

Paradise Lost

by John Milton

edited by Eric Armstrong

Notes on this edition

The pronunciations presented here are not necessarily definitive, but are a starting place. Many are choices based on the meter of the line, showing how a word might be pronounced in an attempt to maintain the pentameter. In some cases these pronunciations are quite extreme: witness "ceremony - disyllabic (if possible!) ['sɛə.mənɪ]". Also, I have attempted to give pronunciations to all "unfamiliar" words, or words whose pronunciation isn't immediately obvious from spelling. Not all proper nouns required transcription: "Taurus" seems familiar enough.

I have also chosen, before syllables beginning with r, to leave the schwa in diphthongs that might take "r-colouring" *uncoloured*, or plain : "Oreb" as ['ɔə .rɛb] rather than ['ɔə .rɛb] or ['ɔ .rɛb]. In cases where these diphthongs precede other consonants, I have chosen the r-colouring version, as in "Archangel" - [ɑə 'kɛm dʒɛl]. I feel these choices work best for the stage, but are a matter of taste.

Book I

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
5 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb¹, or of Sinai², didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
10 Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion³ hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's⁴ brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
15 Above th' Aonian⁵ mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

¹Oreb - ['ɔə .rɛb]

²Sinai - ['saɪ .naɪ]

³Sion - ['saɪ .ɒn]

⁴Siloa's - [si 'lou əz]

⁵Aonian - trisyllabic [eɪ 'ou niən]

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
 20 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
 Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That, to the height of this great argument,
 25 I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first--for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of Hell--say first what cause
 Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
 30 Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
 From their Creator, and transgress his will
 For one restraint, lords of the World besides.
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,
 35 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 40 He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
 If he opposed, and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,
 Raised impious⁶ war in Heaven and battle proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
 45 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal⁷ sky,
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamantin⁸e chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent⁹ to arms.

50 Nine times the space that measures day and night
 To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
 55 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
 At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
 60 The dismal situation waste and wild.

⁶impious - disyllabic ['ɪm piəs]

⁷th'ethereal - trisyllabic [ðɪ 'θi riəl]

⁸adamantine - [æ də 'mæn tɪn]

⁹th'Omnipotent - [dɒm 'ni pɒs ,tɛnt]

A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
 No light; but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,
 65 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all, but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
 70 Such place Eternal Justice has prepared
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set,
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven
 As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
 75 Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
 80 Long after known in Palestine, and named
 Beelzebub¹⁰. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
 And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:--

"If thou beest he--but O how fallen! how changed
 85 From him who, in the happy realms of light
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads¹¹, though bright!--if he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise
 90 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
 From what height fallen: so much the stronger proved
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 95 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
 100 And to the fierce contentions brought along
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
 105 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost--the unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield:
 And what is else not to be overcome?

¹⁰Beelzebub - [bi 'eɪ zɪ ,bʌb]

¹¹Myriads - ['mɪ rɪ ,ədz]

110 That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify¹² his power
 Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
 Doubted his empire--that were low indeed;
 115 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,
 And this empyreal¹³ substance, cannot fail;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 120 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

 125 So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer¹⁴!--

 "O Prince, O Chief of many thronèd Powers
 That led th' embattled Seraphim¹⁵ to war
 130 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
 Too well I see and rue the dire event
 135 That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and heavenly Essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 140 Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.
 But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 145 Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 150 By right of war, whate'er his business be,
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep?
 What can it then avail though yet we feel
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being
 155 To undergo eternal punishment?"

¹²deify - [ˈdeɪˌfaɪ]

¹³empyreal - trisyllabic [ɛmˈpɪrɪəl]

¹⁴compeer - [kəmˈpɛə]

¹⁵Seraphim - [ˈsɛrəˌfɪm]

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied:--
 "Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
 Doing or suffering: but of this be sure--
 To do aught¹⁶ good never will be our task,
 160 But ever to do ill our sole delight,
 As being the contrary to his high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,
 165 And out of good still to find means of evil;
 Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see! the angry Victor hath recalled
 170 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
 Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
 The fiery surge that from the precipice¹⁷
 Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
 175 Winged with red lightning and impetuous¹⁸ rage,
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
 Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate¹⁹ fury yield it from our Foe.

