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**The Evolution of Milton's Satan through *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*
and Milton's Establishment of the Hero**

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by

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Abstract of the Thesis

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One of the most imposing themes of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) is the depiction of Satan as heroic. Although deplorable and malevolent, the Satan of *Paradise Lost* appeals to the reader, and his actions and thoughts are easily agreed upon. Embodying the classification of tragic hero, Satan has both made an error in judgment and has been overcome by a tragic flaw that brought about a devastating calamity. Moving onto Milton's second epic, *Paradise Regained* (1671), presents a new problem for the reader as the Satan that he became close to in *Paradise Lost* is non-existent. Satan is no longer depicted as a tragic hero, but is portrayed as an entirely malicious being who has no sign of ever having regretted his actions or sentiments. In realizing his earlier erroneous depiction of Satan, Milton furthers the correction of his error in *Paradise Regained* by exceeding the role of the Son of God. Milton redefines his first presentation of a hero as he realizes what he, as a writer, was capable of in *Paradise Lost* and how he must correct his own mistakes for the sake of the reader in *Paradise Regained*. Moreover, my thesis constructs a conceptual understanding of Satan, Milton's prominent character, and analyzes Satan's depiction in each epic as they are contingent upon each other.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
I. Relationship between <i>Paradise Lost</i> and <i>Paradise Regained</i>	5
II. Milton's Characterization of Satan in <i>Paradise Lost</i>	9
III. The Establishing of Milton's Tragic Hero.....	16
IV. Milton's Characterization of Satan in <i>Paradise Regained</i>	21
V. The Poems and the Bible.....	26
VI. Redefining the Hero in <i>Paradise Regained</i>	32
Conclusion.....	37
Bibliography.....	41

Introduction

The daunting task of transferring Satan from his role as an historical figure in the Judeo-Christian Bible to a character in a literary work is one that John Milton confronts in two of his chief epics, *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671). Satan of the Bible is not a full-fledged character in the sense of the representation of a person in a narrative or dramatic work of art, embodying emotion and thought. The Bible mentions Satan many times according to his attributes, but never explicates his personal feelings and thoughts. For instance, Satan is referred to as “the serpent” in Genesis 3:4, “the adversary” in Job 1:6, and “the author of all evil” in Luke 10:19, and no detail is added in support of his characterization. Milton transforms the historical figure from the Bible, especially his exchanges, namely the temptation of Eve and the temptations of Jesus, into a literary character that on the one hand glorifies the human condition, and on the other hand adds sentiment to the character by means of intricate dialogue. By fictionalizing a Biblical figure, Milton gives Satan an ethos that, due to Milton’s particular techniques, is sympathetic. Creating a text that fictionalizes Satan, the Son of God, and God was challenging for Milton because divinity is thought not to be conceived entirely by the human mind as presented by the Anglican Church and other theological officials and devout followers. Milton’s mission in his epics is heretical and sinful through the eyes of Judeo-Christian believers because it attempts to validate evil action. Counteracting the assumption of the Church, Milton transforms his characters, predominantly that of Satan, into heroic and sympathetic figures that are at the same time separate from and a part of mankind. As Milton states in the opening of *Paradise Lost*, his mission is to “justify the ways of God to men” so that the reader of his poems

can comprehend morality and Christian duty through two of the most prominent happenings in existence, specifically the fall of man and the temptations of Jesus.

After experiencing the worst punishment by being cast into hell, Satan does not feel defeated or depressed. On the contrary, he speaks inspirationally and evokes his legion to not give up their ambition. As Satan states at the onset of Book 1 of *Paradise Lost*,

All is not lost – the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome? (106-109)

Satan's rebelliousness, his seeking of transcendence, his capacity for action, makes him attractive and endears him to readers. Milton's fictionalization of Satan "has freedom without self-discipline, dynamic energy and driving individualism with no recognition of limits" (Hill 367). Satan is unhindered and not even slightly slowed down by his failure as he continues to encourage others to overcome obstacles and not submit to their feelings of loss and disappointment. By constructing Satan in this way, Milton highlights the admirable qualities of the character and exaggerates unfavorable qualities by emphasizing different aspects in each poem. The Satan of Milton's *Paradise Lost* is presented as a tragic hero whom readers can revere and admire. The Satan of *Paradise Regained*, on the other hand, is entirely devoid of any commendable qualities; the poem draws the reader's attention to the character's evil nature, thus being surpassed by the Son of God in whom true heroism is found. This redefining of heroism casts *Paradise Regained* as a sequel to *Paradise Lost* insofar as Milton can only complete his characterization of Satan through each instance.

One major question Milton suggests to the reader in *Paradise Lost* is whether Satan should be seen as a hero of some sort. The answer to this question can be found in the ways in which Milton sets up this heroic figure. Milton's arrangement remains notorious, for it provokes reactions that arise from religious and moral values, on the one hand, and an obligation to strict literary understanding, on the other. For example, in lines 262-263 of *Paradise Lost's* Book 1 Satan states, "To reign is worth ambition, though in hell: / Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." The reader must make the distinction between the importance of power and the gravity of hell, while also making note of Satan's manipulative rhetoric that attempts to pervert the reader's mind. Milton presents a conflict for the reader, but not a conflict of the poem, as it is not meant for the reader to understand Satan as a hero due to the simple fact that he is still the ultimate embodiment of evil and danger toward humankind. The danger Satan proposes is overwhelmingly treacherous, but very much tangible and present as it is a temptation the reader confronts daily. Still the reader is intensely interested in reading Satan as such due to Milton's crafty fictionalization. Milton's rhetoric "[lulls] the reader into a complacency that renders him vulnerable to the shock" (Fish, Surprised by Sin.101). Whether Satan is truly heroic or not, the reader is tempted to side with Satan by means of Milton's appeal to humanity. In recognizing Satan's personal attributes, the reader becomes just as guilty as Eve as each are equally fallen and defeated.

Through illustrative depictions, Satan is seen as the one who undermines, destroys, and deliberately acts in opposition to morality. Milton challenges these notions in *Paradise Lost* and depicts Satan as the one who has been undermined; the one who was treated unfairly and has been destroyed because, as the narrator of *Paradise Lost* insists, God "created evil," (2.623) shaped the place "where all life dies," (2.624) and allows "all monstrous, all prodigious things"

(2.625) to pervert good. Moreover, Milton depicts God as tyrannical and responsible for evil, while also being hurtful toward Satan. Since Satan has been bullied and forced out of heaven, tension becomes present for the reader as he is now unwillingly feeling sympathetic for the terrorized, unfortunate character. This created tension does not set the reader and Milton's antagonist apart, but joins them together and unpredictably makes God the resistant, unfriendly figure as He is the oppressive one that ill-treated the unlucky Satan.

There is a change, however, in Milton's characterization of Satan from *Paradise Lost* to *Paradise Regained*. *Paradise Regained* offers a logical development from *Paradise Lost* that can be explained by noting the time that has passed for the characters according to theological history, as well as for Milton's personal evolution, and the change in the circumstances Satan must deal with. At first he is a fallen angel that must grapple with his regret and emotion, but is defeated time and time again by oppressive forces. Through the 1950 article "Satan: The Dramatic Role of Evil", Arnold Stein affirms "[Satan's] remorse, pity, tears pay homage to good, but are perverted through the virtue of responsibility" and becomes completely corrupt by the time he meets with Christ in the desert (221). The question of heroism is still a main factor as one grows acclimated to the compassionate Satan of *Paradise Lost*. Satan's earlier rhetoric and physical attraction change from appealing to repulsive. Milton does not depict Satan in the later epic as a fallen angel in a mental state of limbo that longs for answers and toils with emotion. Milton defiantly modifies his poetic creation to be a character that only relies on his evil nature and is willing to do anything to hurt others due to utter hopelessness. Milton understands that he must correct the previous definition of heroism because it was not based on a moral standard, but on the use of calculated manipulation.

