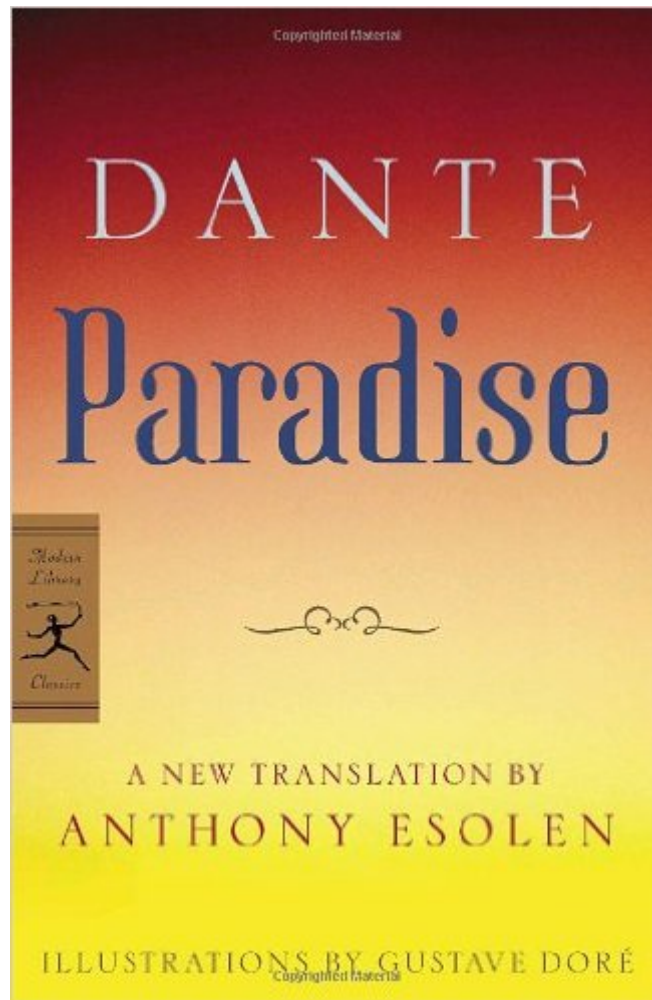


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# Paradise (Modern Library Classics)



## Synopsis

As long as there is any justice in the world of books, [Esolen's] will be the standard Dante . . . for some time to come. — Robert Royal, *Crisis*

In this, the concluding volume of *The Divine Comedy*, Dante ascends from the devastation of the *Inferno* and the trials of Purgatory. Led by his beloved Beatrice, he enters Paradise, to profess his faith, hope, and love before the Heavenly court. Completed shortly before his death, Paradise is the volume that perhaps best expresses Dante's spiritual philosophy about resurrection, redemption, and the nature of divinity. It also affords modern-day readers a clear window into late medieval perceptions about faith. A bilingual text, classic illustrations by Gustave Doré, an appendix that reproduces Dante's key sources, and other features make this the definitive edition of Dante's ultimate masterwork.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I haven't read Esolen's *Inferno*, but his translation of Purgatory was superb--not just the translation itself but the notes, which I'm fairly certain Esolen wrote. After translating the *Inferno*, the Purgatory, and then the Paradise, Esolen was stimulated to write a magnificent interpretative introduction to the Paradise which is one of the best pieces I've ever read on Dante. Esolen's Introduction to the Paradise ranks with Erich Auerbach's essays on Dante in *Mimesis* and *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, and I prefer it to T. S. Eliot's famous essay on Dante; it is a classic. Esolen's introduction to the Paradise in this edition is alone worth the price of the book, and I would

characterise it as a must-read for anyone interested in Dante and his Comedy. As with the previous volumes of the Comedy, in the Paradise Esolen again proves himself to be a sensitive and judicious translator, and the notes are again excellent.

In Paradise, Dante's taken on an impossible task: describing the indescribable. Even St. Paul found it impossible to recount his mystical experience of heaven. The Inferno and Purgatory read like journeys onto which theological and philosophical points are appended. Paradise reads more like a theological treatise onto which a journey is appended. Dante's vision of Paradise is deeply poetic, thoughtful, theological, and thought-provoking. Dante's description of the fall of the angels (and Esolen's notes thereon) are particularly insightful. Dante (the poet not the character in the poem) spends much effort on what constitutes a just ruler and on the relationship between Church and state. Never does he discuss the joy in heaven over the repentant sinner. Nor does he present the saints he meets as active intercessors for those on earth, though in canto xviii Dante the character does ask the heavenly army to pray for those led astray by a corrupt pope, and later (xxxii) he asks Beatrice to pray for him. In the final canto St. Bernard intercedes for Dante, begging the intercession of the Blessed Virgin that Dante may behold the beatific vision. But all those folks on earth who beg the saints to pray for them? I didn't notice any saint responding to the entreaties of those on earth, or indeed, even acknowledging that he heard their prayers. I did not find Dore's illustrations of much value in my appreciation of Paradise, unlike with the Inferno and Purgatory. I thought the final cantos of Paradise were the volume's strongest. Esolen's Introduction and his notes are very good aids. I've read (and reviewed on ) Esolen's translations of the three books of the Divine Comedy. He's to be complimented on these highly readable and reasonably priced books.

The introduction to this book is comprehensive and thoughtful. Anthony Esolen writes beautifully and does a great job of explaining the framework of Dante's Paradise. The notes are extremely helpful, too, though I think I would have preferred footnotes to end notes, as I had to keep flipping to the back. It was a minor distraction, however, and I never would have begun to appreciate Dante's poetry without Esolen's notes. If anybody is interested in more, the author is preparing a series of instructional CD's for the entire Divine Comedy. As of this writing , only the CD's on the Inferno are available, but I'm eagerly awaiting the rest of the series because I think Esolen has a great way of explaining things.

I loved the entire Divine Comedy and Anthony Esolen's translation is a great one to read. I asked for

recommendations before deciding on my translation, and was so glad I did. Thank you Mr. Esolen!

If you want epic storytelling and great poetry - this is the real thing! And the Anthony Esolen translation is the best by far. Highly recommended! Paradise (Modern Library Classics)

This is a review of the Kessinger published hardback copy. My poor heart broke when this book arrived. :(This is not Esolen, I don't even know this translator! There was no Italian, there was only 130 pages, the translation was awful, the publisher is even different! All I wanted to do was to read The Paradise, but instead I was taken to the Inferno, ie; Hell!!!!!! I don't know what I did to deserve this, this experience has made me more jaded than ever. :(I guess I learned not to be so trusting with .

Thought I was ordering the Esolen translation, which is how I got to the page. Clicked on the Kindle option, and instead got a totally different translation. Not Esolen! Totally unacceptable.

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