

Paradise Lost: Book 1 Quotations

Writer: John Milton | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

“Of Man’s first disobedience, and the Fruit / Of that Forbidden Tree...”

Exp:

This line introduces the main theme of

Paradise Lost

. It refers to Adam and Eve’s sin of eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Their disobedience brought sin, death, and suffering into the world. Milton begins the poem by focusing on this act as the root of humanity’s fall.

“Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable, Doing or suffering; but of this be sure, To do aught good never will be our task...”

Exp:

Satan speaks to Beelzebub here. He says being weak is the worst thing, whether in action or in suffering. He promises they will never do good and will only focus on opposing God.

“The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.”

Exp:

In

Paradise Lost

Book One, Satan says that the mind is very powerful. He means that how we think can change how we feel. Even in Hell, a strong mind can find hope, and even in Heaven, a weak mind can feel unhappy.

“Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.”

Exp:

In *Paradise Lost* Book One, Satan says this line to show his pride and refusal to serve God. He thinks it is better to be a leader in Hell, even in pain, than to be a servant in Heaven. This

shows his desire for freedom and power, even if it brings suffering. Satan values independence more than peace or happiness.

“Awake, arise, or be for ever fall’n.”

Exp:

In this line, Satan is speaking to his fallen angels. He tells them to wake up and stand strong. Otherwise, they will remain defeated forever. This indicates his determination to fight back and not give up. Although after being defeated by God.

“A mind not to be changed by place or time.”

Exp:

Here, Satan says that his mind will not change, no matter where he is or how much time passes. This shows his strong will and refusal to surrender. He is determined to stay the same.

“Who overcomes / By force, hath overcome but half his foe.”

Exp:

In this line, Satan states that defeating an enemy solely with force is not a complete victory. True victory comes when you also defeat their spirit or willpower. This reflects Satan's belief in mental strength and strategy over just physical power.

“Me miserable! which way shall I fly / Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?”

Exp:

Here, Satan feels miserable and hopeless. He wonders where he can escape from God's endless anger and his own deep despair. This shows a moment of regret and helplessness. Although Satan has a strong and defiant character.

“Of man’s first disobedience,...

Brought death into the world, and all our woe.”

Exp:

These lines refer to Adam and Eve's first sin and it was disobeying God by eating the forbidden fruit. This act brought death, suffering, and all human troubles into the world. It explains the

beginning of human pain and the consequences of sin.

“No light, but rather darkness visible.”

Exp:

In this line, Satan describes Hell as a place with no light. This means the darkness is so intense that it feels like something you can see. It portrays the utter despair and hopelessness of Hell.

Moral Lesson: Pride and ambition against divine authority lead to ruin, and true strength lies in humility and obedience to God.

LxNotes