

Paradise Lost and James Nayler's Fall

"Let such that think they stand, take heed lest they fall."
James Nayler¹

IS it possible that John Milton's portrayal of Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost* draws more on contemporary sources, on Quaker sources in particular, than has been recognized? When Milton constructed the epic fall of Adam and Eve he did so using highly developed characters who might occur amidst the religious excitement in Cromwell's unstable England just prior to the Restoration. Milton's Adam and Eve are characters who could not have existed at any other time, faced as they are with a lonely search for inward religion when the security of Eden was sacrificed to forbidden knowledge. Theirs is the separatist predicament in essence: rebelliousness finding out its frailty by asking for knowledge too high for man. Expecting to become "A Goddess among Gods", as Satan suggests to Eve (IX, 547), she and Adam soon find themselves reduced to total dependence on their forsaken God. To discover his love afresh through Christ's renewal of conscience is a task that Milton knew to be essential for those separatists who had sought, only to transgress, the highest spiritual knowledge. Where is the boundary between man and God? How far may he go toward becoming Christ, having measured access to God's inmost mind? Failing like Satan in his proud attempt to become God, how is the self-damage done by Adam and Eve to be repaired? This was a living issue for Milton in a perilous time of prophetic drive for ultimate justification by sects and by individual prophets.

Adam and Eve show the unwanted effects of each man becoming his own church. Unlike their portrayals in Milton's most likely literary sources, Hugo Grotius's *Adamus Exul* (1601) and Giambattista Andreini's *L'Adamo* (1613) the first humans in *Paradise Lost* are marked by mid-seventeenth-century English Protestant separatism. Their individuality is

¹ James Nayler, *How the Ground of Temptation is in the Heart of the Creature*. Quoted by Emilia Fogelklou in *James Nayler the Rebel Saint* (London, 1931), p. 309.

heightened, like the artist Rembrandt's grotesque Adam and Eve, when contrasted with their medieval prototypes.¹ Milton's figures have become similarly complicated, psychologically impenetrable to each other and puzzling to the reader who is expected to discern a meaning in this. Each is self-concerned, proud and distant, or after the fall hotly familiar in a sensual way. They are creatures of extremes, so fervent and inward that they are prone to lose the sense of common obedience with which they were charged.

Milton portrayed his characters' spirituality to make them immediate for readers who knew first-hand the lonely, conflicted and often unpredictable search as it was for many Puritans. Adam and Eve as separated man and woman, are rebels against God's authority, ambiguously held by the bonds of matrimony while disentangling from the guilt of breaking his decrees. Few separatists went so far as they, but some realized that the most intricate emotions of personal relationship might be involved in religion. The simple characters of Grotius and Andreini discuss their precarious positions more fully than do Milton's, but they experience less of its anguish. We are continually reminded that Milton's figures were conceived in the period of George Fox and the early Friends, whose spiritual searches take individuality into account to a degree seldom seen before. The spiritual status of Adam and Eve is conditional upon autonomous personality, whose development is an issue in the poem. The individual was emerging with a definition new in literature, a definition clearly found in such Elizabethans as John Donne that by mid-seventeenth century was pervasive. Milton gave Adam and Eve dramatically separate and opposed personalities, which are developed beyond what seemed necessary to his predecessors in the hexameral tradition (writings about the six days of creation). By doing so the woman's iniquity and the man's impossible dilemma of loyalties are heightened. Adam speaks honourably of accepting God's prohibition not to touch the tree of knowledge (IV, 423), while his partner, in a quite different frame of mind, thinks admiringly of her mirrored image on the day she was shaped from Adam's rib.

Thus early in the poem, the hierarchical principle of "Hee for God onely, shee for God in him" (IV, 299) is infringed, from which follows conflict over gardening duties and from

¹ Rembrandt's "Adam and Eve" is an etching of 1638.

them, the fall itself. Milton well knew the actual difficulties of keeping domestic accord. Thus the question of fit spiritual knowledge is combined with that of stresses in an intimate relationship, and *Paradise Lost* examines the perils of a union between man and woman in the likelihood, as he could believe, that she would try to exceed the bounds set by God's decree. Beginning from Genesis III, Milton re-examines the marital conflict as presented by Grotius, Andreini, by Serafino Della Salandra in *Adamo Caduto* (1647) and others early and late in the Renaissance. Milton is heir to all of them, but his epic gives the domestic upset of natural order a new and troubled gravity, the gravity of spiritual presumption.

