Paradise Lost Book 3
John Milton (1667)

THE ARGUMENT

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

HAil holy light, ofspring of Heav'n first-born,
Or of th' Eternal Coeternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from Eternitie, dwelt then in thee, [ 5 ]
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,
Whose Fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest [ 10 ]
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,
Escap't the Stygian Pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight [ 15 ]
Through utter and through middle darkness borne
With other notes then to th' Orphean Lyre
I sung of Chaos and Eternal Night,
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend, [20]
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovr'n vital Lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that rowle in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs, [25]
Or dim suffusion veild. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
Cleer Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill,
Smit with the love of sacred Song; but chief
Thee Sion and the flowrie Brooks beneath [30]
That wash thy hallowd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor somtimes forget
Those other two equal'd with me in Fate,
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides, [35]
And Tiresias and Phineus Prophets old.
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful Bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal Note. Thus with the Year [40]
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose,
Or flocks, or heards, or human face divine;
But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark [45]
Surrounds me, from the cheerful wayes of men
Cut off, and for the Book of knowldg fair
Presented with a Universal blanc
Of Nature's works to mee expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdome at one entrance quite shut out. [50]
So much the rather thou Celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. [55]

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure Empyrean where he sits
High Thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven [60]
Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his Glory sat,
His onely Son; On Earth he first beheld
Our two first Parents, yet the onely two [ 65 ]
Of mankind, in the happie Garden plac't,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivald love
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the Gulf between, and Satan there [ 70 ]
Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night
In the dun Air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet
On the bare outside of this World, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd without Firmament, [ 75 ]
Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
Thus to his onely Son foreseeing spake.

Onely begotten Son, seest thou what rage [ 80 ]
Transports our adversarie, whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no barrs of Hell, nor all the chains
Heapt on him there, nor yet the main Abyss
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
On desparate reveng, that shall redound [ 85 ]
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not farr off Heav'n, in the Precincts of light,
Directly towards the new created World,
And Man there plac't, with purpose to assay [ 90 ]
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert
For man will heark'n to his glozing Iyes,
And easily transgress the sole Command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall, [ 95 ]
Hee and his faithless Progenie: whose fault?
Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of mee
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' Ethereal Powers [ 100 ]
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who faild;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have givn sincere
Of true allegiance, constant Faith or Love,
Where onely what they needs must do, appeard, [ 105 ]
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despold,
Made passive both, had servd necessitie, [ 110 ]
Not mee. They therefore as to right belongd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Thir maker, or thir making, or thir Fate,
As if predestination over-rul'd
Thir will, dispos'd by absolute Decree [ 115 ]
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Thir own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of Fate, [ 120 ]
Or aught by me immutablie foreseen,
They trespass, Authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I formd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they enthall themselves: I else must change [ 125 ]
Thir nature, and revoke the high Decree
Unchangeable, Eternal, which ordain'd
Thir freedom, they themselves ordain'd thir fall.
The first sort by thir own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd [ 130 ]
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in Mercy and Justice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glorie excel,
But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
    Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd [ 135 ]
All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
Substantially express'd, and in his face [ 140 ]
Divine compassion visibly appeard,
Love without end, and without measure Grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.
        O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace; [ 145 ]
For which both Heav'n and Earth shall high extoll
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of Hymns and sacred Songs, wherewith thy Throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
For should Man finally be lost, should Man [ 150 ]
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest Son
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joynd
With his own folly? that be from thee farr,
That farr be from thee, Father, who art Judg
Of all things made, and judgest onely right. [155]
Or shall the Adversarie thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine, shall he fulfill
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
Or proud return though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd and to Hell [160]
Draw after him the whole Race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thy self
Abolish thy Creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glorie thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both [165]
Be questiond and blaspheam'd without defence.

