

Paradise lost

Book 4.th

h^o 1

Book 4, th Paradise Lost.

("O for that warning voice") In order to raise the horror and attention of his reader, Milton introduces his relation of Satan's adventures upon earth, by wishing that the same warning voice had been uttered now, at Satan's first coming, that St John, who in a vision saw the Apocalypse or Revelation of the most remarkable events which were to befall the Christian Church to the end of the world, heard when the dragon ("that old serpent called the devil and Satan") was put to second death. Reve: 12th chap: 12th ver: "woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the

Devil is come down unto you,
having great wrath": ("The accuser
of mankind") as he is represented
in that same chapter of the Revela-
tion "For the accuser of our tre-
-thens is cast down, which accused
them before our God day & night."
10th ver: ("Get not rejoicing in his
speed") Satan was "bold far off, and
fearless" and as he drew nearer, was
pleased "with hoped success"; but now
he is come to earth "to begin his
dire attempt" he does not rejoice
in it, his heart misgives him,
"horror and doubt distract him"
("The bitter memory of what he
was, what is, and what must be")
Memory is the thinking or reflecting
upon any thing, as well present

and future as past. Virgil says
that his bees "remembering the win-
-ter coming on" laid by provisions
in the summer. ("Meridian tower") At
noon the sun is lifted up as in a
tower. The metaphor is used by
Virgil. ("In pride and worse ambi-
-tion") Milton seems to mean by
pride the vice considered in itself,
and only as it is the temper of
the proud man; and by ambition
the vice that carried him to
aim at being equal with God: &
was not this vice the worse of
the two? Satan always lays the
blame on his ambition; "no un-
-bounded hope had raised ambition"
"Such joy ambition finds" ("I being
for disdained. ("His dain forbids

me") disdain forbids me that word
submission. ("By thee, and more
than half perhaps with reign")
This passage may be understood thus,
"Evil be thou my good" be thou as
my delight, as my happiness; "By
thee I hold at least divided em-
pire with Heaven's King" at pre-
sent, I rule in Hell, as God in
Heaven: "By thee" I say; he is made
to repeat it with emphasis, to
add the greater force to his dia-
bolical sentiment, and to mark
it more strongly to the reader: "and"
in a short time "with reign perhaps
more than half" in this new
world as well as in Hell; "as man
ere long, and this new world that
know" And he is very properly
made to conclude his speech with

This, as this was now his main ba-
siness, and the end of his coming
hither. ("each passion dimmed his
face Thrice changed with pale,
ire, envy, & despair") Each passion
ire, envy and despair, dimmed his
countenance, which was thrice
changed with pale thro' the suc-
cessive agitations of these three
passions. ("on th' Assyrian mount")
Misphates is supposed to have been
between Armenia and Assyria, &
therefore may be called Assyrian.
From Milton's account of the si-
tuation of Eden, that it was in
Assyria, and that Misphates was
not far from Eden. ("where de-
licious Paradise") Satan is now
come to the border of Eden, where he
has a nearer prospect of Paradise,

which Milton represents as situa-
-ted in a champaign country upon
the top of a steep hill, called the
Mount of Paradise. The sides of
this hill were overgrown with
thickets and bushes, so as not to
be passable; and overhead above
these, on the sides of the hill, like-
-wise grew the loftiest trees, and
as they ascended in ranks, shade
above shade, they formed a kind
of natural ~~theatre~~, the rows of
trees rising one above another in
the same manner as the benches
in the theatres, and places of pub-
-lic shows & spectacles. ^(yet higher) And yet
higher than the highest of these trees,
grew up the verdant wall of Pa-
-radise, a green inclosure like a

