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Philip A. Powell

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PARADISE LOST AND THE BOOK OF JOB: A COMPARISON OF
FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE, SIN, INTERCESSION,
RESTORATION, AND THEODICY

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of English
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Philip A. Powell

April 1973

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Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

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Contents

Introduction .	
I. Milton and the Book of Job	-
II. The Book of Job	19
III. Traditional Job	33
IV. Milton's Job	43
V. Forbidden Knowledge and Sin	66
Forbidden Knowledge	66
Sin	78
VI. Intercession, Restoration, and Theodicy	89
Intercession	89
Restoration .	95
Theodicy	104
List of Works Cited	114

Introduction

It should not be surprising to anyone who has read Paradise Lost to find evidence of the Book of Job in Milton's epic. The Book of Job is part of the Old Testament wisdom literature, and there is no doubt that Milton was familiar with the text. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate parallels in the systems of ideas of Paradise Lost and the Book of Job. It is not my intention to prove deliberate modeling of Paradise Lost after the Book of Job, nor do I intend to make passage to passage correlations between the two books.

Chapter I shows the importance of the Book of Job for Milton, the general connection of the book with Milton's works, and reasons why Job can be discussed in comparison with Paradise Lost. Chapter II presents a modern interpretation of the Book of Job. Chapter III discusses the Joban tradition, the ways in which the Book of Job was understood up to Milton's time. Chapter IV examines problems which arise from conflicts of Milton's theology with the Joban tradition. The tradition is altered to account for Milton's theology in general and his references to Job in particular.

By this process we reach an understanding of Milton's Job.

Chapters V and VI contain the discussions of parallel ideas in Paradise Lost and the Book of Job. Ideas in Job are used to provide insight in approaching similar areas in Milton's epic. Chapter V examines areas relating to the fall of man away from God--forbidden knowledge and sin. Chapter VI presents issues relating to man's return to God--intercession and restoration, and it concludes the thesis with an examination of theodicy, the justification of God's ways to men.

Chapter 1

Milton and the Book of Job

In order to consider parallels in the ideas of Paradise Lost and the Book of Job it is first necessary to justify a comparison of the two books. This may be done in three stages, by showing the importance of the Book of Job, the general connection of the Book of Job with Milton's works, and finally some reasons why Job can be discussed along with Adam.

That Milton was aware of the Book of Job and valued it can be seen by reference to Job in Milton's prose (particularly De Doctrina Christiana) and poetry (especially Paradise Regained) and by the use of passages or passage parallels from the Joban text in prose and poetry, including Paradise Lost.¹ The importance of the Book of Job to biblical epics, including those by Milton, is shown in this statement by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski: "The tradition of biblical exegesis thus supports the conception of the Book of Job as

¹A list of Job passages or passage parallels in Paradise Lost may be found in the "Index of Biblical References" in James H. Sims, The Bible in Milton's Epics (Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press, 1962), pp. 259-73.

an epic by a heroic interpretation of its chief character and its action, by an extension of its meaning and scope through typological interpretation, and by exaltation of the Book as a compendium of ethics and of knowledge."²

Relationships among ideas in the Book of Job and Paradise Lost will be discussed at length in this paper. At this time we should understand the general connection of the Book of Job with Milton's works. Critics have noted the relation of the Job story to Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes, and these will be reviewed in following paragraphs. Job's importance for all of Milton's work can best be understood by his stature as a biblical or Christian hero. William R. Herman defines the biblical hero in contrast to the better known Hellenic hero. "His main characteristic is not physical strength but moral strength, permitting him to be obedient to God when all others reject God or the need to be obedient. The Hellene obtains glory through defiance; the Biblical hero obtains glory through submission."³ John T. Shawcross notes the following: "What justly gives heroic name to person or to poem, Milton implies, is striving valiantly for good against opposing forces, and when those forces are basic, the term 'heroic' is most suitable."⁴

²Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, Milton's Brief Epic (Providence, R.I.: Brown Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 27-28.

³William R. Herman, "Heroism and Paradise Lost," CE, 21 (Oct. 1959), 13.

⁴John T. Shawcross, "The Style and Genre of Paradise

The importance of Job can be understood in this context.

Burton O. Kurth remarks: "Of all the human figures in the Bible, Job perhaps came closest to representing the ideal of heroic faith, patience, and fortitude in the face of trial and suffering."⁵

Critics have frequently compared the Book of Job to Paradise Regained. The relationship has been suggested by a remark Milton made in The Reason of Church Government, writing of "that Epick form whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief model" (C.E. 3.237).⁶ Northrop Frye, on the basis of a discussion of "brief epic" form, suggests that Job was the model for Paradise Regained, with Christ in Job's character role.⁷ Charles W. Jones provides a more general discussion of Milton's view of the book of Job as a model

Lost," in New Essays on Paradise Lost, ed. Thomas Kranidas (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), p. 20.

⁵Burton O. Kurth, Milton and Christian Heroism, Univ. of California Publications English Studies, No. 20 (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959), p. 134.

⁶References to Milton's prose will be included in the text and will consist of C.E. (Columbia edition), the volume number for that edition, and the page numbers. Prose references will be to the text as found in Frank Allen Patterson, gen. ed., The Works of John Milton, 18 vols. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1931-1938). References to Milton's poetry will consist of the poem (when necessary), book number, and line numbers of the poetry as found in Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose (New York: Odyssey Press, 1957). When the notation must include the poem title, it will be P.L. (Paradise Lost) or P.R. (Paradise Regained).

⁷Northrop Frye, The Return of Eden (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 120.

for an epic. Jones shows "first, that Milton had grounds for believing that the Book of Job possessed the external form of an epic; second, that then he could also believe that it had the internal form of an epic; and third, that he could believe that he would be following a natural and traditional pattern if he should write a brief epic in the form of the Book of Job."⁸ Of interest are those internal epic qualities that Jones feels Milton would have seen in the Book of Job: "(a) its primitive quality, (b) its single hero, (c) its single choice, (d) its 'greater heroism.'"⁹

Barbara Kiefer Lewalski provides the best comparison of Job and Paradise Regained. She first demonstrates the genre of the "brief epic" and its applicability to Paradise Regained and the Book of Job. But even more convincing is her discussion of the parallels between the temptation of Christ and the afflictions of Job. "Throughout the poem Christ is presented in the Jobean mold--alone, seemingly abandoned by God, forced to endure a relentless barrage of temptations many of which take the form, as in Job, of subtle intellectual arguments."¹⁰ In both the biblical book and Milton's epic God provokes Satan's malice by pointing out his favorites, Job and Christ. In addition, God in

⁸Charles W. Jones, "Milton's 'Brief Epic,'" SP, 44 (1947), 210.

⁹Ibid., p. 220.

¹⁰Lewalski, Milton's Brief Epic, p. 108.

Paradise Regained indicates that Christ's temptations will serve much the same purpose as the afflictions of Job--to prove Christ and to serve as example for angels and men. Lewalski notes these other parallels: similar action in the temptation sequences of both books, God's voice in the whirlwind of the Book of Job and a storm which Satan claims as the voice of God's dissatisfaction, and the glorification of Job's success and Christ's triumph with celebrations by angelic hosts.¹¹ John James Teunissen also compares the relationships of Job and Christ, noting that Job is related to Christ in suffering and in triumph. "But it is of course not only in his suffering that Job is related to Christ, it is even more importantly in the outcome of that suffering. Job's victory over Satan, imperfect as it may have been, is the first recorded instance of a human being's ability to stand against the Arch Fiend's horrifying afflictions and temptations; and in his victory Job shares in Christ's--to come later--and he becomes with Christ the model Christian hero."¹²

Teunissen also draws a comparison of the Book of Job with Samson Agonistes. "Both Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes deal with the theme of the Book of Job: how do Christ and a man who typifies Him suffer patiently, and from

¹¹Ibid., pp. 111-14.

¹²John James Teunissen, "Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom: The Book of Job and Milton's Conception of Patient Suffering in 'Paradise Regained' and 'Samson Agonistes,'"

that patient suffering how do they emerge victorious as heroes of faith? Milton's *donnée* in both of these poems is that there are only two patterns which can be followed in the archetypal affliction-temptation action: the pattern of the reprobate--blasphemy and destruction--or the pattern of the elect as established by Job--faith, patience, and spiritual victory."¹³ Some critics have called Samson's character into question, but Teunissen insists Samson does not belong to the reprobate. "Samson may have been too proud and he may have been uxorious, but, again like Job, he is in no sense reprobate. Even his triumphant death is virtuous, without question of the possibility of desperate suicide."¹⁴ William O. Harris, though not writing of Job in connection with Samson, suggests such a comparison when he writes of the "doctrinal concept which informs the play--the concept of Patience as the highest manifestation of Fortitude, that particular cardinal virtue traditionally opposed to the terrible sin of tristitia and despair."¹⁵

Understanding the importance of the Book of Job to Milton, we may examine some reasons why the Book of Job may be discussed in relation to Paradise Lost. We should note first the general parallel between the two books. Milton

Diss. Univ. of Rochester 1967, pp. 280-81.

¹³Ibid., p. 314.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 319.

¹⁵William O. Harris, "Despair and 'Patience as the Truest Fortitude' in Samson Agonistes," ELH, 30 (1963), 107.

opens his epic by noting that he will discuss "Man's First Disobedience," and will, in the process, "assert Eternal Providence, / And justify the ways of God to men" (1.25-26). Shawcross comments on this introduction: "The stated subject is Man's disobedience, but the thesis is that eternal providence will justify to Man God's ways toward him, and the theme is God's love. God's love for Man best illustrates His providence and best justifies His ways. The intention of the poem is thus the didactic aim of inculcating virtue in Man by showing God's truth, justice, and mercy, leading to peace, and Satan's deceit, injustice, and hate, leading to war."¹⁶ In De Doctrina Christiana, in a chapter titled "OF THE FALL OF OUR FIRST PARENTS, AND OF SIN," Milton comments on God's providence in relation to man in the Fall. Milton shows, as he does in the opening of Paradise Lost, that God is to be seen in relation to both the fall and the restoration of man. "The Providence of God as regards the fall of man, is observable in the sin of man, and the misery consequent upon it, as well as in his restoration" (C.E. 15.179). Thus, Paradise Lost is concerned with God, with the nature and actions of man, and with the indicated means of restoration, the sacrifice of Christ. Similarly, the Book of Job is a book of God and man. The realm of man is considered in Job's character and actions, while the providence of God is

¹⁶Shawcross, "The Style and Genre of Paradise Lost," p. 17.

illustrated in Job's situation and in Job's dramatic encounter with God. Because Paradise Lost and the Book of Job both deal with the relation of God and man, and because of the importance of the Book of Job and of Job the man, it is useful to compare the Book of Job with Milton's Paradise Lost.

In addition to the conceptual relationships of the Book of Job and Paradise Lost, comparison of the books is invited by an aspect of Job himself. This falls within the realm of biblical typology. Through typology, Adam, Job, Samson, Christ, and other heroes of faith are all related because Job and the others are seen as types and Christ is their antitype. Mary Ann Radzinowicz defines a biblical type. "A type is a prefiguration of something to come; the history of the world is explainable as the type of the man of faith prefigures Christ, as the old Adam prefigures the new, as the perfect life of the redeemed prefigures the perfect development of the state."¹⁷

H. R. MacCallum, in his excellent article, "Milton and Figurative Interpretation of the Bible," notes the problems of using typology in relation to Milton's works. The key to the issue of interpretation in the seventeenth century is how the commentator understood St. Paul's "The letter killeth but

¹⁷Mary Ann Radzinowicz, "'Man as a Probationer of Immortality': Paradise Lost XI-XII," in Approaches to Paradise Lost, ed. C. A. Patrides (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1968), pp. 41-42.

the spirit giveth life." The church reformers, Milton included, tended to the theory that this ruled out the traditionally popular practice of reading multilevel interpretation into scripture.¹⁸ Milton actually used two types of figurative interpretation: images used to describe the nature and actions of God, falling under the heading of accommodation; and images drawn from history which were read typologically.¹⁹ In general, the church reformers spoke out against typological readings of scripture, but they still used them. It would appear that what was being sought was a degree of control or limitation over a useful practice that had gotten out of hand.²⁰ What came to be allowed was a doctrine of compound sense, in which there was only one literal sense, but this sense could include both the historical moment and the prefiguration. Milton seems to have accepted this, for he wrote of this sense in De Doctrina Christiana. "No passage of Scripture is to be interpreted in more than one sense; in the Old Testament, however, this sense is sometimes a compound of the historical and typical, as in Hosea xi.1. compared with Matt. ii.15. 'out of Egypt have I called my son,' which may be explained in a double sense, as referring partly to the people of Israel, and

¹⁸H.R. MacCallum, "Milton and Figurative Interpretation of the Bible," UTQ, 31 (July 1962), 397-99.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 399.

²⁰Ibid., p. 404.

partly to Christ in his infancy" (C.E. 16.263).

Milton was conservative in his use of typology, but he certainly did accept at least some use of it. MacCallum shows one of the ways in which Milton limited typological usage. "Milton reveals little interest in that traditional form of typology in which an external event in the Old Testament prefigures an equally external event in the New; the Protestant bias of his thought consistently caused him to emphasize the inward and spiritual nature of the antitype."²¹ Biblical exegesis led to a variety of types. MacCallum notes that "a threefold pattern can be discerned in typical events: the type can refer to the life of Christ, to the life of the Church and the individual Christian within it, or to the mysteries of eternity. In traditional terminology, these three forms are called allegory (this technical sense must be distinguished sharply from the general meaning), tropology, and anagogy."²² MacCallum comments on the dominant typology in Paradise Lost. "In the world history contained in the last books of Paradise Lost, . . . , the typology focusses on the man of faith as the prefiguration of Christ. Modelled on the Epistle to the Hebrews (11-13) and Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin in Acts (7.1-53), this typology is, in the technical sense, allegorical."²³

²¹Ibid., p. 407.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 408.

That is, the men of faith in the closing books of Paradise Lost prefigure the life of Christ.

