Master of Arts (1ST YEAR)

MA-101

ENGLISH

Directorate of Distance Education
Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology

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Subject	**English**
Course Code	**101 (Sem. I)**
Author	**Dr. Nutan Yadav**
Philip Sidney	**Unit : 01 (1550-1660)**

Lesson Structure

1.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

1.2 Introduction of Age (Metaphysical Period)

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86) was one of the finest poets of the English Renaissance and a pioneer of the sonnet form and English love poetry. At the time Sidney started writing; English literature had not achieved the eminence, it was to reach before the end of the sixteenth century. The century had begun in a positive way for literature: the War of the Roses was over, a vigorous, young Henry VIII was on the throne, and England seemed poised for literary greatness. Poets like John Skelton, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, were writing in the traditions of the Continental Renaissance. Then came the English Reformation and both political and cultural chaos descended on England. In the middle part of the century, poets began writing again, but most of them were not distinguished. The best of them was probably George Gascoigne. Then in 1579, a young poet named Edmund Spenser published *The Shepheardes Calender*, a series of twelve poems using a variety of verse forms, and a new age of English poetry was born. Significantly, *The Shepheardes Calender* was dedicated to Philip Sidney.

The major works written during the 1580s were Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, whose first three (of six) books were published in 1590, and the works of Sidney. Sonnet sequences became one of the most popular forms of poetry. Sequences were composed by such notable poets as Spenser (the *Amoretti*), Samuel Daniel (*Delia*), and Shakespeare.

In the sixteenth century, the sonnet was extraordinarily popular. In fact, for more than two centuries before Sidney wrote, the sonnet had been one of the favorite forms of Continental poets, largely because of the influence of the fourteenth-century Italian poet Petrarch. Petrarch wrote hundreds of sonnets, mostly about a woman named Laura.

1.3 Main Body of the Text

1.3.1 About the Poet

Sir Philip Sidney (1554 - 1586) was an English poet, courtier, scholar, and soldier who is remembered as one of the most prominent figures of the Elizabethan age. His works include Astrophel and Stella, The Defence of Poesy (also known as The Defence of Poetry or An Apology for Poetry), and The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia.

Like the best of the Elizabethans, Sidney was successful in more than one branch of literature, but none of his work appeared until after his death. His finest achievement was a sequence of 108 love sonnets. These owe much to Petrarch and Pierre de Ronsard in tone and style and place Sidney as the greatest Elizabethan sonneteer after Shakespeare. Written to his mistress, Lady Penelope Rich, though dedicated to his wife, they reveal true lyric emotion couched in a language delicately archaic. In form, Sidney usually adopts the Petrarchan octave (ABBAABBA), with variations in the sestet that include the English final couplet. His artistic contacts were more peaceful and significant for his lasting fame. During his absence from court, he wrote Astrophel and Stella (1591) and the first draft of The Arcadia and The Defence of Poesy. His pastoral romance The Arcadia (1598) is an intricate love story, embodying the ideals of medieval chivalry, so congenial to Sidney's spirit.

1.3.2 About the Poem

Many of Sidney's finest poems are to be found in his long sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella* – the first substantial sonnet sequence in English literature – but he wrote several other poems which are much-loved and widely anthologized. *Astrophil and Stella* is Sir Philip Sydney's renowned sonnet sequence, comprised of 108 sonnets and 11 songs. Although the inspiration for the sonnets is not known for certain, it is believed that the sequence is largely autobiographical and inspired by his relationship with Penelope Devereux, who is represented in the sequence by Stella. The introspective, self-analytical nature of Sydney's sonnets highly contrasts with the way Sydney was said to value his privacy throughout his life.

1.3.3 Critical Study of poem

In his work *Astrophil and Stella*, Sidney advanced the art of poetry through his use of intensely emotional and personal sonnets. In this work specifically, Sidney seems to break from his supposed private nature to allow his readers into his most personal thoughts and feelings. The 108 sonnets and 11 songs in this work are said to be somewhat autobiographical, representing Sidney's relationship with a woman named Penelope Devereux. This work is considered the first of the Elizabethan sonnet cycles.

- *Astrophil and Stella* exemplify the literary awareness characteristic of Sidney's work. In the sonnets below, Sidney seems to use literary awareness to create a parallel between the relationship between Astrophil and Stella and his relationship with writing. His allusions to literature and writing (particularly evident in the first sonnet selection) imply that he is using his poetry as an outlet to express his deep appreciation and love for writing. The idea that these poems are autobiographical, paired with Sidney's consistent allusions to literature, further supports the idea that Sidney is trying to express his appreciation for and love of literature through the sonnets in this work.
- Sidney also shows, through these sonnets, that writing is not simply a relationship between the writer and the work but rather a relationship between the writer and his audience. The emotions that Sidney portrays in his sonnets create an atmosphere of openness that does not seem to be present in any other facet of Sidney's life. In *Astrophil and Stella*, Sidney seems to use his writing to relate to his audience. He also seems to utilize writing as a way to express his deepest emotions– something he felt he could not do in any other aspect of his life.

MAJOR THEMES:

Sydney's poems in *Astrophil and Stella* followed, in many senses, the traditions of Petrarch and the Italian, French, and Spanish writers that imitated him. He played various emotional conditions against each other, such as hope and despair, fondness and resentment, bodily cravings, and spiritual longings. In this Sidney touches on a few main themes throughout the sonnet sequence. One of these themes is that of love versus desire. Throughout the sequence, Astrophil is shown as being madly in unreciprocated love with Stella. But this love quickly turns to desire that he cannot control, and ultimately leads to the downfall of their platonic relationship.

Another theme, and all-encompassing metaphor, is the difference between light and day as the difference between Stella being with Astrophil and not being with him, respectively. Even the name of the sequence and characters imply this metaphor, translating to "star-lover" and "star."

LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURE:

Sidney's poems in *Astrophil and Stella* can be categorized primarily as English sonnets. However, it is important to point out that his form throughout the story of *Astrophil and Stella* is constantly changing throughout the sequence, the first sonnet uses the rhyme scheme ABAB-ABAB-CDCD-EE, the second is ABBA-ABBA-CDCD-EE, and the fifth is ABAB-BCBC-DEDE-FF. This use of changing rhyme scheme could be a way of intensifying, or quickening, the plot to the climax of the story. In addition to the rhyme scheme, the structure of the individual lines varies in some of the poems. While most are in the form of iambic pentameter, some poems have lines with more syllables than others. For instance, in Sonnet 1, the lines are each twelve syllables long. Perhaps he is doing this intending to try to draw them out to portray the agony that Astrophil is trying to feel. Sidney also uses various metaphors throughout his sonnets, such as comparing love to a "freezing fire."

1.4 Further Body of the Text

Sonnet 1: 'Loving in truth'.

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,—
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,—
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;
Studying inventions fine her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburn'd brain …

One of **the best poems about writing poetry**, this sonnet, written in alexandrines or twelve-syllable lines, opens Sidney's great sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, a sequence of 108 sonnets – and a few songs – inspired by Sidney's unrequited love for Penelope Rich (nee Devereux), who was offered to him as a potential wife a few years before. Sidney turned her down, she married Lord Robert Rich, and Sidney promptly realized he was in love with her. In this sonnet, Sidney

searches for the best way to marshal his feelings and put them into words that will move 'Stella' that the poem consists of three sentences. The first eight lines comprise one long sentence, while the second and third sentences are each three lines long. Those first eight lines are also tied together by rhyme, for the rhyme scheme is a-b-a-b-a-b-a-b. The last six lines, however, have a rhyme scheme of c-d-c-d-e-e, which looks like a quatrain (four lines) and a couplet (two lines); but that rhyme scheme stands in a kind of counterpoint to the sense of the poem, since the sentences run c-d-c and d-e-e. Although we may not be conscious of this counterpoint as we read, it does affect our appreciation of the poems, especially since Sidney uses the technique quite frequently. It throws us ever so slightly off balance and calls our attention to the conclusions of the poems in a different way than a single couplet might. (Musically it is analogous to the use of the three-not figure, a triplet, against a two-note figure.)

The first line of the poem gives us a great deal of insight into what will follow in the whole sequence. Astrophel begins by telling us that he loves in truth. We may wonder exactly what that means, though it certainly sounds promising, then he says that he is "fain in verse my love to show." "Fain" means happy or obliged, and in either of those senses we get a picture of Astrophel wanting and needing to express his love in poetic form, but if we look again at the phrase "fain in verse," it is hard to believe that the pun on "feign" is unintentional. In other words, Astrophel may protest that he loves in truth, but his language indicates that "loving in truth" may be little more than a pose and he is feigning that love in his verse.

Astrophel's expectations for that verse are expressed in the next three lines, as he indicates what he wants to accomplish. Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesy*, says that poetry should do two things that lead to its ultimate purpose. It should delight and instruct. If it delights enough, people will want to read it and will therefore be more likely to learn what it teaches. But the ultimate aim of poetry, he says, is to move readers to virtuous action. People who read and are delighted enough to read more should learn what virtuous action is and, since it is more virtuous to perform virtuous actions than not to perform them, should be moved to perform them. Astrophel—*not* Sidney—uses similar reasoning. He wants Stella to find pleasure in his pain, that is, to enjoy reading the poetry in which he describes the pain he suffers because of his love. If she enjoys reading about pain, she will read more, which will make her know about his pain, which will make her pity him, which will move her to bestow grace on him. At first glance, this plan seems straightforward enough, but we must ask what

kind of woman would enjoy reading about someone else's pain. Does Astrophel think that Stella will enjoy his pain? Further, we must ask exactly what it is Astrophel hopes to obtain from her. He says "grace," but that is at best a vague term. Sidney, as a devout Christian, would have known that in a religious sense "grace" would have meant unmerited favor bestowed by God on human beings, but we may justifiably doubt that this is precisely the meaning that Astrophel has in mind. He may mean that what he hopes to attain is unmerited, but what does he hope to attain? He might mean that he simply wants her to look favorably on him, but that explanation hardly seems likely when we consider the bulk of *Astrophel and Stella*—even before we know what the poems say. More probably, he wants what all writers of love sonnets want, his lady's love. That love, of course, is almost invariably unattainable. After all, if the lady returned the speaker's love, there would be no reason for him to write more sonnets and he and his lady might be otherwise occupied, so love poetry flourishes as a result of unrequited love.

Sonnet 2 : 'With how sad steps'.

With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies;
How silently, and with how wan a face.
What, may it be that even in a heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries …

Explanation- In this, one of Sir Philip Sidney's most famous poems and the first of four poems from the '30s' in the sequence *Astrophil and Stella* to appear on this list, 'Astrophil' apostrophizes the pale moon in the night sky, wondering whether its pallor stems from hopeless love (as Astrophil's unhappiness down on Earth does). Sidney deftly steers his sonnet away from the sentimental excesses of courtly love poetry by introducing a note of bitterness in the final line, accusing the unimpressed Stella of 'ungratefulness'.

Sonnet 3: 'I might (unhappy word!), O me, I might'.

I might!—unhappy word—O me, I might,
And then would not, or could not, see my bliss;

Till now wrapt in a most infernal night,

I find how heav'nly day, wretch! I did miss …

Explanation- As we mentioned above, the poems numbered in the 30s in *Astrophil and Stella* yield several real classics of Renaissance poetry. Here, Sidney/Astrophil chastises himself for not having immediately fallen in love with Penelope/Stella; as we know from **the second sonnet in the sequence**, it was not 'love at first sight. If it had been, he could have wooed her and married her, and lived happily ever after: if only he had been more foolish (and fallen headlong into love right away) or wiser (and been able to forget her altogether), he would be happier now…

Sonnet 4 - 38: 'This night, while sleepe begins with heauy wings'.

This night, while sleep begins with heavy wings

To hatch mine eyes, and that unbitted thought

Doth fall to stray; and my chief powers are brought

To leave the cepter of all subject things:

The first that straight my fancy's error brings

Unto my mind, is *Stella*'s image; wrought

By *Love*'s own self, but with so curious draught,

That she, methinks, not only shines but sings …

Explanation- This is not quite so famous as some of the other poems on this list of classic Sidney poems, but we think it's a wonderful description of how love takes over our minds entirely, even during the hours of sleep: as Astrophil lies asleep, his 'fancy' conjures up an image of his beloved Stella – but she doesn't merely *shine*, she *sings* as well in this vivid dream of her. But then, when he wakes up, this delightful vision of Stella vanishes, and with it the ability to get back off to sleep. It's an experience every unhappy lover will have felt; but who has said it as well as Sidney does here?

5. Sonnet 39: 'Come sleep, O sleep'.

Come Sleep, O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,

The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,

The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,

The indifferent judge between the high and low …

Astrophil and Stella 5: It is most true, that eyes are formed to serve

It is most true, that eyes are formed to serve

The inward light; and that the heavenly part
Ought to be king, from whose rules who do swerve,
Rebels to Nature, strive for their own smart.
It is most true, what we call Cupid’s dart,
An image is, which for ourselves we carve;
And, fools, adore in temple of our heart,
Till that good god make Church and churchman starve.
True, that true beauty virtue is indeed,
Whereof this beauty can be but a shade,
Which elements with mortal mixture breed;
True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soul up to our country move;
True; and yet true, that I must Stella love.

Astrophil and Stella 64: No more, my dear, no more these counsels try

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
Oh, give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharg'd with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labour trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case,
But do not will me from my love to fly.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care though some above me sit;
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

Astrophil and Stella 21: Your words my friend (right healthful caustics) blame

Your words my friend (right healthful caustics) blame
My young mind marred, whom Love doth windlass so,
That mine own writings like bad servants show
My wits, quick in vain thoughts, in virtue lame,
That Plato I read for nought, but if he tame

Such coltish gyres, that to my birth I owe
Nobler desires, least else that friendly foe,
Great expectation, wear a train of shame.
For since mad March great promise made of me,
If now the May of my years much decline,
What can be hoped my harvest time will be?
Sure you say well, your wisdom's golden mine
Dig deep with learning's spade, now tell me this,
Hath this world ought so fair as Stella is?

Astrophil and Stella 14: Alas, have I not pain enough, my friend

Alas, have I not pain enough, my friend,
Upon whose breast a fiercer gripe doth tire
Than did on him who first stale down the fire,
While Love on me doth all his quiver spend,
But with your rhubarb words you must contend
To grieve me worse, in saying that Desire
Doth plunge my well-formed soul even in the mire
Of sinful thoughts, which do in ruin end?
If that be sin which doth the manners frame,
Well stayed with truth in word and faith of deed,
Ready of wit, and fearing naught but shame;
If that be sin which in fixed hearts doth breed
A loathing of all loose unchastity,
Then love is sin, and let me sinful be.

Astrophil and Stella 72: Desire, though thou my old companion

Desire, though thou my old companion art,
And oft so clings to my pure Love that I
One from the other scarcely can descry,
While each doth blow the fire of my heart,
Now from thy fellowship I needs must part;
Venus is taught with Dian's wings to fly;
I must no more in thy sweet passions lie;
Virtue's gold now must head my Cupid's dart.
Service and honor, wonder with delight,

Fear to offend, will worthy to appear,
Care shining in mine eyes, faith in my sprite:
These things are let me by my only dear;
But thou, Desire, because thou wouldst have all,
Now banished art. But yet alas

1.5 Check Your Progress

Short questions-

- **Critical appreciation of the poem 'Loving in Truth**
- **Critical appreciation of the Sonnet 31: 'With how sad steps'.**
- **Critical appreciation of the poem Sonnet 33: 'I might (unhappy word!), O me, I might' from Astrophel and Stella.**

Critical appreciation of the poem 'Loving in Truth'

One of the best poems about writing poetry, this sonnet, written in alexandrines or twelve-syllable lines, opens Sidney's great sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, a sequence of 108 sonnets – and a few songs – inspired by Sidney's unrequited love for Penelope Rich (nee Devereux), who was offered to him as a potential wife a few years before. Sidney turned her down, she married Lord Robert Rich, and Sidney promptly realized he was in love with her. In this sonnet, Sidney searches for the best way to marshal his feelings and put them into words that will move 'Stella' that the poem consists of three sentences. The first eight lines comprise one long sentence, while the second and third sentences are each three lines long. Those first eight lines are also tied together by rhyme, for the rhyme scheme is a-b-a-b-a-b-a-b. The last six lines, however, have a rhyme scheme of c-d-c-d-e-e, which looks like a quatrain (four lines) and a couplet (two lines); but that rhyme scheme stands in a kind of counterpoint to the sense of the poem, since the sentences run c-d-c and d-e-e. Although we may not be conscious of this counterpoint as we read, it does affect our appreciation of the poems, especially since Sidney uses the technique quite frequently. It throws us ever so slightly off balance and calls our attention to the conclusions of the poems in a different way than a single couplet might. (Musically it is analogous to the use of the three-not figure, a triplet, against a two-note figure.)

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that he is “fain in verse my love to show.” “Fain” means happy or obliged, and in either of those senses we get a picture of Astrophel wanting and needing to express his love in poetic form, but if we look again at the phrase “fain in verse,” it is hard to believe that the pun on “feign” is unintentional. In other words, Astrophel may protest that he loves in truth, but his language indicates that “loving in truth” may be little more than a pose and he is feigning that love in his verse.

- Astrophel’s expectations for that verse are expressed in the next three lines, as he indicates what he wants to accomplish. Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesy*, says that poetry should do two things that lead to its ultimate purpose. It should delight and instruct. If it delights enough, people will want to read it and will therefore be more likely to learn what it teaches. But the ultimate aim of poetry, he says, is to move readers to virtuous action. People who read and are delighted enough to read more should learn what virtuous action is and, since it is more virtuous to perform virtuous actions than not to perform them, should be moved to perform them. Astrophel—*not* Sidney—uses similar reasoning. He wants Stella to find pleasure in his pain, that is, to enjoy reading the poetry in which he describes the pain he suffers because of his love. If she enjoys reading about pain, she will read more, which will make her know about his pain, which will make her pity him, which will move her to bestow grace on him. At first glance, this plan seems straightforward enough, but we must ask what kind of woman would enjoy reading about someone else’s pain. Does Astrophel think that Stella will enjoy his pain? Further, we must ask exactly what it is Astrophel hopes to obtain from her. He says “grace,” but that is at best a vague term. Sidney, as a devout Christian, would have known that in a religious sense “grace” would have meant unmerited favor bestowed by God on human beings, but we may justifiably doubt that this is precisely the meaning that Astrophel has in mind. He may mean that what he hopes to attain is unmerited, but what does he hope to attain? He might mean that he simply wants her to look favorably on him, but that explanation hardly seems likely when we consider the bulk of *Astrophel and Stella*—even before we know what the poems say. More probably, he wants what all writers of love sonnets want, his lady’s love. That love, of course, is almost invariably unattainable. After all, if the lady returned the speaker’s love, there would be no reason for him to write more sonnets and he and his lady might be otherwise occupied, so love poetry flourishes as a result of unrequited love.

- **Critical appreciation of the Sonnet 31: 'With how sad steps'.**

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- **Critical appreciation of the poem Sonnet 33: 'I might (unhappy word!), O me, I might' from Astrophel and Stella.**

As we mentioned above, the poems numbered in the 30s in *Astrophil and Stella* yield several real classics of Renaissance poetry. Here, Sidney/Astrophil chastises himself for not having immediately fallen in love with Penelope/Stella; as we know from **the second sonnet in the sequence**, it was not 'love at first sight. If it had been, he could have wooed her and married her, and lived happily ever after: if only he had been more foolish (and fallen headlong into love right away) or wiser (and been able to forget her altogether), he would be happier now…

1.6 Summary

Sidney's poems in *Astrophil and Stella* can be categorized primarily as English sonnets. However, it is important to point out that his form throughout the story of *Astrophil and Stella* is constantly changing throughout the sequence– inspired by Sidney's unrequited love for Penelope Rich (*nee* Devereux), who was offered to him as a potential wife a few years before. Sidney turned her down, she married Lord Robert Rich, and Sidney promptly realized he was in love with her. How autobiographical the sonnets are is disputed, and many scholars are inclined towards thinking Sidney is adopting a persona in these poems.

1.7 Keywords

- Sonnet-a poem of fourteen lines is a sonnet
- Penelope-Sidney's girlfriend to whom he wanted to marry
- Unrequited love- love which is not achieved
- Prompted- excitedly
- Astophel- love in sonnet sequence
- Stella –beloved in the sonnet sequence

1.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- Discuss Philip Sidney as a love poet.
- Autobiographical elements in the poems of Philip Sidney

1.9 Answers to Your Progress

Philip Sidney As a Love Poet

Philip Sidney is indisputably one of the great early Elizabethans. It was his writing that made him a Renaissance man. His poems immortalized him and made him such a fascinating figure. Sidney helped to popularize Italian poetic forms such as the sonnet and make them the most popular and enduring forms in English poetry. Sidney produced dazzling sonnets remarkable for their innovation and variety and his sonnets influenced both the literature in the early modern period and on the development of Modern literature.

Sidney describes poetry as creating a separate reality removed from the world of everyday nuisances. These works are "imitation" or "fiction" made of the material of nature. Sidney penned several major works of Elizabethan ere including 'Astrophel and Stella. His "Defence of Poesy' is also a significant contribution to the genre of literary criticism. Sidney's influence on future writers could be analyzed from the standpoint of his handling of the utilitarian view of rhetoric that dominated Sidney's time. In his depth of sincerity and range of subjectivity, Sidney remains no less a greater than Shakespeare himself.

'Astrophel and Stella' is a true English sonnet sequence, characterized by a mixture of wit and sensibility of intellectual brilliance and temperamental ardor. It is a typical Petrarchan sonnet sequence. It is believed that the sequence is largely autobiographical and inspired by his relationship with **Penelope**. In the sonnet, one can find conflict between will and wit, heart and head, desire and reason. Through Astrophel and Stella, Sidney presents a new perspective on love. It touched off a vogue of late Elizabethan sonnet writing that climaxed in William Shakespeare's s great cycle. It represents one of the most genial and original literary expressions of a true poet's profound emotion of love. Sidney's sequence is thus, one of the most influential works in the annals of English literature.

Sir Philip Sidney as a poet is found opposed to all poetic conventions and affectations even when he adheres to the primary forms and generic qualities of

contemporary English Poetry. These sonnets are free from the artificiality of conventional poetic works and are distinctly sincere. As seen in his sonnet Loving in Truth, certain traits of his personality emerge significantly. It is the first poem in his sequence, "Astrophel and Stella" and seems to contain the bearings of his love style.

Sidney, the celebrated ideal courtly poet of the Elizabethan age, reportedly had a love relationship with Penelope Devereux His Astrophel and Stella tells the story of the poet –Astrophel's unrequited love for Stella, a high-born and virtuous woman. Loving in Truth the first sonnet from the cycle conveys the changing emotions of Astrophel, in whose voice the poem is written toward Stella.

Sidney says that there are poets who hunt dictionaries for rhyming and alternative words. They use long rows of alliterations, their poems are entirely artificial, they are merely 'rhyming and versifying 'as the poet calls such poems elsewhere. Sidney arises such poets to sham such artificial ways; name and fame can never be by such deities. Rather they should seek inspiration from their feelings and emotions. They should look into their own heart and write. The poet himself intends to do so. This beloved Stella lives in his heart he would seek inspiration from her. His Stella would inspire him and be inspired by her. He would be able to write great poetry.

To win Stella's love, he wants to tell the beloved about the pain in his heart, which would perhaps arouse pity in her for the poet. He writes:

She might take some pleasure of my pain; pleasure might cause her to read, reading might make her know knowledge might pity win and pity grace obtain.

This property is not just inspiration as impulsive but it is a long struggle with words emotions and feelings.

Love is a common theme in Renaissance poetry dominating the writings of nearly all great writers of the time. Sir, Philip Sidney is one of the most celebrated writers of this period who can create love poems at their highest level. His sonnet cycle Astrophil and Stella shows the spectrum of love in its many different shades and colors in the relation between Astrophil and Stella. Although the question of love and its various meanings is more or less self-evident in Sir Philip Sidney's poetry. He effectively creates in his works anatomy of love. He lays bare to us the mind and the psychological voyage. He shows the readers the wounder caused by the armor of love.

He shows us that the expression of love has no pattern or convention, asset model. Through Astrophil and Stella Sidney is presenting a new perspective of love.

Sidney analysis love in all its different facets and stages. A brief look at 'Astrophil and Stella' shows that many words are employed dealing with beauty. Stella is presented as the incarnation of beauty. Sidney refers to her beloved as princess of beauty throughout the sonnet poet unveils his love for Stella through worshipping her beauty. For him, she is a symbol of earthly perfection the source of elegance and grace in his life. She is an unattainable angel, a heavenly entity, a goddess an inspiration for all human endeavors.

Poet pays much attention to Stella's facial beauty for instance:-

Stella's look on and from her heavenly face sent forth the beams which made so fair my race. He calls her face kissed- worthy 'he is not convinced by such descriptions and goes further

He compares Stella's forehead to alabaster, her hair to gold, her mouth too red per pair, her teeth to the earl, her cheeks to red and white marble, and her eyes to the windows through which the most beautiful things can be seen.

In his celebration of Stella's natural beauty, the poet goes beyond this world and enters the realm of myth. Thus he expresses worldly poems of his love.

Sidney expresses the platonic philosophy of love in his sonnets. Sidney in the poem reveals that virtue. One of the main platonic values of love is an obstacle to the free development of his will. The rejection of virtue is in itself an attack against the established moral precepts. The lover emphasizes his rebellious attitude when he associates it with churches as schools. Declaring himself not fit for such a high level as the poet is the heart. He refers in religious terms to a love that is for from beings religious feeling as platonic love is considered. Once he has revealed the material nature of his love the lover says that virtue will fall in love with his beloved. In the poem, the lover seems to accept the platonic perception that pure love comes into the senses directly towards the heart or soul. These are the organs that relate love to the divinity those whose position remains forever in the senses, rebel to nature, and suffer the anxiety that is provoked by dissatisfaction. The poet establishes a correspondence between beauty and virtue. This irony transforms the preceding lines into a mocking of the precepts they proclaim.

In the poems, Sidney lists a series of truths.

- first, we are born to serve reason alone

- second lovers have only themselves to blame for falling prey to the error of the love God cupid
- third virtue is beauty in its true form rather than the superficial appearance that is usually regarded as beauty.
- The final truth in the poem is that people are only pilgrims on this earth.
- So they concentrate on their souls

Even though the poet recognizes the truth of all of these statements, he is unable to separate his rational understanding from the love in his heart. Despite his knowledge of all of these truths, he concludes that he still loves Stella. His love for her is"True" frequently in the sonnet to play with the reader's mind and to with the meaning of the term.