To whom the great Creatour thus reply'd.
O Son, in whom my Soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, [170]
All hast thou spok'n as my thoughts are, all
As my Eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely voutsaft; once more I will renew [175]
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail [180]
His fall'n condition is, and to me ow
All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warnd [185]
Thir sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incensed Deitie while offerd grace
Invites; for I will cleer thir senses dark,
What may suffice, and soft'n stonie hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. [190]
To Prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endevord with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My Umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear, [195]
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be hard'nd, blind be blinded more, [ 200 ]
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not don; Man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealtie, and sinns
Against the high Supremacie of Heav'n, [ 205 ]
Affecting God-head, and so loosing all,
To expiate his Treason hath naught left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posteritie must dye,
Dye hee or Justice must; unless for him [ 210 ]
Som other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say Heav'nly Powers, where shall we find such love,
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Mans mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save, [ 215 ]
Dwels in all Heaven charitie so deare?
    He ask'd, but all the Heav'nly Quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n: on mans behalf
Patron or Intercessor none appeard,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw [ 220 ]
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have bin lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, [ 225 ]
His dearest mediation thus renewd.
    Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all [ 230 ]
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought,
Happie for man, so coming; he her aide
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undon, hath none to bring: [ 235 ]
Behold mee then, mee for him, life for life
I offer, on mee let thine anger fall;
Account mee man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glorie next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly dye [ 240 ]
Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreck all his rage;
Under his gloomie power I shall not long
Lie vanquisht; thou hast givn me to possess
Life in my self for ever, by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due [ 245 ]
All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsom grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted Soule
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue [ 250 ]
My Vanquisher, spoild of his vanted spoile;
Death his deaths wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample Air in Triumph high
Shall lead Hell Captive maugre Hell, and show [ 255 ]
The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
While by thee rais'd I ruin all my Foes,
Death last, and with his Carcass glut the Grave:
Then with the multitude of my redeemd [ 260 ]
Shall enter Heaven long absent, and returne,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd,
And reconcilement; wrauth shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence Joy entire. [ 265 ]

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

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrauth, O thou [ 275 ]
My sole complacence! well thou know' st how dear,
To me are all my works, nor Man the least
Though last created, that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By loosing thee a while, the whole Race lost. [ 280 ]
Thou therefore whom thou only canst redeem,
Thir Nature also to thy Nature joyn;
And be thy self Man among men on Earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,
By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room [ 285 ]
The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee
As from a second root shall be restor'd,
As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guiltie all his Sons, thy merit [ 290 ]
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Thir own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
Shall satisfie for Man, be judg'd and die, [ 295 ]
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His Brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So Heav'nly love shall outdoo Hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeeme,
So dearly to redeem what Hellish hate [ 300 ]
So easily destroy'd, and still destroyes
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou by descending to assume
Mans Nature, less'n or degrade thine owne.
Because thou hast, though Thron'd in highest bliss [ 305 ]
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all to save
A World from utter loss, and hast been found
By Merit more then Birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being Good, [ 310 ]
Farr more then Great or High; because in thee
Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds,
Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt Reign [ 315 ]
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King, all Power
I give thee, reign for ever, and assume
Thy Merits; under thee as Head Supream
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce: [ 320 ]
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell;
When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
Shalt in the Sky appeer, and from thee send
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaime [ 325 ]
Thy dread Tribunal: forthwith from all Windes
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past Ages to the general Doom
Shall hast'n, such a peal shall rouse thir sleep.
Then all thy Saints assembli'd, thou shalt judge [ 330 ]
Bad men and Angels, they arraignd shall sink
Beneath thy Sentence; Hell her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell [ 335 ]
And after all thir tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,
For regal Scepter then no more shall need, [ 340 ]
God shall be All in All. But all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
Adore the Son, and honour him as mee.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas't, but all
The multitude of Angels with a shout [ 345 ]
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
With Jubilee, and loud Hosanna's filld
Th' eternal Regions: lowly reverent
Towards either Throne they bow, and to the ground [ 350 ]
With solemn adoration down they cast
Thir Crowns inwove with Amarant and Gold,
Immortal Amarant, a Flour which once
In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life
Began to bloom, but soon for mans offence [ 355 ]
To Heav'n remov'd where first it grew, there grows,
And flours aloft shading the Fount of Life,
And where the river of Bliss through midst of Heavn
Rows o're Elision Flours her Amber stream;
With these that never fade the Spirits elect [ 360 ]
Bind thir resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,
Now in loose Garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement that like a Sea of Jasper shon
Impurpl'd with Celestial Roses smil'd.
Then Crown'd again thir gold'n Harps they took, [ 365 ]
Harps even tun'd, that glittering by thir side
Like Quivers hung, and with Præamble sweet
Of charming symphonie they introduce
Thir sacred Song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could joine [ 370 ]
Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.

