

**Paradise Lost<sup>1</sup> (1667)**  
By John Milton

**Paradise Lost: The Tenth Book**

THE ARGUMENT.—Man's transgression known, the guardian Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; 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, clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new World, and the sin by Man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan, their 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; their 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, transformed, with himself also, suddenly into Serpents, according to his doom given 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 fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways; which he approves not, but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the Serpent, and exhorts her, with him, to seek peace of the offended Deity by repentance and supplication.

**Paradise Lost: The Eleventh Book**

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: Michael's coming down. Adam shews to Eve certain ominous signs: he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him: the Angel denounces

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their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: the Angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the Flood.

THUS they, in lowliest, plight, repentant stood  
 Praying; for from the Mercy-seat above  
 Prevenient grace descending had removed  
 The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh  
 Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed 5  
 Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer  
 Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight  
 Than loudest oratory. Yet their port  
 Not of mean suitors; nor important less  
 Seemed their petition than when the ancient Pair 10  
 In fables old, less ancient yet than these,  
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore  
 The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine  
 Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers  
 Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds 15  
 Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed  
 Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then, clad  
 With incense, where the Golden Altar fumed,  
 By their great Intercessor, came in sight  
 Before the Father's Throne. Them the glad Son 20  
 Presenting thus to intercede began:—  
 “See, Father, what first-fruits on Earth are sprung  
 From thy implanted grace in Man—these sighs  
 And prayers, which in this golden censer, mixed 25  
 With incense, I, thy priest, before thee bring;  
 Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed  
 Sown with contribution in his heart, than those  
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees  
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen 30  
 From innocence. Now, therefore, bend thine ear  
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;  
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me  
 Interpret for him, me his Advocate  
 And propitiation; all his works on me,  
 Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those 35  
 Shall perfer, and for these my death shall pay.  
 Accept me, and in me from these receive  
 The smell of peace toward Mankind; let him live,  
 Before thee reconciled, at least his days  
 Numbered, though sad, till death, his doom (which I 40  
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),  
 To better life shall yield him, where with me

All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss,  
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.”  
 To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:— 45  
 “All thy request for Man, accepted Son,  
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree.  
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell  
 The law I gave to Nature him forbids;  
 Those pure immortal elements, that know 50  
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,  
 Eject him, tainted now, and purge him off,  
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,  
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best  
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55  
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt  
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts  
 Created him endowed—with Happiness  
 And Immortality; that fondly lost,  
 This other served but to eternize woe, 60  
 Till I provided Death: so Death becomes  
 His final remedy, and, after life  
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined  
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,  
 Waked in the renovation of the just, 65  
 Resigns him up with Heaven and Earth renewed.  
 But let us call to synod all the Blest  
 Through Heaven’s wide bounds; from them I will not hide  
 My judgments—how with Mankind I proceed,  
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw, 70  
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed.”  
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
 To the bright Minister that watched. He blew  
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps  
 When God descended, and perhaps once more 75  
 To sound at general doom. The angelic blast  
 Filled all the regions: from their blissful bowers  
 Of amarantin shade, fountain or spring,  
 By the waters of life, where’er they sate  
 In fellowships of joy, the Sons of Light 80  
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high,  
 And took their seats, till from his Throne supreme  
 The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will:—  
 “O Sons, like one of us Man is become  
 To know both Good and Evil, since his taste 85  
 Of that defended Fruit; but let him boast  
 His knowledge of good lost and evil got,  
 Happier had it sufficed him to have known

Good by itself and evil not at all.  
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite— 90  
 My motions in him; longer than they move,  
 His heart I know how variable and vain,  
 Self—left. Lest, therefore, his now bolder hand  
 Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,  
 And live for ever, dream at least to live 95  
 For ever, to remove him I decree,  
 And send him from the Garden forth, to till  
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil,  
 Michael, this my behest have thou in charge:  
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim 100  
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend,  
 Or in behalf of Man, or to invade  
 Vacant possessions, some new trouble raise;  
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God  
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair, 105  
 From hallowed ground the unholy, and denounce  
 To them, and to their progeny, from thence  
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint  
 At the sad sentence rigorously urged  
 (For I behold them softened, and with tears 110  
 Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.  
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
 Dismiss them not disconsolate reveal  
 To Adam what shall come in future days,  
 As I shall thee enlighten; intermix 115  
 My covenant in the Woman's seed renewed.  
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace;  
 And on the east side of the Garden place,  
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
 Cherubic watch, and of a Sword the flame 120  
 Wide—waving, all approach far off to fright,  
 And guard all passage to the Tree of life;  
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove  
 To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,  
 With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude.” 125  
 He ceased, and the Archangelic Power prepared  
 For swift descent; with him the cohort bright  
 Of watchful Cherubim. Four faces each  
 Had, like a double Janus; all their shape  
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those 130  
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,  
 Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,  
 To resalute the World with sacred light,

Leucothea waked, and with fresh dews imbalmed 135  
 The Earth, when Adam and first matron Eve  
 Had ended now their orisons, and found  
 Strength added from above, new hope to spring  
 Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet linked;  
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed:— 140  
     “Eve, easily may faith admit that all  
 The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;  
 But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven  
 So prevalent as to concern the mind  
 Of God high-blest, or to incline his will, 145  
 Hard to belief may seem. Yet this will prayer,  
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne  
 Even to the seat of God. For, since I sought  
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease,  
 Kneeled and before him humbled all my heart, 150  
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,  
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew  
 That I was heard with favour; peace returned  
 Home to my breast, and to my memory  
 His promise that thy seed shall bruise our Foe; 155  
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now  
 Assures me that the bitterness of death  
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee!  
 Eve rightly called, Mother of all Mankind,  
 Mother of all things living, since by thee 160  
 Man is to live, and all things live for Man.”  
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek:—  
 “Ill-worthy I such title should belong  
 To me transgressor, who, for thee ordained  
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach 165  
 Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise.  
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
 That I, who first brought death on all, am graced  
 The source of life; next favourable thou,  
 Who highly thus to entitle me voutsaf’st, 170  
 Far other name deserving. But the field  
 To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,  
 Though after sleepless night; for see! the Morn,  
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins  
 Her rosy progress smiling. Let us forth, 175  
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
 Where’er our day’s work lies, though now enjoined  
 Laborious, till day droop. While here we dwell,  
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?  
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content.” 180