According to Greek mythology, the nine muses had control over the arts and senses and they inspire in these areas of the subject.

The nine muses include muse of epic poetry, muse of love poetry, muse of history, muse of music, muse of tragedy. muse of sacred poetry, muse of loves, and muse of comedy. In the first sonnet, the muse that the narrator is looking for inspiration is the muse of love poetry to win her love. In the last line:

"fool, look in the heart and write erato, reminds the poet to write straight from his heart in his own words. The poet himself says that Stella is his muse who lives in his heart. She is the source of his poetic inspiration. He hopes that inspired by her, he will write noble poetry.

In the sonnet, '**Alas have I not pain enough my friend'** Sidney conveys the experience of a man living in truth by placing Astraphil.

By love, he becomes increasingly at odds with society until he remains alone in physical and spiritual darkness. In the sonnet, he confesses that the desire plunges his soul in the miles of sinful thoughts which do in the routine end; yet he defends his sinful state. The agony of love is displayed with a sharper awareness than before. In the last six lines of the sonnet, there are two divisions of three lines each. Each division opens with an "if the argument, the first occupying all three lines, the second two, with the "then" answer to both coming in the final line. The gist of both "if" arguments are that the speaker loves Stella enables him in every way: firstly it makes him a better gentleman, more truthful, faithful rise and discreet. Secondly in his

single-minded devotion makes him “loathe all lose unchastity” this is the key to the black-in–white and up–in–down an argument that ends the poem.

The love, he envisions with Stella is of course sinful by any conventional view, the very opposite of faithfulness, truth, chastity but by his reason it is more than love because Stella is a fixed star of his devotion. he even tells his friend that

‘**that if to love is sin, he would like to be sinful’**

In sonnet 18, the friend of Astrophil blames him for his excessive love for Stella. He is concerned about his behavior. The sonnet defends Astrophil against the attack of an outside observer. This sonnet does not agree violently with love. Astrophil simply listens to the criticism of the outside observer and then moves on, unchanged in his affection. Artrophil believes that what his friend says might be right. But he asks his friend if this world is as beautiful as Stella is.

The sonnet opens abruptly and in the middle of a conversation, Astrophil is talking to a friend. That friend has rebuked Astrophil for wasting his time on love. His arguments are not rationally disputed. He tells Astrophil that the whole affair is improper for a man of good birth. Education and high moral purposes mean a lot in life. He urges Astrophil to read Plato as a cure for love. Plato teaches the young lovers to sublimate their desires and aspires for higher things in love. Astrophil agrees with him and is aware that love disgraces him but he cannot abandon his love. This love for Stella has made him mad. He praises Stella on most glorious terms. It is her work that has aroused love in him.

In a world that is as beautiful as Stella, Astrophil will go on loving her. He simply ignores his friend's criticism.

In the sequence, Astrophil is attracted to and in pursuit of a married woman called Stella. On stealing the first kiss from Stella while she is asleep, the male protagonist worries about her reaction. But later on, chides himself for not taking advantage of the situation. He, being constantly refused, feels anger and does not wait too long before trying to seduce her yet again. Sidney is using the Astrophil journey from hope to despair as a fictional device for the analysis of human desire in calculative terms. Sidney tries to several desired love of Astrophil for Stella.

Sidney’s technique

Sidney was a great experimenter with word forms and stanza patterns, he understood the technical peculiarity of the sonnet from which had fallen into disuse after Wyatt and Surrey. The expression of a complex personality was the driving force of

Sidney's sonnets, so marks and diction in his poems, display extraordinary range and flexibility. Wyatt and Surrey had been largely concerned with the primary need to avoid a standard poetic diction and standard verse rhythms. For them, the simple epithets and the purest English terms were the best. Sidney had already understood the rudiments of their technique in the sonnets of Arcadia. Now he was free to strike out for himself and invent his idioms.

In Aterophil and Stella, he coined such compounds words as rose embarked skies, post praise hue long with love acquainted eyes, and indulged in elaborate wordplay and alliteration. Figures of speech are rhetorical devices used by writers to give words meaning beyond their usual literal definition Sidney has.

In the first sonnet, the word 'pain' has a double meaning. In one sense it refers to the pains of love and in another sense, it refers to the hardships of creative writing.

Thus from the beginning to the end, Sidney's sonnets are filled with such devices.

The more striking feature of Sidney in his use of colloquialism and current speech rhythms Wyath too had practiced these methods in his sonnets, but he was never so confident of his medium as to ring the changes we find in 'Astrophil and Stella'.

'Guess we the cause what is it thus fie no: or so much lays. how then sure this' It is Sidney's meters are closely associated with speech rhythms.

'Fly fly my friends I have my death wound and further let her go soft but here she comes to go to'.

Sidney is not always concerned with articulating the moods and passions of Astrophil. Sometimes the words and meters seek to represent the personality of Stella. As of some unspecified friend who advises as perhaps of an allegorical figure: they talk argue, just plead or remonstrate, according to the requirements of the situation. But whoever speaks it is the poet's ego that we are eventually returned for self-analysis, self-pity, and self-congratulation.

Sidney's approach is different from Shakespeare's sonnets to his friend. Both poets employ dramatic techniques, but Shakespeare's interests are extraverted, while for Sidney, it is the inner subjective drama that matters. The outstanding exceptions Appeared in some sonnets where the poet 's imagination turns to consider the inanimate world. The diction and meter are subdued to the intrinsic qualities of sleep, the moon the highway, and the river.

Come sleep O, sleep the certain knot of peace, the bathing place of wit the balm of woe the poor man's wrath, the prisoner's release

In these lines, Sidney's diction is full of hypnotic suggestions. It is a perfect piece of spell bounding with its powerful and sustained evocations of all that sleep signifies.

To mankind, and here where his impersonal outlook predominates, metrical regularity is nicely maintained.

Sidney employed a defer variation of rhyme scheme in 108 sonnets of the sequence.

There are four types of an octave and six types of a sestet with fourteen different contractions of rhyme. On the other hand, verse structure follows quite well-marked lines in three sonnets, the octave followed the Petrarchan rhyme scheme. But it was subdivided by syntax into more marked quatrain units than the Italian form. The sestet diverged completely. It was constructed on two principles. A perfect division is set up by the syntax and a quatrain and couplet division is established by rhyme. Fifty-nine sonnets in the sequence follow some pattern, with its octave rhyme scheme (ab, ba, abba) and its interlocking technique in the sestet, (cdc,dee). In other sonnets, the octave variants show no serious departure in basic stricture. They stress the quatrain subdivision with some emphasis but they present the integral rhyme scheme of the octave. Concerning sestet structure.

The remaining sonnets repeat the pattern of the majority group and four show only the insignificant variant adds,cee. This rhyme scheme is generally reserved for the lighter poems of the sequence with its two sets of a rhyming couplet. It produces a somewhat joint impression and has not had the subtlety of the staple interlocking technique.

The staple sonnet form of Astrophil and Stella is not a modification of surrey's English as of Petrarch's Italian models, and certainly not a compromise between the two. In all probability, it was suggested by the maturer sonnets of Wyatt. It was Wyatt who set forth the arrangement of quatrain and couplet in sestet following an integral rhyme scheme in the octave for the most part Wyatt's sonnet is built upon clear-out emotional contrasts. Between his mistress, behavior, and his own between his misery and the joys of others. For Sidney, emotional states were also intellectual and spiritual dilemmas too required analysis and definition. He built upon the technical foundations laid by but explained their potent analytics more fully than the earlier poet. Sidney's

sonnet is neither a strict Petrarchan sonnet nor a strict Shakespearean sonnet but contains elements of both including a recognized octet and a final couplet. A Petrarchan has always been the central theme of the devotion of love dedicated to the lady. love has remained a prominent feature of a typical Petrarchan sonnet. Sir Philip Sidney's loving in truth is also a conventional Petrarchan sonnet naturally inspired by the theme of ideal love. the poet ‘s love is intense deep but he cannot attain his lady’s favor. The sonnet is a true love poem based on the Petrarchan convention of treating the theme of love.

In the sonnet “Not at first sight, nor with a dribbed shot “ Philip Sidney rejects the Petrarchan convention of love, at first sight, the poet says his love for Stella is not love at first sight. This love did not happen when he laid his eyes on her not did this love take birth when he was that by cupid’s arrow it was more gradual than that forced. This love grew gradually till it had full conquest.

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Only liked and eventually beloved it was not what he had thought that love would command of him but he did as he was required to do by love.

In short, Sidney wants to say that Stella's love made him a slave. He was unexpectedly full for her and now he is trapped. She has complete control and this pains him.

The structure also enumerates the songs, which have a significant place in further explicating the course of events. Some reflect Astrophil’s idolatrous and basic phenoms nature song is about the stolen kiss, some is a praise of the power of music is

the conversation between the hero and heroine in which she rejects his advances and song to evoke Astrophil desperation.

Autobiographical touch

The autobiographical note is Astrophil and Stella is a hotly debated issue. According to W.A wrangler.

Sidney went out of his way to identify himself as Astrophil and Stella as lady rich and even wrote three sonnets to reveal her married name but though the poems are autobiographical the details are highly selected and most of Sidney's known public and private activities are passed over in silence. Nor are they like many other collections of sonnets a series of were epistles designed to gain the favor of the lady. There is no evidence that the sonnets were ever sent to Stella herself indeed many of them were inappropriate for her eyes there would have even no point in having her guess her name and no lover attempting to gain favor would tell his mistress of his cynical selves to break her consent. Stella herself is not directly addressed until sonnet 30, and only occasionally addressed thereafter. Astrophil is the central figure everything is presented from his point of view. He addresses a variety of persons, things, or personifications. Sometimes he communes with himself. The poems then are a series of conversations or speeches.

There are definite stages in the progress of Sidney’s courtship and thus he has given the sequence a greater overall unity than most Elizabethan sequences have. There is some physical activity in these sequence accounts of tournaments of a stolen kiss clandestine meetings but the essential action is internal and concerns the play of thought and the workings of emotion. These sonnets are broadly tried into three parts marked by shifts in the attitude of Astrophil himself. The first part presents the reactions of a sensitive young man in love. He finds nothing pleasant in it and calls it slavery hell and poison:

I call it to praise to suffer tyranny: and now employ the remnant of my wit. To make myself believe that all is well while with a feeling skill I paint my hell.

There is a conflict between will and wit, heart and head desire and reason which tears his soul to pieces. He is aware that his love is vain and disgraces him but he cannot free himself from it and gives sophisticated arguments to justify his thraldom, to pour that by reason good, good reasons her to love. Ture that on earth we are but pilgrims made and should in the soul.

Astrophil equates passion with virtue and insists that it was the lady's known worth that first caused him to love her. As a philosopher with the toothache he perceives that no amount of reasoning will ease the pain:

Virtue awake beauty but beauty is I may I must I can I will I do Leave following that which it is going to just let her go soft but here she comes.

Astrophil again all over himself to believe that Stella, a mortal woman as she can let virtue incarnate and that virtue in her is made strong by beauty's might:

Where love is chasteness pain both learn delight and humbleness grows one with charity. The consequences of changes in Astrophil 's attitude are shown in the second tournament sonnet in the first tournament sonnet he had won the prize he said because he was inspired by Stella's eyes but in the second tournament he is so birthed by her sight that he forgets to fight and makes a complete fool of himself. Now he gives overall protestation and goes in real pursuit of Stella. A change also occurs in Stella previously she had been.

And unresponsive. Now she begs him, like a true platonist to show his love by overcoming desire, she confesses to loving him in return, but urges him in his interests to renounce her:

I enjoyed but straight thus watered was my wine: that love she did but loved a love, not bling which would not let me whom she loved decline from the nobler course but for my birth and mind finally Stella accepted him as her lover on condition that he take a virtuous course, the result is a phase of jubilation hectic and not without on undercurrent of fear.

Astrophil hopes that Stella will go to bed in a meeker mood and celebrated her visible charms concluding with the flattering remark that his maiden muse both blesh to tell the best. He denounces her husband suggesting that it would be no more than justice to secure his wife.

It is of short duration for soon. Te clamors of desire, the old companion makes themselves heard again. Stello grants further concessions but at last, mention is made of physical separation:

To conclude, the sonnets are certainly autobiographical but this sequence is in no sense a diary because in it Sidney has not written about the full range of his interests.

Like other sonnet sequences, Astrophil and Stella concentrate primarily on attitudes and states of mind whereby all the poems central on a single all abuorbing

experience in this case Astrophil's obsessive and rejected love. The autobiographical element is evident and the sonnet voiceASidney's desires regrets and conflicts of conscience, which resulted from the social pressures and moral restraints of his time. even though the reverberating theme of the poem is one of moral bleakness it was nevertheless greatly admired and appellate by the righteous and virtuous Elizabethans because of the conventions it adhered to. As the didactical element, and the complementing structural features.

Along with frank subjectivity and intense sincerity, Astrophil and Stella are enriched with rich imagination a characteristic gift of the renaissance. Thematically the poem is an open admission of the poet 's futile efforts to please his beloved through were offerings. Love is seen as an ideal that requires selfless dedication and earnest yearning Sidney's tone is animated with an idealistic which is free from egoism. The singleness of motion, about love that characterized the Petrarchan sonnet, is also found in the poem.

Sidney's poems represent one of the most genial and original literary expressions of a true poet 's profound emotion of love.

SONNETS FROM ASTROPHEL OF STELLA

Sir Philip Sidney was considered as one of the most influential figures of the Elizabethan age . after Shakespeare's sonnets, Sidney's astrophel and Stella are considered the finest of the elizabethan sonnet cycle. Sidney was also known for his literary criticism known as ''The Defence of Poesy", all though he shared his writing with his close friends he did not allow his work to be published during his lifetime. Sidney is said to have had an elaborate and expensive funeral procession. as a beloved courtier, Sidney was mourned throughout England. He was not only an influential writer and advocate of the arts but also embodied the characteristics of "an ideal courtier". In Spenser's view.

The world 's late wonder, and heaven's new joy.

The words for Sidney meant exactly what they said, what the poet sincerely felt. In his work Astrophel and Stella. Sidney.

"Astrophel and Stella" is considered as most important sonnet sequence of the Elizahethan Sonnet cycle. In this work, Sidney seems to break from his supposed private nature to allow his readers into his most personal thoughts and feelings. Sidney's relationship with a woman named Penelope Devereux is revealed by Astrophel and Stella. Exemplifies the literary awareness characteristic of Sidney's

work. this sonnet sequence tells the story of Astrophil whose name means star-lover and his hopeless passion for Stella his beloved means a star. Nevertheless, Sidney and Penelope seem to have met at court around the time of her marriage, and his feelings for her developed. Sonnets are rhymed usually on the theme of love, and this sonnet sequence portrays the theme of love between astrophel and Stella.

Sir Philip Sidney is one of the most celebrated writers who can create love poems at their highest level. His sonnet cycle astrophel and Stella shows the spectrum of love in its many different shades and colors in the relation between astrophel the star loves and Stella.

Renaissance fully dominated the writings of nearly all great writers of the time and Sir Philip is among all those writers. Sidney effectively creates in his work anatomy of love. He analyses love in all its different facets and stages. He lays bare to the mechanism of love. In the very first sonnet of this sequence, Astrophil begins his passage through the path of his love for his star. Sidney tables through a cause and effect series that describes his state. The poet shows Astrophil's desire and struggles to express his love for Stella. He also describes the eventual failure that Astrophil faces in this endeavor. He says:

"Knowledge might pity winner and pity grace obtain"

As the poet wanted his beloved to know his condition by reading his sonnets. Reading will bring her to the knowledge. Of his deplorable state by which he hopes to be able to gain pity. Pity he hopes will then gain him the grace. Eventually, he hopes to win her love by seeming.

Changed into the desire of getting his beloved at any cost. He wanted his beloved in his life at the age of "love for desire" later it got changed into the platomic love of the poet, after the marriage of his beloved.

"Astrophel and Stella" is a tragic love story. Sidney has followed humans' literary theory in attributing a fictional but credible love affair to real characters. Sidney's picture of love is however unorthodox one about country poetry. Astrophil 's debate with himself about love is new in contemporary terms. The poet says that the only way to truly express one's love is not by the use of common connection and prose, rather only by looking into one's own heart. Throughout the sequence, Astrophil is shown as being madly in unreciprocated love with Stella. But this love quickly turns to desire that he can not control and ultimately leads to the downfall of their platonic love. In a nutshell, sir Philip Sidney can be called a love poet

concerning the sonnet sequence “Astrophil and Stella “ as he desires their platonic love of Astrophil.

Sidney’s ‘Astrophil and Stella is one of the best sonnet sequences in the Elizabethan sonnet cycle with an autobiographical touch in it. This is a sonnet sequence of a “star-lover and star” as from the time of their first appearance, these sonnets were recognized as containing autobiographical material. Astrophel, the young courtier politician, bears a clear resemblance to Sidney and sometimes identifies himself with his creator. Stella on the other side was generally accepted as the pseudonym of lady rich born Penelope Devereux.

All though it is easy to exaggerate the autobiographicla element in Astrophil and Stella's sonnets, there is little doubt about the identity of the two main characters of the title. “Stella” is Penelope Duereux, the beautiful daughter of the first Earl of Essex. The earl's dying wish was for Penelope to marry Sidney but at that time she was too young to marry and later got married to Robert, the third born of rich. Although the inspiration for the sonnets is not known for certain, it is believed that the sequence is largely autobiographical and inspired by his relationship with them.

Astrophil and Stella an autobiographical sonnet sequence

Generally,’ Astrophel and Stella' tracks the development of a love affair. Throughout the sequence of poems, the protagonist and narrator astrophel falls in love with the beautiful Stella, a woman who is virtuous, intelligent, and his idealized partner in life. The relationship between the two becomes dramatic and complicated as the sequence continues. The autobiographical element in the sequence is seen at its best. The poet can relate the storyline of the sequence with his life and therefore the sonnet sequence can be said as full of autobiographical touch.

Since the publication of “Astrophel and Stella,” some sonnets were recognized as containing autobiographical elements. Astrophil ‘s singleness of purpose is quickly rewarded and he sees signs of hope in some sonnets. Sidney is not always concerned with articulating the moods and passions of astrophel. the sense of autobiographical touch is not fully seen in every sonnet of this sequence but some of it.

Compactly, it can truly be said that a mirror of an autobiographical element can purely.

The structure of Astrophel and Stella is somewhat different from that of the sonnets of William Shakespeare Sidney was following the pattern in amorous poetry set by Petrarch, who in his sonnet celebrated his beloved under the name of “Stella”.

Many people simply called “Astrophel and Stella as a typical Petrarchan sonnet sequence filled with the Petrarchan conventions of love and desire. But Sidney presents a new perspective on love, one that is quite different from that of Petrarch Wyatt and many other poots.

Sidney did experiments with verse forms and stanza- patterns. He understood the technical peculiarity of the sonnet from which had fallen into disuse after Wyatt and Surrey. Meter and diction in his poems display an extraordinary range and flexibility.

Sidney employs a clever variation in rhyme schemes. In 108 sonnets of the sequence, there are four types of octave and six types of sestet with fourteen different combinations of rhyme. Sidney used different rhyme schemes in his different sonnets of.

Thus we see that Sidney has employed various techniques in his sonnet sequence.

2.10 Suggested Readings

- MacArthur, J., Critical Contexts of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella, and Spenser's Amoretti (Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 1989). ISBN 0-920604-45-5
- Parker, Tom W.N, Proportional Form in the Sonnets of the Sidney Circle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
- Young, R.B., Three Studies in the Renaissance: Sidney, Jonson, Milton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958).

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 101	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Unit :02 (1550-1660)	
Dr. Faustus By Christopher Marlowe	

Lesson Structure

2.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

2.2 Introduction

Introduction of Age (Renaissance Period)

The term *Renaissance*, deriving from the French for "rebirth," is a name retroactively bestowed by 19th-century thinkers, who distinguished the era by its revivals: a renewed interest in ancient languages, the recovery of antique manuscripts, and the return to the classical ideals underlying the era's defining intellectual movement, Renaissance humanism.

It was an era of dynamism, excitement, and change. Human beings reached out toward new ideas and new goals and extended themselves beyond the limits of what they thought they could achieve.

The Renaissance was characterized first by the growth of humanism, the centrality of the human being, and human achievements. Renaissance writers, thinkers, and artists focused their attention on what it means to be human. Writers explored the human condition. Artists painted the human body in new and creative ways. Thinkers explored the inner workings of the human mind, human relationships, and human society. Even as Renaissance people were looking inward at themselves, though, they were also looking backward toward the past. The Renaissance was a time of rediscovery of classical Greek.

2.3 Main body of the text

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)

1.3.1 About the Dramatist

Christopher Marlowe was an English playwright, poet, and translator of the Elizabethan era. He is counted among the most famous Elizabethan dramatist. He was the first to achieve critical notoriety for his use of 'blank verse' which became the standard for the era. His plays are distinguished by their protagonists. Themes found

within his literary works have been noted as humanistic with realistic emotions and his catering to the taste of his Elizabethan audience for generous displays of extreme physical violence, cruelty, and bloodshed. While his literary career lasted less than six years and his life only 29 years, his achievement ensures his lasting legacy.

Various conspiracy theories have been related to the death of Marlowe but the real reason for Marlowe's death is still debated. But what is not debated is Marlow's literary importance, as he is Shakespeare's most important predecessor and is second only to Shakespeare himself in the realm of Elizabethan tragic drama.

Six dramas have been attributed to the authorship of Christopher Marlowe either alone or in collaboration with other writers, with varying degrees of evidence. The writing sequence or chronology of these plays is mostly unknown

Plays

Works (The dates of composition are approximate).:

- *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (*c.* 1585–1587; possibly co-written with Thomas Nashe; printed 1594)
- *Tamburlaine*; Part I (*c.* 1587), Part II (*c.* 1587–1588; printed 1590)
- *The Jew of Malta* (*c.* 1589–1590; printed 1633)
- *Doctor Faustus* (*c.* 1588–1592; printed 1604 & 1616)
- *Edward II* (*c.* 1592; printed 1594
- *The Massacre at Paris* (*c.* 1593; printed *c.* 1594)

Some important plays of Marlowe are-

1. The Jew of Malta

'The Jew of Malta' (fully The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta), with a prologue delivered by a character representing Machiavelli, depicts the Jew Barabas, the richest man on all the island of Malta. His wealth is seized, however, and he fights the government to regain it until his death at the hands of Maltese soldiers.
The play swirls with religious conflict, intrigue, and revenge, and is considered to have been a major influence on Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. The title character, Barabas, is seen as the main inspiration for Shakespeare's Shylock character in *Merchant*. The play is also considered the first (successful) Black comedy, or tragicomedy.

Barabas is a complex character who has provoked mixed reactions in audiences, and there has been extensive debate about the play's portrayal of Jews (as with Shakespeare's *Merchant*). Filled with unseemly characters, the play also ridicules

oversexed Christian monks and nuns and portrays a pair of greedy friars vying for Barabas' wealth. *The Jew of Malta* in this way is a fine example of what Marlowe's final four works are in part known for controversial themes.

2. Edward the Second

The historical 'Edward the Second' *(fully* The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragical Fall of Proud Mortimer*)* is a play about the deposition of England's King Edward II by his barons and the queen, all of whom resent the undue influence the king's men have over his policies.

'Edward the Second' is a tragedy featuring a weak and flawed monarch, and it paved the way for Shakespeare's more mature histories, such as Richard II, Henry IV, *and* Henry V.

It is the only Marlowe plays whose text can be reliably said to represent the author's manuscript, as all of Marlowe's other plays were heavily edited or simply transcribed from performances, and the original texts were lost to the ages.

3. The Massacre at Paris

'The Massacre at Paris' is a short and lurid work, the only extant text of which was likely a reconstruction from memory, or "reported text," of the original performance. Because of its origin, the play is approximately half the length of Edward the Second, The Jew of Malta, and each part of Tamburlaine, and comprises mostly bloody action with little depth of characterization or quality verse. For these reasons, the play has been the most neglected of Marlowe's oeuvre.

Massacre portrays the events of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, in which French royalty and Catholic nobles instigated the murder and execution of thousands of protestant Huguenots. Interestingly, the warning comes from a character referred to as "English Agent," a character who has been thought to be Marlowe himself, representing his work with the queen's secret service.

2.3.2 About the book

Doctor Faustus

Marlowe's most famous play is '*The Tragically History of Doctor Faustus*', but, as is the case with most of his plays, it has survived only in a corrupt form, and when Marlowe wrote it has been a topic of debate.

Based on the German '*Faustbuch*' *Doctor Faustus* is acknowledged as the first dramatized version of the Faust legend, in which a man sells his soul to the devil

in exchange for knowledge and power. While versions of the story began appearing as early as the 4th century, Marlowe deviates significantly by having his hero unable to repent and have his contract annulled at the end of the play. He is warned to do so throughout by yet another Marlowe variation of the retelling--a Good Angel--but Faustus ignores the angel's advice continually.In the end, Faustus finally seems to repent for his deeds, but it is either too late or just simply irrelevant, as Mephistopheles collects his soul, and it is clear that Faustus exits to hell with him.

2.4. Further Body of the text

2.4.1 Character list of the play.

Dr. Faustus

The protagonist Faustus is a brilliant sixteenth-century scholar from Wittenberg, Germany, whose ambition for knowledge, wealth, and worldly might makes him willing to pay the ultimate price—his soul—to Lucifer in exchange for supernatural powers. Faustus's initial tragic grandeur is diminished by the fact that he never seems completely sure of the decision to forfeit his soul and constantly wavers about whether or not to repent. His ambition is admirable and initially awesome, yet he ultimately lacks a certain inner strength. He is unable to embrace his dark path wholeheartedly but is also unwilling to admit his mistake.

Mephastophilis

He is a devil whom Faustus summons with his initial magical experiments. Mephastophilis's motivations are ambiguous: on the one hand, his oft-expressed goal is to catch Faustus's soul and carry it off to hell; on the other hand, he actively attempts to dissuade Faustus from making a deal with Lucifer by warning him about the horrors of hell. Mephastophilis is ultimately as tragic a figure as Faustus, with his moving, regretful accounts of what the devils have lost in their eternal separation from God and his repeated reflections on the pain that comes with damnation.

- **Old Man**

An enigmatic figure appears in the final scene. The old man urges Faustus to repent and to ask God for mercy. He seems to replace the good and evil angels, who, in the first scene, try to influence Faustus's behavior.

- **Good Angel**

It is a spirit that urges Faustus to repent for his pact with Lucifer and return to God. Along with the old man and the bad angel, the good angel represents, in many ways, Faustus's conscience and divided will between good and evil.

