

Classic Poetry Series

**William Blake**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# William Blake(28 November 1757 – 12 August 1827)

an English poet, painter, and printmaker. Largely unrecognised during his lifetime, Blake is now considered a seminal figure in the history of both the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age. His prophetic poetry has been said to form "what is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language". His visual artistry has led one contemporary art critic to proclaim him "far and away the greatest artist Britain has ever produced". Although he lived in London his entire life except for three years spent in Felpham he produced a diverse and symbolically rich corpus, which embraced the imagination as "the body of God", or "Human existence itself".

Considered mad by contemporaries for his idiosyncratic views, Blake is held in high regard by later critics for his expressiveness and creativity, and for the philosophical and mystical undercurrents within his work. His paintings and poetry have been characterised as part of both the Romantic movement and "Pre-Romantic",<sup>[6]</sup> for its large appearance in the 18th century. Reverent of the Bible but hostile to the Church of England - indeed, to all forms of organised religion - Blake was influenced by the ideals and ambitions of the French and American revolutions, as well as by such thinkers as Jakob Böhme and Emanuel Swedenborg.

Despite these known influences, the singularity of Blake's work makes him difficult to classify. The 19th century scholar William Rossetti characterised Blake as a "glorious luminary," and as "a man not forestalled by predecessors, nor to be classed with contemporaries, nor to be replaced by known or readily surmisable successors".

William Blake and his works have been extensively discussed and criticised over the twentieth and now this century, however previous to that he was barely known. He first became known in 1863 with Alexander Gilchrist's biography "Life" and only fully appreciated and recognised at the beginning of the twentieth century. It seems his art had been too adventurous and unconventional for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, maybe you could even say he was ahead of his time? Either way, today he is a hugely famous figure of Romantic literature, whose work is open to various interpretations, which has been known to take a lifetime to establish. As well as his works being difficult to interpret, him as a person has also provoked much debate. Henry Crabb Robinson, who was a diarist and friend of Blake's at the end of his life asked the question many students of Blake are still unable to conclusively answer:

“Shall I call him artist or genius – or mystic – or madman?” (Lucas, 1998 p. 1)

Born on 28th November 1757 in Soho in London, he had a grounded and happy upbringing. Although always a well read and intelligent man, Blake left school at the early age of ten to attend the Henry Pars Drawing Academy for five years. The artists he admired as a child included Raphael, Michelangelo, Giulio, Romano and Dürer. He started writing poetry at the age of twelve and in 1783 his friends paid for his first collection of verses to be printed, which was entitled “Poetical Sketches” and is now seen as a major poetical event of the 18th century. Despite his obvious talents as a poet, his official profession was as an engraver because he could not afford to do a painter’s apprenticeship and therefore began his apprenticeship with the engraver James Basire in 1772. After completing his apprenticeship six years later, he joined the Royal Academy of Art. At this point his art and engraving remained separate – he wrote and drew for pleasure and simply engraved to earn a living. In 1784 he opened his own shop and in the same year completed “Island in the Moon”, which ridiculed his contemporaries of the art and literature social circles he mixed with. Two years previous to this, he married Catherine Boucher.

Now Blake was an established engraver, he began experimenting with printing techniques and it was not long before he compiled his first illuminated book, 'Songs of Innocence' in 1788. Blake wanted to take his poetry beyond being just words on a page and felt they needed to be illustrated to create his desired effect. Shortly after he completed 'The Book of Thel' and from 1790-3, 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell', which followed on from his significant Prophetic books. These books were a collection of writings on his philosophical ideas and although they have nothing to do with his poetry, it was a sign of his increasing awareness of the social injustices of his time, which led to the completion of his 'Songs of Experience' in 1794.

One of Blake’s main influences was the society in which he lived. He lived during revolutionary times and witnessed the downfall of London during Britain’s war with republican France. His disgust with society grew as he matured and 'The Songs of Innocence and Experience' depict this transition. As well as having radical religious ideas for the time (he did not believe in “religion of nature or reason, but thought man’s nature was imaginative and mystical” (Lister 1968, p.27)), he also had radical political ideas due to the day-to-day poverty he was forced to witness.

“Living near the end of a century, born in a period of imperialistic wars, coming to maturity during the American Revolution and to the full bloom of his genius during the French Revolution, aware of impending economic change and sick to

the bone of ruling hypocrisy, he viewed the events of his own days as the fulfilment of prophecy..." (Hagstrum 1964, p. 97-98)

Blake's preoccupation with good and evil as well as his strong philosophical and religious beliefs remained throughout his life and he never stopped depicting them in his poetry and engravings. He died at the age of sixty-nine in 1827 and although the Blake family name died with him, his legacy as a fascinating, complex man of many artistic talents will no doubt remain strong well into this century. Other famous works include 'Europe', 'America', 'Visions of the Daughters of Albion' and 'The Book of Urizen'.

Although Blake is not well known for being a specifically grotesque artist, it is his experiences and disgust with London society in the late eighteenth century that clearly emulates elements of the grotesque. As it would be impossible to discuss all of Blake's works, this study will focus on 'Songs of Innocence and Experience', particularly 'Songs of Experience' to learn how he portrayed his views on society and how the grotesque falls into that.

# A Cradle Song

Sweet dreams form a shade,  
O'er my lovely infants head.  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,  
By happy silent moony beams

Sweet sleep with soft down.  
Weave thy brows an infant crown.  
Sweet sleep Angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night,  
Hover over my delight.  
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles,  
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thy eyes,  
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,  
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child,  
All creation slept and smil'd.  
Sleep sleep, happy sleep.  
While o'er thee thy mother weep

Sweet babe in thy face,  
Holy image I can trace.  
Sweet babe once like thee.  
Thy maker lay and wept for me

Wept for me for thee for all,  
When he was an infant small.  
Thou his image ever see.  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee on me on all,  
Who became an infant small,  
Infant smiles are His own smiles,  
Heaven & earth to peace beguiles.

William Blake

# A Divine Image

Cruelty has a human heart,  
And Jealousy a human face;  
Terror the human form divine,  
And Secresy the human dress.

The human dress is forged iron,  
The human form a fiery forge,  
The human face a furnace sealed,  
The human heart its hungry gorge.

William Blake

# A Dream

Once a dream did weave a shade  
O'er my angel-guarded bed,  
That an emmet lost its way  
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, wildered, and forlorn,  
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,  
Over many a tangle spray,  
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

'Oh my children! do they cry,  
Do they hear their father sigh?  
Now they look abroad to see,  
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropped a tear:  
But I saw a glow-worm near,  
Who replied, 'What wailing wight  
Calls the watchman of the night?

'I am set to light the ground,  
While the beetle goes his round:  
Follow now the beetle's hum;  
Little wanderer, hie thee home! '

William Blake



# A Little Boy Lost

Nought loves another as itself,  
Nor venerates another so,  
Nor is it possible to thought  
A greater than itself to know.

'And, father, how can I love you  
Or any of my brothers more?  
I love you like the little bird  
That picks up crumbs around the door.'

The Priest sat by and heard the child;  
In trembling zeal he seized his hair,  
He led him by his little coat,  
And all admired the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,  
'Lo, what a fiend is here! said he:  
'One who sets reason up for judge  
Of our most holy mystery.'

The weeping child could not be heard,  
The weeping parents wept in vain:  
They stripped him to his little shirt,  
And bound him in an iron chain,

And burned him in a holy place  
Where many had been burned before;  
The weeping parents wept in vain.  
Are such thing done on Albion's shore?

William Blake

# A Little Girl Lost

Children of the future age,  
Reading this indignant page,  
Know that in a former time  
Love, sweet love, was thought a crime.

In the age of gold,  
Free from winter's cold,  
Youth and maiden bright,  
To the holy light,  
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair,  
Filled with softest care,  
Met in garden bright  
Where the holy light  
Had just removed the curtains of the night.

Then, in rising day,  
On the grass they play;  
Parents were afar,  
Strangers came not near,  
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet,  
They agree to meet  
When the silent sleep  
Waves o'er heaven's deep,  
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white  
Came the maiden bright;  
But his loving look,  
Like the holy book  
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

'Ona, pale and weak,  
To thy father speak!  
Oh the trembling fear!  
Oh the dismal care

That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair!

William Blake

# A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine.  
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole;  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

William Blake

# A QUESTION ANSWERED

What is it men in women do require?

The lineaments of Gratified Desire.

What is it women do in men require?

The lineaments of Gratified Desire.

William Blake

# A Song

Sweet dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head!  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams!

Sweet Sleep, with soft down  
Weave thy brows an infant crown  
Sweet Sleep, angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child!

Sweet smiles, in the night  
Hover over my delight!  
Sweet smiles, mother's smile,  
All the livelong night beguile.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thine eyes!  
Sweet moan, sweeter smile,  
All the dovelike moans beguile.

Sleep, sleep, happy child!  
All creation slept and smiled.  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee doth mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace;  
Sweet babe, once like thee  
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me:

Wept for me, for thee, for all,  
When He was an infant small.  
Thou His image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,  
Who became an infant small;  
Infant smiles are his own smiles;  
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

William Blake

# A War Song To Englishmen

Prepare, prepare the iron helm of war,  
Bring forth the lots, cast in the spacious orb;  
Th' Angel of Fate turns them with mighty hands,  
And casts them out upon the darken'd earth!  
Prepare, prepare!

Prepare your hearts for Death's cold hand! prepare  
Your souls for flight, your bodies for the earth;  
Prepare your arms for glorious victory;  
Prepare your eyes to meet a holy God!  
Prepare, prepare!

Whose fatal scroll is that? Methinks 'tis mine!  
Why sinks my heart, why faltereth my tongue?  
Had I three lives, I'd die in such a cause,  
And rise, with ghosts, over the well-fought field.  
Prepare, prepare!

The arrows of Almighty God are drawn!  
Angels of Death stand in the louring heavens!  
Thousands of souls must seek the realms of light,  
And walk together on the clouds of heaven!  
Prepare, prepare!

Soldiers, prepare! Our cause is Heaven's cause;  
Soldiers, prepare! Be worthy of our cause:  
Prepare to meet our fathers in the sky:  
Prepare, O troops, that are to fall to-day!  
Prepare, prepare!

Alfred shall smile, and make his harp rejoice;  
The Norman William, and the learnèd Clerk,  
And Lion Heart, and black-brow'd Edward, with  
His loyal queen, shall rise, and welcome us!  
Prepare, prepare!

William Blake



# Ah Sunflower

Ah Sunflower, weary of time,  
Who countest the steps of the sun;  
Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,  
Arise from their graves, and aspire  
Where my Sunflower wishes to go!

William Blake

# America, A Prophecy

The shadowy Daughter of Urthona stood before red Orc,  
When fourteen suns had faintly journey'd o'er his dark abode:  
His food she brought in iron baskets, his drink in cups of iron:  
Crown'd with a helmet and dark hair the nameless female stood;  
A quiver with its burning stores, a bow like that of night,  
When pestilence is shot from heaven: no other arms she need!  
Invulnerable though naked, save where clouds roll round her loins  
Their awful folds in the dark air: silent she stood as night;  
For never from her iron tongue could voice or sound arise,  
But dumb till that dread day when Orc assay'd his fierce embrace.  
'Dark Virgin,' said the hairy youth, 'thy father stern, abhorr'd,  
Rivets my tenfold chains while still on high my spirit soars;  
Sometimes an Eagle screaming in the sky, sometimes a Lion  
Stalking upon the mountains, and sometimes a Whale, I lash  
The raging fathomless abyss; anon a Serpent folding  
Around the pillars of Urthona, and round thy dark limbs  
On the Canadian wilds I fold; feeble my spirit folds,  
For chain'd beneath I rend these caverns: when thou bringest food  
I howl my joy, and my red eyes seek to behold thy face--  
In vain! these clouds roll to and fro, and hide thee from my sight.'

Silent as despairing love, and strong as jealousy,  
The hairy shoulders rend the links; free are the wrists of fire;  
Round the terrific loins he seiz'd the panting, struggling womb;  
It joy'd: she put aside her clouds and smiled her first-born smile,  
As when a black cloud shews its lightnings to the silent deep.

Soon as she saw the terrible boy, then burst the virgin cry:

'I know thee, I have found thee, and I will not let thee go:  
Thou art the image of God who dwells in darkness of Africa,  
And thou art fall'n to give me life in regions of dark death.  
On my American plains I feel the struggling afflictions  
Endur'd by roots that writhe their arms into the nether deep.  
I see a Serpent in Canada who courts me to his love,  
In Mexico an Eagle, and a Lion in Peru;  
I see a Whale in the south-sea, drinking my soul away.  
O what limb-rending pains I feel! thy fire and my frost  
Mingle in howling pains, in furrows by thy lightnings rent.'

This is eternal death, and this the torment long foretold.'

William Blake

# An Imitation Of Spenser

Golden Apollo, that thro' heaven wide  
Scatter'st the rays of light, and truth's beams,  
In lucent words my darkling verses dight,  
And wash my earthy mind in thy clear streams,  
That wisdom may descend in fairy dreams,  
All while the jocund hours in thy train  
Scatter their fancies at thy poet's feet;  
And when thou yields to night thy wide domain,  
Let rays of truth enlight his sleeping brain.  
For brutish Pan in vain might thee assay  
With tinkling sounds to dash thy nervous verse,  
Sound without sense; yet in his rude affray,  
(For ignorance is Folly's leasing nurse  
And love of Folly needs none other's curse)  
Midas the praise hath gain'd of lengthen'd ears,  
For which himself might deem him ne'er the worse  
To sit in council with his modern peers,  
And judge of tinkling rimes and elegances terse.

And thou, Mercurius, that with wingèd brow  
Dost mount aloft into the yielding sky,  
And thro' Heav'n's halls thy airy flight dost throw,  
Entering with holy feet to where on high  
Jove weighs the counsel of futurity;  
Then, laden with eternal fate, dost go  
Down, like a falling star, from autumn sky,  
And o'er the surface of the silent deep dost fly:

If thou arrivest at the sandy shore  
Where nought but envious hissing adders dwell,  
Thy golden rod, thrown on t 1000 he dusty floor,  
Can charm to harmony with potent spell.  
Such is sweet Eloquence, that does dispel  
Envy and Hate that thirst for human gore;  
And cause in sweet society to dwell  
Vile savage minds that lurk in lonely cell

O Mercury, assist my lab'ring sense  
That round the circle of the world would fly,

As the wing'd eagle scorns the tow'ry fence  
Of Alpine hills round his high aëry,  
And searches thro' the corners of the sky,  
Sports in the clouds to hear the thunder's sound,  
And see the wingèd lightnings as they fly;  
Then, bosom'd in an amber cloud, around  
Plumes his wide wings, and seeks Sol's palace high.

And thou, O warrior maid invincible,  
Arm'd with the terrors of Almighty Jove,  
Pallas, Minerva, maiden terrible,  
Lov'st thou to walk the peaceful solemn grove,  
In solemn gloom of branches interwove?  
Or bear'st thy AEgis o'er the burning field,  
Where, like the sea, the waves of battle move?  
Or have thy soft piteous eyes beheld  
The weary wanderer thro' the desert rove?  
Or does th' afflicted man thy heav'nly bosom move?

William Blake

# And Did Those Feet In Ancient Time

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

# Auguries Of Innocence

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

A Robin Red breast in a Cage  
Puts all Heaven in a Rage.  
A dove house fill'd with doves & Pigeons  
Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.  
A dog starv'd at his Master's Gate  
Predicts the ruin of the State.  
A Horse misus'd upon the Road  
Calls to Heaven for Human blood.  
Each outcry of the hunted Hare  
A fibre from the Brain does tear.  
A Skylark wounded in the wing,  
A Cherubim does cease to sing.  
The Game Cock clipp'd and arm'd for fight  
Does the Rising Sun affright.  
Every Wolf's & Lion's howl  
Raises from Hell a Human Soul.  
The wild deer, wand'ring here & there,  
Keeps the Human Soul from Care.  
The Lamb misus'd breeds public strife  
And yet forgives the Butcher's Knife.  
The Bat that flits at close of Eve  
Has left the Brain that won't believe.  
The Owl that calls upon the Night  
Speaks the Unbeliever's fright.  
He who shall hurt the little Wren  
Shall never be belov'd by Men.  
He who the Ox to wrath has mov'd  
Shall never be by Woman lov'd.  
The wanton Boy that kills the Fly  
Shall feel the Spider's enmity.  
He who torments the Chafer's sprite  
Weaves a Bower in endless Night.  
The Catterpillar on the Leaf  
Repeats to thee thy Mother's grief.

Kill not the Moth nor Butterfly,  
For the Last Judgement draweth nigh.  
He who shall train the Horse to War  
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.  
The Beggar's Dog & Widow's Cat,  
Feed them & thou wilt grow fat.  
The Gnat that sings his Summer's song  
Poison gets from Slander's tongue.  
The poison of the Snake & Newt  
Is the sweat of Envy's Foot.  
The poison of the Honey Bee  
Is the Artist's Jealousy.  
The Prince's Robes & Beggars' Rags  
Are Toadstools on the Miser's Bags.  
A truth that's told with bad intent  
Beats all the Lies you can invent.  
It is right it should be so;  
Man was made for Joy & Woe;  
And when this we rightly know  
Thro' the World we safely go.  
Joy & Woe are woven fine,  
A Clothing for the Soul divine;  
Under every grief & pine  
Runs a joy with silken twine.  
The Babe is more than swadling Bands;  
Throughout all these Human Lands  
Tools were made, & born were hands,  
Every Farmer Understands.  
Every Tear from Every Eye  
Becomes a Babe in Eternity.  
This is caught by Females bright  
And return'd to its own delight.  
The Bleat, the Bark, Bellow & Roar  
Are Waves that Beat on Heaven's Shore.  
The Babe that weeps the Rod beneath  
Writes Revenge in realms of death.  
The Beggar's Rags, fluttering in Air,  
Does to Rags the Heavens tear.  
The Soldier arm'd with Sword & Gun,  
Palsied strikes the Summer's Sun.  
The poor Man's Farthing is worth more  
Than all the Gold on Afric's Shore.



One Mite wrung from the Labrer's hands  
Shall buy & sell the Miser's lands:  
Or, if protected from on high,  
Does that whole Nation sell & buy.  
He who mocks the Infant's Faith  
Shall be mock'd in Age & Death.  
He who shall teach the Child to Doubt  
The rotting Grave shall ne'er get out.  
He who respects the Infant's faith  
Triumph's over Hell & Death.  
The Child's Toys & the Old Man's Reasons  
Are the Fruits of the Two seasons.  
The Questioner, who sits so sly,  
Shall never know how to Reply.  
He who replies to words of Doubt  
Doth put the Light of Knowledge out.  
The Strongest Poison ever known  
Came from Caesar's Laurel Crown.  
Nought can deform the Human Race  
Like the Armour's iron brace.  
When Gold & Gems adorn the Plow  
To peaceful Arts shall Envy Bow.  
A Riddle or the Cricket's Cry  
Is to Doubt a fit Reply.  
The Emmet's Inch & Eagle's Mile  
Make Lame Philosophy to smile.  
He who Doubts from what he sees  
Will ne'er believe, do what you Please.  
If the Sun & Moon should doubt  
They'd immediately Go out.  
To be in a Passion you Good may do,  
But no Good if a Passion is in you.  
The Whore & Gambler, by the State  
Licenc'd, build that Nation's Fate.  
The Harlot's cry from Street to Street  
Shall weave Old England's winding Sheet.  
The Winner's Shout, the Loser's Curse,  
Dance before dead England's Hearse.  
Every Night & every Morn  
Some to Misery are Born.  
Every Morn & every Night  
Some are Born to sweet Delight.

Some are Born to sweet Delight,  
Some are born to Endless Night.  
We are led to Believe a Lie  
When we see not Thro' the Eye  
Which was Born in a Night to Perish in a Night  
When the Soul Slept in Beams of Light.  
God Appears & God is Light  
To those poor Souls who dwell in the Night,  
But does a Human Form Display  
To those who Dwell in Realms of day.

William Blake

# Broken Love

MY Spectre around me night and day  
Like a wild beast guards my way;  
My Emanation far within  
Weeps incessantly for my sin.

'A fathomless and boundless deep,  
There we wander, there we weep;  
On the hungry craving wind  
My Spectre follows thee behind.

'He scents thy footsteps in the snow  
Wheresoever thou dost go,  
Thro' the wintry hail and rain.  
When wilt thou return again?

'Dost thou not in pride and scorn  
Fill with tempests all my morn,  
And with jealousies and fears  
Fill my pleasant nights with tears?

'Seven of my sweet loves thy knife  
Has bereavèd of their life.  
Their marble tombs I built with tears,  
And with cold and shuddering fears.

'Seven more loves weep night and day  
Round the tombs where my loves lay,  
And seven more loves attend each night  
Around my couch with torches bright.

'And seven more loves in my bed  
Crown with wine my mournful head,  
Pitying and forgiving all  
Thy transgressions great and small.

'When wilt thou return and view  
My loves, and them to life renew?  
When wilt thou return and live?  
When wilt thou pity as I forgive?'