Satan thus develops as a character through and between the two epics. An analysis of how this development is portrayed, the relationship between Milton and Biblical texts, as well as Milton's redefining of the heroic figure, shows that these contributing factors work together to alter the character of Satan. As Milton tempts the reader to succumb to Satan's charm in *Paradise Lost* and reckon him as a hero, he realizes his responsibility in forcing his reader to sin with his characters. Satan, accordingly, is a character representing morality and human nature as the reader can learn from Satan's mistakes. Milton realizes he must "educate the reader to an awareness of his position and responsibilities as a fallen man" (Fish, Surprised by Sin.1). He is a character that goes beyond intriguing the reader to signifying the relationship between humanity and the fallen state of mankind. Milton uses Satan as a mirror for the reader to view his own faults and passions, and by doing so places the reader on the same platform as his character.

I. Relationship between *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*

In deciding to write *Paradise Lost*, Milton consciously places himself in the tradition of prior epic writers, such as the ancients Homer and Virgil, and the Medieval and Renaissance poets, Dante and Spenser. By doing this, he raises specific sets of expectations both for himself and for his readers. Formally, Milton's first epic covers many traditional conceits: it begins *in medias res*; it contains invocations to a muse; it concerns the attendance of and interactions between heavenly and earthly beings; it uses conventions such as similes and series of people and places; it contains themes common to epics, such as war, nationalism, empire, and stories of origin; and his main character is a faulted, yet glorified figure, such as the celebrated Achilles. Just as previous epics drew upon issues and culture consistent with the time period in which they were constructed, Milton followed the traditional epic

framework by imposing his own personal ideas and conflicts with England's politics in his writing.

Milton composed *Paradise Lost* from 1658–1664 while he was blind, through sporadic and tedious dictation after his governmental duties in England increased exponentially. Milton's authority grew in the government that he supported, yet had many problems with. "The Fall of man then was a historical event for Milton" with symbolic significance "as an allegory of man's inability to live up to his own standards" primarily in the government and the public (Hill 344). To Milton, the biblical event of man's disobedience was not only something of history, but was constantly recurring through mankind as it repetitively fails the expectations of God and morality of government. For instance, "with the return of Charles, Milton's tower of dreams for England's salvation crumbled to desolate ruins" and any sign of hope Milton once had was lost and trampled on by the naivety of mankind (Wolfe 337). As his frustrations grew and he became more disappointed in the human race, his inspirations to construct *Paradise Lost* became more prominent. Since he saw the direct connection between the English government and the fall of mankind, as I mentioned earlier, Milton was able to adapt the part government and politics to the whole of existence through his writing.

With the uneasiness of living in a world in which he did not find comfort and had an excessive problem with authority, Milton began composing *Paradise Lost* and his tragic hero, Satan. The epic consists of many themes also found in England at the time, namely the censure of ideas; an idealized norm to which all must conform, namely censorship; rebellion; overpowering authority; and the collapse of the human race. As Milton dealt with censorship and problems of individuality in his personal life, Satan deals with these same problems and is

cast out of heaven and eternally punished, thus supporting the idea that Milton's personal life is echoed through his fictional character. The similarities between Satan and Milton become exaggerated through analyzing the relationship between England during the seventeenth century and the plot of *Paradise Lost* and the poem becomes consistent with the work of Dante as Dante places key political figures of his time in the circles of hell in his *The Divine Comedy*, Milton irrefutably compares the relationship between heaven, hell, and earth, along with the characters within, to the moral and immoral figures present in England, namely God to King Charles and Satan to the Puritan rebels.

Milton trailed *Paradise Lost* with his latter epic, *Paradise Regained*, but the term "sequel" does not correspond straightforwardly to the political standpoint Milton was so steadfast in confronting in the earlier epic. Identifying the latter epic as a sequel is entirely contingent upon the character of Satan. "The wilderness in which the action of *Paradise Regained* takes place recalls that which Adam and Eve entered at the end of *Paradise Lost*," and, furthermore, the circumstances in the two poems are consecutive and tie the temptation of Adam and Eve successively to the temptation of Jesus, and by doing so Milton shows the progressive degeneration of Satan (Hill 414). While "both poems are fundamentally concerned with education: moral, political, and spiritual" and "contain adumbrations of the Apocalypse, foreshadowed as some though by the Great Plague and Great Fire," *Paradise Regained* offers answers to the immoral temptations set forth in *Paradise Lost* (Lewalski 493). The earlier epic challenged and questioned heroism, while the latter establishes and explicates the truth of the matter.

The reader of *Paradise Lost* cannot determine the difference between complete good and corrupt evil or God and Satan through Milton's rhetoric and appealing depictions because, either consciously or unconsciously, the reader sides with evil. *Paradise Regained* allows Milton to transform Satan into the entity that "tempts the Son of God with aims and objectives which had formerly appeared tempting to Milton" (Hill 343). Through the heroic character of Satan and the tyranny of God, the reader finds a gray area in determining moral life and immoral life in *Paradise Lost*. Contrarily, *Paradise Regained* offers no such gray area. As Satan changes from an attractive leader to a repulsive tempter, "Jesus [becomes] a model of unflinching resistance to and forthright denunciation of all versions of the sinful or disordered life, and all the faulty and false models of church and state" that I will later further explicate (Lewalski 493). Milton's strong political views are still present insofar as good and evil, morality and immorality are pinned against each other to mirror the communal lives of mankind.

Milton proposes many questions to the reader of *Paradise Lost*, such as "Is Satan justified in his anger and resentment toward God?," "Should Satan suffer such a harsh punishment as the inhabitation of hell for eternity?," "Are the ways of God in accordance to private good or public good?," and "Is Satan defensible as the tragic-hero of the poem?". Milton answers these questions in his first epic by strongly supporting Satan as hero of force, leadership, and redemption. Yet, Barbara Lewalski also asserts, in reading *Paradise Regained*, the reader is made aware of his failure in trusting Satan as Milton teaches the reader that "Jesus' moral and intellectual trials [are] higher epic heroism" and "as a political gesture, it allowed him to develop a model of nonviolent yet active and forceful resistance" to

temptation and authority (511). Through prioritizing the close relationship between characters in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* the reader can move out of the mindset of analyzing the poems strictly as political texts, namely the idea that Milton is Satan, and into analyzing the poems as texts that share the purpose of teaching morality. Even though the two works share in their teaching of morality, the two ways of reading Milton's work, that being with a focus on politics and a focus on morality, can co-exist in an interpretation of the texts because they each deal with their own matters, plots, and settings, proving they are distinct works that can also be dealt with separately to better understand the shift in Milton's focus.