- **Evil Angel**

It is a spirit that serves as the counterpart to the good angel and provides Faustus with reasons not to repent for sins against God. The evil angel represents the evil half of Faustus's conscience.

- **Lucifer**

He is the prince of devils, the ruler of hell, and Mephastophilis's master.

- **Wagner**

He is Faustus's servant. Wagner uses his master's books to learn how to summon devils and work magic.

- **Clown**

He is a clown who becomes Wagner's servant. The clown's antics provide comic relief; he is a ridiculous character, and his absurd behavior initially contrasts with Faustus's grandeur. As the play goes on, though, Faustus's behavior comes to resemble that of the clown.

- **Robin**

An ouster, or innkeeper, who, like the clown, provides a comic contrast to Faustus. Robin and his friend Rafe learn some basic conjuring, demonstrating that even the least scholarly can possess skill in magic. Marlowe includes Robin and Rafe to illustrate Faustus's degradation as he submits to simple trickery such as theirs.

- **Rafe**

He is an ouster and a friend of Robin. Rafe appears as Dick (Robin's friend and a clown) in B-text editions of *Doctor Faustus*.

- **Valdes and Cornelius**

They are two friends of Faustus, both magicians, who teach him the art of black magic.

- **Horse-courser**

A horse-trader who buys a horse from Faustus, which vanishes after the horse-courser rides it into the water, leading him to seek revenge.

- **The Scholars**

They are Faustus's colleagues at the University of Wittenberg. Loyal to Faustus, the scholars appear at the beginning and end of the play to express dismay at the turn Faustus's studies have taken, to marvel at his achievements, and then to hear his agonized confession of his pact with Lucifer.

- **The pope**

He is the head of the Roman Catholic Church and a powerful political figure in the Europe of Faustus's day. The pope serves as both a source of amusement for the play's Protestant audience and a symbol of the religious faith that Faustus has rejected.

- **Emperor Charles V**

The most powerful monarch in Europe, whose court Faustus visits.

- **Knight**

He is a German nobleman at the emperor's court. The knight is skeptical of Faustus's power, and Faustus makes antlers sprout from his head to teach him a lesson. The knight is further developed and known as Benvolio in B-text versions of *Doctor Faustus*; Benvolio seeks revenge on Faustus and plans to murder him.

2.4.2 Chapter wise summary

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Prologue

The Chorus, a single actor, enters and introduces the plot of the play. It will involve neither love nor war, he tells us but instead will trace the "form of Faustus'

fortunes" (Prologue.8). The Chorus chronicles how Faustus was born to lowly parents in the small town of Rhode, how he came to the town of Wittenberg to live with his kinsmen, and how he was educated at Wittenberg, a famous German university. After earning the title of doctor of divinity, Faustus became famous for his ability to discuss theological matters. The Chorus adds that Faustus is "swollen with cunning" and has begun to practice necromancy, or black magic (Prologue.20). The Prologue concludes by stating that Faustus is seated in his study.

Analysis: Prologue

The Chorus's introduction to the play links Doctor Faustus to the tradition of Greek tragedy, in which a chorus traditionally comments on the action. Although we tend to think of a chorus as a group of people or singers, it can also be composed of only one character. Here, the Chorus not only gives us background information about Faustus's life and education but also explicitly tells us that his swelling pride will lead to his downfall. The story that we are about to see is compared to the Greek myth of Icarus, a boy whose father, Daedalus, gave him wings made out of feathers and beeswax. Icarus did not heed his father's warning and flew too close to the sun, causing his wings to melt and sending him plunging to his death. In the same way, the Chorus tells us, Faustus will "mount above his reach" and suffer the consequences (Prologue.21)

The way that the Chorus introduces Faustus, the play's protagonist, is significant, since it reflects a commitment to Renaissance values. The European Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed a rebirth of interest in classical learning and inaugurated a new emphasis on the individual in painting and literature. In the medieval era that preceded the Renaissance, the focus of scholarship was on God and theology; in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the focus turned toward the study of humankind and the natural world, culminating in the birth of modern science in the work of men like Galileo Galilei and Isaac Newton.

The Prologue locates its drama squarely in the Renaissance world, where humanistic values hold sway. Classical and medieval literature typically focuses on the lives of the great and famous—saints or kings or ancient heroes. But this play, the Chorus insists, will focus not on ancient battles between Rome and Carthage, or the "courts of kings" or the "pomp of proud audacious deeds" (Prologue.4–5). Instead, we are to witness the life of an ordinary man, born to

humble parents. The message is clear: in the new world of the Renaissance, an ordinary man like Faustus, a common-born scholar, is as important as any king or warrior, and his story is just as worthy of being told.

Scene- 1

These metaphysics of magicians,

And necromantic books are heavenly!

In a long soliloquy, Faustus reflects on the most rewarding type of scholarship. He first considers logic, quoting the Greek philosopher Aristotle, but notes that disputing well seems to be the only goal of logic, and, since Faustus's debating skills are already good, logic is not scholarly enough for him. He considers medicine, quoting the Greek physician Galen, and decides that medicine, with its possibility of achieving miraculous cures, is the most fruitful pursuit—yet he notes that he has achieved great renown as a doctor already and that this fame has not satisfied him. He considers the law, quoting the Byzantine emperor Justinian, but dismisses law as too petty, dealing with trivial matters rather than larger ones. Divinity, the study of religion and theology, seems to offer wider vistas, but he quotes from St. Jerome's Bible that all men sin and finds the Bible's assertion that "[t]he reward of sin is death" an unacceptable doctrine. He then dismisses religion and fixes his mind on magic, which, when properly pursued, he believes will make him "a mighty god" (1.62).

Wagner, Faustus's servant, enters as his master finishes speaking. Faustus asks Wagner to bring Valdes and Cornelius, Faustus's friends, to help him learn the art of magic. While they are on their way, a good angel and an evil angel visit Faustus. The good angel urges him to set aside his book of magic and read the Scriptures instead; the evil angel encourages him to go forward in his pursuit of the black arts. After they vanish, it is clear that Faustus is going to heed the evil spirit, since he exults at the great powers that the magical arts will bring him. Faustus imagines sending spirits to the end of the world to fetch him jewels and delicacies, having them teach him secret knowledge, and using magic to make himself king of all Germany.

Valdes and Cornelius appear, and Faustus greets them, declaring that he has set aside all other forms of learning in favor of magic. They agree to teach Faustus the principles of the dark arts and describe the wondrous powers that will be his if he remains committed during his quest to learn magic. Cornelius tells him that "[t]he miracles that magic will perform / Will make thee vow to study nothing else" (1.136–137). Valdes lists several texts that Faustus should read, and the two friends promise

to help him become better at magic than even they are. Faustus invites them to dine with him, and they exit.

Analysis: Scene 1

The scene now shifts to Faustus's study, and Faustus's opening speech about the various fields of scholarship reflects the academic setting of the scene. In proceeding through the various intellectual disciplines and citing authorities for each, he is following the dictates of medieval scholarship, which held that learning was based on the authority of the wise rather than on experimentation and new ideas. This soliloquy, then, marks Faustus's rejection of this medieval model, as he sets aside each of the old authorities and resolves to strike out on his own in his quest to become powerful through magic.

As is true throughout the play, however, Marlowe uses Faustus's own words to expose Faustus's blind spots. In his initial speech, for example, Faustus establishes a hierarchy of disciplines by showing which are nobler than others. He does not want merely to protect men's bodies through medicine, nor does he want to protect their property through law. He wants higher things, and so he proceeds on to religion. There, he quotes selectively from the New Testament, picking out only those passages that make Christianity appear in a negative light. He reads that "[t]he reward of sin is death," and that "[i]f we say we that we have no sin, / We deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us" (1.40–43). The second of these lines comes from the first book of John, but Faustus neglects to read the very next line, which states, "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Thus, through selective quoting, Faustus makes it seem as though religion promises only death and not forgiveness and so he easily rejects religion with a fatalistic "What will be, shall be! Divinity, adieu!" (1.48). Meanwhile, he uses religious language—as he does throughout the play—to describe the dark world of necromancy that he enters. "These metaphysics of magicians / and necromantic books are heavenly" (1.49–50), he declares without a trace of irony. Having gone upward from medicine and law to theology, he envisions magic and necromancy as the crowning discipline, even though by most standards it would be the least noble.

Faustus is not a villain, though; he is a tragic hero, a protagonist whose character flaws lead to his downfall. Marlowe imbues him with tragic grandeur

in these early scenes. The logic he uses to reject religion may be flawed, but there is something impressive in the breadth of his ambition, even if he pursues it through diabolical means. In Faustus's long speech after the two angels have whispered in his ears, his rhetoric outlines the modern quest for control over nature (albeit through magic rather than through science) in glowing, inspiring language. He offers a long list of impressive goals, including the acquisition of knowledge, wealth, and political power that he believes he will achieve once he has mastered the dark arts. While the reader or playgoer is not expected to approve of his quest, his ambitions are impressive, to say the least. Later, the actual uses to which he puts his magical powers are disappointing and tawdry. For now, however, Faustus's dreams inspire wonder.

Scene- 2

Two scholars come to see Faustus. Wagner makes jokes at their expense and then tells them that Faustus is meeting with Valdes and Cornelius. Aware that Valdes and Cornelius are infamous for their involvement in the black arts, the scholars leave with heavy hearts, fearing that Faustus may also be falling into "that damned art" as well (2.29).

Scene- 3

Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss

That night, Faustus stands in a magical circle marked with various signs and words, and he chants in Latin. Four devils and Lucifer, the ruler of hell, watch him from the shadows. Faustus renounces heaven and God, swears allegiance to hell, and demands that Mephastophilis rise to serve him. The devil Mephastophilis then appears before Faustus, who commands him to depart and return dressed as a Franciscan friar, since "[t]hat holy shape becomes a devil best" (3.26). Mephastophilis vanishes, and Faustus remarks on his obedience. Mephastophilis then reappears, dressed as a monk, and asks Faustus what he desires. Faustus demands his obedience, but Mephastophilis says that he is Lucifer's servant and can obey only Lucifer. He adds that he came because he heard Faustus deny obedience to God and hoped to capture his soul.

Faustus quizzes Mephastophilis about Lucifer and hell and learns that Lucifer and all his devils were once angels who rebelled against God and have been damned

to hell forever. Faustus points out that Mephastophilis is not in hell now but on earth; Mephastophilis insists, however, that he and his fellow demons are always in hell, even when they are on earth, because being deprived of the presence of God, which they once enjoyed, is hell enough. Faustus dismisses this sentiment as a lack of fortitude on Mephastophilis's part and then declares that he will offer his soul to Lucifer in return for twenty-four years of Mephastophilis's service. Mephastophilis agrees to take this offer to his master and departs. Left alone, Faustus remarks that if he had "as many souls as there be stars," he would offer them all to hell in return for the kind of power that Mephastophilis offers him (3.102). He eagerly awaits Mephastophilis's return.

Scene-4

Wagner converses with a clown and tries to persuade him to become his servant for seven years. The clown is poor, and Wagner jokes that he would probably sell his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton; the clown answers that it would have to be well-seasoned mutton. After first agreeing to be Wagner's servant, however, the clown abruptly changes his mind. Wagner threatens to cast a spell on him, and he then conjures up two devils, who he says will carry the clown away to hell unless he becomes Wagner's servant. Seeing the devils, the clown becomes terrified and agrees to Wagner's demands. After Wagner dismisses the devils, the clown asks his new master if he can learn to conjure as well, and Wagner promises to teach him how to turn himself into any kind of animal—but he insists on being called "Master Wagner."

Analysis: Scenes 2–4

Having learned the necessary arts from Cornelius and Valdes, Faustus now takes the first step toward selling his soul when he conjures up a devil. One of the central questions in the play is whether Faustus damns himself entirely on his own or whether the princes of hell somehow entrap him. In scene 3, as Faustus makes the magical marks and chants the magical words that summon Mephastophilis, he is watched by Lucifer and four lesser devils, suggesting that hell is waiting for him to make the first move before pouncing on him. Mephastophilis echoes this idea when he insists that he came to Faustus of his own accord when he heard Faustus curse God and forswear heaven, hoping that Faustus's soul was available for the taking. But while the demons may be active agents eagerly seeking to seize Faustus's soul, Faustus himself makes the first

move. Neither Mephastophilis nor Lucifer forces him to do anything against his will.

Indeed, if anything, Mephastophilis seems far less eager to make the bargain than Faustus himself. He willingly tells Faustus that his master, Lucifer, is less powerful than God, having been thrown "by aspiring pride and insolence, / … from the face of heaven" (3.67–68). Furthermore, Mephastophilis offers a powerful portrait of hell that seems to warn against any pact with Lucifer. When Faustus asks him how it is that he is allowed to leave hell to come to earth, Mephastophilis famously says:

> ***Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.***
> ***Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,***
> ***And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,***
> ***Am not tormented with ten thousand hells***
> ***In being deprived of everlasting bliss?*** ***(3.76–80)***

Mephastophilis exposes the horrors of his own experience as if offering sage guidance to Faustus. His honesty in mentioning the "ten thousand hells" that torment him shines a negative light on the action of committing one's soul to Lucifer. Indeed, Mephastophilis even tells Faustus to abandon his "frivolous demands" (3.81).

But Faustus refuses to leave his desires. Instead, he exhibits the blindness that serves as one of his defining characteristics throughout the play. Faustus sees the world as he wants to see it rather than as it is. This shunning of reality is symbolized by his insistence that Mephastophilis, who is presumably hideous, reappears as a Franciscan friar. In part, this episode is a dig at Catholicism, pitched at Marlowe's fiercely Protestant English audience, but it also shows to what lengths Faustus will go to mitigate the horrors of hell. He sees the devil's true shape, but rather than flee in terror he tells Mephastophilis to change his appearance, which makes looking upon him easier. Again, when Mephastophilis has finished telling him of the horrors of hell and urging him not to sell his soul, Faustus blithely dismisses what Mephastophilis has said, accusing him of lacking "manly fortitude" (3.85). There is a desperate naïveté to Faustus's approach to the demonic: he cannot seem to accept that hell is as bad as it seems, which propels him forward into the darkness. The antics of Wagner and the clown provide a comic counterpoint to the well-seasoned shoulder of mutton, and

Wagner uses his newly gained conjuring skill to frighten the clown into serving him. Like Faustus, these clownish characters (whose scenes are so different from the rest of the play that some writers have suggested that they were written by a collaborator rather than by Marlowe himself) use magic to summon demons. But where Faustus is grand and ambitious and tragic, they are low and common and absurd, seeking mutton and the ability to turn into a mouse or a rat rather than world power or fantastic wealth. As the play progresses, though, Faustus's grandeur diminishes, and he sinks toward the level of the clowns, suggesting that degradation precedes damnation.

Scene- 5

Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That after this life there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

Faustus begins to waver in his conviction to sell his soul. The good angel tells him to abandon his plan and "think of heaven, and heavenly things," but he dismisses the good angel's words, saying that God does not love him (5.20). The good and evil angels make another appearance, with the good one again urging Faustus to think of heaven, but the evil angel convinces him that the wealth he can gain through his deal with the devil is worth the cost. Faustus then calls back Mephastophilis, who tells him that Lucifer has accepted his offer of his soul in exchange for twenty-four years of service. Faustus asks Mephastophilis why Lucifer wants his soul, and Mephastophilis tells him that Lucifer seeks to enlarge his kingdom and make humans suffer even as he suffers.

Faustus decides to make the bargain, and he stabs his arm to write the deed in blood. However, when he tries to write the deed his blood congeals, making writing impossible. Mephastophilis goes to fetch fire to loosen the blood, and, while he is gone, Faustus endures another bout of indecision, as he wonders if his blood is attempting to warn him not to sell his soul. When Mephastophilis returns, Faustus signs the deed and then discovers an inscription on his arm that reads "Homo fuge," Latin for "O man, fly" (5.77). While Faustus wonders where he should fly, Mephastophilis presents a group of devils, who cover Faustus with crowns and rich garments. Faustus puts aside his doubts. He hands over the deed, which promises his body and soul to Lucifer in exchange for twenty-four years of constant service from Mephastophilis.

After he turns in the deed, Faustus asks his new servant where hell is located, and Mephastophilis says that it has no exact location but exists everywhere. He continues explaining, saying that hell is everywhere that the damned are cut off from God eternally. Faustus remarks that he thinks hell is a myth. At Faustus's request for a wife, Mephastophilis offers Faustus a she-devil, but Faustus refuses. Mephastophilis then gives him a book of magic spells and tells him to read it carefully.

Faustus once again wavers and leans toward repentance as he contemplates the wonders of heaven from which he has cut himself off. The good and evil angels appear again, and Faustus realizes that "[m]y heart's so hardened I cannot repent!" (5.196). He then begins to ask Mephastophilis questions about the planets and the heavens. Mephastophilis answers all his queries willingly until Faustus asks who made the world. Mephastophilis refuses to reply because the answer is "against our kingdom"; when Faustus presses him, Mephastophilis departs angrily (5.247). Faustus then turns his mind to God, and again he wonders if it is too late for him to repent. The good and evil angels enter once more, and the good angel says it is never too late for Faustus to repent. Faustus begins to appeal to Christ for mercy, but then Lucifer, Beelzebub (another devil), and Mephastophilis enter. They tell Faustus to stop thinking of God and then present a show of the Seven Deadly Sins. Each sin—Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth, and finally Lechery—appears before Faustus and makes a brief speech. The sight of the sins delights Faustus's soul, and he asks to see hell. Lucifer promises to take him there that night. In the meantime, he gives Faustus a book that teaches him how to change his shape.

Scene- 6

Meanwhile, Robin, a stable hand, has found one of Faustus's conjuring books, and he is trying to learn the spells. He calls in an innkeeper named Rafe, and the two go to a bar together, where Robin promises to conjure up any kind of wine that Rafe desires.

Analysis: Scenes 5–6

Even as he seals the bargain that promises his soul to hell, Faustus is repeatedly filled with misgivings, which are bluntly symbolized in the verbal duels between the good and evil angels. His body seems to rebel against the choices that he has made—his blood congeals, for example, preventing him from signing the compact, and a written warning telling him to fly away appears on his arm. Sometimes Faustus seems to understand the gravity of what he is doing:

when Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephastophilis appear to him, for example, he becomes suddenly afraid and exclaims, "O Faustus, they are come to fetch thy soul!" (5.264). Despite this awareness, however, Faustus is unable to commit to good

Amid all these signs, Faustus repeatedly considers repenting but each time decides against it. Sometimes it is the lure of knowledge and riches that prevents him from turning to God, but other times it seems to be his conviction—encouraged by the bad angel and Mephastophilis—that it is already too late for him, a conviction that persists throughout the play. He believes that God does not love him and that if he were to fly away to God, as the inscription on his arm seems to advise him to do, God would cast him down to hell. When Faustus appeals to Christ to save his soul, Lucifer declares that "Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just," and orders Faustus to cease thinking about God and think only of the devil (5.260). Faustus's sense that he is already damned can be traced back to his earlier misreading of the New Testament to say that anyone who sins will be damned eternally—ignoring the verses that offer the hope of repentance.

At the same time, though, Faustus's earlier blindness persists. We can see it in his delighted reaction to the appalling personifications of the Seven Deadly Sins, which he treats as sources of entertainment rather than of moral warning. Meanwhile, his willingness to dismiss the pains of hell continues, as he tells Mephastophilis that "I think hell's a fable / . . . / Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales" (5.126–135). These are the words of rationalism or even atheism—both odd ideologies for Faustus to espouse, given that he is summoning devils. But Faustus's real mistake is to misinterpret what Mephastophilis tells him about hell. Faustus takes Mephastophilis's statement that hell is everywhere for him because he is separated eternally from God to mean that hell will be merely a continuation of his earthly existence. He thinks that he is already separated from God permanently and reasons that hell cannot be any worse.

Once Faustus has signed away his soul, his cosmos seems to become inverted, with Lucifer taking the place of God and blasphemy replacing piety. After Faustus has signed his deed, he swears by Lucifer rather than God: "Ay, take it; and the devil gives thee good don't" (5.112). His rejection of God is also evident when he says, "Consummatum est," meaning "it is finished," which were

Christ's dying words on the cross (5.74). Even Faustus's arm stabbing alludes to the stigmata, or wounds, of the crucified Christ.

Meanwhile, the limits of the demonic gifts that Faustus has been given begin to emerge. He is given the gift of knowledge, and Mephastophilis willingly tells him the secrets of astronomy, but when Faustus asks who created the world, Mephastophilis refuses to answer. The symbolism is clear: all the worldly knowledge that Faustus has so strongly desired points inexorably upward, toward God. The central irony, of course, is that the pact he has made completely detaches him from God. With access to higher things thus closed off, Faustus has nowhere to go but down.

Chorus- 2

Wagner takes the stage and describes how Faustus traveled through the heavens on a chariot pulled by dragons to learn the secrets of astronomy. Wagner tells us that Faustus is now traveling to measure the coasts and kingdoms of the world and that his travels will take him to Rome.

Scene -7

Faustus appears, recounting to Mephastophilis his travels throughout Europe—first from Germany to France and then on to Italy. He asks Mephastophilis if they have arrived in Rome, whose monuments he greatly desires to see, and Mephastophilis replies that they are in the pope's privy chamber. It is a day of feasting in Rome, to celebrate the pope's victories, and Faustus and Mephastophilis agree to use their powers to play tricks on the pope.

As Faustus and Mephastophilis watch, the pope comes in with his attendants and a prisoner, Bruno, who had attempted to become pope with the backing of the German emperor. While the pope declares that he will depose the emperor and forces Bruno to swear allegiance to him, Faustus and Mephastophilis disguise themselves as cardinals and come before the pope. The pope gives Bruno to them, telling them to carry him off to prison; instead, they give him a fast horse and send him back to Germany.

Later, the pope confronts the two cardinals whom Faustus and Mephastophilis have impersonated. When the cardinals say that they never were given custody of Bruno, the pope sends them to the dungeon. Faustus and Mephastophilis, both invisible, watch the proceedings and chuckle. The pope and his attendants then sit down to dinner. During the meal, Faustus and Mephastophilis make themselves

invisible and curse noisily and then snatch dishes and food as they are passed around the table. The churchmen suspect that there is some ghost in the room, and the pope begins to cross himself, much to the dismay of Faustus and Mephastophilis. Faustus boxes the pope's ear, and the pope and all his attendants run away. A group of friars enters, and they sing a dirge damning the unknown spirit that has disrupted the meal. Mephastophilis and Faustus beat the friars, fling fireworks among them, and flee.

Scene- 8

Robin the oyster, or stable hand, and his friend Rafe have stolen a cup from a tavern. They are pursued by a vintner (or wine-maker), who demands that they return the cup. They claim not to have it, and then Robin conjures up Mephastophilis, which makes the vintner flee. Mephastophilis is not pleased to have been summoned for a prank, and he threatens to turn the two into an ape and a dog. The two friends treat what they have done as a joke, and Mephastophilis leaves in a fury, saying that he will go to join Faustus in Turkey.

Analysis: Chorus 2–Scene 8

The scenes in Rome are preceded by Wagner's account, in the second chorus, of how Faustus traveled through the heavens studying astronomy. This feat is easily the most impressive that Faustus performs in the entire play since his magical abilities seem more and more like cheap conjured tricks as the play progresses. Meanwhile, his interests also diminish in importance from astronomy, the study of the heavens, to cosmography, the study of the earth. He even begins to meddle in political matters in the assistance he gives Bruno (in the B text only). By the end of the play, it depicts that his chief interests are playing practical jokes and producing impressive illusions for nobles—a far cry from the ambitious pursuits that he outlines in scene 1.

Chorus- 3

The Chorus enters to inform us that Faustus has returned home to Germany and developed his fame by explaining what he learned during his journey. The German emperor, Charles V, has heard of Faustus and invited him to his palace, where we next encounter him.

Scene- 9

At the court of the emperor, two gentlemen, Martino and Frederick, discuss the imminent arrival of Bruno and Faustus. Martino remarks that Faustus has promised to conjure up Alexander the Great, the famous conqueror. The two of them

wake another gentleman, Benvolio, and tell him to come down and see the new arrivals, but Benvolio declares that he would rather watch the action from his window because he has a hangover.

Faustus comes before the emperor, who thanks him for having freed Bruno from the clutches of the pope. Faustus acknowledges the gratitude and then says that he stands ready to fulfill any wish that the emperor might have. Benvolio, watching from above, remarks to himself that Faustus looks nothing like what he would expect a conjurer to look like.

The emperor tells Faustus that he would like to see Alexander the Great and his lover. Faustus tells him that he cannot produce their actual bodies but can create spirits resembling them. A knight present in the court (Benvolio in the B text) is skeptical and asserts that it is as untrue that Faustus can perform this feat as that the goddess Diana has transformed the knight into a stag.

Before the eyes of the court, Faustus creates a vision of Alexander embracing his lover (in the B text, Alexander's great rival, the Persian king Darius, also appears; Alexander defeats Darius and then, along with his lover, salutes the emperor). Faustus conjures a pair of antlers onto the head of the knight (again, Benvolio in the B text). The knight pleads for mercy, and the emperor entreats Faustus to remove the horns. Faustus complies, warning Benvolio to have more respect for scholars in the future.

With his friends Martino and Frederick and a group of soldiers, Benvolio plots an attack against Faustus. His friends try to dissuade him, but he is so furious at the damage done to his reputation that he will not listen to reason. They resolve to ambush Faustus as he leaves the court of the emperor and to take the treasures that the emperor has given Faustus. Frederick goes out with the soldiers to scout and returns with word that Faustus is coming toward them and that he is alone. When Faustus enters, Benvolio stabs him and cuts off his head. He and his friends rejoice, and they plan the further indignities that they will visit on Faustus's corpse. But then Faustus rises with his head restored. Faustus tells them that they are fools since his life belongs to Mephastophilis and cannot be taken by anyone else. He summons Mephastophilis, who arrives with a group of lesser devils, and orders the devils to carry his attackers off to hell. Then, reconsidering, he orders them instead to punish Benvolio and his friends by dragging them through thorns and hurling them off of cliffs, so that the world will see what happens to people who attack Faustus. As the

men and devils leave, the soldiers come in, and Faustus summons up another clutch of demons to drive them off.

Benvolio, Frederick, and Martino reappear. They are bruised and bloody from having been chased and harried by the devils, and all three of them now have horns sprouting from their heads. They greet one another unhappily, express horror at the fate that has befallen them, and agree to conceal themselves in a castle rather than face the scorn of the world.