mural mound, like a bank set with
a hedge, but this hedge grew not
up so high as to hinder Adam's
prospect into the neighbouring coun-
-try below, which is called his "em-
-pire"; as the whole earth was
his "dominion". But above this
ledge or green wall grew a cir-
-cling row of the finest fruit trees,
and the only entrance into Para-
-dise was a gate on the eastern
side. This is the prose account
of this happy age. ("and whisper whence
they stole their balmy spoils") This
^{appears to be} passage is taken from one in Shakes-
-peare "like the sweet South that
breathes upon a bank of violets,
stealing & giving odour" ("with luck
decay well pleased, they slack

there course") The north east wind
blowing contrary to those who
have doubled the "Cape of Good Hope"
and are past the island "Mozambique"
on the eastern coast of Africa,
near the continent, and are sailing
forward, they must necessarily "black
their course"; but yet they are well
enough "pleased with such delay"
as it gives them the pleasure of
smelling such delicious odors. "I
scent odors" from Saba, a city &
country of Arabia Felix, "travelling
the best" the most famous for
frankincense. ("Hail Asmodens")
Asmodens was the evil spirit, en-
-minded of Sarah, the daughter
of Rachel, whose seven husbands,

he destroyed; but after that she was
married to the son of Tobit, he
was driven away by the fumes of
the heart and liver of a fish; "the
which smelt when the evil spirit
had smelted, he fled into the ut-
-most parts of Egypt, and the
Angel bound him" The book of
Tobit Chapter 8^{30th verse}. ("A path
of man or beast that passed that
way") That would have passed that
way. ("The middle tree is highest
there that grew") The tree of life
also in the midst of the garden".
2^d chap: Genesis. 9. ver: ("Of God, the
garden was, by him in th' east of
Eden planted") 2^d chap: Genesis
8. ver:

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden" That is Eastward of the place where Moses wrote his history, tho' Milton says, "in the east of Eden"; and then we have in a few lines our author's topography of Eden. This province, in which the terrestrial Paradise was planted, extended from Auran, or Haran, a city of Mesopotamia near the river Euphrates, extended, from thence eastward to Selucia, a city, built by Seleucus one of the successors of Alexander the Great, upon the river Tigris. Or in other words, this province

was the same, where the children of Israel dwell in Telassar, as Isaiah says 37th chap: 12. ver. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Reseph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar" which Telassar, or Sala - tha was a province and a city of the children of Eden, placed by Ptolemy in Babylonia, upon the common stream of Tigris & Euphrates. So that Milton places ^{Paradise} Eden, agreeably to the accounts in Scripture, somewhere in Mesopotamia. ("Southward thro' Eden went a river large") This is more

probably the river formed by
the junction of the Euphrates,
and Tigris, which flows southward,
upon this river it is supposed
by the best commentators that
the Terrestrial Paradise was
situated. ("And now divided into
four streams") This is grounded up-
on the words of Moses, 2^d chap.
Genesis. 10. ver. "And a river
is cut out of Eden to water
the garden, and from thence it
was parted, and became into
four heads". (~~"Flowers of all hue,~~
and ("Poenice Universae Pan") The
Ancients personified every thing.
Pan is nature, the Graces

are the beautiful seasons, and
the Hours are the time requi-
sited for the production &
perfection of things. ("Not that
fair field") Not that fair
field of Euna in Sicily, from
whence Proserpine was carried
away by Dis or Pluto, which oc-
casioned her mother Ceres to seek
her all the world over; ("nor
that sweet grove of Daphne")
near Antioch, the capital
of Syria, ⁺ seated on the banks
of the river (⁺ "Euphrates") together
with the ("Cassanian") Spring there,
of the same name with that
in Greece, and celebrated for its
whetive qualities; (~~not that fair field~~ ^{not that fair field} ~~nor the island~~)