II. Milton's Characterization of Satan in *Paradise Lost*

Milton's characterization of Satan in *Paradise Lost* is best exemplified in in Book 4 through Satan's soliloquy in which Satan states,

O thou that, with surpassing glory crowned,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world – at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads – to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere,
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
Warring in heaven against heaven's matchless king;
Ah, wherefore? He deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was

In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! Yet all his good proved ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high,
I sdeigned subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome, still paying, still to owe: . . .
Which way shall I fly Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven . . .
For never can true reconcilment grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep . . .
So farewell hope, and, with hope, farewell fear,
Farewell remorse; all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least
Divided empire with heaven's king I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world, shall know. (32-113)

Prior to Book 4, the reader has only been familiarized with Satan through narration and dialogue that only concentrates on other fallen angels' subjective point of views. More than the direct

correlation between Satan and the various instances in the Bible, Satan must appear “habitually as a man among men” when he is exposed as truthful to win the affection of the reader (Kastor 378). One of the main points of the soliloquy is to sum up the different qualities and feelings of Satan, while contradicting authority because of its flaws. Satan moves through many stages of emotion; not only is he not exposed as solely regretful or simply angry, but also he moves through emotions which showcase his versatility and change. “The danger” and excitement for Milton is that Satan’s “intricacy will engage the reader’s attention and lead him into an error of omission” (Fish, Surprised by Sin.10). Milton is aware that by presenting a soliloquy as such, the reader will be so drawn to the emotions and endearing aspects of Satan that he will omit any negative features of the character. Through this soliloquy Milton establishes his fallen angel as a heroic figure and tempts the reader to believe that Satan is not the horrendous character he might have been familiar with in the past, but is a sympathetic, self-aware leader who will push forth to overcome all odds.

Satan profoundly examines his position in the soliloquy because he is only comfortable expressing his true feelings privately. Until Book 4, Satan has only presented in a company of other demons, thus forcing him to act strong and unchanged. The beginning of the soliloquy examines Satan’s acknowledgement of God’s glory, but it begins to twist and manipulate this lucidity to justify his pursuance of evil action. Satan begins his speech by respectfully addressing God in a way that would seem wholly weak if expressed in the company of his legions. Satan acknowledges God’s “surpassing glory” (32) and admires that “all the stars / Hide their diminished heads” (34-35) in His presence. In complimenting God at the opening of the speech, Satan proves that he is not ignorant of the greatness of the Almighty that he tries to discount publicly. Even though Satan made the decision to rebel, he realizes in his fallen state

that God is praiseworthy and feels remorse as he is “still half in love with the thing he has rejected and compelled to catalogue its attraction” and “so suffused with pathos” (Fish, How Milton Works.49). This lack of ignorance on Satan’s part is commendable because he can be recognized as a character who is cognizant of his superiors and conscious of his mistakes, thus making him not purely evil. “The treatment of Satan is important, therefore, not as a metaphysical construction, not as an instance of curious and fascinating speculation” as depicted in previous texts such as the Bible, “but as a commentary on life, on human frustration and fulfillment” (Frye 25). The character of Satan is not, and I suspect Milton would say should not, be treated as a character who should only intrigue the reader; he must only be presented as a character that can teach the reader a lesson about life. Moreover, Milton does not rely on the preconceived notions of Satan that may focus on the reader’s fascination of Satan’s uncontaminated evil. Instead, Milton relies heavily on Satan’s humanism and approachability due to his frustration with authority and fulfillment of personal desires. The character of Satan in *Paradise Lost* is not devoid of accountability and compassion – emotions mankind is founded upon.

After the reverential address to God, Satan admits his flaws which are all too familiar to the reader. Satan admits all “[God’s] good proved ill in [him],” (48) thus making him “miserable,” (73) and was made subordinate because of his overwhelming amount of “boasting” (85). The reader is familiar with these faults because he, too, is a part of mankind and is vulnerable to the desire to boast, is prone to feeling miserable, and is susceptible to letting others influence him. “Milton recognized that what moved the people in the royalist work” would be “a fictional character with an emotional rhetorical appeal” (Bennett, 441). Milton needed add rhetorical handling to the character’s speech to create a more direct confrontation between reader

and Satan. Moreover, Satan's emotional appeal is so striking that it will sidetrack the reader from what he knows is right in real life. Satan is first presented as courteous and attentive, but these qualities are quickly overthrown when he introduces his hurt and abandonment and states he "hate[s] thy beams / That bring to [his] remembrance from what state / [He] fell" (37-39). Satan's peaceful front quickly turns to anger and hate as he remembers all that he has lost. The omnipotent being and the bright beams of the sun that were first appreciated are now mere reminders of "how glorious [he] once" (39) was "Till pride and worse ambition threw [him] down" (40). Seeing the sun which represents power and prominence, and feeling the warmth of its beams draws Satan's attention, as well as the reader's, to the fact that Satan was once the brightest and most beautiful of God's angels. Although hate and anger are considered negative emotions, Satan's ability to feel sentiment mirrors the nature of the reader. The reader can recognize his own feelings in Satan and draw logical conclusions for Satan's resentment. Milton surpasses the limitations that categorize Satan as an angel apart from humans, and categorizes him instead as a reflection of the human condition. Consequently, this categorization makes the reader more fit to relate to Satan than to divinity as he cannot understand the viewpoint of someone who is not subject to emotion and is able to struggle with issues between right and wrong, such as God and the Son. "The reader cannot, no matter how much he understands, give up his humanity," thus his relationship to Satan is irrefutable (Hyman 497). The Satan of *Paradise Lost* is representative of the human condition as he embodies the same weaknesses and desires of the reader.

Milton advances his characterization of Satan again later in the soliloquy when Satan denounces optimism, anxiety, and repentance. In concluding his address to the sun, Satan decides to expel any expectation of regaining his once admirable position in heaven and actively

condemn all optimism when he states “farewell hope, and, with hope, farewell fear, / Farewell remorse, all good to me is lost” (108-109). Still, what can seem like a moment of hopelessness and despair is actually a time of inspiration and bonding for the reader and Satan. In studying these few lines, it seems to me that they can be taken as a time of ultimate despair for the character when analyzed alone. He is abandoning hope of returning to his peaceful state and no longer longs to pursue goodness that may or may not make up for his sins. Yet, taken in the context of the soliloquy and followed by Satan asserting, “by thee at least / Divided empire with heaven’s king I hold, / By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign,” (110-112) it is clear that Satan denounces these attributes regarded as universal positive qualities in order to establish a new set of standards that are only suitable to him. As Satan deciphers his thoughts and weighs his feelings, he transforms through his stages of admiration, resentment, blame, and declaration of a new future. Satan is somewhat unstable in his emotion as he is not sure if he should ask for contrition or rebel yet again. As a final point he decides that he is not only an inhabitant of hell, but he *is* hell, even stating “myself am hell,” (75) and with that assertion he must condemn all positivity and accept himself as he is. He no longer finds it necessary to try to be something he is not by longing for God’s acceptance and forgiveness. He would rather embrace his sinful nature.

Satan issues a convincing argument by claiming God knew what Satan is capable of doing, yet God still created Satan, therefore the war is His fault and not Satan’s. It would be easy to assume that if someone were creating something with a dangerous future, the creator would not permit the evil to take place. Likewise, since God is all-knowing, He is aware that by creating Satan, the war in heaven will occur and the malicious being will forever disturb existence. Since God is aware of Satan’s future, but permits it to happen, it is God’s fault for

being negligent. Satan cries, “he created what I was / In that bright eminence” (43-44) thus why should Satan “pay him thanks” (47) and “afford him praise” (46) when it is God’s own fault. And further, “all [God’s] good proved ill in [Satan], / And wrought but malice” (48-49) which made Satan believe that “one step higher / Would set [him] highest” (50-51). Satan becomes overconfident and feels that since God loves him enough to make him the brightest angel, he should be permitted to pursue an even more authoritative role. Satan justifiably rebels against God and continues to “attempt to usurp control of all things by regarding godhead as a fragment of itself, as a mere naked power, divorced from love and from goodness” (Frye 26). Satan also takes advantage of God’s mercy and thinks he will not ever be punished for his wrongdoings since all that he is comes from God. Placing the blame on God and proving that Satan could not have known what he was doing exposes ignorance and innocence. Satan has been given the worst punishment that leaves him “So burdensome, still paying, still to owe” (53) which is all because of God’s allowance of his malicious nature and moral failure. Because of Satan’s closeness to the reader, understanding him to be free of blame and tolerating his words allows sympathy and compassion to take over as he bears impossible pain from “wounds of deadly hate” that have “pierced so deep” (99). Satan will never be able to repent fully for what he has done because his wounds have affected him so greatly.