How did Milton come to this? Of course his own early marital difficulties—the abrupt leave-taking of Royalist Mary Powell after their marriage in 1642—could not help but rankle still. A poet's unsettled conflicts may prove the stuff of his imaginings, and a lurking mistrust of woman is surely behind the portrayal of Eve's false hopes. But the incident with Mary Powell and the divorce tracts were far behind him when he turned to depicting the Eve of his Biblical epic. Residual mistrust of woman there was, but I want to suggest that what gave Milton more immediate material for his Adam and Eve, the fallen separatist saints, was the scandal of James Nayler's fall. "The Quakers' Jesus's" shaping power over the contemporary imagination can be detected in *Paradise Lost*, whose vivid characterization may in part be explained by looking to this event.¹

The epic's development was cumulative with actual composition beginning perhaps as early as 1655, certainly by

¹ It had seemed possible that Milton was drawn close to Nayler's circle through his second wife, Katherine Woodcock, whom Milton married in 1656. She was the daughter of a Captain William Woodcock of Hackney (W. R. Parker, *Milton A Biography*, Oxford, 1968, p. 1053). This prompted the thought that Katherine's father might have been the Quaker William Woodcock who was invited to serve in the militia (so arguing previous military experience) in June 1659 (W. C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, Cambridge, 1961, p. 18), and in whose house in the Savoy a retired meeting was held at which Nayler sometimes preached. However, a careful search of Quaker records for the period, made by Malcolm Thomas, Assistant Librarian at Friends House, failed to disclose a connection: "It is possible that the Milton Woodcocks are related in some way to the Quaker ones, but there is no evidence I can allege for it." There is therefore no firm evidence of Milton's contact with Friends much before his association with Thomas Ellwood in 1662. Although they can hardly have escaped his notice, Milton's acquaintance with the early Quaker leaders in London remains speculative.

1658. The poem took shape in Milton's mind through the revolutionary period, reaching its final state at the undoing of Cromwell's republic, with which he had associated his reformist hopes. *Paradise Lost* was not published until the comparative safety of 1667. As the idea of a Christian epic of paradisaical loss and inward recovery grew, it picked up a wealth of useful socio-political material in the course of events—from parliamentary debates to civil war battles. The saga of James Nayler's ill-judged entry into Bristol in October 1656, his cruel punishment for blasphemy, and his attempt to recover grace may well have offered a stimulus to construct a new version of the archetypal fall and recovery as it looked in the midst of changing sectarian hopes for a final revelation of truth. The occurrence of Nayler's fall, at just the time of Milton's greatest impressionability in forming the poetic fiction, has been overlooked. Studies of the hexameral tradition assume its literary influence almost to the exclusion of contemporary religious happenings, to which it is certain Milton attended closely.

Nayler's Christ-like entry into Bristol, conducted by immoderate women admirers, was as sensational as any event in those excited times. For this Nayler barely escaped martyrdom after a trial for blasphemy that engaged Cromwell's parliamentarians in one of their most searching debates. The setting was Westminster Hall, only a short distance from Milton's place of residence in Petty France. He was still occasionally translating foreign correspondence for the government, a task which had occupied him more fully prior to his blindness. Nayler's was a trial about a fundamental point in prophetic religion—whether a man who presents himself as a dramatic sign of Christ's coming has profaned Christ. The degree to which the inner light confers sanctity was being judged, and the possible dangers of Quaker belief lay exposed. How could Milton, the champion of religious liberty, ignore so conspicuous a test of separatism's most extreme consequences? Religious freedom continually occupied his thoughts, and indeed he probably attended to the ten- or eleven-day argument that developed over the acts of Nayler and his followers, noting each turn of opinion as speakers wrestled with the issue. In the House of Commons it was finally agreed that he had exceeded all permissible prophetic bounds, and the strongly worded decision had it

