

**PARADISE LOST AND THE FALL FROM GRACE: A CLOSER  
LOOK AT THE REDEMPTION POETRY OF THE SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURY**

**USH K**

Research Scholar

M.Phil English

Bharath Institute Of Higher Education And Research

Mail Id: [ushababu1981@gmail.com](mailto:ushababu1981@gmail.com)

Guide Name: **Dr. Rekha**

Assistant Professor, Department Of English

Bharath Institute Of Higher Education And Research

**Address for Correspondence**

**USH K**

Research Scholar

M.Phil English

Bharath Institute Of Higher Education And Research

Mail Id: [ushababu1981@gmail.com](mailto:ushababu1981@gmail.com)

Guide Name: **Dr. Rekha**

Assistant Professor, Department Of English

Bharath Institute Of Higher Education And Research

**ABSTRACT**

Paradise Lost is the most theological of all English poems. The Bible is the fountain head of this epic which deals with Man's disobedience, his loss of paradise, and the prime cause of his fall constituting the doctrine known as the Fall of Man. The subject of this epic —the Fall of Man—is directly drawn from the Bible. The narrative of the creation of Adam and Eve, their prelapsarian life in Paradise, Satan's enticement of the mother of mankind, Eve's succumbing to the temptation of Satan and her eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, her sharing the fruit with Adam, and their final expulsion from the plain of Paradise —find expression in the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. Milton takes up this narrative and gives a new shape to it in the

*Research Paper*

form of an epic poem. But the point of paramount importance here is that Milton goes beyond the Biblical texts and gives an expanded version of the narrative in Paradise Lost. In many important aspects, the epic does not conform to the Biblical positions. This present research has endeavored to survey how far Milton has maintained his loyalty to the Bible in the process of composing the epic and how far his appropriated Biblical contents are authentic or accurate.

**INTRODUCTION****God, Creation, and The Fall of Man**

*“For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens: God himself that formed the earth and made it: he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited, I am the Lord: and there is none else.”*

— *(The Holy Bible. Book of Isaiah. 45. 18)*

God created the whole Universe with sublime purposes. The mysteries of His Creation are beyond the knowledge and comprehension of human beings. He designed the world and placed Man in it for no vain purposes. Since Man, having attained the high favour of God, is inhabiting the earth, he must comprehend the grounds of his existence on the earth to make a thorough sense of life, and at the sametime, the ways of God to him, which will not only make him intellectually successful but also committed to his sole functions. Dr. Bilal Philips observes that “The variety and complexity of the intricate systems which constitute the fabric of both the human beings and the world in which they exist indicate that there must have been a SupremeBeing who created them” (3). Religious scriptures of major Abrahamic faiths offer detailed thread of discourse on the Creation, dwelling upon the purposes virtually working behind it. Adnan Oktar, a Turkish Scholar, rightly observes that:

The Holy Bible testifies thus: “For consequently saith the Lord that created the heavens: God himself that formed the earth and made it: he hath hooked up it, he created it not in useless, he fashioned it to be inhabited, i am the Lord: and there is none else” (Isa. 45. 18). This verse glaringly broadcasts that God created the heavens and the earth now not invain, but he shaped it “to be inhabited”. To be greater

*Research Paper*

particular, God had a few reasonable functions while growing the sector. The e book of Isaiah similarly mentions that: “but now for this reason says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who shaped you, O Israel: Do now not fear, for i've redeemed you; i've referred to as you by using name, you're mine” (Isa. 43. 1) God in addition says: “i'm able to say to the north, "give them up," and to the south, "Do now not withhold; carry my sons from some distance away and my daughters from the end of the earth” (Isa. 43. 6). And the primary purpose is as God mentions: “each person, who's called by way of my call, whom I created for my glory, whom I shaped and made” (Isa . forty three. 7). God created us to rejoice his Glory in all walks of our life.

John Milton was a very disciplined learner from the infancy of his educational life. He entered St. Paul’s School at the age of twelve and since then he began his journey of “„labour and intent study“ which he later said he took „ “ and by which he aspired to after times, as they should not willingly let it die“” (qtd in Prince 8). After completing academic education at Cambridge, Milton spent five years at Horton (1632-1638) on scholarly self-study, apparently doing nothing, except composing a few loose poems. His father sincerely supported Milton’s scholarly vocation. Professor Nitish Kumar Basu observes that:

“His father must have been not only very fond of his son but very proud of his scholarship. Otherwise, after leaving Cambridge in his 24<sup>th</sup> year, Milton could not have spent five years at Horton in his father’s house, continuing his self- education when his friends were truly anxious about his apparently doing nothing. He was gradually becoming used to his dream of becoming not only apoet but „a great poet“. He, however, only composed *Comus*, *Lycidas*, *Le Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and a few insignificant poems during these five years and waited twenty years airing his political and religious views” (8).

