

~ BOOK I ~

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

CHAPTER 1

1. *Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit*
2. *Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast*
3. *Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,*
4. *With loss of Eden, till one greater Man*
5. *Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,*
6. *Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top*
7. *Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire*
8. *That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,*
9. *In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth*
10. *Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill*
11. *Delight thee more, and Siloa's Brook that flow'd*
12. *Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence*
13. *Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,*
14. *That with no middle flight intends to soar*
15. *Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues*
16. *Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.*
17. *And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer*
18. *Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,*
19. *Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first*
20. *Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread*
21. *Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss*
22. *And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark*
23. *Illumin, what is low raise and support;*
24. *That to the highth of this great Argument*
25. *I may assert Eternal Providence,*
26. *And justify the wayes of God to men.*
27. *Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view*
28. *Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause*
29. *Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,*
30. *Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off*
31. *From thir Creator, and transgress his Will*
32. *For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?*
33. *Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?*
34. *Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile*
35. *Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd*
36. *The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride*
37. *Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host*
38. *Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring*
39. *To set himself in Glory above his Peers,*
40. *He trusted to have equal'd the most High,*
41. *If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim*
42. *Against the Throne and Monarchy of God*
43. *Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud*
44. *With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power*
45. *Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie*
46. *With hideous ruine and combustion down*
47. *To bottomless perdition, there to dwell*
48. *In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,*
49. *Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.*

50. *Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night*
51. *To mortal men, he with his horrid crew*
52. *Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe*
53. *Confounded though immortal: But his doom*
54. *Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought*
55. *Both of lost happiness and lasting pain*
56. *Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes*
57. *That witness'd huge affliction and dismay*
58. *Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:*

1. Tell me about man's first sin, when he tasted the forbidden fruit and caused all our troubles, until Jesus came and saved us.
6. Inspire me with this knowledge. You are the heavenly spirit who inspired Moses in his teachings.
12. I'm asking for your help because I want to write a great work different from any that was ever written before.
17. I want you to teach me, Holy Spirit, because you value goodness more than fancy churches.
19. You know everything. You were there at the Beginning. You sat like a dove with your wings spread over the dark emptiness and made it come to life.
23. Enlighten me where I am ignorant and strengthen my abilities so that I can correctly explain God's great purpose to men.
27. You know everything about Heaven and Hell, so tell me, what was it that made Adam and Eve go against God's orders? They seemed so happy. He had given them the whole world, except for one little thing.
33. Who made them do this awful thing? It was that snake from Hell, wasn't it. His envy and thirst for revenge made him go trick Eve the way he did.
37. His pride had got him thrown out of Heaven with all his followers. They supported him in his ambition to glorify himself - even to the point of waging war against God.
44. But he was doomed to fail. After a terrible war, God threw him into Hell for daring to fight him.
50. For nine days he and his evil followers were lying helpless in the fires of Hell.
54. But soon he grew angry, thinking about all the lost pleasures and the unending pain.
56. He looked around and saw a lot of suffering. But he only felt stubborn pride and hatefulness.

59. *At once as far as Angels kenn he views*  
 60. *The dismal Situation waste and wilde,*  
 61. *A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round*  
 62. *As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames*  
 63. *No light, but rather darkness visible*  
 64. *Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe,*  
 65. *Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace*  
 66. *And rest can never dwell, hope never comes*  
 67. *That comes to all; but torture without end*  
 68. *Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed*  
 69. *With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:*  
 70. *Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd*  
 71. *For those rebellious, here thir Prison ordain'd*  
 72. *In utter darkness, and thir portion set*  
 73. *As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n*  
 74. *As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole.*  
 75. *O how unlike the place from whence they fell!*  
 76. *There the companions of his fall, o'whelm'd*  
 77. *With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,*  
 78. *He soon discerns, and weltring by his side*  
 79. *One next himself in power, and next in crime,*  
 80. *Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd*  
 81. *Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,*  
 82. *And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words*  
 83. *Breaking the horrid silence thus began.*  
 84. *If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd*  
 85. *From him, who in the happy Realms of Light*  
 86. *Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine*  
 87. *Myriads though bright: If he Whom mutual league,*  
 88. *United thoughts and counsels, equal hope*  
 89. *And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,*  
 90. *Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd*  
 91. *In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest*  
 92. *From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd*  
 93. *He with his Thunder: and till then who knew*  
 94. *The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those,*  
 95. *Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage*  
 96. *Can else inflict, do I repent or change,*  
 97. *Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind*  
 98. *And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,*  
 99. *That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,*

100. *And to the fierce contention brought along*  
 101. *Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd*  
 102. *That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,*  
 103. *His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd*  
 104. *In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,*  
 105. *And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?*  
 106. *All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,*  
 107. *And study of revenge, immortal hate,*  
 108. *And courage never to submit or yield:*  
 109. *And what is else not to be overcome?*  
 110. *That Glory never shall his wrath or might*  
 111. *Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace*  
 112. *With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,*  
 113. *Who from the terrour of this Arm so late*  
 114. *Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,*  
 115. *That were an ignominy and shame beneath*  
 116. *This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods*  
 117. *And this Empyrean substance cannot fail,*  
 118. *Since through experience of this great event*

59. As far as he could see there were flames, but they burned dark instead of bright, and they only revealed sorrow and hopelessness.