Two of the most important features of Satan’s characterization are his strong leadership and perseverance when he states that he will reign “As man ere long, and this new world, shall know,” (113) both of which are promising attributes to the depiction of his heroism. The entire soliloquy shows a personal and internal debate, and by the end he decides to claim his own territory and push through the hardships, and by doing so, he will perpetually reign. Satan claims that he will rule the underworld and become a prominent force in mankind “As man ere

long, and this new world, shall know” (113). Despite his rejection, he will persist against the odds and prove his prominence. “When alone,” Satan is able to admit “his degeneration, but his sorrow does not stop him from furthering the purposes which brought it on” (Frye 39). Overall, Satan is willing to recognize his impediment, namely pride, but will remain faithful to his ideals and beliefs. Not only does Satan seem sincere, sensitive, and adoring by his vulnerability, but his conviction will make him a strong and admirable leader as the reader can appreciate.

III. The Establishing of Milton’s Tragic Hero

The relationship between the reader and Milton’s boundless antagonist begins at the onset of *Paradise Lost*, which means the character of Satan is established even before the aforementioned soliloquy. The narrator re-counts,

The infernal serpent; he it was whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers (1.34-39)

As the epic begins in *medias res*, the reader first finds himself in hell during a debate among Satan and his legions after the actual war in heaven. First introducing Satan with characteristics mirroring Greco-Roman heroes, such as Achilles and Aeneas, personalizes the reader’s experience as he can relate Satan to past heroes. Greco-Roman heroes have already established a foundation for the focus of heroism; therefore, when presented with Milton’s Satan, it is easy to relate him to native knowledge that aids in the determining of him as a hero. Satan, “Stirred up

with envy and revenge” (1.35) while “aspiring / To set himself in glory above his peers,” (1.38-39) longs for exaltation, success, and fame just as Achilles longed for these assets during The Trojan War and Aeneas during the foundation of Rome.

Only a few lines later Milton describes hell as “A dungeon horrible... / As one great furnace flamed” to make visible only “sights of woe” and “Regions of sorrow” where “peace / And rest can never dwell” (1.61-66). While I find it difficult to establish a clear picture of hell because there is no way to, say, go to hell and come back to earth to report my findings, Milton’s description elaborates what the scene is like by linking it to common understandings, such as a “dungeon,” a “furnace,” and “flame[s]”. Milton also depicts emotions of deep sorrow and suffering that introduces the pitiable and mournful features of the fall. The language bids the reader to identify with Satan and developed sympathy for his banishment to hell. With “our first view of Satan and the impression given, reinforced by a succession of speeches in Book I” the reader can anticipate manipulation and deception along with “enormous endurance, a certain splendid recklessness, [and] remarkable powers of rising to an occasion” (Fish, Surprised by Sin.4). As this is the first instance in which Satan is addressed, Milton seems to sum up the character to catch the attention of the reader and inflict a desire to read onward. The reader becomes entirely sympathetic and finds him cheering for the fallen hero who must now dwell within the most appalling environment.

The appreciation of Satan is undeniable when his physical stature is illustrated. Once being God’s brightest and most beautiful angel, Satan’s beauty is now obstructed, but his size and brightness are not. Before his troops in hell he “[Stands] like a tower” with “his form [that] had not yet lost / All her original brightness” (1.591-592). His attractiveness is no longer found

in innocent beauty, but in physical intimidation and the remembrance of what he once was. Whether it is because of the fear that his presence evokes as he is “above the rest / In shape and gesture” (1.589-590) or because his troops guilelessly lust for his approval, the reader can admit that Satan’s presence is confounding. He is compared to a tower that is proud and ostentatious to which all other beings seem miniscule and insignificant. His massive frame contains “Deep scars of thunder” and “brows / Of dauntless courage” that exemplify the war in heaven and the result of his rebellion. His size, brightness, and battle scars outweigh beauty and he is now exemplified as a hero that has recently overcome the most horrific battle in which his troops fought through as well. The Satan of *Paradise lost* stands for power, revolution, and authority.

In addition to his size, the important feature of Satan here is his brightness. Often compared to the sun in the poem, Satan represents the sun both in its brightness and its fundamental location in the solar system. . Milton’s first representation of Satan in Book 1 of *Paradise Lost* consists both of the comparison between Satan’s stature and a tower, and the comparison between Satan and the eclipsed sun. Consequently, the troops and the audience are introduced to the massive force that is Satan and his ability to shine through the crowd of angels “as when the sun new risen / Looks through the horizontal misty air... / or from behind the moon / In dim eclipse” (1.594-597). Satan distorts the “right analogy: the sun is to the stars as God to the angels,” and “his perverse inference” that he is to the angels as the sun is to the stars “shows his alienations for the divinely created universe” (Samuel 246). In heaven he was the brightest of the angels and worked closely with God, showing that his brightness was something that was not mistakenly given to him, but represented importance, just as the sun is vital to the existence of the other planets. His brightness sustains the fall and in hell Satan is now the center to which his troops revolve around. Even though self-proclaimed, his leadership over his troops is not

questioned or challenged. His force and existence cannot be muted and it is clear that he is a natural born leader. This natural born leadership is also proof that his divinity is still present. His troops recognize that he was once great and while his position in heaven might be lost, his divinity and power remain persistent through the fall.

The dialogue between Satan and his dominions demonstrates how conniving Satan is and explicates Milton's intentions in tempting his reader. Milton was aware that to tempt the reader to fall with Adam and Eve and to succumb to the greatness of Satan, he must construct long manipulative statements of persuasion. Satan must state his claim and prove to his troops and the reader that he is unjustly in an unfortunate perpetual state. Recapitulating the terror of what has happened, Satan states, "till then who knew / The force of those dire arms?" and how could he have known what the outcome of the rebellion would have been since he thought he and his legion had a good chance of overthrowing the great contender (1.93-94). He even states that he "shook God's throne", implying that he moved the immovable (1.105). The comprehension of his argument is implicit as the audience agrees with his reasoning and believe Satan to be greatly powerful because he did something no one else was capable of doing. He then empowers his audiences and fuels their rage by stating, "Farewell, happy fields, / Where joy for ever dwells; hail, horrors, hail, / Infernal world" (1.250-251) and concludes, "War, then, war / Open or understood, must be resolved" (1.661-662). Satan decides to outlaw the happiness the fallen angels once had, and now raise the supremacy of the condemned territory. The war he speaks of is not over and still needs resolution, showing that his punishment was not a conclusion, just an interruption. Milton, through Satan, manipulates his reader to believing Satan did not commit a sinful act, and thus is being mistreated by "arbitrary and incomprehensible" authority (Hill 348). He then shows his character as an individual who will not yield to authority simply

because it rules. Authority means nothing to Satan as long as he is not the one in charge. Instead, Satan will abandon what is causing him pain, continue to fight for what he believes in, and will endlessly confront his opposition.