The importance of the father’s role in building Milton’s multi-faceted scholarship is doubly testified by Milton’s fifteen-month tour on the continent. Milton’s father afforded the total expenditure of the tour, which completed and enriched his education. While on the tour, Milton came to know the civil strife in his homeland and he instantly returned to England, ultimately involving himself in the conflict airing his radical political and religious views, through a lot of polemical pamphlets,

*Research Paper*

forgetting for twenty years his original ambition to become a great poet. When the Commonwealth government under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell collapsed, resulting in the return of Charles II to the throne of England, inaugurating the Restoration in 1660, Milton's political dreams remained unrealized. He came back to his original intention of becoming a great poet and finally produced the finest poetry of all times

*Paradise Lost* is an epic poem. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* using the old draft which he had sketched for composing a Classical tragedy on the Fall of Man, now preserved in Trinity College, Cambridge. Milton after a lot of scholarly deliberations recognized the vast scope of epic genre and the universal implications of the subject—the Fall of Man—which led him finally to eschew the plan of writing a tragedy. Keeping the Biblical narrative, the Fall of Man, as the foundation, he ultimately produced his epic *Paradise Lost* in 1665. It was first published in 1667 in ten Books and later in twelve Books in 1674. *Paradise Lost* is an intellectual supplementation to the interstices of the seminal Biblical texts on the Fall of Man. Milton has undertaken here the task of justifying the ways of God to men and has successfully achieved his aims during the process. One important aspect of the epic *Paradise Lost* is that though the actual cornerstone of the theology of *Paradise Lost* is anchored in the Bible, it does not always conform to the Biblical positions. In many consequential aspects, *Paradise Lost* and the Bible cannot be reconciled. In fact, *Paradise Lost* is a very complex amalgamation of Milton's Puritanic ambitions and classical humanist ideals. *Paradise Lost* is deeply steeped in the strong moral and Puritanic ideals which Milton had nourished since the very early days of his learning. But it is also important to note that Milton's humanist ideals tend to outshine his Puritanic ones in *Paradise Lost*. According to eminent scholars, Milton has contravened the Bible in many theological aspects while providing his own radical humanist theology in *Paradise Lost*. The present research on the authenticity of the Biblical Contents of *Paradise Lost* with reference to Books I and II is a study on how much Milton has maintained his loyalty to the Bible in the process of writing *Paradise Lost*.

*Paradise Lost* is an epic poem. The scope of this epic is so vast that the readers express a sense of wonder at the epic's thoughts that move through eternity. *Paradise*

*Lost* is much broader than Homer's *Iliad*, and *Odyssey*, or Virgil's *Aeneid*, if considered in terms of design crafted encompassing all the events that took place in the beginning of time, and all the developments that were to come in the future. *Paradise Lost* deals with a subject that has universal implications. It has no specific time boundary; it incorporates the beginning, middle, and end of time. Book I of *Paradise Lost* dwells upon, for instance, the effects of the War in Heaven, namely, the fall of the rebel Angels, their preparation and parade for a fresh insurrection, the building of Pandemonium for conference on their next course of action against God. Book II deals with the debate of the leaders of the fallen Angels in Hell, the descriptions of the torments in Hell, Satan's commitment to explore the newly created world, his encounter with Sin and Death at the gates of Hell, Satan's perilous journey through Chaos, his meeting Chaos and Night, and his arrival in the created world. Book III touches upon the debate in Heaven, God the Father's foreseeing Man's Fall through his Freewill, the Son's (Christ) sacrificing himself as ransom to redeem Man, the Angels' singing God's praises around His Throne, Satan's arrival on the outer space of the Universe, Uriel's directing disguised Satan to the earth. Book IV incorporates Satan's entering into Paradise, the description of Paradise, Satan's spying on Adam and Eve, Eve's description of her creation, Uriel's warning to Gabriel about Satan's disguised presence in Paradise, the innocent prelapsarian life of Adam and Eve, the comprehension of Satan by Ithuriel and Zephon, and Gabriel's expelling Satan from Paradise.

