

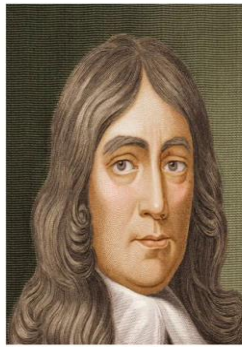
Poetry
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John Milton – 1

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John Milton (1608-1674)



- Historical Context
- Literary Context
- John Milton
- *Paradise Lost*
 - Book 1: 1-194
 - **Selected Passages**
 - Invocation to the Muse
 - The Burning Lake
 - Satan's Address to the Devils
 - Hope of Revenge
- Analysis



We are going to discuss the poetry of one of the most important poets in English poetry, John Milton, from the 17th century. We have examined the poems of metaphysical poets like John Den, George Herbert, Henry Warne and Andrew Marvell. They also belong to this 17th century. Some early 17th century and some going on into the later part of the 17th century like Andrew Marvell. In fact, Andrew Marvell and John Milton were close friends and good friends. They helped each other.

If John Milton helped Andrew Marvell to get a job in the government, Andrew Marvell actually saved Milton from death when there was a change in government that is after the restoration. We will see the historical and literary context in which Milton imagined, Milton spoke for the freedom of speech. Milton worked for the people and the government, and also improved himself by self-study, to write the best epic, the first epic, the first complete full-fledged epic in English, that is *Paradise Lost*.

In this course, we will see Book 1 and, in this lecture, we will see lines 1 to 194. In the next lecture, we will see the rest of Book 1. We have some selected passages, dealing with Invocation

to the Muse, The Lake, The Burning Lake in which we find all the devils including Satan. And then Satan coming out of this Lake, addressing the devils to think about their plan of action for the next activity, that is they have some Hope of Revenge he speaks about. And we will analyze the selected passages and conclude this lecture and then move on to the second lecture dealing with lines 195 to 798 of Book 1.

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Historical Context



- Appointment of William Laud as the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1621
- Ascension of King Charles I in 1625
- Charles's attempt to unite the Church of Scotland with England – Bishops' War of 1639 and 1640
- The English Civil War (1642-1648) – a decisive and divisive event leading to the emergence of Tories and Whigs
- The Protectorate (1653-1660)
- Restoration of monarchy in 1660



Similar historical context or incidents have shaped Milton as well. The appointment of William Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1621 actually caused some of the serious problems in English society when Laud was trying to impose certain rituals from this Roman catholic church practices. And this was possible because of this support from King Charles I as well, who became a king in 1625 after his father's death that is, King James death in 1625. As a mission, Charles also wanted to unite the two churches, Church of Scotland with the Church of England.

That led to one part of the civil war that is called the Bishop's war of 1639 and 1640 together they made up with the support from the parliamentarians caused this English Civil War. It was a decisive and divisive event leading to the emergence of two parties, two kinds of people, one supporting the king that is Tories, another supporting the parliamentarians, that is Whigs. Leading to The Protectorate, that is, the common wealth from 1653 to 1660 but then, it did not last. The people's aspiration to have their own government without their king did not last long. In 1660 monarchy was restored with the arrival of King Charles I

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Literary Context



- Francis Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) and *Novum Organum* (1620)
- Metaphysical poets like Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Marvell (religious)
- Cavalier Poets like Thomas Carew, Sir John Suckling, and Richard Lovelace (secular)
- Popular poets like Edmund Waller and Abraham Cowley
- The psychological, religious and philosophical works of Robert Burton, Sir Thomas Browne, and Thomas Hobbes
- The Royal Society in 1662



The literary context is also similar but certain incidents, certain intellectual currents which took place in 17th century shaped Milton much more than other poets. For example, Francis Bacon's book, 'The Advancement of Learning' and another book, 'Novum Organum' actually contributed to the scientific thinking, scientific temper, against which Milton was writing his Christian epic poem about God, heaven, hell and earth. A different kind of knowledge has arrived; new knowledge has arrived from this geocentric to heliocentric world. But Milton was perhaps one of the last renaissance scholars to retain or maintain the same old geocentric view in his greatest epic, *Paradise Lost*. Other poets like metaphysical poets, Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan and Marvell, they were writing more of religious poetry.