So spake, so wished, much-humbled Eve; but Fate  
 Subscribed not. Nature first gave signs, impressed  
 On bird, beast, air—air suddenly eclipsed,  
 After short blush of morn. Nigh in her sight  
 The bird of Jove, stooped from his aerie tour, 185  
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;  
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,  
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,  
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;  
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190  
 Adam observed, and, with his eye the chase  
 Pursuing, not unmoved to Eve thus spake:—  
 “O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,  
 Which Heaven by these mute signs in Nature shews,  
 Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn 195  
 Us, haply too secure of our discharge  
 From penalty because from death released  
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,  
 Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,  
 And thither must return, and be no more? 200  
 Why else this double object in our sight,  
 Of flight pursued in the air and o’er the ground  
 One way the self-same hour? Why in the east  
 Darkness ere day’s mid-course, and morning-light  
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205  
 O’er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
 And slow descends, with something Heavenly fraught?”  
 He erred not; for, by this, the Heavenly bands  
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now  
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt— 210  
 A glorious Apparition, had not doubt  
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam’s eye.  
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw  
 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright; 215  
 Nor that which on the flaming Mount appeared  
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,  
 Against the Syrian king, who, to surprise  
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,  
 War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch 220  
 In their bright stand there left his Powers to seize  
 Possession of the Garden; he alone,  
 To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,  
 Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,  
 While the great Visitant approached, thus spake:— 225  
 “Eve, now expect great tidings, which, perhaps,

Of us will soon determine, or impose  
 New laws to be observed; for I descry,  
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,  
 One of the Heavenly host, and, by his gait, 230  
 None of the meanest—some great Potentate  
 Or of the Thrones above, such majesty  
 Invests him coming; yet not terrible,  
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,  
 As Raphael, that I should much confide, 235  
 But solemn and sublime; whom, not to offend,  
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.”  
 He ended; and the Archangel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
 Clad to meet man. Over his lucid arms 240  
 A military vest of purple flowed,  
 Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain  
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old  
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof.  
 His starry helm unbuckled shewed him prime 245  
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side,  
 As in glistening zodiac, hung the sword,  
 Satan’s dire dread, and in his hand the spear.  
 Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from his state  
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared:— 250  
 “Adam, Heaven’s high behest no preface needs.  
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seizure many days,  
 Given thee of grace, wherein thou may’st repent, 255  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 May’st cover. Well may then thy Lord, appeased,  
 Redeem thee quite from Death’s rapacious claim;  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not. To remove thee I am come, 260  
 And send thee from the Garden forth, to till  
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.”  
 He added not; for Adam, at the news  
 Heart-strook, with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen 265  
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
 Discovered soon the place of her retire:—  
 “O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!  
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave  
 Thee, native soil? these happy walks and shades, 270  
 Fit haunt of Gods, where I had hope to spend,  
 Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day

That must be mortal to us both? O flowers,  
 That never will in other climate grow, 275  
 My early visitation, and my last  
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand  
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,  
 Who now shall rear ye to the Sun, or rank  
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?  
 Thee, lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorned 280  
 With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee  
 How shall I part, and whither wander down  
 Into a lower world, to this obscure  
 And wild? How shall we breathe in other air  
 Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?" 285  
 Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:  
 "Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign  
 What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,  
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine.  
 Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes 290  
 Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;  
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil."  
 Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp  
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,  
 To Michael thus his humble words addressed:— 295  
 "Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or named  
 Of them the highest—for such of shape may seem  
 Prince above princes—gently hast thou told  
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
 And in performing end us. What besides 300  
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,  
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring—  
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
 Recess, and only consolation left  
 Familiar to our eyes; all places else 305  
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate,  
 Nor knowing us, nor known. And, if by prayer  
 Incessant I could hope to change the will  
 Of Him who all things can, I would not cease  
 To weary him with my assiduous cries; 310  
 But prayer against his absolute decree  
 No more avails than breath against the wind,  
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
 This most afflicts me—that, departing hence, 315  
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprived  
 His blessed countenance. Here I could frequent,  
 With worship, place by place where he voutsafed



Presence Divine, and to my sons relate,  
 ‘On this mount He appeared; under this tree 320  
 Stood visible; among these pines his voice  
 I heard; here with him at this fountain talked.’  
 So many grateful altars I would rear  
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone  
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory 325  
 Or monument to ages, and thereon  
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.  
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek  
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace?  
 For, though I fled him angry, yet, recalled 330  
 To life prolonged and promised race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts  
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore.”  
 To whom thus Michael, with regard benign:—  
 “Adam, thou know’st Heaven his, and all the Earth, 335  
 Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills  
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
 Fomented by his virtual power and warmed.  
 All the Earth he gave thee to possess and rule,  
 No despicable gift; surmise not, then, 340  
 His presence to these narrow bounds confined  
 Of Paradise or Eden. This had been  
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread  
 All generations, and had hither come,  
 From all the ends of the Earth, to celebrate 345  
 And reverence thee their great progenitor.  
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down  
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:  
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain  
 God is, as here, and will be found alike 350  
 Present, and of his presence many a sign  
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round  
 With goodness and paternal love, his face  
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.  
 Which that thou may’st believe, and be confirmed 355  
 Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent  
 To shew thee what shall come in future days  
 To thee and to thy offspring. Good with bad  
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending  
 With sinfulness of men—thereby to learn 360  
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
 And pious sorrow, equally inured  
 By moderation either state to bear,  
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead

Safest thy life, and best prepared endure 365  
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend  
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)  
 Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st,  
 As once thou slept'st while she to life was formed."  
 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:— 370  
 "Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide, the path  
 Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heaven submit,  
 However chastening—to the evil turn  
 My obvious breast, arming to overcome  
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won, 375  
 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 is clearest ken  
 Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay. 380  
 Not higher that hill, nor wider looking ground,  
 Whereon for different cause the Tempter set  
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness,  
 To shew him all Earth's kingdoms and their glory.  
 His eye might there command wherever stood 385  
 City of old or modern fame, the seat  
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls  
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,  
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,  
 To Pacquin, of Sinæan kings, and thence 390  
 To Agra and Lahor of Great Mogul,  
 Down to the golden Chersonese, or where  
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since  
 In Hispahan, or where the Russian Ksar  
 In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance, 395  
 Turchestan—born; nor could his eye not ken  
 The empire of Negus to his utmost port  
 Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,  
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
 And Sofala (thought Ophir), to the realm 400  
 Of Congo, and Angola fardest south,  
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,  
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,  
 Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;  
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway, 405  
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoiled  
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410

Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights  
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed  
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight  
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue  
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see, 415  
 And from the well of life three drops instilled.  
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,  
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
 That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,  
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became intranced. 420  
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:—  
 “Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold  
 The effects which thy original crime hath wrought  
 In some to spring from thee, who never touched 425  
 The excepted Tree, nor with the Snake conspired,  
 Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive  
 Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds.”  
 His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,  
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430  
 New-reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds:  
 I' the midst an altar as the landmark stood,  
 Rustic, of grassy sord. Thither anon  
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
 First-fruits, the green ear and the yellow sheaf, 435  
 Unculled, as came to hand. A shepherd next,  
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid  
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,  
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites performed. 440  
 His offering soon propitious fire from heaven  
 Consumed, with nimble glance and grateful steam;  
 The other's not, for his was not sincere:  
 Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,  
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone 445  
 That beat out life; he fell, and, deadly pale,  
 Groaned out his soul, with gushing blood effused.  
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
 Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried:—  
 “O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen 450  
 To that meek man, who well had sacrificed:  
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?  
 To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:—  
 “These two are brethren, Adam, and to come  
 Out of thy loins. The unjust the just hath slain, 455  
 For envy that his brother's offering found

From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact  
 Will be avenged, and the other's faith approved  
 Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,  
 Rowling in dust and gore." To which our Sire:— 460  
     "Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!  
 But have I now seen Death? Is this the way  
 I must return to native dust? O sight  
 Of terror, foul and ugly to behold!  
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! 465  
     To whom thus Michael:—"Death thou hast seen  
 In his first shape on Man; but many shapes  
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead  
 To his grim cave—all dismal, yet to sense  
 More terrible at the entrance than within. 470  
 Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,  
 By fire, flood, famine; by intemperance more  
 In meats and drinks, which on the Earth shall bring  
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew  
 Before thee shall appear, that thou may'st know 475  
 What misery the inabstinence of Eve  
 Shall bring on me." Immediately a place  
 Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;  
 A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid  
 Numbers of all diseased—all maladies 480  
 Of ghastly spasm, of racking torture, qualms  
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,  
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,  
 Dæmoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy, 485  
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
 Dropsies and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.  
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair  
 Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch; 490  
 And over them triumphant Death his dart  
 Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked  
 With vows, as their chief good and final hope.  
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
 Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495  
 Though not of woman born: compassion quelled  
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears  
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess,  
 And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed:—  
     "O miserable Mankind, to what fall 500  
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!  
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given

To be thus wrested from us? rather why  
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew  
 What we receive would either not accept 505  
 Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,  
 Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus  
 The image of God in Man, created once  
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,  
 To such unsightly sufferings be debased 510  
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,  
 Retaining still divine similitude  
 In part, from such deformities be free,  
 And for his Maker's image' sake exempt?"  
 "Their Maker's image," answered Michael, "then 515  
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified  
 To serve ungoverned Appetite, and took  
 His image whom they served—a brutish vice,  
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.  
 Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520  
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;  
 Or, if his likeness, by themselves defaced  
 While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules  
 To loathsome sickness—worthily, since they  
 God's image did not reverence in themselves." 525  
 "I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.  
 But is there yet no other way, besides  
 These painful passages, how we may come  
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?"  
 "There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe 530  
 The rule of *Not too much*, by temperance taught  
 In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence  
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
 Till many years over thy head return.  
 So may'st thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou drop 535  
 Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease  
 Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.  
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive  
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change  
 To withered, weak, and grey; thy senses then, 540  
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo  
 To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,  
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign  
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry,  
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume 545  
 The balm of life." To whom our Ancestor:—  
 "Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong  
 Life much—bent rather how I may be quit,

Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge,  
 Which I must keep till my appointed day 550  
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend  
 My dissolution." Michael replied:—  
 "Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st  
 Live well, how long or short permit to Heaven.  
 And now prepare thee for another sight." 555  
 He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
 Were tents of various hue: by some were herds  
 Of cattle grazing: others whence the sound  
 Of instruments that made melodious chime  
 Was heard, of harp and organ, and who moved 560  
 Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch  
 Instinct through all proportions low and high  
 Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.  
 In other part stood one who, at the forge  
 Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565  
 Had melted (whether found where casual fire  
 Had wasted woods, on mountain or in vale,  
 Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot  
 To some cave's mouth, or whether washed by stream  
 From underground); the liquid ore he drained 570  
 Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed  
 First his own tools, then what might else be wrought  
 Fusil or graven in metal. After these,  
 But on the hither side, a different sort  
 From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat, 575  
 Down to the plain descended: by their guise  
 Just men they seemed, and all their study bent  
 To worship God aright, and know his works  
 Not hid; nor those things last which might preserve  
 Freedom and peace to men. They on the plain 580  
 Long had not walked when from the tents behold  
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
 In gems and wanton dress! to the harp they sung  
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.  
 The men, though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes 585  
 Rove without rein, till, in the amorous net  
 Fast caught, they liked, and each his liking chose.  
 And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,  
 Love's harbinger, appeared; then, all in heat,  
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590  
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:  
 With feast and music all the tents resound.  
 Such happy interview, and fair event  
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,

And charming symphonies, attached the heart 595  
 Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,  
 The bent of Nature; which he thus expressed:  
 “True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest,  
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope  
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600  
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;  
 Here Nature seems fulfilled in all her ends.”  
 To whom thus Michael:—“Judge not what is best  
 By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,  
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end, 605  
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.  
 Those tents thou saw’st so pleasant were the tents  
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
 Who slew his brother: studious they appear  
 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare; 610  
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.  
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;  
 For that fair female troop thou saw’st, that seemed  
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615  
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
 Woman’s domestic honour and chief praise;  
 Bred only and completed to the taste  
 Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,  
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye:— 620  
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives  
 Religious titled them the Sons of God,  
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,  
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
 Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy 625  
 (Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which  
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.”  
 To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:—  
 “O pity and shame, that they who to live well  
 Entered so fair should turn aside to tread 630  
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!  
 But still I see the tenor of Man’s woe  
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.”  
 “From Man’s effeminate slackness it begins,”  
 Said the Angel, “who should better hold his place 635  
 By wisdom, and superior gifts received.  
 But now prepare thee for another scene.”  
 He looked, and saw wide territory spread  
 Before him—towns, and rural works between,  
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640

Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,  
 Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise.  
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,  
 Single or in array of battle ranged  
 Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood. 645  
 One way a band select from forage drives  
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
 From a fat meadow-ground, or fleecy flock,  
 Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,  
 Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650  
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:  
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join;  
 Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies  
 With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field  
 Deserted. Others to a city strong 655  
 Lay siege, encamped, by battery, scale, and mine,  
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
 With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire;  
 On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.  
 In other parts the sceptred haralds call 660  
 To council in the city-gates: anon  
 Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,  
 Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon  
 In factious opposition, till at last  
 Of middle age one rising, eminent 665  
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
 Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,  
 And judgment from above: him old and young  
 Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,  
 Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence, 670  
 Unseen amid the throng. So violence  
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.  
 Adam was all in tears; and to his guide  
 Lamenting turned full sad:—"Oh, what are these?  
 Death's ministers, not men! who thus deal death 675  
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
 Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew  
 His brother; for of whom such massacre  
 Make they but of their brethren, men of men? 680  
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven  
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?"  
 To whom thus Michael:—"These are the product'  
 Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st,  
 Where good with bad were matched; who of themselves 685  
 Abhor to join, and, by imprudence mixed,



Produce prodigious births of body or mind.  
 Such were these Giants, men of high renown;  
 For in those days might only shall be admired,  
 And valour and heroic virtue called. 690  
 To overcome in battle, and subdue  
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
 Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
 Of human glory, and, for glory done,  
 Of triumph to be styled great conquerors, 695  
 Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods—  
 Destroyers rightlier called, and Plagues of men.  
 Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,  
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.  
 But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st 700  
 The only righteous in a world perverse,  
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset  
 With foes, for daring single to be just,  
 And utter odious truth, that God would come  
 To judge them with his Saints—him the Most High, 705  
 Rapt in a balmy cloud, with wingèd steeds,  
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God  
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,  
 Exempt from death, to show thee what reward  
 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710  
 Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.”  
 He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed.  
 The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;  
 All now was turned to jollity and game,  
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance, 715  
 Marrying or prostituting, as befell,  
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair  
 Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.  
 At length a reverend Sire among them came,  
 And of their doings great dislike declared, 720  
 And testified against their ways. He oft  
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,  
 Triumphs or festivals, and to them preached  
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls  
 In prison, under judgments imminent; 725  
 But all in vain. Which when he saw, he ceased  
 Contending, and removed his tents far off;  
 Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
 Began to build a Vessel of huge bulk,  
 Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth, 730  
 Smeared round with pitch, and in the side a door  
 Contrived, and of provisions laid in large

For man and beast: when lo! a wonder strange!  
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small  
 Came sevens and pairs, and entered in, as taught 735  
 Their order; last, the Sire and his three sons,  
 With their four wives; and God made fast the door.  
 Meanwhile the South-wind rose, and, with black wings  
 Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove  
 From under heaven; the hills to their supply 740  
 Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,  
 Sent up amain; and now the thickened sky  
 Like a dark ceiling stood: down rushed the rain  
 Impetuous, and continued till the earth  
 No more was seen. The floating Vessel swum 745  
 Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow  
 Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else  
 Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp  
 Deep under water rowled; sea covered sea,  
 Sea without shore: and in their palaces, 750  
 Where luxury late reigned, sea—monsters whelped  
 And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,  
 All left in one small bottom swum embarked.  
 How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755  
 Depopulation! Thee another flood,  
 Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drowned,  
 And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared  
 By the Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,  
 Though comfortless, as when a father mourns 760  
 His children, all in view destroyed at once,  
 And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:—  
 “O Visions ill foreseen! Better had I  
 Lived ignorant of future—so had borne  
 My part of evil only, each day's lot 765  
 Enough to bear. Those now that were dispensed  
 The burden of many ages on me light  
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth  
 Abortive, to torment me, ere their being,  
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek 770  
 Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall  
 Him or his children—evil, he may be sure,  
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,  
 And he the future evil shall no less  
 In apprehension than in substance feel 775  
 Grievous to bear. But that care now is past;  
 Man is not whom to warn; those few escaped  
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,