60. These fires would never go out and the torture would never end.

70. This is the place Justice made for those who rebel against God.

73. It was as far from Heaven and Heaven's light and as different from Heaven as it could be.

76. This is where he saw all his defeated followers. And there, wallowing in the flames right next to him, was his top assistant.

80. Later we would know him as Beelzebub.

81. His leader, who they called Satan, finally spoke.

84. **“Is this really you? If you are who I think you are, how you've changed! Your brightness that outshined everyone is gone.**

87. *If you're the one who joined me in planning and undertaking our grand mission--it looks like now we are joined again, but in misery.*

92. *Look at how far we fell! It turns out he was much stronger than us after all, but how could we know that?*

94. *But I don't care what he did to us, or may still do, I'm not sorry. And I'm not going to change.*

97. *My appearance may have changed, but the indignity I suffered that caused me to fight him hasn't changed.*

100. *And what made the multitudes agree with me and join me in battling him and shaking up his kingdom--that hasn't changed.*

105. *So what if we lost some ground? He'll never be able to take away my free will, my revenge, my hate, or my courage never to give up.*

109. *And if I still have all that, what did he win?*

111. *Am I supposed to kneel and beg for mercy from him who I just gave some serious worry about the safety of his empire?*

115. *That would be worse shame than the defeat we just had.*

117. *We can't die, and we can't be physically hurt, but we have learned a lot from this experience.*

119. *In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,*  
 120. *We may with more successful hope resolve*  
 121. *To wage by force or guile eternal Warr*  
 122. *Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe,*  
 123. *Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy*  
 124. *Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.*  
 125. *So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain,*  
 126. *Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:*  
 127. *And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.*  
 128. *O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,*  
 129. *That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr*  
 130. *Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds*  
 131. *Fearless, endanger'd Heav'ns perpetual King;*  
 132. *And put to proof his high Supremacy,*  
 133. *Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,*  
 134. *Too well I see and rue the dire event,*  
 135. *That with sad overthrow and foul defeat*  
 136. *Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host*  
 137. *In horrible destruction laid thus low,*  
 138. *As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences*  
 139. *Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains*  
 140. *Invincible, and vigour soon returns,*  
 141. *Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state*  
 142. *Here swallow'd up in endless misery.*  
 143. *But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now*  
 144. *Of force believe Almighty, since no less*  
 145. *Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours)*  
 146. *Have left us this our spirit and strength intire*  
 147. *Strongly to suffer and support our pains,*  
 148. *That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,*  
 149. *Or do him mightier service as his thralls*  
 150. *By right of Warr, what e're his business be*  
 151. *Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,*  
 152. *Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;*

118. *And what made the multitudes agree with me and join me in battling him and shaking up his kingdom--that hasn't changed.*  
 119. *So what if we lost some ground? He'll never be able to take away my free will, my revenge, my hate, or my courage never to give up.*  
 120. *And if I still have all that, what did he win?*  
 121. *Am I supposed to kneel and beg for mercy from him who I just gave some serious worry about the safety of his empire?*  
 122. *That would be worse shame than the defeat we just had.*  
 123. *We can't die, and we can't be physically hurt, but we have learned a lot from this experience.*  
  
 120. *Whether we do it by outright battle or some more devious way, we can fight our enemy forever--that tyrant in Heaven who sits there now, gloating over his victory.”*  
 125. *Satan said these words forcefully though he was in pain and despair.*  
 127. *Beelzebub responded, “Oh Prince, you bravely led the rebelling angels against Heaven's king.*  
 132. *But he defeated us, whether by his greater strength or just good luck, I don't know.*  
 134. *Now, too late, I see only too well the sad outcome of our plan--the loss of Heaven, and all our comrades left in such sad shape.*  
 138. *But we are like gods and can't die. Our minds and spirits are indestructible, and soon our strength will return, although our glory and joy are gone forever.*  
 143. *Now I think our Conqueror must really be almighty. How else could he defeat an army like ours?*  
 146. *But what if he left us alive just to make us suffer?*  
 149. *Or maybe he wants to make us his slaves to do whatever strange things he thinks up for us to do in this dark pit.*