 180 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither²⁰ let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 185 There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
 And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire calamity,
 190 What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
 If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
 195 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian²¹ or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,

¹⁶aught - [ˈɔt]

¹⁷precipice - [ˈpɹɛ sɪ ˌpɪs]

¹⁸impetuous - trisyllabic [ɪm ˈpɛ ˌtɪuəs]

¹⁹satiate - disyllabic [ˈseɪ ʃɪət]

²⁰thither - [ˈðɪ ðə]

²¹Titanian - trisyllabic [taɪ ˈteɪ niən]

Briareos²² or Typhon²³, whom the den
 200 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
 Leviathan²⁴, which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream.
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-founded skiff,
 205 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.

 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,
 210 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
 Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 215 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn²⁵
 On Man by him seduced, but on himself
 220 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.

 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
 225 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
 He lights--if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 230 And such appeared in hue as when the force
 Of subterranean²⁶ wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
 Of thundering Etna, whose combustible
 And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
 235 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singèd bottom all involved
 With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian²⁷ flood
 240 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
 Not by the sufferance of supernal²⁸ Power.

²²Briareos - [bɹiːrɪ 'eɪ əs]

²³Typhon - ['taɪ fən]

²⁴Leviathan - [lɪ 'vaɪ ə θæn]

²⁵shewn - archaic spelling of shown [ʃoʊn] or [ʃeʊn] or [ʃun]

²⁶subterranean - [sʌb tə 'tɛrɪ nɪən]

²⁷Stygian - ['strɪ dʒɪən]

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
 Said then the lost Archangel²⁹, "this the seat
 That we must change for Heaven?--this mournful gloom
 245 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
 Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 250 Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
 Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor--one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 255 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 260 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 265 Th' associates³⁰ and co-partners of our loss,
 Lie thus astonished on th' oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 270 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub
 Thus answered:--"Leader of those armies bright
 Which, but th' Omnipotent, none could have foiled!
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 275 Of hope in fears and dangers--heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults
 Their surest signal--they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 280 Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious³¹ height!"

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
 285 Ethereal³² temper, massy, large, and round,

²⁸supernal - [su 'pɜː nəl]

²⁹Archangel - [ɑː 'keɪn dʒəl]

³⁰associates - trisyllabic [ə 'sɒʊ fɪts]

³¹pernicious - [pə 'nɪ fəs]

³²Ethereal - [ɪ 'θi ɪəl]

Behind him cast. The broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening, from the top of Fesole³³,
 290 Or in Valdarno³⁴, to descry new lands,
 Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
 His spear--to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great admiral, were but a wand--
 295 He walked with, to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marl, not like those steps
 On Heaven's azure³⁵; and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
 Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
 300 Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called
 His legions--Angel Forms, who lay entranced
 Thick as autumnal³⁶ leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
 High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
 305 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
 Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris³⁷ and his Memphian³⁸ chivalry,
 While with perfidious³⁹ hatred they pursued
 The sojourners⁴⁰ of Goshen⁴¹, who beheld
 310 From the safe shore their floating carcasses
 And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He called so loud that all the hollow deep
 315 Of Hell resounded:--"Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the Flower of Heaven--once yours; now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 320 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds
 Cherub⁴² and Seraph⁴³ rolling in the flood

³³Fesole - ['fi zə ,leɪ]

³⁴Valdarno - [vɒl 'dɑː nou]

³⁵azure - ['æ ʒɪʊə]

³⁶autumnal - [ɒ tʌm nəl]

³⁷Busiris - [bʊ 'saɪ ɪs]

³⁸Memphian - ['mem fiən]

³⁹perfidious - [pə 'fi dɪəs]

⁴⁰sojourners - [sə 'dʒɜː nəz]

⁴¹Goshen - ['gou ʃən]

⁴²Cherub - ['tʃɛə ɪb]

⁴³Seraph - ['sɛə ɪf]

- 325 With scattered arms and ensigns⁴⁴, till anon
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
 Th' advantage, and, descending, tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?
 330 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
- They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 335 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's⁴⁵ son, in Egypt's evil day,
 340 Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious⁴⁶ Pharaoh hung
 Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;
 So numberless were those bad Angels seen
 345 Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 350 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
 A multitude like which the populous North
 Poured never from her frozen loins to pass
 Rhene⁴⁷ or the Danaw⁴⁸, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
 355 Beneath Gibraltar⁴⁹ to the Libyan sands.
 Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great Commander--godlike Shapes, and Forms
 Excelling human; princely Dignities;
 360 And Powers that erst⁵⁰ in Heaven sat on thrones,
 Though on their names in Heavenly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and razed
 By their rebellion from the Books of Life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 365 Got them new names, till, wand'ring o'er the earth,
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part

⁴⁴ensigns - ['ɛn sɒnz]

⁴⁵Amram's - ['æm jæmz]

⁴⁶impious - disyllabic ['ɪm piəs]

⁴⁷Rhene - [ri:n]

⁴⁸Danaw - [də 'nɔ]

⁴⁹Gibraltar - [dʒɪ 'bɪrəl tər]

⁵⁰erst - [ɜːst]

Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and th' invisible
 370 Glory of him that made them to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 375 And various idols through the heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
 At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
 380 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof?

