otherwise the only line in the poem with only eight syllables, while line 990 has twelve. But this metrical irregularity has considerable rhetorical power.
997. miserie (1667) meserie (1674)

The End of the Tenth Book (1674) The End of the Ninth Book (1667)

Book 11

Argument

The Argument of Book 11 (1674) is roughly the first half of the Argument to Book 10 as printed in 1668 and 1669.

2. but (1674, 1668) and (1669)
3. Cherubim (1674, 1668) Cherubims (1669)

233. coming; (1667) coming? (1674). Conceivably, the question mark was substituted for an exclamation point.
329. footstep trace (1667) foot step-trace (1674)
335. Earth, (1667) Earth. (1674)
380. to the amplest reach (1674) to ampest reach (1667). 1667 conforms to the meter, but the change may be intended.
427. that sin derive (1667) that derive (1674)
485–7. added in 1674
Dæmoniac Phrenzie, moaping Melancholie
And Moon-struck madness, pining Atrophie
Marasmus and wide-wasting Pestilence,
lines 484–5 in 1667 read:
Intestin Stone and Ulcer, Colic Pangs,
Dropsies, and Asthma's, and Joint-racking Rheums. (line 488 in 1674)
551–2. Of rendring up and patiently attend / My dissolution. Michael repli'd, (1674) Of rendring up. Michael to him repli'd (10.548, 1667)
579. last (1674, 1669 errata) lost (1667)
651. makes (1674) tacks (1667)
710. punishment; (1667) punishment? (1674)
787. New verse paragraph. Neither 1674 nor 1667 indent, but new speeches are normally indented. This speech begins a new page so the compositor may have missed it.
870. who (1674) that (1667)

Book 12

The 1674 edition begins with five added lines, and contains lines 898–1541 of the 1667 Book 10.

Argument

The Argument to Book 12 is roughly the last half of the Argument to Book 10 in 1668 and 1669. Much of the first sentence is new:
The Angel Michael continues from the Flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain, who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascention; the state of the Church till his Second Coming. Adam greatly satisfied. . . (1674)
thence from the Flood relates, and by degrees explains, who that Seed of the Woman shall be; his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascention; the state of the Church till his second Coming. Adam greatly satisfied. . . (1667)

9. Place. (1668, 1669) Place, (1674)

1–5 added in 1674. Lines 897–8 of Book 10 (1667) read: “Both Heav’n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell. / Thus thou hast seen one World begin and end;” In 1674 these are line 901 of Book 11 and line 6 of Book 12. The paragraph inception at line 6 is new to the 1674 edition.

191. The (1674) This (1667)

238. he grants what they besaught (1674) he grants them thir desire (1667)

300. Law (1667) law (1674)

534. Will deem (1667) Well deem (1674)
Appendix

Sketches for a drama on the subject of the Fall, from Milton’s notebook (the Trinity manuscript). The first two sketches have lines drawn through them, apparently deleting them. In the last two sketches, some items are heavily crossed out.

the Persons

Michael Heavenly Love
Chorus of Angels
Lucifer
Adam (with the serpent)
Eve
Conscience
Death
Labour
Sicknesse
Discontent
Ignorance
with others
Faith
Hope
Charity

the Persons

Moses or Divine (Wisdom)
Michael. Justice. Mercie
Heavenly Love
The Evening Starre Hesperus
Chorus of Angels
Lucifer
Adam
Eve
Conscience
Death
Labour
Sicknesse
Discontent
Ignorance
Feare
Death
Faith
Hope
Charity
Paradise Lost  The Persons

Moses \(\piρολογίζει\) [prologizei] recounting how he assum’d a true bodie, that it corrupts not because of his with god in the mount declares the like of Enoch and Eliah, besides the purity of ye pl[ace] that certaine pure winds, dues, and clouds preserve it from corruption whence Hea

v

n exhortst to the sight of god, tells they cannot se Adam in the state of innocence by reason of thire sin

Justice

Mercie

debating what should become of man if he fall

Mercie

Wisdome

(hymne of ye creation)

Chorus of Angels sing a

Act 2

Heavenly Love

Evening starre

chorus sing the mariage song and describe Paradice

Act 3

Lucifer contriving Adams ruine

Chorus feares for Adam and relates Lucifers rebellion and fall

Act 4

Adam

Eve

fallen

Conscience cites them to Gods examination

chorus bewails and tells the good Adam hath lost

Act 5

Adam and Eve, driven out of Paradice

presented by an angel with

Labour greife hatred Envie warre famine Pestilence

sicknesse
discontent
Ignorance

thire names
likewise winter, heat, Tempest &c

Death

mutes to whome he gives

enterd into ye world
Faith, Hope, Charity  
       comfort him and instruct him  

Several pages later Milton sketched another plan under the title Adams Banishment, crossed out and replaced by the title Adam unparadiz’d.

The angel Gabriel either descending or entering, shewing since (in earth, as in heaven, describes Paradise. next this globe was created, his frequency as much next first the chorus shewing the reason of his comming to keep his watch in Paradise after Lucifers rebellion by command from god, & withall expressing his desire to see, & know more concerning this excellent new creature man. the angel Gabriel as by his name signifying a prince of power tracing paradise with a more free office comes passes by the station of ye chorus & desired by them relates what he knew of man as the creation of Eve with thire love, & marriage. after this Lucifer appeares after his overthrow, bemoans himself, seeks revenge on man the chorus prepare resistance at his first approach at last after discourse of enmity on either side he departs wherat the chorus sings of the battell, & victorie in heavn against him & his accomplices, as before after the first act was sung a hymn of the creation.

[[sentence inserted from opposite leaf]] heer again may appear Lucifer relating, & insulting in what he had don to the destruction of man. man next & Eve having by this time bin seduc’d by the serpent appeares confusedly cover’d with leaves conscience in a shape accuses him, Justice cites him to the place whither Jehova call’d for him in the mean while the chorus entertains the stage, & his [is] inform’d by some angel the manner of his fall.

[[sentence inserted from foot of page]] heer the chorus bewailes Adams fall. Adam then & Eve returne accuse one another but especially Adam lays the blame to his wife, is stubborn in his offence Justice appeares reason with him convinces him [[sentence inserted from foot of page]] the chorus admonisheth Adam, & bids him beware by Lucifers example of impenitence the Angel is sent to banish them out of paradice but before causes to passe before his eyes in shapes a mask of all the evills of this life & world he is humbl’d relents, dispaire. at last appeares Mercy comforts him & brings in faith, hope, & charity promises the Messiah, then calls in faith, hope, & charity, instructs him he repents gives god the glory, submitts to his penalty the chorus breifly concludes. compare this with the former draught.
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