153. *What can it then avail though yet we feel*  
 154. *Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being*  
 155. *To undergo eternal punishment?*  
 156. *Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.*  
 157. *Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable*  
 158. *Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,*  
 159. *To do ought good never will be our task,*  
 160. *But ever to do ill our sole delight,*  
 161. *As being the contrary to his high will*  
 162. *Whom we resist. If then his Providence*  
 163. *Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,*  
 164. *Our labour must be to pervert that end,*  
 165. *And out of good still to find means of evil;*  
 166. *Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps*  
 167. *Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb*  
 168. *His inmost counsels from thir destin'd aim.*  
 169. *But see the angry Victor hath recall'd*  
 170. *His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit*  
 171. *Back to the Gates of Heav'n: The Sulphurous Hail*  
 172. *Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid*  
 173. *The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice*  
 174. *Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,*  
 175. *Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,*  
 176. *Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now*  
 177. *To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.*  
 178. *Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,*  
 179. *Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.*  
 180. *Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,*  
 181. *The seat of desolation, voyd of light,*  
 182. *Save what the glimmering of these livid flames*  
 183. *Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend*  
 184. *From off the tossing of these fiery waves,*  
 185. *There rest, if any rest can harbour there,*  
 186. *And reassembling our afflicted Powers,*  
 187. *Consult how we may henceforth most offend*  
 188. *Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,*  
 189. *How overcome this dire Calamity,*  
 190. *What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,*  
 191. *If not what resolution from despare.*  
 192. *Thus Satan talking to his nearest Mate*  
 193. *With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes*  
 194. *That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides*  
 195. *Prone on the Flood, extended long and large*  
 196. *Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge*  
 197. *As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,*  
 198. *Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,*  
 199. *Briareos or Typhon, whom the Den*  
 200. *By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast*  
 201. *Leviathan, which God of all his works*  
 202. *Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:*  
 203. *Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam*  
 204. *The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,*  
 205. *Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,*  
 206. *With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind*  
 207. *Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night*  
 208. *Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delays:*

153. *What good is it if we remain alive and healthy forever if it's only so we can suffer forever?"*
156. Satan answered quickly, *"I know it stinks to be under his power, but I'll tell you one thing--we will never do good deeds again. We'll get all our pleasure from doing evil, because it's the opposite of what he wants.*
162. *And if he tries to turn our evil actions into something good, we'll find another way to turn them into evil again.*
166. *And sometimes we'll succeed, and disrupt his plans and cause him a lot of grief.*
169. *But look around--the enemy forces have gone back to Heaven, and the storm that surrounded us is calm now.*
178. *Maybe his anger has been satisfied, or maybe he's turning his back on us in contempt--either way, let's take advantage of the opportunity.*
180. *See that dark barren plain over there?*
183. *Let's get out of these flames and go rest there--if we can get any rest in this miserable place.*
186. *Let's gather everybody there and decide how we can recover from this disaster and make more trouble for the enemy."*
192. As Satan spoke to his companion only his head and blazing eyes were up above the flames.
194. The rest of his body was stretched out on the lake of fire like a big whale--the kind that sailors, they say, sometimes mistake for an island and spend the night anchored by its side.

209. *So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay*  
 210. *Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence*  
 211. *Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will*  
 212. *And high permission of all-ruling Heaven*  
 213. *Left him at large to his own dark designs,*  
 214. *That with reiterated crimes he might*  
 215. *Heap on himself damnation, while he sought*  
 216. *Evil to others, and enrag'd might see*  
 217. *How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth*  
 218. *Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn*  
 219. *On Man by him seduc't, but on himself*  
 220. *Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.*  
 221. *Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool*  
 222. *His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames*  
 223. *Driv'n backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld*  
 224. *In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid Vale.*  
 225. *Then with expanded wings he steers his flight*  
 226. *Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air*  
 227. *That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land*  
 228. *He lights, if it were Land that ever burn'd*  
 229. *With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;*  
 230. *And such appear'd in hue, as when the force*  
 231. *Of subterranean wind transports a Hill*  
 232. *Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side*  
 233. *Of thundring Ætna, whose combustible*  
 234. *And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,*  
 235. *Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,*  
 236. *And leave a singed bottom all involv'd*  
 237. *With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole*  
 238. *Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,*  
 239. *Both glorying to have scap't the Stygian flood*  
 240. *As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength,*  
 241. *Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.*

210. And he might never have got out of that lake, or even lifted his head, if God didn't decide to allow it.
214. God left him free to commit his many crimes and pile more damnation on himself while he tried to harm others.
217. But he would find that the result would be God's goodness, grace, and mercy given to man, while he suffered God's punishment over and over.
221. So Satan got up, and the flames rolled back leaving a big open space where he had been lying.
225. Then he spread his wings and flew up into the polluted air and landed on dry land--if you could call it land, since it was as hot as fire.
230. The smoke and the stink and the color of the hill was like an erupted volcano.
237. This land was meant for people who were not blessed.
238. Beelzebub followed Satan. They were both proud to have gotten out of the lake by their own power, or so they believed.