THE ARGUMENT

The Angel Michael continues from the Flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain, who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascention; the state of the Church till his second Coming. Adam greatly satisfied and recomforted by these Relations and Promises descends the Hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams compos'd to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery Sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking thir Stations to guard the Place.

AS one who in his journey bates at Noone,
Though bent on speed, so heer the Archangel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then with transition sweet new Speech resumes. [ 5 ]

Thus thou hast seen one World begin and end;
And Man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceave
Thy mortal sight to faile; objects divine
Must needs impaire and wearie human sense: [ 10 ]
Henceforth what is to com I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
This second sours of Men, while yet but few;
And while the dread of judgement past remains
Fresh in thir mindes, fearing the Deitie, [ 15 ]
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead thir lives and multiplie apace,
Labouring the soile, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn wine and oyle; and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing Bullock, Lamb, or Kid, [ 20 ]
With large Wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred Feast,
Shal spend thir dayes in joy unblam'd, and dwell
Long time in peace by Families and Tribes
Under paternal rule; till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who not content [ 25 ]
With fair equalitie, fraternal state,
Will arrogate Dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite disposess
Concord and law of Nature from the Earth,
Hunting (and Men not Beasts shall be his game) [ 30 ]
With Warr and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his Empire tyrannous:
A mightie Hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav'n,
Or from Heav'n claming second Sovrantie; [ 35 ]
And from Rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of Rebellion others he accuse.
Hee with a crew, whom like Ambition joyns
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the West, shall finde [ 40 ]
The Plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boiles out from under ground, the mouth of Hell;
Of Brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A Citie and Towre, whose top may reach to Heav'n;
And get themselves a name, least far disperst [ 45 ]
In foraign Lands thir memorie be lost,
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through thir habitations walks
To mark thir doings, them beholding soon, [ 50 ]
Comes down to see thir Citie, ere the Tower
Obstruct Heav'n Towrs, and in derision sets
Upon thir Tongues a various Spirit to rase
Quite out thir Native Language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown: [ 55 ]
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the Builders; each to other calls
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mockt they storm; great laughter was in Heav'n
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange [ 60 ]
And hear the din; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.
Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable Son so to aspire
Above his Brethren, to himself assuming [ 65 ]
Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv'n:
He gave us onely over Beast, Fish, Fowl
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but Man over men
He made not Lord; such title to himself [ 70 ]
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this Usurper his encroachment proud
Stayes not on Man; to God his Tower intends
Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain [ 75 ]
Himself and his rash Armie, where thin Aire
Above the Clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of Breath, if not of Bread?
   To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That Son, who on the quiet state of men [ 80 ]
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational Libertie; yet know withall,
Since thy original lapse, true Libertie
Is lost, which alwayes with right Reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no indivual being: [ 85 ]
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obeyd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart Passions catch the Government
From Reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore since hee permits [ 90 ]
Within himself unworthie Powers to reign
Over free Reason, God in Judgement just
Subjects him from without to violent Lords;
Who oft as undeservedly enthral
His outward freedom: Tyrannie must be, [ 95 ]
Though to the Tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet somtimes Nations will decline so low
From vertue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But Justice, and some fatal curse annext
Deprives them of thir outward libertie, [ 100 ]
Thir inward lost: Witness th' irreverent Son
Of him who built the Ark, who for the shame
Don to his Father, heard this heavie curse,
Servant of Servants, on his vitious Race.
Thus will this latter, as the former World, [ 105 ]
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy Eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to thir own polluted wayes; [ 110 ]
And one peculiar Nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,
A Nation from one faithful man to spring:
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in Idol-worship; O that men [ 115 ]
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
While yet the Patriark liv'd, who scap'd the Flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship thir own work in Wood and Stone
For Gods! yet him God the most High voutsafes [ 120 ]
To call by Vision from his Fathers house,
His kindred and false Gods, into a Land
Which he will shew him, and from him will raise
A mightie Nation, and upon him showre
His benediction so, that in his Seed [ 125 ]
All Nations shall be blest; he straight obeys
Not knowing to what Land, yet firm believes:
I see him, but thou canst not, with what Faith
He leaves his Gods, his Friends, and native Soile
Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the Ford [ 130 ]
To Haran, after a cumbrous Train
Of Herds and Flocks, and numerous servitude;
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
_Canaan_ he now attains, I see his Tents [ 135 ]
Pitcht about Sechem, and the neighbouring Plaine
Of Moreh; there by promise he receaves
Gift to his Progenie of all that Land;
From Hamath Northward to the Desert South
(Things by thir names I call, though yet unnam'd) [ 140 ]
From Hermon East to the great Western Sea,
Mount Hermon, yonder Sea, each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shoare
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream
Jordan, true limit Eastward; but his Sons [ 145 ]
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of Hills.
This ponder, that all Nations of the Earth
Shall in his Seed be blessed; by that Seed
Is meant thy great deliverer, who shall bruise
The Serpents head; whereof to thee anon [ 150 ]
Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This Patriarch blest,
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A Son, and of his Son a Grand-childe leaves,
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
The Grandchilde with twelve Sons increast, departs [ 155 ]
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the River Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at seaven mouthes
Into the Sea: to sojourn in that Land
He comes invited by a younger Son [ 160 ]
In time of dearth, a Son whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that Realme
Of Pharao: there he dies, and leaves his Race
Growing into a Nation, and now grown
Suspected to a sequent King, who seeks [ 165 ]
To stop thir overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
In hospitably, and kills their infant Males:
Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claime [170]
His people from enthralment, they return
With glory and spoile back to thir promis’d Land.
But first the lawless Tyrant, who denies
To know thir God, or message to regard,
Must be compell’d by Signs and Judgements dire; [175]
To blood unshed the Rivers must be turnd,
Frogs, Lice and Flies must all his Palace fill
With loath’d intrusion, and fill all the land;
His Cattel must of Rot and Murren die,
Botches and blaines must all his flesh imboss, [180]
And all his people; Thunder mixt with Haile,
Haile mixt with fire must rend th’ Egyptian Skie
And wheel on th’ Earth, devouring where it rouls;
What it devours not, Herb, or Fruit, or Graine,
A darksom Cloud of Locusts swarming down [185]
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three dayes;
Last with one midnight stroke all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds [190]
The River-dragon tam’d at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as Ice
More hard’nd after thaw, till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissd, the Sea [195]
Swallows him with his Host, but them lets pass
As on drie land between two christal walls,
Aw’d by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescu’d gain thir shoar:
Such wondrous power God to his Saint will lend, [200]
Though present in his Angel, who shall goe
Before them in a Cloud, and Pillar of Fire,
By day a Cloud, by night a Pillar of Fire,
To guide them in thir journey, and remove
Behinde them, while th’ obdurat King pursues: [205]
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning Watch;
Then through the Firey Pillar and the Cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his Host
And craze thir Chariot wheels: when by command [210]
Moses once more his potent Rod extends
Over the Sea; the Sea his Rod obeys;
On thir imbatell'd ranks the Waves return,
And overwhelm thir Warr: the Race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shoar advance [215]
Through the wilde Desert, not the readiest way,
Least entring on the Canaanite allarmd
Warr terrifie them inexpert, and feare
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life [220]
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untraind in Armes, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by thir delay
In the wide Wilderness, there they shall found
Thir government, and thir great Senate choose [225]
Through the twelve Tribes, to rule by Laws ordaind:
God from the Mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In Thunder Lightning and loud Trumpets sound
Ordaine thir Lawes; part such as appertaine [230]
To civil Justice, part religious Rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadowes, of that destind Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what meanes he shall achieve
Mankinds deliverance. But the voice of God [235]