As supposed to cavalier poets like Thomas Carew, Sir John Suckling, Richard Lovelace, who were writing more of secular poetry. We have two interesting poets who were very popular during this time, but we do not know much about them today, that is one is, Edmund Waller, another is Abraham Cowley. Abraham Cowley, we have seen that Dr. Johnson was writing a life of Cowley, rather than a life of John Donne.

We have important books from Robert Burton, Thomas Browne and Thomas Hobbes, to shape up this English thought, English society, English philosophy at this time. Science took the decisive shape in the form of the Royal Society in 1662. More of exploration not only of this geographical space, but also the inner realm, what man is capable of, what we can discover in

this world, what we can discover with our own eyes, that is where this empirical philosophy, empirical approach to life was beginning to take shape during this time.

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John Milton (1608-1674)



- A defender of various political and social causes, including freedom of speech, republicanism and remarriage
 - Attempted various forms of prose and poetry in Latin and English
 - Remembered for *Lycidas* (1638), *Areopagitica* (1644), and *Samson Agonistes* (1671), and *Paradise Lost* (1667/1674), among others.
 - One of the four pillars of English poetic tradition
- Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton



John Milton has a rich life. He was a defender of various political and social causes. Surprisingly, this freedom of speech, he had enough freedom of speech, but then it was not enough. He was an independent thinker. He wanted to express his ideas, not only his own ideas; anybody must have this freedom of speech. He was also a republican supporting the parliament. And interestingly, he was also supporting remarriage, because his own first wife, immediately after marriage left him and returned to him much later.

So, he began to ask a question, just because a woman leaves a husband, why should a husband remain single for a long time? Later on, he married another lady and one more lady. He had three wives, but two of them died of child birth, unfortunately. Milton attempted various forms of poetry and also prose, in both Latin and English. In fact, Milton was a polyglot; he knew many languages, even Hebrew. He could read original Hebrew.

And today he is remembered for some of his poems, including this *Paradise Lost*. Some other well-known poems like *Lycidas* and *Samson Agonistes* is actually a tragedy and *Areopagitica* is a prose track in which he has spoken fiercely for the freedom of speech. As we have already noted, Milton is considered to be one of the four pillars of English poetic tradition. The other three being Chaucer, Spenser and Shakespeare.

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Paradise Lost (1667/1674)



- Planned a grand epic for England based on the legends of King Arthur
- Trained himself for the task over six years of study
- Composed the epic of *Paradise Lost* (1667) in ten books on the Fall of Man
- Expanded version of 12 books in 1674
- *Paradise Regained* (1671) in 4 books is not as successful as *Paradise Lost*.
- Celebrated English epic poem in blank verse.
- Major characters: God, Satan, Adam and Eve, etc.
- Miltonic Style – Grand Style



We have chosen to discuss *Paradise Lost* that too Book 1 only. We have 12 books totally. But we will deal with only one book, and that too we will have some selected passages. What is this whole *Paradise Lost* about? which was published in 1667 in 10 books and later in 1674 in 12 books to conform to the tradition of 12 books in Virgil's *Aeneid*. When Milton was a young man, he planned to write a grand epic, a great epic for England based on English history that is the legends of King Arthur.

He actually trained himself for 6 years for this task. He devoted himself to the study of all text philosophy, religion, science, everything that was available to him. He was preparing himself to write only the greatest epic, that was his determined task, that was his ambition in life, apart from his ambition of contributing to the English church, English society that is the state. It was a huge task he set for himself. He composed the epic of *Paradise Lost* in 1667, that is he published it. He started writing it around 1663 or so, he published the 10 books in 1667 and later on expanded two of his books into four books and then made it up as 12 books in 1674.

He also wrote a sequel to *Paradise Lost* called *Paradise Regained* in 1671. But this one has only four books. It deals with the arrival of Christ to redeem humanity. This *Paradise Lost* is a celebrated English epic poem in blank verse unlike other heroic epics which have this heroic couplet.

We have some major characters like God, Satan, Adam and Eve, some angels and devils we have. This particular epic poem is known for this Grand Style. Mathew Arnold and other critics after him have identified the style of Milton as grand style and it has come to be called Miltonic Style after the author of this poem John Milton. We will spend some time specially in the next lecture on this grand style.