### **John Milton's Paradise Lost with reference to Books I and II**

*Paradise Lost* is the projection and expression of a very cultured, rich, learned and committed mind. This long and comprehensive poem is acknowledged as an artistic achievement of John Milton's literary genius. Its form and complexity of structure, grand style, pregnant arguments made throughout the poem, beauty of language, artistic manipulation of poetic devices, and so forth invite complimentary responses from the readers and critics alike. In fact, this epic appeared as a concrete proof of a long cherished ambition of an old blind figure that nourished his intellectual calibre keeping his inner self aloof from a scene abounding in political and religious conflicts. Ever since his appearance as student in the arena of classical literature, John Milton was cultivating in his mind an ambition to become not only a poet but a „great poet“.

*Research Paper*

The fruit of this well-nourished firm determination to become a great poet was effectively reaped by John Milton in the end. John Milton had produced no significant work when he left Cambridge except some few loose poems, but his dormant aspiration to become a grand poet was assuming a concrete shape by the time when he was exhausting his talent for five years at Horton in his father's house indulging in self-education. In 1637 Milton had informed his friend Diodati about his intention to "soar above the Aonian mount" in these memorable lines: Yea, I am pluming my wings for a flight."

The unquenching thirst for knowledge and scholarship and the intention to meet his comprehensive education compelled John Milton to make a journey to Italy in 1638, spending fifteen months there to invigorate his poetic genius, but, he, ultimately finding himself in an entirely disordered circumstance, returned home in August 1639. He had no intention to participate in the conflicts of his days, yet the heated exchanges among the contemporary scholars and controversies of the time moved him so much so that he eventually joined in them, writing pamphlets and airing his radical and complex views on Reformation, church government, state education problems, marriage and divorce. All the time, he nourished at the back of his mind the ambition to become "a great poet", although the turmoils of his days claimed his complete attention to at least think on them profoundly and in 1661 Milton, though completely blind, turned his focus on his original intention to become a great poet ultimately producing his great canonical. The poet completed his epic *Paradise Lost* by 1664 but the Plague and Great Fire of London prevented its publication till 1667. Twenty years after he had dreamt of becoming a great poet, John Milton demonstrated his inner talents in the form of *Paradise Lost* that originally appeared in ten parts and the reading public received the poem warmly and appreciated the mammoth enterprise of the poet with great esteem.

**The introduction of the Concept of Disobedience**

"As Milton was writing an epic, he had to follow the epic convention of introducing a war, the war in Heaven, and Book I depicts the result of the war, the events of the actual war preceding the present stage being later related to Adam by Raphael (in Books V and VI) to make him understand the nature of the enemy he will have to face" (Basu 28). Thus, the poet begins *Paradise Lost* introducing the readers to the

*Research Paper*

Biblical concept of Disobedience as committed by the first parents of Mankind through the temptation of Satan to eat from the “Forbidden Tree” and the subsequent Fall of Man from Paradise in which they were placed by God the Almighty with high favour. It was some sort of poetic convention with the classical poets to invoke the Muse of Classical poetry in the beginning of an epic, seeking the aid of the Goddess in their enterprises so that they may not have to falter on their way to justify what they have undertaken in their works. Although Milton was following in the footsteps of the masters of classical epic like Homer, Virgil, Tasso, yet unlike the classical epic poets, Milton invokes “Heavenly Muse”, as entirely distinct from the Muse of Classical Poetry, as his chief source of poetic inspiration, at the very outset of his poem, stating the central theme thus:

“Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,” (PL. 1. 1-5)

Milton, in straightforward manner, relates the major theme of his poem— the act of Disobedience committed by the first parents of humanity in eating the fruit of the Tree of knowledge of true and evil and their succeeding expulsion from the garden of Eden— the autumn of guy. “Milton begins Paradise misplaced through putting forward our and his team spirit inside the Fall of man, in its results, and inside the want to be redeemed from its consequences” (Danielson one hundred fifteen). even though the situation of the poem is derived without delay from the e-book of Genesis, the introduction and the fall of man, but Milton merits the credit of originality for the manner in which he has manipulated the subject matter. within the Bible, we study that when our lord god completed the advent of the heavens and the earth, he fashioned guy out of the dust of earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of lifestyles and guy became a living soul. “And our lord god formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and guy have become a dwelling soul” (The Holy Bible, King James model, Gen. 2. 7). the lord god then put man in the lawn of Eden asking him to devour freely from any tree of the garden which God prompted



*Research Paper*

to grow there, except the tree of know-how of exact and evil and God warned him as a result: finding Adam by myself in Eden, God created Eve from Adam’s rib and brought her earlier than him. This is depicted beautifully by William Blake (1757-1827) in his painting “The Creation of Eve” (Illustration 2.1).