The war in heaven has ended, but unresolved to the fallen angels as they want to rebel yet again and overpower good. Milton, through Satan, pulls the reader in and gains sympathy, understanding, wonder, and optimism such that the reader and the fallen angels are now impressed with what Satan has concocted and they now want to rally together to fight back against God. Satan operates by stating,

Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat (390-394)

Because the argument is methodically premeditated and practical, it is evident that Satan does not doubt his plan. He places the debate over the future of the fallen angels in their own hands by asking them if they resolved the long debate that is theirs, not his. At the same time, Satan implies what their resolution should be by means of stating they should be lifted up to find their prior home. Reader and legion alike are blinded by his words (as they are inspiring and encouraging of a hopeful future toward Satan's audience). Contrastingly, his logical speech is not to win over the troops, but to make them think that they have a say in the matter. By stating his claims and asking the opinion of some of the participants – Moloch, Thammuz, Dagon, Rimmon, and Beelzebub – it seems that he genuinely cares about their opinions and wants to do

what is best for them as a group. But since Satan knows he is capable of manipulating them, his performance is only a façade. Satan's confident disguise, his overwhelming physical stature, and his unhindered brightness contribute to Milton's characterization. Satan is not a flat character that can be explained or understood based on one or two traits. Rather, he must be analyzed through his many psychological, emotional, and influential levels.

IV. Milton's Characterization of Satan in *Paradise Regained*

The Satan of *Paradise Regained* is constructed by Milton in a less sympathetic manner than he is in his earlier poem. Satan, in speaking to the Son of God, refutes the earlier sentiment found within his soliloquy in Book 4 of *Paradise Lost*, and proves to be devoid of emotion. Satan is no longer apologetic for his rebellion, nor does he respect the position of God which is best exemplified in Book 1 when Satan introduces himself:

Tis true, I am that spirit unfortunate
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep –
Yet to that hideous place not so confined
By rigour unconniving but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the air; nor from the heaven of heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came, among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth (357-370)

After growing accustomed to the Satan of *Paradise Lost*, the reader forms an understanding about Satan's motives that was not present in *Paradise Lost*. Milton teaches the reader the faults of his past hero and that he should not be envied, but disgusted. Unlike his tempting of the reader to fall for the attractiveness of Satan in his earlier epic, Milton throws away his rhetorical tricks and decides to teach the reader of both his own and Satan's mistakes. Although the reader at one time thought the outcome of Milton's epics should counter the outcomes of the Bible and prove Satan to be victorious in one way or another, the Satan that is now observed in *Paradise Regained* is not an entity that should triumph.

The most appealing quality of Satan in *Paradise Lost* is the ability of the reader to relate to him. Milton presents Satan in the earlier epic to be courteous, understanding, and human. These attributes fortify Milton's creation of Satan as tragic hero. Conscious of his manipulation of the reader, Milton envisions his Satan of *Paradise Regained* to contradict his earlier sentiments and show the reader Satan's truly corrupt nature. The new Satan is characterized best in the Book 1 of *Paradise Regained* through his conversation with the Son. I use the term "new" because the Satan of the latter epic makes no contribution to the foundation of the tragic hero in the first epic. If analyzed separately, the presentations of Satan are very different. For instance, the Satan in *Paradise Lost* evokes sympathy and familiarity, while the Satan of *Paradise Regained* evokes resentment and fear. Unlike his soliloquy in which he alternates back and forth between not knowing if he is entirely corrupt or redeemable, in the dialogue between Satan and the Son, Satan establishes a sense of individuality and assertion. He addresses the Son by stating, "Tis true, I am that spirit unfortunate.../ who was driven / With [the other fallen angels] from bliss to the bottomless deep" (358-361). Unlike Satan's earlier questioning in *Paradise*

Lost, “Which way shall I fly / Infinite wrath and infinite despair?,” (4.73-74) Satan makes clear declarations; he is certainly the one who has proved to be fallen and been beaten by God; he is undoubtedly the one who rebelled against the Almighty and is now held prisoner in hell. This declaration does not harbor remorse or sentiment. Instead, Satan’s statements no longer show awareness of his troubles, but only an awareness of his forfeiture.

The fraternity established between the reader and Satan was founded in the ability for Satan to express emotion in *Paradise Lost*. Because Satan speaks in such a manipulative manner, Satan says enough for the audience to infer emotion without strictly stating how he feels. For instance, by Satan saying in *Paradise Lost* “so much the stronger proved / He with his thunder: and till then who knew / The force of those dire arms,” (1.92-94) the audience can deduce that Satan did not know what he was up against in trying to overthrow God and since he was unaware, he could not have knowingly understood God’s greatness. Milton allows the reader to visualize and analyze the text and take from it what he may. The outpour of emotion from the character is what pulls the reader in and justifies Satan as tragic. Contrarily, the inference of emotion is removed in *Paradise Regained* and now that the reader has “[given] Satan his due,” he “can understand the nature of his evil” that is devoid of emotion (Stein 221). Satan now chooses to simply state his anger; he “enjoy[s] / Large liberty” (1.364-365); he “contemplate[s] and admire[s]” (1.380); and “envy... excites [him]” (1.397) which makes his sentiment insincere. The reader no longer has to sympathize or empathize to relate to and understand their beloved hero. The close bond that was formed through Satan’s earlier presentation is now lost as the reader has learned to stray from their admiration for the character to stay out of danger. Milton has re-built Satan to leave behind the emotional appeal. By just stating his emotion, no reciprocity is brought about, showing Satan to be insensitive and careless.

As aforementioned through the section in which I spoke of Satan's manipulation of his legion, he cared immensely about how others viewed him. He wanted to seem humble and respectful, even though he was not. Later, in *Paradise Regained*, his interest in making others fall for him is gone, as well. He does not have to win anyone over because he has become completely corrupt and is no longer wavering between concerns regarding his burden.

Another discrepancy from *Paradise Lost* is Milton's Satan of *Paradise Regained* does not rely on his physical nature. The Satan of the former is described as having "eyes / That sparkling blazed" (I, 193-194) and is of "monstrous size" (1.196). He has "expanded wings" (1.225) that are strong enough to carry his "mighty stature" (1.222). Milton reverts back to the simplicity of Satan in the latter epic by not building him up to be the figure of strength and colossal size that was once admired and feared. Satan has "lost / Much lustre to [his] native brightness" (1.377-378). Satan is mindful of his physical change, but does not rely on his physical intimidation any longer. The new battle Satan faces is not one of physical strength like the war in heaven, but it is of mental strength as he is faced with a new hero that will not succumb to worldly temptation. Milton's new Satan "applies his trained way of thinking to the problems facing a hero whose kingdom... must be a kingdom of the mind" (Stein 94). This new depiction of Satan confirms that Milton does not want the reader to be blinded by Satan's physical representation. Milton, in the previously mentioned lines, draws attention to Satan at one time relying too much on his physical appearance and now he must rely solely on his ability to persuade.

