

Paradise Regained

by

JOHN MILTON

1671



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Milton: Paradise Regained

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THE FIRST BOOK.

I Who e're while the happy Garden sung,
 By one mans disobedience lost, now sing
 Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
 By one mans firm obedience fully tri'd
 Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd 5
 In all his wiles, defeated and repuls't,
 And *Eden* rais'd in the wast Wilderness.

Thou Spirit who ledst this glorious Eremite
 Into the Desert, his Victorious Field
 Against the Spiritual Foe, and broughtst him thence 10
 By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
 As thou art wont, my prompted Song else mute,
 And bear through highth or depth of natures bounds
 With prosperous wing full summ'd to tell of deeds
 Above Heroic, though in secret done, 15
 And unrecorded left through many an Age,
 Worthy t'have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer with a voice
 More awful then the sound of Trumpet, cri'd
 Repentance, and Heavens Kingdom nigh at hand 20
 To all Baptiz'd: to his great Baptism flock'd
 With aw the Regions round, and with them came
 From *Nazareth* the Son of *Joseph* deem'd
 To the flood *Jordan*, came as then obscure,
 Unmarkt, unknown; but him the Baptist soon 25
 Descri'd, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
 As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
 To him his Heavenly Office, nor was long
 His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
 Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a Dove 30
 The Spirit descended, while the Fathers voice
 From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
 That heard the Adversary, who roving still
 About the world, at that assembly fam'd
 Would not be last, and with the voice divine 35
 Nigh Thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
 Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
 With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To Councel summons all his mighty Peers, 40
 Within thick Clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
 A gloomy Consistory; and them amidst

With looks agast and sad he thus bespake.

O ancient Powers of Air and this wide world,
 For much more willingly I mention Air, 45
 This our old Conquest, then remember Hell
 Our hated habitation; well ye know
 How many Ages, as the years of men,
 This Universe we have possest, and rul'd
 In manner at our will th' affairs of Earth, 50
 Since *Adam* and his facil consort *Eve*
 Lost Paradise deceiv'd by me, though since
 With dread attending when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the Seed of *Eve*
 Upon my head, long the decrees of Heav'n 55
 Delay, for longest time to him is short;
 And now too soon for us the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compast, wherein we
 Must bide the stroak of that long threatn'd wound,
 At least if so we can, and by the head 60
 Broken be not intended all our power
 To be infring'd, our freedom and our being.
 In this fair Empire won of Earth and Air;
 For this ill news I bring, the Womans seed
 Destin'd to this, is late of woman born, 65
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause,
 But his growth now to youths full flowr, displaying
 All vertue, grace and wisdom to atchieve
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
 Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim 70
 His coming, is sent Harbinger, who all
 Invites, and in the Consecrated stream
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
 Purified to receive him pure, or rather
 To do him honour as their King; all come, 75
 And he himself among them was baptiz'd,
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
 The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
 Thenceforth the Nations may not doubt; I saw
 The Prophet do him reverence, on him rising 80
 Out of the water, Heav'n above the Clouds
 Unfold her Crystal Dores, thence on his head
 A perfect Dove descend, what e're it meant,
 And out of Heav'n the Sov'raign voice I heard,
 This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd. 85
 His Mother then is mortal, but his Sire,
 He who obtains the Monarchy of Heav'n,

And what will he not do to advance his Son?
 His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep; 90
 Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
 In all his lineaments, though in his face
 The glimpses of his Fathers glory shine.
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate, 95
 But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
 Not force, but well couch't fraud, well woven snares,
 E're in the head of Nations he appear
 Their King, their Leader, and Supream on Earth.
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook 100
 The dismal expedition to find out
 And ruine *Adam*, and the exploit perform'd
 Successfully; a calmer voyage now
 Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once
 Induces best to hope of like success. 105
 He ended, and his words impression left
 Of much amazement to th' infernal Crew,
 Distracted and surpriz'd with deep dismay
 At these sad tidings; but no time was then
 For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 110
 Unanimous they all commit the care
 And management of this main enterprize
 To him their great Dictator, whose attempt
 At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
 In *Adam*'s overthrow, and led thir march 115
 From Hell's deep-vaulted Den to dwell in light,
 Regents and Potentates, and Kings, yea gods
 Of many a pleasant Realm and Province wide.
 So to the Coast of *Jordan* he directs
 His easie steps; girded with snaky wiles, 120
 Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try;
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
 To end his Raign on Earth so long enjoy'd: 125
 But contrary unweeting he fulfill'd
 The purpos'd Counsel pre-ordain'd and fixt
 Of the most High, who in full frequence bright
 Of Angels, thus to *Gabriel* smiling spake.
Gabriel this day by proof thou shalt behold, 130
 Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth
 With man or mens affairs, how I begin

To verifie that solemn message late,
 On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
 In *Galilee*, that she should bear a Son 135
 Great in Renown, and call'd the Son of God;
 Then toldst her doubting how these things could be
 To her a Virgin, that on her should come
 The Holy Ghost, and the power of the highest
 O're-shadow her: this man born and now up-grown, 140
 To shew him worthy of his birth divine
 And high prediction, henceforth I expose
 To Satan; let him tempt and now assay
 His utmost subtilty, because he boasts
 And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng 145
 Of his Apostasie; he might have learnt
 Less over-weening, since he fail'd in *Job*,
 Whose constant perseverance overcame
 Whate're his cruel malice could invent.
 He now shall know I can produce a man 150
 Of female Seed, far abler to resist
 All his sollicitations, and at length
 All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,
 Winning by Conquest what the first man lost
 By fallacy surpriz'd. But first I mean 155
 To exercise him in the Wilderness,
 There he shall first lay down the rudiments
 Of his great warfare, e're I send him forth
 To conquer Sin and Death the two grand foes,
 By Humiliation and strong Sufferance: 160
 His weakness shall o'rcome Satanic strength
 And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
 That all the Angels and Ætherial Powers,
 They now, and men hereafter may discern,
 From what consummate vertue I have chose 165
 This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
 To earn Salvation for the Sons of men.

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
 Admiring stood a space, then into Hymns
 Burst forth, and in Celestial measures mov'd, 170
 Circling the Throne and Singing, while the hand
 Sung with the voice, and this the argument.

Victory and Triumph to the Son of God
 Now entring his great duel, not of arms,
 But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles. 175
 The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
 Ventures his filial Vertue, though untri'd,

Against whate' re may tempt, whate' re seduce,
 Allure, or terrifie, or undermine.
 Be frustrate all ye stratagemms of Hell, 180
 And devilish machinations come to nought.
 So they in Heav'n their Odes and Vigils tun'd:
 Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days
 Lodg'd in *Bethabara* where *John* baptiz'd,
 Musing and much revolving in his brest, 185
 How best the mighty work he might begin
 Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
 Publish his God-like office now mature,
 One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading;
 And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190
 With solitude, till far from track of men,
 Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
 He entred now the bordering Desert wild,
 And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
 His holy Meditations thus persu'd. 195
 O what a multitude of thoughts at once
 Awakn'd in me swarm, while I consider
 What from within I feel my self, and hear
 What from without comes often to my ears,
 Ill sorting with my present state compar'd. 200
 When I was yet a child, no childish play
 To me was pleasing, all my mind was set
 Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
 What might be publick good; my self I thought
 Born to that end, born to promote all truth, 205
 All righteous things: therefore above my years,
 The Law of God I read, and found it sweet,
 Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
 To such perfection, that e're yet my age
 Had measur'd twice six years, at our great Feast 210
 I went into the Temple, there to hear
 The Teachers of our Law, and to propose
 What might improve my knowledge or their own;
 And was admir'd by all, yet this not all
 To which my Spirit aspir'd, victorious deeds 215
 Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
 To rescue *Israel* from the *Roman* yoke,
 Then to subdue and quell o're all the earth
 Brute violence and proud Tyrannick pow'r,
 Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd: 220
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly first
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,

And make persuasion do the work of fear;
 At least to try, and teach the erring Soul
 Not wilfully mis-doing, but unaware 225
 Misled; the stubborn only to destroy.
 These growing thoughts my Mother soon perceiving
 By words at times cast forth inly rejoyc'd,
 And said to me apart, high are thy thoughts
 O Son, but nourish them and let them soar 230
 To what highth sacred vertue and true worth
 Can raise them, though above example high;
 By matchless Deeds express thy matchless Sire.
 For know, thou art no Son of mortal man,
 Though men esteem thee low of Parentage, 235
 Thy Father is the Eternal King, who rules
 All Heaven and Earth, Angels and Sons of men,
 A messenger from God fore-told thy birth
 Conceiv'd in me a Virgin, he fore-told
 Thou shouldst be great and sit on *David's* Throne, 240
 And of thy Kingdom there should be no end.
 At thy Nativity a glorious Quire
 Of Angels in the fields of *Bethlehem* sung
 To Shepherds watching at their folds by night,
 And told them the Messiah now was born, 245
 Where they might see him, and to thee they came;
 Directed to the Manger where thou lais't,
 For in the Inn was left no better room:
 A Star, not seen before in Heaven appearing
 Guided the Wise Men thither from the East, 250
 To honour thee with Incense, Myrrh, and Gold,
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,
 Affirming it thy Star new grav'n in Heaven,
 By which they knew thee King of *Israel* born.
 Just *Simeon* and Prophetic *Anna*, warn'd 255
 By Vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake
 Before the Altar and the vested Priest,
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.
 This having heard, strait I again revolv'd
 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ 260
 Concerning the Messiah, to our Scribes
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
 I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
 Through many a hard assay even to the death,
 E're I the promis'd Kingdom can attain, 265
 Or work Redemption for mankind, whose sins
 Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.