that Nayler was guilty of blasphemy, was an impostor and seducer of the people. The difficulty lay in what should be done about the offence, liberty of conscience being upheld by several influential speakers. Those who debated were well known to Milton who, in another connection in *Defensio Secunda*, favourably mentions five among the most lenient: The Lord President Lawrence, Major-General John Desborough, Major-General John Lambert, William Sydenham, and of more doubtful opinion Sir Gilbert Pickering.¹ As a loyal Cromwellian and civil servant, Milton was bound to feel deeply the testing through which Nayler put those parliamentarians who were most tender toward manifestations of the spirit; no doubt he relived their trial of conscience himself. The first part of Nayler's punishment was executed in a pillory set up in Palace Yard, Westminster, where the atmosphere must have been charged with the strangeness of what was happening to that godly man. Was blind Milton led out to witness this spectacle with his remaining senses? It is quite probable he was.

Nayler's official punishment, the pillorying, whipping through the streets, the burning of his tongue and branding of his forehead, all in view of the London public, showed the savagery that could attend questions of doubtful personal sanctity. Undeniably he had over-reached his rightful dispensation, sinfully moved by "imagination" through subtle stages leading to identification with Christ. This was the revenge of a people frightened by Familist and other prophetic excesses in a time of extreme social instability. However sweet Nayler's acceptance of suffering, he was made an object of derision as well as of pity. Even George Fox said he had "runn out", and Friends could not countenance him. A preacher of strength and unsurpassed spiritual gifts had been brought down by meddling with the prerogatives of God. Under the spell of enthusiasm Nayler pretended to the highest knowledge, and in this Milton's Adam closely resembles him. He, too, allowed woman to waste his being in a futile grasp for Godhead, which had been expressly forbidden

¹ John Milton, *Defensio Secunda* in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (Yale University Press, 1966), Vol. 4, Part I, pp. 675-677. In this tract of 1654 defending the revolutionary party, Milton commemorates certain leaders he considers to be virtuous in war and peace. He makes clear that they were known to him "either through friendship or by report": they are familiarly addressed as preservers of liberty.

entanglement with women enthusiasts he could neither govern nor understand.

Writing of the biblical fall, Nayler strangely gives no emphasis to the woman's part in it. In a pamphlet of 1656, he explains in cryptic phrases how it came about that man "turned to the Lust that is carnal and self-ended".¹ Something painful is being avoided.

When man looked out into the other, where he ruled who abides not in the Truth, wherein the disobedience was received in, of that which was contrary to the will of God to feed upon, then he joynd to that w^{ch} was contrary, wherein the weakness was, and the death, darkness and blindness, as to the things of God; and that which freely he had received of God; and grew subtil within himself, and wise to do evil, so that he had lost the will that was free, to wait upon God in his wisdom and counsel, freely to be carryed forth by him; and so from the uprightness and innocency, and pure wisdom and spiritual power, which God had placed in his heart, he fell, and into the self-inventions which he had chosen in the contrary will . . .²

A wrong choice loses the seed of righteousness and man becomes brutish, turning to "vanity" and "folly". Subject to the "earthly principle, he is covered with thick darkness", cut off from the spirit and "heart-blinde", for which the only remedy is Christ's renewing light. It is plain that Nayler saw the spiritual meaning of temptation, while missing the human involvement that a dramatic poem could reveal and that was present for many to see, in his own case.

Nayler's "other", wherein the disobedience was received, is woman, the Eve whom Milton shows bending to Satan in betrayal of God, Adam and herself. This Eve Nayler experienced in the person of Martha Simmonds, who together with Hannah Stranger and some others led him into folly at Bristol. Martha Simmonds seeming to defer to Nayler's spiritual gifts, as Eve deferred to Adam's higher intellect, undermined and nearly destroyed them. When Martha Simmonds tried to enlist Nayler to oppose Burrough and Howgill, the chief Quaker preachers in London, it was charged that she had bewitched him. In the language of the day the charge was accurate enough: he had certainly lost the "raining power that was in him", to use her own words.³ It

¹ James Nayler, *Love to the Lost* (London, edition of 1665), p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³ Emilia Fogelklou, *James Nayler*, p. 307.