As Satan denounces God's power in *Paradise Regained*, he also deprecates the authority of God's Son:

Resembling thy great father: he seeks glory,

And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; nor content in heaven,
By all his angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad (3.110-114)

As he blasphemes against the authority of God, Satan attempts to justify God's objective as glory, no matter who it comes from, which is primarily regarded as a sin. The Son of God is depicted as God's right hand man. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and supreme just as his Father. God creates His Son to restore the innocence of mankind, but Satan mistakes this creation to be less than omnipotent. Satan in a conniving mode denounces the Son by claiming that Satan too "came, among the sons of God" (1.368) when God "gave up into [his] hands Uzzean Job" (1.369). In the New Testament Job is tested when God removes His protection to prove to Satan that Job will not curse his faith. Satan expects Job to turn against God when Satan removes Job's wealth, family, and physical well-being. Instead, Job seeks God's help and submits to His will which leads to the restoration of a better life for Job. Satan omits his wrongdoing in the matter and instead qualifies himself as the one responsible for Job's faithful action since if it were not for Satan, Job would not have proved his loyalty. This instance is strained because it justifies his origin as equal to God's own Son. Satan's confidence is less appealing as his faults are easier to point out and he does not work as hard in his speech to manipulate the audience. It becomes clear that Satan is boasting and fabricating the truth as an attempt to tempt the Son. Satan seems to have given up and does not care to wily tempt, but would rather bombard with information to support his supposed superiority to the Son. All the strategies Satan used to execute, calculated attacks, and preying on the weak, are abandoned. The Satan of

Milton's later epic forsakes effort and seems as though he does not care about the outcome of his actions because there is no significance to his existence.

V. The Poems and the Bible

Both of Milton's epics attempt and succeed in reworking stories within the Bible. This reworking is crucial to the understanding of Milton's Satan because most, if not all, of Milton's alterations focus primarily on Satan's role in biblical history. While the Bible seems to present Satan as a more random force of evil, Milton singles him out as the principal agent in each grand affair. In addition, this reworking is necessary in understanding Milton's Satan as it shows the growth and the importance of Satan in Milton's account of the fall of man and the temptations of Jesus. *Paradise Lost* summons specific accounts of the Bible to not only support the credit of Milton's epic, but to directly interweave it with Biblical history, just as *Paradise Regained* does the same. Milton does this to show the stories of the Bible as relevant and intricate. By expanding the account of the fall of man, Milton takes the writings of the Bible and explicates them further by adding dialogue, emotion, and reason. Milton relates his work to the Bible in such a way that his reader is able to share in the characters' experiences and understand the celestial affairs, such as the war in heaven and the fall of man, to bring reality and rationalization to the story. Most significantly, Satan is presented not as a random force of evil, but as a key figure in the downfall and redemption of mankind which is Milton's main purpose.

Genesis 3 begins by stating "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made". This report is quickly followed by the conversation between Eve and the serpent without any explication to why or how the serpent is the vehicle for evil temptation. The choosing of the serpent for the vehicle of temptation creates images for the

reader to relate the snake to Satan himself, more than only the abstract idea of evil. The reader associates the slithering, sly motion of the serpent with the cunning and scheming attributes of the tempter of mankind. As Genesis is the first book of the Bible and the first account of Judeo-Christian history, there is not much before this event that leads to the fall of man with no justification, no thought process, no reasoning, and no individualization. Genesis simply states the serpent is present and moves quickly to Eve's temptation. Satan the individual is not present.

Unlike Genesis, Milton unfolds the development of Satan as the serpent, the advancement into Adam and Eve's dispute over venturing into the garden alone, the lengthy and detailed conversation between Eve and the serpent, and the emotional struggle of Adam after his wife betrays the Lord. Through the books of *Paradise Lost*, Milton builds the character of Satan to be offended, angry, ambitious, and favorable. Hence, by Book 9 the reader has an established foundation of Milton's character. Furthermore, the choosing of the serpent has great importance and weight for the temptation that follows:

Thus the orb he roamed
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Considered every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him, after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,

As from his wit and native subtlety

Proceeding which in other beasts observed... (9.82-94)

This calculating effort suggests “like everything else in the universe, the serpent has his appointed place in the divine order, and the place is good” although used to carry out evil as “Satan views the universe from a distorted angle and... creates... uses that are accidental to the essence of the thing” (Fish, Surprised by Sin.153). This careful selection of the serpent, further reiterates Satan’s evil manipulation as he perverts something as simple and innocent as an animal in Paradise, and tarnishes the animal’s reputation and symbolic inferences. Milton recounts Satan roaming “With narrow search, and with inspection deep / Consider[ing] every creature, which of all / Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found / The serpent subtlest beast of all the field” (9.82-86). Milton’s reader is given a descriptive narration to the choosing of the serpent by Satan himself. A mental picture can be formed concerning the disturbed fallen angel roaming the earth to find a vessel he can use to transfigure himself to overcome God’s wrath. Not only does Milton’s dramatization emphasize free will insofar as Satan is able to choose his method, but it introduces the character of Satan into a calculating being that is far more than just a fleeting serpent in the garden by means of personalizing the character.

Milton subtracts little from Genesis, but adds and modifies a great deal. Most importantly Milton adds Satan to the Biblical version in which he is not present as noted earlier. “Satan” is used many times in the Bible, namely in the book of Job, the Gospels, and The Book of Revelation. Since the name “Satan” is predominantly found in the New Testament, Milton brings Christian faith to the Hebrew account of the fall of man. Even though the Old Testament does not refer directly to Satan, The Book of Revelation affirms the relation in two places: first

in Rev. 12:9 – “The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” – secondly in Rev. 20:2 – “[The angel] seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan,... and threw him into the pit... so that he would deceive the nations no more”. The quoted passages from the New Testament use the specific title “Satan” and attach the name to the serpent and, additionally, deceiver of mankind. Personifying the serpent and fictionalizing Satan marks the accounts as universal. Furthermore, evil and divinity are not some abstract ideas through Milton’s work; they become concise, realistic, attainable notions. Milton is able to tie together *Paradise Lost* with the Judeo-Christian faith that he was widely accustomed to which also supports his characterization of Satan. The reader is able to find common ground in Milton’s approach to Genesis 3 and use his text to understand the story and its origin more in depth. Unlike the impact of the Bible’s account that is simplistic, Milton offers a detailed version that justifies not only the ways of God, but the vulnerability of human error. It is now not just a serpent that perverts Eve that can allude to the presence of Satan, but is a fallen, beloved angel of God with whom the reader can sympathize and understand as an intricate character while noticing his changes and degradation. There is more to Milton’s Satan than unadulterated evil and with his creative literary technique, Milton makes the reader fall with Eve.

Furthermore, Milton's *Paradise Regained* is a short epic that is loosely based on chapter four of Luke's gospel in the New Testament. In addition, it is a work that is filled with typology and various examples of parody that Milton utilizes to reveal how Satan tries to imitate and manipulate Christ. Milton’s objective in the second epic is to “tell of deeds / Above heroic, though in secret done” (1.14-15). In other words, Milton must transcend the previous depiction

of his tragic hero and characterize Satan according to his fallen, anti-heroic mode which is vastly different from the Satan of the Bible.

The Biblical account of the temptations of Jesus takes place in one short narration. Luke 4 recites that Jesus, returning “from the Jordan” and “led by the Spirit in the wilderness,” is confronted by the devil who asks three things of Jesus; first the devil states, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread”; second, “To you I will give [the glory of all the kingdoms] and all this authority... If you, then, will worship me”; and finally, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from [the pinnacle of the temple]” and God should “command his angels concerning you, to protect you”. The Son never gives into temptation and finalizes his denial by saying, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test’”. The chapter itself ends by stating, “When the devil had finished every test, he departed from [Jesus] until an opportune time”. Luke only narrates the story’s plot without incorporating emotion and without individualizing the characters according to hero or anti-hero standards.