Source: <http://darknessvisible.christs.cam.ac.uk> (Painted by William Blake)

Illustration 2.1 Book VIII. 470: The Creation of Eve

Now follows the events of Man’s Disobedience in which Eve falls prey to Satan’s temptation and eats the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil and persuades her husband to do the same, and eventually incurs expulsion from Paradise as the severe punishment from God. Christ, the Messiah, provided himself as a ransom to the sin and with the aid of suffering on the move, he stored the complete Mankind making it possible to regain the lost completely satisfied Paradise. “For as by using one guy’s disobedience many were made sinners, so through the obedience of 1 shall many be made righteous” (Rom. five.19). The actual healing of the entire Mankind will now not but be found out until the last Day of Judgement, when our lord god will judge the entire global and receive the righteous humans into Paradise (Basu 28).



**The Invocation to Heavenly Muse and the Holy Spirit**

Being a very pious and devoted Christian, Milton does not invoke the Goddess of the Greek and Roman poets at the beginning of his epic, instead he invokes the Heavenly Muse or the goddess of sacred song, the Heavenly Power which inspired Prophet Moses on Mount Sinai or Horeb and Prophet David on Sion or Zion. Since Milton did not have faith in idol worship or idolatry, he could not seek inspiration from the Muses of Greek mythology who were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory. He invokes an entirely different Divine Power keeping his Puritan individuality intact which reflects his artistic power of invention and originality:

“Sing Heav’nly Muse, that on the secret top  
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
 That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,  
 In the Beginning how the Heav’ns and Earth  
 Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill  
 Delight thee more, and Siloa’s Brook that flow’d  
 Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence  
 Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,” (PL. 1. 6-13)

It is worth mentioning here that the recognition of Milton’s „Heavenly Muse“ with the pagan Muse of the Classical Poetry, as invoked by Homer, Virgil, Hesiod, Ovid, Lucan and Lucretius, would definitely be implausible on the ground that Milton was a devout Christian and he, a devoted Puritan Christian poet, did not put faith in the pagan Muses of Greek mythology. Besides, John Milton confronted difficulty in following this epic convention of invoking the Muse while composing *Paradise Lost*, as he was dwelling upon a theme directly extracted from the Bible, the Fall of Man. And here instead of seeking poetic inspiration from a pagan Muse, Milton appealed to his „Heavenly Muse“ that is to be identified with the Biblical Lord God Himself. Milton was calling upon the Divine Muse who inspired Prophet Moses on Mount Horeb or Sinai, as described in the Bible. God revealed the Laws or the Decalogue to Moses on Mount Horeb. “The Lord our God made a covenant with us (Moses and his

*Research Paper*

People) in Horeb” (Deut. 5. 2). Mount Sinai is also assumed to be the site where Moses received the Ten Commandments as is narrated in the holy Bible.

Satan was cast down violently into Hell and he was falling from „the Ethereal Skie“ like a flame of fire. John Martin (1789-1854) depicted it charmingly in his Mezzotint “The Fall of the Rebel Angels” (Illustration 2.3).



Source: <http://darknessvisible.christs.cam.ac.uk> (Painted by John Martin)

Illustration 2.3 Book I. 44: The Fall of Satan and the Rebel Angels

Jesus Christ saw Satan as Lightning fall from heaven (Luke. 10. 18). The phrase „Ethereal Skie“ implies Heaven, the abode of God, specifically known as the Emyrean, created of the element of fire. But Milton does not make an attempt to give a scientific and consistent explanation of Ethereal and Emyrean, rather exploits these Greek and Medieval ideas for poetic purposes (Prince 107).