To mortal eare is dreadful; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besaught
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high Office now [240]
Moses in figure beares, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the Prophets in thir Age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus Laws and Rites
Establisht, such delight hath God in Men [245]
Obedient to his will, that he voutsafes
Among them to set up his Tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal Men to dwell:
By his prescript a Sanctuary is fram'd
Of Cedar, overlaid with Gold, therein [250]
An Ark, and in the Ark his Testimony,
The Records of his Cov'nant, over these
A Mercie-seat of Gold between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim, before him burn
Seaven Lamps as in a Zodiac representing [255]
The Heav'nly fires; over the Tent a Cloud
Shall rest by Day, a fiery gleame by Night,
Save when they journie, and at length they come,
Conducted by his Angel to the Land
Promis'd to Abraham and his Seed: the rest
Were long to tell, how many Battels fought,
How many Kings destroy'd, and Kingdoms won,
Or how the Sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still
A day entire, and Nights due course adjourne,
Mans voice commanding, Sun in Gibeon stand, [ 265 ]
And thou Moon in the vale of Aialon,
Till Israel overcome; so call the third
From Abraham, Son of Isaac, and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heav'n, [ 270 ]
Enlightn'er of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveald, those chiefly which concerne
Just Abraham and his Seed: now first I finde
Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eas'd,
Erwhile perplext with thoughts what would becom [ 275 ]
Of mee and all Mankind; but now I see
His day, in whom all Nations shall be blest,
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidd'n knowledge by forbidd'n means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those [ 280 ]
Among whom God will deigne to dwell on Earth
So many and so various Laws are giv'n;
So many Laws argue so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin [ 285 ]
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was Law given them to evince
Thir natural pravitie, by stirring up
Sin against Law to fight; that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove, [ 290 ]
Save by those shadowie expiations weak,
The bloud of Bulls and Goats, they may conclude
Some bloud more precious must be paid for Man,
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness
To them by Faith imputed, they may finde [ 295 ]
Justification towards God, and peace
Of Conscience, which the Law by Ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor Man the moral part
Perform, and not performing cannot live.
So Law appears imperfet, and but giv'n [ 300 ]
With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better Cov'nant, disciplin'd
From shadowie Types to Truth, from Flesh to Spirit,
From imposition of strict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace, from servil fear [ 305 ]
To filial, works of Law to works of Faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the Minister
Of Law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua whom the Gentiles Jesus call, [ 310 ]
His Name and Office bearing, who shall quell
The adversarie Serpent, and bring back
Through the worlds wilderness long wanderd man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they in thir earthly Canaan plac't [ 315 ]
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
National interrupt thir public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies:
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom [ 320 ]
The second, both for pietie renownd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his Regal Throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All Prophecie, That of the Royal Stock [ 325 ]
Of David (so I name this King) shall rise
A Son, the Womans Seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All Nations, and to Kings foretold, of Kings
The last, for of his Reign shall be no end. [ 330 ]
But first a long succession must ensue,
And his next Son for Wealth and Wisdom fam'd,
The clouded Ark of God till then in Tents
Wandring, shall in a glorious Temple enshrine.
Such follow him, as shall be registerd [ 335 ]
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scrowle,
Whose foul Idolatries, and other faults
Heapt to the popular summe, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose thir Land,
Thir Citie, his Temple, and his holy Ark [ 340 ]
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud Citie, whose high Walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion, Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivitie he lets them dwell
The space of seventie years, then brings them back, [ 345 ]
Remembrance, and his Cov'nant sworn
To David, stabisht as the dayes of Heav'n.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of Kings
Thir Lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-<i>edifie</i>, and for a while [ 350 ]
In mean estate live moderate, till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the Priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the Altar, and should most
Endeavour Peace: thir strife pollution brings [ 355 ]
Upon the Temple it self: at last they seise
The Scepter, and regard not David's Sons,
Then loose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed King Messiah might be born
Barr'd of his right; yet at his Birth a Starr [ 360 ]
Unseen before in Heav'n proclaims him com,
And guides the Eastern Sages, who enquire
His place, to offer Incense, Myrrh, and Gold;
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
To simple Shepherds, keeping watch by night; [ 365 ]
They gladly thither haste, and by a Quire
Of squadrond Angels hear his Carol sung.
A Virgin is his Mother, but his Sire
The Power of the most High; he shall ascend
The Throne hereditarie, and bound his Reign [ 370 ]
With earths wide bounds, his glory with the Heav'ns.
    He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharg'd, as had like grief bin dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words, which these he breathd.
    O Prophet of glad tidings, finisher [ 375 ]
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steddiest thoughts have searcht in vain,
Why our great expectation should be call'd
The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, <i>Haile</i>,
High in the love of Heav'n, yet from my Loynes [ 380 ]
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy Womb the Son
Of God most High; So God with man unites.
Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal paine: say where and when
Thir fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victors heel [ 385 ].
    To whom thus Michael. Dream not of thir fight,
As of a Duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: not therefore joynes the Son
Manhood to God-head, with more strength to foil
Thy enemie; nor so is overcome [ 390 ]
Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise,
Disabl'd not to give thee thy deaths wound:
Which hee, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy Seed: nor can this be, [ 395 ]
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the Law of God, impos'd
On penaltie of death, and suffering death,
The penaltie to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: [ 400 ]
So onely can high Justice rest appaid.
The Law of God exact he shall fulfill
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfill the Law; thy punishment
He shall endure by coming in the Flesh [ 405 ]
To a reproachful life and cursed death,
Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe
In his redemption, and that his obedience
Imputed becomes theirs by Faith, his merits
To save them, not thir own, though legal works. [ 410 ]
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,
Seis'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemnd
A shameful and accurst, naild to the Cross
By his own Nation, slaine for bringing Life;
But to the Cross he nailes thy Enemies, [ 415 ]
The Law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankinde, with him there crucifi'd,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives, Death over him no power [ 420 ]
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Returne, the Starres of Morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,
His death for Man, as many as offerd Life [ 425 ]
Neglect not, and the benefit imbrace
By Faith not void of workes: this God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy'd,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength [ 430 ]
Defeating Sin and Death, his two maine armes,
And fix Farr deeper in his head thir stings
Then temporal death shall bruise the Victors heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal Life. [ 435 ]
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on Earth then certayne times to appeer
To his Disciples, Men who in his Life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd [ 440 ]
And his Salvation, them who shall beleevve
Baptizing in the profluent streame, the signe
Of washing them from guilt of sin to Life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the redeemer dy'd. [ 445 ]
All Nations they shall teach; for from that day
Not onely to the Sons of Abrahams Loines
Salvation shall be Preacht, but to the Sons
Of Abrahams Faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all Nations shall be blest. [ 450 ]
Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the aire
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The Serpent, Prince of aire, and drag in Chaines
Through all his Realme, and there confounded leave; [ 455 ]
Then enter into glory, and resume
His Seat at Gods right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heav'n; and thence shall come,
When this worlds dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead [ 460 ]
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receave them into bliss,
Whether in Heav'n or Earth, for then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Then this of Eden, and far happier daies. [ 465 ]
So spake th' Archangel Michael, then paus'd,
As at the Worlds great period; and our Sire
Replete with joy and wonder thus repli'd.
O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce, [ 470 ]
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Then that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By mee done and occasiond, or rejoice [ 475 ]
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
To God more glory, more good will to Men
From God, and over wrauth grace shall abound.
But say, if our deliverer up to Heav'n
Must reascend, what will betide the few [ 480 ]
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth; who then shall guide
His people, who defend? will they not deale
Wors with his followers then with him they dealt?