Milton’s account of the temptation of Jesus is quite different from the version of Luke in many ways. Firstly, Milton chronologically relates Satan’s temptation of Christ to his temptation of Eve in Paradise. Because there are many stories told in the Bible, it seems as though a great deal of time has passed between Genesis and the Gospels. When Satan states,

well he know

How many ages, as the years of men,

This universe we have possessed, and ruled

In manner at our will the affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head (1.47-55)

Milton shows that these two sets of temptations happen in direct correlation to one another. Secondly, the discussion between Satan and the Son is far more intricate and argumentative. Satan asks Jesus, “How hath thou hunger then... / Tell me, if food were now before thee set, / Wouldst thou not eat?” to which Jesus replies, “Thereafter as I like / The giver” (2.319-322). Satan then asks, “Why would that / Cause thy refusal?... Hast thou not right to all created things?” (2.322-344). The simple question and answer found within Luke 4 is transformed into intricate dialogue consisting of detailed interrogations and responses. The tempter argues and battles the Son of God, not succumbing to the quick denial that was thrown back at him. Thirdly, Jesus is far more distinct and exceptional in *Paradise Regained*. The Biblical account of Jesus characterizes him as humble and meek. Milton drew from Jesus’ original humility, but turned the scene of temptation into a heroic battle. The Son of God is described as “unmoved” (4.109) as he responds to the attacks made against him by stating, “this grandeur and majestic show / Of luxury... / [does] allure mine eye / Much less my mind” (4.110-113). The Son stands firm, also avowing “Means there shall be to this, but what the means / Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell,” and does not speak in such a modest tone that is found in Luke. Milton’s Son of God is confident and assertive. The Son does not simply allude to his

faith and authority, but asserts his position and is shown to be more frighteningly powerful.

Even though there are vast differences with Satan as well, the character contrasted between the two accounts does share strong similarities which are simplicity and indifference.

VI. Redefining “Hero” in *Paradise Regained*

Satan’s heroism in *Paradise Lost* is founded in his ability to stand as a strong leader, along with his physical opulence, heightened emotion, tragic downfall, and his ambitious endurance. With all of these qualities that leave any reader feeling like he too can be like Satan, Milton achieves his goal of making Satan his most appealing character. Still, there is a dire problem in people longing to be like the devious tempter of mankind as Milton has inflicted guilt and worry among his reader. In realizing this problem, Milton projects true heroism through an unanticipated hero whom inhabits the body of a man, does not react to emotion, is always obedient to authority, or as Stanley Fish claims in Surprised by Sin, shows portrays “faith, discipline, and obedience” (159). In Book 1 of *Paradise Regained* God the Father asserts, Jesus,

Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate’er [Satan’s] cruel malice could invent. (148-149)

And further,

His weakness shall o’ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
That all the angels and ethereal powers –
They now, and men hereafter – may discern
From what consummate virtue I have chose

This perfect man, by merit called my son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men. (159-167)

The Son of God is the polar opposite of Milton's first heroic character as he must sensibly reject temptations that do not even appeal to him in order to teach the reader of moral heroism. The Son's responsibility is far greater than that of Satan as the Son must achieve a goal for the good of all men, while Satan is only responsible and concerned with himself. Steven Goldsmith suggests Milton now inflicts notions of the superiority of the Son who "consistently sees through [evil] temptation and manifests throughout the epic his awareness that the disruption between name and thing common to the fallen word belongs to Satan's influence, not God's" (130). In *Paradise Regained* Milton sets out to correct the idea of heroism that he strongly forced upon the reader in the previous epic to prove that even though Satan has admirable qualities, he is still all that is evil.

Milton's new hero is distinct in his Christian duty and faithful obedience. Through the two poems, "Satan... is the antithesis of Christian heroism, and a large part of [Milton's works] is devoted to distinguishing between the two [heroes] and showing the superiority of the latter" (Fish, Surprised by Sin.162). Although Milton's battle with religion began at an early age, his faith and admiration for morality is carefully depicted through *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. The victory of Jesus the Messiah is preordained by God himself who states "His weakness shall overcome Satanic strength" (1.161) while His angels sing "Victory and triumph to the Son of God, / Now entering his great duel, not of arms, / But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!" (1.173-175). Not only does Milton tell the reader that the Son of God will overcome the temptations, but he undermines the presupposed idea of heroism. Satan antagonized his

adversaries with tools of calculated seduction and patronizing manipulation. *Paradise Regained* “is a dramatic definition of ‘heroic knowledge,’ not of heroic rejection” and the contest between Satan and the Son is “preparation for acting transcendence in the world” by highlighting “intellectual and moral discipline” (Stein 17). Milton’s new hero will not have arms of strength, nor will he conquer with physical force, but only with mental authority. This mental victory is also spiritual as “Christ’s victory over Satan is a victory for the unseen kingdom of heaven over the kingdoms of this world” (Hyman 496). Because Satan has already lost his battle with the kingdom of heaven, he can only fight within the world and will never reach the location of divinity. Hence, when Christ succeeds in the battle with Satan because of his closeness to spirituality, his conquest is transcendent because it does not rely on any form of manipulation, physical force, or unfair advantage, but on pure goodness.

This new hero is a hero of the mind as “the importance and effectiveness of physical action... no longer holds” (Fish, Surprised by Sin, 181). During the introduction of Jesus as the new hero, he exclaims, “When I was a yet a child, no childish play / To me was pleasing; all my mind was set / Serious to learn and know, and thence to do, / What might be public good” (1.201-204). This confident and self-aware mentality did not take part in trivial games, nor did he take part in pastimes that were aesthetically or joyfully pleasing. At a young age he claims he knew that it was his duty to learn all that he could to make his mind strong enough to then take action and spread the word of God. The desire to do what is “publically good” is one that Satan never considers. Always concerned with his own advancement and desires, Satan only does what will harm others; never what is moral and helpful to others. Jesus on the other hand longs to do what is good for all people and entities. Jesus thinks himself “born to promote all truth / All righteous things,” (1.205-206) while Satan’s tragic heroism only proves he was born to create

destruction and pains of regret. “The perfection of [the Christian hero’s] faith, of his willingness to serve God no matter what service may mean, makes it possible for him to meet unanticipated complications without being demoralized by them” (Fish, Surprised by Sin, 189). The Son may endure a struggle and may face turmoil, but his anguish is only temporary because his perpetual trust in divinity will overcome all evil. The heroic Son of God dedicates his existence both on earth and in heaven to promoting truth, while all of his efforts are put into saving mankind from overwhelming evil, all of which are deeds that extend far beyond his own personal gain. After growing accustomed to the attractive presentations of Satan and believing all that he has is desirable, the reader must undermine Satan and change his perspective to fit Milton’s new definition of heroism. The reader must re-learn what is right through Milton’s correction of the heroic ideal.

Milton continues his correction of heroism by alluding to the flaws of Satan in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. “In juxtaposing Messiah and Satan as contrasting exemplars of true and false heroism, Milton [modifies] the conventional epic machinery, but deepened its moral significance” (Steadman 38). The juxtaposition is not proposed simply to give the reader two archetypes to admire, but to bring out true crises of morality diverted by one and adopted by the other which is Milton’s ultimate objective. Satan who relies on terrorization and force in *Paradise Lost* “rears from off the pool / His mighty stature” (1.220-221) when surrounded by “the companions of his fall” (1.76) while he boasts of his “throne of royal state” (2.1). Milton depicts Satan as eye-catching and dramatic. Milton’s Satan thrives off his power over his dominions. Contrarily, in *Paradise Regained* Jesus is “admired by all,” but “this not all / To which [his] spirit aspired” (1.214-215). Milton’s epic hero does not care to be admired because he as “victorious deeds / Flamed in [his] heart” and “heroic acts” that he must prioritize in the

name of morality (1.215-216). In *Paradise Regained* Milton refers back to his earlier epic by calling out the reader and telling him that what he previously understood to be heroic, namely the physical power and resentment of Satan, was not sympathetic, but selfish. Although the Son of God may seem intimidating because he is purely divine, Milton relates him to the reader by showing that he commits good acts merely because it is the right thing to do. The new hero does not have ulterior motives or an overflow of emotion, but acts accordingly.