'O'er my sins thou sit and moan:  
Hast thou no sins of thy own?  
O'er my sins thou sit and weep,  
And lull thy own sins fast asleep.

'What transgressions I commit  
Are for thy transgressions fit.  
They thy harlots, thou their slave;  
And my bed becomes their grave.

'Never, never, I return:  
Still for victory I burn.  
Living, thee alone I'll have;  
And when dead I'll be thy grave.

'Thro' the Heaven and Earth and Hell  
Thou shalt never, quell:  
I will fly and thou pursue:  
Night and morn the flight renew.'

'Poor, pale, pitiable form  
That I follow in a storm;  
Iron tears and groans of lead  
Bind around my aching head.

'Till I turn from Female love  
And root up the Infernal Grove,  
I shall never worthy be  
To step into Eternity.

'And, to end thy cruel mocks,  
Annihilate thee on the rocks,  
And another form create  
To be subservient to my fate.

'Let us agree to give up love,  
And root up the Infernal Grove;  
Then shall we return and see  
The worlds of happy Eternity.

'And throughout all Eternity

I forgive you, you forgive me.  
As our dear Redeemer said:  
"This the Wine, and this the Bread."

William Blake

# But In The Wine-Presses The Human Grapes Sing Not Nor Dance

But in the Wine-presses the human grapes sing not nor dance:  
They howl and writhe in shoals of torment, in fierce flames consuming,  
In chains of iron and in dungeons circled with ceaseless fires,  
In pits and dens and shades of death, in shapes of torment and woe:  
The plates and screws and racks and saws and cords and fires and cisterns  
The cruel joys of Luvah's Daughters, lacerating with knives  
And whips their victims, and the deadly sport of Luvah's Sons.

They dance around the dying and they drink the howl and groan,  
They catch the shrieks in cups of gold, they hand them to one another:  
These are the sports of love, and these the sweet delights of amorous play,  
Tears of the grape, the death sweat of the cluster, the last sigh  
Of the mild youth who listens to the luring songs of Luvah.----

William Blake

# Cradle Song

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,  
Dreaming in the joys of night;  
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep  
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Soft desires I can trace,  
Secret joys and secret smiles,  
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel  
Smiles as of the morning steal  
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast  
Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep  
In thy little heart asleep!  
When thy little heart doth wake,  
Then the dreadful night shall break.

William Blake

# Day

The Sun arises in the East,  
Cloth'd in robes of blood and gold;  
Swords and spears and wrath increast  
All around his bosom roll'd  
Crown'd with warlike fires and raging desires.

William Blake



# Divine Image

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
All pray in their distress,  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
Is God our Father dear;  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
Is man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart  
Pity, a human face;  
And Love, the human form divine;  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine:  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, Turk, or Jew.  
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,  
There God is dwelling too.

William Blake

# Earth's Answer

Earth raised up her head  
From the darkness dread and drear,  
Her light fled,  
Stony, dread,  
And her locks covered with grey despair.

'Prisoned on watery shore,  
Starry jealousy does keep my den  
Cold and hoar;  
Weeping o're,  
I hear the father of the ancient men.

'Selfish father of men!  
Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!  
Can delight,  
Chained in night,  
The virgins of youth and morning bear?

'Does spring hide its joy,  
When buds and blossoms grow?  
Does the sower  
Sow by night,  
Or the plowman in darkness plough?

'Break this heavy chain,  
That does freeze my bones around!  
Selfish, vain,  
Eternal bane,  
That free love with bondage bound.'

William Blake

# England! Awake! Awake! Awake!

England! awake! awake! awake!

Jerusalem thy Sister calls!

Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death

And close her from thy ancient walls?

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet

Gently upon their bosoms move:

Thy gates beheld sweet Zion's ways:

Then was a time of joy and love.

And now the time returns again:

Our souls exult, and London's towers

Receive the Lamb of God to dwell

In England's green and pleasant bowers.

William Blake

# Eternity

He who binds to himself a joy  
Does the winged life destroy;  
But he who kisses the joy as it flies  
Lives in eternity's sun rise.

William Blake

# Fair Elanor

The bell struck one, and shook the silent tower;  
The graves give up their dead: fair Elenor  
Walk'd by the castle gate, and lookèd in.  
A hollow groan ran thro' the dreary vaults.  
She shriek'd aloud, and sunk upon the steps,  
On the cold stone her pale cheeks. Sickly smells  
Of death issue as from a sepulchre,  
And all is silent but the sighing vaults.

Chill Death withdraws his hand, and she revives;  
Amaz'd, she finds herself upon her feet,  
And, like a ghost, thro' narrow passages  
Walking, feeling the cold walls with her hands.

Fancy returns, and now she thinks of bones  
And grinning skulls, and corruptible death  
Wrapp'd in his shroud; and now fancies she hears  
Deep sighs, and sees pale sickly ghosts gliding.

At length, no fancy but reality  
Distracts her. A rushing sound, and the feet  
Of one that fled, approaches--Ellen stood  
Like a dumb statue, froze to stone with fear.

The wretch approaches, crying: `The deed is done;  
Take this, and send it by whom thou wilt send;  
It is my life--send it to Elenor:--  
He's dead, and howling after me for blood!

`Take this,' he cried; and thrust into her arms  
A wet napkin, wrapp'd about; then rush'd  
Past, howling: she receiv'd into her arms  
Pale death, and follow'd on the wings of fear.

They pass'd swift thro' the outer gate; the wretch,  
Howling, leap'd o'er the wall into the moat,  
Stifling in mud. Fair Ellen pass'd the bridge,  
And heard a gloomy voice cry `Is it done?'

As the deer wounded, Ellen flew over  
The pathless plain; as the arrows that fly  
By night, destruction flies, and strikes in darkness.  
She fled from fear, till at her house arriv'd.

Her maids await her; on her bed she falls,  
That bed of joy, where erst her lord hath press'd:  
'Ah, woman's fear!' she cried; 'ah, cursèd duke!  
Ah, my dear lord! ah, wretched Elenor!

'My lord was like a flower upon the brows  
Of lusty May! Ah, life as frail as flower!  
O ghastly death! withdraw thy cruel hand,  
Seek'st thou that flow'r to deck thy horrid temples?

'My lord was like a star in highest heav'n  
Drawn down to earth by spells and wickedness;  
My lord was like the opening eyes of day  
When western winds creep softly o'er the flowers;

'But he is darken'd; like the summer's noon  
Clouded; fall'n like the stately tree, cut down;  
The breath of heaven dwelt among his leaves.  
O Elenor, weak woman, fill'd with woe!

Thus having spoke, she raisèd up her head,  
And saw the bloody napkin by her side,  
Which in her arms she brought; and now, tenfold  
More terrifièd, saw it unfold itself.

Her eyes were fix'd; the bloody cloth unfolds,  
Disclosing to her sight the murder'd head  
Of her dear lord, all ghastly pale, clotted  
With gory blood; it groan'd, and thus it spake:

'O Elenor, I am thy husband's head,  
Who, sleeping on the stones of yonder tower,  
Was 'reft of life by the accursèd duke!  
A hirèd villain turn'd my sleep to death!

'O Elenor, beware the cursèd duke;  
O give not him thy hand, now I am dead;

He seeks thy love; who, coward, in the night,  
Hirèd a villain to bereave my life.'

She sat with dead cold limbs, stiffen'd to stone;  
She took the gory head up in her arms;  
She kiss'd the pale lips; she had no tears to shed;  
She hugg'd it to her breast, and groan'd her last.

William Blake

## From Milton: And Did Those Feet

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here,  
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:  
Bring me my Arrows of desire:  
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,  
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green & pleasant Land.

William Blake



# Gwin King Of Norway

Come, kings, and listen to my song:  
When Gwin, the son of Nore,  
Over the nations of the North  
His cruel sceptre bore;  
The nobles of the land did feed  
Upon the hungry poor;  
They tear the poor man's lamb, and drive  
The needy from their door.

`The land is desolate; our wives  
And children cry for bread;  
Arise, and pull the tyrant down!  
Let Gwin be humblèd!'

Gordred the giant rous'd himself  
From sleeping in his cave;  
He shook the hills, and in the clouds  
The troubl'd banners wave.

Beneath them roll'd, like tempests black,  
The num'rous sons of blood;  
Like lions' whelps, roaring abroad,  
Seeking their nightly food.

Down Bleron's hills they dreadful rush,  
Their cry ascends the clouds;  
The trampling horse and clanging arms  
Like rushing mighty floods!

Their wives and children, weeping loud,  
Follow in wild array,  
Howling like ghosts, furious as wolves  
In the bleak wintry day.

`Pull down the tyrant to the dust,  
Let Gwin be humblèd,'  
They cry, `and let ten thousand lives  
Pay for the tyrant's head.'

From tow'r to tow'r the watchmen cry,  
`O Gwin, the son of Nore,  
Arouse thyself! the nations, black  
Like clouds, come rolling o'er!

Gwin rear'd his shield, his palace shakes,  
His chiefs come rushing round;  
Each, like an awful thunder cloud,  
With voice of solemn sound:

Like rearèd stones around a grave  
They stand around the King;  
Then suddenly each seiz'd his spear,  
And clashing steel does ring.

The husbandman does leave his plough  
To wade thro' fields of gore;  
The merchant binds his brows in steel,  
And leaves the trading shore;

The shepherd leaves his mellow pipe,  
And sounds the trumpet shrill;  
The workman throws his hammer down  
To heave the bloody bill.

Like the tall ghost of Barraton  
Who sports in stormy sky,  
Gwin leads his host, as black as night  
When pestilence does fly,

With horses and with chariots--  
And all his spearmen b 1000 old  
March to the sound of mournful song,  
Like clouds around him roll'd.

Gwin lifts his hand--the nations halt;  
`Prepare for war!' he cries--  
Gordred appears!--his frowning brow  
Troubles our northern skies.

The armies stand, like balances  
Held in th' Almighty's hand;--

`Gwin, thou hast fill'd thy measure up:  
Thou'rt swept from out the land.'

And now the raging armies rush'd  
Like warring mighty seas;  
The heav'ns are shook with roaring war,  
The dust ascends the skies!

Earth smokes with blood, and groans and shakes  
To drink her children's gore,  
A sea of blood; nor can the eye  
See to the trembling shore!

And on the verge of this wild sea  
Famine and death doth cry;  
The cries of women and of babes  
Over the field doth fly.

The King is seen raging afar,  
With all his men of might;  
Like blazing comets scattering death  
Thro' the red fev'rous night.

Beneath his arm like sheep they die,  
And groan upon the plain;  
The battle faints, and bloody men  
Fight upon hills of slain.

Now death is sick, and riven men  
Labour and toil for life;  
Steed rolls on steed, and shield on shield,  
Sunk in this sea of strife!

The god of war is drunk with blood;  
The earth doth faint and fail;  
The stench of blood makes sick the heav'ns;  
Ghosts glut the throat of hell!

O what have kings to answer for  
Before that awful throne;  
When thousand deaths for vengeance cry,  
And ghosts accusing groan!

Like blazing comets in the sky  
That shake the stars of light,  
Which drop like fruit unto the earth  
Thro' the fierce burning night;

Like these did Gwin and Gordred meet,  
And the first blow decides;  
Down from the brow unto the breast  
Gordred his head divides!

Gwin fell: the sons of Norway fled,  
All that remain'd alive;  
The rest did fill the vale of death,  
For them the eagles strive.

The river Dorman roll'd their blood  
Into the northern sea;  
Who mourn'd his sons, and overwhelm'd  
The pleasant south country.

William Blake

# Hear The Voice

HEAR the voice of the Bard,  
Who present, past, and future, sees;  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word  
That walk'd among the ancient trees;

Calling the lapsed soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might control  
The starry pole,  
And fallen, fallen light renew!

'O Earth, O Earth, return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass!  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumbrous mass.

'Turn away no more;  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor,  
The watery shore,  
Is given thee till the break of day.'

William Blake

# Hear The Voice Of The Bard

Hear the voice of the Bard !  
Who present, past, and future sees;  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word,  
That walked among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsed soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might control  
The starry pole,  
And fallen, fallen, light renew!

'O Earth, O Earth, return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass;  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumberous mass.

'Turn away no more;  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor,  
The watery shore,  
Is given thee till the break of day.'

William Blake

## Holy Thursday (Experience)

Is this a holy thing to see.  
In a rich and fruitful land.  
Babes reduced to misery.  
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?  
Can it be a song of joy?  
And so many children poor?  
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine.  
And their fields are bleak & bare.  
And their ways are fill'd with thorns  
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine.  
And where-e'er the rain does fall:  
Babe can never hunger there,  
Nor poverty the mind appall.

William Blake

## Holy Thursday (Innocence)

Tw'as on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean  
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green  
Grey headed beadle's walked before with wands as white as snow  
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow

O what a multitude they seemed these flowers of London town  
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own  
The hum of multitudes was there but multitudes of lambs  
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song  
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among  
Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor  
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door

William Blake



# How Sweet I Roam'D

How sweet I roam'd from field to field,  
And tasted all the summer's pride  
'Til the prince of love beheld  
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He shew'd me lilies for my hair  
And blushing roses for my brow;  
He led me through his garden fair,  
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,  
And Phoebus fir'd my vocal rage  
He caught me in his silken net,  
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,  
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;  
Then stretches out my golden wing,  
And mocks my loss of liberty.

William Blake

# I Heard An Angel

I heard an Angel singing  
When the day was springing,  
'Mercy, Pity, Peace  
Is the world's release.'

Thus he sung all day  
Over the new mown hay,  
Till the sun went down  
And haycocks looked brown.

I heard a Devil curse  
Over the heath and the furze,  
'Mercy could be no more,  
If there was nobody poor,

And pity no more could be,  
If all were as happy as we.'  
At his curse the sun went down,  
And the heavens gave a frown.

Down pour'd the heavy rain  
Over the new reap'd grain ...  
And Miseries' increase  
Is Mercy, Pity, Peace.

William Blake

# I Rose Up At The Dawn Of Day

I rose up at the dawn of day--  
'Get thee away! get thee away!  
Pray'st thou for riches? Away! away!  
This is the Throne of Mammon grey.'

Said I: This, sure, is very odd;  
I took it to be the Throne of God.  
For everything besides I have:  
It is only for riches that I can crave.

I have mental joy, and mental health,  
And mental friends, and mental wealth;  
I've a wife I love, and that loves me;  
I've all but riches bodily.

I am in God's presence night and day,  
And He never turns His face away;  
The accuser of sins by my side doth stand,  
And he holds my money-bag in his hand.

For my worldly things God makes him pay,  
And he'd pay for more if to him I would pray;  
And so you may do the worst you can do;  
Be assur'd, Mr. Devil, I won't pray to you.

Then if for riches I must not pray,  
God knows, I little of prayers need say;  
So, as a church is known by its steeple,  
If I pray it must be for other people.

He says, if I do not worship him for a God,  
I shall eat coarser food, and go worse shod;  
So, as I don't value such things as these,  
You must do, Mr. Devil, just as God please.

William Blake

# I Saw A Chapel

I saw a chapel all of gold  
That none did dare to enter in,  
And many weeping stood without,  
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a serpent rise between  
The white pillars of the door,  
And he forc'd and forc'd and forc'd,  
Down the golden hinges tore.

And along the pavement sweet,  
Set with pearls and rubies bright,  
All his slimy length he drew  
Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out  
On the bread and on the wine.  
So I turn'd into a sty  
And laid me down among the swine.

William Blake

# I See The Four-Fold Man

I see the Four-fold Man, The Humanity in deadly sleep  
And its fallen Emanation, the Spectre and its cruel Shadow.  
I see the Past, Present and Future existing all at once  
Before me. O Divine Spirit, sustain me on thy wings,  
That I may awake Albion from his long and cold repose;  
For Bacon and Newton, sheath'd in dismal steel, their terrors hang  
Like iron scourges over Albion: reasonings like vast serpents  
Infold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations.

I turn my eyes to the schools and universities of Europe  
And there behold the Loom of Locke, whose Woof rages dire,  
Wash'd by the Water-wheels of Newton: black the cloth  
In heavy wreaths folds over every nation: cruel works  
Of many Wheels I view, wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic  
Moving by compulsion each other, not as those in Eden, which,  
Wheel within wheel, in freedom revolve in harmony and peace.

William Blake

# If It Is True What The Prophets Write

If it is true, what the Prophets write,  
That the heathen gods are all stocks and stones,  
Shall we, for the sake of being polite,  
Feed them with the juice of our marrow-bones?

And if Bezaleel and Aholiab drew  
What the finger of God pointed to their view,  
Shall we suffer the Roman and Grecian rods  
To compel us to worship them as gods?

They stole them from the temple of the Lord  
And worshipp'd them that they might make inspirèd art abhorr'd;

The wood and stone were call'd the holy things,  
And their sublime intent given to their kings.  
All the atonements of Jehovah spurn'd,  
And criminals to sacrifices turn'd.

William Blake

# Infant Joy

'I have no name;  
I am but two days old.'  
What shall I call thee?  
'I happy am,  
Joy is my name.'  
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!  
Sweet joy, but two days old.  
Sweet Joy I call thee:  
Thou dost smile,  
I sing the while;  
Sweet joy befall thee!

William Blake

# Infant Sorrow

My mother groaned, my father wept,  
Into the dangerous world I leapt;  
Helpless, naked, piping loud,  
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,  
Striving against my swaddling bands,  
Bound and weary, I thought best  
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

William Blake



# Introduction To The Songs Of Innocence

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
'Piper, pipe that song again;'  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer:!!'  
So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read.'  
So he vanish'd from my sight;  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake

# Jerusalem

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold:  
Bring me my arrows of desire:  
Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

# Jerusalem: England! Awake! Awake! Awake!

England! awake! awake! awake!  
Jerusalem thy Sister calls!  
Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death  
And close her from thy ancient walls?

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet  
Gently upon their bosoms move:  
Thy gates beheld sweet Zion's ways:  
Then was a time of joy and love.

And now the time returns again:  
Our souls exult, and London's towers  
Receive the Lamb of God to dwell  
In England's green and pleasant bowers.

William Blake

# Jerusalem: I See The Four-Fold Man, The Humanity In Deadly Sleep

I see the Four-fold Man, The Humanity in deadly sleep  
And its fallen Emanation, the Spectre and its cruel Shadow.  
I see the Past, Present and Future existing all at once  
Before me. O Divine Spirit, sustain me on thy wings,  
That I may awake Albion from his long and cold repose;  
For Bacon and Newton, sheath'd in dismal steel, their terrors hang  
Like iron scourges over Albion: reasonings like vast serpents  
Infold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations.

I turn my eyes to the schools and universities of Europe  
And there behold the Loom of Locke, whose Woof rages dire,  
Wash'd by the Water-wheels of Newton: black the cloth  
In heavy wreaths folds over every nation: cruel works  
Of many Wheels I view, wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic  
Moving by compulsion each other, not as those in Eden, which,  
Wheel within wheel, in freedom revolve in harmony and peace.

William Blake

# Laughing Song

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,  
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;  
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,  
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

when the meadows laugh with lively green,  
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,  
When Mary and Susan and Emily  
With their sweet round mouths sing 'Ha, ha he!'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,  
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread:  
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,  
To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha, ha, he!'

William Blake

# London

I wandered through each chartered street,  
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,  
A mark in every face I meet,  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,  
In every infant's cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every blackening church appals,  
And the hapless soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down palace-walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful harlot's curse  
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,  
And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.

William Blake

# Love And Harmony

Love and harmony combine,  
And round our souls entwine  
While thy branches mix with mine,  
And our roots together join.

Joys upon our branches sit,  
Chirping loud and singing sweet;  
Like gentle streams beneath our feet  
Innocence and virtue meet.

Thou the golden fruit dost bear,  
I am clad in flowers fair;  
Thy sweet boughs perfume the air,  
And the turtle buildeth there.

There she sits and feeds her young,  
Sweet I hear her mournful song;  
And thy lovely leaves among,  
There is love, I hear his tongue.

There his charming nest doth lay,  
There he sleeps the night away;  
There he sports along the day,  
And doth among our branches play.

William Blake

# Love's Secret

Never seek to tell thy love,  
Love that never told can be;  
For the gentle wind does move  
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,  
I told her all my heart;  
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears,  
Ah! she did depart!

Soon as she was gone from me,  
A traveler came by,  
Silently, invisibly  
He took her with a sigh.

William Blake



# Mad Song

The wild winds weep  
And the night is a-cold;  
Come hither, Sleep,  
And my griefs infold:  
But lo! the morning peeps  
Over the eastern steeps,  
And the rustling birds of dawn  
The earth do scorn.

Lo! to the vault  
Of paved heaven,  
With sorrow fraught  
My notes are driven:  
They strike the ear of night,  
Make weep the eyes of day;  
They make mad the roaring winds,  
And with tempests play.

Like a fiend in a cloud,  
With howling woe,  
After night I do crowd,  
And with night will go;  
I turn my back to the east,  
From whence comforts have increas'd;  
For light doth seize my brain  
With frantic pain.