Thee Father first they sung Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
Fountain of Light, thy self invisible [ 375 ]
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant Shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appeer, [380]
Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil thir eyes,
Thee next they sang of all Creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud [385]
Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no Creature can behold; on thee
Impresst the effulgence of his Glorie abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
Hee Heav'n of Heavens and all the Powers therein [390]
By thee created, and by thee threw down
Th' Aspiring Dominations: thou that day
Thy Fathers dreadful Thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming Chariot wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting Frame, while o're the necks [395]
Thou drov'st of warring Angels disarray.
Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaime
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Fathers might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on Man; him through their malice fall'n, [400]
Father of Mercie and Grace, thou didst not doome
So strictly, but much more to pitie enclin'd:
No sooner did thy dear and onely Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pitie enclin'd, [405]
He to appease thy wrauth, and end the strife
Of Mercy and Justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the Bliss wherein hee sat
Second to thee, offerd himself to die
For mans offence. O unexampl'd love, [410]
Love no where to be found less then Divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of Men, thy Name
Shall be the copious matter of my Song
Henceforth, and never shall my Harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Fathers praise disjoine. [415]

Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry Sphear,
Thir happie hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacus Globe
Of this round World, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior Orbs, enclos'd [420]
From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a Globe farr off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless Continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms [ 425 ]
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement skie;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heav'n
Though distant farr some small reflection gaines
Of gimmering air less vex't with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field. [ 430 ]
As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowie ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a Region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of Lambs or yeanling Kids
On Hills where Flocks are fed, flies toward the Springs [ 435 ]
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren Plaines
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With Sails and Wind thir canie Waggons light:
So on this windie Sea of Land, the Fiend [ 440 ]
Walk'd up and down alone bent on his prey,
Alone, for other Creature in this place
Living or liveless to be found was none,
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like Aereal vapours flew [ 445 ]
Of all things transitorie and vain, when Sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built thir fond hopes of Glorie or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life; [ 450 ]
All who have thir reward on Earth, the fruits
Of painful Superstition and blind Zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, emptie as thir deeds;
All th' unaccomplisht works of Natures hand, [ 455 ]
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixt,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighbouring Moon, as some have dreamd;
Those argent Fields more likely habitants, [ 460 ]
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold
Betwixt th' Angelical and Human kinde:
Hither of ill-joynd Sons and Daughters born
First from the ancient World those Giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd: [ 465 ]
The builders next of Babel on the Plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain designe
New Babels, had they wherewithall, would build:
Others came single; he who to be deem’d
A God, leap’d fondly into Ætna flames [ 470 ]
Empedocles, and hee who to enjoy
Plato’s Elysium, leap’d into the Sea,
Cleombrotus, and many more too long,
Embryo’s and Idiots, Eremits and Friers
White, Black and Grey, with all thir trumperie. [ 475 ]
Here Pilgrims roam, that stray’d so farr to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav’n;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic;
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis’d; [ 480 ]
They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fixt,
And that Crystalline Sphear whose ballance weighs
The Trepidation talkt, and that first mov’d;
And now Saint Peter at Heav’n’s Wicket seems
To wait them with his Keys, and now at foot [ 485 ]
Of Heav’n’s ascent they lift thir Feet, when loe
A violent cross wind from either Coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand Leagues awry
Into the devious Air; then might ye see
Cowles, Hoods and Habits with thir wearers tost [ 490 ]
And flutterd into Raggs, then Reliques, Beads,
Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,
The sport of Winds: all these upwhirld aloft
Fly o’re the backside of the World farr off
Into a Limbo large and broad, since call’d [ 495 ]
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopl’d, and untrod;
All this dark Globe the Fiend found as he pass’d,
And long he wander’d, till at last a gleame
Of dawning light turn’d thither-ward in haste [ 500 ]
His travell’d steps; farr distant he descries
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven a Structure high,
At top whereof, but farr more rich appeer’d
The work as of a Kingly Palace Gate [ 505 ]
With Frontispice of Diamond and Gold
Imbellisht, thick with sparkling orient Gemmes
The Portal shon, inimitable on Earth
By Model, or by shading Pencil drawn.
The Stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw [ 510 ]
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of Guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open Skie,
And waking cri'd, This is the Gate of Heav'n [ 515 ]
Each Stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav'n somtimes
Viewless, and underneath a bright Sea flow'd
Of Jasper, or of liquid Pearle, whereon
Who after came from Earth, sayling arriv'd, [ 520 ]
Wafted by Angels, or flew o're the Lake
Rapt in a Chariot drawn by fiery Steeds.
The Stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easie ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the dores of Bliss. [ 525 ]
Direct against which opn'd from beneath,
Just o're the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by farr then that of after-times
Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large, [ 530 ]
Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy Tribes,
On high behests his Angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas the fount of Jordans flood [ 535 ]
To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Ægypt and th' Arabian shoare;
So wide the op'ning seemd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave.
Satan from hence now on the lower stair [ 540 ]
That scal'd by steps of Gold to Heav'n Gate
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this World at once. As when a Scout
Through dark and desart wayes with peril gone
All night; at last by break of cheerful dawne [ 545 ]
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing Hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some forein land
First-seen, or some renown'd Metropolis
With glistening Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd, [ 550 ]
Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams.
Such wonder seis'd, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit maligne, but much more envy seis'd
At sight of all this World beheld so faire.
Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood [ 555 ]
So high above the circling Canopie
Of Nights extended shade; from Eastern Point
Of Libra to the fleecie Starr that bears
Andromeda farr off Atlantic Seas
Beyond th' Horizon; then from Pole to Pole [560]
He views in breth, and without longer pause
Down right into the Worlds first Region throws
His flight precipitant, and windes with ease
Through the pure marble Air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable Starrs, that shon [565]
Stars distant, but nigh hand seemd other Worlds,
Or other Worlds they seemd, or happy Iles,
Like those Hesperian Gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate Fields, and Groves and flourie Vales,
Thrice happy Iles, but who dwelt happy there [570]
He stayd not to enquire: above them all
The golden Sun in splendor likest Heaven
Allur'd his eye: Thither his course he bends
Through the calm Firmament; but up or downe
By center, or eccentric, hard to tell, [575]
Or Longitude, where the great Luminarie
Alooff the vulgar Constellations thick,
That from his Lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses Light from farr; they as they move
Thir Starry dance in numbers that compute [580]
Days, months, & years, towards his all-chearing Lamp
Turn swift thir various motions, or are turnd
By his Magnetic beam, that gently warms
The Univers, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen, [585]
Shoots invisible vertue even to the deep:
So wondrously was set his Station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the Sun's lucent Orbe
Through his glaz'd Optic Tube yet never saw. [590]
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught o'n Earth, Medal or Stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike informd
With radiant light, as glowing Iron with fire;
If mettal, part seemd Gold, part Silver cleer; [595]
If stone, Carbuncle most or Chrysolite,
Rubie or Topaz, to the Twelve that shon
In Aarons Brest-plate, and a stone besides
Imagind rather oft then elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that which here below [600]
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,  
In vain, though by thir powerful Art they binde  
Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound  
In various shapes old Proteus from the Sea,  
Draind through a Limbec to his Native forme. [ 605 ]
What wonder then if fields and region here  
Breathe forth Elixir pure, and Rivers run  
Potable Gold, when with one vertuous touch  
Th' Arch-chimic Sun so farf from us remote  
Produces with Terrestrial Humor mixt [ 610 ]
Here in the dark so many precious things  
Of colour glorious and effect so rare?  
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
Undazl'd, farf and wide his eye commands,  
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, [ 615 ]
But all Sun-shine, as when his Beams at Noon  
Culminate from th' Æquator, as they now  
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
Shadow from body opaque can fall, and the Aire,  
No where so cleer, sharp'nd his visual ray [ 620 ]
To objects distant farr, whereby he soon  
Saw within k enn a glorious Angel stand,  
The same whom John saw also in the Sun:  
His back was turnd, but not his brightness hid;  
Of beaming sunnie Raies, a golden tiar [ 625 ]
Circl'd his Head, nor less his Locks behind  
Illustrious on his Shoulders fledge with wings  
Lay waving round; on som great charge imploy'd  
He seemd, or fixt in cogitation deep.  
Glad was the Spirit impure as now in hope [ 630 ]
To find who might direct his wandring flight  
To Paradise the happie seat of Man,  
His journies end and our beginning woe.  
But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
Which else might work him danger or delay: [ 635 ]
And now a stripling Cherube he appeers,  
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
Youth smil'd Celestial, and to every Limb  
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd;  
Under a Coronet his flowing haire [ 640 ]
In curles on either cheek plaid, wings he wore  
Of many a colourd plume sprinkl'd with Gold,  
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
Before his decent steps a Silver wand.  
He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright, [ 645 ]
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turnd,
Admonisht by his ear, and strait was known
Th' Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seav'n
Who in God's presence, neerest to his Throne
Stand ready at command, and are his Eyes [ 650 ]
That run through all the Heav'n's, or down to th' Earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O're Sea and Land; him Satan thus accostes;
    Uriel, for thou of those seav'n Spirits that stand
In sight of God's high Throne, gloriously bright, [ 655 ]
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
Where all his Sons thy Embassie attend;
And here art likeliest by supream decree
Like honor to obtain, and as his Eye [ 660 ]
To visit oft this new Creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, [ 665 ]
Hath brought me from the Quires of Cherubim
Alone thus wandring. Brightest Seraph tell
In which of all these shining Orbes hath Man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining Orbes his choice to dwell; [ 670 ]
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration him behold
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces powrd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet, [ 675 ]
The Universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driv'n out his Rebell Foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happie Race of Men
To serve him better: wise are all his wayes. [ 680 ]
    So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisie, the onely evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth: [ 685 ]
And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdoms Gate, and to simplicitie
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held [ 690 ]
The sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n;
Who to the fraudulent Impostor foule
In his uprightness answer thus returnd.
Faire Angel, thy desire which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorifie [ 695 ]
The great Work-Maister, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy Empyreal Mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps [ 700 ]
Contented with report hear onely in heav'n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance alwayes with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend [ 705 ]
Thir number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid thir causes deep.
I saw when at his Word the formless Mass,
This worlds material mould, came to a heap:
*Confusion* heard his voice, and wilde uproar [ 710 ]
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shon, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to thir several Quarters hasted then
The cumbrous Elements, Earth, Flood, Aire, Fire, [ 715 ]
And this Ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That rowld orbicular, and turnd to Starrs
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course, [ 720 ]
The rest in circuit walles this Universe.
Look downward on that Globe whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is Earth the seat of Man, that light
His day, which else as th' other Hemisphere [ 725 ]
Night would invade, but there the neighbouring Moon
(So call that opposite fair Starr) her aide
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing through mid Heav'n,
With borrowed light her countenance triform [ 730 ]
Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is *Paradise*,
*Adams* abode, those loftie shades his Bowre.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. [ 735 ]
Thus said, he turn'd, and Satan bowing low,
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from th' Ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, [ 740 ]
Throws his steep flight in many an Aerie wheele,
Nor staid, till on Niphates top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