Analysis: Chorus 3–Scene 9

Twenty-four years pass between Faustus's pact with Lucifer and the end of the play. Yet, for us, these decades sweep by remarkably quickly. We see only three main events from the twenty-four years: Faustus's visits to Rome, to the emperor's court, and then to the Duke of Vanholt in scene 11. While the Chorus assures us that Faustus visits many other places and learns many other things that we are not shown, we are still left with the sense that Faustus's life is being accelerated at a speed that strains belief. But Marlowe uses this acceleration to his advantage. By making the years pass so swiftly, the play makes us feel what Faustus himself must feel—namely, that his too-short lifetime is slipping away from him and his ultimate, hellish fate is drawing ever closer. In the world of the play, twenty-four years seems long when Faustus makes the pact, but both he and we come to realize that it passes rapidly.

Meanwhile, the use to which Faustus puts his powers is unimpressive. In Rome, he and Mephastophilis box the pope's ears and disrupt a dinner party. At the court of Emperor Charles V (who ruled a vast stretch of territory in the sixteenth century, including Germany, Austria, and Spain), he essentially performs conjuring tricks to entertain the monarch. Before he makes the pact with Lucifer, Faustus speaks of rearranging the geography of Europe or even making himself emperor of Germany. Now, though, his sights are set considerably lower. His involvement in the political realm extends only to freeing Bruno, Charles's candidate to be pope. Even this action (which occurs only in the B text) seems largely a lark, without any larger political goals behind it. Instead, Faustus occupies his energies summoning up Alexander the Great, the heroic Macedonian conqueror. This trick would be extremely impressive, except that Faustus tells the emperor that "it is not in my ability to present / before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased / princes" (9.39–41). In other

words, all of Mephastophilis's power can, in Faustus's hands, produce only impressive illusions. Nothing of substance emerges from Faustus's magic, in this scene or anywhere in the play, and the man who earlier boasts that he will divert the River Rhine and reshape the map of Europe now occupies himself with revenging a petty insult by placing horns on the head of the foolish knight.

The B-text scene outside the emperor's court, in which Benvolio and his friends try to kill Faustus, is utterly devoid of suspense since we know that Faustus is too powerful to be murdered by a gang of incompetent noblemen. Still, Faustus's way of dealing with the threat is telling: he plays a kind of practical joke, making the noblemen think that they have cut off his head, only to come back to life and send a collection of devils to hound them. With all the power of hell behind him, he takes pleasure in sending Mephastophilis out to hunt down a collection of fools who pose no threat to him and insists that the devils disgrace the men publicly so that everyone will see what happens to those who threaten him. This command shows a hint of Faustus's old pride, which is so impressive early in the play; now, though, Faustus is entirely concerned with his reputation as a fearsome wizard and not with any higher goals. Traipsing from court to court, doing tricks for royals, Faustus has become a kind of sixteenth-century celebrity, more concerned with his public image than with the dreams of greatness that earlier animate him.

Scene- 10

Faustus, meanwhile, meets a horse-courser and sells him his horse. Faustus gives the horse-courser a good price but warns him not to ride the horse into the water. Faustus begins to reflect on the pending expiration of his contract with Lucifer and falls asleep. The horse-courser reappears, sopping wet, complaining that when he rode his horse into a stream it turned into a heap of straw. He decides to get his money back and tries to wake Faustus by hollering in his ear. He then pulls on Faustus's leg when Faustus will not wake. The leg breaks off, and Faustus wakes up, screaming bloody murder. The horse-courser takes the leg and runs off. Meanwhile, Faustus's leg is immediately restored, and he laughs at the joke that he has played. Wagner then and tells Faustus that the Duke of Vanholt has summoned him. Faustus agrees to go, and they depart together.

Robin and Rafe have stopped for a drink in a tavern. They listen as a carter or wagon-driver, and the horse-courser discuss Faustus. The carter explains that Faustus

stopped him on the road and asked to buy some hay to eat. The carter agreed to sell him all he could eat for three farthings, and Faustus proceeded to eat the entire wagonload of hay. The horse-courser tells his own story, adding that he took Faustus's leg as revenge and that he is keeping it at his home. Robin declares that he intends to seek out Faustus, but only after he has a few more drinks.

Scene- 11

At the court of the Duke of Vanholt, Faustus's skill at conjuring up beautiful illusions wins the duke's favor. Faustus comments that the duchess has not seemed to enjoy the show and asks her what she would like. She tells him she would like a dish of ripe grapes, and Faustus has Mephastophilis bring her some grapes. (In the B text of *Doctor Faustus*, Robin, Dick, the carter, the horse-courser, and the hostess from the tavern burst in at this moment. They confront Faustus, and the horse-courser begins making jokes about what he assumes is Faustus's wooden leg. Faustus then shows them his leg, which is whole and healthy, and they are amazed. Each then launches into a complaint about Faustus's treatment of him, but Faustus uses magical charms to make them silent, and they depart.) The duke and duchess are much pleased with Faustus's display, and they promise to reward Faustus greatly.

Analysis: Scenes 10–11

Faustus's downward spiral, from tragic greatness to self-indulgent mediocrity, continues in these scenes. He continues his journey from court to court, arriving this time at Vanholt, a minor German duchy, to visit the duke and duchess. Throughout the play we see Faustus go from the seat of the pope to the court of the emperor to the court of a minor nobleman. The power and importance of his hosts decrease from scene to scene, just as Faustus's feats of magic grow ever more unimpressive. Just after he seals his pact with Mephastophilis, Faustus soars through the heavens on a chariot pulled by dragons to learn the secrets of astronomy; now, however, he is reduced to playing pointless tricks on the horse-courser and fetching out-of-season grapes to impress a bored noblewoman. Even his antagonists have grown increasingly ridiculous. In Rome, he faces the curses of the pope and his monks, which are strong enough to give even Mephastophilis pause; at the emperor's court, Faustus is opposed by a collection of brave noblemen, if unintelligent. At Vanholt, though, he faces down an absurd collection of comical rogues, and the worst of it is that Faustus seems to have become one of them, a clown among

clowns, taking pleasure in using his unlimited power to perform practical jokes and cast simple charms.

Selling one's soul for power and glory may be foolish or wicked, but at least there is grandeur to the idea of it. Marlowe's Faustus, however, has lost his hold on that doomed grandeur and has become pathetic. The meaning of his decline is ambiguous: perhaps part of the nature of a pact with Lucifer is that one cannot gain all that one hopes to gain from it. Or perhaps Marlowe is criticizing worldly ambition and, by extension, the entire modern project of the Renaissance, which pushed God to one side and sought mastery over nature and society. Along the lines of this interpretation, it seems that in Marlowe's worldview the desire for complete knowledge about the world and power over it can ultimately be reduced to fetching grapes for the Duchess of Vanholt—in other words, to nothing.

Earlier in the play, when Faustus queries Mephastophilis about the nature of the world, Faustus sees his desire for knowledge reach a dead-end at God, whose power he denies in favor of Lucifer. Knowledge of God is against Lucifer's kingdom, according to Mephastophilis. But if the pursuit of knowledge leads inexorably to God, Marlowe suggests, then a man like Faustus, who tries to live without God, can ultimately go nowhere but down, into mediocrity. There is no sign that Faustus himself is aware of the gulf between his earlier ambitions and his current state. He seems to take joy in his petty amusements, laughing uproariously when he confounds the horse-courser and leaping at the chance to visit the Duke of Vanholt. Still, his impending doom begins to weigh upon him. As he sits down to fall asleep, he remarks, "What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemned to die?" (10.24). Yet, at this moment at least, he seems convinced that he will repent at the last minute and be saved—a significant change from his earlier attitude when he either denies the existence of hell or assumes that damnation is inescapable. "Christ did call the thief upon the cross," he comforts himself, referring to the New Testament story of the thief who was crucified alongside Jesus Christ, repented for his sins, and was promised a place in paradise (10.28). That he compares himself to this figure shows that Faustus assumes that he can wait until the last moment and still escape hell. In other words, he wants to renounce Mephastophilis, but not just yet. We can easily anticipate that his willingness to delay will prove fatal.

Chorus 4–Epilogue

Chorus- 4

Wagner announces that Faustus must be about to die because he has given Wagner all of his wealth. But he remains unsure since Faustus is not acting like a dying man—rather; he is out carousing with scholars.

Scene- 12

Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss:
Her lips suck forth my soul, see where it flies!
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena!

Faustus enters with some of the scholars. One of them asks Faustus if he can produce Helen of Greece (also known as Helen of Troy), who they have decided was "the admirable lady / that ever lived" (12.3–4). Faustus agrees to produce her, and gives the order to Mephastophilis: immediately, Helen herself crosses the stage, to the delight of the scholars.

The scholars leave, and an old man enters and tries to persuade Faustus to repent. Faustus becomes distraught, and Mephastophilis hands him a dagger. However, the old man persuades him to appeal to God for mercy, saying, "I see an angel hovers o'er thy head / And with a vial full of precious grace / Offers to pour the same into thy soul!" (12.44–46). Once the old man leaves, Mephastophilis threatens to shred Faustus to pieces if he does not reconfirm his vow to Lucifer. Faustus complies, sealing his vow by once again stabbing his arm and inscribing it in blood. He asks Mephastophilis to punish the old man for trying to dissuade him from continuing in Lucifer's service; Mephastophilis says that he cannot touch the old man's soul but that he will scourge his body. Faustus then asks Mephastophilis to let him see Helen again. Helen enters, and Faustus makes a great speech about her beauty and kisses her.

Scene- 13

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damned perpetually.
Ugly hell gape not! Come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books—ah, Mephastophilis!

The final night of Faustus's life has come, and he tells the scholars of the deal he has made with Lucifer. They are horrified and ask what they can do to save him, but he tells them that there is nothing to be done. Reluctantly, they leave to pray for Faustus. A vision of hell opens before Faustus's horrified eyes as the clock strikes eleven. The last hour passes by quickly, and Faustus exhorts the clocks to slow and time to stop so that he might live a little longer and have a chance to repent. He then begs God to reduce his time in hell to a thousand years or a hundred thousand years, so long as he is eventually saved. He wishes that he were a beast and would simply cease to exist when he dies instead of facing damnation. He curses his parents and himself, and the clock strikes midnight. Devils enter and carry Faustus away as he screams, "Ugly hell gape not! Come not, Lucifer! / I'll burn my books—ah, Mephastophilis!" (13.112–113).

Epilogue

The Chorus enters and warns the wise "[o]nly to wonder at unlawful things" and not to trade their souls for forbidden knowledge (Epilogue.6).

Analysis: Chorus 4–Epilogue

The final scenes contain some of the most noteworthy speeches in the play, especially Faustus's speech to Helen and his final soliloquy. His address to Helen begins with the famous line "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships," referring to the Trojan War, which was fought over Helen and goes on to list all the great things that Faustus would do to win her love (12.81). He compares himself to the heroes of Greek mythology, who went to war for her hand, and he ends with lengthy praise of her beauty. In its flowery language and emotional power, the speech marks a return to the eloquence that marks Faustus's words in earlier scenes, before his language and behavior become mediocre and petty. Having squandered his powers in pranks and childish entertainments, Faustus regains his eloquence and tragic grandeur in the final scene, as his doom approaches. Still, as impressive as this speech is, Faustus maintains the same blind spots that lead him down his dark road in the first place. Earlier, he seeks transcendence through magic instead of religion. Now, he seeks it through sex and female beauty, as he asks Helen to make him "immortal" by kissing him (12.83). Moreover, it is not even clear that Helen is real, since Faustus's earlier conjuring of historical figures evokes only illusions

and not physical beings. If Helen too is just an illusion, then Faustus is wasting his last hour's dallying with a fantasy image, an apt symbol for his entire life.

Faustus's final speech is the most emotionally powerful scene in the play, as his despairing mind rushes from idea to idea. One moment he is begging time to slow down, the next he is imploring Christ for mercy. One moment he is crying out in fear and trying to hide from the wrath of God, the next he is begging to have the eternity of hell lessened somehow. He curses his parents for giving birth to him but then owns up to his responsibility and curses himself. His mind's various attempts to escape his doom, then, lead inexorably to an understanding of his guilt.

The passion of the final speech points to the central question in *Doctor Faustus* of why Faustus does not repent. Early in the play, he deceives himself into believing either that hell is not so bad or that it does not exist. But, by the close, with the gates of hell opening before him, he still ignores the warnings of his conscience and of the old man, a physical embodiment of the conscience that plagues him. Faustus's loyalty to Lucifer could be explained by the fact that he is afraid of having his body torn apart by Mephastophilis. But he seems almost eager, even in the next-to-last scene, to reseal his vows in blood, and he even goes a step further when he demands that Mephastophilis punish the old man who urges him to repent. Marlowe suggests that Faustus's self-delusion persists even at the end. Having served Lucifer for so long, he has reached a point at which he cannot imagine breaking free.

In his final speech, Faustus is wracked with remorse, yet he no longer seems to be able to repent. Christian doctrine holds that one can repent for any sin, however grave, up until the moment of death and be saved. Yet this principle does not seem to hold for Marlowe's protagonist. *Doctor Faustus* is a Christian tragedy, but the logic of the final scene is not Christian. Some critics have tried to deal with this problem by claiming that Faustus does not repent in the final speech but that he only speaks wistfully about the possibility of repentance. Such an argument, however, is difficult to reconcile with lines such as:

> *O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?. . .*
> *One drop of blood would save my soul, half a drop: ah my Christ—*
> *(13.69–71)*

Faustus appears to be calling on Christ, seeking the precious drop of blood that will save his soul. Yet some unseen force—whether inside or outside him—prevents him from giving himself to God.

Ultimately, the ending of *Doctor Faustus* represents a clash between Christianity, which holds that repentance and salvation are always possible, and the dictates of tragedy, in which some character flaw cannot be corrected, even by appealing to God. The idea of Christian tragedy, then, is paradoxical, as Christianity is ultimately uplifting. People may suffer—as Christ himself did—but for those who repent, salvation eventually awaits. To make *Doctor Faustus* a true tragedy, then, Marlowe had to set down a moment beyond which Faustus could no longer repent, so that in the final scene, while still alive, he can be damned and conscious of his damnation.

The unhappy Faustus's last line returns us to the clash between Renaissance values and medieval values that dominates the early scenes and then recedes as Faustus pursues his mediocre amusements in later scenes. His cry, as he pleads for salvation, that he will burn his books suggests, for the first time since early scenes, that his pact with Lucifer is primarily about a thirst for limitless knowledge—a thirst that is presented as incompatible with Christianity.

> ***Faustus is gone! Regard his hellish fall,***
> ***Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise***
> ***Only to wonder at unlawful things:***
> ***Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits***
> ***To practice more than heavenly power permits.***
>
> ***(Epilogue.4–8)***

In the duel between Christendom and the rising modern spirit, Marlowe's play seems to come down squarely on the side of Christianity. Yet Marlowe, himself notoriously accused of atheism and various other sins, may have had other ideas, and he made his Faustus sympathetic, if not necessarily admirable. While his play shows how the untrammeled pursuit of knowledge and power can be corrupting, it also shows the grandeur of such a quest. Faustus is damned, but the gates that he opens remain standing wide, waiting for others to follow.

Christian, the play suggests, but only within limits. As the Chorus says in its final speech

2.4.3 Analysis of Major Characters

Dr. Faustus

The protagonist Faustus is a brilliant sixteenth-century scholar from Wittenberg, Germany, whose ambition for knowledge, wealth, and worldly might makes him willing to pay the ultimate price—his soul—to Lucifer in exchange for supernatural powers. Faustus's initial tragic grandeur is diminished by the fact that he never seems completely sure of the decision to forfeit his soul and constantly wavers about whether or not to repent. His ambition is admirable and initially awesome, yet he ultimately lacks a certain inner strength. He is unable to embrace his dark path wholeheartedly but is also unwilling to admit his mistake.

Mephastophilis

He is a devil whom Faustus summons with his initial magical experiments. Mephastophilis's motivations are ambiguous: on the one hand, his oft-expressed goal is to catch Faustus's soul and carry it off to hell; on the other hand, he actively attempts to dissuade Faustus from making a deal with Lucifer by warning him about the horrors of hell. Mephastophilis is ultimately as tragic a figure as Faustus, with his moving, regretful accounts of what the devils have lost in their eternal separation from God and his repeated reflections on the pain that comes with damnation.

2.5 Check your progress

- What are the various themes discussed in the play?
- Character sketch of Dr. Faustus
- Character sketch of Mephastophilis
- Role of chorus in the play
- The symbolic significance of good and bad evil
- Significance of soliloquies of Dr. Faustus in the play
- Significance of seven deadly scenes.

2.6 Summary

Dr. Faustus opens with a Prologue, where the Chorus introduces Doctor Faustus and his story. Faustus is a brilliant scholar who leaves behind the study of logic, medicine, law, and divinity to study magic and necromancy, the art of speaking to the dead. When he is approached by a Good and Bad Angel, it is the Bad Angel who wins his attentions by promising that he will become a great magician. Faustus ignores his other scholarly duties and attempts to summon a devil. By revoking his

baptism he attracts the attention of Lucifer, Mephistopheles, and other devils. Faustus strikes a pact with Lucifer, allowing him 24 years with Mephistopheles as his assistant, but after the pact begins Mephistopheles will not answer Faustus' questions. The two angels return, but even though Faustus waffles, coercion from the devils has him again swear allegiance to Lucifer. Faustus achieves nothing worthwhile with his pact, warns other scholars of his folly, and the play ends with Faustus dragged off to Hell by Mephistopheles as the Chorus attempts a moral summation of events with an Epilogue.

2.7 Key words

- Prologue
- Chorus
- Soliloquy
- Necromancy
- Hierarchy
- Sin
- Redemption
- Damnation
- Renaissance

2.8. Answer to check your progress

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work

- **The theme of Sin, Redemption, and Damnation**

In so far as *Doctor Faustus* is a Christian play, it deals with the themes at the heart of Christianity's understanding of the world. First, there is the idea of sin, which Christianity defines as acts contrary to the will of God. In making a pact with Lucifer, Faustus commits what is in a sense the ultimate sin: not only does he disobey God, but he consciously and even eagerly renounces obedience to him, choosing instead to swear allegiance to the devil. In a Christian framework, however, even the worst deed can be forgiven through the redemptive power of Jesus Christ, God's son, who, according to Christian belief, died on the cross for humankind's sins. Thus, however terrible Faustus's pact with Lucifer may be, the possibility of redemption is always open to him. All that he needs to do, theoretically, is ask God for forgiveness. The play offers countless moments in which Faustus considers doing just that, urged on by

the good angel on his shoulder or by the old man in scene 12—both of whom can be seen either as emissaries of God, personifications of Faustus's conscience, or both. Each time, Faustus decides to remain loyal to hell rather than seek heaven. In the Christian framework, this turning away from God condemns him to spend an eternity in hell. Only at the end of his life does Faustus desire to repent, and, in the final scene, he cries out to Christ to redeem him. But it is too late for him to repent. In creating this moment in which Faustus is still alive but incapable of being redeemed, Marlowe steps outside the Christian worldview to maximize the dramatic power of the final scene. Having inhabited a Christian world for the entire play, Faustus spends his final moments in a slightly different universe, where redemption is no longer possible and where certain sins cannot be forgiven.

- **The Conflict between Medieval and Renaissance Values**

Scholar R.M. Dawkins famously remarked that *Doctor Faustus* tells "the story of a Renaissance man who had to pay the medieval price for being one." While slightly simplistic, this quotation does get at the heart of one of the play's central themes: the clash between the medieval world and the world of the emerging Renaissance. The medieval world placed God at the center of existence and shunted aside man and the natural world. The Renaissance was a movement that began in Italy in the fifteenth century and soon spread throughout Europe, carrying with it a new emphasis on the individual, on classical learning, and scientific inquiry into the nature of the world. In the medieval academy, theology was the queen of the sciences. In the Renaissance, though, secular matters took center stage.

Faustus, despite being a magician rather than a scientist (a blurred distinction in the sixteenth century), explicitly rejects the medieval model. In his opening speech in scene 1, he goes through every field of scholarship, beginning with logic and proceeding through medicine, law, and theology, quoting an ancient authority for each: Aristotle on logic, Galen on medicine, the Byzantine emperor Justinian on law, and the Bible on religion. In the medieval model, tradition and authority, not individual inquiry, were key. But in this soliloquy, Faustus considers and rejects this medieval way of thinking. He resolves, in full Renaissance spirit, to accept no limits, traditions, or authorities in his quest for knowledge, wealth, and power.

The play's attitude toward the clash between medieval and Renaissance values is ambiguous. Marlowe seems hostile toward the ambitions of Faustus, and, as Dawkins notes, he keeps his tragic hero squarely in the medieval world, where eternal

damnation is the price of human pride. Yet Marlowe himself was no pious traditionalist, and it is tempting to see in Faustus—as many readers have—a hero of the new modern world, a world free of God, religion, and the limits that these imposed on humanity. Faustus may pay a medieval price, this reading suggests, but his successors will go further than he and suffer less, as we have in modern times. On the other hand, the disappointment and mediocrity that follow Faustus's pact with the devil, as he descends from grand ambitions to petty conjuring tricks, might suggest a contrasting interpretation. Marlowe may be suggesting that the new, modern spirit, though ambitious and glittering, will lead only to a Faustian dead end.

- **Power as a Corrupting Influence**

Early in the play, before he agrees to the pact with Lucifer, Faustus is full of ideas for how to use the power that he seeks. He imagines piling up great wealth, but he also aspires to plumb the mysteries of the universe and to remake the map of Europe. Though they may not be entirely admirable, these plans are ambitious and inspire awe, if not sympathy. They lend a grandeur to Faustus's schemes and make his quest for personal power seem almost heroic, a sense that is reinforced by the eloquence of his early soliloquies.

Once Faustus actually gains the practically limitless power that he so desires, however, his horizons seem to narrow. Everything is possible to him, but his ambition is somehow sapped. Instead of the grand designs that he contemplates early on, he contents himself with performing conjuring tricks for kings and noblemen and takes a strange delight in using his magic to play practical jokes on simple folks. It is not that power has corrupted Faustus by making him evil: indeed, Faustus's behavior after he sells his soul hardly rises to the level of true wickedness. Rather, gaining absolute power corrupts Faustus by making him mediocre and by transforming his boundless ambition into a meaningless delight in petty celebrity.

In the Christian framework of the play, one can argue that true greatness can be achieved only with God's blessing. By cutting himself off from the creator of the universe, Faustus is condemned to mediocrity. He has gained the whole world, but he does not know what to do with it.

The Divided Nature of Man

Faustus is constantly undecided about whether he should repent and return to God or continue to follow his pact with Lucifer. His internal struggle goes on throughout the play, as part of him wants to do good and serve God, but part of him

(the dominant part, it seems) lusts after the power that Mephastophilis promises. The good angel and the evil angel, both of whom appear at Faustus's shoulder to urge him in different directions, symbolize this struggle. While these angels may be intended as an actual pair of supernatural beings, they represent Faustus's divided will, which compels Faustus to commit to Mephastophilis but also to question this commitment continually.

Various other themes in Dr. Faustus

Other main themes in *Doctor Faustus* are the folly of ambition, true versus illusive power, and good versus evil.

- **The folly of ambition:** Faustus's initially grand aims quickly give way to pranks and entertainments, showing the folly of his desire to reach for power beyond human limitations.
- **True versus illusive power:** Faustus's power is not truly his own but rather that of Mephistophilis, who is subservient to Lucifer, who is in turn constrained by God.
- **Good versus evil:** Faustus at first chooses the side of evil in his attainment of ungodly magic, but he later decides to repent, only to be easily swayed towards evil again.

The Folly of Ambition

From the very outset, Faustus is unsatisfied with traditional areas of study, believing that he is destined for far greater accomplishments than the mastery of normal subjects can prepare him for. It is for this reason that he is attracted to the magical arts, which he knows can grant him powers far beyond those of even kings. But as Faustus's true motivations become clearer, it is evident that he desires powers far beyond the limits of human life. As the action of the play builds, Faustus's ambition clashes rather pointedly against his actual behavior, and this leads him to failure.By setting Faustus's goals as high as he does (diverting the Rhine, redefining the political borders of Europe, commanding the secret knowledge of the cosmos, etc.), Marlowe effectively predetermines the trajectory of Faustus's arc. With such lofty ambitions, there is only one way for Faustus to go: downward. This also relegates Faustus's highest ambitions to the purely theoretical realm. These ambitions prompt Faustus to go through with his deal with Lucifer. From the moment his wielding of infernal power becomes real and not theoretical, his actions seem mediocre.

It is a very human failing to be paralyzed in the face of an utterly inexhaustible set of options. In this way the true potential of Mephistophilis's power, in the hands of Faustus, is never even remotely realized. Instead, Faustus exhausts his more impressive feats off-stage and in the space of a few lines of exposition and then sets his sights almost humorously low.

It is not hard to imagine Faustus experiencing a certain amount of fraudulence in the performance of his feats. This may be one reason for his altercation with the Knight. His reputation, his abilities, and his actions, are almost completely accomplished at the hand of Mephistophilis. Indeed, by seeking powers beyond that which humans can attain, Faustus gets precisely what he asks for: powers he cannot actually claim as his own. This is part of the lesson of his tragedy Like Icarus, Faustus reaches for powers beyond his grasp and ultimately falls. Faced with the certainty of torment and death, Faustus finds himself precisely where he began but with his ambitions now reversed. Having gained little for the sale of his soul, he is ironically willing to give it all up again, merely for a chance at a bit more life.

True Versus Illusive Power

Although Faustus does influence most of the action in the play through his desires and choices, almost none of his actual deeds are performed by him. From the first, Faustus's summoning of Mephistophilis is undercut as an achievement when Mephistophilis admits that he only appeared because he had a good chance of collecting Faustus's soul. From this point on, Faustus wields virtually no power of his own.

It is not only Faustus, however, who has the mere illusion of power. Mephistophilis himself admits that he can do nothing without the consent of Lucifer. His power, like Faustus's, really stems from another source. Furthermore, the limits of Mephastophilis's abilities are shown early on when he proves incapable of fulfilling certain basic requests of Faustus's, such as for a wife or for information about who created the universe. Furthermore, the summoning of heroic and mythological characters as specters suggests that the power Mephistophilis controls are but a convincing illusion. The same is true for Lucifer himself. While often considered a counterpoint to God, Lucifer is subordinate to God's will and incapable of rising to the greatness of creation.