Yet neither thus disheartn'd or dismay'd,
 The time prefixt I waited, when behold
 The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270
 Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
 Before Messiah and his way prepare.
 I as all others to his Baptism came,
 Which I believ'd was from above; but he
 Strait knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd 275
 Me him (for it was shew'n him so from Heaven)
 Me him whose Harbinger he was; and first
 Refus'd on me his Baptism to confer,
 As much his greater, and was hardly won;
 But as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
 Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
 The Spirit descended on me like a Dove,
 And last the sum of all, my Father's voice,
 Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone 285
 He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
 But openly begin, as best becomes
 The Authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.
 And now by some strong motion I am led 290
 Into this Wilderness, to what intent
 I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
 For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
 So spake our Morning Star then in his rise,
 And looking round on every side beheld 295
 A pathless Desert, dusk with horrid shades;
 The way he came not having mark'd, return
 Was difficult, by humane steps untrod;
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
 Accompanied of things past and to come 300
 Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
 Such Solitude before choicest Society.
 Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
 Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
 Under the covert of some ancient Oak, 305
 Or Cedar, to defend him from the dew,
 Or harbour'd in one Cave, is not reveal'd;
 Nor tasted humane food, nor hunger felt
 Till those days ended, hunger'd then at last
 Among wild Beasts: they at his sight grew mild, 310
 Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk
 The fiery Serpent fled, and noxious Worm,

The Lion and fierce Tiger glar'd aloof.
 But now an aged man in Rural weeds,
 Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray Ewe, 315
 Or wither'd sticks to gather; which might serve
 Against a Winters day when winds blow keen,
 To warm him wet return'd from field at Eve,
 He saw approach, who first with curious eye
 Perus'd him, then with words thus utt'red spake. 320
 Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
 So far from path or road of men, who pass
 In Troop or Caravan, for single none
 Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
 His Carcass, pin'd with hunger and with droughth? 325
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,
 For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the Ford
 Of *Jordan* honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
 Of God; I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
 Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
 To Town or Village nigh (nighest is far)
 Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
 What happ'ns new; Fame also finds us out.
 To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither 335
 Will bring me hence, no other Guide I seek.
 By Miracle he may, reply'd the Swain,
 What other way I see not, for we here
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
 More then the Camel, and to drink go far, 340
 Men to much misery and hardship born;
 But if thou be the Son of God, Command
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;
 So shalt thou save thy self and us relieve
 With Food, whereof we wretched seldom taste. 345
 He ended, and the Son of God reply'd.
 Think'st thou such force in Bread? is it not written
 (For I discern thee other then thou seem'st)
 Man lives not by Bread only, but each Word
 Proceeding from the mouth of God; who fed 350
 Our Fathers here with Manna; in the Mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank,
 And forty days *Elijah* without food
 Wandred this barren waste, the same I now.
 Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust, 355
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
 Whom thus answer'd th' Arch Fiend now undisguis'd.

'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate,
 Who leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt
 Kept not my happy Station, but was driv'n 360
 With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
 Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
 By rigour unconniving, but that oft
 Leaving my dolorous Prison I enjoy
 Large liberty to round this Globe of Earth, 365
 Or range in th' Air, nor from the Heav'n of Heav'ns
 Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
 I came among the Sons of God, when he
 Gave up into my hands *Uzzean Job*
 To prove him, and illustrate his high worth; 370
 And when to all his Angels he propos'd
 To draw the proud King *Ahab* into fraud
 That he might fall in *Ramoth*, they demuring,
 I undertook that office, and the tongues
 Of all his flattering Prophets glibb'd with lyes 375
 To his destruction, as I had in charge.
 For what he bids I do; though I have lost
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
 To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
 To love, at least contemplate and admire 380
 What I see excellent in good, or fair,
 Or vertuous, I should so have lost all sense.
 What can be then less in me than desire
 To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
 Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent 385
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?
 Men generally think me much a foe
 To all mankind: why should I? they to me
 Never did wrong or violence, by them
 I lost not what I lost, rather by them 390
 I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
 Copartner in these Regions of the World,
 If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
 Oft my advice by presages and signs,
 And answers, oracles, portents and dreams, 395
 Whereby¹ they may direct their future life.
 Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
 Companions of my misery and wo.
 At first it may be; but long since with wo
 Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof, 400
 That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
 Nor lightens aught each mans peculiar load.

Small consolation then, were Man adjoyn'd:
 This wounds me most (what can it less) that Man,
 Man fall'n shall be restor'd, I never more. 405

To whom our Saviour sternly thus reply'd.
 Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lyes
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
 Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
 Into the Heav'n of Heavens; thou com'st indeed, 410
 As a poor miserable captive thrall,
 Comes to the place where he before had sat
 Among the Prime in Splendour, now depos'd,
 Ejected, emptyed, gaz'd, unpityed, shun'd,
 A spectacle of ruin or of scorn 415
 To all the Host of Heaven; the happy place
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
 So never more in Hell then when in Heaven. 420
 But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
 What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
 Of righteous² *Job*, then cruelly to afflict him 425
 With all inflictions, but his patience won?
 The other service was thy chosen task,
 To be a lyer in four hundred mouths;
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all Oracles 430
 By thee are giv'n, and what confest more true
 Among the Nations? that hath been thy craft,
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lyes.
 But what have been thy answers, what but dark
 Ambiguous and with double sense deluding, 435
 Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
 And not well understood as good not known?
 Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
 Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct
 To flye or follow what concern'd him most, 440
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
 For God hath justly giv'n the Nations up
 To thy Delusions; justly, since they fell
 Idolatrous, but when his purpose is
 Among them to declare his Providence 445
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
 But from him or his Angels President

In every Province, who themselves disdain
 To approach thy Temples, give thee in command
 What to the smallest tittle thou shalt say 450
 To thy Adorers; thou with trembling fear,
 Or like a Fawning Parasite obey'st;
 Then to thy self ascrib'st the truth fore-told.
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse 455
 The Gentiles; henceforth Oracles are ceast,
 And thou no more with Pomp and Sacrifice
 Shalt be enquir'd at *Delphos* or elsewhere,
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
 God hath now sent his living Oracle 460
 Into the World, to teach his final will,
 And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
 In pious Hearts, an inward Oracle
 To all truth requisite for men to know.
 So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend, 465
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
 Dissembl'd, and this Answer smooth return'd.
 Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
 And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
 But misery hath rested from me; where 470
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,
 And not inforc'd oft-times to part from truth;
 If it may stand him more in stead to lye,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art plac't above me, thou art Lord; 475
 From thee I can and must submiss endure
 Check or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discourst, pleasing to th' ear,
 And tuneable as Silvan Pipe or Song; 480
 What wonder then if I delight to hear
 Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire
 Vertue, who follow not her lore: permit me
 To hear thee when I come (since no man comes)
 And talk at least, though I despair to attain. 485
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise and pure,
 Suffers the Hypocrite or Atheous Priest
 To tread his Sacred Courts, and minister
 About his Altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing, and vouchsaf'd his voice 490
 To *Balaam* Reprobate, a Prophet yet
 Inspir'd; disdain not such access to me.

To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow.
Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more. 495

He added not; and Satan bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
Into thin Air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her sullen wing to double-shade 500
The Desert, Fowls in thir clay nests were couch't;
And now wild Beasts came forth the woods to roam.

The End of the First Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D. The Second BOOK.