Lynn Veach Sadler finds a problem with traditional typological readings. "Typological approaches to Samson Agonistes have tended to obscure Milton's emphasis on the historical and the experiential. Miltonic types do not merely await fulfillment in Christ, the antitype, but demonstrate the continuity of God's ways through all historical dispensations."²⁴ Sadler disagrees with the position on typology that the meaning of the type cannot be known until it is fulfilled in the antitype. Because Milton combined belief in the Son and the Father, those who lived before Christ were nevertheless saved by Christ because of their belief in the Father. "Milton's emphasis falls on the continuity of dispensations in the process of regeneration common, through Christ, to all types."²⁵ "For Milton, types and their antitypes belong to the unity of the divine plan and simultaneously image its unity so that in the historical movement, by careful response to the conditions of his dispensation, the individual has the signs necessary for his regeneration without waiting, as the medieval (and Dantesque) mode of figurality implies, until the full plan is revealed in the Day of

²⁴Lynn Veach Sadler, "Regeneration and Typology: Samson Agonistes and Its Relation to De Doctrina Christiana, Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained," SEL, 12 (Winter 1972), 141.

²⁵Ibid., p. 142.

Judgment."²⁶ The effect of Sadler's twist of traditional typology is to place emphasis on the pattern of action of the type in his own time and for all subsequent time up to the actual fulfillment in the time of the antitype.

There is, of course, a tradition which supports typology as MacCallum illustrates it. Sadler's slight alteration of the tradition is not presented with any precedent--only with the justification she provides from Milton's theology. It is difficult, then, to rule on the point which she has raised. As has been said, the effect of her change is to place emphasis on the pattern of action of the type in his own time and as an example for future times. There is, therefore, some support for Sadler's position in Milton's works. It explains the value of Samson's brand of action and regeneration as an example, not merely as a vague shadow of Christ.²⁷ It emphasizes the pattern of action of Job as example for Christ in Paradise Regained. It makes possible the cumulative effect of the types of men of faith in the last books of Paradise Lost as these types move forward in history to Christ. And finally, Sadler's method of applying typology makes acceptable the fact that the type may exist in contrast to as well as parallel to the antitype. Thus, Adam's fall can be overcome by Christ; at the same time,

²⁶Ibid., p. 144.

²⁷Sadler uses her method of applying typology on this point, p. 156.

Adam is seen as a type of Christ. If we use Sadler's brand of typology, then, we see value in the type for his pattern of action under his own peculiar dispensation and as a foreshadowing of Christ. While traditional typology, by silence on the issue, might not support this alteration, Milton's works and theology appear to provide all the support needed, at least in application to Milton's own works.

We return to the relation of Adam and Job. This relation, through typology, is actually a more complex relationship of Adam-Job-Christ. Both Adam and Job were traditionally accepted as types of Christ. Adam, of course, erred; on his part, Job suffered less perfectly than Christ. There is, therefore, a cumulative process from Adam, through Job, to Christ. Teunissen comments on this process: "For the archetypal sufferer is Adam, winning his way back to God through affliction, patience, and new knowledge. Through his antitypes--Job, Samson, Christ--he undergoes probation and education in the rigidly-regulated school of affliction established especially for him after the Fall."²⁸ Lewalski notes that allusions in the beginning of Paradise Regained to Adam and Job suggest that Christ will appear as the "Second Adam,"²⁹ and "that Christ's temptation is also to be seen as a reprise and heightening of Job's victory over

²⁸Teunissen, p. 369.

²⁹Lewalski, Milton's Brief Epic, p. 164.

Satan's temptations."³⁰ "The allusions to Job in the induction also arouse reader expectations, for they reverberate against an exegetical tradition relating Adam, Job, and Christ in terms of their temptations. Job himself was understood to be a kind of second Adam, a perfect or all-but-perfect hero who relived and reversed the first man's temptation experience by his victory over Satan's machinations."³¹

We have mentioned the typological process in the last books of Paradise Lost, and we should return to this subject, since Paradise Lost is to be the principal Miltonic work discussed in the rest of the paper. It might at first seem odd that Job himself does not appear in the series of types of men of faith in Books XI and XII. There are, however, two excellent reasons for this omission. First, Job does not appear in the sources Milton used for these sections. More important, however, is the fact that there was a traditional lack of agreement on where and when Job fit in the historical process of the Old Testament. Milton reflects this uncertainty in Paradise Regained (3.94), when Christ speaks of Job "Made famous in a Land and times obscure." Therefore, Job could not be placed in the historical pattern of the last books of Paradise Lost. Still, the spirit of his success and reputation is there, as Michael repeatedly urges Adam and Eve to accept patience. In the last books of

³⁰Ibid., p. 165.

³¹Ibid., p. 178.

Paradise Lost Adam is shown within his own time the process whereby man returns to Paradise in eternity. Radzinowicz comments on the purpose of the last book: "Not just to have attained the sum of wisdom but to have seen the deeds of fortitude which lead to higher victory is what brings Adam to a paradise within. Milton has shaped the last two books to show Adam that patience and heroic martyrdom are more than an inner condition; they are a species of ethical behaviour."³² Teunissen notes: "The vision of the history of the human race to the time of Christ which Adam is granted in the closing books of Paradise Lost is essentially a vision of the way in which the heroes of patience and faith will struggle slowly upward until the race is fit to produce the Messiah, the complete and new Adam, the perfect and unassailable hero."³³

The book of Job was important to Milton--so important that Job provided the pattern for Christ in Paradise Regained. In Paradise Lost, Adam learned patience. Job was connected in typology to Adam by the Adam-Job-Christ relationship. While Job appeared later than Adam, the Book of Job, of course, existed long before Milton wrote. Therefore, a sort of reverse typology, or reverse example, of Job to Adam existed for Milton to use if he wished. And while Christ, the God-man, was the perfect example, Job, like Adam, was

³²Radzinowicz, p. 32.

³³Teunissen, p. 372.

mere man. In addition, the Book of Job is a book of man and God, and the relation of God to Job, with the resulting theodicy, was also available to Milton. It is reasonable, therefore, to seek a comparison of issues in the Book of Job and Milton's Paradise Lost. The next step is to gain an understanding of the Book of Job.

Chapter 2

The Book of Job

For years the word "patience" has been connected with Job, but it is difficult to understand how anyone can read the Book of Job and see Job as a patient man, at least in the common understanding of patience as calm, uncomplaining endurance. A man who laments his suffering and calls upon God to appear before him to justify the suffering is neither calm nor quietly enduring. Marvin H. Pope comments on Job's lamentations: "In spite of sporadic attempts of ancient scribes and translators to soften the impact of some of the near blasphemous tirades, the fact cannot be mistaken that Job bluntly calls into question divine justice and providence. The extreme case of Job's unmerited woes, as with any and every instance of seemingly senseless suffering, raises the ultimate questions of divine justice (theodicy) and the meaning and purpose of life."¹

Scholars agree that the book of Job is about suffering, though there are differences in belief as to exactly what the book has to say about it. Yet, suffering is not the entire

¹Marvin H. Pope, ed., Job, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1965), p. xiii.

issue of the book. B. Davie Napier writes that "the sensitive reader of Job may well wonder whether the primary concern of the writing is the problem of suffering or that one vast, central problem of life under God, the life of faith."² When the question of suffering is considered in relation to the answer, and both are extended to logical ends, as indicated, the overall problem becomes one of theodicy. Napier states that the issue is "the question of existential sovereignty: who is in control in time and history and in the life of man, who sets the terms of existence, who is lord of life--God or man? In the last analysis Job protests, not his suffering, but an order of existence in which he is unable by his own devices to maintain his life in security and to achieve its fulfillment."³

Since Fall and Redemption may be seen as the vehicles for discussion of theodicy in Paradise Lost, suffering provides movement in the Joban poetry. We must see how the problem of suffering is resolved in order to understand the larger issue of theodicy.

The Book of Job begins with a prose prologue (1.1-2.13), probably a modified folk tale,⁴ in which Job is introduced

²B. Davie Napier, Song of the Vineyard (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 334.

³Ibid., p. 338.

⁴Samuel Terrien, "Introduction and Exegesis to the Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, III (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 888.

and the cause of his suffering is described. Job was an Edomite prince⁵ of outstanding character; he was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" (1.1b).⁶ He was blessed with a large family, wealth, and fame. Samuel Terrien explains Job's "perfection." "The Hebrew idea of perfection referred to physical and mental health, soundness, completeness, entirety, 'roundness.' A perfect man was comparable to a 'finished product.' Job was not only well rounded, self-possessed, and balanced, he was also well adapted to his social environment, upright by practicing straightforwardness and justice in his dealings with his fellow men."⁷

Satan came before Yahweh (the Lord) and challenged Him that Job was blameless only because he was rewarded for his righteousness. As Satan put it: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" (1.9b). "But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (1.11). So the Lord allowed Satan to take away all of Job's wealth, fame, and family (with the exception of his wife), so long as Job was not harmed bodily. Job's reaction was to remain righteous; he mourned and exclaimed: "Naked came I out of

⁵Ibid., p. 910.

⁶All quotations from the Book of Job are from the text as found in Vol. III of The Interpreter's Bible (for bibliog. ref., see Terrien, Samuel). Text references (chapter and verse) will be to the King James Version unless marked R.S.V. (Revised Standard Version).

⁷Terrien, p. 909.

my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (1.21). Satan was not satisfied and further challenged God that if sickness befell Job, then he would curse the Lord. So Yahweh allowed Satan to plague Job with bodily woes. Job's wife challenged him: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die" (2.9). But Job chastised her and replied that as man receives good from God, he must also expect to receive evil. "In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (2.10).

Satan's game with God was based on Satan's assertion that Job had served God for rewards of righteousness, not out of faith. As George Buchanan Gray explains Satan's theory of man, "human nature is incapable of pure devotion to God, human conduct is not disinterested; if the payment for it ceases, or becomes uncertain, man's service of God will cease, man will no longer address God reverentially, or affectionately, but blasphemingly; where love and trust had seemed to be while such qualities received their price, there hate and contempt will certainly be when the price is withdrawn."⁸ As Job sat in the ash heap, deeply troubled but not despairing while he retained his integrity, his wife saw

⁸George Buchanan Gray, "Introduction" in A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job, I, ed. Samuel Rolles Driver and George Buchanan Gray, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), p. lii. This entire analysis of Job owes much to Gray, more than can be revealed by footnotes for quotations and other references to his work. While his analysis is not unique, it is certainly one of the most easy to understand.

only his suffering, and she offered the most expeditious relief--that Job curse God and die. What she apparently did not understand was that this would prove Satan's point; Job would vindicate Satan by showing that his love of God was only in response to his prosperity. So Job retained his integrity, did not "sin with his lips"; he foiled Satan, but he also opened himself to attack from comparable theories on earth.

At the last of the prose prologue we are told that Job was visited by three old friends: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They sat for a week in silence, for they saw that Job was greatly troubled (2.13). With the prose prologue ended, a discussion (in poetic form) began between Job and his friends (3.1-31.40). Job began with a lamentation (3.1-26) cursing his existence and expressing three wishes--that he had never been born, that he had died at birth, and that he might die at that moment.⁹ This is followed by three cycles of discussion in which the friends speak and Job answers. The third cycle is not complete, and Samuel Terrien believes that Zophar's final speech has been combined with Job's third reply to Bildad so that Job's reply is toned down, making Job acceptable to early audiences.¹⁰ The position of the friends is unchanging, though it is expressed in different

⁹Terrien, p. 925.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 888.

ways. The three friends held the theory of divine justice as seen in individual retribution. According to this theory, man is rewarded in proportion to his righteousness; a sinner is cursed and a pious man is blessed, the degree of misery or reward being determined by the severity of sin or strength of virtue. Since Job's suffering was great, he must have sinned greatly. The friends reminded Job that as a wise man he knew this theory, believed it, and had taught it himself. All the wisdom of past ages supported individual retribution, and Job could not deny the theory. Therefore, he should humbly appeal to God, and he would be rewarded with forgiveness. Job, however, knew his innocence; he maintained his integrity throughout. Yet, his mental attitude changed. While he continued to lament in his despair, he became increasingly defiant. Job acknowledged God's omnipotence and knew that it was futile to contend with God. Still, he wavered between requests for God to uphold his integrity and pleas for death if God was not going to attest to his innocence. In his final oath of innocence (31.1-40) Job reasserted his righteousness and issued a challenge for an honorable encounter with God.

Oh, that I had one to hear me!

(Here is my signature! let the Almighty answer me!)

Oh, that I had the indictment written by my
adversary!

Surely I would carry it on my shoulder;

I would bind it on me as a crown;

I would give him an account of all my steps;

like a prince I would approach him (R.S.V. 31.35-37).

Job was not answered immediately. In fact, even his final soliloquy was interrupted. A hymn on wisdom (28.1-28) was inserted, again probably to tone down Job's speech. Pope comments on the hymn: "Virtually all critics are agreed that the poem on wisdom, xxviii, is extraneous. It is put into the mouth of Job with no effort being made to correlate or integrate it with the rest of Job's discourse. The burden of its message is that wisdom far exceeds in value any precious material on or in the earth, and is completely inaccessible to man except through piety."¹¹ Agreeing that the hymn on wisdom is out of place in the book of Job, Samuel Terrien notes, nevertheless, that it "foretells in some subtle way the thesis which is unfolded in the discourses of Yahweh (chs. 38-41), and it seems to signify that both Job and his friends have made vain claims to discern the ways of God with men."¹²

Following Job's demand to see God, a new speaker, Elihu, is introduced. He did not appear earlier, and he will not appear again. However, several chapters (32.1-37.24) are given to his discourses. While many critics would eliminate the speeches as an intrusion by an inferior poet, others see Elihu as a bridge between Job's challenge and God's reply.¹³

¹¹Pope, p. xviii.

¹²Terrien, p. 1100.

¹³Ibid., p. 1128.

We cannot easily discard six chapters of the Book of Job. If we accept that the Joban poet did not write Elihu's discourses, we still must accept them as a contribution of the Joban school. We could, as some critics urge, discard portions of the book which do not appear to have been written by the Joban poet, though we would run the risk of being too clever and cutting portions which are undesirable for our interpretation of the book. I prefer to accept the Book of Job as it stands, a product of the Joban school, and consider an interpretation of the book as a whole. Therefore, we must include Elihu. Elihu disclaimed Job's charge that God was unjust because he remained silent, asserted the dogma of individual retribution, and attacked Job's innocence. Elihu went further than Job's friends by suggesting that the purpose of God's chastisement of man was educational. God made man aware of his sin and, therefore, made it possible for man to repent and to be rewarded. Like the friends, Elihu went on to show God's omnipotence and to admonish Job humbly to seek God's forgiveness.

When Elihu had finished, Yahweh spoke twice and Job replied twice (38.1-42.6). God answered Job's challenge with a challenge of His own.

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by
words without knowledge?
Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I
will demand of thee, and answer thou me (38.2-3).

