

Paradise Lost

Selected lines from Book I (105-124 & 242-270)

- **About John Milton:**

- Eminent English poet, Polemicist and man of letters, John Milton was born 9th December, 1608 and died on 8th November, 1674.
- He expressed contemporary religious and political instability in his literary pieces.
- He mostly known for his epic poem Paradise Lost contained in 1667 and composed in blank verse.
- He talked about his personal beliefs, and passion for freedom and self-determination

- Paradise Lost is a well-known for its great concept and rich imagination as well as the dignity of language used by John Milton.
- In the prologue of Book I, John Milton invokes Muse and discloses his purpose. also describes subject of the epic as man's first disobedience towards God and consequences of that disobedience.
- When Adam and Eve eat the fruit of forbidden tree of Knowledge against the God's will and eventually they are displaced from heaven to earth to experience suffering and death.
- Here, Milton, in Prologue, clears that the Adam and Eve were deceived by serpent who is Satan.

- The poem begins in the middle of the story (Biblical) as Satan, lying on his back with his other rebellious angels, chained on a lake of fire, epics traditionally do.
- Milton says that Satan, along with his fellow angels attempts to overthrow the God by beginning civil war in the Heaven.
- But God defeats Satan and his angels and throws them out of heaven. They all remain in void for nine days and finally land in Hell where they again make stay for nine days.
- According to Milton its creatures rebel against creator.
- Usually, Epics begin with the descriptions of protagonists action but, Milton's Paradise Lost commences with antagonist

- So, Milton in the present epic, Book I entirely throws a light on Satan's personality.
- As Satan lies on his back in a lake of fire which is completely dark.
- Beelzebub, Satan's second-in command, sits next to him.
- By breaking his silence, Satan narrates their lamenting position at the present condition(Hell) and how they have lost their magnificent status as angels in Heaven.
- He confesses that they are defeated by God and he does not have any complain about his rebel against God.
- But it does not mean they can not fight against Him to regain the place in heaven. He also says that nobody can wipe out their heavenly essence or essence from heaven.
- So, he promises them that he will keep fighting against the "tyranny of Heav'n" until his last breath.

- Then, Beelzebub says that God always claimed himself to be omnipotent and expelled us from Heaven to Hell for suffering forever.
- Though, Satan does not deny Beelzebub's opinion about the God, he puts it firmly that they have to continue their mission of fighting with God by another way.
- Then he suggests them that they should move from fire lake to another place.
- Thereafter, poet describes Satan's physical appearance as terrible in size like whale or Greek Titan floating on waves.

1. Then Satan also describes barren position of Hell as compare to the glory of Heaven.
2. However, he says that Hell and Heaven are only the mind's creation and proclaims "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n." and he appeals them to rebel against the God again.
3. After motivating and comforting each other, they all, as part of preparation of war against God, by using supernatural power they build up huge temple.
4. The temple is more magnificent than any other temple built by human being or Egypt Pyramid.
5. Milton also expresses that the devils are very flexible as they have the capacity to change their mood or shape as from larger to dwarf.