William Blake

# Milton: And Did Those Feet In Ancient Time

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold:  
Bring me my arrows of desire:  
Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

# Milton: But In The Wine-Presses The Human Grapes Sing Not Nor Dance

But in the Wine-presses the human grapes sing not nor dance:  
They howl and writhe in shoals of torment, in fierce flames consuming,  
In chains of iron and in dungeons circled with ceaseless fires,  
In pits and dens and shades of death, in shapes of torment and woe:  
The plates and screws and racks and saws and cords and fires and cisterns  
The cruel joys of Luvah's Daughters, lacerating with knives  
And whips their victims, and the deadly sport of Luvah's Sons.

They dance around the dying and they drink the howl and groan,  
They catch the shrieks in cups of gold, they hand them to one another:  
These are the sports of love, and these the sweet delights of amorous play,  
Tears of the grape, the death sweat of the cluster, the last sigh  
Of the mild youth who listens to the luring songs of Luvah.

William Blake

# Mock On, Mock On, Voltaire, Rousseau

Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau;  
Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!  
You throw the sand against the wind,  
And the wind blows it back again.  
And every sand becomes a gem  
Reflected in the beams divine;  
Blown back they blind the mocking eye,  
But still in Israel's paths they shine.

The Atoms of Democritus  
And Newton's Particles of Light  
Are sands upon the Red Sea shore,  
Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

William Blake

# My Pretty Rose Tree

A flower was offered to me,  
Such a flower as May never bore;  
But I said 'I've a pretty rose tree,'  
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty rose tree,  
To tend her by day and by night;  
But my rose turned away with jealousy,  
And her thorns were my only delight.

William Blake

# My Spectre Around Me Night And Day

i

My spectre around me night and day  
Like a wild beast guards my way;  
My Emanation far within  
Weeps incessantly for my sin.

ii

` A fathomless and boundless deep,  
There we wander, there we weep;  
On the hungry craving wind  
My Spectre follows thee behind.

iii

` He scents thy footsteps in the snow,  
Wheresoever thou dost go,  
Thro' the wintry hail and rain.  
When wilt thou return again?

iv

` Dost thou not in pride and scorn  
Fill with tempests all my morn,  
And with jealousies and fears  
Fill my pleasant nights with tears?

v

` Seven of my sweet loves thy knife  
Has bereavèd of their life.  
Their marble tombs I built with tears,  
And with cold and shuddering fears.

vi

` Seven more loves weep night and day  
Round the tombs where my loves lay,

And seven more loves attend each night  
Around my couch with torches bright.

vii

`And seven more loves in my bed  
Crown with wine my mournful head,  
Pitying and forgiving all  
Thy transgressions great and small.

viii

`When wilt thou return and view  
My loves, and them to life renew?  
When wilt thou return and live?  
When wilt thou pity as I forgive?'

a

`O'er my sins thou sit and moan:  
Hast thou no sins of thy own?  
O'er my sins thou sit and weep,  
And lull thy own sins fast asleep.

b

`What transgressions I commit  
Are for thy transgressions fit.  
They thy harlots, thou their slave;  
And my bed becomes their grave.

ix

`Never, never, I return:  
Still for victory I burn.  
Living, thee alone I'll have;  
And when dead I'll be thy grave.

x

`Thro' the Heaven and Earth and Hell  
Thou shalt never, never quell:

I will fly and thou pursue:  
Night and morn the flight renew.'

c

` Poor, pale, pitiable form  
That I follow in a storm;  
Iron tears and groans of lead  
Bind around my aching head.

xi

` Till I turn from Female love  
And root up the Infernal Grove,  
I shall never worthy be  
To step into Eternity.

xii

` And, to end thy cruel mocks,  
Annihilate thee on the rocks,  
And another form create  
To be subservient to my fate.

xiii

` Let us agree to give up love,  
And root up the Infernal Grove;  
Then shall we return and see  
The worlds of happy Eternity.

xiv

` And throughout all Eternity  
I forgive you, you forgive me.  
As 1000 our dear Redeemer said:  
"This the Wine, and this the Bread."

William Blake



# Never Seek To Tell Thy Love

Never seek to tell thy love  
Love that never told can be;  
For the gentle wind does move  
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,  
I told her all my heart,  
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears--  
Ah, she doth depart.

Soon as she was gone from me  
A traveller came by  
Silently, invisibly--  
O, was no deny.

William Blake

# Night

The sun descending in the west,  
The evening star does shine;  
The birds are silent in their nest,  
And I must seek for mine.

The moon, like a flower,  
In heaven's high bower,  
With silent delight  
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,  
Where flocks have took delight.  
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves  
The feet of angels bright;  
Unseen they pour blessing,  
And joy without ceasing,  
On each bud and blossom,  
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,  
Where birds are covered warm;  
They visit caves of every beast,  
To keep them all from harm.  
If they see any weeping  
That should have been sleeping,  
They pour sleep on their head,  
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,  
They pitying stand and weep;  
Seeking to drive their thirst away,  
And keep them from the sheep.  
But if they rush dreadful,  
The angels, most heedful,  
Receive each mild spirit,  
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes  
Shall flow with tears of gold,  
And pitying the tender cries,

And walking round the fold,  
Saying, 'Wrath, by His meekness,  
And, by His health, sickness  
Is driven away  
From our immortal day.

'And now beside thee, bleating lamb,  
I can lie down and sleep;  
Or think on Him who bore thy name,  
Graze after thee and weep.

For, washed in life's river,  
My bright mane for ever  
Shall shine like the gold  
As I guard o'er the fold.'

William Blake

# Now Art Has Lost Its Mental Charms

` Now Art has lost its mental charms  
France shall subdue the world in arms.'  
So spoke an Angel at my birth;  
Then said ` Descend thou upon earth,  
Renew the Arts on Britain's shore,  
And France shall fall down and adore.  
With works of art their armies meet  
And War shall sink beneath thy feet.  
But if thy nation Arts refuse,  
And if they scorn the immortal Muse,  
France shall the arts of peace restore  
And save thee from the ungrateful shore.'

Spirit who lov'st Britannia's Isle  
Round which the fiends of commerce smile --

William Blake

## Nurse's Song (Innocence)

When voices of children are heard on the green  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast  
And everything else is still

Then come home my children the sun is gone down  
And the dews of night arise  
Come come leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies

No no let us play, for it is yet day  
And we cannot go to sleep  
Besides in the sky, the little birds fly  
And the hills are all covered with sheep

Well well go & play till the light fades away  
And then go home to bed  
The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd  
And all the hills echoed

William Blake

# On Another's Sorrow

Can I see another's woe,  
And not be in sorrow too?  
Can I see another's grief,  
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,  
And not feel my sorrow's share?  
Can a father see his child  
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear  
An infant groan, an infant fear?  
No, no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all  
Hear the wren with sorrows small,  
Hear the small bird's grief and care,  
Hear the woes that infants bear --

And not sit beside the next,  
Pouring pity in their breast,  
And not sit the cradle near,  
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,  
Wiping all our tears away?  
Oh no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all:  
He becomes an infant small,  
He becomes a man of woe,  
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,  
And thy Maker is not by:  
Think not thou canst weep a tear,  
And thy Maker is not year.

Oh He gives to us his joy,  
That our grief He may destroy:  
Till our grief is fled an gone  
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake

# Preludium To Europe

The nameless shadowy female rose from out the breast of Orc,  
Her snaky hair brandishing in the winds of Enitharmon;  
And thus her voice arose:

'O mother Enitharmon, wilt thou bring forth other sons?  
To cause my name to vanish, that my place may not be found,  
For I am faint with travail,  
Like the dark cloud disburden'd in the day of dismal thunder.

My roots are brandish'd in the heavens, my fruits in earth beneath  
Surge, foam and labour into life, first born and first consum'd!  
Consumed and consuming!  
Then why shouldst thou, accursed mother, bring me into life?

I wrap my turban of thick clouds around my lab'ring head,  
And fold the sheety waters as a mantle round my limbs;  
Yet the red sun and moon  
And all the overflowing stars rain down prolific pains.

Unwilling I look up to heaven, unwilling count the stars:  
Sitting in fathomless abyss of my immortal shrine  
I seize their burning power  
And bring forth howling terrors, all devouring fiery kings,

Devouring and devoured, roaming on dark and desolate mountains,  
In forests of eternal death, shrieking in hollow trees.  
Ah mother Enitharmon!  
Stamp not with solid form this vig'rous progeny of fires.

I bring forth from my teeming bosom myriads of flames,  
And thou dost stamp them with a signet; then they roam abroad  
And leave me void as death.  
Ah! I am drown'd in shady woe and visionary joy.

And who shall bind the infinite with an eternal band?  
To compass it with swaddling bands? and who shall cherish it  
With milk and honey?  
I see it smile, and I roll inward, and my voice is past.'



She ceased, and roll'd her shady clouds  
Into the secret place.

William Blake

# Proverbs Of Hell (Excerpt From The Marriage Of Heaven And H

In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.  
Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead.  
The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.  
Prudence is a rich, ugly old maid courted by Incapacity.  
He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence.  
The cut worm forgives the plow.  
Dip him in the river who loves water.  
A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.  
He whose face gives no light, shall never become a star.  
Eternity is in love with the productions of time.  
The busy bee has no time for sorrow.  
The hours of folly are measur'd by the clock; but of wisdom, no clock can measure.  
All wholesome food is caught without a net or a trap.  
Bring out number, weight and measure in a year of dearth.  
No bird soars too high, if he soars with his own wings.  
A dead body revenges not injuries.  
The most sublime act is to set another before you.  
If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise.  
Folly is the cloak of knavery.  
Shame is Pride's cloke.  
Prisons are built with stones of law, brothels with bricks of religion.  
The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.  
The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.  
The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.  
The nakedness of woman is the work of God.  
Excess of sorrow laughs. Excess of joy weeps.  
The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword, are portions of eternity, too great for the eye of man.  
The fox condemns the trap, not himself.  
Joys impregnate. Sorrows bring forth.  
Let man wear the fell of the lion, woman the fleece of the sheep.  
The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship.  
The selfish, smiling fool, and the sullen, frowning fool shall be both thought wise, that they may be a rod.  
What is now proved was once only imagin'd.  
The rat, the mouse, the fox, the rabbit watch the roots; the lion, the tyger, the

horse, the elephant watch the fruits.  
The cistern contains: the fountain overflows.  
One thought fills immensity.  
Always be ready to speak your mind, and a base man will avoid you.  
Every thing possible to be believ'd is an image of truth.  
The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow.  
The fox provides for himself, but God provides for the lion.  
Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night.  
He who has suffer'd you to impose on him, knows you.  
As the plow follows words, so God rewards prayers.  
The tygers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.  
Expect poison from the standing water.  
You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough.  
Listen to the fool's reproach! it is a kingly title!  
The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of earth.  
The weak in courage is strong in cunning.  
The apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow; nor the lion, the horse,  
how he shall take his prey.  
The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest.  
If others had not been foolish, we should be so.  
The soul of sweet delight can never be defil'd.  
When thou seest an eagle, thou seest a portion of genius; lift up thy head!  
As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays  
his curse on the fairest joys.  
To create a little flower is the labour of ages.  
Damn braces. Bless relaxes.  
The best wine is the oldest, the best water the newest.  
Prayers plow not! Praises reap not!  
Joys laugh not! Sorrows weep not!  
The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the genitals Beauty, the hands and feet  
Proportion.  
As the air to a bird or the sea to a fish, so is contempt to the contemptible.  
The crow wish'd every thing was black, the owl that every thing was white.  
Exuberance is Beauty.  
If the lion was advised by the fox, he would be cunning.  
Improvement makes strait roads; but the crooked roads without improvement  
are roads of genius.  
Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.  
Where man is not, nature is barren.  
Truth can never be told so as to be understood, and not be believ'd.  
Enough! or too much.



# Reeds Of Innocence

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
'Piper, pipe that song again;'  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'  
So I sung the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book that all may read.'  
So he vanish'd from my sight;  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake

# Samson

Samson, the strongest of the children of men, I sing; how he was foiled by woman's arts, by a false wife brought to the gates of death! O Truth! that shinest with propitious beams, turning our earthly night to heavenly day, from presence of the Almighty Father, thou visitest our darkling world with blessed feet, bringing good news of Sin and Death destroyed! O whiterobed Angel, guide my timorous hand to write as on a lofty rock with iron pen the words of truth, that all who pass may read. -- Now Night, noontide of damned spirits, over the silent earth spreads her pavilion, while in dark council sat Philista's lords; and, where strength failed, black thoughts in ambush lay. Their helmed youth and aged warriors in dust together lie, and Desolation spreads his wings over the land of Palestine: from side to side the land groans, her prowess lost, and seeks to hide her bruised head under the mists of night, breeding dark plots. For Dalila's fair arts have long been tried in vain; in vain she wept in many a treacherous tear. `Go on, fair traitress; do thy guileful work; ere once again the changing moon her circuit hath performed, thou shalt overcome, and conquer him by force unconquerable, and wrest his secret from him. Call thine alluring arts and honest-seeming brow, the holy kiss of love, and the transparent tear; put on fair linen that with the lily vies, purple and silver; neglect thy hair, to seem more lovely in thy loose attire; put on thy country's pride, deceit, and eyes of love decked in mild sorrow; and sell thy lord for gold.' For now, upon her sumptuous couch reclined in gorgeous pride, she still entreats, and still she grasps his vigorous knees with her fair arms. `Thou lov'st me not! thou'rt war, thou art not love! O foolish Dalila! O weak woman! it is death clothed in flesh thou lovest, and thou hast been encircled in his arms! Alas, my lord, what am I calling thee? Thou art my God! To thee I pour my tears for sacrifice morning and evening. My days are covered with sorrow, shut up, darkened! By night I am deceived! Who says that thou wast born of mortal kind? Destruction was thy father, a lioness suckled thee, thy young hands tore human limbs, and gorged human flesh. Come hither, Death; art thou not Samson's servant? 'Tis Dalila that calls, thy master's wife; no, stay, and let thy master do the deed: one blow of that strong arm would ease my pain; then should I lay at quiet and have rest. Pity forsook thee at thy birth! O Dagon furious, and all ye gods of Palestine, withdraw your hand! I am but a weak woman. Alas, I am wedded to your enemy! I will go mad, and tear my crisped hair; 1000 I'll run about, and pierce the ears o' th' gods! O Samson, hold me not; thou lovest me not! Look not upon me with those deathful eyes! Thou wouldst my death, and death approaches fast.' Thus, in false tears, she bath'd his feet, and thus she day by day oppressed his soul: he seemed a mountain; his brow among the clouds; she seemed a silver stream, his feet embracing. Dark thoughts rolled to and fro in his mind, like thunder clouds

troubling the sky; his visage was troubled; his soul was distressed. ` Though I should tell her all my heart, what can I fear? Though I should tell this secret of my birth, the utmost may be warded off as well when told as now.' She saw him moved, and thus resumes her wiles. ` Samson, I'm thine; do with me what thou wilt: my friends are enemies; my life is death; I am a traitor to my nation, and despised; my joy is given into the hands of him who hates me, using deceit to the wife of his bosom. Thrice hast thou mocked me and grieved my soul. Didst thou not tell me with green withs to bind thy nervous arms; and, after that, when I had found thy falsehood, with new ropes to bind thee fast? I knew thou didst but mock me. Alas, when in thy sleep I bound thee with them to try thy truth, I cried, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" Then did suspicion wake thee; how didst thou rend the feeble ties! Thou fearest nought, what shouldst thou fear? Thy power is more than mortal, none can hurt thee; thy bones are brass, thy sinews are iron. Ten thousand spears are like the summer grass; an army of mighty men are as flocks in the valleys; what canst thou fear? I drink my tears like water; I live upon sorrow! O worse than wolves and tigers, what canst thou give when such a trifle is denied me? But O! at last thou mockest me, to shame my over-fond inquiry. Thou toldest me to weave thee to the beam by thy strong hair; I did even that to try thy truth; but, when I cried "The Philistines be upon thee!" then didst thou leave me to bewail that Samson loved me not.' He sat, and inward griev'd; he saw and lov'd the beauteous suppliant, nor could conceal aught that might appease her; then, leaning on her bosom, thus he spoke: ` Hear, O Dalila! doubt no more of Samson's love; for that fair breast was made the ivory palace of my inmost heart, where it shall lie at rest: for sorrow is the lot of all of woman born: for care was I brought forth, and labour is my lot: nor matchless might, nor wisdom, nor every gift enjoyed, can from the heart of man hide sorrow. Twice was my birth foretold from heaven, and twice a sacred vow enjoined me that I should drink no wine, nor eat of any unclean thing; for holy unto Israel's God I am, a Nazarite even from my mother's womb. Twice was it told, that it might not be broken. "Grant me a son, kind Heaven," Manoa cried; but Heaven refused. Childless he mourned, but thought his God knew best. In solitude, though not obscure, in Israel he lived, till venerable age came on: his flocks increased, and plenty crowned his board, beloved, revered of man. But God hath other joys in store. Is burdened Israel his grief? The son of his old age shall set it free! The venerable sweetener of his life receives the promise first from Heaven. She saw the maidens play, and blessed their innocent mirth; she blessed each new-joined pair; but from her the long-wished deliverer shall spring. Pensive, alone she sat within the house, when busy day was fading, and calm evening, time for contemplation, rose from the forsaken east, and drew the curtains of heaven: pensive she sat, and thought on Israel's grief, and silent prayed to Israel's God; when lo! an angel from the fields of light entered the house. His form was manhood in the prime, and from his spacious brow shot

terrors through the evening shade. But mild he hailed her, "Hail, highly favoured!" said he; "for lo! thou shalt conceive, and bear a son, and Israel's strength shall be upon his shoulders, and he shall be called Israel's Deliverer. Now, therefore, drink no wine, and eat not any unclean thing, for he shall be a Nazarite to God." Then, as a nei 727 ghour, when his evening tale is told, departs, his blessing leaving, so seemed he to depart: she wondered with exceeding joy, nor knew he was an angel. Manoa left his fields to sit in the house, and take his evening's rest from labour -- the sweetest time that God has allotted mortal man. He sat, and heard with joy, and praised God, who Israel still doth keep. The time rolled on, and Israel groaned oppressed. The sword was bright, while the ploughshare rusted, till hope grew feeble, and was ready to give place to doubting. Then prayed Manoa: "O Lord, thy flock is scattered on the hills! The wolf teareth them, Oppression stretches his rod over our land, our country is ploughed with swords, and reaped in blood. The echoes of slaughter reach from hill to hill. Instead of peaceful pipe the shepherd bears a sword, the ox-goad is turned into a spear. O when shall our Deliverer come? The Philistine riots on our flocks, our vintage is gathered by bands of enemies. Stretch forth thy hand, and save!" Thus prayed Manoa. The aged woman walked into the field, and lo! again the angel came, clad as a traveller fresh risen on his journey. She ran and called her husband, who came and talked with him. "O man of God," said he, "thou comest from far! Let us detain thee while I make ready a kid, that thou mayest sit and eat, and tell us of thy name and warfare; that, when thy sayings come to pass, we may honour thee." The Angel answered, "My name is Wonderful; inquire not after it, seeing it is a secret; but, if thou wilt, offer an offering unto the Lord."

William Blake



# Several Questions Answered

What is it men in women do require?

The lineaments of Gratified Desire.

What is it women do in men require?

The lineaments of Gratified Desire.

The look of love alarms

Because 'tis fill'd with fire;

But the look of soft deceit

Shall Win the lover's hire.

Soft Deceit & Idleness,

These are Beauty's sweetest dress.

He who binds to himself a joy

Dot the winged life destroy;

But he who kisses the joy as it flies

Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

Submitted by Josh Horn

William Blake

# Silent, Silent Night

Silent, silent night,  
Quench the holy light  
Of thy torches bright;

For possessed of Day  
Thousand spirits stray  
That sweet joys betray.

Why should joys be sweet  
Used with deceit,  
Nor with sorrows meet?

But an honest joy  
Does itself destroy  
For a harlot coy.

William Blake

# Sleep! Sleep! Beauty Bright

Sleep! sleep! beauty bright,  
Dreaming o'er the joys of night;  
Sleep! sleep! in thy sleep  
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet Babe, in thy face  
Soft desires I can trace,  
Secret joys and secret smiles,  
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,  
Smiles as of the morning steal  
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast  
Where thy little heart does rest.

O! the cunning wiles that creep  
In thy little heart asleep.  
When thy little heart does wake  
Then the dreadful lightnings break,

From thy cheek and from thy eye,  
O'er the youthful harvests nigh.  
Infant wiles and infant smiles  
Heaven and Earth of peace beguiles.

William Blake

# Song

My silks and fine array,  
My smiles and languish'd air,  
By love are driv'n away;  
And mournful lean Despair  
Brings me yew to deck my grave;  
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heav'n  
When springing buds unfold;  
O why to him was't giv'n  
Whose heart is wintry cold?  
His breast is love's all-worshipp'd tomb,  
Where all love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an axe and spade,  
Bring me a winding sheet;  
When I my grave have made  
Let winds and tempests beat:  
Then down I'll lie as cold as clay.  
True love doth pass away!