"Hydra" incircled with the river
Tirona" in Africa, where "Pham"
or Ham the son of Noah, there
called "old" (who first peopled
Egypt & Lybia, and among the
Gentiles goes by the name of
"Ammon" or Lybian Jove") his
his mistress "Amalthea" and her
beautiful son "Bacchus" from
his stepdame Rhea's eye, the
stepdame of Bacchus, and wife of
the Lybian Jove - (now mounts
Amara) where the kings of Abyssinia,
a kingdom in the upper
Ethiopia keep their children guarded,
a place of most delightful
Prospect & Situation, inclosed

with alabaster rocks, which it is
a day's journey to ascend, supposed
by some, tho' so far distant from
from the true Paradise, to be
the seat of Paradise, under the
Ethiopian, or equinoctial line
near the springs of the river
Nile; but any, nor any of these
could vie with this Paradise of
Eden; this exceeded all that
historians have written, or poets
have feigned of the most beautiful
places in the world. ("Eden
garden") Some authors com-
prehend Mesopotamia in the
ancient Assyria. "which implies
Injection" Milton manifestly

alludes to St Paul's first Epistle
to the Corinthians. Chap: 11th
14^{verse} "Let not even nature itself
teach you, that if a man have
long hair, it is a shame unto
him?" and therefore Milton gives
Adam locks, that "hung clustering
but not beneath his shoulders
broad". "But if a woman have
15^{verse} long hair" "continued the Apostle"
it is a glory to her, for her hair
is given her for a covering or
veil, as it is rendered in the
margin; and therefore our Au-
thor gives Eve very long hair,
"She wore her golden tresses as
a veil down to the slender waist."

And this long hair the Ap^{stle}
considers as an argument and
token of her subjection, a cov-
ering, a veil, in sign that she
is under the power of her
husband, and for the same rea-
son he ^{Milton} says that it implied
subjection. ("with Gordian twine")
with many intricate turnings
twistings, like the famous Gordian
knot, which nobody could untie,
but Alexander cut it with his
sword. Gordius was a Phrygian,
who, from a peasant was raised to
the throne. Having a petition, the
Phrygians consulted the oracle, &
were told that all their troubles

would cease upon their choosing
for their king, the first man they
met, going to the temple of Jupi-
ter, mounted on a chariot. Gord-
ius was the object of their choice,
and he immediately consecrated
his chariot, in the temple of Ju-
piter. The knot, which tied the
yoke to the draught tree, was
made in such an artful manner,
that the end of the cord could
not be perceived. From this cir-
cumstance, a report was soon
spread, that the empire of A-
sia, was promised by the oracle,
to him that cut the Gordian
knot. Alexander in his conquest

of Asia, passed by Gordium, & he
cut the knot with his sword, and
asserted that he fulfilled the oracle.
("His braided train") His plaited twisted
tail. ("And of his fatal guile gave
proof unheeded") That intricate
form, into which he put himself,
was a sort of symbol, or type,
of his fraud, tho' not then regarded.
("Or bedward ruminating") Chewing
the end before they go to bed. ("To
th' ocean iles") The islands in the
western ocean; for that the sun
set in the sea, and rose out of it
again, was an ancient poetic ac-
tion, and has become part of the
wha serology of poetry. ("And in

the "ascending scale of Heaven")
the "balance" of Heaven, or Libra,
is one of the twelve signs, and
when the sun is in that sign,
as he is at the autumnal equi-
-nox, the days and nights are
equal, as if weighed in a balance,
and from hence, our author seems
to have borrowed his metaphor,
of the scales of Heaven, weighing
night & day, the one ascending
as the other sinks. ("Little inferior")
For this there is the authority
of Scripture "Thou hast made
him a little lower than the
angels" ("the partner & the part
of all these joys") of it here used

as among ("This one, this easy charge")
as it is expressed from God's command,
2^d chap Genesis 16. 17 ver: Of every tree
of the garden thou may'st freely
eat; but of the tree of knowledge
of good and evil, thou shalt not eat
of it, for in the day that thou
eatest thereof, thou shalt surely
die." And in this manner when A-
dam says afterwards, "Dominion
given over all other creatures that
possess Earth, air, and sea." it is
taken from the divine commission
1 chap Genesis 20. "Have dominion
over the fish of the sea, and over
the fowl of the air, and over eve-
ry living thing that moveth

upon the earth: "we take notice
of these things, that every reader
may be sensible, how much of
Scripture, Milton hath wrought
into his poem. ("under a platan")