Wandering that watery desert. I had hope,  
 When violence was ceased and war on Earth, 780  
 All would have then gone well, peace would have crowned  
 With length of happy days the race of Man;  
 But I was far deceived, for now I see  
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.  
 How comes it thus? Unfold, Celestial Guide, 785  
 And whether here the race of Man will end.”  
 To whom thus Michael:—“Those whom last thou saw’st  
 In triumph and luxurious wealth are they  
 First seen in acts of powers eminent  
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void; 790  
 Who, having split much blood, and done much waste,  
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby  
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,  
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,  
 Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride 795  
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.  
 The conquered, also, and enslaved by war,  
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose,  
 And fear of God—from whom their piety feigned  
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800  
 Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,  
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,  
 Worldly, or dissolute, on what their lords  
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for the Earth shall bear  
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried. 805  
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved,  
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;  
 One man except, the only son of light  
 In a dark age, against example good,  
 Against allurements, custom, and a world 810  
 Offended. Fearless of reproach and scorn,  
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways  
 Shall them admonish, and before them set  
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe  
 And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 815  
 On their impenitence, and shall return  
 Of them derided, but of God observed  
 The one just man alive: by his command  
 Shall build a wondrous Ark, as thou beheld’st,  
 To save himself and household from amidst 820  
 A world devote to universal wrack.  
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast  
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged  
 And sheltered round, but all the cataracts

Of Heaven set open on the Earth shall pour 825  
 Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep,  
 Broke up, shall heaven the ocean to usurp  
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise  
 Above the highest hills. Then shall this Mount  
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved 830  
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,  
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,  
 Down the great River to the opening Gulf,  
 And there take root, and island salt and bare,  
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea—mews' clang— 835  
 To teach thee that God at'tributes to place  
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought  
 By men who there frequent or therein dwell.  
 And now what further shall ensue behold.”  
 He looked, and saw the Ark hull on the flood, 840  
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled.  
 Driven by a keen North-wind, that, blowing dry,  
 Wrinkled the face of Deluge, as decayed;  
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass  
 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845  
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink  
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole  
 With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt  
 His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut. .  
 The Ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850  
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.  
 And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;  
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive  
 Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.  
 Forthwith from out the ark a Raven flies. 855  
 And, after him, the surer messenger,  
 A Dove, sent forth once and again to spy  
 Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;  
 The second time returning, in his bill  
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign. 860  
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark  
 The ancient sire descends, with all this train;  
 Then, with uplifted hands and eyes devout,  
 Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds  
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a Bow 865  
 Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,  
 Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.  
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,  
 Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy broke forth:—  
 “O thou, who future things cants represent 870

As present, Heavenly Instructor, I revive  
 At this last sight, assured that Man shall live,  
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.  
 Far less I now lament for one whole world  
 Of wicked sons destroyed that I rejoice 875  
 For one man found so perfect and so just  
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world  
 From him, and all his anger to forget.  
 But say what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven:  
 Distended as the brow of God appeased? 880  
 Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind  
 The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,  
 Lest it again dissolve and shower the Earth?"  
 To whom the Archangel:—"Dextrously thou aim'st.  
 So willingly doth God remit his ire: 885  
 Though late repenting him of Man depraved,  
 Grieved at his heart, when, looking down, he saw  
 The whole Earth filled with violence, and all flesh  
 Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,  
 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight 890  
 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 895  
 Over the Earth a cloud, with therein set  
 His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look  
 And call to mind his Covenant. Day and night,  
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,  
 Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new 900  
 Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell."

## **Paradise Lost: The Twelfth Book**

THE ARGUMENT.—The Angel Michael continues, from the Flood, to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that Seed of the Woman shall be which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall: his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the Church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery Sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

AS one who, in his journey, bates at noon,  
 Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel paused  
 Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,  
 If Adam ought perhaps might interpose;  
 Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes:— 5  
 “Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end,  
 And Man as from a second stock proceed.  
 Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive  
 Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine  
 Must needs impair and weary human sense. 10  
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate;  
 Thou, therefore, give due audience, and attend.  
 “This second source of men, while yet but few,  
 And while the dread of judgment past remains  
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15  
 With some regard to what is just and right  
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,  
 Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,  
 Corn, wine and oil; and, from the herd or flock  
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20  
 With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,  
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell  
 Long time in peace, by families and tribes,  
 Under paternal rule, till one shall rise,  
 Of proud, ambitious heart, who, not content 25  
 With fair equality, fraternal state,  
 Will arrogate dominion undeserved  
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
 Concord and law of Nature from the Earth—  
 Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game) 30  
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse  
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous.  
 A mighty Hunter thence he shall be styled  
 Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,  
 Or from Heaven claiming second sovranity, 35  
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,  
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.  
 He, with a crew, whom like ambition joins  
 With him or under him to tyrannize,  
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 40  
 The Plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell.  
 Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build  
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven;