seemed that Satan himself could not have depressed Nayler's spirit more, so strongly was he influenced during the three days of spiritual travail he unwisely spent at her house. A strange attraction for women was Nayler's weakness, and he easily became subservient to them. Witchcraft was the name given to malevolence directed by certain women toward those around them, and one can almost believe that Martha Simmonds disguised such feelings under apparent admiration for Nayler.¹ She would not leave him alone in London or in Bristol, following him as he weakened, much as Satan tracked Eve until he implanted the self-destructive idea of becoming a goddess. Martha, already possessed, captured the vulnerable Adam in Nayler by assailing the melancholic strain in his temperament. Her audacity, extending to a challenge to Fox's very leadership, stunned and weakened him. Dominated by this Ranterish woman, herself suspiciously like a challenger to his leadership, Nayler passively accepted a messianic role upon release from Exeter prison. Adulated by Hannah Stranger and her husband, who had written, "Thy Name shall be no more James Nayler, but Jesus", Nayler was set on the road to spiritual disaster which befell his progress into Bristol. Even those excited times were unprepared for such a spectacle. The authorities could do little but punish the seeming mockery of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Possession was immediately suspected, as the title of Ralph Farmer's *Sathan Inthron'd in his Chair of Pestilence* indicates. Friends passed judgment by meeting in silence; great must have been their consternation at the inflated "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Israel" with which Nayler had been adulated. This leader, a preacher of the subtlest

¹ The social history of seventeenth-century witchcraft does not include the name of Martha Simmonds, who was no more than passingly accused of the offence. Hers is not a typical case, as appears from Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), Ch. 16. Though at the hearing Sir Gilbert Pickering said "He is bewitched, really bewitched . . ." (Fogelklou, p. 202), Richard Hubberthorne, writing to Margaret Fell, says simply of Martha Simmonds that Nayler was "much subject to her" (Mabel Brailsford, *A Quaker from Cromwell's Army: James Nayler* (London, 1927), p. 108), while George Fox refers to her oddly as "Martha Symonds, which is called thy mother" (Brailsford, p. 113). Nayler himself, however, was more than a little concerned about bewitchment, writing of "the woman of Witchcraft, which hunteth for the precious life of the holy Child, seeking to draw your strength of affections from him after the harlot, that so he may fail & die daily in your hearts and affections, while the Lust goes out to another, covered with some fair pretence . . ." (*Milk for Babes* (London, edition of 1665), p. 16).

power, and a man of matchless charm was brought low, as Adam was to be brought low in the poem forming in Milton's mind.

The fall of Eve and then Adam, Milton stresses, follows from their desire to become God, each in his way aspiring to higher knowledge than is fit: "Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead", he wrote in the Argument to Book III. At the poem's close, the regenerate Adam admits to having looked for "Forbidd'n knowledge by forbidd'n means" (XII, 279), and when Milton has foretold an age of persecution for conscience, Adam shows the Archangel Michael wise contrition, and he promises to limit aspiration in times to come.

Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can containe;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learne, that to obey is best,
And love with feare the onely God, to walk
As in his presence . . .

(XII, 558-563)

Nayler, like Adam, is a learner in the school of hard experience. Change by inward refinement is the all-important teaching of *Paradise Lost*; the knowledge of how both active and passive sinfulness can be reduced, the error of separation overcome, is man's most important attainment. Here Nayler's acts could certainly have helped Milton shape a separatist Adam, so disloyal to God yet remediable had his lapse been. Nayler had taken the passive part at Bristol; fanatically led, he entered the city gates, hands folded before him as if enclosed in a trance. Adam too succumbed passively, "overcome with Femal charm" (IX, 999). Nayler's non-interfering inwardness was evident at the Parliamentary committee hearing where he explained that he had been "commanded by the Lord to suffer such things to be done by me, as to the outward, as a sign, not as I am a creature".¹ A reporter said the answer was given in great meekness and wisdom. Adam's trial by Christ similarly finds the offender explaining circumstances with a willingness to learn meekly (X, 85f). Adam, too, might have pleaded his "sign" of

¹ Mabel Brailsford, *A Quaker from Cromwell's Army: James Nayler*, p. 133.

faithfulness to a reality above the creature, but at this stage he had more to learn of forgiveness than had Nayler. Did Nayler and Adam equally know the woman to be deceived, and follow because indissolubly bound to her? Was it an "effeminate slackness" (XI, 634), wearied out by imprisonment and fasting, that led Nayler to obey woman as his God, following where her presumption led? The deepest motives are obscure in both cases, and the parallel is not complete. But there are enough elements in common to argue a connection that would have occurred naturally to Milton's Puritan readers as arising from his summing up of Nayler's folly and his redeeming spiritual education.