Yahweh's first speech showed Job how insignificant he was by describing the magnificence and mystery of His creation of

the world and all in it. Job replied:

Behold, I am of small account; what shall I
 answer thee?
 I lay my hand on my mouth,
 I have spoken once, and I will not answer;
 twice, but I will proceed no further (R.S.V.
 40.4-5).

Yahweh spoke again, renewing his challenge to Job and
 again showing His extreme power in His creation of Behemoth
 and Leviathan. Job answered:

I know that thou canst do all things,
 and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted
 (R.S.V. 42.2).

I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,
 but now my eye sees thee;
 therefore I despise myself,
 and repent in dust and ashes (R.S.V. 42.5-6).

Following Job's submission there is an epilogue in
 prose form (42.7-17). The Lord spoke to Eliphaz: "My wrath
 is kindled against you and against your two friends; for you
 have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has"
 (R.S.V. 42.7). Job was allowed to intercede on behalf of
 his friends. Finally, Job was doubly blessed with fame,
 wealth, and a new family.

We return to the problem of Job in the dialogue. As a
 wise man in his own time, Job would have believed the theory
 put forth by his friends that the righteous prosper and the
 sinful are damned. It is only when this theory is blocked
 by the fact of his own complete innocence that Job questions
 the correctness of his traditional belief. Gray explains
 the purpose of the dialogue as follows: "The Dialogue,

therefore, is not directed towards reaching a correct or more adequate theory, but towards emphasizing the certainty of the fact and the consequent falseness of the prevailing theory."¹⁴ Job enters the discussions with a weak debate position because he has no case to argue except his own purity; the friends, of course, are unable to understand Job's innocence because his worldly condition negates his purity. Job is caught in a cycle that no earthly debate can correct.

As he doggedly proclaims his innocence, Job is caught by a new fear. Gray explains Job's reasoning: "Because he has no other theory of suffering than that of the friends, he can imagine no other just cause for his own suffering than sin on his part; since, then, as he knows directly and for certain that such just cause does not exist, he infers that his suffering has been unjustly inflicted, that God--the God at least of his own old and the friends' still cherished theory--is unjustly causing his suffering, has changed without good cause from being his friend into his enemy."¹⁵ Job never regrets his service of God; he never curses God to the satisfaction of Satan. Job does, however, request audience with God so that he can find out if God is with him.

Plagued by suffering, unhelped by friends who do not understand him (since even the upstart Elihu, who offers a

¹⁴Gray, p. liv.

¹⁵Ibid., p. lv.

new theory of suffering's purpose, denies Job's innocence), and fearful that God has abandoned him, Job is torn within as the new and old Job conflict. This is reflected in his attitudes toward Yahweh. As Job considers his old theory, that of the friends, and the resultant image of an unjust and unfriendly God, Job begs to be left alone to die. But as he reasserts his innocence and recalls the God who was his friend, Job demands vindication.¹⁶ He must meet with God and find His justice.

Yahweh speaks, but he does not present a justification of man's suffering. He gives no theory to replace that of the friends. William E. Hulme writes about Yahweh's speeches. "There is no ethical content to God's revelation, only a stress on his majesty, power, and genius. He makes no attempt morally to justify his ways with Job or to acknowledge the existence of any moral demand."¹⁷ God solves the suffering issue by not commenting on it. Gray explains what is revealed by Yahweh when He speaks.

What the speech does not contain is singularly important; for its silence is a tacit repetition of the judgement challenged by the Satan in the Prologue, an anticipation of the vindication of Job against the friends expressed in the Epilogue, and a justification of one of Job's two thoughts on God against the other. The speech in no way goes back on Yahweh's judgement in the Prologue; it does not in the slightest degree admit the

¹⁶Ibid., p. lviii.

¹⁷William E. Hulme, Dialogue in Despair (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 143.

justice of the Satan's impugment of the inner springs, or the friends' impugment of the outward elements of Job's conduct before his suffering came upon him: it does not, as Job had at times feared, show God, when He appears, unjustly treating him as and pronouncing him guilty of sins such as could account for his sufferings. Thus the speech tacitly confirms the voice of Job's conscience,¹⁸ that his life had been free from blame.

The Epilogue, seen by some critics as a proof of the friends' case, since Job is rewarded when he repents, actually states what God's silence had implied. God says to Eliphaz that He is enraged against the friends because they "have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has" (R.S.V. 42.7). The friends spoke falsely of God; as Gray notes, "in inventing charges against Job they have told lies to maintain their theory of God; in repudiating these charges and denying that his calamities are God's accusation of wickedness in him, Job has spoken right."¹⁹ Job's prosperity is returned only after this has been made clear. Gray explains this: "Job's character being directly vindicated, his disinterestedness established, there was no reason why the story should end with the sufferings inflicted for a particular purpose made perpetual after the purpose had been achieved."²⁰

¹⁸Gray, pp. lix-lx.

¹⁹Ibid., p. lxi.

²⁰Ibid., p. lxii.

Job, of course, does not get off without a reprimand. Job's sin is his impertinence after the suffering has been inflicted. Job and the friends sin in presuming to know the ways of God to such an extent that they offer explanations on His behalf. God says that man cannot know His ways, and Job admits that he spoke from a position of no knowledge (42.3-6).

In resolving the problem of suffering and in reprimanding Job and his friends, the Yahweh speeches justify the ways of God to man. God's justice is established in His words; as Robert Gordis explains, "just as there is order and harmony in the natural world, though imperfectly grasped by man, so there is order and meaning in the moral sphere, though often incomprehensible to man."²¹ In addition to a show of force, Yahweh's speeches to Job show the majesty of creation. Hulme shows the importance of this revelation. "Through this involvement with God in terms of the marvels of creation, Job began to hear--to see--the gospel of his love. . . . It is this gospel rather than the law (the thou shalt and thou shalt not) that produces ethical commitment."²² Gordis remarks: "The poet's ultimate message is clear: Not only Ignoramus, 'we do not know,' but Ignorabimus, 'we may never know.' But the poet goes further. He calls

²¹Robert Gordis, The Book of God and Man (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 133.

²²Hulme, p. 145.

upon us Gaudeamus, 'let us rejoice,' in the beauty of the world, though its pattern is only partially revealed to us. It is enough to know that the dark mystery encloses and in part discloses a bright and shining miracle."²³

²³Gordis, p. 134.

Chapter 3 Traditional Job

The discussion of the Book of Job to this point has sought a modern understanding of the book. The traditional understanding of the text up to Milton's time was a little different. While commentators before Milton and men in his own time wrote detailed expositions of the Book of Job, Milton himself did not. We are somewhat handicapped, then, when we attempt to discuss the Book of Job in relation to any of Milton's works, even to Paradise Regained, in which the relationships are most direct and obvious. Two critics, Lewalski and Teunissen, have tried to solve the problem by recreating the exegetical tradition which was available to Milton. Lewalski briefly discusses the Joban tradition in order to compare the "brief epic" genre of the Book of Job with Paradise Regained. Teunissen examines the traditional understanding of Job and applies the results to both Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes.

In her book, Milton's Brief Epic: The Genre, Meaning, and Art of Paradise Regained, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski writes of two primary Job traditions, the predominantly Catholic

tradition, which pictures a heroic Job, and the standard Protestant exegesis, which is closer to the modern interpretation I have given.

Lewalski credits the "Catholic" exegesis as the source of the epic heroism of Job and, therefore, of that heroic influence on Milton, despite the differences of the more Protestant tradition.¹ Lewalski traces the exegesis to the Greek and Latin Fathers, through Catholic tradition up to and including the seventeenth century, and even including some Protestant commentators.

This tradition emphasizes chapters i and ii, scanting or sometimes entirely omitting treatment of the dialogues. Accordingly, the chief elements of the story are the two "councils in heaven" in which Job is singled out to be God's champion in the contest with Satan, and the trials and miseries which Satan inflicts upon Job. If discussed at all, the dialogues are regarded simply as a continuation of the trial: Job's friends, signifying heretics, are seen as Satan's agents endeavoring to lead Job to the spiritual pitfalls of false belief and despair. In this reading God's commendation of Job in chapter i as "a perfect and an upright man" unparalleled on earth, and the authorial observation in chapter ii that "In all this did not Job sinne with his lips" define the terms for the entire contest. Job's later outcries are simply pious lamentations like those of Jeremiah and of Christ on the cross, or else they are prophetic and typological utterances. Some commentators will concede that Job commits slight venial sins of ignorance and rashness in his outcries, but others deny that he exhibits any imperfections whatever. This interpretation views Elihu as a proud and arrogant teacher or else a faithless gentile; he rather than Job is the object

¹Lewalski, Milton's Brief Epic, pp. 24-25.

of God's first words from the whirlwind, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job xxxviii:2). God's subsequent address to Job is not a rebuke but an instruction of his ignorance or an exercise in humility, after which God declares Job victor in all his combats and gives him due reward.²

Despite Milton's protests against Catholicism, Lewalski does not feel that the Protestant tradition destroyed for Milton the epic heroism of the Book of Job. "Milton could readily adopt the 'epic' view of the Book of Job since, as the Job references in his prose tracts indicate, he seems to have accepted the 'heroic' interpretation of Job as a sinless, perfect hero overcoming all temptation."³ Nevertheless, Lewalski does present the Protestant view of the Joban text.

The standard Protestant exegesis of the story, appearing with minor differences in the writings of Luther, Calvin, Beza, and many others, may be summarized as follows: In chapters i and ii, Job, sustained by the grace of God, patiently and gloriously overcomes all the trials to which Satan has subjected him--loss of goods and children, tormenting ulcers in his own flesh, the temptation to blasphemy and despair posed by his wife. However, Job's curse on the day of his birth (chap. iii), and his subsequent rash and sinful though not actually blasphemous complaints against God's justice throughout his dialogues with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, constitute a fall from his former uprightness: at this time he manifests what the Geneva Bible calls "his great imperfections in

²Ibid., pp. 20-21.

³Ibid., p. 103.

this battel between ye spirit & the flesh," or what John Trapp calls the weakness of the soul temporarily deserted by God. Job does, however, speak the truth with regard to his former uprightness and the mysterious ways of God's providence in dealing with man, while his friends, though well-meaning toward Job and pious toward God, are wrong in their opinion that God's favors and punishments in this world are exactly squared to man's deserts, and wrong also in deducing from this false premise that Job's apparent virtue must be hypocrisy. Chapter xxxii begins the resolution of the situation in the young Elihu's just estimation of Job's case: he acquits Job of earlier hypocrisy but convicts him of sin in his present questionings of God's dispensations. God, speaking from the whirlwind, confirms Elihu's argument with further demonstrations of the incomprehensibility of his ways. He forgives the repentant Job, restoring his former blessings in double measure, and he harshly answers Job's friends for their wrong doctrine, though he offers to forgive them if Job will offer sacrifice for them.⁴

In his doctoral dissertation, "Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom: The Book of Job and Milton's Conception of Patient Suffering in 'Paradise Regained' and 'Samson Agonistes,'" John James Teunissen also reviews the traditional Joban exegesis. Some of his work is similar to that of Lewalski, but Teunissen's presentation of his study of Joban commentary is much more detailed. The tradition Teunissen presents is commentary from the Fathers, sixteenth and seventeenth century Catholics, Catholic "patience books" and one seventeenth century Protestant "patience book," European

⁴Ibid., pp. 18-19.

Calvinists, and the English Calvinists.⁵ Obviously, tradition built over such a length of time and from such various sources consists of general trends or conglomerate generalities, seldom in complete agreement. In fact, as has been shown from Lewalski's book, there was great disagreement among Catholics and Calvinists. Teunissen, recognizing Milton's position on Catholicism, emphasizes the Protestant elements of the tradition. The overall picture which results from Teunissen's treatment of the Joban tradition, then, is a general picture of Protestant exegesis which is highly Calvinistic.

Teunissen establishes first that commentators saw Job as a real man in a real time. "For the vast majority of seventeenth-century Christians Job was a real man, the Book of Job was a real history, and its writing was divinely inspired."⁶ There was disagreement, however, in the details of time and place.

Job was of the elect. However, the scriptural notation

⁵Unfortunately, Teunissen seems to include Milton as an English Calvinist and attributes primarily Calvinistic Protestant interpretation of the Book of Job to Milton. For example, in the introduction to his seventh chapter, Teunissen writes of the critical error of attributing "a broad misreading of the text of Job to English Calvinists in general or to Milton in particular" (365). As will be shown later, this introduces theological problems which seem to disregard key points of Milton's De Doctrina Christiana. Nevertheless, the work Teunissen has done to document the Joban tradition up to Milton is commendable and should not be discarded because Teunissen misapplies Calvinism to Milton's works.

⁶Teunissen, p. 25.

that Job was "perfect" was seen as referring not to the perfection of Christ or even the prelapsarian perfection of Adam, but to the soundness of Job's character. Yet, as a member of the elect, in the Calvinist sense, Job was a man chosen by God and protected by His grace. Teunissen explains Job's election. "Thus it is perfectly clear to the seventeenth-century commentator that when in 1:8 God asks Satan, 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?,' He singles Job out as one of His elect (my servant) and, as such, makes him instrumental in the glorious task of showing forth His providence."⁷

Teunissen shows that the affliction of Job was ultimately traceable to God, since Satan was not given initiative in his actions. Commentators placed emphasis on the two councils in heaven, reading them as allegory or as accommodation, in order to explain the situation of Job (and, of course, of themselves). "Job, like any man, cannot be of the elect without God's plan, and he cannot stand against temptation without God's grace. He cannot be tried without Satan and he cannot be triumphant without God."⁸

Job was afflicted to test him and to teach him; that is, affliction is both probative and educative, the typical pattern, according to Teunissen.⁹ The afflictions were rendered

⁷Ibid., p. 107.

⁸Ibid., p. 149.

⁹Ibid., p. 285.

in order of increasing potency. "They occur in this order: deprivation of material possessions, familial loss, personal physical pain and humiliation, betrayal by his wife, and finally the silence, disapproval, and accusations of his friends."¹⁰ Meanwhile, at least during the prologue, God's grace is sufficient to sustain Job through his affliction. Teunissen notes the sustaining power of God's grace. "God sends man afflictions to try his faith and, if that faith is strong enough, God sends man the grace with which to exercise his patience and withstand the affliction."¹¹

During the dialogue, Job's patience waivers but does not fail. He does not deny the providence of God. Nevertheless, Job cries out from his passions. This is possible because Job is temporarily deserted by God's spirit in order to obtain proof of his faith.¹² If he remains faithful, as he does, the grace is returned. The probative element (the test) is combined with the educative element (the proof of the return of grace to the faithful). Teunissen notes the following: "What the elect need, then, when they are temporarily abandoned by the Holy Spirit is faith that He will not allow them to be tempted above their strength and that He will return in time to save them if they labor strongly and

¹⁰Ibid., p. 121.