And get themselves a name, lest far dispersed 45  
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost—  
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
 But God, who oft descends to visit men  
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks,  
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50  
 Comes down to see their city, ere the Tower  
 Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets  
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase  
 Quite out their native language, and, instead,  
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown. 55  
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud  
 Among the builders; each to other calls,  
 Not understood—till, hoarse and all in rage,  
 As mocked they storm. Great laughter was in Heaven,  
 And looking down to see the hubbub strange 60  
 And hear the din. Thus was the building left  
 Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* named.”  
 Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas’d:—  
 “O execrable son, so to aspire  
 Above his brethren, to himself assuming 65  
 Authority usurped, from God not given!  
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,  
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
 By his donation: but man over men  
 He made not lord—such title to himself 70  
 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 75  
 Himself and his rash army, where thin air  
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,  
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?”  
 To whom thus Michael:—“Justly thou abhorr’st  
 That son, who on the quiet state of men 80  
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,  
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty  
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells  
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being. 85  
 Reason in Man obscured, or not obeyed,  
 Immediately inordinate desires  
 And upstart passions catch the government  
 From Reason, and to servitude reduce  
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits 90

Within himself unworthy powers to reign  
 Over free reason, God, in judgment just,  
 Subjects him from without to violent lords,  
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall  
 His outward freedom. Tyranny must be, 95  
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.  
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low  
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,  
 But justice and some fatal curse annexed,  
 Deprives them of their outward liberty, 100  
 Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son  
 Of him who built the Ark, who, for the shame  
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,  
*Servant of servants*, on his vicious race.  
 Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105  
 Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,  
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
 His presence from among them, and avert  
 His holy eyes, resolving from thenceforth  
 To leave them to their own polluted ways, 110  
 And one peculiar nation to select  
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoked—  
 A nation from one faithful man to spring.  
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
 Bred up in idol-worship—Oh, that men 115  
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,  
 While yet the patriarch lived who scaped the Flood,  
 As to forsake the living God, and fall  
 To worship their own work in wood and stone  
 For gods!—yet him God the Most High voutsafes 120  
 To call by vision from his father's house,  
 His kindred, and false gods into a land  
 Which he will shew him, and from him will raise  
 A mighty nation, and upon him shower  
 His benediction so that in his seed 125  
 All Nations shall be blest. He straight obeys;  
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.  
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith  
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,  
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130  
 To Haran—after him a cumbrous train  
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude—  
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth  
 With God, who called him, in a land unknown  
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents 135  
 Pitched about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain



Of Moreh. There, by promise, he receives  
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
 From Hamath northward to the Desert south  
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed), 140  
 From Hermon east to the great western sea;  
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold  
 In prospect, as I point them: on the shore,  
 Mount Carmel; here, the double-founded stream,  
 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons 145  
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.  
 This ponder, that all nations of the Earth  
 Shall in his seed be blessèd. By that seed  
 Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise  
 The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150  
 Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,  
 Whom *faithful Abraham* due time shall call,  
 A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves,  
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown.  
 The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs 155  
 From Canaan to a land hereafter called  
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;  
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
 Into the sea, To sojourn in that land  
 He comes, invited by a younger son 160  
 In time of dearth—a son whose worthy deeds  
 Raise him to be the second in that realm  
 Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race  
 Growing into a nation, and now grown  
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165  
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves,  
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:  
 Till, by two brethren (those two brethren call  
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170  
 His people from enthrallment, they return,  
 With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.  
 But first the lawless tyrant, who denies  
 To know their God, or message to regard,  
 Must be compelled by signs and judgments dire: 175  
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;  
 Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill  
 With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;  
 His cattle must of rot and murrain die;  
 Botches and blains must all his flesh imboss, 180  
 And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,  
 Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,

And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;  
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,  
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 85  
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;  
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;  
 Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born  
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190  
 The River-dragon tamed at length submits  
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft  
 Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice  
 More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage  
 Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea 195  
 Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass,  
 As on dry land, between two crystal walls,  
 Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand  
 Divided till his rescued gain their shore:  
 Such wondrous power God to his Saint will lend, 200  
 Though present in his Angel, who shall go  
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire—  
 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire—  
 To guide them in their journey, and remove  
 Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues. 205  
 All night he will pursue, but his approach  
 Darkness defends between till morning-watch;  
 Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud  
 God looking forth will trouble all his host,  
 And craze their chariot-wheels: when, by command, 210  
 Moses once more his potent rod extends  
 Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;  
 On their imbattled ranks the waves return,  
 And overwhelm their war. The race elect  
 Safe towards Canaan, from the shore, advance 215  
 Through the wild Desert—not the readiest way,  
 Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,  
 War terrify them inexpert, and fear  
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather  
 Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220  
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
 Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.  
 This also shall they gain by their delay  
 In the wide wilderness: there they shall found  
 Their government, and their great Senate choose 225  
 Through the twelve Tribes, to rule by laws ordained.  
 God, from the Mount of Sinai, whose grey top  
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself,

In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpet's sound, 230  
 Ordain them laws—part, such as appertain  
 To civil justice; part, religious rites  
 Of sacrifice, informing them, by types  
 And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise  
 The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve  
 Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235  
 To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech  
 That Moses might report to them his will,  
 And terror cease; he grants what they besought,  
 Instructed that to God is no access  
 Without Mediator, whose high office now 240  
 Moses in figure bears, to introduce  
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,  
 And all the Prophets, in their age, the times  
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites  
 Established, such delight hath God in men 245  
 Obedient to his will that he voutsafes  
 Among them to set up his Tabernacle—  
 The Holy One with mortal men to dwell.  
 By his prescript a sanctuary is framed  
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 250  
 An ark, and in the Ark his testimony,  
 The records of his covenant; over these  
 A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings  
 Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn  
 Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing 255  
 The heavenly fires. Over the tent a cloud  
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,  
 Save when they journey; and at length they come,  
 Conducted by his Angel, to the land  
 Promised to Abraham and his seed. The rest 260  
 Were long to tell—how many battles fought;  
 How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won;  
 Or how the sun shall in mid—heaven stand still  
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand, 265  
 And thou, Moon, in the vale of Aialon,  
 Till *Israel* overcome!'—so call the third  
 From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him  
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."  
 Here Adam interposed:—"O sent from Heaven, 270  
 Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things  
 Thou hast revealed, those chiefly which concern  
 Just Abraham and his seed. Now first I find  
 Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eased,

Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would become 275  
 Of me and all mankind; but now I see  
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest—  
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought  
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.  
 This yet I apprehend not—why to those 280  
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on Earth  
 So many and so various laws are given.  
 So many laws argue so many sins  
 Among them; how can God with such reside?”  
 To whom thus Michael:—“Doubt not but that sin 285  
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;  
 And therefore was law given them, to evince  
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up  
 Sin against Law to fight, that, when they see  
 Law can discover sin, but no remove, 290  
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,  
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude  
 Some blood more precious must be paid for Man,  
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,  
 To them by faith imputed, they may find 295  
 Justification towards God, and peace  
 Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies  
 Cannot appease, nor man the moral part  
 Perform, and not performing cannot live.  
 So Law appears imperfect, and but given 300  
 With purpose to resign them, in full time,  
 Up to a better covenant, disciplined  
 From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,  
 From imposition of strict laws to free  
 Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear 305  
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.  
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
 Highly beloved, being but the minister  
 Of Law, his people into Canaan lead;  
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310  
 His name and office bearing who shall quell  
 The adversary Serpent, and bring back  
 Through the world’s wilderness long-wandered Man  
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed, 315  
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins  
 National interrupt their public peace,  
 Provoking God to raise them enemies—  
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent,  
 By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom 320

The second, both for piety renowned  
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne  
 For ever shall endure. The like shall sing  
 All Prophecy—that of the royal stock 325  
 Of David (so I name this king) shall rise  
 A son, the Woman’s Seed to thee foretold,  
 Foretold to Abraham as in whom shall trust  
 All nations, and to kings foretold of kings  
 The last, for of his reign shall be no end. 330  
 But first a long succession must ensue;  
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,  
 The clouded Ark of God, till then in tents  
 Wandering, shall in a glorious Temple enshrine.  
 Such follow him as shall be registered 335  
 Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll:  
 Whose foul idolatries and other faults,  
 Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense  
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,  
 Their city, his Temple, and his holy Ark, 340  
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
 To that proud city whose high walls thou saw’st  
 Left in confusion, Babylon thence called.  
 There in captivity he lets them dwell  
 The space of seventy years; then brings them back, 345  
 Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn  
 To David, established as the days of Heaven.  
 Returned from Babylon by leave of kings,  
 Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God  
 They first re-edify, and for a while 350  
 In mean estate live moderate, till, grown  
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow.  
 But first among the priests dissension springs—  
 Men who attend the altar, and should most  
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings 355  
 Upon the Temple itself; at last they seize  
 The sceptre, and regard not David’s sons;  
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true  
 Anointed King Messiah might be born  
 Barred of his right. Yet at his birth a Star, 360  
 Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come,  
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:  
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night; 365  
 They gladly thither haste, and by a quire

Of squadroned Angels hear his carol sung.  
 A Virgin is his mother, but his sire  
 The Power of the Most High. He shall ascend  
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370  
 With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens."  
 He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy  
 Surcharged as had, like grief, been dewed in tears,  
 Without the vent of words; which these he breathed:—  
 "O prophet of glad tidings, finisher 375  
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain—  
 Why our great Expectation should be called  
 The Seed of Woman. Virgin Mother, hail!  
 High in the love of Heaven, yet from my loins 380  
 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  
 Except with mortal pain. Say where and when  
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victor's heel." 385  
 To whom thus Michael:—"Dream not of their fight  
 As of a duel, or the local wounds  
 Of head or heel. Not therefore joins the Son  
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil  
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390  
 Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,  
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;  
 Which he who comes thy Saviour shall recure,  
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
 In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be, 395  
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed  
 On penalty of death, and suffering death,  
 The penalty to thy transgression due,  
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400  
 So only can high justice rest appaid.  
 The Law of God exact he shall fulfil  
 Both by obedience and by love, though love  
 Alone fulfil the Law; thy punishment  
 He shall endure, by coming in the flesh 405  
 To a reproachful life and cursed death,  
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
 In his redemption, and that his obedience  
 Imputed becomes theirs by faith—his merits  
 To save them, not their own, though legal, works. 410  
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,  
 Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemned

A shameful and accursed, nailed to the Cross  
 By his own nation, slain for bringing life;  
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies— 415  
 The Law that is against thee, and the sins  
 Of all mankind, with him there crucified,  
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
 In this his satisfaction. So he dies,  
 But soon revives; Death over him no power 420  
 Shall long usurp. Ere the third dawning light  
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise  
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
 Thy ransom paid, which Man from Death redeems—  
 His death for Man, as many as offered life 425  
 Neglect not, and the benefit imbrace  
 By faith not void of works. This godlike act  
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,  
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act  
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430  
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,  
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings  
 Than temporal death shall bruise the Victor's heel,  
 Or theirs whom he redeems—a death like sleep,  
 A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435  
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay  
 Longer on Earth than certain times to appear  
 To his disciples—men who in his life  
 Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge  
 To teach all nations what of him they learned 440  
 And his salvation, them who shall believe  
 Baptizing in the profluent stream—the sign  
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life  
 Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,  
 For death like that which the Redeemer died. 445  
 All nations they shall teach; for from that day  
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins  
 Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons  
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;  
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450  
 Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend  
 With victory, triumphing through the air  
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
 The Serpent, Prince of Air, and drag in chains  
 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave; 455  
 Then enter into glory and resume  
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high  
 Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,