The course of Nayler's reformation was centrally important to all contemporary separatists. His later pamphlets recognize that the Christian reader was especially attentive to the providential means of remedying pride, the greatest crime against God. How regeneration came about was of broad interest, and seventeenth-century religious literature shows that a great variety of falls, from that of Catholic John Donne into sensuality to that of John Bunyan in "selling Christ", might all be referred to Adam's renewal in Christ. Acceptably to remake the fallen person required not only free confession but a prototype of rebuilding. In this the doctrine of the first and second Adams stood supreme, and its various incarnations were of intense concern in this period. There was no better place for Milton to find an account of rebirth in the spirit than in Nayler's tracts, which plead with the unregenerate while yet the smarting experience of his own fall is being assimilated. Many passages meditate on the excess to which an inability to distinguish between Christ's outward coming and a visionary consciousness of him had led. More pertinently still, Nayler meditates on carnal deviations from true godliness, the material of Milton's high drama.

If any Carnal Way be opened, it will form a fair pretence as though it were of God, which is not of God; and this seeks to betray the just and faithful one from you; and would part you from your chaste waiting upon him whom you love, taking his advantage by your hast, weariness and weakness in the journey . . .¹

Such passages, searching the predicament in which he had been, give Nayler's admonitions their life, and make plausible his call to forsake all wordliness.

¹ James Nayler, *Milk for Babes* (London, edition of 1665), pp. 3-4.

But in all your Journey, take heed of the Adulterous mind, for it secretly devoureth the precious Life; Wherefore take heed of that which looketh out, give not way to that eye not for a moment; for if you consent to it upon any pretence whatsoever, you enter into a Covenant therewith, against the holy Seed, to destroy the chast mind; but whether it be rough or smooth, yet hold it as an Enemy, and that which if it get in by consent, must out by suffering double to the delight it brings with it; but if as an Enemy you withstand it by constant and patient resistings, it will flie, and grow weaker upon every assault; and he that giveth you victory, will grow more in your esteem and delight.¹

Thus Nayler establishes a sense of limits, of observing clear restrictions found by moving too close to the carnality of prophetic religion. Nayler learned to "wait low, and diligently hearken thereto, untill the thing it self spring up, which naturally hath . . . Riches in it . . .".² We think of Raphael's advice to Adam, which he is able to take only after suffering: "be lowlie wise" (VIII, 173). This is "the summe/Of wisdom . . ." (XII, 575-576), for which praise is offered by both fallen saints, Adam and Nayler, when the true riches are known.

Nayler's words are much more than a recantation, constrained though he was to explain his lapse. In an astonishingly compressed metaphoric account of regeneration closing this pamphlet, he tells how "I went on the way of wrath, & passed by the gates of hell . . .", suffering until rescue. The passage speaks of providential guidance, the greater good that comes of rising from a fall: "then didst thou lift me out of the pit & set me forth in the sight of mine enemy". "And how good is it that man be proved in the night", he adds, quite in keeping with Milton's belief that the second Adam is a better, more tender, child of light than the old one had been. A sense of limits, spiritual triumph over the divided self, consummates both Nayler and Milton's Adam. Nayler's words on revival are fittingly paradisaic, and as poetic as any description of the garden in *Paradise Lost*: "thou fill'dst the lower parts of the Earth with gladness, & the valley was opened, thy showers descended abundantly, so the Earth was fill'd with virtues. Thou madest thy Plant to spring, & the thirsty soul became as a watered Garden . . ."³

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

Such resonant language is good evidence of the change that had come about, and the imagery unites prophet and poet.