¹¹Ibid., p. 139.

¹²Ibid., pp. 151-52, 187, et passim.

suffer long."¹³

The tradition does not attempt to eliminate the passionate outcries of the tormented Job. These lamentations are seen as manifestations of the inner warring passions. Stoic acceptance was as unacceptable as blasphemy. As Teunissen notes, the commentators sought moderation. "The task which faces the Calvinist commentator is to make Job tread a via media between these two extremes; he must remain the example of holy human suffering and patience, but he must not be allowed to fall into either extreme, blasphemy under God's afflictions or indifference to His trial."¹⁴ Job's passions are human. The fact that he does not reject his belief in the ultimate divine providence proves his faith, and it is this proof which is so valued that the lamentations can be forgiven.

Job's friends are seen as a Satanic temptation of extreme potency. The friends misrepresent God's ways, and it becomes Job's task to defend God against these erroneous human arguments. While Job's intentions are laudable, it is recognized that he fares poorly. Teunissen notes Job's failure:

Smarting under his friends' misinterpretation of his situation and falling to his knees under the weight of his overpowering passions, Job proceeds to add further verbal misdemeanours to his already shaken relationship with

¹³Ibid., pp. 167-68.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 148.

God. He intends, certainly, to defend God's justice and providence against the oblique attacks of his comforters, but the violence of his spiritual sufferings is too much: he unintentionally speaks prideful and impious words against God. A weak human being, he stumbles, he falls, he sins, thus illustrating that in our warfare with Satan even the most upright of us is helpless without God's grace. For God has withdrawn for a time from Job, the champion of patience.¹⁵

Elihu enters the scene as God's spokesman. He accuses Job of pride in his present attitude and urges him to redeem himself by humbling himself before God. Elihu's discourses are wise, but Elihu apparently fails. He lacks the divine touch; his apparent failure is attributed to lack of tact, or youth, or inexperience. Therefore, God intervenes, disproving the friends' theory of individual retribution, and, of course, succeeding where Job and Elihu had failed.

Teunissen comments on God's purpose: "He intervenes in order to demonstrate His own power and sovereignty and to show that Job is worth saving because of his faith and, of course, because he is one of the elect."¹⁶

The tradition of Joban exegesis as Teunissen shows it emphasizes the probative and educative value of Job's temptations, makes God responsible for the evil, demonstrates the eternality of grace of the faithful elect, demonstrates the value of human patience, and illustrates the power and grace

¹⁵Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 212.

of God. This tradition would undoubtedly have been known to Milton.

Chapter 4

Milton's Job

The scarcity of detail and emphasis on perfect patience in Lewalski's discussion and the theological problems of the Calvinistic emphasis of Teunissen's interpretation demonstrate a need for another look at the Joban material with Milton specifically in mind. We can start by discussing the problems with the material presented by Lewalski and Teunissen.

The problem with Lewalski's use of the Book of Job is her emphasis on Job as a sinless, perfect hero. I do not argue with the near perfection of Job, with God's choosing Job as his champion, nor with Lewalski's assertion of Job as an epic hero. But we must consider the issue of whether Milton saw Job faltering during the poetic sections of the biblical book. First, in De Doctrina Christiana, Milton discusses sin common to all men and the personal sin of each man. Sin is seen as transgression of the law. "By the law is here meant, in the first place, that rule of conscience which is innate, and engraven upon the mind of man; secondly, the special command which proceeded out of the mouth of God

(for the law written by Moses was long subsequent), Gen. ii.17. 'thou shalt not eat of it'" (C.E. 15.179-81). All men share in common sin because of the act of disobedience of Adam and Eve. Further, there is personal sin. "THE PERSONAL SIN OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IS THAT WHICH EACH IN HIS OWN PERSON HAS COMMITTED INDEPENDENTLY OF THE SIN WHICH IS COMMON TO ALL. Here likewise all men are guilty. Job ix. 20. 'if I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me.' x. 15. 'if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.' Psal. cxliii. 2. 'in thy sight shall no man living be justified.' Prov. xx. 9. 'who can say, I am pure from my sin?' Eccles. vii. 20. 'there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.' Rom. iii. 23. 'all have sinned'" (C.E. 15.193). Job, then, like all men, is a sinner. It may be successfully argued, however, that Job's sins have been overcome before he enters the story; that is, the glorification of Job in the prose prologue would seem to indicate that if Job, as all men, has sinned, he is already regenerate when the dialogue begins.

The issue, then, must be whether Job falters during his passionate outcries against his affliction. The resolution of this issue may be found by comparing the two times the virtue patience is discussed in De Doctrina Christiana. This requires first an understanding of the importance of the virtues Milton names. Book II of De Doctrina concerns how God is to be worshipped by man. Milton begins the book by

stating that God is to be worshipped chiefly by good works; these are carefully defined to distinguish good works as Milton sees them from the good works required by the Catholics. "GOOD WORKS are THOSE WHICH WE PERFORM BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD WORKING IN US THROUGH TRUE FAITH, TO THE GLORY OF GOD, THE ASSURED HOPE OF OUR OWN SALVATION, AND THE EDIFICATION OF OUR NEIGHBOR" (C.E. 17.5). God is seen as the primary cause of these works, and the proximate causes lie in man. "The PROXIMATE CAUSES OF GOOD WORKS are naturally, in ordinary cases at least, good habits, or, as they are called, VIRTUES; in which is comprised the whole of our duty towards God and man" (C.E. 17.27). The importance of virtues in man lies in their being the remnants of innate conscience in man; therefore, what is opposed to virtues or good habits in man must be transgression of the law, or sin.

The first discussion of the virtue of patience is in Book II, chapter III, "OF THE VIRTUES BELONGING TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD" (C.E. 17.51). These are special virtues pertaining to man's duty to God. "OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD relates to HIS IMMEDIATE WORSHIP or SERVICE; which is either internal or external. Internal worship consists mainly in the acknowledgment of the one true God, and in the cultivation of devout affections towards him" (C.E. 17.51). Patience is one of the "devout affections" towards God. "PATIENCE is that whereby we acquiesce in the promises of God, through a confident reliance on his divine providence, power, and goodness,

and bear inevitable evils with equanimity, as the dispensation of the supreme Father, and sent for our good. Job i. 22. 'in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.' ii.10. 'shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'" (C.E. 17.67). This supports the assertion of Job as the perfectly patient man, but the discussion does not stop here, because Milton always noted what is opposed to the virtues he named. "Opposed to this is impatience under the divine decrees; a temptation to which the saints themselves are at times liable. I Kings xix. 4. 'he requested for himself that he might die.' Job iii. 2,&c. 'let the day perish wherein I was born.' vii. 11. 'therefore I will not refrain my mouth.' xix. 7. 'behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment'" (C.E. 17.69).

The second discussion of patience is in Book II, chapter X, "OF THE SECOND CLASS OF VIRTUES CONNECTED WITH THE DUTY OF MAN TOWARDS HIMSELF" (C.E. 17.247). Discussed in this chapter are the virtues of fortitude and patience; these are the virtues "which are exercised in the resistance to, or the endurance of evil" (C.E. 17.247).

PATIENCE consists in the endurance of misfortunes and injuries. . . .

The opposites to this are, first, impatience and an effeminate spirit. Prov. xxiv. 10. "if thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small."

Secondly, an hypocritical patience, which voluntarily inflicts upon itself unnecessary evils. This is exemplified

in the prophets of Baal, I Kings xviii. 28. "they cut themselves after their manner with knives"; and in the flagellations of the modern Papists.

Lastly, a stoical apathy; for sensibility to pain, and even lamentations, are not inconsistent with the true patience; as may be seen in Job and the other saints, when under the pressure of affliction (C.E. 17.253).

It is clear then that Milton, in accordance with the tradition of the time, equated Job with the epitome of the patient sufferer. As Teunissen showed, Milton accepted the traditional position that while man should not be impatient, his patience should not consist of stoical apathy. In fact, Milton's understanding of "patient endurance of misfortunes and injuries" even included an active element. In his divorce tract, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, Milton wrote the following: "but which of Jobs afflictions were sent him with that law, that he might not use means to remove any of them if he could?" (C.E. 3.425). What affliction he could not remove Job had to endure; still, he was allowed sensibility to pain and lamentations as a man responsible for his own well being, for this point is made when considering man's duty to himself. Nevertheless, while it is clear that Milton placed Job in the tradition of the patient sufferer, it is also clear from the discussion of impatience as opposed to duty to God that Milton did not place Job in the Catholic tradition of the perfectly patient man. In the first of the two passages on patience and opposed impatience, Milton showed Job liable to impatience, and the passages quoted are

from the poetic dialogue of the Book of Job. Thus, while excusing Job for human reaction to affliction, Milton did show that Job sinned during his outcries against his affliction. Milton's Job was similar to the traditional understanding of the Book of Job, but it is the Protestant tradition, not the Catholic, to which Milton's Job is related.

The problems with Teunissen's Job are of a basic theological conflict. The tradition Teunissen presents, while similar to Milton's Job, is simply too Calvinistic to be accepted as Milton's understanding of the Book of Job. The following are issues on which there are major differences: responsibility for evil, election, withdrawal and return of grace, and accommodation.

The Calvinist tradition made God responsible for evil. The Joban text, with the wager in the prose prologue, is particularly suited to support this theory. While Job was unaware of the scenes which preceded his affliction, the reader certainly is aware of them. Therefore, the scenes in heaven form a crucial issue in our understanding of Milton and the traditional interpretation of the Book of Job. We may start with a simple Miltonic statement concerning God and evil: "For God, who is infinitely good, cannot be the doer of wickedness, or of the evil of sin; on the contrary, out of the wickedness of men he produces good" (C.E. 15.69). It is clear, then, that God is not the source of the evil with which Job is afflicted. Nevertheless, the problem

remains of examining how God can be innocent of this evil and at the same time be the one who gave Job up to Satan to be afflicted.

We may start by listing the passages in Milton's De Doctrina Christiana which pertain generally to God and evil and particularly to the Satan-God wager. "God, however, is concerned in the production of evil only in one of these two ways; either, first, he permits its existence by throwing no impediment in the way of natural causes and free agents or, secondly, he causes evil by the infliction of judgments, which is called the evil of punishment" (C.E. 15.67). "Nor does God make that will evil which was before good; but the will being already in a state of perversion, he influences it in such a manner, that out of its own wickedness it either operates good for others, or punishment for itself, though unknowingly, and with the intent of producing a very different result" (C.E. 15.73-75).

Concerning the evil angels, or devils, Milton makes the following points: "They are sometimes, however, permitted to wander throughout the whole earth, the air, and heaven itself, to execute the judgments of God. Job i. 7. 'from going to and fro in the earth.' . They are even admitted into the presence of God. Job i. 6. ii. 1. Their proper place, however, is the bottomless pit, from which they cannot escape without permission. . Nor can they do anything without the command of God. Job. i. 12. 'Jehovah said

unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power'" (C.E. 15.109). "The prayers even of unbelievers sometimes prevail with God, to the obtaining of bodily comforts or worldly advantages Hence he occasionally grants the requests even of devils. Job i. 11,12. 'put forth thy hand now . . . and Jehovah said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power.' See also ii. 5,6" (C.E. 17.103).

In discussing temptation, Milton notes the following: "To this view of providence must be referred what is called temptation, whereby God either tempts men, or permits them to be tempted by the devil or his agents" (C.E. 15.87). There are both evil and good temptations. "A good temptation is that whereby God tempts even the righteous for the purpose of proving them, not as though he were ignorant of the disposition of their hearts, but for the purpose of exercising or manifesting their faith or patience, as in the case of Abraham and Job" (C.E. 15.87).

Three references to Job in Paradise Regained are also applicable to the issue of who is responsible for the evil afflicted on Job. The first passage involves God speaking to Gabriel about the failure of Satan when he tempted Job and the lesson Satan should have learned:

he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent (1.146-49).

In the second and third passages, the application of malice to Satan is again made, this time in an interchange between

Satan, who claims a good cause for afflicting Job, and the Son, who convicts Satan of malice.

I came among the Sons of God when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth
(1.368-70).

What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? (1.424-26).

From the combination of these statements and Joban references, then, comes the explanation of the heavenly councils which determine the temptations of Job. God points out the righteousness of Job; Satan, with malice in his heart, requests control of Job because Satan cannot tolerate such righteousness and wishes to upset and disprove it, as he did with Adam and Eve, and as he will attempt to do with the Son in Paradise Regained. God permits the evil already active in Satan to be applied in a good temptation of Job, though Satan, of course, does not wish it to be a good temptation. The intensity of Job's affliction and the malicious intent are entirely attributed to Satan. God, of course, foreknows Job's "constant perseverance"; though He does not will the actions of Job, He foresees that Job will not deny Him and that this temptation is good (good out of evil, the Miltonic pattern) since Job will prove his faith and patience. Thus, Milton's God is not the author of Job's afflictions.

Election is the second problem with the tradition which Teunissen presents. Milton believed in election, but his concept of election was different from that of the Calvinists.

Teunissen points out that Job was chosen (as he certainly is when God points him out to Satan), was therefore elect, and as a result could not fail so long as he was sustained by God's grace. When God withdrew His grace for a time to test Job, Job faltered but did not completely fall. Because he maintained his faith in God, God's grace was reinstated and Job was glorified. Because Job was elect, he was predestined to success. The God who was responsible for tempting Job (in the Calvinist interpretation) also sustained Job, so the results were determined by necessity.

Milton provides a lengthy discussion of both predestination and election in De Doctrina Christiana. A few references here will illustrate his position on both and will also show where he disagreed with the Calvinist doctrine. "I do not understand by the term election, that general or national election, by which God chose the whole nation of Israel for his own people . . . Nor do I mean that sense of the word election in which God, after rejecting the Jews, is said to have chosen that the Gospel should be announced to the Gentiles . . . ; nor that in which an individual is said to be selected for the performance of some office . . . But that special election is here intended, which is nearly synonymous with eternal predestination" (C.E. 14.97-99). Thus, predestination and election are tied together. We must understand, however, what is meant by Miltonic predestination. "The principal SPECIAL DECREE of God RELATING TO MAN is

termed PREDESTINATION, whereby GOD IN PITY TO MANKIND, THOUGH FORESEEING THAT THEY WOULD FALL OF THEIR OWN ACCORD, PREDESTINATED TO ETERNAL SALVATION BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD THOSE WHO SHOULD BELIEVE AND CONTINUE IN THE FAITH; FOR A MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY OF HIS OWN MERCY, GRACE, AND WISDOM, ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE IN CHRIST" (C.E. 14.91).