Notes

Satan. The name's literal senses are "enemy" or "adversary."

Godhead. In book 9, Satan comes to Eve when she is separated from Adam and tempts her into eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge. Part of his ruse involves promising her eventual Godhead (9.708).

Uriel. Literally the "fire" or "light" of God, Uriel is one of the four archangels of the Hebrew tradition. The others were Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, and each was assigned one quarter of the world in each of the cardinal directions. The name does not originate in the Bible (Uriel never appears in the Bible), but in the Apocrypha.

Mt. Niphates. A mountain in the Taurus range, in Armenia. Milton refers to it as being near Assyria in 4.126. It becomes the scene of Satan's temptation of Christ in11.381 as well as Paradise Regain'd 3.252-265. According to Jordanes' The Origins and Deeds of the Gods, Niphates is a mountain range in Asia: "The range has different names among various peoples. The Indian calls it Imaus and in another part Paropamisus. The Parthian calls it first Choatras and afterward Niphates; the Syrian and Armenian call it Taurus; the Scythian names it Caucasus and Rhipeaeus, and at its end calls it Taurus. Many other tribes have given names to the range."


unblam'd. Milton's narrator expresses some anxiety about getting this address to God as Light just right, anxious not to omit some glory by speaking another, or to misspeak himself at all in addressing one so high, so glorious.

God is light. As in 1 John 1: 5.

effluence. Pouring or streaming forth.

Saylor URL: http://www.saylor.org/courses/engl402/

Attributed to: [Thomas H. Luxon]
increate. Not Created.

Or hear'st thou rather. "Or wouldst thou rather be addressed as . . . "

Ethereal. Born of or tempered by Heavenly fire, or merely of Heaven.

Before the Heavens. See Genesis 1:3, which states that light was the first created thing.

invest. Envelop.

void and formless. See the description of the "world" before creation in Genesis 1:2.

Stygian. Referring to the river Styx, one of the rivers of Hell, found at the entrance to Hades. Also used in general reference to the underworld of classical mythology. Milton's narrator says that he has left the Hell of books 1 and 2, and now ascends to description of heaven, as if he were, as Dante imagines making such a journey himself in Purgatorio 1. 1-9.

utter and through middle darkness. A reference to Hell and Chaos. See note for Chaos.

Chaos. Milton borrows the concept of chaos, or unformed matter, from Hesiod and Platonic philosophy (especially the Timaeus 53a-b). See also Schwartz.

the heav'nly Muse. Urania, the muse associated with astronomy. Also implies the Holy Spirit. See the earlier invocation to the muse in 1.6 and the later one in 7.1. Orphean. Relating to the legendary orator and poet Orpheus, who travelled to Hades to plead for the release of his young wife, Eurydice. See Ovid Metamorphoses 10.