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Pullman on the Great Revenge Story



“I think it is **the central story of our lives**, the story that more than any other tells us **what it means to be human**. But however many different it is told in the future, and however many interpretations are made of it, I don’t think the version created by Milton, blind and ageing, out of political favor, dictating it day by day to his daughter, will ever be surpassed.” (10)

[Pullman, Philip. 2005. *John Milton Paradise Lost*. Oxford UP, Oxford.]



What is this Paradise Lost again? What does a contemporary like Pullman say on this great epic? According to Pullman, ‘it is a great revenge story.’ Revenge stories are always popular as we have in films and also in books and other stories. He says,

“I think it is a central story of our lives, the story that more than any other tells us, what it means to be human. But however, many different it is told in the future, and however many interpretations are made of it, I don’t think the version created by Milton, blind and ageing, out of political favor, dictating it day by day to his daughter, will ever be surpassed.” (10)

It is one of the greatest epics we have, one of the greatest revenge epics we have in English. And nobody can surpass it, Pullman says, and probably no other poet can do that. Wordsworth attempted an epic in English, he also was toying with the idea of writing about historical matters

concerning England. But then later he chose to write about his own self that we will see when we come to romantic poetry.

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Paradise Lost, Book I

- 798 lines
- The Verse
- The Argument
- Invocation to the Muse
- Statement of the theme
- Introduction of Satan
- Beelzebub & other devils
- Satan's Size
- Satan on Heaven and Hell
- List of Warriors
- Building of Pandemonium
- Plan for Debate on Action



What do we have in Paradise Lost, Book 1? As the picture shows us, we can see Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden near this apple tree, or tree of life, where we have Satan in the form of a serpent, and speaking to Eve, tempting her to eat this apple. Their sult of that eating forbidden fruit is there being sent out of this paradise by Michael from, that is God, through Michael from this paradise. We have Satan receiving them here downwards and these our great grandparents , they left the paradise to the earth to suffer for the misery of the human condition.

This particular book, book 1 has 798 lines, it has, the whole book actually begins with this verse and also the argument, where we have some summary of this book. Every book has this kind of summary at the beginning. In this Book 1, we have Invocation to the Muse, Statement of the Theme, Introduction of Satan, other characters like Beelzebub and many other devils, and the size, the huge size, the monstrous size of Satan is given much importance in this book.

And also, we come to know certain insights into what makes heaven, what makes hell from the mouth of Satan himself. And then as an epic convention, we have a list of warriors that is cataloguing of all the warriors who are participating in this war with God led by Satan. We have the construction of Pandemonium, the capital city of hell. And then in this Pandemonium, in this hall we have a discussion by all this devil led by Satan on the future course of action.

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The Verse



- Milton's justification for using blank verse in his epic poem *Paradise Lost*.

“The measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meter;”

- Lack of rhyme is not a defect but a design,
- The first epic in English to use blank verse
- Against the grain of his age of rhyming verse, especially that of Dryden.



Milton deliberately chose to write blank verse. And so, he has explained, why he chose to write his epic in blank verse in this particular section called *The Verse*, in his book, *The Paradise Lost*. Milton justified using blank verse in his epic poem *Paradise Lost*. He says,

“The measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and Virgil in Latin. Rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially. But the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meter.”

He did not want to follow this rhyme; he did not want to follow these typical other kinds of heroic couplets and things like that. At the same time, he wants the readers that this lack of rhyme is not exactly a defect, but it is a deliberate design that he has brought into this poem *Paradise Lost*. So, he claims that, this is the first epic in English to use blank verse. We are already familiar with blank verse being used in other context in poetry and drama, particularly in the Elizabethan, most of the plays were written in blank verse.

But here for an epic poem, we have this use of blank verse. Later on, other poets will employ this, including Wordsworth for his own epic, *The Prelude*. This use of blank verse in the context

of restoration society in poetry is a kind of going against the grain of his own age of rhyming verse particularly John Dryden and later on Alexander Pope. But primarily, Johnson was familiar with and concerned with Dryden, because he was his contemporary.

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The Argument



- Suggestions of the readers to include a summary of each book in the expanded 1674 edition
- Man's disobedience, the loss of Paradise, the fall due to Satan's revolt against God
- Satan and his fallen angels in hell
- Their miserable condition
- Satan's motivation
- Their warriors
- Building of Pandemonium
- The debate on war with God by force or fraud



When Milton published his Paradise Lost in 1667 for the first time, he did not publish this argument that is summarizing the whole book and presenting it at the beginning of every book. It seems when readers wanted to have this kind of summary of every book, remember Milton's Paradise Lost is not that easy to read, because it has its own Miltonic style, grand style. That means, some effort the reader has to make to understand what Milton has written.