Be sure they will, said th' Angel; but from Heav'n [ 485 ]
Hee to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them, and the Law of Faith
Working through love, upon thir hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth, and also arme [ 490 ]
With spiritual Armour, able to resist
Satans assaults, and quench his fierie darts,
What Man can do against them, not affraid,
Though to the death, against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompen't, [ 495 ]
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Thir proudest persecuters: for the Spirit
Powrd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the Nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue [ 500 ]
To speak all Tongues, and do all Miracles,
As did thir Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each Nation to receave
With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length
Thir Ministry perform'd, and race well run, [ 505 ]
Thir doctrine and thir story written left,
They die; but in thir room, as they forewarne,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous Wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Hea'vn
To thir own vile advantages shall turne [ 510 ]
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left onely in those written Records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names, [ 515 ]
Places and titles, and with these to joine
Secular power, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promisd alike and giv'n
To all Beleevers; and from that pretense, [ 520 ]
Spiritual Lawes by carnal power shall force
On every conscience; Laws which none shall finde
Left them inrould, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the Spirit of Grace it self, and binde [ 525 ]
His consort Libertie; what, but unbuild
His living Temples, built by Faith to stand,
Thir own Faith not anothers: for on Earth
Who against Faith and Conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume: [ 530 ]
Whence heaviere persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, farr greater part,
Well deem in outward Rites and specious formes
Religion satisfid; Truth shall retire [ 535 ]
Bestuck with slandrous darts, and works of Faith
Rarely be found: so shall the World goe on,
To good malignant, to bad men benigne,
Under her own weighte groaning till the day
Appeare of respiration to the just, [ 540 ]
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promissd to thy aid
The Womans seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the Clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd [ 545 ]
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted World, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness and peace and love [ 550 ]
To bring forth fruits Joy and eternal Bliss.