William Blake

## Song: Memory, Hither Come

Memory, hither come,  
And tune your merry notes;  
And, while upon the wind  
Your music floats,

I'll pore upon the stream  
Where sighing lovers dream,  
And fish for fancies as they pass  
Within the watery glass.

I'll drink of the clear stream,  
And hear the linnet's song;  
And there I'll lie and dream  
The day along:

And, when night comes, I'll go  
To places fit for woe,  
Walking along the darken'd valley  
With silent Melancholy.

William Blake

# Songs Of Experience: Introduction

Hear the voice of the Bard!  
Who Present, Past, & Future sees  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word,  
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might controll.  
The starry pole;  
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass;  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumbrous mass.

Turn away no more:  
Why wilt thou turn away  
The starry floor  
The watery shore  
Is given thee till the break of day.

William Blake

# Songs Of Innocence: Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild  
Piping songs of pleasant glee  
On a cloud I saw a child.  
And he laughing said to me.

Pipe a song about a Lamb:  
So I piped with merry cheer,  
Piper, pipe that song again--  
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer,  
So I sung the same again  
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write  
In a book that all may read--  
So he vanished from my sight  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs,  
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake

# Spring

Sound the flute!

Now it's mute!

Bird's delight,

Day and night,

Nightingale,

In the dale,

Lark in sky,--

Merrily,

Merrily merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little boy,

Full of joy;

Little girl,

Sweet and small;

Cock does crow,

So do you;

Merry voice,

Infant noise;

Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,

Here I am;

Come and lick

My white neck;

Let me pull

Your soft wool;

Let me kiss

Your soft face;

Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

William Blake



# The Angel

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?  
And that I was a maiden Queen  
Guarded by an Angel mild:  
Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day,  
And he wiped my tears away;  
And I wept both day and night,  
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings, and fled;  
Then the morn blushed rosy red.  
I dried my tears, and armed my fears  
With ten-thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again;  
I was armed, he came in vain;  
For the time of youth was fled,  
And grey hairs were on my head.

William Blake

# The Angel That Presided O'Er My Birth

The Angel that presided o'er my birth  
Said, 'Little creature, form'd of Joy and Mirth,  
'Go love without the help of any Thing on Earth.'

William Blake

# The Birds

He. Where thou dwellest, in what grove,  
Tell me Fair One, tell me Love;  
Where thou thy charming nest dost build,  
O thou pride of every field!

She. Yonder stands a lonely tree,  
There I live and mourn for thee;  
Morning drinks my silent tear,  
And evening winds my sorrow bear.

He. O thou summer's harmony,  
I have liv'd and mourn'd for thee;  
Each day I mourn along the wood,  
And night hath heard my sorrows loud.

She. Dost thou truly long for me?  
And am I thus sweet to thee?  
Sorrow now is at an end,  
O my Lover and my Friend!

He. Come, on wings of joy we'll fly  
To where my bower hangs on high;  
Come, and make thy calm retreat  
Among green leaves and blossoms sweet.

William Blake

# The Blossom

Merry, merry sparrow!  
Under leaves so green  
A happy blossom  
Sees you, swift as arrow,  
Seek your cradle narrow,  
Near my bosom.  
Pretty, pretty robin!  
Under leaves so green  
A happy blossom  
Hears you sobbing, sobbing,  
Pretty, pretty robin,  
Near my bosom.

William Blake

# The Book Of Thel

- 1 Does the Eagle know what is in the pit?
- 2 Or wilt thou go ask the Mole?
- 3 Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod?
- 4 Or Love in a golden bowl?

I

- 1.1 The daughters of the Seraphim led round their sunny flocks,
- 1.2 All but the youngest: she in paleness sought the secret air,
- 1.3 To fade away like morning beauty from her mortal day:
- 1.4 Down by the river of Adona her soft voice is heard,
- 1.5 And thus her gentle lamentation falls like morning dew:
  
- 1.6 'O life of this our spring! why fades the lotus of the water,
- 1.7 Why fade these children of the spring, born but to smile and fall?
- 1.8 Ah! Thel is like a wat'ry bow, and like a parting cloud;
- 1.9 Like a reflection in a glass; like shadows in the water;
- 1.10 Like dreams of infants, like a smile upon an infant's face;
- 1.11 Like the dove's voice; like transient day; like music in the air.
- 1.12 Ah! gentle may I lay me down, and gentle rest my head,
- 1.13 And gentle sleep the sleep of death, and gentle hear the voice
- 1.14 Of him that walketh in the garden in the evening time.'
- 1.15 The Lily of the valley, breathing in the humble grass,
- 1.16 Answer'd the lovely maid and said: 'I am a wat'ry weed,
- 1.17 And I am very small and love to dwell in lowly vales;
- 1.18 So weak, the gilded butterfly scarce perches on my head.
- 1.19 Yet I am visited from heaven, and he that smiles on all
- 1.20 Walks in the valley and each morn over me spreads his hand,
- 1.21 Saying, 'Rejoice, thou humble grass, thou new-born lily-flower,
- 1.22 Thou gentle maid of silent valleys and of modest brooks;
- 1.23 For thou shalt be clothed in light, and fed with morning manna,
- 1.24 Till summer's heat melts thee beside the fountains and the springs
- 1.25 To flourish in eternal vales.' Then why should Thel complain?
- 1.26 Why should the mistress of the vales of Har utter a sigh?'
  
- 1.27 She ceas'd and smil'd in tears, then sat down in her silver shrine.
  
- 1.28 Thel answer'd: 'O thou little virgin of the peaceful valley,
- 1.29 Giving to those that cannot crave, the voiceless, the o'ertired;

1.30 Thy breath doth nourish the innocent lamb, he smells thy milky garments,  
1.31 He crops thy flowers while thou sittest smiling in his face,  
1.32 Wiping his mild and meekin mouth from all contagious taints.  
1.33 Thy wine doth purify the golden honey; thy perfume,  
1.34 Which thou dost scatter on every little blade of grass that springs,  
1.35 Revives the milked cow, and tames the fire-breathing steed.  
1.36 But Thel is like a faint cloud kindled at the rising sun:  
1.37 I vanish from my pearly throne, and who shall find my place?'

1.38 'Queen of the vales,' the Lily answer'd, 'ask the tender cloud,  
1.39 And it shall tell thee why it glitters in the morning sky,  
1.40 And why it scatters its bright beauty thro' the humid air.  
1.41 Descend, O little Cloud, and hover before the eyes of Thel.'

1.42 The Cloud descended, and the Lily bow'd her modest head  
1.43 And went to mind her numerous charge among the verdant grass.

## II

2.1 'O little Cloud,' the virgin said, 'I charge thee tell to me  
2.2 Why thou complainest not when in one hour thou fade away:  
2.3 Then we shall seek thee, but not find. Ah! Thel is like to thee:  
2.4 I pass away: yet I complain, and no one hears my voice.'

2.5 The Cloud then shew'd his golden head and his bright form emerg'd,  
2.6 Hovering and glittering on the air before the face of Thel.

2.7 'O virgin, know'st thou not our steeds drink of the golden springs  
2.8 Where Luvah doth renew his horses? Look'st thou on my youth,  
2.9 And fearest thou, because I vanish and am seen no more,  
2.10 Nothing remains? O maid, I tell thee, when I pass away  
2.11 It is to tenfold life, to love, to peace and raptures holy:  
2.12 Unseen descending, weigh my light wings upon balmy flowers,  
2.13 And court the fair-eyed dew to take me to her shining tent:  
2.14 The weeping virgin trembling kneels before the risen sun,  
2.15 Till we arise link'd in a golden band and never part,  
2.16 But walk united, bearing food to all our tender flowers.'

2.17 'Dost thou, O little Cloud? I fear that I am not like thee,  
2.18 For I walk thro' the vales of Har, and smell the sweetest flowers,  
2.19 But I feed not the little flowers; I hear the warbling birds,  
2.20 But I feed not the warbling birds; they fly and seek their food:

- 2.21 But Thel delights in these no more, because I fade away;  
2.22 And all shall say, 'Without a use this shining woman liv'd,  
2.23 Or did she only live to be at death the food of worms?' '  
  
2.24 The Cloud reclin'd upon his airy throne and answer'd thus:  
  
2.25 'Then if thou art the food of worms, O virgin of the skies,  
2.26 How great thy use, how great thy blessing! Every thing that lives  
2.27 Lives not alone nor for itself. Fear not, and I will call  
2.28 The weak worm from its lowly bed, and thou shalt hear its voice,  
2.29 Come forth, worm of the silent valley, to thy pensive queen.'  
  
2.30 The helpless worm arose, and sat upon the Lily's leaf,  
2.31 And the bright Cloud sail'd on, to find his partner in the vale.

### III

- 3.1 Then Thel astonish'd view'd the Worm upon its dewy bed.  
  
3.2 'Art thou a Worm? Image of weakness, art thou but a Worm?  
3.3 I see thee like an infant wrapped in the Lily's leaf  
3.4 Ah! weep not, little voice, thou canst not speak, but thou canst weep.  
3.5 Is this a Worm? I see thee lay helpless and naked, weeping,  
3.6 And none to answer, none to cherish thee with mother's smiles.'  
3.7 The Clod of Clay heard the Worm's voice and rais'd her pitying head:  
3.8 She bow'd over the weeping infant, and her life exhal'd  
3.9 In milky fondness: then on Thel she fix'd her humble eyes.  
  
3.10 'O beauty of the vales of Har! we live not for ourselves.  
3.11 Thou seest me the meanest thing, and so I am indeed.  
3.12 My bosom of itself is cold, and of itself is dark;  
3.13 But he, that loves the lowly, pours his oil upon my head,  
3.14 And kisses me, and binds his nuptial bands around my breast,  
3.15 And says: 'Thou mother of my children, I have loved thee  
3.16 And I have given thee a crown that none can take away.'  
3.17 But how this is, sweet maid, I know not, and I cannot know;  
3.18 I ponder, and I cannot ponder; yet I live and love.'  
  
3.19 The daughter of beauty wip'd her pitying tears with her white veil,  
3.20 And said: 'Alas! I knew not this, and therefore did I weep.  
3.21 That God would love a Worm I knew, and punish the evil foot  
3.22 That wilful bruis'd its helpless form; but that he cherish'd it

- 3.23 With milk and oil I never knew, and therefore did I weep;  
3.24 And I complain'd in the mild air, because I fade away,  
3.25 And lay me down in thy cold bed, and leave my shining lot.'
- 3.26 'Queen of the vales,' the matron Clay answer'd, 'I heard thy sighs,  
3.27 And all thy moans flew o'er my roof, but I have call'd them down.  
3.28 Wilt thou, O Queen, enter my house? 'Tis given thee to enter  
3.29 And to return: fear nothing, enter with thy virgin feet.'

#### IV

- 4.1 The eternal gates' terrific porter lifted the northern bar:  
4.2 Thel enter'd in and saw the secrets of the land unknown.  
4.3 She saw the couches of the dead, and where the fibrous roots  
4.4 Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless twists:  
4.5 A land of sorrows and of tears where never smile was seen.
- 4.6 She wander'd in the land of clouds thro' valleys dark, list'ning  
4.7 Dolours and lamentations; waiting oft beside a dewy grave  
4.8 She stood in silence, list'ning to the voices of the ground,  
4.9 Till to her own grave plot she came, and there she sat down,  
4.10 And heard this voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit.
- 4.11 'Why cannot the Ear be closed to its own destruction?  
4.12 Or the glist'ning Eye to the poison of a smile?  
4.13 Why are Eyelids stor'd with arrows ready drawn,  
4.14 Where a thousand fighting men in ambush lie?  
4.15 Or an Eye of gifts and graces show'ring fruits and coined gold?  
4.16 Why a Tongue impress'd with honey from every wind?  
4.17 Why an Ear, a whirlpool fierce to draw creations in?  
4.18 Why a Nostril wide inhaling terror, trembling, and affright?  
4.19 Why a tender curb upon the youthful burning boy?  
4.20 Why a little curtain of flesh on the bed of our desire?'
- 4.21 The Virgin started from her seat, and with a shriek  
4.22 Fled back unhinder'd till she came into the vales of Har.

William Blake



# The Book Of Urizen (Excerpts)

Lo, a shadow of horror is risen  
In Eternity! Unknown, unprolific,  
Self-clos'd, all-repelling: what demon  
Hath form'd this abominable void,  
This soul-shudd'ring vacuum? Some said  
'It is Urizen.' But unknown, abstracted,  
Brooding, secret, the dark power hid.

Times on times he divided and measur'd  
Space by space in his ninefold darkness,  
Unseen, unknown; changes appear'd  
Like desolate mountains, rifted furious  
By the black winds of perturbation.

For he strove in battles dire,  
In unseen conflictions with shapes  
Bred from his forsaken wilderness  
Of beast, bird, fish, serpent and element,  
Combustion, blast, vapour and cloud.

Dark, revolving in silent activity:  
Unseen in tormenting passions:  
An activity unknown and horrible,  
A self-contemplating shadow,  
In enormous labours occupied.

But Eternals beheld his vast forests;  
Age on ages he lay, clos'd, unknown,  
Brooding shut in the deep; all avoid  
The petrific, abominable chaos.

His cold horrors silent, dark Urizen  
Prepar'd; his ten thousands of thunders,  
Rang'd in gloom'd array, stretch out across  
The dread world; and the rolling of wheels,  
As of swelling seas, sound in his clouds,  
In his hills of stor'd snows, in his mountains  
Of hail and ice; voices of terror  
Are heard, like thunders of autumn  
When the cloud blazes over the harvests

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter I

1. Lo, a shadow of horror is risen  
In Eternity! Unknown, unprolific!  
Self-clos'd, all-repelling: what Demon  
Hath form'd this abominable void  
This soul-shudd'ring vacuum?--Some said  
"It is Urizen", But unknown, abstracted  
Brooding secret, the dark power hid.

2. Times on times he divided, & measur'd  
Space by space in his ninefold darkness  
Unseen, unknown! changes appear'd  
In his desolate mountains rifted furious  
By the black winds of perturbation

3. For he strove in battles dire  
In unseen confictions with shapes  
Bred from his forsaken wilderness,  
Of beast, bird, fish, serpent & element  
Combustion, blast, vapour and cloud.

4. Dark revolving in silent activity:  
Unseen in tormenting passions;  
An activity unknown and horrible;  
A self-contemplating shadow,  
In enormous labours occupied

5. But Eternals beheld his vast forests  
Age on ages he lay, clos'd, unknown  
Brooding shut in the deep; all avoid  
The petrific abominable chaos

6. His cold horrors silent, dark Urizen  
Prepar'd: his ten thousands of thunders  
Rang'd in gloom'd array stretch out across  
The dread world, & the rolling of wheels  
As of swelling seas, sound in his clouds  
In his hills of stor'd snows, in his mountains  
Of hail & ice; voices of terror,  
Are heard, like thunders of autumn,

When the cloud blazes over the harvests

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter Ii

1. Earth was not: nor globes of attraction  
The will of the Immortal expanded  
Or contracted his all flexible senses.  
Death was not, but eternal life sprung

2. The sound of a trumpet the heavens  
Awoke & vast clouds of blood roll'd  
Round the dim rocks of Urizen, so nam'd  
That solitary one in Immensity

3. Shrill the trumpet: & myriads of Eternity,  
Muster around the bleak desarts  
Now fill'd with clouds, darkness & waters  
That roll'd perplex'd labring & utter'd  
Words articulate, bursting in thunders  
That roll'd on the tops of his mountains

4. From the depths of dark solitude. From  
The eternal abode in my holiness,  
Hidden set apart in my stern counsels  
Reserv'd for the days of futurity,  
I have sought for a joy without pain,  
For a solid without fluctuation  
Why will you die O Eternals?  
Why live in unquenchable burnings?

5. First I fought with the fire; consum'd  
Inwards, into a deep world within:  
A void immense, wild dark & deep,  
Where nothing was: Natures wide womb  
And self balanc'd stretch'd o'er the void  
I alone, even I! the winds merciless  
Bound; but condensing, in torrents  
They fall & fall; strong I repell'd  
The vast waves, & arose on the waters  
A wide world of solid obstruction

6. Here alone I in books form'd of metals  
Have written the secrets of wisdom

The secrets of dark contemplation  
By fightings and conflicts dire,  
With terrible monsters Sin-bred:  
Which the bosoms of all inhabit;  
Seven deadly Sins of the soul.

7. Lo! I unfold my darkness: and on  
This rock, place with strong hand the Book  
Of eternal brass, written in my solitude.

8. Laws of peace, of love, of unity:  
Of pity, compassion, forgiveness.  
Let each chuse one habitation:  
His ancient infinite mansion:  
One command, one joy, one desire,  
One curse, one weight, one measure  
One King, one God, one Law.

William Blake

## The Book Of Urizen: Chapter Iii

1. The voice ended, they saw his pale visage  
Emerge from the darkness; his hand  
On the rock of eternity unclasping  
The Book of brass. Rage siez'd the strong

2. Rage, fury, intense indignation  
In cataracts of fire blood & gall  
In whirlwinds of sulphurous smoke:  
And enormous forms of energy;  
All the seven deadly sins of the soul  
In living creations appear'd  
In the flames of eternal fury.

3. Sund'ring, dark'ning, thund'ring!  
Rent away with a terrible crash  
Eternity roll'd wide apart  
Wide asunder rolling  
Mountainous all around  
Departing; departing; departing:  
Leaving ruinous fragments of life  
Hanging frowning cliffs & all between  
An ocean of voidness unfathomable.

4. The roaring fires ran o'er the heav'ns  
In whirlwinds & cataracts of blood  
And o'er the dark desarts of Urizen  
Fires pour thro' the void on all sides  
On Urizens self-begotten armies.

5. But no light from the fires. all was darkness  
In the flames of Eternal fury

6. In fierce anguish & quenchless flames  
To the desarts and rocks He ran raging  
To hide, but He could not: combining  
He dug mountains & hills in vast strength,  
He piled them in incessant labour,  
In howlings & pangs & fierce madness  
Long periods in burning fires labouring

Till hoary, and age-broke, and aged,  
In despair and the shadows of death.

7. And a roof, vast petrific around,  
On all sides He fram'd: like a womb;  
Where thousands of rivers in veins  
Of blood pour down the mountains to cool  
The eternal fires beating without  
From Eternals; & like a black globe  
View'd by sons of Eternity, standing  
On the shore of the infinite ocean  
Like a human heart struggling & beating  
The vast world of Urizen appear'd.

8. And Los round the dark globe of Urizen,  
Kept watch for Eternals to confine,  
The obscure separation alone;  
For Eternity stood wide apart,  
As the stars are apart from the earth

9. Los wept howling around the dark Demon:  
And cursing his lot; for in anguish,  
Urizen was rent from his side;  
And a fathomless void for his feet;  
And intense fires for his dwelling.

10. But Urizen laid in a stony sleep  
Unorganiz'd, rent from Eternity

11. The Eternals said: What is this? Death  
Urizen is a clod of clay.

12. Los howld in a dismal stupor,  
Groaning! gnashing! groaning!  
Till the wrenching apart was healed

13. But the wrenching of Urizen heal'd not  
Cold, featureless, flesh or clay,  
Rifted with direful changes  
He lay in a dreamless night

14. Till Los rouz'd his fires, affrighted



At the formless unmeasurable death.

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter Iv

<i>a</i>

1. Los smitten with astonishment  
Frightend at the hurtling bones
2. And at the surging sulphureous  
Perturbed Immortal mad raging
3. In whirlwinds & pitch & nitre  
Round the furious limbs of Los
4. And Los formed nets & gins  
And threw the nets round about
5. He watch'd in shuddring fear  
The dark changes & bound every change  
With rivets of iron & brass;
6. And these were the changes of Urizen.

<i>b</i>.

1. Ages on ages roll'd over him!  
In stony sleep ages roll'd over him!  
Like a dark waste stretching chang'able  
By earthquakes riv'n, belching sullen fires  
On ages roll'd ages in ghastly  
Sick torment; around him in whirlwinds  
Of darkness the eternal Prophet howl'd  
Beating still on his rivets of iron  
Pouring sodor of iron; dividing  
The horrible night into watches.
2. And Urizen (so his eternal name)  
His prolific delight obscurd more & more  
In dark secresy hiding in surgeing  
Sulphureous fluid his phantasies.  
The Eternal Prophet heavd the dark bellows,

And turn'd restless the tongs; and the hammer  
Incessant beat; forging chains new & new  
Numb'ring with links. hours, days & years

3. The eternal mind bounded began to roll  
Eddies of wrath ceaseless round & round,  
And the sulphureous foam surgeing thick  
Settled, a lake, bright, & shining clear:  
White as the snow on the mountains cold.

4. Forgetfulness, dumbness, necessity!  
In chains of the mind locked up,  
Like fetters of ice shrinking together  
Disorganiz'd, rent from Eternity,  
Los beat on his fetters of iron;  
And heated his furnaces & pour'd  
Iron sodor and sodor of brass

5. Restless turnd the immortal inchain'd  
Heaving dolorous! anguish'd! unbearable  
Till a roof shaggy wild inclos'd  
In an orb, his fountain of thought.