Sovran. Sovereign.

eyes, that rowle in vain. Milton had been totally blind since 1652 (see Flannagan's Chronology). The poet and the narrator are thus almost fully identified.

drop serene. A reference to gutta serena, the medical term for the variety of cataracts which blinded Milton; it in fact refers to any blindness which has no appearance-altering features. These cataracts gave little or no physical clouding or other sign of blindness, but left Milton virtually sightless.

Mt. Sion. A sacred mountain, purported to be the site of Moses's "lore and teaching" from God. Milton apparently prefers its image to that of the usual
mountain home of the Muses, Mount Parnassus. See 1.386 and 1.442 and Deuteronomy 4:48.

*Thamyris.* Homer mentions this blind Thracian in the *Iliad* 2.594.

*Maeonides.* An archaic form of the name Homer, the blind poet and author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey.* The name stems from his apparent homeland of Maeonia.

*Tiresias.* A sage and prophet who appears in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* as well as in *Antigone.* A Theban seer, he prophesied the fall of Oedipus, and spoke of his blindness as the facilitator of his state of illumination.

*Phineus.* A blind Thracian king who enjoyed the gift of prophecy. See Apollodorus' *Library* 1.9.21.

*numbers.* A reference to poetic units and rhythm, namely verses, or when appropriate, used in reference to musical measures.

*the wakeful Bird.* The nightingale.

*darkling.* Intended as an adjective, meaning "in the dark".

*the Book of knowledg fair.* That is, creation as a book of knowledge. See book 1, chapter 5 and Calvin's *Institutes* 1.5.

*Empyrean.* Of or pertaining to the highest Heaven or celestial areas.

*stoop.* To swoop down, as with a bird of prey.

*World.* Here the poem refers not to the Earth alone, but rather the sphere of the created universe, beyond which is Chaos or void.

*assay.* To try.

*glozing.* Flattering, cajoling, or perverting.

*the sole Command.* God's command that Adam and Eve leave the tree of knowledge untouched.

*Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.* This phrase is the kernel of Milton's sense of free will. The reformation debate about free will and predestination was framed by Erasmus, *On Free Will* (1524), and Luther, *The Bondage of the Will* (1525).

*Reason also is choice.* See Areopagitica.

Saylor URL: http://www.saylor.org/courses/engl402/

Attributed to: [Thomas H. Luxon]
Predestination. Milton's conception of predestination can be usefully compared to Augustine's in Anti-Pelagian Writings in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1, Volume 5

The first sort. Satan and his angel followers.

Man falls deceiv'd. See Milton's version of Adam's fall in 9. 998.

Spirits elect. The "good" angels are spirits elect. Milton intends this to mean those who have not rebelled with Satan. They are referred to in 1 Timothy 5: 21.

Substantially express'd. The Son is the substantial expression of the Father's invisible (5. 157) glory. Compare this father-son relation to Adam and Eve's as described in4.481-491. See also William Blake's 1808 image of the relation of Father to Son.

Adversarie. Literal sense of the name Satan.

Abolish thy Creation. See Genesis 6:6-7 and PL 2. 370.

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might. The Son is here defined as the sole agent of God, the outward expression in word, wisdom, and might of an otherwise invisible (see line 375 and 5. 157), ineffable God.

pray, repent, and bring obedience due. See the culmination of this in 10.1081-1096. Compare to Calvin's sense of human beings as totally incapable of right action (Institutes 3.22.1-3). Perhaps Milton has the father repeat the point to emphasize this departure from the strict Calvinism typical of his republican associates from the 1640s and 50s.

Heav'nly Quire stood mute. Compare to the grand consult of devils in book 2.418-20

man shall find grace. See William Blake's 1808 watercolor illustration of these lines.

unprevented. Here the word retains its Latin root, and should be read as "un-anticipated."

death. The child of the incestuous relationship between Satan and his daughter Sin in 2.746.

maugre. In spite of.

complacence. Pleasure or source of pleasure.
**right Hand.** Christ sits at the right hand of God. A sign of utmost respect, and simultaneously one of slight inferiority. Milton held the unorthodox view that the Son was not coeternal with the Father, but was begotten by the Father at a particular moment before creation.

**Made flesh.** Echoes John 1: 14: "The Word was made flesh."

**Virgin seed.** Referring to the Virgin Mary and the Son's incarnation as a man.

**room.** In the place of Adam.

**Adams Son.** Milton's bid to reconcile two of Jesus's common titles: Son of Man and Son of God.

**without thee none.** Milton, like most of his contemporaries, believed that belief in Jesus Christ was the only salvation from eternal damnation. On this score, at least, he was absolutely intolerant.

**imputed.** Ascribed by vicarious substitution. This has been read to mean both Christ's taking on man's sin, and man's taking on Christ's virtue to enable salvation.