When this World's dissolution shall be ripe,  
 With glory and power, to judge both quick and dead— 460  
 To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward  
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,  
 Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth  
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days." 465  
 So spake the Archangel Michaël; then paused,  
 As at the World's great period; and our Sire,  
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:—  
 "O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense,  
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470  
 And evil turn to good—more wonderful  
 Than that which by creation first brought forth  
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,  
 Whether I should repent me now of sin  
 By me done and occasioned, or rejoice 475  
 Much more that much more good thereof shall spring—  
 To God more glory, more good-will to men  
 From God—and over wrath grace shall abound.  
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven  
 Must reascend, what will betide the few, 480  
 His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,  
 The enemies of truth. Who then shall guide  
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal  
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"  
 "Be sure they will," said the Angel; "but from Heaven 485  
 He to his own a Comforter will send,  
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell,  
 His Spirit, within them, and the law of faith  
 Working through love upon their hearts shall write,  
 To guide them in all truth, and also arm 490  
 With spiritual armour, able to resist  
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts—  
 What man can do against them not afraid,  
 Though to the death; against such cruelties  
 With inward consolations recompensed, 495  
 And often supported so as shall amaze  
 Their proudest persecutors. For the Spirit,  
 Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
 To evangelize the nations, then on all  
 Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue 500  
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,  
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win  
 Great numbers of each nation to receive  
 With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at length,



Their ministry performed, and race well run, 505  
 Their doctrine and their story written left,  
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,  
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,  
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven  
 To their own vile advantages shall turn 510  
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth  
 With superstitions and traditions taint,  
 Left only in those written Records pure,  
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names, 515  
 Palaces, and titles, and with these to join  
 Secular power, though feigning still to act  
 By spiritual; to themselves appropriating  
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and given  
 To all believers; and, from that pretense, 520  
 Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force  
 On every conscience—laws which none shall find  
 Left them enrowled, or what the Spirit within  
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
 But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind 525  
 His consort, Liberty? what but unbuild  
 His living temples, built by faith to stand—  
 Their own faith, not another's? for, on Earth,  
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard  
 Infallible? Yet many will presume: 530  
 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 535  
 Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of Faith  
 Rarely be found. So shall the World go on,  
 To good malignant, to bad men benign,  
 Under her own weight groaning, till the day  
 Appear of respiration to the just 540  
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return  
 Of Him so lately promised to thy aid,  
 The Woman's Seed—obscurely then foretold,  
 Now amplier known the Saviour and thy Lord;  
 Last in the clouds from Heaven to be revealed 545  
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
 Satan with his perverted World; then raise  
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,  
 New Heavens, new Earth, Ages of endless date  
 Founded in righteousness and peace and love, 550

To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.”  
 He ended; and thus Adam last replied:—  
 “How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,  
 Measured this transient World, the race of Time,  
 Till Time stand fixed! Beyond is all abyss— 555  
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.  
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,  
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill  
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;  
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560  
 Henceforth I learn that to obey is best,  
 And love with fear the only God, to walk  
 As in his presence, ever to observe  
 His providence, and on him sole depend,  
 Merciful over all his works, with good 565  
 Still overcoming evil, and by small  
 Accomplishing great things—by things deemed weak  
 Subverting worldly-strong, and worldly-wise  
 By simply meek; that suffering for Truth’s sake  
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 570  
 And to the faithful death the gate of life—  
 Taught this by his example whom I now  
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.”  
 To whom thus also the Angel last replied:—  
 “This having learned, thou hast attained the sum 575  
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars  
 Thou knew’st by name, and all the ethereal powers,  
 All secrets of the Deep, all Nature’s works,  
 Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,  
 And all the riches of this world enjoy’dst, 580  
 And all the rule, one empire. Only add  
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith;  
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,  
 By name to come called Charity, the soul  
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth 585  
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.  
 Let us descend now, therefore, from this top  
 Of speculation; for the hour precise  
 Exacts our parting hence; and, see! the guards, 590  
 By me encamped on yonder hill, expect  
 Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,  
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.  
 We may no longer stay. Go, waken Eve;  
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed, 595  
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed

To meek submission: thou, at season fit,  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard—  
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her seed to come 600  
 (For by the Woman's Seed) on all mankind—  
 That ye may live, which will be many days,  
 Both in one faith unanimous; though sad  
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered  
 With meditation on the happy end." 605  
 He ended, and they both descend the hill.  
 Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve  
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her waked;  
 And thus with words not sad she him received:—  
 "Whence thou return'st and whither went'st I know; 610  
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since, with sorrow and heart's distress  
 Wearied, I fell asleep. But now lead on;  
 In me is no delay; with thee to go 615  
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay  
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me  
 Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,  
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.  
 This further consolation yet secure 620  
 I carry hence: though all by me is lost,  
 Such favour I unworthy am voutsafed,  
 By me the Promised Seed shall all restore."  
 So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard  
 Well pleased, by answered not; for now too nigh 625  
 The Archangel stood, and from the other hill  
 To their fixed station, all in bright array,  
 The Cherubim descended, on the ground  
 Gliding meteorous, as evening mist  
 Risen from a river o'er the marish glides, 630  
 And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel  
 Homeward returning. High in front advanced,  
 The brandished sword of God before them blazed,  
 Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,  
 And vapour at the Libyan air adust, 635  
 Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat  
 In either hand the hastening Angel caught  
 Our lingering Parents, and to the eastern gate  
 Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast  
 To the subjected plain—then disappeared. 640  
 They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld  
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,

Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate  
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.  
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon;     645  
The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.  
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way.