Nayler, like Adam, realized that God is authority as well as inspiration. To follow him correctly is to be guided, not possessed: "you shall have your Laws from the Law-giver Christ Jesus, and your judgement from the Father of lights . . .".¹ Consent is given to limits, yet Nayler's prose retains its power of exhortation, its subtlety and lift. Even the severest imprisonment and disapprobation from former followers could not reduce his determination to grow beyond what he had been in the days of confusion. The judgmental melancholy through which he passed abated, a chastened humility appeared in the whole man, who at his death could speak the most moving sentences about grace found among the oppressed. No longer open to self-deception, Nayler's confessional pamphlets show him to have gathered the ravages of Satan under the Seed's promise. Though Nayler cannot dramatize the fallen woman's part, his is exactly Milton's language in the closing books of *Paradise Lost*. Milton wrote of ultimate deliverance to come at the end of history, with its inward signs to be cherished until that final event. Nayler agrees that the moment of fulfilment is still to be awaited, that the process of becoming ready is long and arduous. A man perfected by error and suffering enlarges his hopes over those of mere prophetic fervour: he thinks now of the shared need to grow and to change in things of the spirit. Milton's symbol for this hope is the Seed of Adam and Eve in its power to restore, and the dramatic restoration is that of man and woman in living union.

Both in one Faith unanimous though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more cheerd
With meditation on the happie end.

(XII, 603-605)

This regeneration, on its earthly plane, is the reconciliation and reunion of separated persons. As it is between Adam and Eve reconciled in *Paradise Lost*, so it was with Nayler seeking out those from whom he had been so long separated. We recall that Nayler the pilgrim ended his life on the road home to wife and family at Wakefield.

¹ James Nayler, *What the Possession of the Living Faith Is* (London, edition of 1664), p. 40.

The story of Nayler's fall and recovery has a fitting symmetry, completed with his death in 1660, when an era of wonders was checked by the return of Charles II. Nayler's fall became legendary as an example of the highest enthusiasm judged and forgiven. Parted from God by asking for too much knowledge, he was returned through loving obedience; this is the archetype of Adam, but was Nayler's experience in fact in Milton's mind as he constructed the fall in *Paradise Lost*? Milton himself had not undergone the spiritual upheavals of the great sectarian leaders, yet he certainly knew the springs from which they arose. He felt poetry being written through him by the Holy Spirit, while the scruples of a cultivated European prevented him prophesying a reign of Christ about to begin in England. The possibility was none the less exciting, and Milton never ruled plenary inspiration, such as Nayler's, to be impossible. He could gauge its excesses without falling into them himself, and without loss of concern for those who discovered them to their sorrow. For Nayler there had been the test of a religious liberty Milton had long upheld, that liberty, in which self-discipline was understood, he opposed to enforced uniformity of belief. Nayler's was the indiscipline of one freed of all ecclesiastical restraint who has to discover it again through the most rigorous religious experience.

Nayler, the rebel saint, underwent an essential human experience at the boundary of inspiration. Any individual human soul venturing to the place of contact between man and God would be especially noted by Milton, who had long since given up hope of the churches composing their differences by agreement. When beginning his grand summary of man's lot in *Paradise Lost*, he looked for signs of divine intervention that were more than speciously stated, signs in keeping with the poem's mystical invocation to a new church of the upright hearted. The post-Restoration Quakerism of Ellwood and Penington that was to attract him tended toward mystical quietism of which there is much in the chastened Adam. But Adam's initial enthusiasm is active and the course it runs belongs to the heroic age of Nayler. The beauty of Nayler's prophetic language, the penetration with which he preached and wrote, insured a hearing from the poet. Many sectarians found themselves in error and disgrace; none but Nayler went so deep into the pit, were restored in the spirit by humble learning, and found the exact language

to discern the religious meaning of that experience. To use language with candour and beauty was given only to a few. This Milton would have recognized in Nayler, judging him to be singularly favoured, given as a sign in a larger sense than the Bristol episode alone to convey a meaning all men should grasp. Nayler was an Adam whose bitter-sweet seed held the fullest promise Milton envisages in his epic. Similar mistakes would be made again, wisdom won and lost many times over, but at least there was something on record to show how yielding to temptation might be overcome and a larger good attained. Nayler himself indicates the way:

And if you abide faithful in the light waiting, you will be so far from turning into the liberty of the flesh, that you will see every vain thought and imagination judged in the first motion, and the ground of all sin you will see laid open, and so come to see the Axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree that hath brought forth evil fruit, which is Johns Ministry, and the Baptism of Repentance, and so be led on to him who fulfils all righteousness; and that kingdom you will hear preach't at hand, which consists not in words, but in power . . .¹

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¹ James Nayler, *A Salutation to the Seed of God* (London, edition of 1665), p. 26.