Milton's new hero should be respected as divinity, but should be admired because he does not bring down morality and attempt to justify evil. As Aristotle points out in chapter fifteen of the *Poetics*, "characters should be good", and additionally heroes should be good. Good can be understood to mean many different things, such as that which promotes morality, happiness, and a universal safety. Therefore, in analyzing Milton's first hero, Satan, one can deduct that he is not encouraging morality, he never achieves happiness for himself or others, and he is not acting with universal welfare in mind. Jesus, Milton's new hero, contrarily acts according to the good that Aristotle believes should be depicted in literature for readers to learn how to live their own lives. More specifically, Milton's new hero shows that "there is only one good reason for positively valuing created things: as either a manifestation of the creator's goodness and glory or as part of a response to the creator's good" which ties in the main theme of Christianity (Fish, How Milton Works.55). As Satan was compared to the sun earlier because of his brightness and closeness to God, Milton affirms through the Son that "a false ruler... can be compared to a sun that fails to shine with the light given it," just as Satan failed his position in heaven, "but a true ruler is genuinely comparable to the shining sun only if he does not claim absolute power" (Bennett 444). Christ never has to claim his authority or hurt those that are below him; his authority is found in his confidence and ability to rule without ruling.

Conclusion

Past studies of Milton's Satan have focused primarily on one of Satan's presentations and have lacked a focus on the relationship between the Satan of *Paradise Lost* and the Satan of *Paradise Regained*. A lot of research has focused on one or the other, or even both, but separately and with no direct correlation. Even though the two poems can stand apart holistically from one another and relate different tales, to analyze Milton's Satan one must observe the foundation of the character in the earlier, his transformation between, and the conclusive representation in the later. Satan is not a fixed character; his behavior and thoughts transform during and because of his experiences. Satan before the fall was confident, eager, and licentious. After being thrown out of hell, Satan becomes remorseful, indignant, and assertive. Finally, during his ambitious attempt to seduce the Son of God, Satan is ambivalent and indifferent. Although his hope for regaining his seat in heaven is abandoned, a new hope arises, allowing him to look forward to destructing God's future plans. Each of these characteristics of Satan from *Paradise Lost* to *Paradise Regained* is contingent upon one another to gain a firm foundation of Milton's intentions in his fictionalization.

To illustrate the co-dependency of Satan on the two texts, researchers should ask and answer two leading questions: How can Satan be understood through *Paradise Lost* without *Paradise Regained*? And, how can Satan be criticized through the latter epic, if the first was non-existent? To answer the first question, if Satan is only analyzed through Milton's first epic, the tragic hero is the conclusive emphasis. Milton builds Satan to relate to the reader which is a bond that he carries through the poem. Satan's plan to destroy mankind is realized through his tempting of Eve, thus the hero the reader fell in love with is triumphant. Without the addition of

Paradise Regained, the reader will always be left with admiration for Milton's tragic hero, even though one may understand that it is a perverse fascination. The second question poses the opposite reaction. Since in the latter epic Satan does not express communal qualities or traits, readers cannot fully comprehend the significance of Milton's earlier carefully constructed hero. Without the former narration, the effect of Satan is close to the Biblical account of the temptations in the desert because there is no explanation or common ground dramatized. Here Satan is merely a vehicle for evil and the motivation inflicted from his expulsion from heaven is lost. If the first epic did not exist, the Satan of *Paradise Regained* would never have appealed to Milton's reader and would not have gained such a complicated, intricate, and necessary presence. *Paradise Regained* needs *Paradise Lost*, and vice versa, moreover to showcase Milton's carefully constructed characterization, plot, and epic proportion.

The dependency of the two works is contingent upon the character of Satan, and furthermore expresses Milton's adjustment to his teachings. In writing *Paradise Lost* Milton was able to construct a character that manipulated the reader just as Satan manipulated mankind. This process presented a situation that causes a thematic problem for the reader. Even though he should be able to deduce that admiring Satan is illogical and immoral, due to Milton's poetic technique to sway the reader, it becomes difficult to completely abandon the fallen angel. Thus, in realizing this problem, Milton was able to adapt another biblical story, the temptations of Jesus, to a fictionalization that could conclude his theme of morality. In transferring Satan from his first epic to his latter, Milton was able to correct the notion of heroism. Heroism, as defined through *Paradise Lost*, is open-ended for a subjective response from the reader. Contrarily, heroism through *Paradise Regained* shows certainty and a conclusive pronouncement.

Satan embodies the politics and the personal life of Milton, which are both experienced across time periods and relevant to the universal ethics of humanity. Additionally, the personal experiences of Milton aided in the construction of his epics as they supplied motivation and models for him to expand upon in his writing. Milton is understood as a poet-prophet who places himself “with, or above, Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, Tasso, and the rest,” who undertook a “strenuous project of educating readers in the virtues, values, and attitudes that make people worthy of liberty” (Lewalski 442). Milton adapts his knowledge of great poets to his own personal conflicts, and then translates his adaptation to writing that is meant to teach his reader of higher order issues. Moreover, the task of writing the two poems was not merely to express talent or entertainment, but to tell a tale that is the foundation of human existence and what should be understood by these tales. The private aspect of the work is Milton’s ability to impose the particulars of his own life on something very public and universal. Into his epics “Milton poured all that he had learned, experienced, desired, and imagined about life, love artistic creativity, theology, work, history, and politics” (Lewalski 442). Milton was able to express his innermost problems with the government, morality, social norms, and theology by masking the issues with literary fiction.

The height of Satan’s reign among Milton’s characters is in his eye-catching appeal resolved “between genuine and counterfeit virtue, true and false standards of praise” (Steadman 24). Satan stands out as Milton’s central figure as he is the perfect archetype for the portrayal of morality. Milton re-affirms whatever ethics and emotion Satan does possess in order to provoke the reader, while he also juxtaposes Satan’s corruption in order for the reader to deduce that morality is the opposite of Satan’s actions. Stanley Fish suggests in his 1967 work Surprised by Sin, “from the beginning of the poem, the reader is aware that certain moral distinctions are

being conveyed to him by an unconventional kind of word play” (94). At the onset, the reader of Milton’s epics is aware that he is being presented with a lesson on morality because of the presentation of Satan and God, or more specifically good and evil. Still, while the reader becomes guilty through the rhetorical strategies of Milton and, through Milton, Satan, he becomes entirely responsible for his own actions and reactions because of this awareness as he learns he must “stand his ground or... retreat” (206). Milton, being a poet-prophet, is also a teacher who uses Satan as the vehicle for his lessons. Both heroes, Satan and the Son, are educators as the “contrast between the busy energy of Milton’s [tempter]... as [he] move[s] here and there pointing out many things, and the stillness of the Miltonic hero, for whom movement.... is a temptation” (Fish, How Milton Works, 33). Each character is central to Milton’s lesson on morality, but Satan steals the most essential role by means of his humanistic qualities through his soliloquy, sympathetic nature, individualism in a large crowd of fallen angels, and opposition that fuels his plans for his future. Furthermore, Satan is not shown as a primary character in Milton’s work, but as the central figure around which all lessons and importance revolves.

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