**The fall of Satan from Heaven into the deep pit of Hell**

God punished Satan by flinging him into the bottomless pit of Hell, bounding him with “chains of darkness” for his insolence and pride to defy God’s Omnipotence. Satan with

*Research Paper*

his legions of Angels now lay confounded in the „fiery gulf“ for nine days after the fall, which also took the same space of time: “ (PL. 6. 871-873). Gustave Dore portrayed it in his illustration “Nine Days they fell” (Illustration 2.4). Professor N. K. Basu argues that here Milton reminds us of the fact that there was no sun to mark the succession of days and nights by its rising and setting and in actuality the starry Universe came into existence after the fall of the rebel Angels (31). Satan, chained on a fiery lake, regains consciousness and suffers more at „lost happiness“. Milton gives Satan and his companions of fall the attribution of being „immortal“ as they were Angels. Their being immortal renders the punishment doubly acute: they have lost paradise and now are subjects to eternal perdition:



Source: <http://darknessvisible.christs.cam.ac.uk> (Engraved by Gustave Dore)

Illustration 2.4 Book VI. 871: “Nine Days they fell”

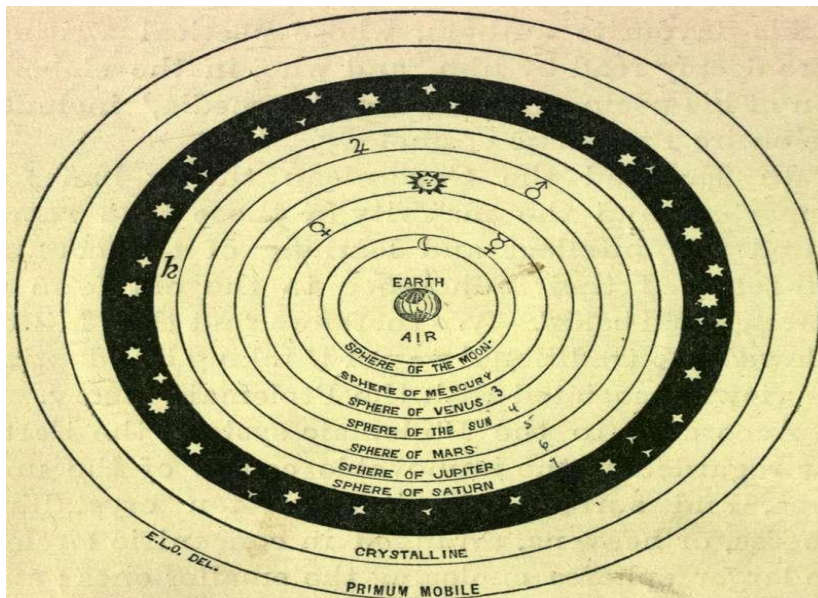
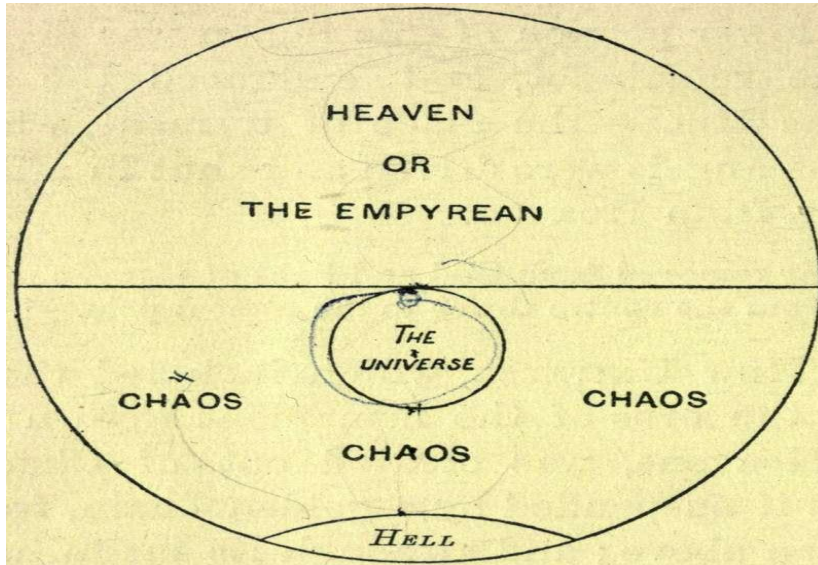
Dr. Samuel Johnson rightly holds that Milton’s peculiar power is to darken the gloomy: Milton’s style of portraying the awful and gloomy figure of Satan subscribes to Johnson’s views. Satan, having been hurled down from Heaven, surveyed painstakingly the utterly desolate and dreary site of Hell without any sign of life and vegetation, and found a dreadful dungeon blazing like a huge furnace yet giving no light but rather making the absolute darkness partly visible, thus revealing terrifying scenes, sorrowful regions of punishment where