He ended; and thus Adam last reply'd.
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measur'd this transient World, the Race of time,
Till time stand fixt: beyond is all abyss,
[ 555 ]
Eternitie, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart.
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this Vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire. [ 560 ]
Henceforth I learne, that to obey is best,
And love with feare the onely God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good [ 565 ]
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deemd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek; that suffering for Truths sake
Is fortitude to highest victorie, [ 570 ]
And to the faithful Death the Gate of Life;
Taught this by his example whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also th' Angel last repli'd:
This having learnt, thou hast attained the summe [ 575 ]
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the Starrs
Thou knewst by name, and all th' ethereal Powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Natures works,
Or works of God in Heav'n, Aire, Earth, or Sea,
And all the riches of this World enjoydst, [ 580 ]
And all the rule, one Empire; onely add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add Faith,
Add vertue, Patience, Temperance, add Love,
By name to come call'd Charitie, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath [ 585 ]
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A Paradise within thee, happier farr.
Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of Speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see the Guards, [ 590 ]
By mee encampt on yonder Hill, expect
Thir motion, at whose Front a flaming Sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle Dreams have calm'd [ 595 ]
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
To meek submission: thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her Faith to know,
The great deliverance by her Seed to come [ 600 ]
(For by the Womans Seed) on all Mankind.
That ye may live, which will be many dayes,
Both in one Faith unanimous though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more cheer'd
With meditation on the happie end. [ 605 ]