**new life.** These lines, 290-94, virtually paraphrase Paul's doctrine in Romans 5: 14-21.

**Equal to God.** The phrase here modifies "bliss," implying that the Son in heaven enjoys bliss equal to that enjoyed by God, but not necessarily general equality of the Son to God. Though, Milton might have invited a misreading here from more orthodox readers. We should probably understand the use of the word "unequals" in 8.383 with a similar latitude.

**merit.** Milton presents the Son as Son of God more by virtue of his deeds than by virtue of his begetting. Satan plays a parody of such merit in 2.5.

**thy Manhood also.** That is, by virtue of dying for men as a mortal, the Son's "manhood," his incarnate self, will be advanced to a heavenly throne every bit as much as his godhood already is. The term "manhood" appears gender specific, as if salvation were principally a manly experience, and only by extension intended for women.

**under thee as Head Supream.** All orders of angels and creatures are now to be placed under the Son as "universal king."

**from all Winds.** From every direction.

**cited.** Called forth.
Doom. Judgement, with the eschatalogical implications of Judgement Day. Immortal Amaranth. Amaranth, a purple flower which according to legend, could not, as its name implied, ever wither.

Elisian. Elysian refers to Elysium, the classical Greek place reserved for the virtuous departed. The term can be extended to any heavenly or divinely joyous place of similar stature to Heaven.

conspicuous. Clearly visible, unlike God who is invisible (5. 157) or barely visible. See also the note above.

effulgence. Splendid radiance.

opacous. Opaque.

first convex. The outer edge of the created universe, bordering on Chaos.

inferior Orbs. The spheres described by our solar system, sun, planets, moons.

Imaus. A mountain in the Himalayan range.

roving Tartar. Genghis Khan.

yeanling. Newborn.

Hydaspes. The Jhelum river in the Punjab. The Ganges is a major river of northern India.

Sericana. China, and the Gobi desert, over which people often traveled in sail-powered wagons.

store. A multitude.

Aereal. Of the air, airy.

Not in the neighbouring Moon. Ariosto, in Orlando Furioso 34. LXX-LXXIII (1532), imagined such a Limbo of Vanities located on the moon; Milton ridicules this as a "dream."

argent. Silver.

Translated Saints. Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2: 1-11) were both transported to heaven alive.

Sennaar. The plain of Shinar from Genesis 10: 10.

Empedocles. Sicilian pre-Socratic philosopher from the fifth century, BCE. In his Ars Poetica 464-67, Horace tells the story of how Empedocles threw himself into the volcanic Mt. Aetna to prove himself divine; the volcano spewed out his apparently mortal remains.

Cleombrotus. A youth said to have drowned himself in an ecstatic fervor after reading the Plato's Phaedo (Lactantius, Divine Institutes 3.18).

White, Black and Grey. The White Friars are the Carmelites, the Black are the Dominicans, and the Grey are the Franciscans. Milton's contempt for these Roman Catholic orders prompts him to place them in this Limbo of Vanities.

Golgotha. The site of the crucifixion. See Matthew 27:33.

weeds. Clothing.

whose ballance weighs. Libra, symbolized by the balance, was located in one of the 55 crystalline spheres of Ptolemaic cosmology. In Ptolemaic cosmology, this balance was said to measure the trepidation, or irregular motion, in the sphere. Traditional cosmologists, committed to a Ptolemaic model, spoke much about "trepidation" as a way of accounting for otherwise unaccounted for celestial motions. For graphic and animated details of Ptolemaic cosmology, see "The Universe of Aristotle and Ptolemy."

that first mov’d. The primum mobile, or prime mover sphere from which the movement of all the other spheres derived. For graphic and animated details of Ptolemaic cosmology, see The Universe of Aristotle and Ptolemy.

wicket. Door. As Orgel & Goldberg note (874), this is a diminutive form and doubtless intended to invoke a sense of irony.

Beads. Rosaries, or prayers recited with beads as memory aids.

Indulgences. Indulgences were special dispensations that could be purchased from Roman Catholic church officials. Luther denounced them in his 95 Theses, especially Thesis 21.

Bulls. Certain Papal decrees are called Bulls.
Paradise of Fools. An area devoid of boundaries intended to be the abode of transgressors. Regina Schwartz notes its significance as a boundless area is central to the theme of Paradise Lost; to violate boundaries, as Satan attempted to, and as man attempted in desiring Godhead, is a great transgression against God (Schwartz, Remembering and Repeating, 140).

Jacob. According to Genesis 28, Jacob cheats his older brother Esau by deceiving his father Isaac into blessing him in Esau's stead. Jacob then had a dream of angels ascending a ladder, hence the term "Jacob's Ladder."