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
 Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,
 Their altars by his altar, gods adored
 385 Among the nations round, and durst abide
 Jehovah⁵¹ thundering out of Sion, throned
 Between the Cherubim⁵²; yea, often placed
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
 Abominations; and with cursèd things
 390 His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.
 First, Moloch⁵³, horrid king, besmeared with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
 Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
 395 Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite⁵⁴
 Worshipped in Rabba⁵⁵ and her watery plain,
 In Argob⁵⁶ and in Basan⁵⁷, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon⁵⁸. Nor content with such
 400 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
 His temple right against the temple of God
 On that opprobrious⁵⁹ hill, and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom⁶⁰, Tophet⁶¹ thence

⁵¹Jehovah - [dʒə 'hɒv vʌ]

⁵²Cherubim - ['tʃɛə rʊ bɪm]

⁵³Moloch - ['mɒ lək]

⁵⁴Ammonite - ['æ mə nɑɪt]

⁵⁵Rabba - ['ræ bə]

⁵⁶Argob - ['ɑə ɡɒb]

⁵⁷Basan - ['bæ sən]

⁵⁸Arnon - [ɑə nɒn]

⁵⁹opprobrious - trisyllabic [ə 'prɒv brɪəs]

⁶⁰Hinnom - ['hɪ nəm]

⁶¹Tophet - ['tɒ fət]

405 And black Gehenna⁶² called, the type of Hell.
 Next Chemos⁶³, th' obscene dread of Moab's⁶⁴ sons,
 From Aroar⁶⁵ to Nebo⁶⁶ and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim⁶⁷; in Hesebon⁶⁸
 And Horonaim⁶⁹, Seon's⁷⁰ realm, beyond
 410 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
 And Eleale⁷¹ to th' Asphaltic⁷² Pool:
 Peor⁷³ his other name, when he enticed
 Israel in Sittim⁷⁴, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 415 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of ⁷⁵Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,
 Till good Josiah⁷⁶ drove them thence to Hell.
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood
 420 Of old Euphrates⁷⁷ to the brook that parts
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baalim⁷⁸ and Ashtaroth⁷⁹--those male,
 These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 425 And uncompounded is their essence pure,
 Not tried or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 430 Can execute their airy purposes,
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 435 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low

⁶²Gehenna - [gə 'he nə]

⁶³Chemos - ['ki mous]

⁶⁴Moab's - ['mou æbz]

⁶⁵Aroar - ['æ ɹou ,ɑə]

⁶⁶Nebo - ['ni bou]

⁶⁷Abarim - ['æ bə ,ɪm]

⁶⁸Hesebon - ['he zə ,bɒn]

⁶⁹Horonaim - [hɒ ɹə 'naɪ ɪm]

⁷⁰Seon's - ['seɪ ɒnz]

⁷¹Eleale - [ɛ li 'æ le]

⁷²th' Asphaltic - [ðæs 'fɒl tɪk]

⁷³Peor - [pi ɔə]

⁷⁴Sittim - ['sɪ tɪm]

⁷⁵Moloch - ['mɒ lək]

⁷⁶Josiah - [dʒou 'saɪ ə]

⁷⁷Euphrates - [ju 'fɹeɪ tɪz]

⁷⁸Baalim - ['bɑ: lɪm]

⁷⁹Ashtaroth - [æʃ tə 'ɪθθ]

Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth⁸⁰, whom the Phoenicians⁸¹ called
 Astarte⁸², queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
 440 To whose bright image nightly by the moon
 Sidonian⁸³ virgins paid their vows and songs;
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious⁸⁴ king whose heart, though large,
 445 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. Thammuz⁸⁵ came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
 450 While smooth Adonis from his native rock
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 455 Ezekiel⁸⁶ saw, when, by the vision led,
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
 460 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge⁸⁷,
 Where he fell flat and shamed his worshippers:
 Dagon⁸⁸ his name, sea-monster, upward man
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high
 Reared in Azotus⁸⁹, dreaded through the coast
 465 Of Palestine, in Gath⁹⁰ and Ascalon⁹¹,
 And Accaron⁹² and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him followed Rimmon⁹³, whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana⁹⁴ and Pharphar⁹⁵, lucid streams.