So, readers wanted to have his summary at the beginning, so he has given this summary in the form of an argument. He received the suggestions from the readers, particularly the publishers to include a summary of each book in the expanded edition in 1674. This particular poem deals with man's disobedience, the loss of Paradise, the fall of man due to Satan's revolt against God and his temptation of man to eat this forbidden apple, to get this knowledge of the difference between innocence and experience.

And so, this poem deals with the, the entire group of devils, the chief of which is a Satan and all other fallen angels in hell. The miserable condition of the devils in the Burning Lake is presented to as in this particular book, Book 1. But Satan, though he has fallen, has not lost his motivation,

his inspiration, or his energy to fight with God. So, he self-motivates himself and then he motivates his own fallen angels by his speeches.

We have a list of warriors and then how this Pandemonium is built, that is by Malciber that is mentioned. And then we have the big preparation for the debate on war with God, direct or indirect war, by force or fraud, we have this kind of the beginning of that, setting up of that meeting we have at the end of Book 1.

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Invocation - I

- Of Man's 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
5. Restore us and regain the blissful seat,
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
10. 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 advent'rous song,



So, we begin with this Invocation, we have some selected passages, we will read these passages one after another and please pay attention to the highlighted words, so that you can understand the kind of emphasis that we lay on certain special words and phrases or even lines.

“Of Man’s 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.

5. Restore us and regain the blissful seat,

Sing, Heav’nly Muse, that on the secret top.

Or Oreb or Of Sinai, didst inspire,
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth

10. 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 advent'roue song."

Milton the poet, the narrator of this poem, invokes the muse, the classical muse. Normally we have this calliope, the epic muse for every poet.

So here Milton invokes the muse, the classical muse, but when he comes to this heavenly muse, when he comes to this secret top, the shepherd and all that, he indicates that he does not stop with this classical muse of epic, he also includes the Christian epic, or Christian muse, the heavenly muse, the holy spirit, that inspired Moses, that is a shepherd. So, this or Sinai, this mountain area where Moses received this law for human beings from God.

So, he wants to, Milton wants to receive that kind of blessing from the heavenly spirit, the heavenly muse to write his adventurous song. Certain words and phrases, for example, this Oreb, Sinai, and things like that are highly allusive. That is one source of difficulty with Milton is the Latinate diction. Another is the classical allusion or allusion to the whole range of knowledge that Milton was familiar with.

It is said, he is the only poet with so much of scholarly learning. All other epic poets did not have so much of self trained learning. So, as a result, we will be facing challenges because of this enormous range of scholarship from Milton. But we can overcome these difficulties with a good annotated text. The text that we are using from representative poetry online, we can use many other texts as also. It has enough annotations to help us some points of explanation which will help us to understand the poem.

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Invocation - II

- That with no middle flight intends to soar
15. Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
20. Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support,
That to the height of this great argument
25. I may assert Eternal Providence
And justify the ways of God to men.



The invocation continues.

- “That with no middle flight intends to soar
15. Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues,
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
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20. Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread.
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And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support,
That to the height of this great argument
25. I may assert Eternal Providence

And justify the ways of God to men.”

This is the task Milton has set for himself to justify the ways of God to men, to assert eternal providence, to deal with the story of the first disobedience. The fruit of which man had to bear, that is to be thrown out of this Paradise and suffer for ever without any kind of relief except through Jesus Christ, the arrival of God. So here in this passage, we can see how Milton daringly says, things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

Nobody has attempted this kind of epic poem. But this is scholars have noted that this is a kind of paraphrase from another Italian poet. For that kind of influence study and all that some annotations may help us. But what we have to notice in this passage is the spirit, the holy spirit becomes very clear when he mentions this simile like expression ‘dove like sat’st brooding on the vast Abyss.’ Dove, this holy spirit or this holy host blessing, knowing everything. And so, he seeks the blessing of this holy spirit to enlighten what is dark in him and raise his morale, support him, so that he can assert eternal providence and justify the ways of God to man. This is not an ordinary task. In poetry, in blank verse, to write a poem, that too when science was advancing, to destabilize this Christian view of the world, that earth is the centre of the world, there is a heaven above, there is a hell down, this is an old traditional view.