This predestination or election is further considered to show it applicable to all believers.

It seems then that there is no particular predestination or election, but only general--or in other words, that the privilege belongs to all who heartily believe and continue in their belief--that none are predestinated or elected irrespectively; for example, that Peter is not elected as Peter, or John as John, but inasmuch as they are believers, and continue in their belief, and that thus the general decree of election becomes personally applicable to each particular believer, and is ratified to all who remain steadfast in the faith.

This is most explicitly declared by the whole of Scripture, which offers salvation and eternal life equally to all, under the condition of obedience in the Old Testament, and of faith in the New (C.E. 14.107-109).

It becomes clear then that Job is indeed elect, but it is not because he is a particular individual or is of some particular group. Job is elect because he believes and is obedient to God; he is predestined to eternal salvation because he believes and continues in his faith and obedience.

Withdrawal and return of grace is the third problem with merely accepting the tradition that Teunissen presents. Because of the manner in which Job has been shown to be elect,

a withdrawal of grace is necessary to really test Job. Thus, Job is seen as supported by grace through the prologue, temporarily deserted during the poetic section, and reinstated at the end. Here there are two conflicts with Miltonic theology. The first is that the withdrawal of grace, necessary to the Calvinist, is not necessary to Milton's Job because, unlike the Calvinist, Milton sees men as free agents with free will. Secondly, in De Doctrina Christiana Milton equates a withdrawal of grace with evil temptation, that is, as one of the ways in which God is connected with the production of evil for the punishment of the reprobate (a group to which Job does not belong, even when he sins).

We will consider first what Milton means by a withdrawal of God's grace. "An evil temptation is when God either withdraws his grace, or presents occasions of sin, or hardens the heart, or blinds the understanding" (C.E. 15.87). Milton discusses the withdrawal of grace in connection with hardening the hearts and blinding the understandings of evil men, of the reprobate, as in the following:

the common maxim, that God makes sin subservient to the punishment of sin, must be received with caution; for the Deity does not effect his purpose by compelling any one to commit crime, or by abetting him in it, but by withdrawing the ordinary grace of his enlightening spirit, and ceasing to strengthen him against sin. There is indeed a proverb which says, that he who is able to forbid an action, and forbids it not, virtually commands it. This maxim is indeed binding on man, as a moral precept; but it is otherwise with regard to God. When, in conformity with

the language of mankind, he is spoken of as instigating, where he only does not prohibit evil, it does not follow that he therefore bids it, inasmuch as there is no obligation by which he is bound to forbid it. Psal. lxxxi. 11,12. "my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me: so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." Hence it is said, Rom. i. 24. "wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness"; that is, he left them to be actuated by their own lusts, to walk in them; for properly speaking God does not instigate, or give up, him whom he leaves entirely to himself, that is, to his own desires and counsels, and to the suggestions of his ever active spiritual enemy (C.E. 15.77).

While withdrawal of grace is necessary so that Job might be adequately tempted and falter in the tradition Teunissen outlines, free will makes this unnecessary in Miltonic theology. Under Calvinist doctrine, because of God's sovereignty, without a withdrawal of grace, Job's actions would have been determined, predestined, necessitated. Milton, however, makes room for man's actions, for his free will as a free agent, by his theory of God's contingent decrees. He concludes "that God decreed nothing absolutely, which he left in the power of free agents, a doctrine which is shown by the whole canon of Scripture" (C.E. 14.65). Milton recognized the problem of Calvinist doctrine which predestined man's actions to necessity. Besides the silence of Scripture on Calvinist predestination, according to Milton, there is an additional problem:

it would entirely take away from human affairs all liberty of action, all

endeavor and desire to do right. For we might argue thus: If God have at all events decreed my salvation, however I may act, I shall not perish. But God has also decreed as the means of salvation that you should act rightly. I cannot, therefore, but act rightly at some time or other, since God has so decreed; in the mean time I will do as I please; if I never act rightly, it will be seen that I was never predestinated to salvation, and that whatever good I might have done would have been to no purpose (C.E. 14.71).

Milton's Job is a free agent, as are all men. Therefore, when Milton's Job is afflicted, it is a true test of his faith and patience. When he remains true to God, he increases God's glory. For right actions performed under the freedom of will of man do not diminish, but intensify the glory of God.

Nor does this reasoning represent God as depending upon the human will, but as fulfilling his own pleasure, whereby he has chosen that man should always use his own will with a regard to the love and worship of the Deity, and consequently with a regard to his own salvation. If this use of the will be not admitted, whatever worship or love we render to God is entirely vain and of no value; the acceptableness of duties done under a law of necessity is diminished, or rather is annihilated altogether, inasmuch as freedom can no longer be attributed to that will over which some fixed decree is inevitably suspended (C.E. 14.139-41).

Milton's Job remains a free agent, even though he is chosen by God as an example. Although God knows Job's righteousness at the time of Satan's challenge and puts Job forth, also knowing Job's ultimate victory over Satan, yet God's pre-science does not make Job's patience necessary. That is,

prescience or foreknowledge, an attribute of God, does not cause Calvinistic predestination, which is necessity and is different from Miltonic predestination, which is a contingent decree. Milton is perfectly clear on this point. "I allow that future events which God has foreseen, will happen certainly, but not of necessity. They will happen certainly, because the divine prescience cannot be deceived, but they will not happen necessarily, because prescience can have no influence on the object foreknown, inasmuch as it is only an intransitive action. What therefore is to happen according to contingency and the free will of man, is not the effect of God's prescience, but is produced by the free agency of its own natural causes, the future spontaneous inclination of which is perfectly known to God" (C.E. 14.85). Job, like all men, is seen by Milton to be endowed with free will. Therefore, the tradition which Teunissen establishes, where Job is predestined, where withdrawal of grace is necessary so that Job can be afflicted, cannot be accepted as Milton's understanding of the Book of Job.

The final problem with the tradition that Teunissen presents concerns divine accommodation. This is a minor problem, since it is of little importance to an understanding of the Book of Job. However, it does demonstrate the danger of applying tradition to a reading of the book and calling it a Miltonic reading when other statements by Milton disprove the point.

It would first be advisable to know Milton's position on man's knowledge of God and on accommodation.

When we speak of knowing God, it must be understood with reference to the imperfect comprehension of man; for to know God as he really is, far transcends the powers of man's thoughts, much more of his perception. . . . God therefore has made as full a revelation of himself as our minds can conceive, or the weakness of our nature can bear. . . .

Our safest way is to form in our minds such a conception of God, as shall correspond with his own delineation and representation of himself in the sacred writings. For granting that both in the literal and figurative descriptions of God, he is exhibited not as he really is, but in such a manner as may be within the scope of our comprehensions, yet we ought to entertain such a conception of him, as he, in condescending to accommodate himself to our capacities, has shown that he desires we should conceive. For it is on this very account that he has lowered himself to our level, lest in our flights above the reach of human understanding, and beyond the written word of Scripture, we should be tempted to indulge in vague cogitations and subtleties (C.E. 14.31-33).

What we are to do, according to Milton, is to accept what the Scripture says about God. "Let us be convinced that those have acquired the truest apprehension of the nature of God who submit their understandings to his word" (C.E. 14.37). God has shown us in Scripture what He expects us to understand Him to be; therefore, we should submit to His desire.

This leads to the error which Teunissen makes in applying traditional understanding of Scripture and assuming it to be Milton's understanding. Teunissen's error comes in his discussion of the following speech by Satan to Christ in

Paradise Regained:

I came among the Sons of God when he
 Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
 To prove him, and illustrate his high worth
 (1.368-70).

Teunissen comments on this passage as follows:

Milton expects his readers to be familiar with the kind of commentary upon the relationship between God and Satan which one finds in Job exegesis. He expects his reader to make a point-by-point analysis of Satan's speech here in order that he, like Christ, may see through the diabolical falsehoods involved in Satan's twisting of Scripture for his own purposes. First, Satan claims literally to have been in attendance at the Heavenly Council reported in the Book of Job. But only the most ignorant and hidebound traditionalists among the Papists could believe such a thing. The theory of accommodation proves Satan a liar from the outset of his lesson from the Scripture.¹

Yet, as has already been shown in a quote from De Doctrina Christiana, Milton, speaking of the evil angels, or devils, wrote this: "They are even admitted into the presence of God. Job. i. 6. ii. 1" (C.E. 15.109). Milton's discussion of accommodation has warned us to accept of God that which He says of Himself in Scripture. We must conclude, therefore, that Milton would have us believe that Satan did come, literally, to the Heavenly Council.

Since both Lewalski and Teunissen have erred in their presentations of what they believed to be Milton's understanding of the Book of Job, we must attempt to provide our

¹Teunissen, p. 295.

own material to be credited to Milton. We should recognize the limitations of the material available for use. In Milton's works there are both Job references and points for which Joban texts are used as supportive Scriptural evidence. However, the volume of this material is actually quite small. Secondly, Milton has few direct statements about the relation of Job to God. Major existing references to Job emphasize the overall success of Job, the combined effect of prologue and epilogue, which present Job in the tradition of a patient sufferer. Finally, where Job is most referenced, in five passages of Paradise Regained, Milton's emphasis is on the Joban situation, the sufferer tempted who remains true to God and, therefore, serves as an example for the Son in his own temptation. Still, as I have shown in my discussion of Lewalski, Milton did not see Job as unfailing. Despite these problems, there is enough material in Milton's works to at least enlarge and correct the tradition that he would have received. We must recognize the value of the Joban tradition; the Protestant exegesis of Lewalski and the conglomerate tradition put forth by Teunissen do have value. I agree with Lewalski and Teunissen that Milton was affected by this tradition. What I propose, therefore, is what I have already done in discussing the problems with the tradition as presented by these two critics. This is to combine the traditional understanding of the Book of Job with Milton's comments on Job, his use of Joban text, and his theology as set forth in

De Doctrina Christiana. Where Milton is silent we must accept the tradition, so long as the implications accepted do not conflict with Milton's theological doctrine. When Milton provides evidence, this must, of course, be used to enlarge, corroborate, or correct the tradition. Most of the Miltonic evidence has already been presented in the earlier portions of this chapter. What follows now is my general interpretation of how Milton saw the Book of Job, having applied the rules just set forth.

The first issue is the historicity of Job. Tradition held that he was a real man in a real time, but there was disagreement about where and when. Milton reflects this uncertainty in one of the Son's speeches to Satan in Paradise Regained:

I mention still
Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a Land and times obscure;
Who names not now with honor patient Job?
(3.92-95).

Because of a wager with Satan, Job was chosen by God to be tested to see if he would deny God when afflicted. The Son, speaking to Satan in Paradise Regained, notes that it is the height of human glory to be so marked by God.

This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on th'Earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises; thus he did to Job,
When to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
He ask'd thee, hast thou seen my servant Job?
(3.60-67).

As has been shown, the responsibility for the evil, particularly the maliciousness of it, is given to Satan, who is already evil. God permitted Satan to afflict Job, but God was not responsible for the evil. Milton notes that the evil angels are used by God for His purposes, and for this reason they are allowed to leave Hell and to wander earth and the heavens. Further, God brings forth good from evil. Therefore, while Satan intended malice towards Job, God permitted it as a good temptation, to exercise (probative value) or manifest (educative value) the faith and patience of Job. Further, God foreknew the results of Job's temptation, because of God's omniscience, but His prescience did not affect the results of the temptation. It is interesting to note that Milton states that good temptations are to be desired and that God "promises a happy issue" (C.E. 15.89).

Concerning Job's state before the temptations, we must consider Milton in line with the tradition that Job was not "perfect." There are many testimonies to his uprightness, but Milton's discussions of common and personal sin would eliminate Job from the perfection of Adam before the Fall or that greater perfection of Christ.

Teunissen notes the increasing potency of Job's afflictions. Milton is silent in most of this area. He does note the "vehemence" with which Job rejects "the desperat counsels of his wife" (C.E. 3.409). This comment is made in The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce as support for forsaking

a wife when she is a hindrance to religion. Concerning the friends, in several places Milton seems to accept the tradition of the friends as an additional or final affliction of Job. In Of True Religion Milton notes that the friends were well intentioned but wrong (C.E. 6.168). In addition, they were accused of forming rash judgments concerning Job's afflictions (C.E. 15.391). And in Colasterion, Milton noted that God testified his anger against the friends at the end (C.E. 4.239).

During the passion of his dealing with his affliction, Job slipped. No withdrawal of grace was necessary, since it is possible for man to sin without action from God. Further evidence of this is provided in the following statement in De Doctrina Christiana. "Christ therefore prayed to the Father that the faith of Peter might not fail, Luke xxii. 32. For it was possible for his faith to fail through his own fault, without any failure in the ordinary gifts of God's grace; wherefore Christ prayed, not that the grace of God, but that the faith of Peter, might not fail" (C.E. 16.87). Some of the rash statements of Job are to be accepted, since he is expected to be sensitive to his situation. Yet, Job is held liable for impatience in his outcries against God. What sustains Job's position and earns him his status as the most patient of men is his hope. "HOPE is that by which we expect with certainty the fulfillment of God's promises. Job xiii. 15. 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him'" (C.E. 17.57.

Cf. C.E. 6.113). So Job, in the midst of condemning himself by impatience, yet maintains himself by trust in God. Therefore, God speaks in Paradise Regained (1.148) of Job's "constant perseverance" of whatever Satan could inflict.

No mention is made of Elihu, so we must accept the Protestant tradition. Milton accepts that God disproves the theory of the friends. God proves Job's justice, disproves the friends, and again raises Job to glory. Milton does not actually discuss the God of the whirlwind. The prose epilogue is referenced; Milton notes that Job's prosperity is renewed and that he accepts with magnanimity the gifts of his friends (C.E. 17.241). We can assume that Job is accepted by God, after Job sins in his outcries, under the steps for renovation of man which Milton outlines in De Doctrina Christiana. The details of this procedure will be discussed later in comparison with Adam's regeneration in Paradise Lost. Since the God of the whirlwind is not specifically discussed, we can also assume that Milton accepted from tradition the revelation of grace and power of God in His speeches. An early Job passage is used to support the assertion that God is apparent "throughout the whole of nature" (C.E. 14.25), so the idea of seeing God in His creation is sustained in Milton's works. Finally, we should note again that while Job was ignorant of the arrangements made in the prologue, and while Job was only called down for speaking from a position of ignorance, demonstrating his impatience,

for Milton and the reader all this is educative, demonstrating the example of Job under testing, of Job's perseverance, of his overall glorification, and of God's magnificence.