⁸⁰Astoreth - [ˌɑs tɔə ˈɪθ]

⁸¹Phoenicians - [fə ˈni ʃənz]

⁸²Astarte - [æs ˈtɑː te]

⁸³Sidonian - [sɪ ˈdɔʊ niən]

⁸⁴uxorious - [ˈʌk ˈsɔː riəs]

⁸⁵Thammuz - [θæ ˈmuːz]

⁸⁶Ezekiel - [i ˈzi kiəl]

⁸⁷grunsel - [ˈɡrʌn zəl]

⁸⁸Dagon - [ˈdeɪ ɡɒn]

⁸⁹Azotus - [ə ˈzɔʊ təs]

⁹⁰Gath - [gɑθ]

⁹¹Ascalon - [ˈɑ ske ˌlɒn]

⁹²Accaron - [ˈɑ kə ˌrɒn]

⁹³Rimmon - [ˈri mən]

⁹⁴Abbana - [ˈæ bə ˌnɑ]

470 He also against the house of God was bold:
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king--
 Ahaz⁹⁶, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage and displace
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 475 His odious offerings, and adore the gods
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
 A crew who, under names of old renown--
 Osiris⁹⁷, Isis⁹⁸, Orus⁹⁹, and their train--
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
 480 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
 Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed
 The calf in Oreb¹⁰⁰; and the rebel king
 485 Doubled that sin in Bethel¹⁰¹ and in Dan,
 Likening¹⁰² his Maker to the grazèd ox--
 Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
 From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
 490 Belial¹⁰³ came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 495 Turns atheist, as did Eli's ¹⁰⁴sons, who filled
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 500 And injury and outrage; and, when night
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom¹⁰⁵, and that night
 In Gibeah¹⁰⁶, when th' hospitable door
 505 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might:

⁹⁵Pharphar - ['fʌə fʌə]

⁹⁶Ahaz - [eɪ 'hɒz]

⁹⁷Osiris - [oʊ 'saɪ rəs]

⁹⁸Isis - ['aɪ sɪs]

⁹⁹Orus - ['ɔə rəs]

¹⁰⁰Oreb - ['ɔə rəb]

¹⁰¹Bethel - ['be θəl]

¹⁰²Likening - disyllabic ['laɪ knɪŋ]

¹⁰³Belial - trochaic ['be lɪəl]

¹⁰⁴Eli's - ['i laɪz]

¹⁰⁵Sodom - ['sɒ dəm]

¹⁰⁶Gibeah - ['gɪ be ə]

The rest were long to tell; though far renowned
 Th' Ionian gods--of Javan's ¹⁰⁷issue held
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
 510 Their boasted parents;--Titan, Heaven's first-born,
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
 By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
 His own and Rhea's¹⁰⁸ son, like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reigned. These, first in Crete
 515 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
 Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian¹⁰⁹ cliff,
 Or in Dodona¹¹⁰, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric¹¹¹ land; or who with Saturn old
 520 Fled over Adria¹¹² to th' Hesperian¹¹³ fields,
 And o'er the Celtic¹¹⁴ roamed the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
 Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared
 Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief
 525 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
 In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
 Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
 530 Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
 Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared
 His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed
 Azazel as his right, a Cherub¹¹⁵ tall:
 535 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
 Th' imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
 Seraphic¹¹⁶ arms and trophies; all the while
 540 Sonorous¹¹⁷ metal blowing martial sounds:
 At which the universal host up-sent
 A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen

¹⁰⁷Javan's - ['dʒæ vənʒ]

¹⁰⁸Rhea's - ['ri əz]

¹⁰⁹Delphian - ['dɛl fɪən]

¹¹⁰Dodona - [də 'dou nə]

¹¹¹Doric - ['dɒ ɪk]

¹¹²Adria - ['eɪ dɪə]

¹¹³th' Hesperian - [ðes 'pɛə ɪən]

¹¹⁴Celtic - ['kɛl tɪk]

¹¹⁵Cherub - [tʃɛə ɪəb]

¹¹⁶Seraphic - [sɛə 'ɪæ fɪk]