Having only come into control of infernal powers for a short time, Faustus complains that the true splendor of the heavens is inaccessible—and this is because

these divine things are off-limits to Lucifer. Even hell itself exists only in God's absence, and this absence causes tremendous suffering even in Lucifer. It is arguable, then, that Lucifer's power is lesser than that afforded to a human who is in God's good graces. This is why, for example, Mephistophilis could harm the Old Man's flesh but not his soul. Furthermore, the power of Mephistophilis seems to be summonable by anyone (literate or not) who can pick up the appropriate book. The "powers" of hell, in this regard, are no greater than those wielded by drunks, clowns, and servants. All of these facts suggest that, in the world of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, the only true power wielded by anyone in the play is that of God.

Good Versus Evil

Faustus's damnation occurs because of his choice to favor his potential for evil over his potential for good. This is the basis on which Marlowe employs the Good Angel and the Evil Angel, as they both represent dual and oppositional aspects of Faustus's personality. But Marlowe takes pains to present this fundamental duality in several more subtle ways throughout the play.

The next most obvious example is perhaps that of Lucifer. Through descriptions of Lucifer, as well as from the one interaction between him and Faustus, we see that Lucifer's evil is human. While it is true that Lucifer is the lord of sin, Mephistophilis suggests that Lucifer's primary motivation for collecting souls is to gain company and therefore comfort from torment. As a former angel, he is also a force with the potential to do good and who is now pained and furious for want of the love of God. If we consider Lucifer as a tragic hero in the same vein as Faustus, then we may see Marlowe taking a somewhat sympathetic view towards the devil.

Another clever method by which Marlowe presents this fundamental duality is through the employment of Comedy within the context of Tragedy. Godliness, ostensibly the most benevolent force in existence, is barely portrayed in the play and is shown perhaps most strongly by the courageous way in which the Old Man meets his tragic end. Conversely, the vilest and terrible forces—those of hell—are the source of nearly every humorous moment in the play. From an absurd floorshow of sin, put on by Lucifer himself just to distract a human from prayer, to the vulgar and low-brow behavior of the various secondary characters (Robin, Rafe, Wagner, the Clown, the Horse Courser, etc.), Marlowe spares no effort in creating humor from evil. And this depiction of sin, hell, demons, and Lucifer as primarily funny bears significant thematic weight. In particular, it is Faustus's failure to take seriously the nature of sin

and hell that causes the tension of the play. This is also how Marlowe builds to Faustus's tragic end, which is particularly powerful and grim. Marlowe continually defies expectation, crafting scenes in which the audience delights in the devils and sinners on the stage. Like Faustus, the audience is influenced to perceive the gravity of sinless seriously. The play's prevalence of humor amid torment is precisely what makes the sudden absence of humor in Faustus's final moments so compelling.

Q. What is the significance of the 'Seven Deadly Scene' show in the play?

We have these seven deadly sins in the sixth scene. The seven deadly sins are–pride, covetousness, wrath, envy, gluttony, sloth, and lechery. Of good old morality plays are also very much here in this play in a grand spectacle to cheer up the wavering and dejected soul of doctor Faustus. But Marlowe is quite original in his treatment of the scene.

Some critics are of the view that the show is meant for comic relief for the audience. But this is hard to accept. It is meant for bringing back Faustus to the path of hell when he was much irritated by Mephistophilis for not right answers to some of his questions related to the creation of this universe.

Symbolically Faustus surrenders to these deadly sins which lead to the path of hell. The sins are already there in his soul and the show of the sins simply symbolizes or externalizes them.

Q. Significance of the character of Mephastophilis

He is a devil whom Faustus summons with his initial magical experiments. Mephastophilis's motivations are ambiguous: on the one hand, his oft-expressed goal is to catch Faustus's soul and carry it off to hell; on the other hand, he actively attempts to dissuade Faustus from making a deal with Lucifer by warning him about the horrors of hell. Mephastophilis is ultimately as tragic a figure as Faustus, with his moving, regretful accounts of what the devils have lost in their eternal separation from God and his repeated reflections on the pain that comes with damnation.

Qus- Symbolic significance of Good and Bad angles in the play

There is hardly any external action in the play. The real action in the play is the spiritual conflict within the soul of the hero.-a conflict of good and bad angels between law and desire, religion and skepticism, and between curiosity and conscience. Faustus may stand as the symbol of man in general with the strange mixture of virtue and vice in the soul. The good and bad angels personify the two aspects of Faustus's character. The good stands for virtue, goodness, and the latter

stands for the baser spirit of Faustus, his indomitable passion and desires. One stands for his conscience and the other stands for his curiosity for “unlawful things” angles are externalization of the two aspects of Faustus’scharacter.

Discuss *Doctor Faustus* as a tragedy.

Christopher Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus* portrays the titular character on a pursuit of knowledge that ultimately leads to his downfall. Faustus makes an error in judgment in making a pact with Lucifer, which brings about not only his death but the damnation of his soul.

Christopher Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus is perhaps one of the best-known tragedies. It differs from a traditional Greek tragedy, as Faustus doesn't have a high birth status (like a king, prince, etc.). Moreover, as we know, is a Greek tragedy, though the hero suffers, everything is brought into restoration by the end. As long as the person is alive, there is an option of repentance and forgiveness of his sins by God. But Doctor Faustus shows some deviations.

Doctor Faustus can be called an Elizabethan form of tragedy with elements of Christianity and Renaissance. It drew inspiration but was significantly different from the Aristotelian form of tragedy. The tragedy plays by the famous playwright William Shakespeare are believed to be an advancement of Marlowe’s genius.

Now, though we understand that Faustus doesn't have a high birth status, he still enjoys respect in society because of his unmatchable education and intelligence.

Doctor Faustus represents the modern man who is divided between the Christian faith and the Renaissance spirit. Faustus, similar to the heroes of Greek tragedies (Greeks were pioneers of tragedy plays) has one fatal error or tragic flaw *that* leads to his damnation. It is considered extreme pride (this is considered as the most severe of all seven deadly sins as it gives rise to the other sins). He is guilty of being too proud of his intelligence and achievements. Because of his hermits a series of other mistakes one after the other.

We see that Faustus too finally realizes his mistakes and begs for repentance. But it’s too late by then and he meets damnation. Through his tragic end, he gains the audience’s sympathy and provokes *Catharsis*. *Catharsis* is typical of any tragedy. The most obvious and logical conclusion of the Elizabethan (or, later famously called as the Shakespearean tragedy) is the hero’s death. Doctor Faustus can be, hence, called a tragedy play.

Dr. Faustus as a Renaissance tragedy

Or

Dr. Faustus as a tragic hero

Doctor Faustus certainly qualifies as a tragedy as it incorporates many of the characteristics and qualities of such a work as renaissance tragedy. In the main character, we see an individual who falls from a relative position in society to a far lower position of society as the result of his central flaw. In this case, Doctor Faustus's flaw is that of hubris, or his excessive pride. We see Faustus's excessive pride demonstrated most clearly in his own steadfast belief in his soul's damnation.

One specific way in which Doctor Faustus differs from the traditional tragedy mold is in the background of the main character. Traditional tragic figures typically come from the highest of social ranks--often royalty or nobility. Faustus, however, is not. He comes from very meager beginnings and lower-class parents. His rise of the rungs of the social ladder is facilitated by his ability to excel in academia.

Marlowe's work represents tragedy is because it is the story of a protagonist who seeks to appropriate the world following his subjectivity. Within the seeds of his greatness are the very elements of his destruction. It is here where a tragic condition lies. Faustus seeks to gain more knowledge, more understanding, and more control over his world. These attributes are brought to a tragic condition when it is seen that Faustus' destruction is not prevented by these qualities, but enhanced by them. It is in this light where tragedy is apparent in the character. This notion of seeking to make one's place in the world better actually setting the stage for one's demise is a tragic predicament.

Marlowe's play Dr. Faustus arise novel universal questions about the highest order of considerations: the meaning of life and death, the quest for knowledge, the respective power of good and evil.

Following Elizabethan tragedy, the play Dr. Faustus employs comedic relief through the presence of clowns that also acts as a means of giving information about the characters and the action of the play. The clowns in Dr. Faustus are Rafe and Robin. In Elizabethan tragedy, the clowns (rural, country simpletons who misuse language accidentally) and fools (urban dwellers who play with language and "misuse" it intentionally for wit) generally replace the Greek Chorus that carried the

task of moving the story along with information not performed on stage, but in Dr. Faustus, Marlowe employs both the Greek-style Chorus and Elizabethan clowns.

Finally, in keeping with Elizabethan tragic form, Faustus gets himself in so deep, his tragic flaw or error in judgment is so egregious that it leads ultimately and necessarily to his death, thus fulfilling the fate of an Elizabethan tragic hero. Since Faustus has overestimated what he can attain from an arrangement with Lucifer and since he underestimated the power of Lucifer's evil, his ultimate end must be and is death even though he recognizes his mistakes and pleads for pardon.

Understanding of Christopher Marlowe's Elizabethan tragedy, Dr. Faustus, can be framed in terms of the Renaissance philosophy and the Elizabethan tragedy, which takes a different turn on some points from the Aristotelian tragedy, for instance, such as the Elizabethan tragedy's requisite death of the tragic hero. Dr. Faustus demonstrates the Renaissance philosophy that pits the dichotomy of good, angelic humanity against evil, depraved humanity.

Marlowe constructed the character of Dr. Faustus to represent within himself both characteristics of the Renaissance view of humanity as divinely good and hellishly evil. First, Dr. Faustus is presented as a scholar of all things including divinity, the highest Renaissance scholarly discipline. Then, Faustus is shown as dissatisfied with the limitations of humanity and grasping for unlimited knowledge,

Throughout the play, Faustus descends to lower and lower planes of knowledge in his pursuit of the "power" and "omnipotence" that comes from knowledge. In the beginning, Mephistopheles answers all Faustus' questions but draws the line on talk of the universe, which can be seen to stand for astronomical and cosmological studies. Faustus must be content with merely mapping the universe instead of understanding it. Marlowe ultimately shows in Dr. Faustus the futility of the quest for ultimate knowledge and the inevitable result of abandoning moral integrity for omnipotent knowledge.

Dr. Faustus also represents a Classic Elizabethan tragedy. First, the tragic hero has a flaw or makes an error in judgment that leads to his doom. It's hard to say whether Faustus had a fatal flaw in his character or whether he was doomed by a faulty understanding that lead to a fatally disastrous error in judgment. All along the way, Faustus has doubts and hesitations which speak for the integrity of his moral character. If he has a fatal flaw, it might be that he did not reckon the power of evil highly enough, that he thought that with omnipotent knowledge, he could free himself

from the chains of evil he wrapped so blithely around himself. Adam and Eve also fell to the punishment from the lure of knowledge. Of course, quite often Faustus' fatal flaw is said to be greed and irreverent disregard for goodness. One clue to forming a literary stance on the question lies in examining his hesitations and second thoughts. Dr. Faustus is a tragedy because the main character falls as a victim of his circumstances, and is a victim of himself. He is a man with all the potential and possibilities to be successful. He is a Renaissance man who is versed in every aspect of science, philosophy, the arts, education, and genius; yet, he utilizes his energy and wit into absolutely nonsense and unnecessary goals, such as his obsession to be a magician, and his ridiculous fixation for power: A power he has no clue what to do with.

To make matters worse, his self-absorbance led him to make a pact with the devil to obtain that same power he wanted for no factual reason. He didn't even know why he did it, in all reality. He did it with no solid basis, and he began to regret it.

All this for nothing: He dies insane and cursed. No triumph, no merits. Just he, a victim of himself.

In his play 'Dr. Faustus' Christopher Marlowe presents his main character as a tragic 'hero' right from the start - the full title of the play is 'The Tragically History of Doctor Faustus. So we have the idea of 'tragedy' and a history (story) at the beginning - his audiences knew what they were getting - a tragedy or fall from grace or some lofty status. Marlowe's audiences would have been familiar with this idea of tragedy from the old morality plays that were in performance around that time. Marlowe re-used an old legend called Faust to tell the story of a man, who likes all of us at some time to a greater or lesser degree, lets himself down. He loses credibility, reputation, his standing in the eyes of God and Man and risks his immortal soul. It is in identifying with his human frailty and weakness that we see him as a tragic figure. He sells his priceless soul to the devil for the sake of intellectual superiority and finds it a shallow recompense.

One way that Dr. Faustus can be seen as a tragedy lies in the main character himself. The fundamental story of a man, Faustus, trying to appropriate the world in accordance to his subjectivity can lead to the tragic conclusion that each step towards creation is inevitably a step towards destruction. Faustus is a man of science, of boundless optimism, who genuinely believes that through his pact with the devil, he will be able to externalize his own subjective beliefs. In this setting, the real world is

to mirrors the mind. It is in this condition where the tragic condition of Faustus is present, as he believes that he can overtake and control the world based on what is in his mind, his subjectivity. The realization that his desire to do so inevitably leads to his destruction. It reflects the tragic condition that immerses human beings.

In fact "Dr. Faustus" is a story of a man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for necromantic powers (magic). The devil makes him a deal and allows Dr. Faustus 24 years of magical power, but at the end of that time, he was to be taken to Hell. "Dr. Faustus" is a tragic story because the protagonist suffers extreme suffering as a result of the choices he makes throughout the play.

2.10 Suggested reading

- *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe* (edited by Roma Gill in 1986; Clarendon Press published in partnership with Oxford University Press)
- *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (edited by J. B. Steane in 1969; edited by Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey, Revised Edition, 2004, Penguin):
- *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe* (edited by Patrick Cheney in 2004; Cambridge University Press)

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 101	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Unit :03(1550-1660) Sem-1	
The Tempest By William Shakespeare	

Lesson Structure

3.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

3.2 Introduction

Introduction of Age (Elizabethan Age)

The **Elizabethan Age** is the period associated with the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603) and is often considered to be a golden age in English history. It was an age considered to be the height of the English Renaissance and saw the full flowering of English literature and English poetry. In Elizabethan theater, William Shakespeare, among others, composed and staged plays in a variety of settings that broke away from England's past style of plays. It was an age of expansion and exploration abroad, while at home the Protestant Reformation was established and successfully defended against the Catholic powers of the Continent.

3.3 Main Body of the Text

3.3.1 About the age

The Elizabethan Era took place from 1558 to 1603 and is considered by many historians to be the golden age in English History. During this era, England experienced peace and prosperity while the arts flourished. The Elizabethan Era is perhaps most famous for its theatre and the works of William Shakespeare. English Renaissance theatre began with the opening of "The Red Lion" theatre in 1567 and the famous Globe Theatre in 1599. The period produced some of the world's great playwrights including Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Today Shakespeare is considered the greatest writer of the English language. Popular genres of the theatre included the history play, the tragedy, and the comedy.

3.3.2 About the author

William Shakespeare was an English poet, the dramatist who is considered one of the greatest writers to ever use the English language. He is also the most famous playwright in the world with his plays being translated into over 50 languages and performed across the globe for audiences of all ages. For several years his genius as dramatist and poet had been acknowledged by critics and playgoers alike, and his social and professional position had become considerable. Inside the theatre his influence was supreme.

The following are the top four reasons why Shakespeare has stood the test of time.

- Illumination of the Human Experience
- Great Stories
- Compelling Characters
- Ability to Turn a Phrase

3.3.3 About the play

'The Tempest is a play by William Shakespeare, probably written in 1610-1611, and thought to be one of the last plays. After the first scene, which takes place on a ship at sea during the tempest, the rest of the story is set one remote island, where the sorcerer Prospero, a complex and contradictory character, lives with his daughter Miranda, and his two servants- Caliban, a savage monster figure, and Ariel, an airy spirit. The play contains music and songs that evoke the spirit of enchantment on the island. It explores many themes, including magic, betrayal, and family. In act IV, a wedding masque serves as a play-with-in play and contributes spectacle, allegory, and elevated language.

Though 'The Tempest' is listed in the First Folio as the first of Shakespeare's comedies, it deals with both tragic and comic themes, modern critics have created a category of romance for this and other later plays of Shakespeare.

It has been put to varied interpretations—from those that see it as a fable of art and creation, with Prospero representing Shakespeare, and Prospero's renunciation of magic signaling Shakespeare's farewell to the stage, to interpretations that consider it an allegory of Europeans colonizing foreign lands.

3.4 Further Body of the Text

Summary

Act 1, Scene 1

Act One opens amidst a great storm. A ship carrying King Alonso of Naples and his entourage, who are returning home from the wedding of the King's daughter in Tunis, is tossed about by the powerful waves. As the Boatswain tries to keep the boat afloat, the King and two of his hot-headed men, Antonio and Sebastian, come on deck to bark orders at the crew. The Boatswain does not have time to pander to the arrogant King and his courtiers, so he is short with them. The men become enraged, verbally assaulting the boatswain as he tries to regain control of the steering. Only the King's counselor, Gonzalo, remains calm and collected as the ferocious wind splits the ship in half.

Act 1, Scene 2

On an island close by, Prospero, the right Duke of Milan, and his fifteen-year-old daughter, Miranda, watch the wreck of the ship. The compassionate Miranda is horrified by what she sees, but Prospero assures her that all the men on the ship will be safe. He reveals his role in the shipwreck and his relationship with the men on board. He tells his daughter that he was once the Duke of Milan, and, as Duke, he spent most of his time learning the art of magic. But, Prospero's ambitious brother, Antonio, "awaked an evil nature" (1.2.93), and he decided to overthrow Prospero and claim the title of Duke for himself. Antonio received help from King Alonso, and together they removed Prospero from power and placed him and Miranda, who was two at the time, in a boat and abandoned them at sea. Fortunately, the kind-hearted Gonzalo had given them water, clothes, and other supplies, including Prospero's cherished books. Thus they were able to float for some time at sea, and eventually, they landed on the island that has become their permanent home. Now Fate has brought Prospero's enemies near him once again, and, through magic, he admits to Miranda that he was responsible for the storm that brought his brother and the King to the island.

With matters now more pressing than Miranda's many questions, Prospero casts a spell to put her to sleep while he summons his servant, an airy spirit named Ariel. Ariel tells his master that he has magically put the passengers in a trance and dispersed them about the island, ensuring that the King's son, Ferdinand, is by himself, as instructed by Prospero. Ferdinand sits alone in mourning, believing that he is the sole survivor of the crash. Tired from all the tasks Prospero has made him perform, Ariel complains "Is there more toil?" (242), but Prospero quickly reminds Ariel that his "toil" is payment for Prospero rescuing him from imprisonment in a tree trunk, at the hands of 'the foul witch Sycorax' (258) who is now dead but once ruled the island with her magic. Prospero ensures Ariel that, if his current plans are successful, he will release him from his obligations. He next instructs Ariel to make himself invisible to everyone but his master. Ariel flies away and Prospero awakens Miranda, telling her that they are about to visit his other slave, Caliban, a disfigured and savage offspring of the dead witch, Sycorax. Despite Prospero's attempts to tame him, Caliban has remained wide and barbaric and has even attempted to rape Miranda. Prospero calls out to Caliban and, reluctantly, he comes, complaining about his captivity. Prospero replies that he has every right to enslave Caliban, in payment

for all the education and kindness Prospero has given him. Caliban strikes back, proclaiming that he did not want to be educated by Prospero:

> You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
> For learning me your language! (425-7)

Prospero sends Caliban to gather wood, and Ferdinand wanders in with invisible Ariel behind him, playing and singing. Miranda sees Ferdinand and immediately is captivated by his ravishing good looks. The feeling is mutual and Ferdinand falls in love with Miranda. Prospero, who has hoped all along that his daughter would love Ferdinand is delighted. However, to ensure that Ferdinand is the right man for Miranda, he tests Ferdinand's resolve and pretends to distrust the young man. Much to the dismay of Miranda, Prospero imprisons Ferdinand.

Act 2, Scene 1

On another part of the island, Gonzalo tries to comfort King Alonso, who believes that he has lost his only son, Ferdinand. The King's brother, Sebastian, is not as comforting and he mocks Gonzalo's attempts to cheer up the King. Sebastian reminds the King that he had been advised not to take the journey to Tunis in the first place, and thus he is directly responsible for all of their problems. Ariel arrives and magically puts everyone to sleep except Antonio and Sebastian. Antonio suggests that they should kill the King as he sleeps and make Sebastian the new King of Naples. Sebastian agrees, but just as they are about to draw their swords, Ariel awakens King Alonso and Gonzalo. Gonzalo sees the men with their swords drawn and asks what they are doing. Sebastian makes up a lie that they heard "a hollow burst of bellowing" (316), that sounded like a wild animal, and they were merely trying to protect their sleeping king. Believing their intentions were good, King Alonso thinks no more about it and asks them to help in the search for Ferdinand. They agree and the scene comes to a close.

Act 2, Scene 2

Caliban has just finished chopping wood when he hears loud claps of thunder. This prompts him to soliloquize on his hatred of Prospero: "All the infections that the sun sucks up/From bogs, fens, flats on Prospero fall, and make him by inchmeal a disease!" (1-3). He feels that Prospero has filled the island with spirits to torment him for being late with the firewood. Trinculo, the court jester who has been traveling with the King, approaches, and Caliban naturally assume he is one of Prospero's spying

spirits. Caliban falls to the ground, hoping that it will somehow help him go unnoticed. Trinculo is looking for shelter, worried about the coming storm. He sees Caliban, lying flat on his face, and finds him very interesting. He wishes he were in England so that he could put the monster he has discovered on display as a freak of nature. The thunder grows closer and Trinculo finds it necessary, albeit unappealing, to crawl under Caliban's cloak for protection. In his now-famous words, "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows!" (42). Another survivor of the shipwreck, a butler to the King named Stephano, appears. He washed ashore on a barrel of wine and has since ingested its contents and is very drunk indeed. Seeing Trinculo and Caliban lying on the ground, he thinks that they are two-headed monsters with four legs, indigenous to the island. Stephano gives Caliban the bit of wine he has left, hoping to appease the horrid creature. Caliban cries out, "Do not torment me, prithee" (73) because he still believes the men are spirits sent by his master. Trinculo gets up and is relieved to see his friend. The two dance to celebrate their reunion while Caliban, now drunk from his first taste of wine, decides that Stephano will be his new master: "I'll kiss thy foot. I'll swear myself thy subject" (154). Stephano gladly accepts Caliban's offer and they head off to see all the wonders of the island.

Act 3, Scene 1

Act Three opens with Ferdinand performing tasks against his will by his captor, Prospero. He tells himself that, although he is not used to such hard labor, he likes the work because he knows that Miranda "weeps" when she sees him suffer. Miranda appears, followed by Prospero who hides from their site. She offers to carry the logs for him but he refuses her help, insisting that he would rather break his back than see her undergo "such dishonor" (27). They declare their love for one another and agree to be wed as soon as possible. Prospero is delighted by what he is hearing and, now sure that Ferdinand is worthy of his daughter, he returns to his books and his other pressing business with Antonio and the King.

Act 3, Scene 2

The attention turns once again to Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo. Stephano is having trouble controlling Caliban, who hates Trinculo because he continues to refer to Caliban as 'the monster'. Caliban proposes that together they overpower and kill Prospero, and steal his books and his daughter. Stephano agrees to the plan, imagining himself as ruler over the island and the husband of Miranda. But Ariel has been listening to their conversation and he rushes to tell Prospero.

Act 3, Scene 3

Meanwhile, King Alonso and his courtiers have been searching the island for Prince Ferdinand. Suddenly, magical creatures bring forth a banquet and place the food in front of the hungry men. Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio run toward the feast, but just as they are about to eat, Ariel appears, disguised as a harpy, and the table vanishes in a burst of thunder and lightning. Ariel accuses them of being sinful men and tells them that just Fate has caused their shipwreck and taken Alonso's son away from him. He also tells them that they will be tormented until they change their evil ways and lead "a clear life" (82). Ariel disappears and the mystical creatures again appear, dancing to the soft music that now fills the air, and again carrying the table. The King decides to keep looking for his son and die along side of him, and Antonio and Sebastian follow him, foolishly convinced that they can destroy the spirits on the island. Gonzalo, worried that they have gone mad, follows them, hoping to "hinder them from what this ecstasy/ May now provoke them to" (106-7).

Act 4, Scene 1

Prospero has consented to the union of Miranda and Ferdinand and now prepares a wedding masque for the two lovers. He cautions Ferdinand not to "break her virgin knot" (15) until they are legitimately married. Soft music fills the air and three sprites pretending to be the goddesses, Iris, Ceres, and Juno, descend to participate in the celebration. Other nymphs appear and they all dance and make merry. But the festivities are cut short when they hear a "hollow and confused" noise coming from outside Prospero's dwelling. It is the sound of Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo, still drunk and ready to kill Prospero. Prospero dismisses the sprites and tells Ferdinand and Miranda: "Our revels are now ended. These our actors,

> As I foretold you, were all spirits and
> Are melted into air, into thin air:
> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Ye all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,

Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. Sir, I am vex'd;
Bear with my weakness; my, brain is troubled:
Be not disturb'd with my infirmity:
If you be pleased, retire into my cell
And there repose: a turn or two I'll walk,
To still my beating mind. (163-77)

Prospero orders Ariel to bring out all his goods because he knows that Stephano and Trinculo will be enticed by the finery. Ariel enters once again, his arms loaded with beautiful apparel. Prospero and Ariel watch in the shadows as Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo enter Prospero's cell, and sure enough, they are distracted by the fine clothes. Stephano and Trinculo try them on, despite the pleading of Caliban who knows that Prospero will catch them. From the outside noise of wild dogs is heard. Prospero has summoned the spirits of the island to take the shape of fierce hunting hounds to chase the villains out of Prosper's cell. Comically the three men run screaming from the cell, and Prospero and Ariel remain. Prospero tells Ariel that his enemies are now all at his mercy and that he will soon have freedom from the island.

Act 5, Scene 1

The final act opens three days after the great tempest that destroyed the boat. Prospero, clothed in his magic robes, hears a plea from Ariel on behalf of the stranded men. Ariel reports that King Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio have gone mad, while Gonzalo suffers mental anguish as he mourns for the victims. Prospero is moved by Ariel's words and decides that he will show them the mercy that they did not show him twelve years ago. He sends Ariel to fetch the men, and in a soliloquy, he reveals that, once he restores the sanity of his enemies, he will forever renounce magic: "But this rough magic/I here abjure" (50-1). He breaks his magical staff, declares that he will drown his books, and exchanges his magician's robes for the clothing he wore when he was the Duke of Milan. Amidst solemn music, Ariel leads Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian, and Francisco into Prospero's cell. They are in a trance and stand around a circle that Prospero has made. Prospero tells Ariel that he is free from all further obligations and that he will miss him when he returns to Milan. Prospero breaks the spell that holds the men and Gonzalo is the first to speak: "Some heavenly power guide us/Out of this fearful country".