6. In a horrible dreamful slumber;  
Like the linked infernal chain;  
A vast Spine writh'd in torment  
Upon the winds; shooting pain'd  
Ribs, like a bending cavern  
And bones of solidness, froze  
Over all his nerves of joy.  
And a first Age passed over,  
And a state of dismal woe.

7. From the caverns of his jointed Spine,  
Down sunk with fright a red  
Round globe hot burning deep  
Deep down into the Abyss:  
Panting: Conglobing, Trembling  
Shooting out ten thousand branches  
Around his solid bones.  
And a second Age passed over,  
And a state of dismal woe.

8. In harrowing fear rolling round;  
His nervous brain shot branches  
Round the branches of his heart.  
On high into two little orbs  
And fixed in two little caves  
Hiding carefully from the wind,  
His Eyes beheld the deep,  
And a third Age passed over:  
And a state of dismal woe.

9. The pangs of hope began,  
In heavy pain striving, struggling.  
Two Ears in close volutions.  
From beneath his orbs of vision  
Shot spiring out and petrified  
As they grew. And a fourth Age passed  
And a state of dismal woe.

10. In ghastly torment sick;  
Hanging upon the wind;  
Two Nostrils bent down to the deep.  
And a fifth Age passed over;  
And a state of dismal woe.

11. In ghastly torment sick;  
Within his ribs bloated round,  
A craving Hungry Cavern;  
Thence arose his channelled Throat,  
And like a red flame a Tongue  
Of thirst & of hunger appeared.  
And a sixth Age passed over:  
And a state of dismal woe.

12. Enraged & stifled with torment  
He threw his right Arm to the north  
His left Arm to the south  
Shooting out in anguish deep,  
And his Feet stampd the nether Abyss  
In trembling & howling & dismay.  
And a seventh Age passed over:  
And a state of dismal woe.

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter IX

1. Then the Inhabitants of those Cities:  
Felt their Nerves change into Marrow  
And hardening Bones began  
In swift diseases and torments,  
In throbbings & shootings & grindings  
Thro' all the coasts; till weaken'd  
The Senses inward rush'd shrinking,  
Beneath the dark net of infection.
  
2. Till the shrunken eyes clouded over  
Discernd not the woven hipocrisy  
But the streaky slime in their heavens  
Brought together by narrowing perceptions  
Appeard transparent air; for their eyes  
Grew small like the eyes of a man  
And in reptile forms shrinking together  
Of seven feet stature they remaind
  
3. Six days they shrunk up from existence  
And on the seventh day they rested  
And they bless'd the seventh day, in sick hope:  
And forgot their eternal life
  
4. And their thirty cities divided  
In form of a human heart  
No more could they rise at will  
In the infinite void, but bound down  
To earth by their narrowing perceptions  
They lived a period of years  
Then left a noisom body  
To the jaws of devouring darkness
  
5. And their children wept, & built  
Tombs in the desolate places,  
And form'd laws of prudence, and call'd them  
The eternal laws of God
  
6. And the thirty cities remaind  
Surrounded by salt floods, now call'd

Africa: its name was then Egypt.

7. The remaining sons of Urizen  
Beheld their brethren shrink together  
Beneath the Net of Urizen;  
Perswasion was in vain;  
For the ears of the inhabitants,  
Were wither'd, & deafen'd, & cold:  
And their eyes could not discern,  
Their brethren of other cities.

8. So Fuzon call'd all together  
The remaining children of Urizen:  
And they left the pendulous earth:  
They called it Egypt, & left it.

9. And the salt ocean rolled englob'd.

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter V

1. In terrors Los shrunk from his task:  
His great hammer fell from his hand:  
His fires beheld, and sickening,  
Hid their strong limbs in smoke.  
For with noises ruinous loud;  
With hurtlings & clashings & groans  
The Immortal endur'd his chains,  
Tho' bound in a deadly sleep.

2. All the myriads of Eternity:  
All the wisdom & joy of life:  
Roll like a sea around him,  
Except what his little orbs  
Of sight by degrees unfold.

3. And now his eternal life  
Like a dream was obliterated

4. Shudd'ring, the Eternal Prophet smote  
With a stroke, from his north to south region  
The bellows & hammer are silent now  
A nerveless silence, his prophetic voice  
Siez'd; a cold solitude & dark void  
The Eternal Prophet & Urizen clos'd

5. Ages on ages rolld over them  
Cut off from life & light frozen  
Into horrible forms of deformity  
Los suffer'd his fires to decay  
Then he look'd back with anxious desire  
But the space undivided by existence  
Struck horror into his soul.

6. Los wept obscur'd with mourning:  
His bosom earthquak'd with sighs;  
He saw Urizen deadly black,  
In his chains bound, & Pity began,

7. In anguish dividing & dividing



For pity divides the soul  
In pangs eternity on eternity  
Life in cataracts pour'd down his cliffs  
The void shrunk the lymph into Nerves  
Wand'ring wide on the bosom of night  
And left a round globe of blood  
Trembling upon the Void  
Thus the Eternal Prophet was divided  
Before the death-image of Urizen  
For in changeable clouds and darkness  
In a winterly night beneath,  
The Abyss of Los stretch'd immense:  
And now seen, now obscur'd, to the eyes  
Of Eternals, the visions remote  
Of the dark separation appear'd.  
As glasses discover Worlds  
In the endless Abyss of space,  
So the expanding eyes of Immortals  
Beheld the dark visions of Los,  
And the globe of life blood trembling

8. The globe of life blood trembled  
Branching out into roots;  
Fib'rous, writhing upon the winds;  
Fibres of blood, milk and tears;  
In pangs, eternity on eternity.  
At length in tears & cries imbody'd  
A female form trembling and pale  
Waves before his deathly face

9. All Eternity shudder'd at sight  
Of the first female now separate  
Pale as a cloud of snow  
Waving before the face of Los

10. Wonder, awe, fear, astonishment,  
Petrify the eternal myriads;  
At the first female form now separate  
They call'd her Pity, and fled

11. "Spread a Tent, with strong curtains around them  
"Let cords & stakes bind in the Void

That Eternals may no more behold them"

12. They began to weave curtains of darkness  
They erected large pillars round the Void  
With golden hooks fastend in the pillars  
With infinite labour the Eternals  
A woof wove, and called it Science

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter Vi

1. But Los saw the Female & pitied  
He embrac'd her, she wept, she refus'd  
In perverse and cruel delight  
She fled from his arms, yet he followd

2. Eternity shudder'd when they saw,  
Man begetting his likeness,  
On his own divided image.

3. A time passed over, the Eternals  
Began to erect the tent;  
When Enitharmon sick,  
Felt a Worm within her womb.

4. Yet helpless it lay like a Worm  
In the trembling womb  
To be moulded into existence

5. All day the worm lay on her bosom  
All night within her womb  
The worm lay till it grew to a serpent  
With dolorous hissings & poisons  
Round Enitharmons loins folding,

6. Coild within Enitharmons womb  
The serpent grew casting its scales,  
With sharp pangs the hissings began  
To change to a grating cry,  
Many sorrows and dismal throes,  
Many forms of fish, bird & beast,  
Brought forth an Infant form  
Where was a worm before.

7. The Eternals their tent finished  
Alarm'd with these gloomy visions  
When Enitharmon groaning  
Produc'd a man Child to the light.

8. A shriek ran thro' Eternity:

And a paralytic stroke;  
At the birth of the Human shadow.

9. Delving earth in his resistless way;  
Howling, the Child with fierce flames  
Issu'd from Enitharmon.

10. The Eternals, closed the tent  
They beat down the stakes the cords  
Stretch'd for a work of eternity;  
No more Los beheld Eternity.

11. In his hands he seiz'd the infant  
He bathed him in springs of sorrow  
He gave him to Enitharmon.

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter VII

1. They named the child Orc, he grew  
Fed with milk of Enitharmon

2. Los awoke her; O sorrow & pain!  
A tight'ning girdle grew,  
Around his bosom. In sobbings  
He burst the girdle in twain,  
But still another girdle  
Opressd his bosom, In sobbings  
Again he burst it. Again  
Another girdle succeeds  
The girdle was form'd by day;  
By night was burst in twain.

3. These falling down on the rock  
Into an iron Chain  
In each other link by link lock'd

4. They took Orc to the top of a mountain.  
O how Enitharmon wept!  
They chain'd his young limbs to the rock  
With the Chain of Jealousy  
Beneath Urizens deathful shadow

5. The dead heard the voice of the child  
And began to awake from sleep  
All things. heard the voice of the child  
And began to awake to life.

6. And Urizen craving with hunger  
Stung with the odours of Nature  
Explor'd his dens around

7. He form'd a line & a plummet  
To divide the Abyss beneath.  
He form'd a dividing rule:

8. He formed scales to weigh;  
He formed massy weights;

He formed a brazen quadrant;  
He formed golden compasses  
And began to explore the Abyss  
And he planted a garden of fruits

9. But Los encircled Enitharmon  
With fires of Prophecy  
From the sight of Urizen & Orc.

10. And she bore an enormous race

William Blake

# The Book Of Urizen: Chapter Viii

1. Urizen explor'd his dens  
Mountain, moor, & wilderness,  
With a globe of fire lighting his journey  
A fearful journey, annoy'd  
By cruel enormities: forms  
Of life on his forsaken mountains
  
2. And his world teemd vast enormities  
Frightning; faithless; fawning  
Portions of life; similitudes  
Of a foot, or a hand, or a head  
Or a heart, or an eye, they swam mischevous  
Dread terrors! delighting in blood
  
3. Most Urizen sicken'd to see  
His eternal creations appear  
Sons & daughters of sorrow on mountains  
Weeping! wailing! first Thiriel appear'd  
Astonish'd at his own existence  
Like a man from a cloud born, & Utha  
From the waters emerging, laments!  
Grodna rent the deep earth howling  
Amaz'd! his heavens immense cracks  
Like the ground parch'd with heat; then Fuzon  
Flam'd out! first begotten, last born.  
All his eternal sons in like manner  
His daughters from green herbs & cattle  
From monsters, & worms of the pit.
  
4. He in darkness clos'd, view'd all his race,  
And his soul sicken'd! he curs'd  
Both sons & daughters; for he saw  
That no flesh nor spirit could keep  
His iron laws one moment.
  
5. For he saw that life liv'd upon death  
The Ox in the slaughter house moans  
The Dog at the wintry door  
And he wept, & he called it Pity

And his tears flowed down on the winds

6. Cold he wander'd on high, over their cities  
In weeping & pain & woe!  
And where-ever he wanderd in sorrows  
Upon the aged heavens  
A cold shadow follow'd behind him  
Like a spiders web, moist, cold, & dim  
Drawing out from his sorrowing soul  
The dungeon-like heaven dividing.  
Where ever the footsteps of Urizen  
Walk'd over the cities in sorrow.

7. Till a Web dark & cold, throughout all  
The tormented element stretch'd  
From the sorrows of Urizens soul  
And the Web is a Female in embryo  
None could break the Web, no wings of fire.

8. So twisted the cords, & so knotted  
The meshes: twisted like to the human brain

9. And all call'd it, The Net of Religion

William Blake



# The Book Of Urizen: Preludium

Of the primeval Priests assum'd power,  
When Eternals spurn'd back his religion;  
And gave him a place in the north,  
Obscure, shadowy, void, solitary.

Eternals I hear your call gladly,  
Dictate swift winged words, & fear not  
To unfold your dark visions of torment.

William Blake

# The Caverns Of The Grave I've Seen

The Caverns of the Grave I've seen,  
And these I show'd to England's Queen.  
But now the Caves of Hell I view,  
Who shall I dare to show them to?  
What mighty soul in Beauty's form  
Shall dauntless view the infernal storm?  
Egremont's Countess can control  
The flames of Hell that round me roll;  
If she refuse, I still go on  
Till the Heavens and Earth are gone,  
Still admir'd by noble minds,  
Follow'd by Envy on the winds,  
Re-engrav'd time after time,  
Ever in their youthful prime,  
My designs unchang'd remain.  
Time may rage, but rage in vain.  
For above Time's troubled fountains,  
On the great Atlantic Mountains,  
In my Golden House on high,  
There they shine eternally.

William Blake

# The Chimney Sweeper: A Little Black Thing Among The Snow

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying 'weep! 'weep!' in notes of woe!  
'Where are thy father and mother? say?'  
'They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,  
And smil'd among the winter's snow,  
They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury,  
And are gone to praise God and his Priest and King,  
Who make up a heaven of our misery.'

William Blake

# The Chimney-Sweeper: When My Mother Died I Was Very Young

When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry 'Weep! weep! weep! weep!'  
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,  
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,  
'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for, when your head's bare,  
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight! --  
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,  
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,  
And he opened the coffins, and let them all free;  
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,  
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;  
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.  
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:  
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

William Blake

# The Clod And The Pebble

'Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease,  
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.'

So sung a little clod of clay,  
Trodden with the cattle's feet;  
But a pebble of the brook  
Warbled out these meters meet:

'Love seeketh only Self to please,  
To bind another to its delight,  
Joys in another's loss of ease,  
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.'

William Blake

# The Crystal Cabinet

The Maiden caught me in the wild,  
Where I was dancing merrily;  
She put me into her Cabinet,  
And lock'd me up with a golden key.

This cabinet is form'd of gold  
And pearl and crystal shining bright,  
And within it opens into a world  
And a little lovely moony night.

Another England there I saw  
Another London with its Tower,  
Another Thames and other hills,  
And another pleasant Surrey bower.

Another Maiden like herself,  
Translucent, lovely, shining clear,  
Threefold each in the other clos'd  
O, what a pleasant trembling fear!

O, what a smile! a threefold smile  
Fill'd me, that like a flame I burn'd;  
I bent to kiss the lovely Maid,  
And found a threefold kiss return'd.

I strove to seize the inmost form  
With ardor fierce and hands of flame,  
But burst the Crystal Cabinet,  
And like a weeping Babe became--

A weeping Babe upon the wild,  
And weeping Woman pale reclin'd,  
And in the outward air again,  
I fill'd with woes the passing wind.

.

William Blake

# The Echoing Green

The sun does arise,  
And make happy the skies;  
The merry bells ring  
To welcome the spring;  
The skylark and thrush,  
The birds of the bush,  
Sing louder around  
To the bell's cheerful sound,  
While our sports shall be seen  
On the Echoing Green.

Old John with white hair,  
Does laugh away care,  
Sitting under the oak,  
Among the old folk.  
They laugh at our play,  
And soon they all say:  
'Such, such were the joys  
When we all, girls and boys,  
In our youth time were seen  
On the Echoing Green.'

Till the little ones, weary,  
No more can be merry;  
The sun does descend,  
And our sports have an end.  
Round the laps of their mothers  
Many sisters and brother,  
Like birds in their nest,  
Are ready for rest,  
And sport no more seen  
On the darkening Green.

.

William Blake

# The Everlasting Gospel

The vision of Christ that thou dost see  
Is my vision's greatest enemy.  
Thine has a great hook nose like thine;  
Mine has a snub nose like to mine.  
Thine is the Friend of all Mankind;  
Mine speaks in parables to the blind.  
Thine loves the same world that mine hates;  
Thy heaven doors are my hell gates.  
Socrates taught what Meletus  
Loath'd as a nation's bitterest curse,  
And Caiaphas was in his own mind  
A benefactor to mankind.  
Both read the Bible day and night,  
But thou read'st black where I read white.

Was Jesus gentle, or did He  
Give any marks of gentility?  
When twelve years old He ran away,  
And left His parents in dismay.  
When after three days' sorrow found,  
Loud as Sinai's trumpet-sound:  
'No earthly parents I confess—  
My Heavenly Father's business!  
Ye understand not what I say,  
And, angry, force Me to obey.  
Obedience is a duty then,  
And favour gains with God and men.'  
John from the wilderness loud cried;  
Satan gloried in his pride.  
'Come,' said Satan, 'come away,  
I'll soon see if you'll obey!  
John for disobedience bled,  
But you can turn the stones to bread.  
God's high king and God's high priest  
Shall plant their glories in your breast,  
If Caiaphas you will obey,  
If Herod you with bloody prey  
Feed with the sacrifice, and be  
Obedient, fall down, worship me.'



Thunders and lightnings broke around,  
And Jesus' voice in thunders' sound:  
'Thus I seize the spiritual prey.  
Ye smiters with disease, make way.  
I come your King and God to seize,  
Is God a smiter with disease?'  
The God of this world rag'd in vain:  
He bound old Satan in His chain,  
And, bursting forth, His furious ire  
Became a chariot of fire.  
Throughout the land He took His course,  
And trac'd diseases to their source.  
He curs'd the Scribe and Pharisee,  
Trampling down hypocrisy.  
Where'er His chariot took its way,  
There Gates of Death let in the Day,  
Broke down from every chain and bar;  
And Satan in His spiritual war  
Dragg'd at His chariot-wheels: loud howl'd  
The God of this world: louder roll'd  
The chariot-wheels, and louder still  
His voice was heard from Zion's Hill,  
And in His hand the scourge shone bright;  
He scourg'd the merchant Canaanite  
From out the Temple of His Mind,  
And in his body tight does bind  
Satan and all his hellish crew;  
And thus with wrath He did subdue  
The serpent bulk of Nature's dross,  
Till He had nail'd it to the Cross.  
He took on sin in the Virgin's womb  
And put it off on the Cross and tomb  
To be worshipp'd by the Church of Rome.

Was Jesus humble? or did He  
Give any proofs of humility?  
Boast of high things with humble tone,  
And give with charity a stone?  
When but a child He ran away,  
And left His parents in dismay.  
When they had wander'd three days long  
These were the words upon His tongue:

'No earthly parents I confess:  
I am doing My Father's business.'  
When the rich learned Pharisee  
Came to consult Him secretly,  
Upon his heart with iron pen  
He wrote 'Ye must be born again.'  
He was too proud to take a bribe;  
He spoke with authority, not like a Scribe.  
He says with most consummate art  
'Follow Me, I am meek and lowly of heart,  
As that is the only way to escape  
The miser's net and the glutton's trap.'  
What can be done with such desperate fools  
Who follow after the heathen schools?  
I was standing by when Jesus died;  
What I call'd humility, they call'd pride.  
He who loves his enemies betrays his friends.  
This surely is not what Jesus intends;  
But the sneaking pride of heroic schools,  
And the Scribes' and Pharisees' virtuous rules;  
For He acts with honest, triumphant pride,  
And this is the cause that Jesus dies.  
He did not die with Christian ease,  
Asking pardon of His enemies:  
If He had, Caiaphas would forgive;  
Sneaking submission can always live.  
He had only to say that God was the Devil,  
And the Devil was God, like a Christian civil;  
Mild Christian regrets to the Devil confess  
For affronting him thrice in the wilderness;  
He had soon been bloody Caesar's elf,  
And at last he would have been Caesar himself,  
Like Dr. Priestly and Bacon and Newton—  
Poor spiritual knowledge is not worth a button  
For thus the Gospel Sir Isaac confutes:  
'God can only be known by His attributes;  
And as for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost,  
Or of Christ and His Father, it's all a boast  
And pride, and vanity of the imagination,  
That disdains to follow this world's fashion.'  
To teach doubt and experiment  
Certainly was not what Christ meant.

What was He doing all that time,  
From twelve years old to manly prime?  
Was He then idle, or the less  
About His Father's business?  
Or was His wisdom held in scorn  
Before His wrath began to burn  
In miracles throughout the land,  
That quite unnerv'd the Seraph band?  
If He had been Antichrist, Creeping Jesus,  
He'd have done anything to please us;  
Gone sneaking into synagogues,  
And not us'd the Elders and Priests like dogs;  
But humble as a lamb or ass  
Obey'd Himself to Caiaphas.  
God wants not man to humble himself:  
That is the trick of the Ancient Elf.  
This is the race that Jesus ran:  
Humble to God, haughty to man,  
Cursing the Rulers before the people  
Even to the Temple's highest steeple,  
And when He humbled Himself to God  
Then descended the cruel rod.  
'If Thou Humblest Thyself, Thou humblest Me.  
Thou also dwell'st in Eternity.  
Thou art a Man: God is no more:  
Thy own Humanity learn to adore,  
For that is My spirit of life.  
Awake, arise to spiritual strife,  
And Thy revenge abroad display  
In terrors at the last Judgement Day.  
God's mercy and long suffering  
Is but the sinner to judgement to bring.  
Thou on the Cross for them shalt pray—  
And take revenge at the Last Day.'  
Jesus replied, and thunders hurl'd:  
'I never will pray for the world.  
Once I did so when I pray'd in the Garden;  
I wish'd to take with Me a bodily pardon.'  
Can that which was of woman born,  
In the absence of the morn,  
When the Soul fell into sleep,  
And Archangels round it weep,

Shooting out against the light  
Fibres of a deadly night,  
Reasoning upon its own dark fiction,  
In doubt which is self-contradiction?  
Humility is only doubt,  
And does the sun and moon blot out,  
Rooting over with thorns and stems  
The buried soul and all its gems.  
This life's five windows of the soul  
Distorts the Heavens from pole to pole,  
And leads you to believe a lie  
When you see with, not thro', the eye  
That was born in a night, to perish in a night,  
When the soul slept in the beams of light.