MEan while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
 At *Jordan* with the Baptist, and had seen
 Him whom they heard so late expresly call'd
 Jesus Messiah Son of God declar'd,
 And on that high Authority had believ'd, 5
 And with him talkt, and with him lodg'd, I mean
Andrew and *Simon*, famous after known
 With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd,
 Now missing him thir joy so lately found,
 So lately found, and so abruptly gone, 10
 Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
 And as the days increas'd, increas'd thir doubt:
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shewn,
 And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the Mount, and missing long; 15
 And the great *Thisbite* who on fiery wheels
 Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.
 Therefore as those young Prophets then with care
 Sought lost *Elijah*, so in each place these
 Nigh to *Bethabara*; in *Jerico* 20
 The City of Palms, *Anon*, and *Salem* Old,
Machærus and each Town or City wall'd
 On this side the broad lake *Genezaret*,
 Or in *Perea*, but return'd in vain.
 Then on the bank of *Jordan*, by a Creek: 25
 Where winds with Reeds, and Osiers whisp'ring play
 Plain Fishermen, no greater men them call,
 Close in a Cottage low together got
 Thir unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd.
 Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30
 Unlook'd for are we fall'n, our eyes beheld
 Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our Fathers; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth,
 Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand, 35
 The Kingdom shall to *Israel* be restor'd:
 Thus we rejoyc'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
 Into perplexity and new amaze:
 For whither is he gone, what accident
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire 40
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation? God of *Israel*,

Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
 Behold the Kings of the Earth how they oppress
 Thy chosen, to what highth thir pow'r unjust 45
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of thee, arise and vindicate
 Thy Glory, free thy people from thir yoke,
 But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him, 50
 By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown,
 In publick, and with him we have convers'd;
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his Providence; he will not fail
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall, 55
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence,
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy return.
 Thus they out of their complaints new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found unsought:
 But to his Mother *Mary*, when she saw 60
 Others return'd from Baptism, not her Son,
 Nor left at *Jordan*, tydings of him none;
 Within her brest, though calm; her brest though pure,
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
 Some troubl'd thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad. 65
 O what avails me now that honour high
 To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute
 Hale highly favour'd, among women blest;
 While I to sorrows am no less advanc't,
 And fears as eminent, above the lot 70
 Of other women, by the birth I bore,
 In such a season born when scarce a Shed
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air; a Stable was our warmth,
 A Manger his, yet soon enforc't to flye 75
 Thence into *Egypt*, till the Murd'rous King
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
 With Infant blood the streets of *Bethlehem*;
 From *Egypt* home return'd, in *Nazareth*
 Hath been our dwelling many years, his life 80
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
 Little suspicious to any King; but now
 Full grown to Man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
 By *John* the Baptist, and in publick shown,
 Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice; 85
 I look't for some great change; to Honour? no,
 But trouble, as old *Simeon* plain fore-told,

That to the fall and rising he should be
 Of many in *Israel*, and to a sign
 Spoken against, that through my very Soul 90
 A sword shall pierce, this is my favour'd lot,
 My Exaltation to Afflictions high;
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.
 But where delays he now? some great intent 95
 Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
 I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
 He could not lose himself; but went about
 His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
 Since understand; much more his absence now 100
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
 But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
 My heart hath been a store-house long of things
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
 Thus *Mary* pondering oft, and oft to mind 105
 Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
 Since first her Salutation heard, with thoughts
 Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
 The while her Son tracing the Desert wild,
 Sole but with holiest Meditations fed, 110
 Into himself descended, and at once
 All his great work to come before him set;
 How to begin, how to accomplish best
 His end of being on Earth, and mission high:
 For Satan with slye preface to return 115
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gon
 Up to the middle Region of thick Air,
 Where all his Potentates in Council sate;
 There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
 Sollicitous and blank he thus began. 120
 Princes, Heavens antient Sons, Æthereal Thrones,
 Demonian Spirits now, from the Element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd,
 Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath, 125
 So may we hold our place and these mild seats
 Without new trouble; such an Enemy
 Is ris'n to invade us, who no less
 Threat'ns then our expulsion down to Hell;
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote
 Consenting in full frequence was impowr'd, 130
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find
 Far other labour to be undergon

Then when I dealt with *Adam* first of Men,
 Though *Adam* by his Wives allurements fell,
 However to this Man inferior far, 135
 If he be Man by Mothers side at least,
 With more than humane gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
 Perfections absolute, Graces divine,
 And amplitude of mind to greatest Deeds.
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence 140
 Of my success with *Eve* in Paradise
 Deceive ye to perswasion over-sure
 Of like succeeding here; I summon all
 Rather to be in readiness, with hand
 Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst 145
 Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
 So spake the old Serpent doubting, and from all
 With clamour was assur'd thir utmost aid
 At his command; when from amidst them rose
Belial the dissolute Spirit that fell, 150
 The sensuallest, and after *Asmodai*
 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advis'd.
 Set women in his eye and in his walk,
 Among daughters of men the fairest found;
 Many are in each Region passing fair 155
 As the noon Skie; more like to Goddesses
 Then Mortal Creatures, graceful and discreet,
 Expert in amorous Arts, enchanting tongues
 Perswasive, Virgin majesty with mild
 And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach, 160
 Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
 Hearts after them tangl'd in Amorous Nets.
 Such object hath the power to soft'n and tame
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
 Eneerpe, and with voluptuous hope dissolve, 165
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
 At will the manliest, resolute brest,
 As the Magnetic hardest Iron draws.
 Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
 Of wisest *Solomon*, and made him build, 170
 And made him bow to the Gods of his Wives.
 To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.
Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
 All others by thy self; because of old
 Thou thy self doat'st on womankind, admiring 175
 Thir shape, thir colour, and attractive grace,
 None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.

Before the Flood thou with thy lusty Crew,
 False titl'd Sons of God, roaming the Earth
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men, 180
 And coupl'd with them, and begot a race.
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
 In Courts and Regal Chambers how thou lurk'st,
 In Wood or Grove by mossie Fountain side,
 In Valley or Green Meadow to way-lay 185
 Some beauty rare, *Calisto*, *Clymene*,
Daphne, or *Semele*, *Antiopa*,
 Or *Amygone*, *Syrinx*, many more
 Too long, then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, *Neptune*, *Jupiter*, or *Pan*, 190
 Satyr, or Fawn, or Silvan? But these haunts
 Delight not all; among the Sons of Men,
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent? 195
 Remember that *Pelleas* Conquerour,
 A youth, how all the Beauties of the East
 He slightly view'd, and slightly over-pass'd;
 How hee sirnam'd of *Africa* dismiss'd
 In his prime youth the fair *Iberian* maid. 200
 For *Solomon* he liv'd at ease, and full
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
 Higher design then to enjoy his State;
 Thence to the bait of Women lay expos'd;
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far 205
 Then *Solomon*, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
 Of greatest things; what woman will you find,
 Though of this Age the wonder and the fame,
 On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye 210
 Of fond desire? or should she confident,
 As sitting Queen ador'd on Beauties Throne,
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt
 To enamour, as the Zone of *Venus* once
 Wrought that effect on *Jove*, so Fables tell; 215
 How would one look from his Majestick brow
 Seated as on the top of Vertues hill,
 Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout
 All her array; her female pride deject,
 Or turn to reverent awe? for Beauty stands 220
 In the admiration only of weak minds
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her Plumes

Fall flat and shrink into a trivial toy,
 At every sudden slighting quite abasht:
 Therefore with manlier objects we must try 225
 His constancy, with such as have more shew
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;
 Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd;
 Or that which only seems to satisfie
 Lawful desires of Nature, not beyond; 230
 And now I know he hungers where no food
 Is to be found, in the wide Wilderness;
 The rest commit to me, I shall let pass
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.
 He ceas'd, and heard thir grant in loud acclaim; 235
 Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
 Of Spirits likest to himself in guile
 To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
 If cause were to unfold some active Scene
 Of various persons each to know his part; 240
 Then to the Desert takes with these his flight;
 Where still from shade to shade the Son of God
 After forty days fasting had remain'd,
 Now hungring first, and to himself thus said.
 Where will this end? four times ten days I have pass'd 245
 Wandring this woody maze, and humane food
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that Fast
 To Vertue I impute not, or count part
 Of what I suffer here; if Nature need not,
 Or God support Nature without repast 250
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
 But now I feel I hunger, which declares,
 Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
 Can satisfie that need some other way,
 Though hunger still remain: so it remain 255
 Without this bodies wasting, I content me,
 And from the sting of Famine fear no harm,
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed
 Mee hungring more to do my Fathers will.
 It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260
 Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
 Under the hospitable covert nigh
 Of Trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
 And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks, Natures refreshment sweet; 265
 Him thought, he by the Brook of *Cherith* stood
 And saw the Ravens with their horny beaks