The plane tree, so named from
the breadth of its leaves. Greek-
word signifies broad. ("His flesh,
his bone") The Scripture expression,
"bone of my bone, and flesh of
my flesh" 2^d chap Gen: 23 ver:
as afterwards when he calls her,
"part of my soul" ("his Jupiter")
As the Heaven smiles upon the
air, when it makes the clouds,
and every thing fruitful in the
Spring. This seems to be the mean-

ing of the allegory; for Jupiter
is commonly taken for the Heaven,
or ether, and Juno for the air,
tho' some understand by them
the air and earth. However that
be the expression of the clouds
shedding flowers, is very poetical,
and not unlike that fine one
in the Walms, of "the clouds drop-
ping fatness" ("Gabriel") One of
the Arch-angels, sent to show Daniel
the vision of the four monarchies
and the 70 weeks, 7th and 9th
Chapters Daniel, and to the Virgin
Mary, to reveal the incarnation
of our Saviour, 1st chap Luke. His
name in the Hebrew, signifies
"the man of God, or the strength"

and power of God; "weh, by our
author, placed as chief of the
angelic guards, placed about Pa-
radise. ("thy course by lot") he
speaks, as if the Angels, had their
particular courses, and offices af-
signed them by lot, as the priests
had in the service of the temple
("God's latest image") For the
first was Christ, and before
them, were the Angels. ("Beneath
the Azores") They are islands in
the Atlantic ocean; some confound
the Canaries with them. ("Now
came that evening on") This is the
first evening in the poem; for
the action of the preceding books,
lying out of the sphere of the

sun, the time could not be compa-
red. When Satan came first to the
earth, and made that famous so-
biloquy at the beginning of this
book, the sun was, "high in his
meridian tower;" and this is the
evening of that day; and surely
there never was a finer evening;
("And seasons and their change")
We sh^d understand here the seasons
of the day, and not of the year.
("with this her solemn bird")
The nightingale, "moth musical,
moth melancholy," as he says
else where ("Celestial voices") There
sh^d be a comma after voices—
("Iris) The flower, so called from
resembling the colors of the

Iris, or rainbow, "Iris ah hues"
that is, of ah hues, as a little
before, we have, "inwoven shade
laurel and myrtle" that is of
laurel & myrtle. ("Oleosthion em-
blem") Emblem is here taken in
the sense, of inlaid floors, of
stone or wood, to make mathe-
matical, or pictorial figures.
("Pan" or ^{Elphianus}) The ~~intelligent~~ god of
husbandmen. ("More lovely, than
Pandora") Prometheus, the son of
Japhet, or Japetus, had stolen
fire from Heaven, "love's an-
thetic fire" the original &
prototype of ah earthly fire,
which Jupiter being angry at,

to be revenged sent him Pandora,
so called, because ah the Evils had
contributed their gifts, to make
her more charming (for so the
word signifies). She was brought
by Hermes, or Mercury, but was
not received by Prometheus,
the wisen son of Japhet, (as the
name implies) but by his brother,
Epimetheus "the unwisen son". He
enticed his curiosity, to open a box
which she brought, in which was
contained ah manner of evils.
"How night had measured with her
shadowy cone") A cone is a figure
round at bottom, and lessening ah
the way ends in a point. This is
the form of the shadow of the Earth,

The base of the cone standing upon
that side of the globe where the
Sun is not, and consequently
when it's night there. This cone to
those who are on the darkened
side of the earth, would it be seen,
would mount as the Sun fell lower,
and be at its utmost height, in
the vault of their heaven, when
it was midnight. The shadowy
cone had now risen half way,
consequently, supposing it to be
about the time when the days
and nights were of equal length,
it must be now about 9. 0'clock,
the usual time of the angels setting
their tents, as it immediately follows.
This is marking the time very poetical
- ly.