Did Jesus teach doubt? or did He  
Give any lessons of philosophy,  
Charge Visionaries with deceiving,  
Or call men wise for not believing?...

Was Jesus born of a Virgin pure  
With narrow soul and looks demure?  
If He intended to take on sin  
The Mother should an harlot been,  
Just such a one as Magdalen,  
With seven devils in her pen.  
Or were Jew virgins still more curs'd,  
And more sucking devils nurs'd?  
Or what was it which He took on  
That He might bring salvation?  
A body subject to be tempted,  
From neither pain nor grief exempted;  
Or such a body as might not feel  
The passions that with sinners deal?  
Yes, but they say He never fell.  
Ask Caiaphas; for he can tell.—  
'He mock'd the Sabbath, and He mock'd  
The Sabbath's God, and He unlock'd  
The evil spirits from their shrines,  
And turn'd fishermen to divines;  
O'erturn'd the tent of secret sins,  
And its golden cords and pins,

In the bloody shrine of war  
Pour'd around from star to star,—  
Halls of justice, hating vice,  
Where the Devil combs his lice.  
He turn'd the devils into swine  
That He might tempt the Jews to dine;  
Since which, a pig has got a look  
That for a Jew may be mistook.  
"Obey your parents."—What says He?  
"Woman, what have I to do with thee?  
No earthly parents I confess:  
I am doing my Father's business."  
He scorn'd Earth's parents, scorn'd Earth's God,  
And mock'd the one and the other's rod;  
His seventy Disciples sent  
Against Religion and Government—  
They by the sword of Justice fell,  
And Him their cruel murderer tell.  
He left His father's trade to roam,  
A wand'ring vagrant without home;  
And thus He others' labour stole,  
That He might live above control.  
The publicans and harlots He  
Selected for His company,  
And from the adulteress turn'd away  
God's righteous law, that lost its prey.'  
Was Jesus chaste? or did He  
Give any lessons of chastity?  
The Morning blush'd fiery red:  
Mary was found in adulterous bed;  
Earth groan'd beneath, and Heaven above  
Trembled at discovery of Love.  
Jesus was sitting in Moses' chair.  
They brought the trembling woman there.  
Moses commands she be ston'd to death.  
What was the sound of Jesus' breath?  
He laid His hand on Moses' law;  
The ancient Heavens, in silent awe,  
Writ with curses from pole to pole,  
All away began to roll.  
The Earth trembling and naked lay  
In secret bed of mortal clay;

On Sinai felt the Hand Divine  
Pulling back the bloody shrine;  
And she heard the breath of God,  
As she heard by Eden's flood:  
'Good and Evil are no more!  
Sinai's trumpets cease to roar!  
Cease, finger of God, to write!  
The Heavens are not clean in Thy sight.  
Thou art good, and Thou alone;  
Nor may the sinner cast one stone.  
To be good only, is to be  
A God or else a Pharisee.  
Thou Angel of the Presence Divine,  
That didst create this Body of Mine,  
Wherefore hast thou writ these laws  
And created Hell's dark jaws?  
My Presence I will take from thee:  
A cold leper thou shalt be.  
Tho' thou wast so pure and bright  
That Heaven was impure in thy sight,  
Tho' thy oath turn'd Heaven pale,  
Tho' thy covenant built Hell's jail,  
Tho' thou didst all to chaos roll  
With the Serpent for its soul,  
Still the breath Divine does move,  
And the breath Divine is Love.  
Mary, fear not! Let me see  
The seven devils that torment thee.  
Hide not from My sight thy sin,  
That forgiveness thou may'st win.  
Has no man condemnèd thee?'  
'No man, Lord.' 'Then what is he  
Who shall accuse thee? Come ye forth,  
Fallen fiends of heavenly birth,  
That have forgot your ancient love,  
And driven away my trembling Dove.  
You shall bow before her feet;  
You shall lick the dust for meat;  
And tho' you cannot love, but hate,  
Shall be beggars at Love's gate.  
What was thy love? Let Me see it;  
Was it love or dark deceit?'

'Love too long from me has fled;  
'Twas dark deceit, to earn my bread;  
'Twas covet, or 'twas custom, or  
Some trifle not worth caring for;  
That they may call a shame and sin  
Love's temple that God dwelleth in,  
And hide in secret hidden shrine  
The naked Human Form Divine,  
And render that a lawless thing  
On which the Soul expands its wing.  
But this, O Lord, this was my sin,  
When first I let these devils in,  
In dark pretence to chastity  
Blaspheming Love, blaspheming Thee,  
Thence rose secret adulteries,  
And thence did covet also rise.  
My sin Thou hast forgiven me;  
Canst Thou forgive my blasphemy?  
Canst Thou return to this dark hell,  
And in my burning bosom dwell?  
And canst Thou die that I may live?  
And canst Thou pity and forgive?'  
Then roll'd the shadowy Man away  
From the limbs of Jesus, to make them His prey,  
An ever devouring appetite,  
Glittering with festering venoms bright;  
Crying 'Crucify this cause of distress,  
Who don't keep the secrets of holiness!  
The mental powers by diseases we bind;  
But He heals the deaf, the dumb, and the blind.  
Whom God has afflicted for secret ends,  
He comforts and heals and calls them friends.'  
But, when Jesus was crucified,  
Then was perfected His galling pride.  
In three nights He devour'd His prey,  
And still He devours the body of clay;  
For dust and clay is the Serpent's meat,  
Which never was made for Man to eat.

Seeing this False Christ, in fury and passion  
I made my voice heard all over the nation.  
What are those...

I am sure this Jesus will not do,  
Either for Englishman or Jew.

William Blake



# The Fairy

'COME hither, my Sparrows,□  
My little arrows.□  
If a tear or a smile□  
Will a man beguile,□  
If an amorous delay□  
Clouds a sunshiny day,□  
If the step of a foot□  
Smites the heart to its root,□  
'Tis the marriage-ring...□  
Makes each fairy a king.'□

So a Fairy sung.□  
From the leaves I sprung;□  
He leap'd from the spray□  
To flee away;□  
But in my hat caught,□  
He soon shall be taught.□  
Let him laugh, let him cry,□  
He's my Butterfly;□  
For I've pull'd out the sting□  
Of the marriage-ring.

William Blake

# The Fly

Little Fly,  
Thy summer's play  
My thoughtless hand  
Has brushed away.

Am not I  
A fly like thee?  
Or art not thou  
A man like me?

For I dance  
And drink, and sing,  
Till some blind hand  
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life  
And strength and breath  
And the want  
Of thought is death;

Then am I  
A happy fly,  
If I live,  
Or if I die.

William Blake

## The Four Zoas (Excerpt)

'What is the price of Experience? do men buy it for a song?  
Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is bought with the price  
Of all that a man hath, his house, his wife, his children.  
Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy,  
And in the wither'd field where the farmer plows for bread in vain.

It is an easy thing to triumph in the summer's sun  
And in the vintage and to sing on the waggon loaded with corn.  
It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted,  
To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless wanderer,  
To listen to the hungry raven's cry in wintry season  
When the red blood is fill'd with wine and with the marrow of lambs.

It is an easy thing to laugh at wrathful elements,  
To hear the dog howl at the wintry door, the ox in the slaughter house moan;  
To see a god on every wind and a blessing on every blast;  
To hear sounds of love in the thunder storm that destroys our enemies' house;  
To rejoice in the blight that covers his field, and the sickness that cuts off his  
children,  
While our olive and vine sing and laugh round our door, and our children bring  
fruits and flowers.

Then the groan and the dolor are quite forgotten, and the slave grinding at the  
mill,  
And the captive in chains, and the poor in the prison, and the soldier in the field  
When the shatter'd bone hath laid him groaning among the happier dead.

It is an easy thing to rejoice in the tents of prosperity:  
Thus could I sing and thus rejoice: but it is not so with me.'

'Compel the poor to live upon a crust of bread, by soft mild arts.  
Smile when they frown, frown when they smile; and when a man looks pale  
With labour and abstinence, say he looks healthy and happy;  
And when his children sicken, let them die; there are enough  
Born, even too many, and our earth will be overrun  
Without these arts. If you would make the poor live with temper,  
With pomp give every crust of bread you give; with gracious cunning  
Magnify small gifts; reduce the man to want a gift, and then give with pomp.  
Say he smiles if you hear him sigh. If pale, say he is ruddy.

Preach temperance: say he is overgorg'd and drowns his wit  
In strong drink, though you know that bread and water are all  
He can afford. Flatter his wife, pity his children, till we can  
Reduce all to our will, as spaniels are taught with art.'

The sun has left his blackness and has found a fresher morning,  
And the mild moon rejoices in the clear and cloudless night,  
And Man walks forth from midst of the fires: the evil is all consum'd.  
His eyes behold the Angelic spheres arising night and day;  
The stars consum'd like a lamp blown out, and in their stead, behold  
The expanding eyes of Man behold the depths of wondrous worlds!  
One Earth, one sea beneath; nor erring globes wander, but stars  
Of fire rise up nightly from the ocean; and one sun  
Each morning, like a new born man, issues with songs and joy  
Calling the Plowman to his labour and the Shepherd to his rest.  
He walks upon the Eternal Mountains, raising his heavenly voice,  
Conversing with the animal forms of wisdom night and day,  
That, risen from the sea of fire, renew'd walk o'er the Earth;  
For Tharmas brought his flocks upon the hills, and in the vales  
Around the Eternal Man's bright tent, the little children play  
Among the woolly flocks. The hammer of Urthona sounds  
In the deep caves beneath; his limbs renew'd, his Lions roar  
Around the Furnaces and in evening sport upon the plains.  
They raise their faces from the earth, conversing with the Man:

'How is it we have walk'd through fires and yet are not consum'd?  
How is it that all things are chang'd, even as in ancient times?'

William Blake

# The French Revolution (Excerpt)

Thee the ancientest peer, Duke of Burgundy, rose from the monarch's right hand, red as wines  
From his mountains; an odor of war, like a ripe vineyard, rose from his garments,  
And the chamber became as a clouded sky; o'er the council he stretch'd his red limbs,  
Cloth'd in flames of crimson; as a ripe vineyard stretches over sheaves of corn,  
The fierce Duke hung over the council; around him crowd, weeping in his burning robe,  
A bright cloud of infant souls; his words fall like purple autumn on the sheaves:  
'Shall this marble built heaven become a clay cottage, this earth an oak stool and these mowers  
From the Atlantic mountains mow down all this great starry harvest of six thousand years?  
92 And shall Necker, the hind of Geneva, stretch out his crook'd sickle o'er fertile France  
93 Till our purple and crimson is faded to russet, and the kingdoms of earth bound in sheaves,  
94 And the ancient forests of chivalry hewn, and the joys of the combat burnt for fuel;  
95 Till the power and dominion is rent from the pole, sword and sceptre from sun and moon,  
96 The law and gospel from fire and air, and eternal reason and science  
97 From the deep and the solid, and man lay his faded head down on the rock  
98 Of eternity, where the eternal lion and eagle remain to devour?  
99 This to prevent--urg'd by cries in day, and prophetic dreams hovering in night,  
100 To enrich the lean earth that craves, furrow'd with plows, whose seed is departing from her--  
101 Thy nobles have gather'd thy starry hosts round this rebellious city,  
102 To rouze up the ancient forests of Europe, with clarions of cloud breathing war,  
103 To hear the horse neigh to the drum and trumpet, and the trumpet and war shout reply.  
104 Stretch the hand that beckons the eagles of heaven; they cry over Paris, and wait  
105 Till Fayette point his finger to Versailles; the eagles of heaven must have their prey!  
106 He ceas'd, and burn'd silent; red clouds roll round Necker; a weeping is

heard o'er the palace.

107 Like a dark cloud Necker paus'd, and like thunder on the just man's burial day he paus'd;

108 Silent sit the winds, silent the meadows, while the husbandman and woman of weakness

109 And bright children look after him into the grave, and water his clay with love,

110 Then turn towards pensive fields; so Necker paus'd, and his visage was covered with clouds.

111 The King lean'd on his mountains, then lifted his head and look'd on his armies, that shone

112 Through heaven, tinging morning with beams of blood; then turning to Burgundy, troubled:

113 'Burgundy, thou wast born a lion! My soul is o'ergrown with distress.

114 For the nobles of France, and dark mists roll round me and blot the writing of God

115 Written in my bosom. Necker rise! leave the kingdom, thy life is surrounded with snares.

116 We have call'd an Assembly, but not to destroy; we have given gifts, not to the weak;

117 I hear rushing of muskets, and bright'ning of swords, and visages redd'ning with war,

118 Frowning and looking up from brooding villages and every dark'ning city.

119 Ancient wonders frown over the kingdom, and cries of women and babes are heard,

120 And tempests of doubt roll around me, and fierce sorrows, because of the nobles of France.

121 Depart! answer not! for the tempest must fall, as in years that are passed away.'

A wholly owned subsidiary of . Privacy Policy . AD

William Blake

# The Garden Of Love

I went to the Garden of Love,  
And saw what I never had seen;  
A Chapel was built in the midst,  
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut  
And 'Thou shalt not,' writ over the door;  
So I turned to the Garden of Love  
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,  
And tombstones where flowers should be;  
And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

William Blake

# The Grey Monk

1 'I die, I die!' the Mother said,  
2 'My children die for lack of bread.  
3 What more has the merciless Tyrant said?'  
4 The Monk sat down on the stony bed.

5 The blood red ran from the Grey Monk's side,  
6 His hands and feet were wounded wide,  
7 His body bent, his arms and knees  
8 Like to the roots of ancient trees.

9 His eye was dry; no tear could flow:  
10 A hollow groan first spoke his woe.  
11 He trembled and shudder'd upon the bed;  
12 At length with a feeble cry he said:

13 'When God commanded this hand to write  
14 In the studious hours of deep midnight,  
15 He told me the writing I wrote should prove  
16 The bane of all that on Earth I lov'd.

17 My Brother starv'd between two walls,  
18 His Children's cry my soul appalls;  
19 I mock'd at the rack and griding chain,  
20 My bent body mocks their torturing pain.

21 Thy father drew his sword in the North,  
22 With his thousands strong he marched forth;  
23 Thy Brother has arm'd himself in steel  
24 To avenge the wrongs thy Children feel.

25 But vain the Sword and vain the Bow,  
26 They never can work War's overthrow.  
27 The Hermit's prayer and the Widow's tear  
28 Alone can free the World from fear.

29 For a Tear is an intellectual thing,  
30 And a Sigh is the sword of an Angel King,  
31 And the bitter groan of the Martyr's woe  
32 Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.



33 The hand of Vengeance found the bed  
34 To which the Purple Tyrant fled;  
35 The iron hand crush'd the Tyrant's head  
36 And became a Tyrant in his stead.'

William Blake

# The Human Abstract

Pity would be no more  
If we did not make somebody Poor;  
And Mercy no more could be  
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings peace,  
Till the selfish loves increase:  
Then Cruelty knits a snare,  
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,  
And waters the grounds with tears;  
Then Humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of Mystery over his head;  
And the Catterpillar and Fly  
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat;  
And the Raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea  
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree;  
But their search was all in vain:  
There grows one in the Human Brain.

William Blake

# The Invocation

Daughters of Beulah! Muses who inspire the Poet's Song,  
Record the journey of immortal Milton thro' your realms  
Of terror and mild moony lustre, in soft Sexual delusions  
Of varièd beauty, to delight the wanderer, and repose  
His burning thirst and freezing hunger! Come into my hand,  
By your mild power descending down the nerves of my right arm  
From out the portals of my Brain, where by your ministry  
The Eternal Great Humanity Divine planted His Paradise,  
And in it caus'd the Spectres of the Dead to take sweet form  
In likeness of Himself. Tell also of the False Tongue, vegetated  
Beneath your land of Shadows, of its sacrifices and  
Its offerings; even till Jesus, the image of the Invisible God,  
Became its prey; a curse, an offering, and an atonement  
For Death Eternal, in the Heavens of Albion, and before the Gates  
Of Jerusalem his Emanation, in the Heavens beneath Beulah!

William Blake

# The Lamb

Little Lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee.

He is called by thy name,  
For He calls Himself a Lamb.

He is meek, and He is mild;

He became a little child.

I a child, and thou a lamb,

We are called by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

William Blake

# The Land Of Dreams

Awake, awake, my little boy!  
Thou wast thy mother's only joy;  
Why dost thou weep in thy gentle sleep?  
Awake! thy father does thee keep.

'O, what land is the Land of Dreams?  
What are its mountains, and what are its streams?  
O father! I saw my mother there,  
Among the lilies by waters fair.

'Among the lambs, cloth'd in white,  
She walk'd with her Thomas in sweet delight.  
I wept for joy, like a dove I mourn;  
O! when shall I again return? '

Dear child, I also by pleasant streams  
Have wander'd all night in the Land of Dreams;  
But tho' calm and warm the waters wide,  
I could not get to the other side.

'Father, O father! what do we here  
In this land of unbelief and fear?  
The Land of Dreams is better far  
Above the light of the morning star.'

William Blake

# The Lily

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn,  
The humble sheep a threat'ning horn:  
While the Lily white shall in love delight,  
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

William Blake

# The Little Black Boy

My mother bore me in the southern wild,  
And I am black, but oh my soul is white!  
White as an angel is the English child,  
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,  
And, sitting down before the heat of day,  
She took me on her lap and kissed me,  
And, pointed to the east, began to say:

'Look on the rising sun: there God does live,  
And gives His light, and gives His heat away,  
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive  
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

'And we are put on earth a little space,  
That we may learn to bear the beams of love  
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face  
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

'For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear,  
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,  
Saying, 'Come out from the grove, my love and care  
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice','

Thus did my mother say, and kissed me;  
And thus I say to little English boy.  
When I from black and he from white cloud free,  
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy

I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear  
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;  
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him, and he will then love me.

William Blake

# The Little Boy Found

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,  
Led by the wandering light,  
Began to cry, but God, ever nigh,  
Appeared like his father, in white.

He kissed the child, and by the hand led,  
And to his mother brought,  
Who in sorrow pale, through the lonely dale,  
The little boy weeping sought.

William Blake



# The Little Boy Lost

'Father, father, where are you going?

Oh do not walk so fast!

Speak, father, speak to you little boy,

Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there,

The child was wet with dew;

The mire was deep, and the child did weep,

And away the vapour flew.

William Blake

# The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe,  
Lyca's parents go:  
Over vallies deep.  
While the desarts weep.

Tired and woe-begone.  
Hoarse with making moan:  
Arm in arm seven days.  
They trac'd the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep.  
Among shadows deep:  
And dream they see their child  
Starvdd in desert wild.

Pale thro' pathless ways  
The fancied image strays.  
Famish'd, weeping, weak  
With hollow piteous shriek

Rising from unrest,  
The trembling woman prest,  
With feet of weary woe;  
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore.  
Her arm'd with sorrow sore:  
Till before their way  
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,  
Soon his heavy mane.  
Bore them to the ground;  
Then he stalk'd around.

Smelling to his prey,  
But their fears allay,  
When he licks their hands:  
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes  
Fill'd with deep surprise:  
And wondering behold.  
A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown  
On his shoulders down,  
Flow'd his golden hair.  
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,  
Weep not for the maid;  
In my palace deep.  
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed,  
Where the vision led;  
And saw their sleeping child,  
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell  
In a lonely dell  
Nor fear the wolvish howl,  
Nor the lion's growl.

William Blake

# The Little Girl Lost

In futurity  
I prophesy see.  
That the earth from sleep.  
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek  
For her maker meek:  
And the desert wild  
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,  
Where the summers prime  
Never fades away;  
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old  
Lovely Lyca told,  
She had wandered long.  
Hearing wild birds song.

Sweet sleep come to me  
Underneath this tree;  
Do father, mother weep.--  
"Where can Lyca sleep".

Lost in desert wild  
Is your little child.  
How can Lyca sleep.  
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ache.  
Then let Lyca wake;  
If my mother sleep,  
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning, frowning night,  
O'er this desert bright.  
Let thy moon arise.  
While I close my eyes.

Sleeping Lyca lay:  
While the beasts of prey,  
Come from caverns deep,  
View'd the maid asleep

The kingly lion stood  
And the virgin view'd:  
Then he gambolled round  
O'er the hallowed ground:

Leopards, tygers play,  
Round her as she lay;  
While the lion old,  
Bow'd his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,  
And upon her neck,  
From his eyes of flame,  
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness  
Loos'd her slender dress,  
And naked they convey'd  
To caves the sleeping maid.

William Blake

# The Little Vagabond

Dear mother, dear mother, the church is cold,  
But the ale-house is healthy and pleasant and warm;  
Besides I can tell where I am used well,  
Such usage in Heaven will never do well.

But if at the church they would give us some ale,  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day,  
Nor ever once wish from the church to stray.

Then the parson might preach, and drink, and sing,  
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;  
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,  
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father rejoicing to see  
His children as pleasant and happy as he,  
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the barrel,  
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

William Blake

# The Marriage Of Heaven And Hell

## THE ARGUMENT

RINTRAH roars and shakes his  
fires in the burdenM air,  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

Once meek, and in a perilous path

The just man kept his course along

The Vale of Death.