It was being stabilized, at this time Milton was still with conviction writing. He was a puritan, a protestant, a puritan not in the sense of very strict rigid puritan, but in the sense of an independent thinker, in the sense of a free thinker. He was writing, a man with conviction he was writing this epic for his readers.

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Invocation - III



Say first – for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell – say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents in that happy state,
30. Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' **infernal Serpent**; he it was, whose **guile**,
35. Stirr'd up with **envy and revenge**, deceiv'd
The Mother of Mankind, what time his **pride**
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host



The invocation continues further.

“Say first - for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell - say first what cause
Mov'd our grandparents in that happy state,
30. Favour'd of heav'n so highly to fall off
From their creator and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first to seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent, he it was, whose guile
35. Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride,
Had cast him out from heav'n with all his host.”

In this particular passage we find the cause, the result, the effect, the mother of mankind that is Eve was tempted by this infernal serpent that is Satan. What for, because of his own envy, because of his own desire, strong desire for revenge against God's punishment for Satan and his colleagues to be thrown out of heaven into hell. So, Satan's strategy was not to fight God directly, but fight god through human beings, by destroying human beings.

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Invocation - IV



Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
40. He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd **impious war** in Heav'n and battle proud,
44. With vain attempt.



“Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers.
40. He trusted to have equall'd the Most High
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim.
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in heav'n and battle proud
44. With vain attempt.

Satan's attempt to wage a war, civil war, impious war against God was a vain attempt. He did that out of pride. He wanted to equal God, the most high, that was his ambitious aim. Why he should be a second to God, he could not, Satan could not accept the fact that he could be less

than God. That is where the pride, that is where the arrogance led Satan to fight against God. And when he started this along with others, naturally God with all his power was able to win over Satan and his team. And then this particular defeat, did not allow Satan to remain silent. He could not accept it, though it was a vain attempt. So, to prove his arrogance, to prove his pride in himself, to prove his desire for ambition, he continues his restless war with God. It is an eternal war between good and evil.

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Burning Lake

Him the Almighty Power

45. Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
50. Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
55. Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,



The invocation is over. Milton invoked the muse on the one hand classical muse, on the other hand Christian muse. Any power on earth to help him to write the greatest epic, specifically Classical muse and this Christian muse, holy spirit to write this rhyme or poem unattempted yet. Now we find Milton describing the hell. This hell is a Burning Lake. And here again, if you pay attention to the language, you will see how it is, though it is hell, how beautifully Milton describes hell you can see.

Let us begin.

“Him the Almighty power

45. Hurl'd headlong, flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down

To bottomless perdition there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

50. Nine times the space that measures day and night

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserv'd him to move wrath; for now the thought

55. Both of lost happiness and lasting pain,

Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,"

The Almighty hurled him Satan headlong, flaming through the ethereal sky, celestial sky. In all members of Satan's team, they were all hurling down, falling down into hell, to bottomless perdition, endless adamantine, or condemnation. This is a lake of fire, where these devils are bound in chains and they are in misery.

They are fallen and they are vanquished, they are confused, they are, but remember, they are also immortal angels. They were created angels, immortal angels, but then here they suffer, unlike other angels who are remaining with God. There are more of torment comes to Satan because he knows what is happiness, he knows what is pain now. When he compares this to more suffering Satan has, and his eyes are full of woe, suffering, misery.

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Dungeon and Darkness Visible



- At once, as far as Angels' ken, he views
60. The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather **darkness visible**
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
65. Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
69. With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd.



This hell is like a dungeon. And in this dark dungeon, it is amazing to see Milton using this expression darkness visible. In 20th century, William Golding has a novel called Darkness Visible to specifically deal with this kind of good and evil conflict or conflict between good and evil. Darkness is visible. So, this Burning Lake in the dungeon, this heaven, or in this hell is darkness, but it is visible. This is oxymoronic, this is a contradiction, but this is the real picture that Milton produces for us.