He ended, and they both descend the Hill;
Descended, Adam to the Bowre where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak't;
And thus with words not sad she him receav'd.

Whence thou returnst, and whither wentst, I know; [ 610 ]
For God is also in sleep, and Dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and hearts distress
Weared I fell asleep: but now lead on;
In mee is no delay; with thee to goe, [ 615 ]
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to mee
Art all things under Heav’n, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banisht hence.
This further consolation yet secure [ 620 ]
I carry hence; though all by mee is lost,
Such favour I unworthie am voutsait,
By mee the Promis’d Seed shall all restore.

   So spake our Mother Eve, and Adam heard
Well pleas’d, but answer’d not; for now too nigh [ 625 ]
Th’ Archangel stood, and from the other Hill
To thir fixt Station, all in bright array
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as Ev’ning Mist
Ris’n from a River o’re the marish glides, [ 630 ]
And gathers ground fast at the Labourers heel
Homeward returning. High in Front advanc’t,
The brandisht Sword of God before them blaz’d
Fierce as a Comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Libyan Air adust, [ 635 ]
Began to parch that temperate Clime; whereat
In either hand the hastning Angel caught
Our lingring Parents, and to th’ Eastern Gate
Led them direct, and down the Cliff as fast
To the subjected Plaine; then disappear’d. [ 640 ]
They looking back, all th’ Eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late thir happie seat,
Wav’d over by that flaming Brand, the Gate
With dreadful Faces throng’d and fierie Armes:
Som natural tears they drop’d, but wip’d them soon; [ 645 ]
The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.

THE END

Notes:

succeed. That is, happen next.

Relations. Narratives, the stories he has just heard from Michael.

Place. 1674 has a comma here; I have supplied a period.
bates. Abates, pauses.

wearie human sense. Adam listened intently to Raphael tell of many divine things over the course of books 5-8 without feeling the least bit weary (8.210-216). Raphael "accommodated" things beyond "human sense" to Adam's capacity (5.564-576); perhaps Michael does not offer such accommodation, or a fallen Adam is even less capable? Recall that Adam did become weary conversing with God (8.452-458).

second sours. The second source of "Men" would, of course, be Noah. (Even in Genesis, we are not told his wife's name.)

mightie Hunter. This is Nimrod, styled in Genesis 10: 9 as "a mighty hunter before the Lord." See also the Geneva glosses about Nimrod. Flavius Josephus's Antiquities 1.4.2-3 also helped establish Nimrod as tyrant and founder of Babel. See also Eikonoklastes (Complete Prose Works 3.598) where Milton regards Nimrod as the founder of monarchy.

from Heav'n claming. See excerpts from James I's The Trew Law of Free Monarchies: or, The Reciprock and Mutuall Duetie Betwixt a Free King and His Naturall Subiects (1598). See also Milton's Tenure of Kings and Magistrates for a refutation of divine right theory.

from Rebellion. Popular etymologies of the name Nimrod incorrectly linked it to a Hebrew word for rebel.