Food to *Elijah* bringing Even and Morn,
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought: 270
 He saw the Prophet also how he fled
 Into the Desert, and how there he slept
 Under a Juniper; then how awakt,
 He found his Supper on the coals prepar'd,
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
 And eat the second time after repose, 275
 The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days;
 Sometimes that with *Elijah* he partook,
 Or as a guest with *Daniel* at his pulse.
 Thus wore out night, and now the Herald Lark
 Left his ground-nest, high tarring to descry 280
 The morns approach, and greet her with his Song:
 As lightly from his grassy Couch up rose
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd, 285
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
 If Cottage were in view, Sheep-cote or Herd;
 But Cottage, Herd or Sheep-cote none he saw,
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant Grove,
 With chaunt of tuneful Birds resounding loud; 290
 Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
 To rest at noon, and entr'd soon the shade
 High rooft and walks beneath, and alleys brown
 That open'd in the midst a woody Scene,
 Natures own work it seem'd (Nature taught Art) 295
 And to a Superstitious eye the haunt
 Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs; he view'd it round,
 When suddenly a man before him stood,
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
 As one in City, or Court, or Palace bred, 300
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd.
 With granted leave officious I return,
 But much more wonder that the Son of God
 In this wild solitude so long should bide
 Of all things destitute, and well I know, 305
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,
 As story tells, have trod this Wilderness;
 The Fugitive Bond-woman with her Son
 Out cast *Nebaioth*, yet found he relief
 By a providing Angel; all the race 310
 Of *Israel* here had famish'd, had not God
 Rain'd from Heaven Manna, and that Prophet bold

Native of *Thebes* wandring here was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard, 315
 Forty and more deserted here indeed.
 To whom thus Jesus; what conclud' st thou hence?
 They all had need, I as thou seest have none.
 How hast thou hunger then? Satan reply'd,
 Tell me if Food were now before thee set, 320
 Would' st thou not eat? Thereafter as I like
 The giver, answer'd Jesus. Why should that
 Cause thy refusal, said the subtle Fiend,
 Hast thou not right to all Created things,
 Owe not all Creatures by just right to thee 325
 Duty and Service, nor to stay till bid,
 But tender all their power? nor mention I
 Meats by the Law unclean, or offer'd first
 To Idols, those young *Daniel* could refuse;
 Nor proffer'd by an Enemy, though who 330
 Would scruple that, with want opprest? behold
 Nature asham'd, or better to express,
 Troubl'd that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
 From all the Elements her choicest store
 To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord 335
 With honour, only deign to sit and eat.
 He spake no dream, for as his words had end,
 Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld
 In ample space under the broadest shade
 A Table richly spread, in regal mode, 340
 With dishes pill'd, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour, Beasts of chase, or Fowl of game,
 In pastry built, or from the spit, or boyl'd,
 Gris-amber-steam'd; all Fish from Sea or Shore,
 Freshet, or purling Brook, of shell or fin, 345
 And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus and *Lucrine* Bay, and *Afric* Coast.
 Alas how simple, to these Cates compar'd,
 Was that crude Apple that diverted *Eve*!
 And at a stately side-board by the wine 350
 That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
 Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hew
 Than *Ganymed* or *Hylas*, distant more
 Under the Trees now trip'd, now solemn stood
 Nymphs of *Diana*'s train, and *Naiades* 355
 With fruits and flowers from *Amalthea*'s horn,
 And Ladies of th' *Hesperides*, that seem'd

Fairer then feign'd of old, or fabl'd since
 Of Fairy Damsels met in Forest wide
 By Knights of *Logres*, or of *Lyones*, 360
Lancelot or *Pelleas*, or *Pellenore*,
 And all the while Harmonious Airs were heard
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes and winds
 Of gentlest gale *Arabian* odors fann'd
 From their soft wings, and *Flora*'s earliest smells. 365
 Such was the Splendour, and the Tempter now
 His invitation earnestly renew'd.
 What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
 These are not Fruits forbidden, no interdict
 Defends the touching of these viands pure, 370
 Thir taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
 Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
 All these are Spirits of Air, and Woods, and Springs,
 Thy gentle Ministers, who come to pay 375
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee thir Lord:
 What doubt'st thou Son of God? sit down and eat.
 To whom thus Jesus temperately reply'd:
 Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
 And who withholds my pow'r that right to use? 380
 Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
 When and where likes me best, I can command?
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
 Command a Table in this Wilderness,
 And call swift flights of Angels ministrant 385
 Array'd in Glory on my cup to attend:
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find,
 And with my hunger what has thou to do?
 Thy pompous Delicacies I contemn, 390
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts but guiles.
 To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:
 That I have also power to give thou seest,
 If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd, 395
 And rather opportunely in this place
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
 Why shouldst thou not accept it? but I see
 What I can do or offer is suspect;
 Of these things others quickly will dispose 400
 Whose pains have earn'd the far fet spoil. With that
 Both Table and Provision vanish'd quite

With sound of Harpies wings, and Talons heard;
 Only the importune Tempter still remain'd,
 And with these words his temptation pursu'd. 405
 By hunger, that each other Creature tames,
 Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
 Thy temperance invincible besides,
 For no allurement yields to appetite,
 And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410
 High actions; but wherewith to be atchiev'd?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise,
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A Carpenter thy Father known, thy self
 Bred up in poverty and streights at home; 415
 Lost in a Desert here and hunger-bit:
 Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
 To greatness? whence Authority deriv'st,
 What Followers, what Retinue canst thou gain,
 Or at thy heels the dizzy Multitude, 420
 Longer then thou canst feed them on thy cost?
 Money brings Honour, Friends, Conquest, and Realms;
 What rais'd *Antipater* the *Edomite*,
 And his Son *Herod* plac'd on *Juda's* Throne;
 (Thy throne) but gold that got him puissant friends? 425
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
 Get Riches first, get Wealth, and Treasure heap,
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me,
 Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;
 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain, 430
 While Virtue, Valour, Wisdom sit in want.
 To whom thus Jesus patiently reply'd;
 Yet Wealth without these three is impotent,
 To gain dominion or to keep it gain'd.
 Witness those antient Empires of the Earth, 435
 In highth of all thir flowing wealth dissolv'd:
 But men endu'd with these have oft attain'd
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon and *Jephtha*, and the Shepherd lad,
 Whose off-spring on the Throne of *Juda* sat 440
 So many Ages, and shall yet regain
 That seat, and reign in *Israel* without end.
 Among the Heathen, (for throughout the World
 To me is not unknown what hath been done
 Worthy of Memorial) canst thou not remember 445
Quintius, *Fabricius*, *Curius*, *Regulus*?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor

Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches though offer'd from the hand of Kings. 450
 And what in me seems wanting, but that I
 May also in this poverty as soon
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
 Extol not Riches then, the toyl of Fools,
 The wise mans cumbrance if not snare, more apt
 To slacken Virtue, and abate her edge, 455
 Then prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
 What if with like aversion I reject
 Riches and Realms; yet not for that a Crown,
 Golden in shew, is but a wreath of thorns,
 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights 460
 To him who wears the Regal Diadem,
 When on his shoulders each mans burden lies;
 For therein stands the office of a King,
 His Honour, Vertue, Merit and chief Praise,
 That for the Publick all this weight he bears. 465
 Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
 Passions, Desires, and Fears, is more a King;
 Which every wise and vertuous man attains:
 And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
 Cities of men or head-strong Multitudes, 470
 Subject himself to Anarchy within,
 Or lawless passions in him which he serves.
 But to guide Nations in the way of truth
 By saving Doctrine, and from errour lead
 To know, and knowing worship God aright, 475
 Is yet more Kingly, this attracts the Soul,
 Governs the inner man, the nobler part,
 That other o're the body only reigns,
 And oft by force, which to a generous mind
 So reigning can be no sincere delight. 480
 Besides to give a Kingdom hath been thought
 Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
 Far more magnanimous, then to assume.
 Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
 And for thy reason why they should be sought, 485
 To gain a Scepter, ofttest better miss't.

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D. The Third BOOK.

SO spake the Son of God, and Satan stood
 A while as mute confounded what to say,
 What to reply, confuted and convinc,t
 Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
 At length collecting all his Serpent wiles, 5
 With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts.
 I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
 What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
 Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
 To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart 10
 Conteins of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
 Should Kings and Nations from thy mouth consult,
 Thy Counsel would be as the Oracle
Urim and *Thummim*, those oraculous gems
 On *Aaron's* breast: or tongue of *Seers* old 15
 Infallible; or wert thou sought to deeds
 That might require th' array of war, thy skill
 Of conduct would be such, that all the world
 Could not sustain thy Prowess, or subsist
 In battel, though against thy few in arms. 20
 These God-like Vertues wherefore dost thou hide?
 Affecting private life, or more obscure
 In savage Wilderness, wherefore deprive
 All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thy self
 The fame and glory, glory the reward 25
 That sole excites to high attempts the flame
 Of most erected Spirits, most temper'd pure
 Ætherial, who all pleasures else despise,
 All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
 And dignities and powers all but the highest? 30
 Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe, the Son
 Of *Macedonian Philip* had e're these
 Won *Asia* and the Throne of *Cyrus* held
 At his dispose, young *Scipio* had brought down
 The *Carthaginian* pride, young *Pompey* quell'd 35
 The *Pontic* King and in triumph had rode.
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
 Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
 Great *Julius*, whom now all the world admires
 The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd 40
 With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
 Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.