Prospero identifies himself and Alonso, who has seen the error of his ways, repents and resigns the dukedom to Prospero. Alonso is reunited with Ferdinand and the two fathers seal their peace with the marriage of their children. Alonso and Sebastian are not repentant, but they must comply with the orders of the King to restore Prospero as Duke of Milan. Prospero forgives Antonio but does not reconcile with him, saying: "For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother/Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive thy rankest fault" (131-2). Ariel enters with the Boatswain and the Master of the ship, and they report that, to their amazement, the boat has been fully restored and is ready to set sail. Ariel quickly fetches Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo, who are still drunk, and Prospero confronts them. He tells Caliban that he can now be king of the island and Caliban regrets ever thinking that Stephano was his master. He calls himself a "thrice-double ass" (296) for worshipping the dull fool. Prospero invites the King and his courtiers to hear the story of his life on the island, as Ariel (as his final task for Prospero) prepares the proper sailing weather to guide Prospero back to Italy.

3.4.1 Character list

Prospero (The rightful Duke of Milan)	**Miranda** (Daughter of Prospero)	**Ariel** (A spirit in the service of Prospero)
Caliban (a servant of prospero)	**Alonso** (King of Naples)	**Sebastian** (Alonso’s Brother)
Ferdinand (Alonso’s Son)	**Adrian** (A lord serving under Alonso)	

3.4.2 Analysis of major and minor characters

- Prospero – the rightful Duke of Milan
- Miranda – daughter to Prospero
- Ariel – a spirit in service to Prospero
- Caliban – a servant of Prospero and a savage monster
- Alonso – King of Naples
- Sebastian – Alonso's brother
- Antonio – Prospero's brother, the usurping Duke of Milan
- Ferdinand – Alonso's son
- Gonzalo – an honest old councilor
- Adrian – a lord serving under Alonso
- Francisco – a lord serving under Alonso
- Trinculo – the King's jester
- Stephano – the King's drunken butler
- Juno – the Roman goddess of marriage
- Ceres – Roman goddess of agriculture
- Iris – Greek goddess of the sea and sky
- Master – master of the ship
- Mariners
- Boatswain – servant of the master
- Nymphs, Reapers

3.4.3 Analysis of major characters

Prospero

The play's protagonist, and father of Miranda. Twelve years before the events of the play, Prospero was the duke of Milan. His brother, Antonio, in concert with Alonso, king of Naples, usurped him, forcing him to flee in a boat with his daughter. The honest lord Gonzalo aided Prospero in his escape. Prospero has spent his twelve years on the island refining the magic that gives him the power he needs to punish and forgive his enemies.

Miranda

The daughter of Prospero, Miranda was brought to the island at an early age and has never seen any men other than her father and Caliban, though she dimly remembers being cared for by female servants as an infant. Because she has been

sealed off from the world for so long, Miranda's perceptions of other people tend to be naïve and non-judgmental. She is compassionate, generous, and loyal to her father.

Ariel

Prospero's spirit helper. Ariel is referred to throughout as "he," but his gender and physical form are ambiguous. Rescued by Prospero from long imprisonment at the hands of the witch Sycorax, Ariel is Prospero's servant until Prospero decides to release him. He is mischievous and ubiquitous, able to traverse the length of the island in an instant and to change shapes at will. He carries out virtually every task that Prospero needs to be accomplished in the play.

Caliban

Another of Prospero's servants. Caliban, the son of the now-deceased witch Sycorax, acquainted Prospero with the island when Prospero arrived. Caliban believes that the island rightfully belongs to him and has been stolen by Prospero. His speech and behavior is sometimes coarse and brutal, as in his drunken scenes with Stephano and Trinculo (II.ii, IV.i), and sometimes eloquent and sensitive, as in his rebukes of Prospero in Act I, scene ii, and in his description of the eerie beauty of the island in Act III, scene ii (III.ii.130-138).

Ferdinand

Son and heir of Alonso. Ferdinand seems in some ways to be as pure and naïve as Miranda. He falls in love with her upon first sight and happily submits to servitude to win her father's approval.

Alonso

King of Naples and father of Ferdinand. Alonso aided Antonio in unseating Prospero as Duke of Milan twelve years before. As he appears in the play, however, he is acutely aware of the consequences of all his actions. He blames his decision to marry his daughter to the Prince of Tunis on the apparent death of his son. In addition, after the magical banquet, he regrets his role in the usurping of Prospero.

Antonio

He is Prospero's brother. Antonio quickly demonstrates that he is power-hungry and foolish. In Act II, scene i, he persuades Sebastian to kill the sleeping Alonso. He then goes along with Sebastian's absurd story about fending off lions when Gonzalo wakes up and catches Antonio and Sebastian with their swords drawn.

Sebastian

He is Alonso's brother. Like Antonio, he is both aggressive and cowardly. He is easily persuaded to kill his brother in Act II, scene I, and he initiates the ridiculous story about lions when Gonzalo catches him with his sword drawn.

Gonzalo

An old, honest lord, Gonzalo helped Prospero and Miranda to escape after Antonio usurped Prospero's title. Gonzalo's speeches provide an important commentary on the events of the play, as he remarks on the beauty of the island when the stranded party first lands, then on the desperation of Alonso after the magic banquet, and on the miracle of the reconciliation in Act V, scene i.

Trinculo & Stephano

Trinculo, a jester, and Stephano, a drunken butler, are two minor members of the shipwrecked party. They provide a comic foil to the other, more powerful pairs of Prospero and Alonso and Antonio and Sebastian. Their drunken boasting and petty greed reflect and deflate the quarrels and power struggles of Prospero and the other noblemen.

Boatswain

Appearing only in the first and last scenes, the Boatswain is vigorously good-natured. He seems competent and almost cheerful in the shipwreck scene, demanding practical help rather than weeping and praying. And he seems surprised but not stunned when he awakens from a long sleep at the end of the play.

2.5 Check Your Progress

- **Why was Prospero banished?**
- **Who is Ariel and why does he work for Prospero?**
- **Why does Caliban hate Prospero and Miranda?**
- **How does Prospero manipulate Alonso and his company?**
- **Why does Prospero give up magic?**
- **Why was Prospero banished?**

1. Why was Prospero banished?

As the play '*The Tempest'* begins; two men conspired to assassinate Prospero, who was then the Duke of Milan. These two men were Prospero's brother, Antonio, and the King of Naples, Alonso. The purpose of these men's conspiracy was to remove Prospero from power and install Antonio in his place. Antonio succeeded in

taking over the dukedom but the assassination plot failed because Gonzalo alerted Prospero to the plot and helped him escape from Milan on a rotting boat. As Prospero explains to Miranda in Act I, scene II, they arrived on the island "By providence divine." Although Prospero is the victim of a foul plot against his life, he was not entirely blameless in the events that occurred. By his admission, Prospero's increasing obsession with the study of magic had begun to take more and more of his time. This obsession forced him to neglect his duties as duke and eventually hand the government over to Antonio. Though Prospero's delinquency does not justify Antonio's betrayal, it certainly enabled it.

2. Who is Ariel and why does he work for Prospero?

Ariel is a spirit who uses magic to help Prospero carry out his plans. Given Ariel's evident power, it may seem odd that he would be willing to serve Prospero at all. So why does he do the magician's bidding? The main reason is that Ariel owes what freedom he has to Prospero. Before Prospero's arrival on the island, Ariel served Caliban's mother, Sycorax. As Prospero reminds him in Act I, scene II, Ariel fell out of favor with Sycorax, and she imprisoned him in a "cloven pine." Ariel remained stuck in the tree for twelve years, during which time Sycorax died, abandoning Ariel to an eternity of pain. When Prospero arrived on the island, he found Ariel in torment: "Thy groans," he explains, "Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts / Of ever angry bears" (I.ii.). Prospero freed Ariel from this prison, and he struck a deal in which Ariel would serve him faithfully for one year, after which he would be released from all service and returned to freedom.

3. Why does Caliban hate Prospero and Miranda?

Caliban sees Prospero and Miranda as imperialists who took control of an island that he felt belonged to him. In a way, Caliban ironically mirrors Prospero, who was also violently unseated from power. However, whereas Prospero ended up free but in exile, Caliban ended up enslaved in his own home. Caliban resents the sudden and radical shift in his social position, going from the free ruler of the island to the servant of a tyrannical master. In addition to despising Prospero for enslaving him and divesting him of all power, Caliban also resents Miranda for the education she has given him. Miranda describes her efforts as selfless and guided by pity.

4. How does Prospero manipulate Alonso and his company?

Throughout the play, Prospero commands his servant Ariel to present Alonso and his company with visions of splendor and horror. These visions have a dual

purpose. On the one hand, they are meant to keep the men disoriented. At one point Ariel even puts the men to sleep to disorient them further. As long as Alonso and his company remain bewildered, Prospero can control their movements and lead them through space as he pleases. On the other hand, the visions of splendor and horror are meant to break the men down emotionally and psychologically. This emotional breakdown is a crucial aspect of Prospero's plan. Alonso must feel broken and defeated so that when Prospero reveals that his son Ferdinand survived, the revelation will enable an authentic emotional resolution to their longstanding conflict. In other words, Prospero uses magic both to get revenge and to secure his salvation.

5. Why does Prospero give up magic?

Near the beginning of Act V, Prospero stands alone on stage and delivers a speech where he lists his many accomplishments in magic. At the end of this speech, he tells himself that he will abandon "this rough magic" once he's managed to resolve his conflict with Alonso and Antonio:

"I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fathoms in the earth, / And, deeper than did ever plummet sound, / I'll drown my book".

In *The Tempest*, Prospero uses magic as a means to an end. Although his accomplishments in the magic arts have been great, magic itself remains "rough," meaning either "crude" or "violent." In short, magic is capable of great harm. And as Prospero describes in the first act, his obsessive study of magic is what cost him his dukedom in the first place. Prospero, therefore, uses magic to right a wrong and restore himself to power. However, once he accomplishes his goal, he resolves to abandon magic and rid himself of its corrupting influence for good.

6. What Does The Ending Mean?

The Tempest ends with a general sense of resolution and hope. After four acts in which Prospero uses magic to split up, disorient, and psychologically torture his enemies, in the final act he lures everyone to the same spot on the island and forgives Alonso and Antonio for their betrayal twelve years prior. The main event that heals the wounds of the past is the union between Miranda and Ferdinand. Alonso, who thought that his son had died in the shipwreck, feels completely renewed when he sees that Ferdinand has survived. Ferdinand's engagement to Miranda establishes a bond of kinship between Alonso and Prospero, further bridging that rift that separates them. Miranda and Ferdinand's union suggests the possibility for a new future, devoid of the kind of conflict that has driven the play. With the major conflict between

Prospero and Alonso resolved, Prospero breaks his staff and gives up magic in preparation for his return to Milan.

3.6 Summary

Prospero, Duke of Milan, who had been deposed by his brother and the king of Naples, "an enemy inveterate" and exposed at sea in an open boat, raise by his power of enchantment, a violent tempest, and causes his enemies, who are on their return from Africa, to be cast ashore on the island, where for many years he has found refuge with his daughter. By wise and prompt direction of the agency of spirits, over whom his knowledge has given him command, he improves the opportunity to strike the King of Naples with remorse, to convert him from an enemy into an ally, to bring about the marriage of his daughter with his son, regain his right in an independent dukedom, and take noble revenge for the treachery of his brother. The supernatural aids at the command of Prospero give occasion for the highly picturesque incident, but his success, and the interest of the play, are no less due to the discretion, self-command, and vigor, which he displays in availing himself of them. Such qualities might appear inconsistent with his original loss of position, but this is explained by his misfortune being ascribed to his neglect of the active virtues for the sake of knowledge; and it is the very pith and marrow of the argument and conduct of the play, to show what are the exercises and what are the impulses by which in a noble nature such a want of balance may be corrected, and how when studious and administrative energy and moral purpose at last work together in harmony, the coarser, ruder, and baser talents of mere men of the world, are weak as the ways of children.

3.7 Keywords

- Resolve
- Driven
- Kinship
- Psychological
- Resolution
- Accomplishment
- Salvation
- Disoriented

3.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- **Character Sketch of Caliban**
- **Shakespeare's Characters: Prospero (The Tempest)**
- **Discuss the various themes in the play "The Tempest"**

3.9 Answers to Your Progress

Character sketch of Caliban

The character of Caliban is generally thought to be one of the author's masterpieces. It is one of the wildest and most abstracted of all Shakespeare's characters, whose deformity, whether of body or mind, is redeemed by the power and truth of the imagination displayed in it. It is the essence of grossness, but there is not a particle of vulgarity in it. Shakespeare has described the brutal mind of Caliban in contact with the pure and original forms of nature; the character grows out of the soil where it is rooted, uncontrolled, uncouth, and wild, unclamped by any of the meanness's of custom.

Schlegel, the admirable German critic of Shakespeare, observes that Caliban is a poetical character, and "always speaks in blank verse."

Opposed to Prospero and at the extreme limit of the contrast, stands Caliban, the climax of wickedness and brutality. He is the very personification of the evil Will. He is only momentarily tamed by outward constraint and inward powerlessness. His will remains evil, and in him, we have proof of the irrefutable truth that evil, even though, by its acts, invariably annihilates itself and serves the purposes of what is good.

The ethical significance of this character is that he is the most strange of all the creatures ever formed by the poetical imagination — a creature in whom devil, animal, and man, are equally blended, and who, despite his wholly fantastic abnormity, rises before us with the vividness of actual reality.

Caliban is no mere creation of a passing poetic fancy, no chance addition to the substance of the drama; for although he may have originated in Shakespeare's imagination from the fantastic and wondrous reports about the wild inhabitants (the cannibals) of the newly discovered continents, and although grotesquely formed and humorously exaggerated —to suit the fantastic-comic coloring of the whole — still he is a necessary member in the artistic organism of the piece. And as Prospero's mind is

one of more than ordinary endowments, and, like every historical leader of men, represents the higher idea of what is general,

So Caliban, his organic opposite, is likewise no mere individual, but also the representative of what is general, the personified idea of human wickedness; in him, in his defiance and arrogance and his blind, and his coarse sensuality.

Caliban has become a by-word as the strange creation of a poetical imagination. A mixture of gnome and savage, half-demon, half brute, in his behavior we perceive at once the traces of his native disposition, and the influence of Prospero's education. Caliban is malicious, cowardly, false, and base; and yet he is essentially different from the vulgar knaves of a civilized world, as portrayed occasionally by Shakespeare. He is rude, but not vulgar; he never falls into the prosaic and low familiarity of his drunken associates, for he is, in his way, a poetical being; he always speaks in verse. He has picked up everything dissonant and thorny in language to compose out of it a vocabulary of his own; and of the whole variety of nature, the hateful, repulsive, and pettily deformed have alone been impressed on his imagination. The magical world of spirits, which the staff of Prospero has assembled on the island, casts merely a faint reflection into his mind, as a ray of light which falls into a dark cave, incapable of communicating to it either heat or illumination, serves merely to set in motion the poisonous vapors. The delineation of this monster is inconceivably consistent and profound, and, notwithstanding its hatefulness, by no means hurtful to our feelings, as the honor of human nature is left untouched.

Shakespeare's Characters: Prospero (The Tempest)

Tried by suffering, Prospero proves its strengthening qualities. Far from succumbing to the blow, it is not until it has fallen that he displays his true, far-reaching, and terrible power, and becomes the great irresistible magician which Shakespeare himself had so long been. His power is not understood by his daughter, who is but a child, but it is felt by his enemies. He plays with them as he pleases, compels them to repent their past treatment of him, and then pardons them with a calmness of superiority to which Timon could never have attained, but which is far from being that all-obliterating tenderness with which Imogen and Hermione forgive remorseful sinners.

There is less charity towards the offenders in Prospero's absolution than that element of contempt that has so long and so exclusively filled Shakespeare's soul. His forgiveness, the oblivion of a scornful indifference, is not so much that of the strong

man who knows his power to crush if need be, like that of the wisdom which is no longer affected by outward circumstance.

Richard Garnett aptly observes, in his critical introduction to the play in the "Irving Edition," that Prospero finds it easy to forgive because, in his secret soul, he sets very little value on the dukedom he has lost, and is, therefore, roused to very little indignation by the treachery which deprived him of it. His daughter's happiness is the sole thing which greatly interests him now, and he carries his indifference to worldly matters so far that, without any outward compulsion, he breaks his magic wand and casts his books into the sea. Resuming his place among the ranks of ordinary men, he retains nothing but his inalienable treasure, of experience and reflection.

Prospero is not Shakespeare, but the play is in a certain measure autobiographical. It shows us more than anything else what the discipline of life had made of Shakespeare at fifty — a fruit too fully matured to be suffered to hang much longer on the tree. Conscious superiority untinged by arrogance, genial scorn for the mean and base, mercifulness into which contempt entered very largely, serenity excluding passionate affection while admitting tenderness, intellect overtopping morality but in no way blighting or perverting it — such are the mental features of him in whose development the man of the world kept pace with the poet, and who now shone as the consummate perfection of both."

In other words, it is Shakespeare's nature which overflows into Prospero, and thus the magician represents not merely the noble-minded great man, but the genius, imaginatively delineated, not, as in *Hamlet*, psychologically analyzed. Audibly and visibly does Prospero's genius manifest itself, visible and audible also the inward and outward opposition he combats.

The two figures in which this spiritual power and this resistance are embodied are the most admirable productions of an artist's powers in this or any other age. Ariel is a supernatural, Caliban a bestially natural being, and both have been endowed with a human soul. They were not seen but created.

Prospero is the master-mind, the man of the future, as shown by his control over the forces of Nature. He passes as a magician, and Shakespeare found his prototype, as far as external accessories were concerned, in a scholar of mark and man of high principles. A man owning even a small share of the scientific knowledge of our times would inevitably have been regarded as a powerful magician at that date. In the creation of Prospero, therefore, Shakespeare unconsciously anticipated the results

of time. He not merely gave him a magic wand but created a poetical embodiment of the forces of Nature as his attendant spirit.

- Prospero, Duke of Milan, who had been deposed by his brother and the king of Naples, "an enemy inveterate" and exposed at sea in an open boat, raise by his power of enchantment, a violent tempest, and causes his enemies, who are on their return from Africa, to be cast ashore on the island, where for many years he has found refuge with his daughter. By wise and prompt direction of the agency of spirits, over whom his knowledge has given him command, he improves the opportunity to strike the King of Naples with remorse, to convert him from an enemy into an ally, to bring about the marriage of his daughter with his son, regain his right in an independent dukedom, and take noble revenge for the treachery of his brother. The supernatural aids at the command of Prospero give occasion for the highly picturesque incident, but his success, and the interest of the play, are no less due to the discretion, self-command, and vigor, which he displays in availing himself of them. Such qualities might appear inconsistent with his original loss of position, but this is explained by his misfortune being ascribed to his neglect of the active virtues for the sake of knowledge; and it is the very pith and marrow of the argument and conduct of the play, to show what are the exercises and what are the impulses by which in a noble nature such a want of balance may be corrected, and how when studious and administrative energy and moral purpose at last work together in harmony, the coarser, ruder, and baser talents of mere men of the world, are weak as the ways of children.

The Illusion of Justice

The Tempest tells a fairly straightforward story involving an unjust act, the usurpation of Prospero's throne by his brother, and Prospero's quest to re-establish justice by restoring himself to power. However, the idea of justice that the play works toward seems highly subjective, since this idea represents the view of one character who controls the fate of all the other characters. Though Prospero presents himself as a victim of injustice working to right the wrongs that have been done to him, Prospero's idea of justice and injustice is somewhat hypocritical—though he is furious with his brother for taking his power, he has no qualms about enslaving Ariel and Caliban in order to achieve his ends. At many moments throughout the play, Prospero's sense of justice seems extremely one-sided and mainly involves what is

good for Prospero. Moreover, because the play offers no notion of higher-order or justice to supersede Prospero's interpretation of events, the play is morally ambiguous. As the play progresses, however, it becomes more and more involved with the idea of creativity and art, and Prospero's role begins to mirror more explicitly the role of an author creating a story around him. With this metaphor in mind, and especially if we accept Prospero as a surrogate for Shakespeare himself, Prospero's sense of justice begins to seem, if not perfect, at least sympathetic. Moreover, the means he uses to achieve his idea of justice mirror the machinations of the artist, who also seeks to enable others to see his view of the world. Playwrights arrange their stories in such a way that their idea of justice is imposed upon events. In *The Tempest*, the author is *in* the play, and the fact that he establishes his idea of justice and creates a happy ending for all the characters becomes a cause for celebration, not criticism. By using magic and tricks that echo the special effects and spectacles of the theater, Prospero gradually persuades the other characters and the audience of the rightness of his case. As he does so, the ambiguities surrounding his methods slowly resolve themselves. Prospero forgives his enemies, releases his slaves, and relinquishes his magic power, so that, at the end of the play, he is only an old man whose work has been responsible for all the audience's pleasure. The establishment of Prospero's idea of justice becomes less a commentary on justice in life than on the nature of morality in art. Happy endings are possible, Shakespeare seems to say because the creativity of artists can create them, even if the moral values that establish the happy ending originate from nowhere but the imagination of the artist.

The Difficulty of Distinguishing "Men" from "Monsters"

Upon seeing Ferdinand for the first time, Miranda says that he is "the third man that ever I saw" (I.ii.449). The other two are, presumably, Prospero and Caliban. In their first conversation with Caliban, however, Miranda and Prospero say very little that shows they consider him to be human. Miranda reminds Caliban that before she taught him language, he gabbled "like / A thing most brutish" (I.ii.359–360), and Prospero says that he gave Caliban "human care" (I.ii.349), implying that this was something Caliban ultimately did not deserve. Caliban's exact nature continues to be slightly ambiguous later. In Act IV, scene I, reminded of Caliban's plot, Prospero refers to him as a "devil, a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (IV.i.188–189). Miranda and Prospero both have contradictory views of Caliban's humanity. On the one hand, they think that their education of him has lifted him from

his formerly brutish status. On the other hand, they seem to see him as inherently brutish. His devilish nature can never be overcome by nurture, according to Prospero. Miranda expresses a similar sentiment in Act I, scene ii: “thy vile race, / Though thou didst learn, had that isn't which good natures / Could not abide to be with” (I.ii.361–363). The inhuman part of Caliban drives out the human part, the “good nature,” that is imposed on him. Caliban claims that he was kind to Prospero and that Prospero repaid that kindness by imprisoning him (see I.ii.347). In contrast, Prospero claims that he stopped being kind to Caliban once Caliban had tried to rape Miranda (I.ii.347–351). Which character the audience decides to believe depends on whether it views Caliban as inherently brutish, or as made brutish by oppression. The play leaves the matter ambiguous. Caliban balances all of his eloquent speeches, such as his curses in Act I, scene ii and his speech about the isle’s “noises” in Act III, scene ii, with the most degrading kind of drunken, servile behavior. But Trinculo’s speech upon first seeing Caliban (II.ii.18–38), the longest speech in the play, reproaches too harsh a view of Caliban and blurs the distinction between men and monsters. In England, which he visited once, Trinculo says, Caliban could be shown off for money: “There would this monster make a man. Any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian” (II.ii.28–31). What seems most monstrous in these sentences is not the “dead Indian,” or “any strange beast,” but the cruel voyeurism of those who capture and gape at theme.

Prospero’s threats

Prospero issues many threats in *The Tempest*, demonstrating his innate violence and cruelty. For the most part, Prospero directs his threats at his servants. Prospero’s threats typically contain elements of magic, as when he reprimands Caliban for his disobedience: “If thou neglect’st or dost unwillingly / What I command, I’ll rack thee with old cramps, / Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar” (I.ii.). Prospero also makes harsh threats against his more helpful servant, Ariel. Prospero has promised to liberate Ariel after a period of faithful service, and when Ariel reminds his master of this promise, Prospero warns: “If thou more murmur's, I will rend an oak / And peg thee in his knotty entrails” (I.ii.). Curiously, the tree prison Prospero describes here echoes the tree prison the witch Sycorax had placed Ariel in before Prospero’s arrival. Thus, not only do Prospero’s threats indicate his cruel and domineering nature, but they also link him to other tyrannical figures.

Discuss the various themes in the play'The Tempest'

Obedience and disobedience

The themes of obedience and disobedience underscore the island's hierarchy of power. Prospero stands at the top of this hierarchy. As both the former Duke of Milan and a gifted student of magic, Prospero is the most powerful figure on the island. He, therefore, demands obedience from all of his subjects, including his servants and his daughter. At some point, however, each of these subjects disobeys him. Caliban swears his allegiance to Stephano, trading one master for another in an attempt to topple the island's hierarchy altogether. Other examples of disobedience in the play are more nuanced. Miranda, for instance, believes she disobeys her father by pursuing a romance with Ferdinand. But her actions are actually in line with her father's wishes since Prospero's harsh treatment of Ferdinand is designed to make Miranda take pity on him and fall in love with him. The situation is again different in Ariel's case. Ariel has proven himself a faithful servant, yet Prospero considers him disobedient when he asks for his freedom. These complexities ultimately suggest that the island's hierarchy of power is less stable than it appears.

Treason

Shakespeare weaves the theme of treason throughout *The Tempest*. The first instance of treason occurred in the play's prehistory when Antonio conspired with King Alonso to assassinate Prospero and succeed him as the new Duke of Milan. The attempt to kill Prospero was both political treason and brotherly betrayal. The theme of treason returns in the form of twin assassination plots that arise during the play. While Caliban and Stephano plot to kill Prospero and take control of the island, Antonio and Sebastian plot to kill Alonso and take control of Naples. Both of these plots get interrupted, so despite these men's treasonous intentions, they ultimately do no real harm. Yet the interruption of these assassination plots does not fully dismantle the theme of treason. Perhaps indicating future strife, the play's final scene features Miranda and Ferdinand playing chess—a game that can only be won with the metaphorical assassination of the opponent's king. When Miranda accuses Ferdinand of cheating, she recalls how her uncle Antonio cheated his way into power twelve years prior. Does the future hold yet more instances of treason?

Wonder/admiration

The themes of wonder and admiration center on Miranda, whose name means both "wonderful" and "admirable" in Latin. In a play so full of negative feelings about past wrongdoings, Miranda's optimism about the future serves as a beacon of hope. Ferdinand senses Miranda's admirable qualities upon first meeting her, exclaiming, "O you wonder!" (I.ii.). In a later scene he proclaims her superior virtues: "O you, / So perfect and so peerless, are created / Of every creature's best!" (III.i.). Aside from Gonzalo, Miranda most clearly symbolizes optimism about the possibility of new beginnings and a better future: what she calls a "brave new world." Despite Miranda's optimism, wonder sometimes carries a less positive connotation in *The Tempest*. Under Prospero's command and Ariel's magic, the island is itself a place of wonderful occurrences meant to confuse and disorient. At one point in Act V Prospero comments that Alonso and his company have had many wonderful visions and that these visions prevent them from thinking clearly. In this sense, the island's wonderful occurrences conceal the truth for manipulation.