“At once, as far as Angels’ ken, he views

60. The dismal situation waste and wild,
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flam’d; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible.
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And rest can never dwell, hope never comes,
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Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed

69. With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd."

In this passage, when Milton describes hell, he also keeps in mind other kinds of hell, particularly the hell described by Dante in his divine comedy where we have a reference here. "Hope never comes, that comes to all. Abundant all your hope, those who come here" is what is written on the entrance of the hell in Dante's divine comedy. And that kind of memory or trace, Milton brings in here in his own hell as well.

This is a dungeon, this is dismal, horrible, woeful, sorrowful, full of torture, these words we have underlined to draw our attention to the kind of emphasis that Milton pays to the suffering in hell. In spite of all this suffering, misery, torment everything, Milton allows his Satan to rise as a great inspirer, motivator. Satan has not lost hope, so he addresses the devils on many occasions. And here we have some examples.

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Satan's Address to the Devils

90. Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin, into what pit thou seest
From what highth fall'n. So much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder – and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
95. Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
100. And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign and, me preferring,



Once he was very happy, he had excellent thoughts, he has excellent company.

90. "Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd

In equal ruin, into what pit thou seest.

From what highth fall'n. So much the stronger prov'd

He with his thunder- and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
95. Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward luster, that fix'd mind
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
100. And to the fierce contention brought along.
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign and, me preferring."

In this motivating speech for this, for his fallen angels, he talks about his own status as a preferred leader, as a leader with support from many other colleagues. And we can see his own toying mind repent or change, fixed mind and all that. Now we can pay attention to this to content and contention. This is one example where we can see how Milton uses the same word content in a verb form and in another case contention as a noun form, plays with words.

'Word play' is a characteristic of Milton's grand style. And in the first case joined and a line beginning with joined and ending with joined, it is a rhetorical feature called epanalepsis. There are many such rhetorical figures, only when we pay attention, only when we closely read, only when we are drawn to the sounds and words, the senses, the etymological roots, the syntactical structures, we will be able to enjoy the Miltonic poem, epic that is Paradise Lost.

(Refer Slide Time: 34:33)

Hope of Revenge



106. **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?
110. That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire, that were low indeed;
115. That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall:



Everything is doleful, sorrowful, tormenting, woeful, miserable. In this kind of condition, nobody would have any hope. Abandon all your hope, those who come here, that is what Dante says. But Satan who has come to hell, does not abandon his hope. Here we have Milton saying. Milton, that is Satan saying,

106. “All is not lost- the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:”

What is else not to be overcome?” There is nothing that is impossible to overcome for Satan.

- And what is else not to be overcome?”
110. That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire, that were low indeed;

115. That were an ignominy and shame beneath

This downfall:”

Satan cannot accept the fact that it is a shame, it is an ignominy, this downfall is shameful, he will not accept. All is not lost; he has his unconquerable will. That will to independence of Satan, that is the first disobedience against God. The second disobedience is by man, by eating this forbidden fruit. Here we find that courage never to submit or yield from Homer, Ulysses, not to yield, not to submit, we have in Satan, the kind of inversion we have in this particular line, ‘that glory never shall his wrath or might extort from me.’” The glory that he has in himself, as an angel, he may be fallen, but he is angel, like he is immortal. He has his own spirit. So, we will pay attention to this later when we come to poet device. That is why we have underlined it here.

(Refer Slide Time: 36:38)

The Tyranny of Heaven



116. since by fate the strength of Gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advance'd,
120. We may **with more successful hope** resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs and, in th' excess of joy
124. Sole reigning, holds **the tyranny of Heav'n.**



This kind of revengeful feeling comes to him because of this tyranny of God or tyranny of heaven. He says, Satan says, the authority of God is something which is intolerable, tyrannical, that is why there is a statement of this expression in this specific passage .

116. “Since by faith the strength of Gods

And this empyreal substance cannot fail,

Since through experience of this great event

In arms not worse, in foresight much advance'd.

120. We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force, or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe (that is God,)
Who now triumphs and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heav'n."

Milton saw the king, Roman church, or any form of authority as a source of tyranny and that is a kind of purest expression against tyranny that we have here through Satan.

(Refer Slide Time: 37:44)

Satan's Subverting Mind



157. "Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
160. **But ever to do ill our sole delight,**
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
165. And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft times may succeed so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
168. His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.