To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.
 Thou neither dost perswade me to seek wealth
 For Empires sake, nor Empire to affect 45
 For glories sake by all thy argument.
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
 The peoples praise, if always praise unmixt?
 And what the people but a herd confus'd,
 A miscellaneous rabble, who extol 50
 Things vulgar, & well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise,
 They praise and they admire they know not what;
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
 And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
 To live upon thir tongues and be thir talk, 55
 Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?
 His lot who dares be singularly good.
 Th' intelligent among them and the wise
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
 This is true glory and renown, when God 60
 Looking on the Earth, with approbation marks
 The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
 To all his Angels, who with true applause
 Recount his praises; thus he did to *Job*,
 When to extend his fame through Heaven & Earth, 65
 As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
 He ask'd thee, hast thou seen my servant *Job*?
 Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth less known;
 Where glory is false glory, attributed
 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame. 70
 They err who count it glorious to subdue
 By Conquest far and wide, to over-run
 Large Countries, and in field great Battels win,
 Great Cities by assault: what do these Worthies,
 But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave 75
 Peaceable Nations, neighbouring, or remote,
 Made Captive, yet deserving freedom more
 Than those thir Conquerours, who leave behind
 Nothing but ruin wheresoe're they rove,
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy, 80
 Then swell with pride, and must be titl'd Gods,
 Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
 Worship't with Temple, Priest and Sacrifice;
 One is the Son of *Jove*, of *Mars* the other,
 Till Conquerour Death discover them scarce men, 85
 Rowling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
 Violent or shameful death thir due reward.

But if there be in glory aught of good,
 It may by means far different be attain'd
 Without ambition, war, or violence; 90
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
 By patience, temperance; I mention still
 Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly patience born,
 Made famous in a Land and times obscure;
 Who names not now with honour patient *Job*? 95
 Poor *Socrates* (who next more memorable?)
 By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing,
 For truths sake suffering death unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest Conquerours.
 Yet if for fame and glory aught be done, 100
 Aught suffer'd; if young *African* for fame
 His wasted Country freed from *Punic* rage,
 The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek 105
 Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.
 To whom the Tempter murmuring thus reply'd.
 Think not so slight of glory; therein least
 Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory, 110
 And for his glory all things made, all things
 Orders and governs, nor content in Heaven
 By all his Angels glorifi'd, requires
 Glory from men, from all men good or bad,
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption; 115
 Above all Sacrifice, or hallow'd gift
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives
 Promiscuous from all Nations, Jew, or Greek,
 Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
 From us his foes pronounc't glory he exacts. 120
 To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd.
 And reason; since his word all things produc'd,
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to shew forth his goodness, and impart
 His good communicable to every soul 125
 Freely; of whom what could he less expect
 Then glory and benediction, that is thanks,
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompence
 From them who could return him nothing else,
 And not returning that would likeliest render 130
 Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
 Hard recompence, unsutable return

For so much good, so much beneficence.
 But why should man seek glory? who of his own
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs 135
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
 Who for so many benefits receiv'd
 Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
 And so of all true good himself despoil'd,
 Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140
 That which to God alone of right belongs;
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
 That who advance his glory, not thir own,
 Them he himself to glory will advance.
 So spake the Son of God; and here again 145
 Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
 With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
 Insatiable of glory had lost all,
 Yet of another Plea bethought him soon.
 Of glory as thou wilt, said he, so deem, 150
 Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass:
 But to a Kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
 To sit upon thy Father *David's* Throne;
 By Mothers side thy Father, though thy right
 Be now in powerful hands, that will not part 155
 Easily from possession won with arms;
Judæa now and all the promis'd land
 Reduc't a Province under Roman yoke,
 Obeys *Tiberius*; nor is always rul'd
 With temperate sway; oft have they violated 160
 The Temple, oft the Law with foul affronts,
 Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
 Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?
 So did not *Machabeus*: he indeed 165
 Retir'd unto the Desert, but with arms;
 And o're a mighty King so oft prevail'd,
 That by strong hand his Family obtain'd,
 Though Priests, the Crown, and *David's* Throne usurp'd,
 With *Modin* and her Suburbs once content. 170
 If Kingdom move thee not, let move thee Zeal,
 And Duty; Zeal and Duty are not slow;
 But on Occasions forelock watchful wait.
 They themselves rather are occasion best,
 Zeal of thy Fathers house, Duty to free 175
 Thy Country from her Heathen servitude;
 So shalt thou best fullfil, best verifie

The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign,
 The happier reign the sooner it begins,
 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while? 180
 To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
 All things are best fullfil'd in their due time,
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
 If of my reign Prophetic Writ hath told,
 That it shall never end, so when begin 185
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
 He in whose hand all times and seasons roul.
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first
 Be try'd in humble state, and things adverse,
 By tribulations, injuries, insults, 190
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting
 Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
 What I can suffer, how obey? who best
 Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first 195
 Well hath obey'd; just tryal e're I merit
 My exaltation without change or end.
 But what concerns it thee when I begin
 My everlasting Kingdom, why art thou
 Sollicitous, what moves thy inquisition? 200
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?
 To whom the Tempter inly rackt reply'd.
 Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
 Of my reception into grace; what worse? 205
 For where no hope is left, is left no fear;
 If there be worse, the expectation more
 Of worse torments me then the feeling can.
 I would be at the worst; worst is my Port,
 My harbour and my ultimate repose, 210
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My error was my error and my crime
 My crime; whatever for it self condemn'd,
 And will alike be punish'd; whether thou
 Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow 215
 Willingly I could flye, and hope thy reign,
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,
 Rather then aggravate my evil state,
 Would stand between me and thy Fathers ire,
 (Whose ire I dread more then the fire of Hell) 220
 A shelter and a kind of shading cool
 Interposition, as a summers cloud.

If I then to the worst that can be hast,
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
 Happiest both to thy self and all the world, 225
 That thou who worthiest art should'st be thir King?
 Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detain'd
 Of the enterprize so hazardous and high;
 No wonder, for though in thee be united
 What of perfection can in man be found, 230
 Or human nature can receive, consider
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
 At home, scarce view'd the *Gallilean* Towns,
 And once a year *Jerusalem*, few days
 Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe? 235
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and Monarchs, and thir radiant Courts,
 Best school of best experience, quickest in sight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienc't, will be ever 240
 Timorous and loth³, with novice modesty,
 (As he who seeking Asses found a Kingdom)
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventrous:
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes 245
 The Monarchies of the Earth, thir pomp and state,
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thy self so apt, in regal Arts,
 And regal Mysteries; that thou may'st know
 How best their opposition to withstand. 250
 With that (such power was giv'n him then) he took
 The Son of God up to a Mountain high.
 It was a Mountain at whose verdant feet
 A spacious plain out stretch't in circuit wide
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd, 255
 Th' one winding, the other strait and left between
 Fair Champain with less rivers interveind,
 Then meeting joyn'd thir tribute to the Sea:
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oyl and wine,
 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills, 260
 Huge Cities and high towr'd, that well might seem
 The seats of mightiest Monarchs, and so large
 The Prospect was, that here and there was room
 For barren desert fountainless and dry.
 To this high mountain top the Tempter brought 265
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began.
 Well have we speeded, and o're hill and dale,

Forest and field, and flood, Temples and Towers
 Cut shorter many a league; here thou behold'st
Assyria and her Empires antient bounds, 270
Araxes and the *Caspian* lake, thence on
 As far as *Indus* East, *Euphrates* West,
 And oft beyond; to South the *Persian* Bay,
 And inaccessible the *Arabian* drouth:
 Here *Ninevee*, of length within her wall 275
 Several days journey, built by *Ninus* old,
 Of that first golden Monarchy the seat,
 And seat of *Salmanassar*, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
 There *Babylon* the wonder of all tongues, 280
 As antient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy Father *David*'s house
 Led captive, and *Jerusalem* laid waste,
 Till *Cyrus* set them free; *Persepolis*
 His City there thou seest, and *Bactra* there; 285
Ecbatana her structure vast there shews,
 And *Hecatompylos* her hunderd gates,
 There *Susa* by *Choaspes*, amber stream,
 The drink of none but Kings; of later fame
 Built by *Emathian*, or by *Parthian* hands, 290
 The great *Seleucia*, *Nisibis*, and there
Artaxata, *Teredon*, *Tesiphon*,
 Turning with easie eye thou may'st behold.
 All these the *Parthian*, now some Ages past,
 By great *Arsaces* led, who founded first 295
 That Empire, under his dominion holds
 From the luxurious Kings of *Antioch* won.
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view
 Of his great power; for now the *Parthian* King
 In *Ctesiphon* hath gather'd all his Host 300
 Against the *Scythian*, whose incursions wild
 Have wasted *Sogdiana*; to her aid
 He marches now in hast; see, though from far,
 His thousands, in what martial equipage
 They issue forth, Steel Bows, and Shafts their arms 305
 Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
 All Horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
 See how in warlike muster they appear,
 In Rhombs and wedges, and half moons, and wings.
 He look't and saw what numbers numberless 310
 The City gates out powr'd, light armed Troops
 In coats of Mail and military pride;