*Research Paper*

neither peace nor rest exist but prevails utter despair. Professor Neil Forsyth observes in this context that the narrator of the epic gives a glimpse of the inner thoughts and perceptions of Satan in the description of Hell: The region, where Satan is in, partakes the characteristic of “utter darkness” with eternal afflictions ordained to its denizens waving on „a fiery deluge“ fuelled with inexhaustible and ever-burning sulphur. F. T. Prince says: “Hell is so fully described in Books I and II as to need little further comment. It was created after the revolt of the rebellious Angels, in preparation for their inevitable defeat. The creation of the Universe and Man followed the defeat, for reasons which can only be conjectured by Satan (2. 834-37), but are stated plainly by God in Book VII (150-61)” (183). God had prepared this site for the rebellious Angels. “The Medieval notion that the flames of Hell give no light followed from the idea that the damned are deprived of the sight of God, who is light” (Prince 108). Milton follows here the Biblical concept of the land.

At once, Satan, calling up Beelzebub, who is next to him in “order and dignity”, in power and crime, and long after their rebellion came to be known so in Palestine, addresses his inspiring speech at him. Satan, the Arch-Enemy, breaking the horrid silence, starts flattering by investing him with the traits he possessed once in heaven: that once he was clothed with surpassing brightness and outshone other bright multitudes of Angels, and now he is changed entirely from his former being; he shared with him “united thoughts and counsels” and joined in the great expedition against God with „equal hope“, although suffered „equal ruin“— which reflects that till the time of War in Heaven they did not have any knowledge of the force of God’s “dire arms”. Satan now betrays signs of grievances against God, who has inflicted them with such a sentence and out of deep indignation, „from sense of injured merit“, he, with his legions of Angels, opposed the power of God „on the plains of Heaven“. Satan takes his heart as a powerful leader thus:





Source: Milton's Astronomy by Thomas N. Orchard, Pages 64, 66.

Illustrations 2.5 Book II. 1051-53: A Diagram of Milton's Ptolemaic Universe Satan comforts his accomplices making all convinced that though they have suffered an ignominious defeat in the battle, yet they have greater hope of success as they have invincible Will power, perpetual pursuit for retaliation, irreconcilable hatred for God, prowess never to surrender or reconcile with their „grand foe'— which cannot be overpowered anyhow. He is grimly resolved not submit himself to God: “That Glory never shall his wrath or might / Extort from me” (PL. 1. 110). At the same time, to bow down before God „with suppliant

*Research Paper*

knees“ for grace would indeed be a degrading attempt on his part and worse than their downfall: “That were an ignominy and shame beneath / This downfall”. (17). Since they are having angelic strength by Fate and made of „Empyrean substance“ being imperishable, and as they are much advanced in foresight, they can resolve with more successful hope to wage a perpetual War against God, adds Satan.

Satan’s courage and strength of leadership corresponds to his plausible exhortations and powerful rhetoric though fraught with vainglorious words. Here Satan makes an attempt to convince his companions that Fate has invested the Angels with “the strength of gods” and they are imperishable by nature. Satan does not acknowledge their existence to God, which reflects the strength of his valiant leadership. He even thinks that Fate, a distinct Entity, is far superior to God and God rules the Universe by the authority of Fate. Fate has made them indestructible. In one sense, Satan’s claim is contradictory, for in Book IV he admits that God created him: “he (God) deserved no such return / From me, whom he created” (PL. 4. 43). Professor James H. Hanford observes that: “The entire speech is made disjointed to indicate Satan’s emotional stress” (qtd. in Peter 32).

**Satan’s flight to the shore of Hell**

Satan, having escaped „the Stygian flood“, embarks on the shore of Hell. After surveying the soil, the bleak climate of the land, he gives vent to all his inner torments which reveal his inner state of mind, though struggling hard to hide the painful expressions. He grieves upon the loss of Heaven and its celestial light, but eventually accepts his fate of being too far from God as good. He bids adieu to the happy fields of Paradise and greets wholeheartedly the horrors of Hell:

God, / And tasted the eternal joys of heaven, / Am not tormented with ten thousand Hells, / In being deprived of everlasting blisse?“.” (160).