¹¹⁷Sonorous - ['sɒ nə ɪəs]

545 Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
 With orient colours waving: with them rose
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
 Appeared, and serried¹¹⁸ shields in thick array
 Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
 550 In perfect phalanx¹¹⁹ to the Dorian¹²⁰ mood
 Of flutes and soft recorders--such as raised
 To height of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle, and instead of rage
 Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved
 555 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
 Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
 560 Breathing united force with fixèd thought,
 Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now
 Advanced in view they stand--a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 565 Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
 Had to impose. He through the armèd files
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views--their order due,
 570 Their visages¹²¹ and stature as of gods;
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
 Glories: for never, since created Man,
 Met such embodied force as, named with these,
 575 Could merit more than that small infantry
 Warred on by cranes--though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra¹²² with th' heroic race were joined
 That fought at Thebes¹²³ and Ilium¹²⁴, on each side
 Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
 580 In fable or romance of Uther's¹²⁵ son,
 Begirt¹²⁶ with British and Armoric¹²⁷ knights;
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont¹²⁸, or Montalban¹²⁹,

¹¹⁸serried - ['sɛ ɪd]

¹¹⁹phalanx - ['fæ læŋks]

¹²⁰Dorian - ['dɔə ɪən]

¹²¹visages - ['vɪ zə ,dʒəz]

¹²²Phlegra - ['fle grə]

¹²³Thebes - [θɪbz]

¹²⁴Ilium - ['ɪ liəm]

¹²⁵Uther's - ['uθəz]

¹²⁶Begirt - [bi 'gɜ:t]

¹²⁷Armoric - [ɑə 'mɒ ɪk]

¹²⁸Aspramont - ['æs prə ,mɒnt]

585 Damasco¹³⁰, or Marocco, or Trebison¹³¹,
 Or whom Biserta¹³² sent from Afric shore
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia¹³³. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
 Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
 590 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness, nor appeared
 Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
 595 Looks through the horizontal misty air
 Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
 600 Above them all th' Archangel: but his face
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
 605 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
 (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
 For ever now to have their lot in pain--
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
 610 Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
 For his revolt--yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
 Hath scathed¹³⁴ the forest oaks or mountain pines,
 With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,
 615 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.
 Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 620 Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way:--

"O myriads¹³⁵ of immortal Spirits! O Powers
 Matchless, but with th' Almighty!--and that strife
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
 625 As this place testifies, and this dire change,
 Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,

¹²⁹Montalban - ['mɒn təl ,bʌn]

¹³⁰Damasco - [də 'mæs kou]

¹³¹Trebison^d - ['triɛ bi ,sɒnd]

¹³²Biserta - [bi 'sɜː tə]

¹³³Fontarabbia - [fɒn tə 'ɪæ biə]

¹³⁴scathed - [skeɪðd]

¹³⁵myriads - ['mi ɪədz]

Forseeing or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
 How such united force of gods, how such
 630 As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant¹³⁶ legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
 635 For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
 If counsels different¹³⁷, or danger shunned
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
 Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 640 Consent or custom, and his regal state
 Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed--
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 645 New war provoked: our better part remains
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not; that he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force hath overcome but half his foe.
 650 Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
 There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.
 655 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
 Our first eruption--thither, or elsewhere;
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th' Abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 660 Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;
 For who can think submission? War, then, war
 Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 665 Of mighty Cherubim¹³⁸; the sudden blaze
 Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
 670 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
 Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf--undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,

¹³⁶puissant - ['pwi sɒnt]

¹³⁷different - trisyllabic ['dɪ fə ˌɪnnt]

¹³⁸Cherubim - ['tʃɛə ɹʊ bɪm]

The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,
 675 A numerous¹³⁹ brigade hastened: as when bands
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon¹⁴⁰ led them on--
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
 680 From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
 In vision beatific¹⁴¹. By him first
 685 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
 Ransacked the centre, and with impious¹⁴² hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
 690 And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
 Of Babel¹⁴³, and the works of Memphian¹⁴⁴ kings,
 695 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they, with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
 700 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.
 705 A third as soon had formed within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 710 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet¹⁴⁵ symphonies and voices sweet--
 Built like a temple, where pilasters¹⁴⁶ round
 Were set, and Doric¹⁴⁷ pillars overlaid

¹³⁹numerous - disyllabic [ˈnum ɹʌs]

¹⁴⁰Mammon - [ˈmæ mən]