In Mail thir horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice
 Of many Provinces from bound to bound; 315
 From *Arachosia*, from *Candaor* East,
 And *Margiana* to the *Hyrceanian* cliffs
 Of *Caucasus*, and dark *Iberian* dales,
 From *Atropatia* and the neighbouring plains
 Of *Adiabene*, *Media*, and the South 320
 Of *Susiana* to *Balsara*'s hav'n.
 He saw them in thir forms of battell rang'd,
 How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
 Sharp sleet of arrowie showers against the face
 Of thir pursuers, and overcame by flight; 325
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown,
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn,
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight;
 Chariots or Elephants endorst with Towers
 Of Archers, nor of labouring Pioners 330
 A multitude with Spades and Axes arm'd
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or over-lay
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
 Mules after these, Camels and Dromedaries, 335
 And Waggons fraught with Utensils of war.
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
 When *Agrican* with all his Northern powers
 Besieg'd *Albracca*, as Romances tell;
 The City of *Gallaphrone*, from thence to win 340
 The fairest of her *Sex Angelica*
 His daughter, sought by many Prowest Knights,
 Both *Paynim*, and the Peers of *Charleman*.
 Such and so numerous was thir Chivalrie;
 At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd, 345
 And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.
 That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
 Thy Vertue, and not every way secure
 On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
 To what end I have brought thee hither and shewn 350
 All this fair sight; thy Kingdom though foretold
 By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
 Endeavour, as thy Father *David* did,
 Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
 In all things, and all men, supposes means, 355
 Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
 But say thou wer't possess'd of *David*'s Throne

By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or *Jew*; how could'st thou hope
 Long to enjoy it quiet and secure, 360
 Between two such enclosing enemies
Roman and *Parthian*? therefore one of these
 Thou must make sure thy own, the *Parthian* first
 By my advice, as nearer and of late
 Found able by invasion to annoy 365
 Thy country, and captive lead away her Kings
Antigonus, and old *Hyrchanus* bound,
 Maugre the *Roman*: it shall be my task
 To render thee the *Parthian* at dispose;
 Chuse which thou wilt by conquest or by league. 370
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
 That which alone can truly reinstall thee
 In *David*'s royal seat, his true Successour,
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten Tribes
 Whose off-spring in his Territory yet serve 375
 In *Habor*, and among the *Medes* dispers't,
 Ten Sons of *Jacob*, two of *Joseph* lost
 Thus long from *Israel*; serving as of old
 Thir Fathers in the land of *Egypt* serv'd,
 This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore
 To thir inheritance, then, nor till then,
 Thou on the Throne of *David* in full glory,
 From *Egypt* to *Euphrates* and beyond
 Shalt raig, and *Rome* or *Caesar* not need fear. 385
 To whom our Saviour answer'd thus unmov'd.
 Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
 Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear 390
 Vented much policy, and projects deep
 Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,
 Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.
 Means I must use thou say'st, prediction else
 Will unpredict and fail me of the Throne: 395
 My time I told thee, (and that time for thee
 Were better farthest off) is not yet come,;
 When that comes think not thou to find me slack
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome 400
 Luggage of war there shewn me, argument
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.

My brethren, as thou call'st them; those Ten Tribes
 I must deliver, if I mean to raign
David's true heir, and his full Scepter sway 405
 To just extent over all *Israel's* Sons;
 But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
 For *Israel*, or for *David*, or his Throne,
 When thou stood'st up his Tempter to the pride
 Of numbring *Israel*, which cost the lives 410
 Of threescore and ten thousand *Israelites*
 By three days Pestilence? such was thy zeal
 To *Israel* then, the same that now to me.
 As for those captive Tribes, themselves were they
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off 415
 From God to worship Calves, the Deities
 Of *Egypt*, *Baal* next and *Ashtaroth*,
 And all the Idolatries of Heathen round,
 Besides thir other worse then heathenish crimes;
 Nor in the land of their captivity 420
 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
 The God of their fore-fathers; but so dy'd
 Impenitent, and left a race behind
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentils, but by Circumcision vain, 425
 And God with Idols in their worship joyn'd.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who freed, as to their antient Patrimony,
 Unhumbld, unrepentant, unreform'd,
 Headlong would follow; and to thir Gods perhaps 430
 Of *Bethel* and of *Dan*? no, let them serve
 Thir enemies, who serve Idols with God.
 Yet he at length, time to himself best known,
 Remembring *Abraham* by some wond'rous call
 May bring them back repentant and sincere, 435
 And at their passing cleave the *Assyrian* flood,
 While to their native land with joy they hast,
 As the Red Sea and *Jordan* once he cleft,
 When to the promis'd land thir Fathers pass'd;
 To his due time and providence I leave them. 440
 So spake *Israel's* true King, and to the Fiend
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
 So fares it when with truth falshood contends.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D. The Fourth BOOK.

PErplex'd and troubl'd at his bad success
 The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
 Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope,
 So oft, and the perswasive Rhetoric
 That sleek't his tongue, and won so much on *Eve*, 5
 So little here, nay lost; but *Eve* was *Eve*,
 This far his over-match, who self deceiv'd
 And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
 The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
 But as a man who had been matchless held 10
 In cunning, over-reach't where least he thought,
 To salve his credit, and for very spight
 Still will be tempting him who foys him still,
 And never cease, though to his shame the more;
 Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time, 15
 About the wine-press where sweet moust is powr'd,
 Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
 Or surging waves against a solid rock,
 Though all to shivers dash't, the assault renew,
 Vain battry, and in froth or bubbles end; 20
 So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
 Met ever; and to shameful silence brought,
 Yet gives not o're though desperate of success,
 And his vain importunity pursues.
 He brought our Saviour to the western side 25
 Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
 Another plain, long but in bredth not wide;
 Wash'd by the Southern Sea, and on the North
 To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills
 That screen'd the fruits of the earth and seats of men 30
 From cold *Septentrion* blasts, thence in the midst
 Divided by a river, of whose banks
 On each side an Imperial City stood,
 With Towers and Temples proudly elevate
 On seven small Hills, with Palaces adorn'd, 35
 Porches and Theatres, Baths, Aqueducts,
 Statues and Trophees, and Triumphal Arcs,
 Gardens and Groves presented to his eyes,
 Above the highth of Mountains interpos'd.
 By what strange Parallax or Optic skill 40
 Of vision multiplyed through air, or glass
 Of Telescope, were curious to enquire:

And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
 The City which thou seest no other deem
 Then great and glorious *Rome*, Queen of the Earth 45
 So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich
 Of Nations; there the Capitol thou seest
 Above the rest lifting his stately head
 On the *Tarpeian* rock, her Cittadel
 Impregnable, and there Mount *Palatine* 50
 The Imperial Palace, compass huge, and high
 The Structure, skill of noblest Architects,
 With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
 Turrets and Terrases, and glittering Spires.
 Many a fair Edifice besides, more like 55
 Houses of Gods (so well I have dispos'd
 My Aerie Microscope) thou may'st behold
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs
 Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd Artificers
 In Cedar, Marble, Ivory or Gold. 60
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or entring in,
 Pretors, Proconsuls to thir Provinces
 Hasting or on return, in robes of State;
 Lictors and rods the ensigns of thir power, 65
 Legions and Cohorts, turmes of horse and wings:
 Or Embassies from Regions far remote
 In various habits on the *Appian* road,
 Or on the *Æmilian*, some from farthest South,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls, 70
Meroe Nilotic Isle, and more to West,
 The Realm of *Bocchus* to the Black-moor Sea;
 From the *Asian* Kings and *Parthian* among these,
 From *India* and the golden *Chersoness*,
 And utmost *Indian* Isle *Taprobane*, 75
 Dusk faces with white silken Turbants wreath'd:
 From *Gallia*, *Gades*, and the *Brittish* West,
Germans and *Scythians*, and *Sarmatians* North
 Beyond *Danubius* to the *Tauric* Pool.
 All Nations now to *Rome* obedience pay, 80
 To *Rome*'s great Emperour, whose wide domain
 In ample Territory, wealth and power,
 Civility of Manners, Arts, and Arms,
 And long Renown thou justly may'st prefer
 Before the *Parthian*; these two Thrones except, 85
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
 Shar'd among petty Kings too far remov'd;