Now what kind of mind does Satan have? He has a subverting mind, subversive mind. So, he addresses the devils, fallen Cherub, that is the second order of angels, the first one is Serafin,

157. "Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good will never be our task.
160. But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end.
165. And out of good, still to find means of evil;
Which oft times may succeed so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb

His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.”

God is meant to good all the time, even to fallen angels. From evil also God decides to bring out the good, but Satan says, his objective is to pervert that. Our sole objective is, our sole delight is to do evil, even in good. That is what Satan's philosophy. So, he appeals to all his colleagues, let us continue to do evil. And this is a Satan who will say later on, 'evil be the my good' in another book.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:20)

Thematic Contrast

Obedience and Disobedience, God and Satan,
Bliss and Perdition, Peace and War,
Good and Evil, Angels and Devils,
Light and Dark, High and Low,
Heaven, Earth, and Hell,
God, **Man** and Devil

God created the world, the angels and human beings. Some of the angels became **devils by disobeying God** and tempted **humans to disobey god**.
Devils pushed down from Heaven to Hell
Humans thrown away from Paradise to Earth



These passages in line numbers from 1 to 194, we have some thematic contrast that probably holds good for the entire book epic. Obedience and disobedience, obedience to God is paradise, disobedience to God is hell. The conflict between good and evil represent by God and Satan. Haven is bliss, hell is perdition. Peace with God, or war with God is the option we have, the conflict between good and evil is presented to us. And in this conflict angels and devils participate; we have light on the one hand in the heaven and darkness visible in hell. We have high heaven and low hell. We have all these three regions of heaven, earth and hell, this is a kind of geocentric view that Milton presents in this poem.

God created the world, the angels and human beings. Some of the angels became devils by disobeying God. And these angels, particularly Satan, he disobeyed God, he did not stop with that, he received punishment from God, he was not happy with that. He wanted to fight with

God, but the only way he thought he could win over God is to make human beings disobey God. So, we have two kinds of disobedience, first disobedience by Satan, the next, second disobedience by human beings. That is why human beings themselves did not commit this crime of disobedience.

There was another agency that is why human beings have, according to Milton and Christianity, have this possibility of redemption. Whatever sins we commit, we have this redemption, sense of redemption through Christ or through divine grace. Those who disobeyed including Satan, they were pushed down to hell from heaven by God. They took some 9 plus 9, 9 days 9 nights, something like 18 days they took to reach. Such a long distance from heaven to hell. And similarly, for the disobedience by human beings, human beings were thrown out of Eden; they had to move from Paradise to Earth to suffer endlessly. But of course, with some hope.

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Poetic Devices

Pun: fruit (1), de(i)fy (112)

Simile: dove-like (21)

Parallelism:

“what in me is dark,

illumine, what is low raise and support” (22-23)

Latinate: combustion (46), perdition (47), adamantine (48), penal (48)

Images of hell: lake, fire, darkness

Hyperbaton: a variety of word orders

“That glory (never shall) [his wrath or might]

Extort {-} from me.” (110-111)

“We may **with more successful hope** resolve

To wage by force or guile eternal war,” (120-121)



We have a number of poetic devices, we indicated some of them as we read the passages, selected passages, we have pun, word play endlessly in all places. The first one is fruit, fruit is apple, fruit the result, the effect of eating that fruit. I noticed something very interesting, ‘defy’ is defiance, disobedience. But within this, we have ‘deify,’ obedience, or accepting, glorifying God. Simile we have dove-like in the case of holy ghost; we have parallelism in confection, in, “what in me is dark, illumine, what is low, raise and support.”

We also have Latinate diction in combustion, perdition, adamant, when it comes to the description of hell. We have images of hell like Lake of fire, darkness. We have a number of hyperbatons, examples, a variety of word orders, different kinds of word orders. We have actually Milton imitates Latin in English. “That glory (never shall) [his wrath or might] extort { - } from me.” (110-111) I have indicated certain ways through which we can rearrange this passage. “His wrath or might, never shall extort that glory from me.” That is how we can rephrase it.

Similarly, the next one, “we may with more successful hope resolve to wage by force or guile eternal war.” “We may resolve to wage by force or guile eternal war with more successful hope.” In the first case, we see that glory object coming to the front. And in the second case, we have subject is retained in the first position. But it is subject and verb, they are split with an adjunct with more successful hope. So, this kind of play with subject position, object position and the way in which he organizes words, is something remarkable contributing to this through syntax, he contributes to this Miltonic style, that is the grand style.