Satan is here shown as an embodiment of liberty and freedom. He wants to break the shackle of bondage and his craving for freedom is entirely an offshoot of Pride and arrogance. Though in Hell, he will be at least free here and may



*Research Paper*

reign secure. His inner frustrations become apparent when he utters thus:

“Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce

To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:

Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav’n.

But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,

Th’ associates and copartners of our loss

Lye thus astonisht on th’ oblivious Pool, stunned

And call them not to share with us their part

In this unhappy Mansion, or once more

With rallied Arms to try what may be yet

Regaind in Heav’n, or what more lost in Hell?” (PL. 1. 261-70).

He determines to mobilize his force once more to regain Paradise or to lose what has been left with them in Hell. So he moves towards the edge of the lake to awaken his followers lying stupefied there. Gustave Dore finely illustrates it in his engraving “They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung” (Illustration 2.7). He called out his legions and in reproachful vocabulary asked whether they have chosen Hell after the War in Heaven to have repose and ease or whether they have sworn to worship their Conqueror, God, in that abject manner. Are they intentionally wallowing there to enjoy complete surrender? If they do not wake up from their prostration, then God will surely take further advantage of their lethargy. He revitalizes his legions with vigor and promise like a true leader. He also makes mockery of their lethargy producing menace of dire calamity which is waiting to devour them, if they neglect the foresights of their leader: “Awake, arise, or be forever fallen” (PL. 1. 330). This line sums up Satan’s valiant attempt to mobilize the fallen Angels by a vocabulary of hope, scheme, and menace.

The fallen Angels heard Satan’s call and felt abashed. Though they were feeling penetrating pains, yet obeyed their General’s command and started hovering under the canopy of Hell, and soon alighted on „the firm brimstone“ as their leader directed their course by waving his spear. Milton displays his



Sources: <http://darknessvisible.christs.cam.ac.uk> (Engraved by Gustave Dore)

Illustration 2.7 Book I. 331: Satan Arousing the Fallen Angels

The entire body of the fallen Angels, representing united force and determined purpose, started marching to the charming notes of soft pipes which lightened their „painful steps“ over the burning soil of Hell.

## **CONCLUSION**

Paradise Lost is an intensely religious epic poem. Though the epic is a literary representation of the fundamental truth about human condition of struggle between good and evil through the framework of the „Fall of Man“, it has an incredible theological dimension which outshines its literary occupations. In fact, there is no escape from the theology that the epic authoritatively professes in the midst of an immensely conceived network of poetic supplementations to the events of the „Fall of Man“. The theological concepts and their imaginative expansion are so radically intertwined in Paradise Lost that a sensitive reader

*Research Paper*

with sound scriptural scholarship might feel disappointed seeing the play of imagination with theology. *Paradise Lost* is Milton's years-long meditation on the Bible. More precisely, it is a very cautious amalgamation of theological views of a Puritan and poetic imagination of a Humanist poet. It is a reservoir of diverse theological concepts and Christian doctrines. It incorporates the concepts of the Creation, the Fall of Man, of Heaven and Hell, the doctrine of Original Sin, of Salvation, of Trinity, the ontology of the good and bad Angels, the nature of the power of God, the structure of the Universe, the Universe before and after the Fall of Adam and Eve.

The theological concepts and Christian doctrines that are incorporated into the narrative of Adam's Fall are substantially at variance with what the Bible teaches which creates a new ground for research and study. The tendentious imaginative additions to some Biblical concepts are so manifestly evident in it that it is definitively imperative on the part of a scholar with Biblical learning to study and research the accuracy, validity, authenticity of the Miltonic versions of those theological concepts being knit into the poem. The epic *Paradise Lost*, if examined in the light of the Bible, features many non-scriptural ideas. Since the epic cannot be separated from the Bible, it follows that we must evaluate the Miltonic versions of the „Fall of Man“ narrative in the light of the Bible. Critics of *Paradise Lost* have pondered upon whether Milton's poetic rendering of the narrative of the Fall of Man is authentic Biblical theology. The average readers unwittingly believe that *Paradise Lost* is what the Bible speaks to us about the Fall story. The Biblical Contents of *Paradise Lost*, which are unquestionably an admixture of imagination and scripture, go unnoticed in the name of the Bible itself.