The Plain. The Plain of Shinar; see Genesis 11.

a name. See Genesis 11: 4. Michael never mentions either Nimrod or Babel by name.

various. Inconstant, wayward, contrary; see OED2.

rase. Erase, raze.

ture Libertie. See Tenure of Kings and Magistrates. See also Paradise Regain'd 3.414-440 on Israel's "patrimony" of liberty.

some fatal curse. Because Milton is celebrated as a champion of liberty, commentators often fail to recognize these lines (97-110) as the justification for "natural" or race-specific slavery that they articulate. Steven Jablonksi puts the case succinctly: "Milton, for all his hatred of tyranny and love of liberty, was opposed to the enslavement of the wrong people rather than to slavery per se" (Jablonski 188).
irreverent Son. That is, Ham (father of Canaan), Noah's youngest son, punished by God for uncovering his father's nakedness (Genesis 9: 20-27). Commentators frequently interpreted Ham as the progenitor of the Canaanites, a people cursed by God to be slaves forever (see the Geneva notes). Some believed that black Africans also descended from Ham by way of his son Cush.

one peculiar Nation. Israel; see Deuteronomy 7: 6 and 14:2.

one faithful man. Abraham; see Genesis 17: 5.

Bred up in Idol-worship. See Joshua 24:2.

call by Vision. The narrative of Abraham's call is found in Genesis 11 and 12.

believes. Hebrews 11: 8 insists that Abraham was blessed by God because of his faith. So also did Paul in Romans 4:1-3. Paul and others tried hard to reinterpret Abraham as a figure of faith rather than just a chosen patriarch; it is also, for Paul, partly an attempt to re-define the identity, "son of Abraham" as a matter of belief rather than genetics, so that Christian gentiles can be defined as the "true" Israel and the "apostate" Jews as "cast out" (Galatians 3-4). But see also Daniel Boyarin's A Radical Jew and John G. Gager's The Origins of Anti-semitism.

servitude. That is, a large train of servants.


Senir. The Geneva glosses identify Shenir as Mount Hermon. See also Deuteronomy 3:9 and 1 Chronicles 5:23.

Lines 139-146. The description of the boundaries of the "promised land" is found in Numbers 34: 1-12.

that Seed. Here Milton, like most Christian interpreters of the Bible, identifies the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12: 1-3 with the curse pronounced on the serpent in Genesis 3: 15 and the supposedly messianic prophecies of, say, Daniel 7. All these, claims Milton, denote the first and final comings of Jesus Christ. In this way, the entire Hebrew Bible was routinely re-interpreted as an explicitly Christian document.

Grand-childe. The "Son" is Isaac (Genesis 17-18, 22, 24-25) and the grandchild Jacob (Genesis 25-50).

twelve Sons. The twelve sons of Jacob (renamed Israel in Genesis 35: 10) are the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 35: 22-26).
seaven mouthes. Virgil's *Aeneid* 6. 800 speaks of the Nile as seven-gated.

*yonger Son*. That is, Joseph, Jacob's next-to-youngest son; see Genesis 42-47.

*sequent King*. A later Pharaoh; see Exodus 1: 8 and the chapters that follow.

*kills thir infant Males*. See Exodus 1: 15-16. For a comparison between Pharaoh and Charles I, see *Eikonoklastes*.

*Signes and Judgements dire*. For the story of the ten plagues, see Exodus 7-15.

*Murren*. Murrain or hoof-and-mouth disease.

*Botches and blaines*. Botches are swellings or infected pimples; blains are blisters or boils.

*River-dragon*. That is, Pharaoh; see Ezekiel 29: 3.

*sojourners*. The Israelites were not Egyptians, but sojourners in the land of Egypt; Pharaoh made them slaves.

*christal walls*. The story is in Exodus 14, but Milton's diction recalls his translation of Psalm 136:49-50.

*present in his Angel*. That is, God does not present himself to Moses as he once did to Adam (8.295ff), but as here and in book 11, is only present "in his angel," Michael; see Exodus 33: 2-4.