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Rhyme, Rhythm, and Meter

- Milton uses unrhymed blank verse in **Paradise Lost**.
- But end rhyme creeps in sometimes: ire, fire (148, 151)
- **Alliteration**: first, fruit (1), world, woe (3), restore, regain (5), sing, secret (6), heaven hides (27), mother of mankind (36), ambitious aim (50)
- **Anaphora (repetition)**: Say first (27, 28)
- Di- and mono- syllabic words in **iambic pentameter**
- Variation in pauses, run on line, and end stopped line
- “Restore **us and regain** the **blissful seat**, (5 ft) (**Pyrrhic**)
Sing heavenly muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire” (5-7)



Sound effects that is the first characteristic of Miltonic style. He wanted to have freedom in using language. That is why he chose blank verse for his epic poem Paradise Lost. He could manipulate English language in any way he liked without restriction. Sometimes inspite of this freedom that he wants to enjoy some end rhymes we have in certain places, like in line number

148 and 151, where ire rhymes with fire. We have a number of alliterations, first, fruit, world, woe, restore, regain, sing, secret, heaven, hides, mother of mankind, ambitious aim.

We also have anaphora, say first, say first he tells or requests holy ghost, that is the muse. We have, disyllabic words, monosyllabic words in iambic pentameter as well. We have a number of variations in pause and this run on line and end-stopped line. We have some examples here,

“Restore us and regain the blissful seat,
Sing heavenly muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire.”

So, we can see various kinds of play with sound effects that Milton creates in his poem.

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Overall Impression

- Milton's *Paradise Lost* is an epic poem on the grand theme of the fall of man.
- It begins with the invocation to both the epic and Christian Muses.
- It presents the burning lake in which Satan and his colleagues are found.
- It suggests the scope for revenge by force or fraud against the tyranny of God.
- Satan offers an encomium to pervert the design of god and good into evil to hurt god and his creations.
- Milton's poetic and linguistic devices construct the grand style of his epic.



On the whole, we have this great poem, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which is an epic poem on the grand theme of the fall of man. It begins with the invocation to both epic and the Christian muses. It presents the Burning Lake in which Satan and his colleagues have found. It suggests scope for revenge by force or fraud against the tyranny of God by Satan. Satan offers an encomium price to pervert the design of God and Satan offers an encomium to pervert the design

of God and turn good into evil, to hurt God and his creations. Milton's poetic and linguistic devices construct the grand style of his epic.

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Summary

- Historical Context
- Literary Context
- John Milton
- *Paradise Lost*
 - Book 1: 1-194
 - **Selected Passages**
 - Invocation to the Muse
 - The Burning Lake
 - Satan's Address to the Devils
 - Hope of Revenge
- Analysis



In some we have the historical and literary context which actually shaped Milton to write his great epic *Paradise Lost* in 12 books. The book we have chosen is Book 1. And in this lecture, we have discussed lines from 1 to 194. Within this, we have some selected passages dealing with invocation to the muse of Pagan muse or Classical muse. And then we have the Christian muse, that is holy spirit. The invocation we found in 4 sections.

This invocation specifically asks for help to write an epic which has never been attempted by any poet anywhere. We find Satan in the Burning Lake and him addressing his devils, raising some hope in them for revenge against God, by drawing their attention to their own pride in being themselves, being immortal, being powerful. But it takes time to realize that he may not be equal to God, but he will not resist from this temptation of fighting against God.

(Refer Slide time: 47:27)

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- Pullman, Philip. 2005. *John Milton Paradise Lost*. Oxford UP, Oxford.]



We have interesting references for you. We have used this text from representative poetry online from the University of Toronto Library. We have the reference; you can collect it or you can use any other source. We also have another book by Pullman. He has edited this volume, *Paradise Lost*, entire book we have. You can read this introduction and also this Book 1 from here.

Some critical reference we have in *Typological Aporias*. This will guide us or let us know about the kind of difficulties we have in reading this poem *Aporia*, this undecidability, indeterminacy in meaning. In language, has its own capacity to undecide the meaning. So how Milton does it, or the language used by Milton does it in *Paradise Lost*, you could see that using contemporary critical terms. Thank you.