Chapter 5

Forbidden Knowledge and Sin

With an understanding of the action and reasoning in the Book of Job, we can look at parallels between the Joban poet's work and Milton's Paradise Lost. It is not my intention to prove that Job was Milton's model. Obviously, the story of Job works in an entirely different frame than that of Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, there are extensive similarities in the ideas of the two books. Certainly, we must recognize the Book of Job as an influence on Milton's thinking. Therefore, ideas in Job may provide insight which can assist in approaching areas in Paradise Lost.

In this chapter we will deal with two problem areas relating to man's fall away from God. These areas are Forbidden Knowledge and Sin.

Forbidden Knowledge

There is in the Book of Job a warning that man cannot know God's ways. Job admits to having spoken from a position of no knowledge. The Lord challenges Job: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" (38.2). God then charges Job with his insignificance before the Creator.

Job replies: "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?" (R.S.V. 40.4a). God further belittles Job by showing His power and Job's small stature in relation to Behemoth and Leviathan. To this Job replies:

I know that thou canst do all things,
and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted.
"Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?"
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did not
know (R.S.V. 42.2-3).

Gordis explains this speech: "The implication is clear--the universe and its Creator cannot be judged solely from the vantage point of man, and surely not from the limited perspective of one human being."¹ Job, a mere man, should not have attempted to take the whole world in his own hands. It is too large for man alone. Creature cannot displace Creator. This is the lesson of forbidden knowledge; what is forbidden is that which is God's alone, his ways.

Seeking forbidden knowledge is involved with sin, for in Job we find that man must never be so presumptuous as to try to explain the mystery of God, that knowledge which is beyond man's utility and beyond his comprehension. Hulme explains the importance of the unknown. "The very presence of God means mystery. To try and eliminate it as Eliphaz did by feeling compelled to supply answers, is in reality an attempt to bypass God. To let God be God is to accept the presence of mystery."² In seeking forbidden knowledge man tries to

¹Gordis, p. 118.

²Hulme, p. 151.

escape his humanity; he overreaches his ordained limits. Being a man under God requires acceptance of human definition, submission to divine restrictions, obedience to regulation, hence, shunning the forbidden.

In Paradise Lost, Raphael warns Adam against curiosity in Book VII. Adam has been told in Book VI of the war in heaven by which Satan and his crew were expelled from heaven when they sought to place themselves in a state independent of God. Adam has just acknowledged his responsibility to God, "to observe / Immutably his sovran will, the end / Of what we are" (7.78-80). Yet, he asks Raphael to explain more, not that he may know secrets, "but the more / To magnify his works, the more we know" (7.96-97). Raphael agrees to speak, but he adds a warning:

Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing, such Commission from above
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
Only Omniscient, hath suppress't in Night,
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:
Anough is left besides to search and know.
But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her Temperance over Appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain,
Oppresses else with Surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Wind (7.115-30).

Raphael gives Adam the primary lecture on forbidden knowledge in Book VIII (lines 66-178). Howard Schultz notes the total effect of the lecture. "If we reduce his poetry to flat preachment, Raphael taught self-knowledge as the

beginning and end of wisdom. Other knowledge, this omitted, was curiosity."³ Raphael gives an uncertain answer to Adam's question on the problem of celestial motions because it is the product as a work of God which is important to Adam, not the means of the mechanics of the motion. The angel notes:

whether Heav'n move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reck'n right; the rest
From Man or Angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire (8.70-75).

The wide heavens show the glory of the Creator by their magnificence, and man is only a small part of the total creation.

And for the Heav'n's wide Circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his Line stretcht out so far;
That Man may know he dwells not in his own;
An Edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known
(8.100-106).

Yet, while the creation may teach, the ways of the universe are part of the mystery of God.

God to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd Heav'n from Earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain (8.119-22).

God's means must remain his own. Man, Raphael says, is to be human, to be "lowly wise."

Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
Of other Creatures, as him pleases best,

³Howard Schultz, Milton and Forbidden Knowledge (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1955), p. 178.

Wherever plac't, let him dispose: joy thou
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being
 (8.167-74).

Adam (lines 180-97) acknowledges the lecture and indicates an understanding of the message.

But apt the Mind or Fancy is to rove
 Uncheckt, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime Wisdom; what is more, is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractic'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek
 (8.188-97).

Knowledge as Milton saw it was for utility, and the only useful knowledge was self-knowledge, the prime wisdom. Schultz writes: "Whatever served the prime wisdom as handmaid, best served to glorify God and infer man also happier; whatever asked at large of things remote was 'more,' and therefore 'fume, or emptiness, or fond impertinence.'"⁴

In the Argument to Book VIII, Milton explained in prose the sense of the Raphael lecture. "Adam inquires concerning celestial Motions, is doubtfully answer'd, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge." It is significant that Adam is not told that the answer to the question he asks is forbidden; his thinking is merely guided in a more worthwhile direction. No taboo is placed on

⁴Ibid., p. 178.

astronomy. In fact, in De Doctrina Christiana, Milton noted the following: "All study of the heavenly bodies, however, is not unlawful or unprofitable" (C.E. 17.151). The bit of astronomical data Adam seeks is not what is forbidden. The taboo is placed on the reason behind the question--curiosity about God's means, which is an attempt, conscious or not, by the creature to raise himself to equality with God independent of God. Northrop Frye insists that Raphael does not preach that Adam's questions are eternally unanswerable, but that man should not ask them. Adam, Frye says, is faced with the task of retaining Eden, and he needs to know only what has utility. Part of the divine plan was for man to become angelic, so Adam would eventually know as much as Raphael does. In his state at the time of the lecture, however, Adam needed to concentrate on useful thoughts. Frye explains: "If he persists in obedience, nothing he wants to know is likely to be concealed from him; if he fails, there will be nothing in the whole universe outside him to help him."⁵ Though man would eventually know all that can be known by man or angel, while in the state of man there is knowledge which is forbidden.

In Book III (lines 694-707), Uriel lectured to the cherub (Satan disguised) that knowledge leading to the glorification of God was commendable but that no created mind was capable of fully knowing God's secrets. Having stated that desire to

⁵Frye, p. 57.

know the works of God in order to glorify Him is good, Uriel says: "But what created mind can comprehend / Thir number, or the wisdom infinite / That brought them forth, but hid thir causes deep" (3.705-707). This acknowledgement of the limitation of even the angelic mind is similar to Raphael's lecture to Adam. Besides this, in his De Doctrina Christiana, Milton noted a limitation to the omniscience attributable to Christ. "Even the Son, however, knows not all things absolutely; there being some secret purposes, the knowledge of which the Father has reserved to himself alone" (C.E. 14.317). Thus, no created mind, man, angel, or even the Son of God, is able to completely understand God's purposes.

Raphael lectures Adam on self-knowledge and warns him to leave "matters hid" alone. From Uriel we know that some things are known to God alone. Lewalski describes these things. "It would seem that the 'matters hid' referred to here are akin to those defined as such in the Creation sequence: the secret causes of things, God's reasons for disposing as he does in his cosmos--and specifically his plans for and ways toward other worlds and other beings. Adam may inquire about astronomy; but as for God's purposes and ways, he must be content with what is revealed."⁶ We know from Paradise Lost that Adam was endowed at creation with a type of knowledge that we, as men after the Fall, can never really

⁶Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "Innocence and Experience in Milton's Eden," in New Essays on Paradise Lost, ed. Thomas Kranidas (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), pp. 111-12.

understand. Cleanth Brooks writes of Adam's knowledge before the Fall. "The Forbidden Fruit gives Adam knowledge of good and evil as we know them. But it gives him such knowledge only at the price of extirpating another kind of knowledge. Milton maintains that the other kind of knowledge was possible--though none of his readers, being mortal men, could have experienced it. God is made to say that Adam would have been happier 'to have known / Good by itself.' That state is properly mythical."⁷ Milton shows further that what Adam and Eve received as a result of eating the fruit was an end to their "mythical" state of knowledge, replaced by good known only from evil. Eden as Satan finds it before the Fall is described in Book IV. In Eden, "next to Life / Our Death the Tree of Knowledge grew fast by, / Knowledge of Good bought dear by knowing ill" (4.220-22). In De Doctrina a more complete explanation of the tree is given. "It was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil from the event; for since Adam tasted it, we not only know evil, but we know good only by means of evil" (C.E. 15.115). It would seem, then, that they really gained only a knowledge of evil. Finally, in De Doctrina, Milton gives four opposites to the virtue of wisdom; one is of interest here. "Thirdly, in a prying into hidden things after the example of our first parents, who sought after the knowledge of good and evil contrary to the command

⁷Cleanth Brooks, "Milton and Critical Re-estimates," PMLA, 66 (1951), 1052.

of God" (C.E. 17.33). Thus, if before the Fall Adam knew only good without evil, and if the Creator has some other knowledge which separates Him from His created beings, and if man actively sought forbidden knowledge, and if man gained only a knowledge of evil from eating the fruit, then are we to conclude that the tree was actually representative of evil and that evil is the secret of God?

The problem here is confusion of the Forbidden Fruit with Forbidden Knowledge. They are combined, of course, but we must recognize them as separate or we may fall into the trap just presented. Adam acknowledges both the combination and the separation in a comment in Book XII when he refers to himself as one "who sought / Forbidd'n knowledge by forbidd'n means" (12.278-79). The fruit was forbidden because God designated it as such to test the obedience of Adam and Eve. The fruit itself was unimportant. "It was necessary that something should be forbidden or commanded as a test of fidelity, and that an act in its own nature indifferent, in order that man's obedience might be thereby manifested" (C.E. 15.113-15). We have already seen testimony that the tree was named for the later act because of the results of the act (that is, the tree of knowledge of good and evil). But since it was forbidden, and since it was called the tree of knowledge, the connection is made between the tree and "forbidden knowledge." Obviously, the fruit contained no forbidden knowledge, since the fruit was indifferent. Satan, the

author of evil, was the one who promised greater things to come from eating the fruit. Satan made Eve believe the fruit itself to be special. She ate thinking to make herself god-like because she had been fooled into believing that to be the power of the fruit. In eating, Eve sought forbidden knowledge, the secrets of God. Therefore, the forbidden fruit was combined with forbidden knowledge by her act. But the original connection of the two must be attributed to Satan, not God.

In Book IV, Satan overhears Adam explain to Eve the prohibition against the Tree of Knowledge and their responsibilities in Eden. This is followed by Eve's explanation of seeing her reflection in the pond (and being drawn to it) when she awoke after her creation. Satan is disgusted by their bliss and plots how to destroy it.

Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd'n?
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord
 Envy them that? can it be sin to know,
 Can it be death? and do they only stand
 By Ignorance, is that thir happy state,
 The proof of thir obedience and thir faith?
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Thir ruin! Hence I will excite thir minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 To keep them low whom Knowledge might exalt
 Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 (4.512-27).

Satan is the one who attributes actual knowledge to the fruit of the tree. Satan, unable himself to understand and pass a

test of obedience to his Maker, makes the connection which will be man's undoing. The plan he finds and uses is sound and logical; the reason of it fits his twisted logic, and the plan utilizes the weaknesses of Adam and Eve. He convinces Eve that knowledge will make her equal with God and that the knowledge will come from the fruit, which, he says, is forbidden because God wishes to keep man low by denying him knowledge. Eve, deceived, seeks godhead. This is forbidden knowledge in Paradise Lost, as it is in the Book of Job. When creature oversteps his limits by seeking knowledge to make himself equal to or independent of his Creator, he sins by seeking Forbidden Knowledge.

In Paradise Lost the moral of the issue of forbidden knowledge is taught by the third angelic lecturer--Michael. Schultz notes the importance of the material Michael presents. "To human depravity at the foot of our ladder the angel Michael taught self-knowledge in a context of original sin. The poet can never be sufficiently praised for his account of the means whereby fallen man might regain to know God aright--education."⁸ Schultz states that throughout his lecture on the history of man the angel Michael shows both the downfall of man in evil and the remedy: "obedience to the will of God revealed in scripture and confirmed in conscience. Learning this obedience, Adam learned a lesson more valuable than all science, natural and supernatural (XII.575), and by adding

⁸Schultz, p. 180.

works of virtue, patience, temperance, and charity answerable to his high knowledge, possessed his inward Paradise in happiness."⁹ At the end of Michael's lecture Adam says that he has learned an obedience which is equivalent to trusting in the providence of God. He recognizes the need to be satisfied with his human state and admits that he was wrong to seek beyond its limitations.

Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this Vessel can contain;
Beyond this was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend (12.557-64).

It is this that Michael labels the "sum of wisdom." We are returned to Milton's definition of wisdom in De Doctrina Christiana. "WISDOM is THAT WHEREBY WE EARNESTLY SEARCH AFTER THE WILL OF GOD, LEARN IT WITH ALL DILIGENCE, AND GOVERN ALL OUR ACTIONS ACCORDING TO ITS RULE" (C.E. 17.27).

Thus, Milton uses forbidden knowledge as it was used in the Book of Job. Milton shows in Paradise Lost that there is always knowledge known only to God, since even the angelic mind could not comprehend all of God's depth. Man was originally intended to know at least what the angels know. So long as Adam asked for knowledge in order to help himself and to glorify God, knowledge was given. When he tried to gain knowledge which was of no use to him, he was reprimanded

⁹Ibid., p. 181.

and warned against idle curiosity. Adam would have liked to have learned more about cosmology for the sake of his curiosity; yet, as Schultz remarks, he might not have fallen "had he learned the duties of a Christian humanist: to know for the sake of well doing; to grow in knowledge by building gradatim upon this prime wisdom and upon a constant faith in the total rightness of God's universe."¹⁰ But this was not done; when forbidden knowledge was sought, when man sought beyond his limits, he fell into sin. Only through his experience did man learn what he should have learned from the warning given him.

Sin

In both the Book of Job and Paradise Lost sin results from a failure of the creature to comprehend his position in the divine scheme of the universe and the resultant overreaching of his ordained limitations. This, then, amounts to disobedience or defiance of the will of God. In his article, "Milton and Patience," Paul R. Baumgartner states that the virtue of patience "means resignation to the Divine decrees and the acceptance of results, whether immediately good or bad, as belonging to the ultimately beneficent Providence of God."¹¹ This approximates Milton's patience as a special virtue pertaining to man's duty to God. A created

¹⁰Ibid., p. 183.