*craze*. Crack, shatter; but see Exodus 14.

*thir Warr*. Their Army.

*Race elect*. That is, the "children" of Israel, or the Israelites. The word is only beginning to have the full sense it acquires in 19th-century racialist discourse. See *OED2*: "The offspring or posterity of a person; a set of children or descendants."

*Lines 215-222*. Milton's complicated syntax appears basically to render the explanation in Exodus 13: 17-18, with perhaps the added suggestion that martial training not only makes one ready for the challenge of battle, but also changes one's basic attitudes toward life.
thir delay. That is, the forty years in the desert.

great Senate. Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders that constituted their political and religious organization. See Exodus 24: 1-9 and Numbers 11: 16-30.

shadowes. For accurate and full, but uncritical, accounts of Puritan notions of typology, see William G. Madsen, *From Shadowy Types to Truth* or Barbara K. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*. For a critical account, see Luxon, *Literal Figures*.

dreadful. See Exodus 20: 19.

*Messiah*. Following Hebrews 8, Milton subscribes to the familiar Christian notion that Moses prefigures Jesus Christ and that the Israelites are a type or allegorical figure for Christians, the "true" people of God.

*Tabernacle*. The holiest of Hebrew shrines. See Exodus 33: 9, and for an account of its building, Exodus 25-27. Evangelical Christians have a special fascination with the tabernacle and have built clever reconstructions following the Exodus accounts. The Geneva Bible glossed "shittim wood" of Exodus 25: 5 as "a kindred of cedar."

Seaven Lamps. The seven-branched candlestick or menorah was interpreted by Flavius Josephus in *Antiquities* 3.6.7 as symbolizing the seven planets.

stand still. See Joshua 10: 12-14.


evince. Make apparent.

pravitie. Depravity.

*Lines 287-299*. Milton makes Michael speak in specifically Pauline terms about law, sin, and justification; one might even say the terms reflect a specifically reformation understanding of the Pauline terms and concepts. See Romans 3 and Romans 7 and the Geneva glosses on Romans 3 and Romans 7. As with the tabernacle and the figure of Moses, the Hebrew law is interpreted as a shadowy prefiguration of Christian truth. Also see Martin Luther’s *Preface to Romans*.

a better Cov’nant. Again, Milton’s familiar Christian cooptative allegorization of Hebrew law, worship, and even history follows the pattern outlined in Hebrews 8.
shadowie Types to Truth. The key phrase for typology, which is a Protestant version of allegory whereby historical events are taken to be allegories of later, usually apocalyptic, events. For accurate, but uncritical, accounts of Puritan notions of typology, see William G. Madsen, From Shadowy Types to Truth or Barbara K. Lewalski, Protestant Poetics. For a critical account, see Luxon, Literal Figures.

earthly Canaan. Like almost all Christian commentators, Milton regards the "promised land" of Canaan but an "earthly" figure for the "true" promised land of the Christian "Kingdom of Heaven." It is easy to see how Christianity breeds a persistent anti-Jewish strain from this supersessionist allegory of the Jews as "shadowy types" of Christians, a strain usually explained by Miltonists without any hint of distaste.

Judges first. Ancient Israel was ruled first by judges (see Judges and 1 and 2 Samuel), then by Kings (1 Kings and 2 Kings). Saul was Israel's first King (1 Samuel 9: 15-10:9).

the Womans Seed. Two gospel accounts trace Jesus’s lineage to or from David; see Matthew 1 and Luke 3: 23-38.

next Son. Solomon, third king of Israel. See 1 Kings 5-8 and 2 Chronicles 2-5.

Babylon. Like most commentators, Milton believed Babel was somehow the precursor of the Babylonian Empire which, under Nebuchadnezzar, led Israel and its kings captive. See 2 Chronicles 36, Jeremiah 50, and Daniel.

re- edifie. See Ezra 1.

among the Priests. Milton first achieved fame writing against prelacy, that is against forms of church government based on bishops and archbishops (prelates). He believed that particular ecclesiastical structure was bound to lead to corruption. See The Reason of Church Government Urged Against Prelaty (1642).

stranger. Antipater the Idumean, Roman-appointed governor of Jerusalem from 61 BCE and Procurator of Judaea (appointed by Julius Caesar) from 47 BCE. His son was Herod the Great, Roman-approved tetrarch of Judaea. See Josephus, Antiquites 14.8.5 and Matthew 2 and Luke 2.


