

A Study of *Paradise Lost*

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Abstract

John Milton is a great poet laureate in Britain. He wrote *Paradise Lost* in 1667 (the second edition was published in 1674). It consists of 12 books. It has been read and studied by many people. Its subject was taken from the Old Testament.

Before the present world was made, there was an angel named Lucifer. His figure was brightening. God loved him, but he showed signs of resistance. He fell to hell with many angels of Heaven, and he was called "Satan." Satan opted for the revenge with fallen angels in hell.

He changed his body into a snake. He goes to the Paradise and deceives Eve, the female progenitor of human beings. Satan made her eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. This is commonly said their 'original sin'.

Adam who was the first human being and the first male in the world was very confused with Eve's action. He was very angry. However, Adam decided to ruin himself with Eve. God told them that men were still saved with Michael. Adam and Eve went away from the Paradise.

Moreover, Milton wrote about the defeat of the fallen angels and the realization of the kingdom of God in *Paradise Regained*. The material of this epic was taken from the

New Testament. Milton's life coincided with the Puritan revolution. Milton was a Puritan.

Some read Milton from historical and political points of view, while others read him from religious point of view. I am interested in this epic from the religious point of view because it is related with humane goodness. The story shows that there is a conflict between angels and Satan. Angels help God, but Satan resists God and falls into hell. This paper investigates what true goodness is and what Milton wanted to say through Satan.

In this epic, I want to discuss especially Satan. Readers are charmed with goodness of angels but not with evil spirit of Satan. However, angels are not always gentle. They often solve problems using violence. Satan was an evil spirit, but he encourages friends. There is something charming about Satan. I regard that all charm consists of goodness. To love is not all that angels do. One has to be careful of those who love repeatedly and indiscriminately. It is because those are captives of violence.

In Chapter 1, I consider angels. Angels play a big role in this epic. Most of the characters of this work are angels and fallen angels, and human beings do not much have an appearance.

In Chapter 2, I consider Satan. Satan is not supposed to be a hero. Milton assumed that Adam was a hero. But Satan plays a very big role compared with Adam. Satan's charm plays an important role as a character. I observe Satan because good angels are described attractively. Conversely, Satan is depicted very attractively.

In Chapter 3, I consider Milton's thought. Milton wanted to clarify the right way of God. Milton did not leave him departed even if he was jailed. I consider what Milton describes through this work. And the great theme of this work is "free will and reason." I want to consider how different Satan and Eve are with regard to their respective crime.

In Chapter 4, I consider Milton and Satan's weakness. The charm of Satan was his humanity.

Finally, I summarize these ideas. I also want to discuss the problem of good and evil. Milton greatly enlarged this work with his creation and knowledge.