Monstrosity

The theme of monstrosity constitutes the flip-side to the themes of wonder and admiration. Whereas wonder and admiration apply mainly to the beautiful and loving Miranda, monstrosity applies mainly to the ugly and hateful Caliban. The word "monster" appears most frequently in the scenes with Stephano and Trinculo. Upon first laying eyes on Caliban, Trinculo identifies him as a fishy-looking freak, and he imagines exploiting Caliban's monstrous appearance for profit on the streets of a city: "holiday fools" would willingly part with "a piece of silver" to witness the sideshow attraction. Caliban's monstrosity derives not from his appearance alone, but the contrast between his savage appearance and his civilized language. At one point Trinculo expresses surprise that a creature like Caliban should use a term of respect like "Lord." Although Caliban stands as the primary example of monstrosity in *The Tempest*, Alonso also uses the word "monstrous" to refer to illusory sounds and visions produced by Ariel.

3.10 Suggested Reading

- Chute, Marchette. *Stories from Shakespeare*. New York: World Publishing Company, 1956.

- Levin, Bernard. Quoted in *The Story of English*. Robert McCrum, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil. Viking: 1986).

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 101	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Lesson No:04 (1550-1660)Sem-1	
Paradise Lost John Milton	

Lesson Structure

4.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

4.2 Introduction of Age (puritan period or Milton age)

The Puritan Age-1600-1660)

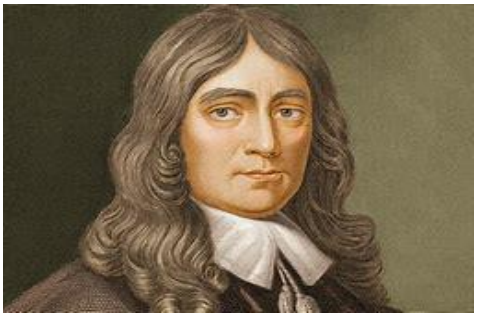
The seventeenth century up to 1660 was dominated by Puritanism and it may be called the puritan Age or the Age of Milton, who was the noblest representative of the puritan spirit. The puritan movement in literature may be considered as the second and greater Renaissance marked by the rebirth of the moral nature of man The puritan movement stood for liberty of the people from the shackles of the deposited ruler as well as the introduction of morality and high ideals in politics. Thus it had two objects personal righteousness, civil and religious liberty. In other words, it aimed of making men honest and free.

“Puritan Literature"

In the literature of the puritan Age, we find the same confusion as we find in religion and politics. As there were no fixed literary standards, imitations of older poets and exaggeration of the poets replaced the original, dignified, and highly imaginative compositions of the Elizabethan writers. The literature produced during this period so-called gloomy age, was not of a higher order, however, this age has the honor of producing one great master of verse whose work would shed luster on any age or people. John Milton, who was the noblest and indomitable representative of the puritan spirit to which, he gave a most lofty and enduring expression.

4.3 Main Body of the Text(Paradise Lost, Book-1)

4.3.1 About the Poet



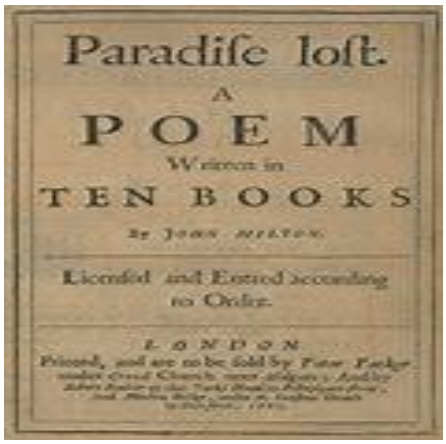
John Milton (1608 –1674)

John Milton (1608 –1674) was an English poet and intellectual who served as a civil servant for the Commonwealth of England under its Council of State and later under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious and political instability and is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667). Written in blank verse, Paradise Lost is widely considered to be one of the greatest works of literature ever written.

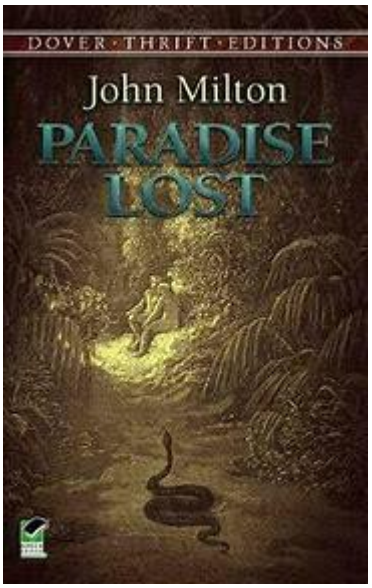
Writing in English and Latin, he achieved international renown within his lifetime; his celebrated *Areopagitica* (1644), written in condemnation of pre-publication censorship, is among history's most influential and impassioned defenses of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. His desire for freedom extended into his style: he introduced new words coined from Latin and Ancient Greek to the English language and was the first modern writer to employ unrhymed verse outside of the theatre or translations.

William Hayley called him the "greatest English author"–and he remains generally regarded "as one of the pre-eminent writers in the English language", though critical reception has oscillated in the centuries since his death. Samuel Johnson praised *Paradise Lost* as "a poem which... concerning design may claim the first place, and concerning performance, the second, among the productions of the human mind". Poets such as William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Thomas Hardy revered him.

4.3.3 About the poem (Paradise Lost Book-1)


Paradiſe loſt.
A
POEM
Written in
TEN BOOKS
By JOHN MILTON.
Licenſed and Entred according to Orderr.
LONDON

(Old Edition)



(Third Edition)

(Paradise Lost Book -1)

Milton introduces his subject: "man's first disobedience" against God and its sorrowful consequences. In the first line, Milton refers to the consequences as the "fruit" of disobedience, punning on the fruit of the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, which Adam and Eve will eat against God's commands. This single act will bring death and suffering into the world, until "one greater man" will come to restore humanity to purity and paradise.

Milton then invokes a Muse, but clarifies that this is a different Muse from the inspirational goddesses the ancient Greek poets called upon – he asks for the Muse that inspired Moses to write Genesis. This Muse is greater than the classical Muse, so Milton hopes that his poem will achieve "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." He associates his Muse with the Holy Spirit, which is part of the Trinity and a force in the creation of the universe. He asks for this divine inspiration that he might "assert Eternal Providence, / And justify the ways of God to men."

After this prologue, Milton asks the **Muse** to describe what first led to **Adam** and **Eve**'s disobedience. He answers himself that they were deceived into "foul revolt" by the "infernal Serpent," who is **Satan**. Satan was an angel who aspired to overthrow **God**, and started a civil war in Heaven. God defeated Satan and his rebel angels and threw them out of Heaven. They fell through an abyss for nine days and then landed in Hell, where they lay stunned for nine more days.

The poem then focuses on **Satan** as he lies dazed in a lake of fire that is dark. Next to him is **Beelzebub**, Satan's second-in-command, and Satan speaks to him, finally breaking the "horrid silence." Satan laments their current state, and how far they have fallen from their previous glorious state as angels. He admits that he has been defeated, but he does not regret his war against **God** (though he never calls God by name). He claims that his heavenly essence cannot be killed, and as long as his life and will remain Satan vows to keep fighting against the tyranny of Heav'n **Beelzebub** answers, saying that **God** (whom he also avoids naming) seems to be omnipotent as he had originally claimed, and he may have let the rebellious angels live just so they could suffer forever. **Satan** doesn't contradict this, but he remains resolved to "ever do ill" and try to pervert God's works into evil, especially when God "out of our evil seek[s] to bring forth good." Satan then suggests they leave the burning lake and find shelter on a distant shore.

Milton describes the terrible size and appearance of **Satan**'s body, which is like a whale or a Greek Titan floating on the waves. Slowly Satan drags himself from the "liquid fire." **Beelzebub** follows, and they spread their wings and fly over the lake to a place of dry land. They are pleased that they can do this of their strength and "Not by the sufferance of supernal power."

As they fly **Satan** laments the desolation of Hell as compared to the glory of Heaven, but he accepts that "The mind is its place, and in itself / Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n," so he would no longer be satisfied in Heaven anyway. He resolves to make the best of the situation, and declares that it is "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n." **Beelzebub** then suggests that Satan summon his armies, as they will answer their leader's voice.

Satan takes up his terrible armor, and he calls to his legions to join him on land and take up the fight again. The rebel angels obey and pull themselves from the fiery lake despite their pain and shame. Milton says that all these angels have had their names erased in Heaven, but they are later given new names by humans and some will be worshipped as false gods.

Among these more prominent devils are **Moloch**, who later becomes a god requiring the sacrifice of children, Ashtoreth (the ancient fertility goddess called Astarte), the sea-monster Dagon, the animal-headed Egyptian gods, the ancient Greek gods, and lastly **Belial**, a lustful and violent god who will corrupt places like Sodom. These fallen angels are given hope by **Satan**'s strong appearance, and they flock to him. They are still dressed in their war gear and have their banners raised, and they create an awesome spectacle as they form ranks and lift their spears.

Satan is encouraged by the sight of his glorious army, which is far more magnificent than any of the famous human armies of later wars. Satan feels a moment of remorse for causing the suffering of so many millions by leading them into rebellion, but then he is strengthened in his resolve. He addresses his legions and commits himself to continue his fight against **God** – his only question now is whether to go back to open war or use more deceitful tactics. He mentions that God had spoken of creating a new world and that the devils might escape there and make a new home.

At **Satan**'s words, the rebel angels all draw their flaming swords and reaffirm their defiance against Heaven. They then fly to a nearby hill and begin to dig into the earth, unearthing gold and other raw minerals. They are urged on by **Mammon**, a

vain devil who even in Heaven kept his eyes always on the ground, admiring the golden pavement. Milton warns the reader about admiring the rich minerals of Hell, as they are nothing but vanity.

With their supernatural powers, the devils construct a massive temple in a short amount of time. This temple is larger and more magnificent than the pyramids of Egypt or any temple humans ever built. The architect is a devil called **Mulciber**, who will become the Greek god Hephaestus, thrown by Zeus from Olympus. The devils call the temple "Pandaemonium" ("all demons" in Greek). The devils can change in size and shape, so they shrink from giants into dwarfs and then all the hundreds of thousands enter Pandaemonium. They sit on golden seats and then begin their debate.

4.3.3 Critical study of the text

- In this opening, Milton condenses and summarizes the subject of his poem – he is trying to write a great epic for the English language, in the tradition of Homer's *Iliad* or Virgil's *Aeneid*. Milton is even more ambitious than these classical poets, however, as his subject is not just heroic men, but the struggle and tragedy of all humanity. Already in this first sentence, Milton points to the scope of Christian history, from Adam to Jesus ("one greater man").
- In this invocation, Milton sets the pattern for the whole poem. He points to his classical forebears, respecting them and seeking to enter into their epic canon, but at the same time, he wants to soar beyond them in terms of ambition and truth. Milton's Muse is the Holy Spirit, and his subject is the Fall of Man, so his epic will be more fundamentally true (to the Christian worldview) and more sweeping in scope than the epics of Homer or Virgil. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the traditional Christian Trinity, but Milton did not consider the Holy Spirit as equal to God.
- Milton includes not only Adam and Eve's disobedience but also the original disobedience in Heaven – Satan's rebellion against God, which is the ultimate revolt of the creature against the creator. Much of the poem's plot will come from the first books of Genesis in the Bible, but the parts about the war in Heaven are based on various scattered Bible verses and Milton's conjecture.

- Like all epics, the tale begins "in media res," or in the middle of the action, and the backstory will be explained later. Milton inverts tradition by beginning with the antagonist, Satan, instead of a protagonist. One of the great debates about *Paradise Lost* has been just how much of an "antagonist" Satan is, however, as he is the poem's most dynamic and interesting character. Some critics have felt that Milton subconsciously sympathized with Satan even as he tried to "justify" God.
- Satan is the first and greatest revolt against the hierarchy of God's universe. God arranges all his creation according to rank, and Satan upset this order by trying to do battle with God himself, the supreme monarch of all. Satan accepts that he has been defeated, but his pride is still too great to ask God for repentance. He will continue to suffer inner turmoil over this decision.
- Like the greatest of epic poets, Milton's language is rich and grandiose. The critic Samuel Johnson commented on Milton's power of "displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful." The devils like to think they can act of their agency, but Milton will show that nothing in the universe happens without God's consent.
- Satan makes this comment rather glibly now, but he will later feel its full implications when he realizes that he carries the pain of Hell within him even in Paradise. "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n" becomes something like his life motto, as he steadfastly refuses to accept God's ruler ship, and struggles against his creator in whatever way he can.
- Milton describes Satan's magnificent size and terrible appearance through many epic similes, but the overall picture of him is still vague – in such grand, imaginative places like Hell and Heaven, size is relative. The devils can change their size and shape, and Satan will gradually become smaller and lowlier in his incarnations, showing the corrupting effects of his disobedience, and Milton's Biblical idea that with good comes power.

- Milton's list of warriors echoes similar lists in the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, but he also reminds us that no matter how magnificent the devils appear, they just lost the war in Heaven. Milton reinforces the truth and ambition of his epic by casting all other gods – including the Greek and Roman gods of earlier epics – as merely fallen angels, lesser powers leading ancient nations away from God's truth.
- Milton will often compare his characters and spectacles to famous examples from human history or other epics, but he almost always places his subjects (in this case the devil army) as "more than" these – more magnificent, more beautiful, huger. Satan acts as a "democratic" sort of leader, asking his devils for their opinions, but in reality, he has already decided his plan – he assumes that the rebellion against God will continue.
- Satan's great power is his persuasive words, as he convinces the devils to continue their revolt even after he led them into a hopeless war against God. "Mammon" basically means "riches," which Jesus warns against on the Sermon on the Mount, but Mammon itself is often personified as a prince of devils.
- Milton was a radical Protestant opposed to the corrupt hierarchy of the Catholic and Anglican churches, and many of his critiques are leveled at their vanity and concern with earthly riches. Pandaemonium then becomes a grotesque parody of the most magnificent churches, all glitter and no substance. The devils shrink in size to enter the structure, but we had no clear idea how big they were before, as size is relative in Hell. Milton again associates a beloved Greek god with a devil.

4.4 Further study of the text

4.4.1 Character list

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4.4.2 Original Text

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of *Eden*, till one greater Man
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
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,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' *Aonian* Mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.
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
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumin, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justifie the wayes of God to men.

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,
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From thir 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
Stird 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
Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in Glory above his Peers,
He trusted to have equal'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 Battel proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
With hideous ruine and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,
Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.
Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once as far as Angels kenn he views
The dismal Situation waste and wilde,
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 onely to discover sights of woe,
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
With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:
Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious, here thir prison ordained
In utter darkness, and thir portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n
As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'rewhelm'd
With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and weltring by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in *Palestine*, and nam'd
Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy Realms of Light
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine
Myriads though bright: If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,
Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd
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,
Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind
And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,

That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,
And shook his throne. What though the field be 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?
That Glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,
Who from the terrour of this Arm so late
Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; 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 advanc't,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal Warr
Irreconcileable, to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.

So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,
That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds

Fearless, endanger'd Heav'ns perpetual King;
And put to proof his high Supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our Glory extinct and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now
Of force believe Almighty, since no less
Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength intire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of Warr, what e're his business be
Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,
Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;
What can it then avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminisht, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable
Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
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,
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 thir destind aim.
But see the angry Victor hath recall'd
His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the Gates of Heav'n: the Sulphurous Hail
Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid
The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,
Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,
The seat of desolation, voyd of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
There rest, if any rest can harbour there,
And reassembling our afflicted Powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire Calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,
If not what resolution from despare.

Thus Satan to his neerest Mate
With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides
Prone on the Flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge

As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or *Earth-born*, that warr'd on *Jove*,
Briareos or *Typhon*, whom the Den
By ancient *Tarsus* held, or that Sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:
Him haply slumbring on the *Norway* foam
The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,
Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind
Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night
Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delayes:
So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
On Man by him seduc't, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool
His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames
Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld
In billows, leave i'th'midst a horrid Vale.
Then with expanded wings he stears his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land
He lights, as if it were Land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force

Of subterranean wind transports a Hill
Torn from *Pelorus*, or the shatter'd side
Of thundring *Aetna*, whose combustible
And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,
Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,
Both glorying to have scap't the *Stygian* flood
As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: fardest from him his best
Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream
Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields
Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrours, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
The mind is its own place, and in it self
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less then he
Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
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,
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?

So *Satan* spake, and him *Beelzebub*
Thus answer'd. Leader of those Armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld,
If once they hear that voyce, thir liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge
Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults
Thir surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lye
Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend
Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb
Through Optic Glass the *Tuscan* Artist views
At Ev'ning from the top of *Fesole*,
Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new Lands,
Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.
His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine
Hewn on *Norwegian* hills, to be the Mast
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,
He walkt with to support uneasie steps

Over the burning Marle, not like those steps
On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach
Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd
His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't
Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks
In *Vallombrosa*, where th' *Etrurian* shades
High overarch't imbowr; or scatterd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce Winds *Orion* arm'd
Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew
Busirus and his *Memphian* Chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The Sojourners of *Goshen*, who beheld
From the safe shore thir floating Carkases
And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,
Under amazement of thir hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates
Warriers, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can sieze
Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
After the toyl of Battel to repose
Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds
Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood
With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.

Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceave the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod
Of *Amrams* Son in *Egypts* evill day
Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of *Locusts*, warping on the Eastern Wind,
That ore the Realm of impious *Pharaoh* hung
Like Night, and darken'd all the Land of *Nile*:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wind under the Cope of Hell
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear
Of thir great Sultan waving to direct
Thir course, in even ballance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;
A multitude, like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loyns, to pass
Rhene or the *Danaw*, when her barbarous Sons
Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath *Gibralter* to the *Lybian* sands.
Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band
The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood
Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, Princely Dignities,
And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones;
Though of thir Names in heav'nly Records now
Be no memorial blotted out and ras'd

By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.
Nor had they yet among the Sons of *Eve*
Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth,
Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man,
By falsities and lyes the greatest part
Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
God thir Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them, to transform
Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd
With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:
Then were they known to men by various Names,
And various Idols through the Heathen World.
Say, Muse, the Names then known, who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery Couch,
At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof?
The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell
Roaming to seek thir prey on earth, durst fix
Thir Seats long after next the Seat of God,
Thir Altars by his Altar, Gods ador'd
Among the Nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundring out of *Sion*, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his Sanctuary it self thir Shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd,
And with thir darkness durst affront his light.
First *Moloch*, horrid King besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud
Thir childrens cries unheard, that past through fire
To his grim Idol. Him the *Ammonite*

Worshipt in *Rabba* and her watry Plain,
In *Argob* and in *Basan*, to the stream
Of utmost *Arnon*. Not content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of *Solomon* he led by fraud to build
His Temple right against the Temple of God
On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove
The pleasant Vally of *Hinnom*, *Tophet* thence
And black *Gehenna* call'd, the Type of Hell.
Next *Chemos*, th' obscene dread of *Moabs* Sons,
From *Aroar* to *Nebo*, and the wild
Of Southmost *Abarim*; in *Hesebon*
And *Heronaim*, *Seons* Realm, beyond
The flowry Dale of *Sibma* clad with Vines,
And *Eleale* to th' *Asphaltick* Pool.
Peor his other Name, when he entic'd
Israel in *Sittim* on thir march from *Nile*
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd
Even to that Hill of scandal, but the Grove
Of *Moloch* homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good *Josiah* drove them hence to Hell.
With these cam they, who from the bordring flood
Of old *Euphrates* to the Brook that parts
Egypt from *Syrian* ground, had general names
Of *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*, those male,
These Feminine. For Spirits when they please
Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is thir Essence pure,
Nor ti'd or manacl'd with joynt or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose
Dilated or condens't, bright or obscure,
Can execute thir aerie purposes,

And works of love or enmity fulfill.
For those the Race of *Israel* oft forsook
Thir living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which thir heads as low
Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came *Astoreth*, whom the *Phoenicians* call'd
Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns;
To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon
Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs,
In *Sion* also not unsung, where stood
Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built
By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,
Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. *Thammuz* came next behind,
Whose annual wound in *Lebanon* allur'd
The *Syrian* Damsels to lament his fate
In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,
While smooth *Adonis* from his native Rock
Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood
Of *Thammuz* yearly wounded; the Love-tale
Infected *Sions* daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch
Ezekial saw, when by the Vision led
His eye survay'd the dark Idolatries
Of alienated *Judah*. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark
Maim'd his brute Image, head and hands lopt off
In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his Worshipers:
Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man
And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high
Rear'd in *Azotus*, dreaded through the Coast

Of *Palestine*, in *Gath* and *Ascalon*
And *Accaron* and *Gaza*'s frontier bounds.
Him follow'd *Rimmon*, whose delightful Seat
Was fair *Damascus*, on the fertil Banks
Of *Abbana* and *Pharphar*, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A Leper once he lost and gain'd a King,
Ahaz his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew
Gods Altar to disparage and displace
For one of *Syrian* mode, whereon to burn
His odious offrings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear'd
A crew who under Names of old Renown,
Osiris, *Isis*, *Orus* and thir Train
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
Fanatic *Egypt* and her Priests, to seek
Thir wandring Gods Disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather then human. Nor did *Israel* scape
Th' infection when thir borrow'd Gold compos'd
The Calf in *Oreb*: and the Rebel King
Doubl'd that sin in *Bethel* and in *Dan*,
Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox,
Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass'd
From *Egypt* marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first born and all her bleating Gods
Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood
Or Altar smoak'd; yet who more oft then hee
In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest
Turns Atheist, as did *Ely's* Sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God.
In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns
And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse

Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,
And injury and outrage: And when Night
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of *Belial*, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the Streets of *Sodom*, and that night
In *Gibeah*, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a Matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' *Ionian* Gods, of *Javans* issue held
Gods, yet confest later then Heav'n and Earth
Thir boasted Parents; *Titan* Heav'ns first born
With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd
By younger *Saturn*, he from mightier *Jove*
His own and *Rhea's* Son like measure found;
So *Jove* usurping reign'd: these first in *Creet*
And *Ida* known, thence on the Snowy top
Of cold *Olympus* rul'd the middle Air
Thir highest Heav'n; or on the *Delphian* Cliff,
Or in *Dodona*, and through all the bounds
Of *Doric* Land; or who with *Saturn* old
Fled over *Adria* to th' *Hesperian* Fields,
And ore the *Celtic* roam'd the utmost Isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimps of joy, to have found thir chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Thir fanting courage, and dispel'd thir fears.
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard

His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall:
Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld
Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't
Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind
With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while
Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:
At which the universal Host upsent
A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond
Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air
With Orient Colours waving: with them rose
A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms
Appear'd, and serried Shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move
In perfect *Phalanx* to the *Dorian* mood
Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd
To hight of noblest temper Hero's old
Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force with fixed thought
Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd
Thir painful steps o're the burnt soyle; and now
Advanc't in view, they stand, a horrid Front
Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise
Of Warriers old with order'd Spear and Shield,
Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief

Had to impose: He through the armed Files
Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse
The whole Battalion views, thir order due,
Thir visages and stature as of Gods,
Thir number last he summs. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength
Glories: For never since created man,
Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more then that small infantry
Warr'd on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood
Of *Phlegra* with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd
That fought at *Theb's* and *Ilium*, on each side
Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds
In Fable or *Romance* of *Uthers* Sons
Begirt with *British* and *Armoric* Knights;
And all who since Baptiz'd or Infidel
Jousted in *Aspramont* or *Montalban*,
Damasco, or *Marocco*, or *Trebisond*
Or whom *Biserta* sent from *Afric* shore
When *Charlemain* with all his Peerage fell
By *Fontarabbia*. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Thir dread commander: he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost
All her Original brightness, nor appear'd
Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess
Of Glory obscur'd; As when the Sun new ris'n
Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon
In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds
On half the Nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes Monarch. Dark'n'd so, yet shon
Above them all th' Arch Angel; but his face

Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes
Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have thir lot in pain,
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't
Of Heav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood,
Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire
Hath scath'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines,
With singed top thir stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar'd
To speak; whereat thir doubl'd Ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his Peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spight of scorn,
Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out thir way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet beleeve, though after loss,
That all these puissant Legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend

Self-rais'd, and repossess thir native seat?
For mee be witness all the Host of Heav'n,
If counsels different, or danger shun'd
By mee, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custome, and his Regal State
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New warr, provok't; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
For this Infernal Pit shall never hold
Caelestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,
For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr
Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd

Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped Arms
Clash'd on thir sounding Shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the Vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far whose griesly top
Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire
Shon with a glossie scurff, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,
The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A numerous Brigad hasten'd. As when Bands
Of Pioners with Spade and Pickax arm'd
Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,
Or cast a Rampart. *Mammon* led them on,
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold,
Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught
Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands
Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth
For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound
And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of *Babel*, and the works of *Memphian* Kings
Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame,
And Strength and Art are easily out-done
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toyle
And hands innumerable scarce perform.

Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the Lake, a second multitude
With wond'rous Art found out the massie Ore,
Severing each kind, and scum'd the Bullion dross:
A third as soon had form'd within the ground
A various mould, and from the boyling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
As in an Organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths.
Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge
Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With Golden Architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n,
The Roof was fretted Gold. Not *Babilon*,
Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence
Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine
Belus or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat
Thir Kings, when *Aegypt* with *Assyria* strove
In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile
Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores
Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendant by suttle Magic many a row
Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed
With *Naphtha* and *Asphaltus* yeilded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
And some the Architect: his hand was known
In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,

Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence,
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his Hierarchie, the Orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
In ancient *Greece*; and in *Ausonian* land
Men call'd him *Mulciber*; and how he fell
From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry *Jove*
Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements; from Morn
To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
A Summers day; and with the setting Sun
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,
On *Lemnos* th' *Aegaean* Ile: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he scape
By all his Engins, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in hell.
Mean while the winged Haralds by command
Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony
And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim
A solemn Councel forthwith to be held
At *Pandaemonium*, the high Capital
Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd
From every Band and squared Regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hunderds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates
And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where Champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair
Defi'd the best of *Panim* chivalry
To mortal combat or carreer with Lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,

Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees
In spring time, when the Sun with *Taurus* rides,
Pour forth thir populous youth about the Hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,
The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,
New rub'd with Baum, expatiate and confer
Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd
Swarm'd and were straitn'd; till the Signal giv'n
Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd
In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons
Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race
Beyond the *Indian* Mount, or Faerie Elves,
Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side
Or Fountain some belated Peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon
Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth and dance
Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd thir shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still amidst the Hall
Of that infernal Court. But far within
And in thir own dimensions like themselves
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat
A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat's,
Frequent and full. After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began.