¹¹Paul R. Baumgartner, "Milton and Patience," SP, 60 (1963), 207.

being, man or angel, is expected to accept his life as a small part of creation in the belief that the Creator, as the knowledgeable director, acts in his interest. Thus, it is the virtue of patience which is ignored by Job, Satan, Adam, and Eve, for acceptance of God's ways as the means of ultimate good is dismissed or questioned as each seeks immediate goals.

In considering Job and sin in relation to Paradise Lost, we must remember that Job serves both as an example of one who gives in to the sin of impatience and as an example of the steadfast, patient sufferer. Paradoxical as it may seem, Milton recognized in the story of Job both Job's sin of impatience and his overall patience. The passages of proof are adjacent, where the Book of Job is quoted to support patience as a duty to God and impatience as the opposite of the virtue. When Job and his friends presume to know so much of God's ways that they can substitute their reason for His, they are rebuked. As Gray explains, the friends, and that internal part of Job which held the theory of individual retribution, were condemned, "for that theory implied a claim to an extent of acquaintance with God's ways which it is the purpose of [God's] speech to show that man did not possess."¹² Further, in his suffering Job lamented his situation. Milton indicated that this was acceptable, since it is not desirable for man to sink into stoical apathy; "for sensibility to pain,

¹²Gray, p. lx.

and even lamentations, are not inconsistent with true patience; as may be seen in Job and the other saints, when under the pressure of affliction" (C.E. 17.253). In fact, Milton indicated that Job should attempt to relieve his suffering if he could. For, as Milton indicated, "which of Jobs afflictions were sent him with that law, that he might not use means to remove any of them if he could?" (C.E. 3.425). Still, Job passed beyond the point of acceptability of his lamentations because he challenged God's ways; that is, he was impatient, manifesting a lack of acceptance of Providence. Milton indicated in De Doctrina Christiana that Job showed impatience under a divine decree, "a temptation to which the saints themselves are at times liable. . . Job iii. 2, &c. 'let the day perish wherein I was born.' vii. 11. 'therefore I will not refrain my mouth.' xix. 7. 'behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment" (C.E. 17.69). Job demonstrates impatience, the inability to be resigned to his fate as a part of God's overall scheme.

Yet, Job also serves as an example of man standing alone in faith when others would have him deny his Creator. Job rebukes his wife when she urges him to curse God and die. Job upholds his belief in the justice of God by maintaining his integrity and not agreeing with his friends on the theory of individual retribution. Despite his slipping when he challenges God, Job, overall, serves as an example of a man

who remains steadfast in his faith in God. That Milton held this view, while also recognizing Job's sin, is shown by Milton's definition of patience as a duty to God.

"PATIENCE is that whereby we acquiesce in the promises of God, through a confident reliance on his divine providence, power, and goodness, and bear inevitable evils with equanimity, as the dispensation of the supreme Father, and sent for our good. Job.i. 22. 'in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.' ii. 10. 'shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'" (C.E. 17.67). Job stands alone in his faith in God. As an example to Adam and Eve, Job is similar to the example of Abdiel and the other angels who fight against Satan in the war in heaven in Paradise Lost. Stanley Fish comments on the role of the angels in this battle.

By assigning them a task they cannot accomplish and an enemy whose disloyalty should be a crippling liability but is not, and a physical arena designed to force them into strategic absurdities, God creates a situation in which the conventional motives for heroic fortitude--success, glory, personal fulfillment--do not pertain and perseverance can only be attributed to a faith in the goodness of the Almighty, to obedience. . . . It is relatively easy to stand up for something or for someone or with someone, less easy to stand alone, not alone as Abdiel stands alone, against an evil he can see and react to, but simply alone, with nothing but an inner reserve to sustain the life of the spirit and stave off despair.¹³

¹³Stanley Fish, "Standing Only: Christian Heroism in Paradise Lost," Critical Quarterly, 9 (1967), 169-70.

It is because Job demonstrates such a reserve of faith that he is the epitome of the patient sufferer, even though he faltered. Fish also points out why the example of standing alone (in his example, Abdiel) should have worked in application to Adam and Eve. "Looking forward, one can see that, for Adam and Eve, life in Paradise, with the forbidden tree always before them, is such a discipline, calling again for a holding action which is physically unimpressive. It has been argued that because Paradise is 'limited to hopelessly inactive virtues' Adam and Eve must fall before they can be truly heroic, but this is to define 'active' much too narrowly. Obeying God in Paradise is an activity, since there is every moment a conscious (active) decision not to act in a certain way."¹⁴

According to E. L. Marilla, "the sin in the Garden of Eden as Milton depicts this sin was the result of what was generally regarded in Renaissance thought as the source of all human failure on a grand scale--man's misconception of his own nature and, hence, misconception of his basic needs. In Milton's view, this error always produces the same disastrous results."¹⁵ Eve's sin is defiance of the divine plan of the universe because she seeks to jump out of her

¹⁴Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁵Esmond L. Marilla, The Central Problem of Paradise Lost: The Fall of Man, Essays and Studies on English Language and Literature, 15 (1953; rpt. Folcroft, Pa.: Folcroft Press, 1970), p. 26.

ordained slot in the universal chain of being for a higher slot on the angelic level. Marilla notes the importance of Eve's sin. "The Renaissance reader would never have missed the fact that Satan's guile was directed toward an accomplishment which would represent not a mere breach of a single divine command but, rather, a complete flouting of God's basic plan in the universe."¹⁶ Marilla sees Adam's sin as "deliberate acquiescence in Eve's defection. Unlike Eve, Adam had little or no delusion . . . about the consequences of his violation of the divine charge. He was quite aware that he was acting in desperation and deliberately jeopardizing his world for personal and immediate ends. His sin was precisely that of wilfully sacrificing the universal and ultimate good in the world in the interest of individual and present 'benefits.'"¹⁷ Therefore, the sins of Adam and Eve are not separate acts, but the same act from different perspectives. For, according to Marilla, it is in the "composite picture" of the sins of Adam and Eve that we find the pattern of man's fundamental sin. Man grows dissatisfied with his state, trusts in his own powers, and attempts to make immediately his that which God had reserved for him later in the divine plan.¹⁸ Therefore, in the Argument to Book III of Paradise Lost, Milton establishes that justice will need to

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 18-19.

be satisfied because "Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead." And in the poetry of the book itself God declares this in his second speech: "Man disobeying, / Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins / Against the high Supremacy of Heav'n, / Affecting God-head, and so losing all" (3.203-206).

The act of the Fall must also be understood in terms of Reason and Passion. As Albert W. Fields notes, in the being of man there is a rational part, the "self-like-God," and a passionate nature. Harmony between the two could be maintained by self-knowledge; this was noted for Adam's benefit.¹⁹ Having acknowledged his uxoriousness to Raphael, Adam discusses his weakness:

For well I understand in the prime end
 Of Nature her th' inferior, in the mind
 And inward Faculties, which most excel,
 In outward also her resembling less
 His Image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that Dominion giv'n
 O'er other Creatures; yet when I approach
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discount'nanc't, and like folly shows;
 Authority and Reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made
 Occasionally; and to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind and nobleness thir seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard Angelic plac't (8.540-59).

¹⁹Albert W. Fields, "Milton and Self-knowledge," PMLA, 83 (1968), 392.

Raphael replies that this is not Nature's fault, but it is Adam's failure to control passion with reason. After further discussion, Raphael warns Adam to control passion:

take heed lest Passion sway
Thy Judgment to do aught, which else free Will
Would not admit; thine and of all thy Sons
The weal or woe in thee is plac't; beware.
(8.635-38).

When Eve meets Adam after she has eaten the fruit, the two elements of self, passion and reason, are together and Adam is forced to make a choice. Fields describes the result of the encounter. "But Adam, seeing himself in Eve, feels forcibly drawn to her, and they become, in a symbolic sense, Adam-Eve: 'Our State cannot be severed, we are one, / One Flesh; to loose thee were to loose my self' (IX.958-959). In discovering one aspect of himself, Adam temporarily loses another."²⁰ As Marilla notes, Adam's acquiescence to Eve seems "beautiful"; "in this fact we are to see precisely Milton's point: concessions of reason to sentiment, when considered in terms of personal and immediate interests, always appear as benevolent or even 'charming' behavior. But, as Adam later admits, his yielding to Eve's whim represented actually a defaulting in his responsibility to mankind."²¹ Thus, Adam's obedience to God is ended for what momentarily he determines to be most important--Eve. Adam's wisdom, defined in De Doctrina (C.E. 17.27) as earnestly searching

²⁰Ibid., p. 397.

²¹Marilla, p. 18.

after the will of God, is destroyed by his passion for Eve. Adam does not even rationally consider the possibility that he might intercede on Eve's behalf. She has sought godhead, and he acquiesces, in effect making his desire for her his god and setting himself and Eve apart, independent of their Creator. Adam set aside his manhood, stepped down the hierarchy, to find a master for the moment. In doing so he sought a god other than his God. Thus, the Son, coming to judge man, said to Adam:

Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey
 Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,
 Superior, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy Manhood, and the Place
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
 Hers in all real dignity: Adorn'd
 She was indeed, and lovely to attract
 Thy Love, not thy Subjection, and her Gifts
 Were such as under Government well seem'd,
 Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright
 (10.145-56).

Obedience is the voluntary act of submission of creature to Creator. Disobedience, then, is a violation of being since it disrupts that submission. John C. Ulreich explains this point. "Rebellion against God contradicts one's own created nature; the consequence of such an action is a fall away from God, a descent on Nature's scale toward the brutish and demonic, paralysis of the will, and disintegration of the self."²² We can see that this was true of the fall of Adam

²²John C. Ulreich, "'Sufficient to Have Stood': Adam's Responsibility in Book IX," Milton Quarterly, 5 (1971), 38.

and Eve, where creature overreaching his limits actually stepped down in the chain of being. It is also true of Satan, and Milton pictured the demonic fall such that the evil angels were eventually hissing and writhing in hell, tasting ashes instead of the fruit of the tree. In his fall, Satan by his own choice established himself autonomous of God, his Creator. Milton notes that Satan "trusted to have equall'd the most High" (P.L. 1.40). Satan, of course, was disobedient, but his sin was self-initiated. Filled with pride, he set himself apart from God so that he would not have to submit to God; Satan said "in my choice / To reign is worth ambition though in Hell: / Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n" (P.L. 1.261-63). Unlike Adam, Satan did not break a command to disobey God. His sinful act was simply to deny the need to submit to God; he owed no obeisance to God because he recognized no fealty to a Creator. Instead, he claimed self-creation, the ultimate autonomous act. Satan said to Abdiel:

who saw

When this creation was? remember'st thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
 We know no time when we were not as now;
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
 By our own quick'ning power (P.L. 5.856-61).

Satan voiced his contradiction of his created nature; he rejected his Maker, deliberately denying the divine design. The sins of Adam, Eve, and Job were different only in degree. In all cases the sins were defiance of God's will because creature misunderstood (in Satan's case, deliberately) the

divine design and attempted to reach beyond the ordained creature limitations.

Chapter 6

Intercession, Restoration, and Theodicy

While Satan refused to repent, Job, Adam, and Eve did repent and were forgiven. Satan continued to fall away from God, but Job, Adam, and Eve were brought back to God. This final chapter will deal with problem areas relating to the means of man's restoration--Intercession and Restoration, and with the overall issue of man in relation to God, Theodicy, or the justification of God's ways to men.

Intercession

In the Book of Job the earthly hero, realizing the limitlessness of God and the limits of man, wishes that there might be a divine intercessor, even though he realizes that this can be only a wish.

If I wash myself with snow, and make my hands never so clean;

Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me:

Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me (9.30-35).

Later, Job resurrects the idea of a mediator, a witness in heaven.

Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.

My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor! (16.19-21).

And a third time Job talks of an intercessor, one who will bring him before God.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me (19.25-27).

Because God seems distant and unapproachable, man needs someone to help him gain a confrontation so that he can obtain divine grace. Terrien comments on Job's wish. "God is God, and forever above man (9:32). But if there were only a days-man, a mediator, who would place his hands upon the shoulders of God and of man, and bring God and man face to face (9:33)! For a Semite, a prince of monotheism, this is a stupendous thought. If only the awful gap between Creator and creature could be bridged! If only the abyss between God transcendent and man impure could be spanned! If only some being, at once God and man, could effect reconciliation and beget peace! Of course the text is no witness to the Christian mystery of the Incarnation, but it prophetically proclaims, through some

via negativa, the necessity of a Christ."¹ If only man had a friend who could present Job's case or, later, who could get Job an audience with God, then Job's case would be solved. In the Book of Job, of course, this remains an "if only" situation; Job eventually confronts God by himself.

It is interesting, nevertheless, that the Joban poet recognized a gap which seemed to exist between man and God, a gap so significant that the poet could conceive of an intercessor. The gap exists for two reasons--because God is God, and man is man. God in the Book of Job is distant and seemingly unapproachable first because He is something separate from the state of being of man. God is surrounded by His secrets, His mystery. Even after He makes Himself partially approachable as the voice in the whirlwind, God speaks of His power and mystery. He reveals Himself to Job, but He does not eliminate His secrecy. The gap also exists, of course, because man is man and therefore not God. Further, the actions of man make the gap wider and more apparent. Job's human friends are one of his sources of torment. Elihu, who presents the most reasonable arguments by urging reconciliation, is rejected. Job is isolated from his fellows and more vulnerable because he fears he may also be isolated from his God. Only God can settle the issue which troubles Job, since He can provide justification and comfort. Yet, because Job will accept only a confrontation with God, the gap between

¹Terrien, pp. 900-901.

man and God is made more prominent and real. The gap which always existed between Job and God is made evident when Job will be satisfied only by a bridging of the gap.

Milton's God in Paradise Lost is also distant and unapproachable. As Irene Samuel explains, Milton's God is not an ordinary being, "but Total Being, the Primal Energy, the Voice of Reason, the Moral Law that makes possible a moral cosmos as surely as the laws of physics make possible a physical cosmos. He is the Creator who by intention brings into being others who act of themselves, and consequently the Intelligence that comprehends the universe."² Samuel notes the propriety of the "tone" of God in his first speech in Book III of Paradise Lost.