Roses are planted where thorns grow,

And on the barren heath

Sing the honey bees.

Then the perilous path was planted,  
And a river and a spring  
On every cliff and tomb;

5

## THE MARRIAGE OF

And on the bleached bones  
Red clay brought forth:  
Till the villain left the paths of ease  
To walk in perilous paths, and drive  
The just man into barren climes.

Now the sneaking serpent walks  
In mild humility ;

And the just man rages in the wilds  
Where Uons roam.

Rintrah roars and shakes his fires in

the burdened air,  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

As a new heaven is begun, and it is  
now thirty-three years since its advent,  
the Eternal Hell revives. And lo!  
Swedenborg is the angel sitting at  
the tomb: his writings are the Unen  
clothes folded up. Now is the domin-  
ion of Edom, and the return of Adam  
into Paradise. — See Isaiah xxxiv. and  
XXXV. chap.

6

## HEAVEN AND HELL

Without contraries is no progres-  
sion. Attraction and repulsion, rea-  
son and energy, love and hate, are  
necessary to human existence.

From these contraries spring what  
the religious call Good and Evil.  
Good is the passive that obeys reason;  
Evil is the active springing from  
Energy.

Good is heaven. Evil is hell.

## THE MARRIAGE OF

## THE VOICE OF THE DEVIL



All Bibles or sacred codes have been the cause of the following errors : —

1. That man has two real existing principles, viz., a Body and a Soul.
2. That Energy, called Evil, is alone from the Body ; and that Reason, called Good, is alone from the Soul.
3. That God will torment man in Eternity for following his Energies.

But the following contraries to these are true : —

- 1 . Man has no Body distinct from his Soul. For that called Body is a portion of Soul discerned by the five senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age.
- 2 . Energy is the only life , and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.

8

## HEAVEN AND HELL

3. Energy is Eternal Delight.

Those who restrain desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained; and the restrainer or reason usurps its place and governs the unwilling.

And being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, till it is only the

shadow of desire.

The history of this is written in Paradise Lost, and the Governor or Reason is called Messiah.

And the original Archangel or possessor of the command of the heavenly host is called the Devil, or Satan, and his children are called Sin and Death.

But in the book of Job, Milton's Messiah is called Satan.

For this history has been adopted by both parties.

It indeed appeared to Reason as if

9

## THE MARRIAGE OF

desire was cast out, but the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, and formed a heaven of what he stole from the abyss.

This is shown in the Gospel, where he prays to the Father to send the Comforter or desire that Reason may have ideas to build on, the Jehovah of the Bible being no other than he who dwells in flaming fire. Know that after Christ's death he became Jehovah.

But in Milton, the Father is Destiny, the Son a ratio of the five senses, and the Holy Ghost vacuum !

Note. — The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at Liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it.

10

## HEAVEN AND HELL

### A MEMORABLE FANCY

As I was walking among the fires of Hell, delighted with the enjoyments of Genius, which to Angels look like torment and insanity, I collected some of their proverbs, thinking that as the sayings used in a nation mark its character, so the proverbs of Hell show the nature of infernal wisdom better than any description of buildings or garments.

When I came home, on the abyss of the five senses, where a flat-sided steep frowns over the present world, I saw a mighty Devil folded in black clouds hovering on the sides of the rock; with corroding fires he wrote the following sentence now perceived by the minds of men, and read by them on earth : —

II

## THE MARRIAGE OF

'How do you know but every bird  
that cuts the airy way  
Is an immense world of delight,  
closed by your senses five?'

12

## HEAVEN AND HELL

### PROVERBS OF HELL

In seed-time learn, in harvest teach,  
in winter enjoy.

Drive your cart and your plough  
over the bones of the dead.

The road of excess leads to the  
palace of wisdom.

Prudence is a rich ugly old maid  
courted by Incapacity.

He who desires, but acts not, breeds  
pestilence.

The cut worm forgives the plough.

Dip him in the river who loves  
water.

A fool sees not the same tree that a  
wise man sees.

He whose face gives no light shall  
never become a star.

13

## THE MARRIAGE OF

Eternity is in love with the produc-  
tions of time.

The busy bee has no time for sor-  
row.

The hours of folly are measured by  
the clock, but of wisdom no clock can  
measure.

All wholesome food is caught with-  
out a net or a trap.

Bring out number, weight, and  
measure in a year of dearth.

No bird soars too high if he soars  
with his own wings.

A dead body revenges not injuries.

The most sublime act is to set an-  
other before you.

If the fool would persist in his folly  
he would become wise.

Folly is the cloak of knavery.

Shame is Pride's cloak.

## HEAVEN AND HELL

Prisons are built with stones of law,  
brothels with bricks of religion.

The pride of the peacock is the  
glory of God.

The lust of the goat is the bounty  
of God.

The wrath of the lion is the wisdom  
of God.

The nakedness of woman is the  
work of God.

Excess of sorrow laughs, excess of  
joy weeps.

The roaring of lions, the howling of  
wolves, the raging of the stormy sea,  
and the destructive sword, are por-  
tions of Eternity too great for the eye  
of man.

The fox condemns the trap, not  
himself.

Joys impregnate, sorrows bring  
forth.

## THE MARRIAGE OF

Let man wear the fell of the lion,  
woman the fleece of the sheep.

The bird a nest, the spider a web,  
man friendship.

The selfish smiling fool and the  
sullen frowning fool shall be both  
thought wise that they may be a rod.

What is now proved was once only  
imagined.

The rat, the mouse, the fox, the  
rabbit watch the roots; the Hon, the  
tiger, the horse, the elephant watch  
the fruits.

The cistern contains, the fountain  
overflows.

One thought fills immensity.

Always be ready to speak your  
mind, and a base man will avoid you.

Everything possible to be believed  
is an image of truth.

The eagle never lost so much time

z6

HEAVEN AND HELL

as when he submitted to learn of the  
crow.

The fox provides for himself, but

God provides for the lion.

Think in the morning, act in the  
noon, eat in the evening, sleep in the  
night.

He who has suffered you to impose  
on him knows you.

As the plough follows words, so  
God rewards prayers.

The tigers of wrath are wiser than  
the horses of instruction.

Expect poison from the standing  
water.

You never know what is enough  
unless you know what is more than  
enough.

Listen to the fool's reproach; it is a  
kingly title.

The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air,

17

THE MARRIAGE OF

the mouth of water, the beard of  
earth.

The weak in courage is strong in  
cunning.

The apple tree never asks the beech  
how he shall grow, nor the lion the  
horse how he shall take his prey.



The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest.

If others had not been foolish we should have been so.

The soul of sweet delight can never be defiled.

When thou seest an eagle, thou seest a portion of Genius. Lift up thy head!

As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys.

To create a little flower is the labour of ages.

i8

## HEAVEN AND HELL

Damn braces; bless relaxes.

The best wine is the oldest, the best water the newest.

Prayers plough not; praises reap not; joys laugh not; sorrows weep not.

The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the genitals Beauty, the hands and feet Proportion.

As the air to a bird, or the sea to a fish, so is contempt to the con-

temptible.

The crow wished everything was black; the owl that everything was white.

Exuberance is Beauty.

If the lion was advised by the fox,  
he would be cunning.

Improvement makes straight roads,  
but the crooked roads without Improve-  
ment are roads of Genius.

19

## THE MARRIAGE OF

Sooner murder an infant in its  
cradle than nurse unacted desires.

Where man is not, nature is barren.

Truth can never be told so as to be  
understood and not to be believed.

Enough! or Too much.

The ancient poets animated all sen-  
sible objects with Gods or Geniuses,  
calling them by the names and adorn-  
ing them with properties of woods,  
rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, na-  
tions, and whatever their enlarged  
and numerous senses could perceive.  
And particularly they studied the  
Genius of each city and country,  
placing it under its mental deity. Till  
a system was formed, which some

took advantage of and enslaved the vulgar by attempting to realize or abstract the mental deities from their objects. Thus began Priesthood.

20

## HEAVEN AND HELL

Choosing forms of worship from poetic tales. And at length they pronounced that the Gods had ordered such things. Thus men forgot that all deities reside in the human breast.

21

## THE MARRIAGE OF

### A MEMORABLE FANCY

The Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them, and whether they did not think at the time that they would be misunderstood, and so be the cause of imposition.

Isaiah answered: 'I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception: but my senses discovered the infinite in everything; and as I was then persuaded, and remained

confirmed, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.'\*

Then I asked: 'Does a firm persuasion that a thing is so, make it so?'

He replied: 'All poets believe that

22

## HEAVEN AND HELL

it does, and in ages of imagination this firm persuasion removed mountains; but many are not capable of a firm persuasion of anything.'

Then Ezekiel said : ' The philosophy of the East taught the first principles of human perception; some nations held one principle for the origin, and some another. We of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle, and all the others merely derivative, which was the cause of our despising the Priests and Philosophers of other countries, and prophesying that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours, and to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius. It was this that our great poet King David desired so fervently, and invokes so pathetically, saying by this he conquers enemies and governs kingdoms; and we so loved our Ggd that we cursed in His

i3

## THE MARRIAGE OF

name all the deities of surrounding nations, and asserted that they had rebelled. From these opinions the vulgar came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the Jews.

'This,' said he, 'like all firm persuasions, is come to pass, for all nations believe the Jews' code, and worship the Jews' God; and what greater subjection can be?'

I heard this with some wonder, and must confess my own conviction. After dinner I asked Isaiah to favour the world with his lost works; he said none of equal value was lost. Ezekiel said the same of his.

I also asked Isaiah what made him go naked and barefoot three years. He answered: 'The same that made our friend Diogenes the Grecian.'

I then asked Ezekiel why he ate dung, and lay so long on his right and

24

## HEAVEN AND HELL

left side. He answered: 'The desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite. This the North American tribes practise. And is he honest

who resists his genius or conscience,  
only for the sake of present ease or  
gratification?'

The ancient tradition that the world  
will be consumed in fire at the end of  
six thousand years is true, as I have  
heard from Hell.

For the cherub with his flaming  
sword is hereby commanded to leave  
his guard at [the] tree of life, and  
when he does, the whole creation will  
be consumed and appear infinite and  
holy, whereas it now appears finite  
and corrupt.

This will come to pass by an im-  
provement of sensual enjoyment.

But first the notion that man has

25

## THE MARRIAGE OF

a body distinct from his soul is to be  
expunged; this I shall do by printing  
in the infernal method by corrosives,  
which in Hell are salutary and medici-  
nal, melting apparent surfaces away,  
and displaying the infinite which was  
hid.

If the doors of perception were  
cleansed everything would appear to  
man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till  
he sees all things through narrow

chinks of his cavern.

26

## HEAVEN AND HELL

### A MEMORABLE FANCY

I was in a printing-house in Hell,  
and saw the method in which knowl-  
edge is transmitted from generation  
to generation.

In the first chamber was a dragon-  
man, clearing away the rubbish from  
a cave's mouth; within, a number of  
dragons were hollowing the cave.

In the second chamber was a viper  
folding round the rock and the cave,  
and others adorning it with gold, silver,  
and precious stones.

In the third chamber was an eagle  
with wings and feathers of air; he  
caused the inside of the cave to be  
infinite; around were numbers of  
eagle-like men, who built palaces in  
the immense cliffs.

In the fourth chamber were lions

27

## THE MARRIAGE OF

of flaming fire raging around and melting the metals into living fluids.

In the fifth chamber were unnamed forms, which cast the metals into the expanse.

There they were received by men who occupied the sixth chamber, and took the forms of books, and were arranged in libraries.

The Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence and now seem to live in it in chains are in truth the causes of its life and the sources of all activity, but the chains are the cunning of weak and tame minds, which have power to resist energy, according to the proverb, 'The weak in courage is strong in cunning.'

Thus one portion of being is the

28

## HEAVEN AND HELL

Prolific, the other the Devouring. To the devourer it seems as if the producer was in his chains; but it is not so, he only takes portions of existence, and fancies that the whole.

But the Prolific would cease to be prolific unless the Devourer as a sea received the excess of his delights.



Some will say, 'Is not God alone the Prolific?' I answer: 'God only acts and is in existing beings or men.'

These two classes of men are always upon earth, and they should be enemies: whoever tries to reconcile them seeks to destroy existence.

Religion is an endeavour to reconcile the two.

Note. — Jesus Christ did not wish to unite but to separate them, as in the parable of sheep and goats; and

29

## THE MARRIAGE OF

He says : ' I came not to send peace, but a sword.'

Messiah, or Satan, or Tempter, was formerly thought to be one of the antediluvians who are our Energies.

30

## HEAVEN AND HELL

## A MEMORABLE FANCY

An Angel came to me and said: 'O pitiable foolish young man! horrible, dreadful state! Consider the hot burning dungeon thou art preparing for thyself to all Eternity, to which thou art going in such career.'

I said : ' Perhaps you will be willing to show me my eternal lot, and we will contemplate together upon it, and see whether your lot or mine is most desirable.'\*

So he took me through a stable, and through a church, and down into the church vault, at the end of v/hich was a mill; through the mill we went, and came to a cave; down the winding cavern we groped our tedious way, till a void boundless as a nether sky appeared beneath us, and we held by

31

## THE MARRIAGE OF

the roots of trees, and hung over this immensity; but I said: 'If you please, we will commit ourselves to this void, and see whether Providence is here also; if you will not, I will.' But he answered : ' Do not presume, young man; but as we here remain, behold thy lot, which will soon appear when the darkness passes away.'

So I remained with him sitting in the twisted root of an oak; he was suspended in a fungus, which hung

with the head downward into the deep.

By degrees we beheld the infinite abyss, fiery as the smoke of a burning city; beneath us at an immense distance was the sun, black but shining; round it were fiery tracks on which revolved vast spiders, crawling after their prey, which flew, or rather swum, in the infinite deep, in the most

32

## HEAVEN AND HELL

terrific shapes of animals sprung from corruption; and the air was full of them, and seemed composed of them. These are Devils, and are called powers of the air. I now asked my companion which was my eternal lot. He said: 'Between the black and white spiders.'

But now, from between the black and white spiders, a cloud and fire burst and rolled through the deep, blackening all beneath so that the nether deep grew black as a sea, and rolled with a terrible noise. Beneath us was nothing now to be seen but a black tempest, till looking East between the clouds and the waves, we saw a cataract of blood mixed with fire, and not many stones' throw from us appeared and sunk again the scaly fold of a monstrous serpent. At last to the East, distant about three degrees, appeared a fiery crest above the waves ;

## THE MARRIAGE OF

slowly it reared like a ridge of golden rocks, till we discovered two globes of crimson fire, from which the sea fled away in clouds of smoke; and now we saw it was the head of Leviathan. His forehead was divided into streaks of green and purple, like those on a tiger's forehead; soon we saw his mouth and red gills hang just above the raging foam, tinging the black deeps with beams of blood, advancing toward us with all the fury of a spiritual existence.

My friend the Angel climbed up from his station into the mill. I remained alone, and then this appearance was no more; but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river by moonlight, hearing a harper who sung to the harp; and his theme was: 'The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, and breeds reptiles of the mind.'

## HEAVEN AND HELL

But I arose, and sought for the mill, and there I found my Angel, who, surprised, asked me how I escaped.

I answered: 'All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics; for when you ran away, I found myself on a bank by moonlight, hearing a harper. But now we have seen my eternal lot, shall I show you yours?' He laughed at my proposal; but I by force suddenly caught him in my arms, and flew Westerly through the night, till we were elevated above the earth's shadow; then I flung myself with him directly into the body of the sun; here I clothed myself in white, and taking in my hand Swedenborg\*s volumes, sunk from the glorious clime, and passed all the planets till we came to Saturn. Here I stayed to rest, and then leaped into the void between Saturn and the fixed stars.

35

#### THE MARRIAGE OF

'Here,' said I, 'is your lot; in this space, if space it may be called.' Soon we saw the stable and the church, and I took him to the altar and opened the Bible, and lo! it was a deep pit, into which I descended, driving the Angel before me. Soon we saw seven houses of brick. One we entered. In it were a number of monkeys, baboons, and all of that species, chained by the middle, grinning and snatching at one another, but withheld by the shortness of their chains. However, I saw that they sometimes grew numerous, and then the weak were caught by the

strong, and with a grinning aspect,  
first coupled with and then devoured  
by plucking off first one Umb and then  
another till the body was left a help-  
less trunk; this, after grinning and  
kissing it with seeming fondness, they  
devoured too. And here and there I  
saw one savourily picking the fiesh off

36

## HEAVEN AND HELL

his own tail. As the stench terribly  
annoyed us both, we went into the  
mill; and I in my hand brought the  
skeleton of a body, which in the mill  
was Aristotle's Analytics.

So the Angel said; 'Thy phantasy  
has imposed upon me, and thou ought-  
est to be ashamed.'

I answered: 'We impose on one  
another, and it is but lost time to con-  
verse with you whose works are only  
Analytics.'\*

'I have always found that Angels  
have the vanity to speak of them-  
selves as the only wise; this they do  
with a confident insolence sprouting  
from systematic reasoning.

'Thus Swedenborg boasts that what  
he writes is new ; though it is only the  
contents or index of already published  
books.

37

## THE MARRIAGE OF

'A man carried a monkey about for a show, and because he was a Uttle wiser than the monkey, grew vain, and conceived himself as much wiser than seven men. It is so with Swedenborg; he shows the folly of churches, and exposes hypocrites, till he imagines that all are religious, and himself the single one on earth that ever broke a net.

'Now hear a plain fact: Swedenborg has not written one new truth. Now hear another: he has written all the old falsehoods.

'And now hear the reason: he conversed with Angels who are all religious, and conversed not with Devils who all hate religion, for he was incapable through his conceited notions.

'Thus Swedenborg's writings are a recapitulation of all superficial

38

## HEAVEN AND HELL

opinions, and an analysis of the more sublime, but no further.

'Have now another plain fact: any man of mechanical talents may from

the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg's, and from those of Dante or Shakespeare an infinite number.

'But when he has done this, let him not say that he knows better than his master, for he only holds a candle in sunshine.'

39

## THE MARRIAGE OF

### A MEMORABLE FANCY

Once I saw a Devil in a flame of fire, who arose before an Angel that sat on a cloud, and the Devil uttered these words: 'The worship of God is, honouring His gifts in other men each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best. Those who envy or calumniate great men hate God, for there is no other God.'

The Angel hearing this became almost blue, but mastering himself he grew yellow, and at last white-pink and smiling, and then replied: 'Thou idolater, is not God One? and is not He visible in Jesus Christ? and has not Jesus Christ given His sanction to the law of ten commandments? and are not all other men fools, sinners,



and nothings?'

40

## HEAVEN AND HELL

The Devil answered: 'Bray a fool in a mortar with wheat, yet shall not his folly be beaten out of him. If Jesus Christ is the greatest man, you ought to love Him in the greatest degree. Now hear how He has given His sanction to the law of ten commandments. Did He not mock at the Sabbath, and so mock the Sabbath's God? murder those who were murdered because of Him? turn away the law from the woman taken in adultery, steal the labour of others to support Him? bear false witness when He omitted making a defence before Pilate? covet when He prayed for His disciples, and when He bid them shake off the dust of their feet against such as refused to lodge them? I tell you, no virtue can exist without breaking these ten commandments. Jesus was all virtue, and acted from impulse, not from rules.'

41

## THE MARRIAGE OF

When he had so spoken, I beheld the Angel, who stretched out his arms embracing the flame of fire, and he was consumed, and arose as Elijah.

Note. — This Angel, who is now become a Devil, is my particular friend; we often read the Bible together in its infernal or diabolical sense, which the world shall have if they behave well.

I have also the Bible of Hell, which the world shall have whether they will or no.

One law for the lion and ox is Oppression.

42

## HEAVEN AND HELL

### A SONG OF LIBERTY

1. The Eternal Female groan'd; it was heard over all the earth:
2. Albion's coast is sick silent; the American meadows faint.
3. Shadows of prophecy shiver along by the lakes and the rivers, and mutter across the ocean. France, rend down thy dungeon!
4. Golden Spain, burst the barriers of old Rome !
5. Cast thy keys, Rome, into

the deep — down falling, even to  
eternity down falling;

6. And weep!

7. In her trembling hands she took  
the new-born terror, howling.

8. On those infinite mountains  
of light now barr'd out by the Atlantic

43

#### THE MARRIAGE OF

sea, the new-born fire stood before the  
starry king.

9. Flagg'd with grey-brown snows  
and thunderous visages, the jealous  
wings wav'd over the deep.

10. The speary hand burn'd aloft;  
unbuckled was the shield; forth went  
the hand of jealousy among the flam-  
ing hair, and hurl'd the new-born  
wonder through the starry night.

11. The fire, the fire is falling !

12. Look up! look up! citizen  
of London, enlarge thy countenance!  
O Jew, leave counting gold; return to  
thy oil and wine! African, black  
African! (Go, winged thought, widen  
his forehead.)