Padan-Aram. Home of Jacob's uncle Laban, who provides him sanctuary from the rage of Esau.

mysteriously was meant. That is the steps on the ladder have been interpreted allegorically to signify a graduated set of states of being between earth and heaven.

Who after came from Earth. Enoch (Genesis 5: 21-24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2: 11) are two who were said to have sailed from earth to heaven.

Rapt. Carried away or transported.

Paneas. Also known as the city of Dan, it lies at the source of the Jordan and forms the northern border of Canaan.

Beersaba. Also known as Beersheba, it forms the southern border of Canaan.

Looks down with wonder. Standing at the foot of the stairway to heaven, Satan finds the prospect below him more wonderful.

obtains. Reaches.

the fleecie Starr. The Andromeda nebula; Andromeda and Aries.

other Worlds. That is, from a distance they looked like stars ("shon/ Stars distant"), but closer ("nigh hand") they appeared to be planets ("other worlds").

Hesperian Gardens. As in A Mask 981-982, this refers to the Hesperides, a legendary orchard at the edge of the world where golden fruit grew, as told in Ovid's Metamorphoses 11. 85. The isles have been associated with both the Canary Islands and British Isles.

hard to tell. Hard to tell because it depends upon whether one believes a Copernican or a Ptolemaic account of the universe. Milton remains uncommitted on this score. See excellent graphic explanations of
the Copernican and Ptolemaic cosmologies. See also Raphael's answer to Adam's questions about cosmology in book 8.70 and following.

*Longitude*. Implying lateral movement. Here, Satan's lateral and vertical movements are both made confusing by the lack of reference to anything else.

*the great Luminarie*. The sun.

*Magnetic beam*. By the time Milton is writing book 3 of *Paradise Lost*, Newton had not yet published his theory of universal gravitation, though he had published early versions of his three laws of motion by 1666. Whether Milton knew of Newton's researches and ideas is a matter of some speculation.

*Astronomer*. Galileo discovered the presence of spots on the sun using his telescope in 1609. Also referred to as the "Tuscan Artist" in 1.288.

*Carbuncle*. Any red gemstone, with implications of Aaron's Breastplate. *choice*. Careful or deliberate.

*Chrysolite*. Any green gemstone.

*the Twelve that shon*. Aaron, high priest of Israel and Moses's brother, wore a ceremonial breastplate in which twelve gemstones were set, each one representing a tribe of Israel. See Exodus 28: 17-24.

*That stone*. Often referred to as "the Philosopher's Stone," long sought after as an alchemical agent capable of turning base metals into gold.

*Hermes*. Mercury, an element crucial to many alchemical processes. Hermes is also a Greek deity, Mercury being his Roman equivalent, son of Zeus and Maia, and God of Science.

*Limbec*. Alembic, an apparatus used for distilling. See "Limbeck" in Samuel Norton, *The Key of Alchemy*; see also John Donne's "A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day, being the shortest day," line 21.

*Potable*. Suitable for drinking. Drinkable gold is "a preparation of nitro-muriate of gold deoxydized by some volatile oil, formerly esteemed as a cordial medicine; drinkable gold." See Johannes Agricola's *Treatise on Gold* 4.

*Arch-chimic*. The first alchemist. In this case the sun and its rays create gemstones in the ground. Timeline of famous alchemists.

*Humor*. Moisture.
**Culminate.** reaching its greatest altitude, its meridian. Here the pre-lapsarian sun rises directly over the equator, creating no shadows and providing Satan with a clear view.

*kenn.* Range of sight.

*The same whom John saw.* See Revelation 19: 17.

*tiar.* Tiara; crown.

**Cherube.** Satan displays his shapeshifting abilities by changing into a Cherub to fool Uriel. Cherubim and seraphim are two orders or ranks of angels. Images of Cherubim stood by the sanctuary in the temple at Jerusalem.

**permisseve.** According to this logic, the difference between what God permits and what he actively wills absolves him from liability for evil and sin.

*tends.* Intends; wants.

*Light.* Genesis 1:2 names Light as the first creation.

**order from disorder sprung.** For Milton's more elaborate account (narrated by Raphael) of the creation, see book 7.205 and following. For the biblical account, see Genesis 1.

*her countenance triform.* "Countenance Triform" is a reference to the three phases of the moon: crescent, full, and waning crescent. They are associated with the goddesses named Luna (Lucina), Diana, and Hecate.

*th' Ecliptic.* The path of the sun, assuming a Ptolemaic, geocentric cosmos.