



ON HEAVENLY LOVE

But man, forgetfull of his Makers grace,
No lesse than angels, whom he did ensew,
Fell from the hope of promist heavenly place,
Into the mouth of Death, to sinners dew,
And all his off-spring into thraldome throw,
Where they for ever should in bonds remaine,
Of never-dead yet ever-dying paine.

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at first
Made of meere love, and after liked well,
Seeing him lie like creature long accurst
In that deep horror of despayred Hell,
Him, wretched in doole would let no longer dwell
But cast out of that bondage to redeeme,
And pay the price all were his debt extreeme.

Out of the bosome of eternall blisse,
In which he reigned with his glorious syre
He downe descended like a most demisse
And abject thrall in fleshe's fraile attyre,
That he for him might pay sinne's deadly hyre
And him restore unto that happie state
In which he stood before his haplesse fate.

In flesh at first the guilt committed was.
Therefore in flesh it must be satisfyde;
Nor spirit, nor angel, though they man surpass,
Could make amends to God for man's misguyde
But onely man himselfe, who selfe did slyde:
So taking flesh of sacred virgin's wombe,
For mans deare sake he did a man become.

O blessed Well of Love! O Floure of Grace!
O glorious Morning-Starre! O lamp of Light!
Most lively image of thy Fathers face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meeke Lambe of God before all worlds behight,
How can we Thee requite for all this good?

Edmund Spenser

Eleanor Baylis Lys.