¹⁴¹beatific - [bi ə ˈti fɪk]

¹⁴²impious - disyllabic [ˈɪm piəs]

¹⁴³Babel - [ˈbeɪ bəl]

¹⁴⁴Memphian - disyllabic [ˈmem fiən]

¹⁴⁵dulcet - [ˈdʌl sət]

¹⁴⁶pilasters - [pi ˈlæ stəz]

¹⁴⁷Doric - [dɔɪ ɹɪk]

715 With golden architrave¹⁴⁸; nor did there want
 Cornice¹⁴⁹ or frieze¹⁵⁰, with bossy sculptures graven;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
 Nor great Alcairo¹⁵¹ such magnificence
 Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
 720 Belus¹⁵² or Serapis¹⁵³ their gods, or seat
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,
 Opening¹⁵⁴ their brazen folds, discover, wide
 725 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets¹⁵⁵, fed
 With naphtha¹⁵⁶ and asphaltus¹⁵⁷, yielded light
 730 As from a sky. The hasty multitude
 Admiring entered; and the work some praise,
 And some the architect. His hand was known
 In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
 Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
 735 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 740 Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
 From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day, and with the setting sun
 745 Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
 On Lemnos¹⁵⁸, th' Aegaeon¹⁵⁹ isle. Thus they relate,
 Erring¹⁶⁰; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
 To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape
 750 By all his engines, but was headlong sent,
 With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

¹⁴⁸architrave - ['ɑː kɪ ˌtɹeɪv]

¹⁴⁹Cornice - ['kɔː nɪs]

¹⁵⁰frieze - ['fɹiːz]

¹⁵¹Alcairo - [æɫ 'kaɪ ɹoʊ]

¹⁵²Belus - ['be ləs]

¹⁵³Serapis - [seə ɹə ˌpɪs]

¹⁵⁴Opening - disyllabic ['oʊ pɪŋ]

¹⁵⁵cressets - ['kɹe sətʃ]

¹⁵⁶naphtha - ['næp θə]

¹⁵⁷asphaltus - [æʃ 'fɒl təs]

¹⁵⁸Lemnos - ['lem nous]

¹⁵⁹th' Aegaeon - [ði 'gi ən]

¹⁶⁰Erring - ['ɜː ɹɪŋ]

Meanwhile the wingèd Heralds, by command
 Of sovereign¹⁶¹ power¹⁶², with awful ceremony¹⁶³
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 755 A solemn council forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium¹⁶⁴, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
 From every band and squarèd regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest¹⁶⁵: they anon
 760 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
 Attended. All access was thronged; the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a covered field, where champions¹⁶⁶ bold
 Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's¹⁶⁷ chair
 765 Defied the best of Paynim¹⁶⁸ chivalry
 To mortal combat, or career with lance),
 Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
 Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 770 In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
 In clusters; they among fresh dewes and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate¹⁶⁹, and confer
 775 Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd
 Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given¹⁷⁰,
 Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 780 Throng numberless--like that pygmean¹⁷¹ race
 Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
 785 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
 Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund¹⁷² music charm his ear;
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal¹⁷³ Spirits to smallest forms

¹⁶¹sovereign - disyllabic ['sɒ vɹɪn]

¹⁶²power - monosyllabic [paʊə]

¹⁶³ceremony - disyllabic (if possible!) ['sɛ rəmənɪ]

¹⁶⁴Pandemonium - [ˌpæn de 'mou ni əm]

¹⁶⁵worthiest - disyllabic ['wɜː ðɪəst]

¹⁶⁶champions -disyllabic ['tʃæm piənz]

¹⁶⁷Soldan's - ['soul dənz]

¹⁶⁸Paynim - ['peɪ nɪm]

¹⁶⁹expatiate - [eks 'peɪ ʃɪət]

¹⁷⁰given - monosyllabic [gɪvɪn]

¹⁷¹pygmean - disyllabic ['piɡ ˈ miən]

¹⁷²jocund - ['dʒʊ kənd]

790 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
 Though without number still, amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,
 The great Seraphic¹⁷⁴ Lords and Cherubim¹⁷⁵
 795 In close recess and secret conclave sat,
 A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full. After short silence then,
 And summons read, the great consult began.

¹⁷³incorporeal - trisyllabic [ɪn 'kɔː pɪəl]

¹⁷⁴Seraphic - [sɛə 'ræ fik]

¹⁷⁵Cherubim - ['tʃɛə .ru ,bɪm]