Summary: Lines 1–26: The Prologue and Invocation

Milton opens *Paradise Lost* by formally declaring his poem's subject: humankind's first act of disobedience toward God, and the consequences that

followed from it. The act is Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, as told in Genesis, the first book of the Bible. In the first line, Milton refers to the outcome of Adam and Eve's sin as the "fruit" of the forbidden tree, punning on the actual apple and the figurative fruits of their actions. Milton asserts that this original sin brought death to human beings for the first time, causing us to lose our home in paradise until Jesus comes to restore humankind to its former position of purity.

Milton's speaker invokes the muse, a mystical source of poetic inspiration, to sing about these subjects through him, but he makes it clear that he refers to a different muse from the muses who traditionally inspired classical poets by specifying that his muse inspired Moses to receive the Ten Commandments and write Genesis. Milton's muse is the Holy Spirit, which inspired the Christian Bible, not one of the nine classical muses who reside on Mount Helicon—the "Aonian mount" of I.15. He says that his poem, like his muse, will fly above those of the Classical poets and accomplish things never attempted before because his source of inspiration is greater than theirs. Then he invokes the Holy Spirit, asking it to fill him with knowledge of the beginning of the world because the Holy Spirit was the active force in creating the universe.

Milton's speaker announces that he wants to be inspired with this sacred knowledge because he wants to show his fellow man that the fall of humankind into sin and death was part of God's greater plan and that God's plan is justified.

Analysis

The beginning of *Paradise Lost* is similar in gravity and seriousness to the book from which Milton takes much of his story: the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. The Bible begins with the story of the world's creation, and Milton's epic begins in a similar vein, alluding to the creation of the world by the Holy Spirit. The first two sentences, or twenty-six lines, of *Paradise Lost,* are extremely compressed, containing a great deal of information about Milton's reasons for writing his epic, his subject matter, and his attitudes toward his subject. In these two sentences, Milton invokes his muse, which is the Holy Spirit rather than one of the nine muses. By invoking a muse, but differentiating it from traditional muses, Milton manages to tell us quite a lot about how he sees his project. In the first place, an invocation of the muse at the beginning of an epic is conventional, so Milton is acknowledging his awareness of Homer, Virgil,

and later poets, and signaling that he has mastered their format and wants to be part of their tradition. But by identifying his muse as the divine spirit that inspired the Bible and created the world, he shows that his ambitions go far beyond joining the club of Homer and Virgil. Milton's epic will surpass theirs, drawing on a more fundamental source of truth and dealing with matters of more fundamental importance to human beings. At the same time, however, Milton's invocation is extremely humble, expressing his utter dependence on God's grace in speaking through him. Milton thus begins his poem with a mixture of towering ambition and humble self-effacement, simultaneously tipping his hat to his poetic forebears and promising to soar above them for God's glorification.

Milton's approach to the invocation of the muse, in which he takes a classical literary convention and reinvents it from a Christian perspective, set the pattern for all of *Paradise Lost*. For example, when he catalogs the prominent devils in Hell and explains the various names they are known by and which cults worshipped them, he makes devils of many gods whom the Greeks, Ammonites, and other ancient peoples worshipped. In other words, the great gods of the classical world have become—according to Milton—fallen angels. His poem purports to tell of these gods' original natures before they infected humankind in the form of false gods. Through such comparisons with the classical epic poems, Milton is quick to demonstrate that the scope of his epic poem is much greater than those of the classical poets and that his worldview and inspiration are more fundamentally true and all-encompassing than theirs. The setting, or world, of Milton's epic, is large enough to include those smaller, classical worlds. Milton also displays his world's superiority while reducing those classical epics to the level of old, nearly forgotten stories. For example, the nine muses of classical epics still exist on Mount Helicon in the world of *Paradise Lost,* but Milton's muse haunts other areas and can fly above those other, less-powerful classical Muses. Thus Milton both makes himself the authority on antiquity and subordinates it to his Christian worldview.

The *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* are the great epic poems of Greek and Latin, respectively, and Milton emulates them because he intends *Paradise Lost* to be the first English epic. Milton wants to make glorious art out of the English language the way the other epics had done for their languages. Not only must a

great epic be long and poetically well-constructed, its subject must be significant and original, its form strict and serious, and its aims noble and heroic. In Milton's view, the story he will tell is the most original story known to man, as it is the first story of the world and the first human beings. Also, while Homer and Virgil only chronicled the journey of heroic men, like Achilles or Aeneas, Milton chronicles the tragic journey of *all* men—the result of humankind's disobedience. Milton goes so far as to say that he hopes to "justify," or explain, God's mysterious plan for humankind. Homer and Virgil describe great wars between men, but Milton tells the story of the most epic battle possible: the battle between God and Satan, good and evil.

Summary: Lines 27–722: Satan and Hell

Immediately after the prologue, Milton raises the question of how Adam and Eve's disobedience occurred and explains that their actions were partly due to a serpent's deception. This serpent is Satan, and the poem joins him and his followers in Hell, where they have just been cast after being defeated by God in Heaven.

Satan lies stunned beside his second-in-command, Beelzebub, in a lake of fire that gives off darkness instead of light. Breaking the awful silence, Satan bemoans their terrible position but does not repent of his rebellion against God, suggesting that they might gather their forces for another attack. Beelzebub is doubtful; he now believes that God cannot be overpowered. Satan does not fully contradict this assessment but suggests that they could at least pervert God's good works to evil purposes. The two devils then rise and, spreading their wings, fly over to the dry land next to the flaming lake. But they can undertake this action only because God has allowed them to lose their chains. All of the devils were formerly angels who chose to follow Satan in his rebellion, and God still intends to turn their evil deeds toward the good.

Once out of the lake, Satan becomes more optimistic about their situation. He calls the rest of the fallen angels, his legions, to join him on land. They immediately obey and, despite their wounds and suffering, fly up to gather on the plain. Milton lists some of the more notable of the angels whose names have been erased from the books of Heaven, noting that later, in the time of man, many of these devils come to be worshipped as gods.

Among these are Moloch, who is later known as a god requiring human sacrifices, and Belial, a lewd and lustful god. Still in war gear, these fallen angels

have thousands of banners raised and their shields and spears in hand. Even in defeat, they are an awesome army to behold.

Satan's unrepentant evil nature is unwavering. Even cast down in defeat, he does not consider changing his ways: he insists to his fellow devils that their delight will be in doing evil, not good. In particular, as he explains to Beelzebub, he wishes to pervert God's will and find a way to make evil out of good. It is not easy for Satan to maintain this determination; the battle has just demonstrated God's overwhelming power, and the devils could not even have lifted themselves off the lake of fire unless God had allowed it. God allows it precisely because he intends to turn their evil designs toward a greater good in the end. Satan's envy of the Son's chosen status led him to rebel and consequently to be condemned. His continued envy and search for freedom lead him to believe that he would rather be a king in Hell than a servant in Heaven. Satan's pride has caused him to believe that his free intellect is as great as God's will. Satan remarks that the mind can make its Hell out of Heaven, or in his case, its own Heaven out of Hell. Satan addresses his comrades and acknowledges their shame in falling to the heavenly forces, but urges them to gather consider whether another war is feasible. Instantly, the legions of devils dig into the bowels of the ground, unearthing gold and other minerals. With their inhuman powers, they construct a great temple in a short time. It is called Pandemonium (which means "all the demons" in Greek), and hundreds of thousands of demonic troops gather there to hold a summit. Being spirits, they can easily shrink from huge winged creatures to the smallest size. Compacting themselves, they enter Pandemonium, and the debate begins.

Analysis

Throughout the first two or three books of *Paradise Lost,* Satan seems as if he's the hero of the poem. This is partly because the focus of the poem is all on him, but it is also because the first books establish his struggle—he finds himself defeated and banished from Heaven and sets about establishing a new course for himself and those he leads. Typically, the hero or protagonist of *any* narrative, epic poem, or otherwise, is a person who struggles to accomplish something. Milton plays against our expectations by spending the first quarter of his epic telling us about the antagonist rather than the protagonist, so that when we meet Adam and Eve, we will have a more profound sense of what they are up against.

But even when the focus of the poem shifts to Adam and Eve, Satan remains the most active force in the story.

One important way in which the narrator develops our picture of Satan—and gives us the impression that he is a hero—is through *epic similes*, lengthy and developed comparisons that tell us how big and powerful Satan is. For example, when Satan is lying on the burning lake, Milton compares him to the titans who waged war upon Jove in Greek mythology. Then, at greater length, he compares him to a Leviathan or whale, that is so huge that sailors mistake it for an island and fix their anchor to it. In other epics, these sorts of similes are used to establish the great size or strength of characters, and on the surface, these similes seem to do the same thing. At the same time, however, the effect of these similes is to unsettle us, making us aware that we do not know how big Satan is at all. No one knows how big the titans were, because they were defeated before the age of man. The image of the Leviathan does not give us a well-defined sense of his size, because the whole point of the image is that the Leviathan's size generates deception and confusion.

More than anything, the similes used to describe Satan make us aware of the fact that size is relative, and that we don't know how big anything in Hell is—the burning lake, the hill, Pandemonium, etc. Milton drives this fact home at the end of Book I with a tautology: while most of the devils shrink in size to enter Pandemonium, the important ones sit "far within / And in their dimensions like themselves" (I.792–793). In other words, they were, however, big they were, but we have no way of knowing how big that was. Finally, it is important to note that the first description of Satan's size is the biggest we will ever see him. From that point on, Satan assumes many shapes and is compared to numerous creatures, but his size and stature steadily diminish. The uncertainty created by these similes creates a sense of irony—perhaps Satan isn't so great after all.

The devils in *Paradise Lost* are introduced to the story here in Book I in almost a parody of how Homer introduces great warriors in the *Iliad*. The irony of these descriptions lies in the fact that while these devils seem heroic and noteworthy in certain ways, they just lost the war in Heaven. As frightening and vividly presented as these creatures are, they did not succeed in killing a single angel.

In Book I, Milton presents Satan primarily as a military hero, and the council of devils as a council of war. In doing so, he makes *Paradise Lost* resonate with earlier epics, which all center around military heroes and their exploits. At the same time, Milton presents an implicit critique of a literary culture that glorifies war and warriors. Satan displays all of the virtues of a great warrior such as Achilles or Odysseus. He is courageous, undaunted, refusing to yield in the face of impossible odds, and able to stir his followers to follow him in brave and violent exploits. Milton is aware of what he's doing in making Satan somewhat appealing in the early chapters. By drawing us into sympathizing with and admiring Satan, Milton forces us to question why we admire martial prowess and pride in literary characters. Ultimately he attempts to show that the Christian virtues of obedience, humility, and forbearance are more important.

4.4.3 Analysis of Major Characters

Satan is a very important character in Paradise Lost. Some readers consider Satan to be the hero, or protagonist, of the story because he struggles to overcome his doubts and weaknesses and accomplishes his goal of corrupting humankind. This goal, however, is evil, and Adam and Eve are the moral heroes at the end of the story, as they help to begin humankind's slow process of redemption and salvation. Satan is far from being the story's object of admiration, as most heroes are. Nor does it make sense for readers to celebrate or emulate him, as they might with a true hero. Yet there are many compelling qualities to his character that make him intriguing to readers.

One source of Satan's fascination for us is that he is an extremely complex and subtle character. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, for Milton to make perfect, infallible characters such as God the Father, God the Son, and the angels as interesting to read about as the flawed characters, such as Satan, Adam, and Eve. Satan, moreover, strikes a grand and majestic figure, apparently unafraid of being damned eternally, and uncowed by such terrifying figures as Chaos or Death. Many readers have argued that Milton deliberately makes Satan seem heroic and appealing early in the poem to draw us into sympathizing with him against our will, so that we may see how seductive evil is and learn to be more vigilant in resisting its appeal.

- Milton devotes much of the poem's early books to developing Satan's character. Satan's greatest fault is his pride. He casts himself as an innocent victim, overlooked for an important promotion. But his ability to think so selfishly in Heaven, where all angels are equal and loved

and happy, is surprising. His confidence in thinking that he could ever overthrow God displays tremendous vanity and pride. When Satan shares his pain and alienation as he reaches Earth in Book IV, we may feel somewhat sympathetic to him or even identify with him. But Satan continues to devote himself to evil. Every speech he gives is fraudulent and every story he tells is a lie. He works diligently to trick his fellow devils in Hell by having Beelzebub present Satan's plan of action.

- Satan's character—or our perception of his character—changes significantly from Book I to his final appearance in Book X. In Book I, He is a strong, imposing figure with great abilities as a leader and public statesmen, whereas by the poem's end he slinks back to Hell in serpent form. Satan's gradual degradation is dramatized by the sequence of different shapes he assumes. He begins the poem as a just-fallen angel of enormous stature, looks like a comet or meteor as he leaves Hell, then disguises himself as a more humble cherub, then as a cormorant, a toad, and finally a snake. His ability to reason and argue also deteriorates. In Book I, he persuades the devils to agree to his plan. In Book IV, however, he reasons to himself that the Hell he feels inside of him is a reason to do more evil. When he returns to Earth again, he believes that Earth is more beautiful than Heaven and that he may be able to live on Earth after all. Satan, removed from Heaven long enough to forget its unparalleled grandeur, is completely demented, coming to believe in his lies. He is a picture of incessant intellectual activity without the ability to think morally. Once a powerful angel, he has become blinded to God's grace, forever unable to reconcile his past with his eternal punishment.

Adam

Adam is a strong, intelligent, and rational character possessed of a remarkable relationship with God. In fact, before the fall, he is as perfect as a human being can be. He has an enormous capacity for reason and can understand the most sophisticated ideas instantly. He can converse with Raphael as a near-equal, and understand Raphael's stories readily. But after the fall, his conversation with Michael during his visions is significantly one-sided. Also, his self-doubt and anger after the fall

demonstrate his new ability to indulge in rash and irrational attitudes. As a result of the fall, he loses his pure reason and intellect.

Adam's greatest weakness is his love for Eve. He falls in love with her immediately upon seeing her and confides to Raphael that his attraction to her is almost overwhelming. Though Raphael warns him to keep his affections in check, Adam is powerless to prevent his love from overwhelming his reason. After Eve eats from the Tree of Knowledge, he quickly does the same, realizing that if she is doomed, he must follow her into doom as well if he wants to avoid losing her. Eve has become his life companion, and he is unwilling to part with her even if that means disobeying God.

Adam's curiosity and hunger for knowledge are other weaknesses. The questions he asks of Raphael about creation and the universe may suggest a growing temptation to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. But like his physical attraction to Eve, Adam can partly avoid this temptation. It is only through Eve that his temptations become unavoidable.

Eve

Created to be Adam's mate, Eve is inferior to Adam, but only slightly. She surpasses Adam only in her beauty. She falls in love with her image when she sees her reflection in a body of water. Ironically, her greatest asset produces her most serious weakness, vanity. After Satan compliments her on her beauty and godliness, he easily persuades her to eat from the Tree of Knowledge.

Aside from her beauty, Eve's intelligence and spiritual purity are constantly tested. She is not unintelligent, but she is not ambitious to learn, content to be guided by Adam as God intended. As a result, she does not become more intelligent or learned as the story progresses, though she does attain the beginning of wisdom by the end of the poem. Her lack of learning is partly due to her absence from most of Raphael's discussions with Adam in Books V, VI, and VII, and she also does not see the visions Michael shows Adam in Books XI and XII. Her absence from these important exchanges shows that she feels it is not her place to seek knowledge independently; she wants to hear Raphael's stories through Adam later. The one instance, in which she deviates from her passive role, telling Adam to trust her on her own and then seizing the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, is disastrous.

Eve's strengths are her capacity for love, emotion, and forbearance. She persuades Adam to stay with her after the fall, and Adam in turn dissuades her from

committing suicide, as they begin to work together as a powerful unit. Eve complements Adam's strengths and corrects his weaknesses. Thus, Milton does not denigrate all women through his depiction of Eve. Rather he explores the role of women in his society and the positive and important role he felt they could offer in the divine union of marriage.

God

An omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent character who knows everything before it happens. Attempting to present such an unimaginable character accurately, Milton appropriates several of God's biblical speeches into his speeches in *Paradise Lost*. God loves his creation and strongly defends humankind's free will. He presents his love through his Son, who performs his will justly and mercifully.

God, in *Paradise Lost,* is less a developed character than a personification of abstract ideas. He is unknowable to humankind and some extent lacks emotion and depth. He has no weaknesses, embodies pure reason, and is always just. He explains why certain events happen, like Satan's decision to corrupt Adam and Eve, tells his angels what will happen next, and gives his reasoning behind his actions in theological terms. God allows evil to occur, but he will make good out of evil. His plan to save humankind by offering his Son shows his unwavering control over Satan.

4.5 Check your progress

- What is the main theme of Paradise Lost?
- Paradise Lost as an Epic
- Analyze the character of Beelzebub in *Paradise Lost*.
- Explain these lines from *Paradise Lost*: "What in me is dark Illume, what is low raise and support; . . . And justify the ways of God to men." What is the significance of these lines?

4.6 Summary

- The poem opens with an invocation; that's when the speaker asks the muses – ancient deities thought to inspire poetry and art – to inspire him, give him the ability to perform, etc.
- He asks the muses to sing about "man's first disobedience" (1), the Forbidden Fruit, his exile from Eden, his eventual redemption through Jesus Christ, etc.

- Soon, the scene shifts to a burning inferno; we're in Hell with Satan, only Hell isn't below the earth but somewhere way out in the middle of nowhere, a place Milton calls Chaos.
- Milton's universe is tricky, so we'll give you a quick lay of the land. The created universe (the earth, the sun, the planets, the stars, etc.) is an enclosed globe or spherical structure. This structure hangs from Heaven by a golden chain. Everything outside the sphere and Heaven is called Chaos, with Hell at the end opposite to Heaven and the universe. Head over to "Best of the Web" to see some pictures.
- Satan looks around bewildered; apparently, he's just fallen from Heaven and hasn't quite adjusted to his new surroundings. It's hot, and there's a weird "darkness visible" all around.
- He notices his first mate, Beelzebub.
- Satan addresses Beelzebub, saying he doesn't look like the friend he knew in Heaven (apparently, the fallen angels have also changed in appearance as well as location).
- Satan describes how he and a bunch of other angels fought with God and lost. Although they've been beaten, all is not lost.
- Beelzebub responds, saying that he's upset and worried about the current state of affairs.
- He suggests that the only reason they still feel strong and courageous – still feel alive – is so that they can completely experience their punishment and satisfy God's "vengeful ire."
- Satan responds, saying that their goal from now on is to be evil: "To do ought good never will be our task, / But ever to do ill our sole delight" (1.159-60). If God does something good, they will try to screw it up.
- Satan suggests that he and Beelzebub move to a nearby plain and think about how to war against God, deal with the horrors of their circumstances, and repair their losses.
- As Satan moves towards the plain, the narrator describes him: he is much bigger than any of the famous giants of classical mythology or the bible. He is so big, a sailor might mistake him for an island and attempt to moor his boat there.

- He moves off the lake and flies – these fallen angels still have their wings – to the plain, which is also burning. Beelzebub eventually follows him.
- Satan looks around and says it's not so bad because he'd rather be as far from God as possible.
- He then suggests that his forces reassemble on the plain so they can figure out a plan of action.
- Satan goes to the shore of the burning lake to beckon the fallen angels; his shield is almost as big as the moon and his spear is much bigger than the biggest mast of a ship.
- The fallen angels are scattered on the lake like a whole bunch of leaves, or just like a whole bunch of reeds in the Red Sea.
- Satan addresses the fallen angels, and he can't believe they've been vanquished.
- He tells them to rise now, or remain fallen forever. They rise very quickly as if they've been caught napping while on duty (that's Milton's comparison, not ours!).
- The angels assemble in squadrons, just like an organized army. There are a ton of them! The leaders of the squadrons assemble close to Satan, the "great commander."
- These leaders will eventually become the various pagan deities described in the Old Testament (the first half of the Bible that deals with the times before Jesus) that the Israelites worshipped (sinfully) alongside God.
- The first to come is Moloch, who is covered in blood. He somehow deceived Solomon – an Old Testament king – to build a temple for him.
- Next comes Chemos; after the Israelites made it out of Egypt, they started spending a lot of time with non-Hebrew peoples and eventually started worshipping this guy.
- With Chemos and Moloch come Baalim and Ashtaroth. Both of these are general words to refer to types of male and female pagan deities found in the region that is now the modern-day middle east, especially Syria, Iraq, Israel, and Jordan.

- Astoreth or Astarte, as the Phoenicians called her, also comes with the fallen angels. She was worshipped by Phoenician virgins and also by the Israelites in their promised land!
- Thammuz comes next; he was supposedly wounded every year, which caused the river Adonis to become a purplish color because of his blood.
- Next comes Dagon, a Philistine sea god whose upper half is man, the lower fish.
- After him comes Rimmnon, a deity worshipped in what is now modern-day Syria.
- Next come the bestial and beastly Egyptian gods with animal heads – Isis, Osiris, and Orus.
- The last to arrive is Belial; nobody ever built a temple for him, but he can be found everywhere. He loves vice for itself and is associated with insolent debauchery.
- There were a lot of other fallen angels, but it would take forever to name them all, says our narrator. For example, there were also the Olympian gods that the Ancient Greeks worshipped.
- A lot of other devils come, and they all look unhappy, though they appear to have some hope left. They are glad to find that Satan is not in total despair.
- Satan rekindles their hope with a speech that sounds good but is really a bunch of rubbish (so says the narrator), and he demands that his flag be unfurled.
- When all the fallen angels see the flag (it shines like a meteor), the individual squadrons raise their flags, spears, and shields and roar with one loud voice.
- The soldiers start marching (silently) to the tune of some hellish pipes, and eventually assemble in front of Satan, waiting for his command.
- Satan stands like a tower over his army (the biggest ever assembled); he's still got some of the old fire still left in him, even after falling a long way.
- Satan tries three times to speak to his minions, but he keeps bursting into tears! Satan can cry? Since when?!

- Finally, he starts speaking, noting that they are brave soldiers and nobody could have foreseen that such an awesome army could ever be defeated.
- Don't worry, he tells them, they will rise again, but they can't fight God in the same way. They have to use "fraud or guile" this time.
- The rumor mill says God intends to create another world, and Satan says they should devote their energies to messing with that world.
- Satan finishes, and his legions all draw their swords as a sign of approval.
- A group of fallen angels led by Mammon – the greedy, money-loving devil – head towards a volcano rich with "metallic ore."
- They start digging in it and eventually unearth a bunch of gold.
- A second group works to separate the ore from the rock with the help of liquid fire – there's a burning lake nearby just right for the purpose – while a third group pours the ore into a mold.
- Eventually, a huge edifice emerges; it looks like a huge temple and has sculptures adorning it, huge pillars, and even a golden roof. It is more magnificent than anything ever seen on earth.
- The fallen angels enter the building, now given the name Pandemonium, to have a council. It is swarming with angels, almost like a beehive.
- All of a sudden, the fallen angels, which a minute before were bigger than giants, now shrink to the size of little elves or dwarves (this is so that they can all fit inside Pandemonium).
- The squadron leaders retain their giant size (they don't shrink) and gather together for the great debate in Hell.

4.7 Keywords

- Epic
- Blank verse
- Muse
- Justify
- Analysis
- Omniscient

- Omnipresent
- Omnipotent

4.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- **Discuss Paradise Lost as an epic (Essay type question)**
- **Character sketch of Satan in Paradise Lost (Essay type question)**

4.9 Answer to check your progress

What is the main theme of Paradise Lost?

The epic poem *Paradise Lost* by John Milton tells of the casting out of the paradise of Satan and other rebellious angels. Satan and his demons devise a plan to retaliate against God by corrupting his new creation—man. Since Adam and Eve have been given free will, God allows Satan to approach and tempt them. Adam and Eve disobey God and fall from grace, and God sends the archangel Michael to drive them out of the Garden of Eden.

In the prologue to book 1, Milton delineates two main themes of *Paradise Lost*. In line 1, he announces that he will write "of man's first disobedience." That obedience to God is an absolute requirement of all creation is emphasized throughout the poem. The expulsion of Satan and his minions from heaven is an example of the consequences of disobedience and rebellion. Similarly, the punishment of Adam and Eve for their disobedience is expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The hierarchy of God's authority over his creation must be observed at all times, and to disregard God's order will always be punished.

2. Discuss *Paradise Lost*, written by John Milton, as an epic.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a poem of great ambition that could have taken no form other than that of an epic. Milton largely ignored the long poems already written in English and deliberately modeled his work on the great classical epics of Virgil and Homer.

John Milton was among the most ambitious of poets, and there was never any doubt that he would write an epic poem. He spent a long time considering the subject, and at one time it seemed likely that he would write the great national epic of England, the *Arthuriad*, or the story of King Arthur. Even this, however, was too trivial a subject for Milton's ambition, which was on a cosmic—rather than a national—scale.

Somewhat paradoxically, much of the innovation in *Paradise Lost* is due to Milton's selection of the most ancient form of poetry. There are poems in English before Milton which are sometimes called epic, but his models were exclusively classical and Italian. He decided that his epic poem need not rhyme, choosing instead blank verse as the closest alternative to the heroic hexameters of classical poets. Essentially, *Paradise Lost* sets the standard of the English epic for all future writers. When they depart from it, as Byron and Tennyson did, it is with full knowledge of their...

Analyze the character of Beelzebub in *Paradise Lost*

Beelzebub's name means "lord of the flies," and this second-in-command to the devil is the most competent of the swarm of vicious demons that surround Satan in hell. He is a loyal sycophant who is both swayed by Satan's charismatic and commanding presence and willing to flatter him, saying,

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Leader of those Armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld [foiled] . . .

Satan doesn't need Beelzebub's praise to believe he is the greatest of beings, and he is probably a bit annoyed that Beelzebub's flattery puts him second to God. Nevertheless, Beezlebub does support Satan's schemes for upsetting God's most cherished plans.

4. Explain these lines from *Paradise Lost*: "What in me is dark Illume, what is low raise and support; . . . And justify the ways of God to men." What is the significance of these lines

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Milton is essentially penning an epic poem, a long narrative poem that details events which are important in the poet's culture and tells of big adventures and high drama. In ancient Greek epic poems, where the form originated in Western culture, the poet would typically begin with an invocation of the muse. The muses were nine daughters of Zeus, responsible for inspiring humankind to create various art forms. A classical poet would invoke the muse of epic poetry, named Calliope, asking her to inspire him.

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