13. The fiery limbs, the flaming hair  
shot like the sinking sun into the  
Western sea.

14. WakM from his eternal sleep,  
the hoary element roaring fled away.

44

#### HEAVEN AND HELL

15. Down rush'd, beating his wings  
in vain, the jealous king, his grey-  
brow'd councillors, thunderous war-  
riors, curl'd veterans, among helms  
and shields, and chariots, horses, ele-  
phants, banners, castles, slings, and  
rocks.

16. Falling, rushing, ruining;  
buried in the ruins, on Urthona's  
dens.

17. All night beneath the ruins;  
then their sullen flames, faded, emerge  
round the gloomy king.

18. With thunder and fire, leading  
his starry hosts through the waste  
wilderness, he promulgates his ten  
commandments, glancing his beamy  
eyelids over the deep in dark dismay.

19. Where the Son of Fire in his  
Eastern cloud, while the Morning  
plumes her golden breast,

20. Spuming the clouds written

45

## THE MARRIAGE OF

with curses, stamps the stony law to  
dust, loosing the eternal horses from  
the dens of night, crying: 'Empire is  
no more! and now the lion and wolf  
shall cease.'

46

## HEAVEN AND HELL

### CHORUS

Let the Priests of the Raven of  
Dawn, no longer in deadly black, with  
hoarse note curse the Sons of Joy.  
Nor his accepted brethren whom,  
tyrant, he calls free, lay the bound or  
build the roof. Nor pale religious  
lechery call that virginity that wishes,  
but acts not !

For everything that lives is holy.

47

William Blake

# The New Jerusalem

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my charriot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

# The Question Answered

What is it men in women do require?

The lineaments of gratified Desire.

What is it women do in men require?

The lineaments of gratified Desire

William Blake

# The Rhine Was Red.

The Rhine was red with humane blood,  
The Danube roll'd a purple tide,  
On the Euphrates Satan stood  
And over Asia stretch'd his pride.

He wither'd up sweet Zion's Hill  
From every Nation of the Earth;  
He wither'd up Jerusalem's Gates  
And in a dark Land gave her birth.

He wither'd up the Human Form  
By laws of sacrifice for sin,  
Till it became a Mortal Worm,  
But O! translucent all within.

Spectre of Albion! warlike Fiend!  
In clouds of blood and ruin roll'd,  
I here reclaim thee as my own,  
My Selfhood! Satan! arm'd in gold.

Is this thy soft Family-Love,  
Thy cruel Patriarchal pride,  
Planting the Family alone,  
Destroying all the World beside?

A man's worst enemies are those  
Of his own house and family;  
And he who makes his law a curse,  
By his own law shall surely die.

In my Exchanges every Land,  
Shall walk, and mine in every Land,  
Mutual shall build Jerusalem,  
Both heart in heart and hand in hand.

William Blake



# The Schoolboy

I love to rise in a summer morn  
When the birds sing on every tree;  
The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
And the skylark sings with me.  
O! what sweet company!

But to go to school on a summer morn,  
O! it drives all joy away;  
Under a cruel eye outworn,  
The little ones spend the day  
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,  
And spend many an anxious hour,  
Nor in my book can I take delight,  
Nor sit in learning's bower,  
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy  
Sit in a cage and sing?  
How can a child, when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing,  
And forget his youthful spring?

O! father and mother, if buds are nipped  
And blossoms blown away,  
And if the tender plants are stripped  
Of their joy in the springing day,  
By sorrow and care's dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy,  
Or the summer's fruits appear?  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
Or bless the mellowing year,  
When the blasts of winter appear?

William Blake

# The Shepherd

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!  
From the morn to the evening he strays;  
He shall follow his sheep all the day,  
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,  
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;  
He is watchful while they are in peace,  
For they know when their shepherd is nigh.

William Blake

# The Sick Rose

O Rose, thou art sick!  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy:  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

William Blake

# The Sky Is An Immortal Tent Built By The Sons Of Los

The sky is an immortal tent built by the Sons of Los:

And every space that a man views around his dwelling-place  
Standing on his own roof or in his garden on a mount  
Of twenty-five cubits in height, such space is his universe:  
And on its verge the sun rises and sets, the clouds bow  
To meet the flat earth and the sea in such an order'd space:  
The starry heavens reach no further, but here bend and set  
On all sides, and the two Poles turn on their valves of gold:  
And if he moves his dwelling-place, his heavens also move  
Where'er he goes, and all his neighbourhood bewail his loss.  
Such are the spaces called Earth and such its dimension.  
As to that false appearance which appears to the reasoner  
As of a globe rolling through voidness, it is a delusion of Ulro.  
The microscope knows not of this nor the telescope: they alter  
The ratio of the spectator's organs, but leave objects untouch'd.  
For every space larger than a red globule of Man's blood  
Is visionary, and is created by the Hammer of Los;  
And every space smaller than a globule of Man's blood opens  
Into Eternity of which this vegetable Earth is but a shadow.  
The red globule is the unwearied sun by Los created  
To measure time and space to mortal men every morning.

William Blake

# The Smile

There is a Smile of Love  
And there is a Smile of Deceit  
And there is a Smile of Smiles  
In which these two Smiles meet

And there is a Frown of Hate  
And there is a Frown of disdain  
And there is a Frown of Frowns  
Which you strive to forget in vain

For it sticks in the Hearts deep Core  
And it sticks in the deep Back bone  
And no Smile that ever was smild  
But only one Smile alone

That betwixt the Cradle & Grave  
It only once Smild can be  
But when it once is Smild  
Theres an end to all Misery

William Blake

# The Song Of Los

## AFRICA

I will sing you a song of Los. the Eternal Prophet:  
He sung it to four harps at the tables of Eternity.  
In heart-formed Africa.  
Urizen faded! Ariston shudderd!  
And thus the Song began

Adam stood in the garden of Eden:  
And Noah on the mountains of Ararat;  
They saw Urizen give his Laws to the Nations  
By the hands of the children of Los.

Adam shudderd! Noah faded! black grew the sunny African  
When Rintrah gave Abstract Philosophy to Brama in the East:  
(Night spoke to the Cloud!  
Lo these Human form'd spirits in smiling hipocrisy. War  
Against one another; so let them War on; slaves to the eternal Elements)  
Noah shrunk, beneath the waters;  
Abram fled in fires from Chaldea;  
Moses beheld upon Mount Sinai forms of dark delusion:

To Trismegistus. Palamabron gave an abstract Law:  
To Pythagoras Socrates & Plato.

Times rolled on o'er all the sons of Har, time after time  
Orc on Mount Atlas howld, chain'd down with the Chain of Jealousy  
Then Oothoon hoverd over Judah & Jerusalem  
And Jesus heard her voice (a man of sorrows) he recievd  
A Gospel from wretched Theotormon.

The human race began to wither, for the healthy built  
Secluded places, fearing the joys of Love  
And the disease'd only propagated:  
So Antamon call'd up Leutha from her valleys of delight:  
And to Mahomet a loose Bible gave.  
But in the North, to Odin, Sotha gave a Code of War,  
Because of Diralada thinking to reclaim his joy.

These were the Churches: Hospitals: Castles: Palaces:  
Like nets & gins & traps to catch the joys of Eternity  
And all the rest a desert;  
Till like a dream Eternity was obliterated & erased.

Since that dread day when Har and Heva fled.  
Because their brethren & sisters liv'd in War & Lust;  
And as they fled they shrunk  
Into two narrow doleful forms:  
Creeping in reptile flesh upon  
The bosom of the ground:  
And all the vast of Nature shrunk  
Before their shrunken eyes.

Thus the terrible race of Los & Enitharmon gave  
Laws & Religions to the sons of Har binding them more  
And more to Earth: closing and restraining:  
Till a Philosophy of Five Senses was complete  
Urizen wept & gave it into the hands of Newton & Locke

Clouds roll heavy upon the Alps round Rousseau & Voltaire:  
And on the mountains of Lebanon round the deceased Gods  
Of Asia; & on the deserts of Africa round the Fallen Angels  
The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent

## ASIA

The Kings of Asia heard  
The howl rise up from Europe!  
And each ran out from his Web;  
From his ancient woven Den;  
For the darkness of Asia was startled  
At the thick-flaming, thought-creating fires of Orc.

And the Kings of Asia stood  
And cried in bitterness of soul.

Shall not the King call for Famine from the heath?  
Nor the Priest, for Pestilence from the fen?  
To restrain! to dismay! to thin!  
The inhabitants of mountain and plain;

In the day, of full-feeding prosperity;  
And the night of delicious songs.

Shall not the Councillor throw his curb  
Of Poverty on the laborious?  
To fix the price of labour;  
To invent allegoric riches:

And the privy admonishers of men  
Call for fires in the City  
For heaps of smoking ruins,  
In the night of prosperity & wantonness

To turn man from his path,  
To restrain the child from the womb,

To cut off the bread from the city,  
That the remnant may learn to obey.  
That the pride of the heart may fail;  
That the lust of the eyes may be quench'd:  
That the delicate ear in its infancy

May be dull'd; and the nostrils clos'd up;  
To teach mortal worms the path  
That leads from the gates of the Grave.

Urizen heard them cry!  
And his shudd'ring waving wings  
Went enormous above the red flames  
Drawing clouds of despair thro' the heavens  
Of Europe as he went:  
And his Books of brass iron & gold  
Melted over the land as he flew,

Heavy-waving, howling, weeping.

And he stood over Judea:  
And stay'd in his ancient place:  
And stretch'd his clouds over Jerusalem;

For Adam, a mouldering skeleton  
Lay bleach'd on the garden of Eden;



And Noah as white as snow  
On the mountains of Ararat.

Then the thunders of Urizen bellow'd aloud  
From his woven darkness above.

Orc raging in European darkness  
Arose like a pillar of fire above the Alps  
Like a serpent of fiery flame!  
The sullen Earth  
Shrunk!

Forth from the dead dust rattling bones to bones  
Join: shaking convuls'd the shivering clay breathes  
And all flesh naked stands: Fathers and Friends;  
Mothers & Infants; Kings & Warriors:

The Grave shrieks with delight, & shakes  
Her hollow womb, & clasps the solid stem:  
Her bosom swells with wild desire:  
And milk & blood & glandous wine.

William Blake

# The Two Songs

I heard an Angel Singing  
When the day was springing:  
"Mercy, pity, and peace,  
Are the world's release."

So he sang all day  
Over the new-mown hay,  
Till the sun went down,  
And the haycocks looked brown.

I heard a devil curse  
Over the heath and the furse:  
"Mercy would be no more  
If there were nobody poor,  
And pity no more could be  
If all were happy as ye:  
And mutual fear brings peace,  
Misery's increase  
Are mercy, pity, and peace."

At his curse the sun went down,  
And the heavens gave a frown.

William Blake

# The Tyger

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright,  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

# The Voice Of The Ancient Bard

Youth of delight, come hither,  
And see the opening morn,  
Image of truth new born.  
Doubt is fled, & clouds of reason,  
Dark disputes & artful teasing.  
Folly is an endless maze,  
Tangled roots perplex her ways.  
How many have fallen there!  
They stumble all night over bones of the dead,  
And feel they know not what but care,  
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.

William Blake

# The Wild Flower's Song

As I wandered the forest,  
The green leaves among,  
I heard a Wild Flower  
Singing a song.

'I slept in the earth  
In the silent night,  
I murmured my fears  
And I felt delight.

'In the morning I went  
As rosy as morn,  
To seek for new joy;  
But oh! met with scorn.'

William Blake

# Three Things To Remember

A Robin Redbreast in a cage,  
Puts all Heaven in a rage.

A skylark wounded on the wing  
Doth make a cherub cease to sing.

He who shall hurt the little wren  
Shall never be beloved by men.

William Blake

# To Autumn

O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stainèd  
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit  
Beneath my shady roof; there thou may'st rest,  
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,  
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!  
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.  
`The narrow bud opens her beauties to  
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and  
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,  
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.

`The spirits of the air live on the smells  
Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.'  
Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;  
Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak  
Hills fled from our sight; but left his golden load.

William Blake

# To Morning

O holy virgin! clad in purest white,  
Unlock heav'n's golden gates, and issue forth;  
Awake the dawn that sleeps in heaven; let light  
Rise from the chambers of the east, and bring  
The honey'd dew that cometh on waking day.  
O radiant morning, salute the sun  
Rous'd like a huntsman to the chase, and with  
Thy buskin'd feet appear upon our hills.

William Blake



# To Nobodaddy

Why art thou silent & invisible  
Father of jealousy  
Why dost thou hide thyself in clouds  
From every searching Eye

Why darkness & obscurity  
In all thy words & laws  
That none dare eat the fruit but from  
The wily serpents jaws  
Or is it because Secresy  
gains females loud applause

William Blake

# To See

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour.

William Blake

# To Spring

O thou with dewy locks, who lookest down  
Thro' the clear windows of the morning, turn  
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,  
Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!

The hills tell each other, and the listening  
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned  
Up to thy bright pavilions: issue forth,  
And let thy holy feet visit our clime.

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds  
Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste  
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls  
Upon our love-sick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour  
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put  
Thy golden crown upon her languished head,  
Whose modest tresses were bound up for thee.

William Blake

# To Summer

O thou who passest thro' our valleys in  
Thy strength, curb thy fierce steeds, allay the heat  
That flames from their large nostrils! thou, O Summer,  
Oft pitched'st here thy goldent tent, and oft  
Beneath our oaks hast slept, while we beheld  
With joy thy ruddy limbs and flourishing hair.

Beneath our thickest shades we oft have heard  
Thy voice, when noon upon his fervid car  
Rode o'er the deep of heaven; beside our springs  
Sit down, and in our mossy valleys, on  
Some bank beside a river clear, throw thy  
Silk draperies off, and rush into the stream:  
Our valleys love the Summer in his pride.

Our bards are fam'd who strike the silver wire:  
Our youth are bolder than the southern swains:  
Our maidens fairer in the sprightly dance:  
We lack not songs, nor instruments of joy,  
Nor echoes sweet, nor waters clear as heaven,  
Nor laurel wreaths against the sultry heat.

William Blake

# To The Accuser Who Is The God Of This World

Truly My Satan thou art but a Dunce  
And dost not know the Garment from the Man  
Every Harlot was a Virgin once  
Nor canst thou ever change Kate into Nan

Tho thou art Worship'd by the Names Divine  
Of Jesus & Jehovah thou art still  
The Son of Morn in weary Nights decline  
The lost Travellers Dream under the Hill

William Blake

# To The Evening Star

Thou fair-haired angel of the evening,  
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light  
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown  
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!  
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the  
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew  
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes  
In timely sleep. Let thy west wing sleep on  
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,  
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,  
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,  
And the lion glares through the dun forest.  
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with  
Thy sacred dew; protect with them with thine influence.

William Blake

# To The Muses

Whether on Ida's shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun, that now  
From ancient melody have ceas'd;

Whether in Heav'n ye wander fair,  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air,  
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,  
Beneath the bosom of the sea  
Wand'ring in many a coral grove,  
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!

How have you left the ancient love  
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!  
The languid strings do scarcely move!  
The sound is forc'd, the notes are few!

William Blake

# To Thomas Butts

TO my friend Butts I write  
My first vision of light,  
On the yellow sands sitting.  
The sun was emitting  
His glorious beams  
From Heaven's high streams.  
Over sea, over land,  
My eyes did expand  
Into regions of air,  
Away from all care;  
Into regions of fire,  
Remote from desire;  
The light of the morning  
Heaven's mountains adorning:  
In particles bright,  
The jewels of light  
Distinct shone and clear.  
Amaz'd and in fear  
I each particle gazèd,  
Astonish'd, amazèd;  
For each was a Man  
Human-form'd. Swift I ran,  
For they beckon'd to me,  
Remote by the sea,  
Saying: 'Each grain of sand,  
Every stone on the land,  
Each rock and each hill,  
Each fountain and rill,  
Each herb and each tree,  
Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,  
Cloud, meteor, and star,  
Are men seen afar.'  
I stood in the streams  
Of Heaven's bright beams,  
And saw Felpham sweet  
Beneath my bright feet,  
In soft Female charms;  
And in her fair arms  
My Shadow I knew,



And my wife's Shadow too,  
And my sister, and friend.  
We like infants descend  
In our Shadows on earth,  
Like a weak mortal birth.  
My eyes, more and more,  
Like a sea without shore,  
Continue expanding,  
The Heavens commanding;  
Till the jewels of light,  
Heavenly men beaming bright,  
Appear'd as One Man,  
Who complacent began  
My limbs to enfold  
In His beams of bright gold;  
Like dross purg'd away  
All my mire and my clay.  
Soft consum'd in delight,  
In His bosom sun-bright  
I remain'd. Soft He smil'd,  
And I heard His voice mild,  
Saying: 'This is My fold,  
O thou ram horn'd with gold,  
Who awakest from sleep  
On the sides of the deep.  
On the mountains around  
The roarings resound  
Of the lion and wolf,  
The loud sea, and deep gulf.  
These are guards of My fold,  
O thou ram horn'd with gold!'  
And the voice faded mild;  
I remain'd as a child;  
All I ever had known  
Before me bright shone:  
I saw you and your wife  
By the fountains of life.  
Such the vision to me  
Appear'd on the sea.

William Blake

# To Tirzah

Whate'er is Born of Mortal Birth  
Must be consumed with the Earth  
To rise from Generation free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?

The Sexes sprung from Shame & Pride,  
Blow'd in the morn, in evening died;  
But Mercy chang'd Death into Sleep;  
The Sexes rose to work & weep.

Thou, Mother of my Mortal part,  
With cruelty didst mould my Heart,  
And with false self-deceiving tears  
Didst bind my Nostrils, Eyes, & Ears:

Didst close my Tongue in senseless clay,  
And me to Mortal Life betray.  
The Death of Jesus set me free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?

William Blake

# To Winter

O Winter! bar thine adamantine doors:  
The north is thine; there hast thou built thy dark  
Deep-founded habitation. Shake not thy roofs,  
Nor bend thy pillars with thine iron car.'  
He hears me not, but o'er the yawning deep  
Rides heavy; his storms are unchain'd, sheathèd  
In ribbèd steel; I dare not lift mine eyes,  
For he hath rear'd his sceptre o'er the world.

Lo! now the direful monster, whose 1000 skin clings  
To his strong bones, strides o'er the groaning rocks:  
He withers all in silence, and in his hand  
Unclothes the earth, and freezes up frail life.

He takes his seat upon the cliffs,--the mariner  
Cries in vain. Poor little wretch, that deal'st  
With storms!--till heaven smiles, and the monster  
Is driv'n yelling to his caves beneath mount Hecla.

William Blake

# When Klopstock England Defied

When Klopstock England defied,  
Uprose William Blake in his pride;  
For old Nobodaddy aloft  
. . . and belch'd and cough'd;  
Then swore a great oath that made Heaven quake,  
And call'd aloud to English Blake.  
Blake was giving his body ease,  
At Lambeth beneath the poplar trees.  
From his seat then started he  
And turn'd him round three times three.  
The moon at that sight blush'd scarlet red,  
The stars threw down their cups and fled,  
And all the devils that were in hell,

Answerèd with a ninefold yell.  
Klopstock felt the intripled turn,  
And all his bowels began to churn,  
And his bowels turn'd round three times three,  
And lock'd in his soul with a ninefold key; . . .  
Then again old Nobodaddy swore  
He ne'er had seen such a thing before,  
Since Noah was shut in the ark,  
Since Eve first chose her hellfire spark,  
Since 'twas the fashion to go naked,  
Since the old Anything was created . . .

William Blake

# Why Should I Care For The Men Of Thames

Why should I care for the men of thames  
Or the cheating waves of charter'd streams  
Or shrink at the little blasts of fear  
That the hireling blows into my ear

Tho born on the cheating banks of Thames  
Tho his waters bathed my infant limbs  
The Ohio shall wash his stains from me  
I was born a slave but I go to be free.

William Blake

# Why Was Cupid A Boy

Why was Cupid a boy,  
And why a boy was he?  
He should have been a girl,  
For aught that I can see.

For he shoots with his bow,  
And the girl shoots with her eye,  
And they both are merry and glad,  
And laugh when we do cry.

And to make Cupid a boy  
Was the Cupid girl's mocking plan;  
For a boy can't interpret the thing  
Till he is become a man.

And then he's so pierc'd with cares,  
And wounded with arrowy smarts,  
That the whole business of his life  
Is to pick out the heads of the darts.

'Twas the Greeks' love of war  
Turn'd Love into a boy,  
And woman into a statue of stone--  
And away fled every joy.

William Blake

# You Don'T Believe

You don't believe -- I won't attempt to make ye:  
You are asleep -- I won't attempt to wake ye.  
Sleep on! sleep on! while in your pleasant dreams  
Of Reason you may drink of Life's clear streams.  
Reason and Newton, they are quite two things;  
For so the swallow and the sparrow sings.

Reason says `Miracle': Newton says `Doubt.'  
Aye! that's the way to make all Nature out.  
`Doubt, doubt, and don't believe without experiment':  
That is the very thing that Jesus meant,  
When He said `Only believe! believe and try!  
Try, try, and never mind the reason why!'

William Blake