These having shewn thee, I have shewn thee all
 The Kingdoms of the world, and all thir glory. 90
 This Emperour hath no Son, and now is old,
 Old, and lascivious, and from *Rome* retir'd
 To *Capreæ* an Island small but strong
 On the *Campanian* shore, with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,
 Committing to a wicked Favourite 95
 All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious,
 Hated of all, and hating; with what ease
 Indu'd with Regal Vertues as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his Throne 100
 Now made a stye, and in his place ascending
 A victor, people free from servile yoke?
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim therefore at no less then all the world, 105
 Aim at the highest, without the highest attain'd
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long
 On *David's* Throne, be propheci'd what will.
 To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd.
 Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show 110
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
 More then of arms before, allure mine eye,
 Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell
 Thir sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On *Cittron* tables or *Atlantic* stone; 115
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read)
 Their wines of *Setia*, *Cales*, and *Falerno*,
Chios and *Creet*, and how they quaff in Gold,
 Crystal and Myrrhine cups imboss'd with Gems
 And studs of Pearl, to me should'st tell who thirst 120
 And hunger still: then Embassies thou shew'st
 From Nations far and nigh; what honour that,
 But tedious wast of time to sit and hear
 So many hollow complements and lies,
 Outlandish flatteries? then proceed'st to talk 125
 Of the Emperour, how easily subdu'd,
 How gloriously; I shall, thou say'st, expel
 A brutish monster: what if I withal
 Expel a Devil who first made him such?
 Let his tormenter Conscience find him out, 130
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free
 That people victor once, now vile and base,

Deservedly made vassal, who once just,
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,
 But govern ill the Nations under yoke, 135
 Peeling thir Provinces, exhausted all
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
 Of triumph that insulting vanity;
 Then cruel, by thir sports to blood enur'd
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd, 140
 Luxurious by thir wealth, and greedier still,
 And from the daily Scene effeminate.
 What wise and valiant man would seek to free
 These thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd,
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free? 145
 Know therefore when my season comes to sit
 On *David's* Throne, it shall be like a tree
 Spreading and over-shadowing all the Earth,
 Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash
 All Monarchies besides throughout the world, 150
 And of my Kingdom there shall be no end:
 Means there shall be to this, but what the means,
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.
 To whom the Tempter impudent repli'd.
 I see all offers made by me how slight 155
 Thou valu'st, because offer'd, and reject'st:
 Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
 Or nothing more then still to contradict:
 On the other side know also thou, that I
 On what I offer set as high esteem, 160
 Nor what I part with mean to give for naught;
 All these which in a moment thou behold'st,
 The Kingdoms of the world to thee I give;
 For giv'n to me, I give to whom I please,
 No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else, 165
 On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
 And worship me as thy superior Lord,
 Easily done, and hold them all of me;
 For what can less so great a gift deserve?
 Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain. 170
 I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less,
 Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
 The abominable terms, impious condition;
 But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
 Thou hast permission on me. It is written 175
 The first of all Commandments, Thou shalt worship
 The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;

And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
 To worship thee accurst, now more accurst
 For this attempt bolder then that on Eve, 180
 And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.
 The Kingdoms of the world to thee were giv'n,
 Permitted rather, and by thee usurp't,
 Other donation none thou canst produce:
 If given, by whom but by the King of Kings, 185
 God over all supreme? if giv'n to thee,
 By thee how fairly is the Giver now
 Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
 As offer them to me the Son of God, 190
 To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
 That I fall down and worship thee as God?
 Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
 That Evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.
 To whom the Fiend with fear abasht reply'd. 195
 Be not so sore offended, Son of God;
 Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men,
 If I to try whether in higher sort
 Then these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
 What both from Men and Angels I receive, 200
 Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth
 Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
 God of this world invok't and world beneath;
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
 To me so fatal, me it most concerns. 205
 The tryal hath indamag'd thee no way,
 Rather more honour left and more esteem;
 Me naught advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
 The Kingdoms of this world; I shall no more 210
 Advise thee, gain them as thou canst, or not.
 And thou thy self seem'st otherwise inclin'd
 Then to a worldly Crown, addicted more
 To contemplation and profound dispute,
 As by that early action may be judg'd, 215
 When slipping from thy Mothers eye thou went'st
 Alone into the Temple; there was found
 Among the gravest Rabbies disputant
 On points and questions fitting *Moses* Chair,
 Teaching not taught; the childhood shews the man, 220
 As morning shews the day. Be famous then
 By wisdom; as thy Empire must extend,

So let extend thy mind o're all the world,
 In knowledge, all things in it comprehend,
 All knowledge is not couch't in *Moses* Law, 225
 The *Pentateuch* or what the Prophets wrote,
 The *Gentiles* also know, and write, and teach
 To admiration, led by Natures light;
 And with the *Gentiles* much thou must converse,
 Ruling them by perswasion as thou mean'st, 230
 Without thir learning how wilt thou with them,
 Or they with thee hold conversation meet?
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
 Thir Idolisms, Traditions, Paradoxes?
 Error by his own arms is best evinc't. 235
 Look once more e're we leave this specular Mount
 Westward, much nearer by Southwest, behold
 Where on the *Ægean* shore a City stands
 Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens the eye of *Greece*, Mother of Arts 240
 And Eloquence, native to famous wits
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
 City or Suburban, studious walks and shades;
 See there the Olive Grove of *Academe*,
Plato's retirement, where the *Attic* Bird 245
 Trills her thick-warbl'd notes the summer long,
 There flowrie hill *Hymettus* with the sound
 Of Bees industrious murmur oft invites
 To studious musing; there *Ilissus* rous
 His whispering stream; within the walls then view 250
 The schools of antient Sages; his who bred
 Great *Alexander* to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted *Stoa* next:
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony in tones and numbers hit 255
 By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse,
Æolian charms and *Dorian Lyric* Odes,
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind *Melesigenes* thence *Homer* call'd,
 Whose Poem *Phæbus* challeng'd for his own. 260
 Thence what the lofty grave Tragœdians taught
 In *Chorus* or *Iambic*, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life; 265
 High actions, and high passions best describing:
 Thence to the famous Orators repair,

Those antient, whose resistless eloquence
 Wielded at will that fierce Democratie,
 Shook the Arsenal and fulmin'd over *Greece*, 270
 To *Macedon*, and *Artaxerxes* Throne;
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
 From Heaven descended to the low-rooft house
 Of *Socrates*, see there his Tenement,
 Whom well inspir'd the Oracle pronounc'd 275
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issu'd forth
 Mellifluous streams that water'd all the schools
 Of Academics old and new, with those
 Sirnam'd *Peripatetics*, and the Sect
Epicurean, and the *Stoic* severe; 280
 These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
 Till time mature thee to a Kingdom's waight;
 These rules will render thee a King compleat
 Within thy self, much more with Empire joyn'd.
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus repli'd. 285
 Think not but that I know these things, or think
 I know them not; not therefore am I short
 Of knowing what I aught: he who receives
 Light from above, from the fountain of light,
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true; 290
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
 The first and wisest of them all profess'd
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;
 The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits, 295
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sence;
 Others in vertue plac'd felicity,
 But vertue joyn'd with riches and long life,
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease,
 The *Stoic* last in Philosophic pride, 300
 By him call'd vertue; and his vertuous man,
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life, 305
 Which when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
 Alas what can they teach, and not mislead;
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310
 And how the world began, and how man fell
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?

Much of the Soul they talk, but all awrie,
 And in themselves seek vertue, and to themselves
 All glory arrogate, to God give none, 315
 Rather accuse him under usual names,
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
 Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
 True wisdom, finds her not, or by delusion
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320
 An empty cloud. However many books
 Wise men have said are wearisom; who reads
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
 A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
 (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek) 325
 Uncertain and unsettl'd still remains,
 Deep verst in books and shallow in himself,
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
 As Children gathering pibles on the shore. 330
 Or if I would delight my private hours
 With Music or with Poem, where so soon
 As in our native Language can I find
 That solace? All our Law and Story strew'd
 With Hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscrib'd, 335
 Our Hebrew Songs and Harps in *Babylon*,
 That pleas'd so well our Victors ear, declare
 That rather *Greece* from us these Arts deriv'd;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of thir Deities, and thir own 340
 In Fable, Hymn, or Song, so personating
 Thir Gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling Epithetes thick laid
 As varnish on a Harlots cheek, the rest,
 Thin sown with aught of profit or delight, 345
 Will far be found unworthy to compare
 With *Sion*'s songs, to all true tasts excelling,
 Where God is prais'd aright, and Godlike men,
 The Holiest of Holies, and his Saints;
 Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee; 350
 Unless where moral vertue is express't
 By light of Nature not in all quite lost.
 Thir Orators thou then extoll'st, as those
 The top of Eloquence, Statists indeed,
 And lovers of thir Country, as may seem; 355
 But herein to our Prophets far beneath,
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching

The solid rules of Civil Government
 In thir majestic unaffected stile
 Then all the Oratory of *Greece* and *Rome*. 360
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
 What makes a Nation happy, and keeps it so,
 What ruins Kingdoms, and lays Cities flat;
 These only with our Law best form a King.
 So spake the Son of God; but Satan now 365
 Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
 Thus to our Saviour with stern brow reply'd.
 Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,
 Kingdom nor Empire pleases thee, nor aught
 By me propos'd in life contemplative, 370
 Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,
 What dost thou in this World? the Wilderness
 For thee is fittest place, I found thee there,
 And thither will return thee, yet remember
 What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause 375
 To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
 Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
 Which would have set thee in short time with ease
 On *David's* Throne; or Throne of all the world,
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380
 When Prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
 Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
 Or Heav'n write aught of Fate, by what the Stars
 Voluminous, or single characters,
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell, 385
 Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate,
 Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death,
 A Kingdom they portend thee, but what Kingdom,
 Real or Allegoric I discern not, 390
 Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,
 Without beginning; for no date prefixt
 Directs me in the Starry Rubric set.
 So saying he took (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expir'd) and to the Wilderness 395
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
 As day-light sunk, and brought in lowring night
 Her shadowy off-spring unsubstantial both,
 Privation meer of light and absent day. 400
 Our Saviour meek and with untroubl'd mind
 After his aerie jaunt, though hurried sore,

Hungry and cold betook him to his rest,
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades
 Whose branching arms thick interwind might shield 405
 From dews and damp of night his shelter'd head,
 But shelter'd slept in vain, for at his head
 The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
 Disturb'd his sleep; and either Tropic now
 Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n, the Clouds 410
 From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
 Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire
 In ruine reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
 Within thir stony caves, but rush'd abroad
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell 415
 On the vext Wilderness, whose tallest Pines,
 Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest Oaks
 Bow'd their Stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
 Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then,
 O patient Son of God, yet only stoodst 420
 Unshaken; nor yet staid the terror there,
 Infernal Ghosts, and Hellish Furies, round
 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
 Some bent at thee thir⁴ fiery darts, while thou
 Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace. 425
 Thus pass'd the night so foul till morning fair
 Came forth with Pilgrim steps in amice gray;
 Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grisly Spectres, which the Fiend had rais'd 430
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
 And now the Sun with more effectual beams
 Had chear'd the face of Earth, and dry'd the wet
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green, 435
 After a night of storm so ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn;
 Nor yet amidst this joy and brightest morn
 Was absent, after all his mischief done, 440
 The Prince of darkness, glad would also seem
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,
 Yet with no new device, they all were spent,
 Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage, 445
 And mad despight to be so oft repell'd.
 Him walking on a Sunny hill he found,

Back'd on the North and West by a thick wood,
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape;
 And in a careless mood thus to him said. 450
 Fair morning yet betides thee Son of God,
 After a dismal night; I heard the rack
 As Earth and Skie would mingle; but my self
 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
 As dangerous to the pillard frame of Heaven, 455
 Or to the Earths dark basis underneath,
 Are to the main as inconsiderable,
 And harmless, if not wholsom, as a sneeze
 To mans less universe, and soon are gone;
 Yet as being oft times noxious where they light 460
 On man, beast, plant, wastful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
 Over whose heads they rore, and seem to point,
 They oft fore-signifie and threaten ill:
 This Tempest at this Desert most was bent; 465
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
 The perfet season offer'd with my aid
 To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of Fate, persue thy way 470
 Of gaining *David's* Throne no man knows when,
 For both the when and how is no where told,
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
 For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
 The time and means: each act is rightliest done, 475
 Not when it must, but when it may be best.
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
 What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
 Of dangers, and adversities and pains,
 E're thou of *Israel's* Scepter get fast hold; 480
 Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies
 May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.
 So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
 And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus. 485
 Mee worse then wet thou find'st not; other harm
 Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none⁵;
 I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
 And threatning nigh; what they can do as signs
 Betok'ning, or ill boding, I contemn 490
 As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
 Who knowing I shall raing past thy preventing,

Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
 At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
 Ambitious spirit, and wouldst be thought my God, 495
 And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrifie
 Mee to thy will; desist, thou⁶ art discern'd
 And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.
 To whom the Fiend now swoln with rage reply'd:
 Then hear, O Son of *David*, Virgin-born; 500
 For Son of God to me is yet in doubt,
 Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
 By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length
 Announc't by *Gabriel* with the first I knew,
 And of the Angelic Song in *Bethlehem* field, 505
 On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
 From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
 Till at the Ford of *Jordan* whither all 510
 Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,
 Though not to be Baptiz'd, by voice from Heav'n
 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
 And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn 515
 In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
 The Son of God, which bears no single sence;
 The Son of God I also am, or was,
 And if I was, I am; relation stands;
 All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought 520
 In some respect far higher so declar'd.
 Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
 And follow'd thee still on to this wast wild;
 Where by all best conjectures I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy. 525
 Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
 To understand my Adversary, who
 And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent,
 By parl, or composition, truce, or league
 To win him, or win from him what I can. 530
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation as a rock
 Of Adamant, and as a Center, firm
 To the utmost of meer man both wise and good, 535
 Not more; for Honours, Riches, Kingdoms, Glory
 Have been before contemn'd, and may agen:

Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heav'n,
 Another method I must now begin. 540

So saying he caught him up, and without wing
 Of *Hippogrif* bore through the Air sublime
 Over the Wilderness and o're the Plain;
 Till underneath them fair *Jerusalem*,
 The holy City lifted high her Towers, 545
 And higher yet the glorious Temple rear'd
 Her pile, far off appearing like a Mount
 Of Alabaster, top't with Golden Spires:
 There on the highest Pinnacle he set
 The Son of God; and added thus in scorn: 550

There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
 Will ask thee skill; I to thy Fathers house
 Have brought thee, and highest plac't, highest is best,
 Now shew thy Progeny; if not to stand,
 Cast thy self down; safely if Son of God: 555
 For it is written, He will give command
 Concerning thee to his Angels, in thir hands
 They shall up lift thee, lest at any time
 Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone. 560

To whom thus Jesus: also it is written,
 Tempt not the Lord thy God, he said and stood.
 But Satan smitten with amazement fell
 As when Earths Son *Antæus* (to compare
 Small things with greatest) in *Irassa* strove
 With *Joves Alcides*,⁷ and oft foil'd still rose, 565
 Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joyn'd,
 Thrott'l'd at length in the Air, expir'd and fell;
 So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride 570
 Fell whence he stood to see his Victor fall.
 And as that *Theban* Monster that propos'd
 Her riddle, and him, who solv'd it not, devour'd;
 That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spight
 Cast her self headlong from th' *Ismenian* steep, 575
 So strook with dread and anguish fell the Fiend,
 And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
 Joyless triumphals⁸ of his hop't success,
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580
 So Satan fell and strait a fiery Globe

Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
 Who on their plummy Vans receiv'd him soft
 From his uneasie station, and upbore
 As on a floating couch through the blithe Air, 585
 Then in a flowry valley set him down
 On a green bank, and set before him spread
 A table of Celestial Food, Divine,
 Ambrosial, Fruits fetcht from the tree of life,
 And from the fount of life Ambrosial drink, 590
 That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
 What hunger, if aught hunger had impair'd,
 Or thirst, and as he fed, Angelic Quires
 Sung Heavenly Anthems of his victory
 Over temptation, and the Tempter proud. 595
 True Image of the Father whether thron'd
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
 Conceiving,⁹ or remote from Heaven, enshrin'd
 In fleshly Tabernacle, and human form,
 Wandring the Wilderness, whatever place, 600
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
 The Son of God, with Godlike force indu'd
 Against th' Attempter of thy Fathers Throne,
 And Thief of Paradise; him long of old
 Thou didst debel, and down from Heav'n cast 605
 With all his Army, now thou hast aveng'd
 Supplanted *Adam*, and by vanquishing
 Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent:
 He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610
 In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
 For though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
 A fairer Paradise is founded now
 For *Adam* and his chosen Sons, whom thou
 A Saviour art come down to re-install. 615
 Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be
 Of Tempter and Temptation without fear.
 But thou, Infernal Serpent, shalt not long
 Rule in the Clouds; like an Autumnal Star
 Or Lightning thou shalt fall from Heav'n trod down 620
 Under his feet: for proof, e're this thou feel'st
 Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound
 By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
 No triumph; in all her gates *Abaddon* rues
 Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe 625
 To dread the Son of God: he all unarm'd

Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
From thy Demoniack holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy Legions, yelling they shall flye,
And beg to hide them in a herd of Swine, 630
Lest he command them down into the deep
Bound, and to torment sent before thir time.
Hail Son of the most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save mankind. 635

Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
Sung Victor, and from Heavenly Feast refresh't
Brought on his way with joy; hee unobserv'd
Home to his Mothers house private return'd.

The END.



Notes

- 1 some copies have Wherbey
- 2 some copies have irghteous
- 3 some copies have loah
- 4 some copies have their
- 5 some copies have no
- 6 some copies have will desist; thou
- 7 no comma in some copies
- 8 some copies have tryumphals
- 9 some copies omit the comma