Power of the most High. See Luke 1: 35.

capital. On the head, as in capitalis, Latin for "on the head."

his works. See 1 John 3: 8.

appaid. Satisfied, paid up in full. See OED2.

by obedience and by love. See Romans 13.

naild to the Cross. See William Blake's 1808 watercolor illustration of these lines.

By his own Nation. Here Milton participates in one of the more persistent anti-Jewish slurs in his day, that Jews, not Romans nailed Jesus to the cross. This slur is based in part on passages like Luke 23: 13-24 and John 19: 12-18. See also Mark 15: 6-25. Flannagan (1998) glosses this passage as follows: "there is no evidence in Milton's works that he condemned Jews for having allowed the Crucifixion." This very passage seems evidence enough to me, though many Miltonists remain loath to recognize it as such. For a good history of anti-Jewish attitudes in church history, see James Carroll, Constantine's Sword.

Starres of Morn. The phrase echoes to Job 38: 7.

thir stings. The imagery comes from 1 Corinthians 15: 55.

temporal death. Death in time, or temporary. As a mortalist, Milton believed that both body and soul died temporarily and were both resurrected together in judgment.

profluent streame. Maurice Kelley, in the Yale Complete Prose (6.544.n6) explains: Milton's position on this sacrament [baptism] may be described as Socinian-Anabaptist immersionism (complete immersion of the baptized person's body), with the further stipulation that the rite must be performed in running water," presumably like a river.

Sons/ Of Abrahams Faith. The Sons of Abraham's faith, as opposed to sons of Abraham's loins, would be Gentiles converted to Christianity, as opposed to Jews by birth. Paul argued that Christian Gentiles were more truly sons of Abraham than unconverted Jews. See Galatians 3:7. Traditional anti-semitism has its roots in such arguments.

Prince of aire. The Geneva glosses to Ephesians 2:2, identify "the prince of the power of the air" as Satan.

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quick and dead. See 2 Timothy 4:1._

Whether in Heav'n or Earth. Will the faithful be rewarded with bliss in a new earth or in heaven? See the Geneva comments on Revelation 21:1.

grace shall abound. The phrase echoes Romans 5: 20.


spiritual Armour. See Ephesians 6: 11-17 and Spenser's Redcrosse Knight in The Faerie Queene 1.


race well run. The phrase echoes 1 Corinthians 9: 24-26. See also Areopagitica.

grievous Wolves. See Acts 20: 29 and "Lycidas" 128.

lucre. See 1 Peter 5:2.

Infallible. Even though the doctrine of the papal infallibility was not made official church dogma until 1870, it was all-but-official doctrine in the Roman Catholic Church of Milton's day. See The Catholic Encyclopedia's article on Infallibility. See also Milton's A Treatise on Civil Power (Complete Prose Works 7.248).


Well. 1667 has "Will" here.

groaning. The phrase echoes Romans 8: 22.

feare. See Psalm 111: 10.


worldly strong. 1 Corinthians 1: 27.

suffering for Truth's sake. Heroic martyrdom is one of Milton's predominant themes; see 9.31-33 and Paradise Regain'd 1.426 and Samson Agonistes 654.
Acknowledged. Thus Milton makes Adam a proleptic Christian as the
supercessionist tradition did so many Hebrew patriarchs and prophets, the most
famous being, perhaps, Daniel. See also Robert Lerner's study of medieval
millenarianism, *The Feast of Abraham*.

Lines 582-583. 2 Peter 1: 5-7.

wak't. Even though the "Argument" above indicates that Adam wakes Eve.

Lines 621-623. Speaking precisely, Adam has not been banished for Eve's crime,
nor has all been lost through her transgression, nor shall the "Promis'd Seed"
restore all by her. Milton presents Eve as having the gist of the matter, but not
the precise details. It's as if Milton puts the first misogynistic overstatements of
Eve's crime in Eve's own mouth, as well as the first inaccurate pseudo-feminist
assessments of Eve.

marsh. Marsh.

adust. Scorched.

the hastning Angel. See William Blake's 1808 watercolor illustration of these
lines.