The near tonelessness of his first speech at once proves itself the right tone. It has offended readers because they assume that the "I" who speaks is or should be a person like other persons. The flat statement of fact, past, present, and future, the calm analysis and judgment of deeds and principles--these naturally strike the ear that has heard Satan's ringing utterance as cold and impersonal. They should. For the omniscient voice of the omnipotent moral law speaks simply what is. Here is no orator using rhetoric to persuade, but the nature of things expounding itself in order to present fact and principle unadorned.³

Thus, God by His nature is distant. Again, the gap also exists because man is not God. Adam was originally intended to rise

²Irene Samuel, "The Dialogue in Heaven: A Reconsideration of Paradise Lost, III, 1-417," PMLA, 72 (1957), 602.

³Ibid., p. 603.

in the hierarchy of being, but in the time before the Fall he was still human, though special. And, of course, by his actions man ensured that the gap should not only remain but be widened. H. V. S. Ogden comments on the actions of man. "The great significance of the Fall is that it is not reversible by human effort or action. Up until the overt act, Adam and Eve could have changed their minds. But once the evil act had sealed the evil will, Man could only be redeemed by Christ's Incarnation and Crucifixion."⁴ As will be shown later, action was required by man to alter his position after the Fall, but this action was possible only because God made it so. Like Job, man in Paradise Lost ensured the existence of the gap between man and God.

Because of Divine Justice in Paradise Lost, intercession is necessary. C. A. Patrides comments on the reason for the Protestant theory of atonement found in Milton's epic. "In addition, however, Milton renders in his exposition 'the atmosphere of the criminal law-court' that is the distinguishing characteristic of the theory advanced by the Reformers. Through his transgression, according to the poet, man brought death upon himself and his posterity; the divine decree which created him immortal could not be revoked, being, like all heavenly laws once enacted, 'Unchangeable, Eternal' (P.L.III. 127); to rescind it were to go contrary to the prescribed

⁴H. V. S. Ogden, "The Crisis of Paradise Lost Reconsidered," PQ, 36 (1957), 3.

standards of Divine Justice: 'Die hee or Justice must'; someone had to substitute for man and thereby 'satisfy' the justice of God and 'placate' His wrath . . ."⁵ Thus, as Milton indicated in the Argument to Book III, "The Son of God freely offers himself a Ransom for Man." Or, as Milton stated in De Doctrina Christiana: "CHRIST'S SACERDOTAL FUNCTION is that whereby HE ONCE OFFERED HIMSELF TO GOD THE FATHER AS A SACRIFICE FOR SINNERS, AND HAS ALWAYS MADE, AND STILL CONTINUES TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US" (C.E. 15.291).

More generally, Christ acted as mediator not only to ransom man, but in any way he could to intercede on man's behalf. "THE MEDIATORIAL OFFICE of Christ is that whereby, AT THE SPECIAL APPOINTMENT OF GOD THE FATHER, HE VOLUNTARILY PERFORMED, AND CONTINUES TO PERFORM, ON BEHALF OF MAN, WHATEVER IS REQUISITE FOR OBTAINING RECONCILIATION WITH GOD, AND ETERNAL SALVATION" (C.E. 15.285). In the beginning of Book X of Paradise Lost, God sends the Son to judge man after the Fall.

But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee
 Vicegerent Son, to thee I have transferr'd
 All Judgment, whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell.
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with Justice, sending thee
 Man's Friend, his Mediator, his design'd
 Both Ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destin'd Man himself to judge Man fall'n
 (10.55-62).

Thus, "Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both / To sentence

⁵C. A. Patrides, "Milton and the Protestant Theory of Atonement," PMLA, 74 (1959), 10.

Man" (10.96-97). In the beginning of Book XI, the Son appears as "Advocate" to urge reconciliation of God with His creature man. He draws attention to the couple in prayer.

Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication, hear his sighs though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let mee
Interpret for him, mee his Advocate
And propitiation, all his works on mee
Good or not good ingraft, my Merit those
Shall perfet, and for these my Death shall pay
(11.30-36).

Semitic thought had to be stretched to conceive of the possibility of a mediator; Christian thought had found its Savior. The difference between the Joban poet's position and Milton's position on this point is explained by the difference between Old Testament theology and that of the New Testament. Nevertheless, the need for Christ in both books is a striking similarity. Job feels the gap keeping him from God, and God in Paradise Lost is pictured so that a similar gap occurs.

Restoration

"THE RESTORATION OF MAN is the act whereby man, being delivered from sin and death by God the Father through Jesus Christ, is raised to a far more excellent state of grace and glory than that from which he had fallen" (C.E. 15.251). The purpose of the restorative process is to bring the creature back into proper perspective in relation to God and thereby not only restore but improve him. "The intent of SUPER-NATURAL RENOVATION is not only to restore man more completely than before to the use of his natural faculties, as regards

his power to form right judgment, and to exercise free will; but to create afresh, as it were, the inward man, and infuse from above new and supernatural faculties into the minds of the renovated" (C.E. 15.367). Having sinned, man has few options; he is either friend of God or an enemy. Man is still, however, a creature with free will in so far as he can choose the side of God that he will attempt to take. Man can seek false glory in the state of evil; as Satan chose, or he can humbly submit his case to God and trust in His forgiveness. God extends His grace to man, making it possible for man to be restored to favor. The nature of God's grace is such that He can forgive if man makes the first move.

Restoration comes to Job when he is confronted by the God he had demanded to see. Job says to God:

I know that thou canst do all things,
 and that no purpose of thine can
 be thwarted.
 "Who is this that hides counsel without
 knowledge?"
 Therefore I have uttered what I did not
 understand, things too wonderful
 for me, which I did not know.
 "Hear and I will speak;
 I will question you, and you declare
 to me."
 I had heard of thee by the hearing of the
 ear, but now my eye sees thee;
 therefore I despise myself,
 and repent in dust and ashes (R.S.V. 42.2-6).

Terrien describes the restoration. "He who had expected to 'come forth as gold' (23:10) bows in adoration and repentance (42:1-6). In the presence of the most holy God all pain is stilled, for grace is sufficient. . Job becomes aware of

his sinfulness at the very instant of his reconciliation. He is saved at the moment of his surrender. He receives all when he surrenders all. God's judgment is none other than the blossoming of his mercy."⁶ In the "sufficiency" of God's grace man finds the opportunity for regeneration. Job is saved because he submits himself to faith in God. He manifests patience, in the Renaissance understanding of the word as Baumgartner has defined it, when he resigns himself to accepting Yahweh's decrees, "whether immediately good or bad, as belonging to the ultimately beneficent Providence of God."⁷

There are, of course, differences between the restorations of Job and Adam, but the requirements and benefits are the same. Job's regeneration is immediate because he meets Yahweh and has only a moment to act to be saved. Adam, on the other hand, has several books in a long epic, and his salvation is even then only foretold as the redemption of man at the price of the life of the Son. Job's restoration is direct and immediate; Adam's is through a medium and is contained only in a promise. Yet, in order to be restored, Adam must submit. And when he is accepted by God, the redemption is like that of Job.

As in the Book of Job, in Paradise Lost Adam's restoration is only possible because of the grace of God. C. A. Patrides notes that God's grace represents "unmerited love of

⁶Terrien, p. 902.

⁷Baumgartner, p. 207.

God toward mankind."⁸ "The outpouring of God's grace described in Paradise Lost is analogous to the act of creation when the divine goodness was 'put forth' over chaos (VII.171)."⁹ Early in Paradise Lost God reveals the grace in Himself which will allow regeneration in man: "Man falls deceiv'd / By th' other first: Man therefore shall find grace, / The other none" (3.130-32). Of particular interest is the action of "Prevenient Grace" in the calling of man. "THE CALLING OF MAN is that natural mode of renovation whereby GOD THE FATHER, ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE IN CHRIST, INVITES FALLEN MAN TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE WAY IN WHICH HE IS TO BE PROPITIATED AND WORSHIPPED; INSOMUCH THAT BELIEVERS, THROUGH HIS GRATUITOUS KINDNESS ARE CALLED TO SALVATION, AND SUCH AS REFUSE TO BELIEVE ARE LEFT WITHOUT EXCUSE" (C.E. 15.345). The general calling of man, in which the force may vary but is always sufficient, and the special calling, where a particular individual is elected, are described by God to the Son in Book III of Paradise Lost.

Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Thir sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incensed Deity while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear thir senses dark,
What may suffice, and soft'n stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due (183-90).

"The change which takes place in man by reason of his

⁸C. A. Patrides, Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 198.

⁹Ibid., p. 208.

calling, is that whereby the natural mind and will of man being partially renewed by a divine impulse, are led to seek the knowledge of God, and for the time, at least, undergo an alteration for the better" (C.E. 15.353-55). This action of "Prevenient Grace" is seen affecting Adam and Eve at the beginning of Book XI.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying, for from the Mercy-seat above
Prevenient Grace descending had remov'd
The stony from thir hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead (1-5).

Grace and the repentant heart are due to God. Patrides comments on grace as shown in God's speech in Book III, 173-202. "The absolute primacy of grace is established absolutely, yet once that is done Milton ensures the proper balance through strategically placed words. Grace may constrain but does not necessarily command. It is 'offerd,' it 'invites,' it can even be 'neglected.' If neglected, it deprives man of mercy; but if 'endevord' with sincere intent, it enables 'persisting' man safely to reach the end."¹⁰

The actual plan for man's restoration is revealed in Book III, 167-216, and in Book XII, 386-465 and 485-551. In these three sections God's plan for man's regeneration is told to the Son and the role of the Son is told to Adam. Despite the need of the Son for man's regeneration, Milton could not write of the actual Incarnation without doing away with the epic conventions of single action and single hero.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 213.

In the epic of Paradise Lost, then, the Son can only be promised as Savior. Frye finds this to be the explanation of the last books of Paradise Lost which seem "a hurried and perfunctory summary of the Bible in the latter part of Michael's revelation. The reason is that such events as the Incarnation and the Last Judgment cannot be given their full poetic resonance at that point in the Paradise Lost scheme, otherwise the conclusion would become top-heavy. They must either be dramatized separately or assumed to have their importance already understood by the reader."¹¹ While Milton could not show the complete restoration of man, he could foretell it in words from God and from Michael; he could also imply the redemption with structural design. He could so design Paradise Lost that it could find completion only in man's salvation by placing emphasis on the restoration. Through a study of the structural pattern of Paradise Lost, Arthur E. Barker demonstrates evidence of Milton's desire to emphasize the restoration of man through Christ. Barker says that a reader rests at the end of each book and at the end of each pair of books. The effect, then, of Milton's change from ten to twelve books was "to reduce the structural emphasis on the Fall of man and to increase the emphasis on his restoration."¹² "In the 1667 arrangement the mind will come to rest on the

¹¹Frye, p. 118.

¹²Arthur E. Barker, "Structural Pattern in Paradise Lost," PQ, 28 (1949), 26.

Fall and the expulsion; looking backward, it will see its rests at the ends of the first three groups as premonitions of these events. In the 1674 version, it will come to rest on Adam's understanding of his situation (and of love), reached under Raphael's direction, on the contrition of Adam and Eve and their hope of mercy, and consequently on the Messianic prophecy of final victory as well as on the expulsion from Paradise."¹³

Milton shows the promises of redemption on God's part; the other half of the scheme is to be provided by man, who must repent to start the restoration process. Adam must submit. In De Doctrina Christiana Milton notes that "we may distinguish certain progressive steps in repentance; namely, conviction of sin, contrition, confession, departure from evil, conversion to good" (C.E. 15.385). George M. Muldrow finds the beginning of Adam's repentance in his submission to God; the critic contrasts the choice in Adam's soliloquy in Book X (720-844) to the choice in Satan's soliloquy on Mount Niphates (4.32-113). "Satan refuses to repent. True, he knows that God will not extend His mercy to him. Still, he considers the possibility and concludes that he himself would provide just cause for God's refusal to offer mercy. On the other hand, although Adam's soliloquy forces him to admit his helplessness, it also forces him to face squarely the consequences of his fall and it leaves him ready for

¹³Ibid., p. 25.

influences through which he can raise himself from despair."¹⁴

As Adam submits to God, Eve, as the partner slightly lower in the chain of being, convicts herself before Adam. Adam's soliloquy in Book X, during which Adam acknowledges his blame, is followed by an encounter with Eve. Adam curses womankind;

but Eve

Not so repulst, with Tears that ceas'd not
 flowing,
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
 Fell humble, and imbracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.
 Forsake me not thus, Adam (10.909-14).

Eve acknowledges her sin against Adam:

On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befall'n,
 On me already lost, mee than thyself
 More miserable; both have sinn'd, but thou
 Against God only, I against God and thee
 (10.927-31).

Eve finishes her plea for grace from Adam with the promise that she will seek from God punishment for herself only:

"On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe, / Mee mee only just object of his ire" (935-36). Her self-conviction recalls Adam's earlier acceptance of blame: "first and last / On mee, mee only, as the source and spring / Of all corruption, all the blame lights due" (10.831-33). Joseph H. Summers identifies Eve's "Forsake me not thus, Adam" speech as a turning point in the epic.

The effect of Eve's speech is immediate on

¹⁴George M. Muldrow, "The Beginning of Adam's Repentance," PQ, 46 (1967), 196.

Adam: "As one disarmd, his anger all he lost" (X.945). He reprimands her, almost justly, for her ignorance (since she is incapable of bearing her own guilt and punishment, she obviously cannot assume Adam's), but his spirit has changed, and a little late and a little lamely he reassures her of his own continued love and of his own responsibility. Adam and Eve continue to explore the false positions (suicide, sexual abstinence), but now they explore them together. With their recollection of the prophecy concerning the "Seed" and with their acknowledgment of the mercy as well as justice of God's judgment, they reach at last the true position of contrition.¹⁵

Eve submits to Adam; Adam voices the submission of both to God. Baumgartner points out the striking contrast between Adam's acceptance of God's conditions, "to his great bidding I submit" (11.314), and Satan's refusal to look to God.

Satan "heroically" refuses to accept the limitations of his existence and is not only damned but in the end finds himself limited to the existence of a serpent. "Who can think of Submission?" (I.661) is Satan's cry, which becomes at last an inarticulate hiss. The energy here is specifically that of impatience, of independence, of non-submission to the will of God. On the other hand, Adam, by being "simply meek" and accepting finally the condition and limitations of his fallen nature, is promised a participation in divine existence through Grace. "To his great bidding I submit" (XI.314) Adam replies to his sentence after the Fall, and it is the sign of his regeneration.¹⁶

Thus, like Job, Adam's opportunity for regeneration comes

¹⁵Joseph H. Summers, "The Voice of the Redeemer in Paradise Lost," PMLA, 70 (1955), 1088.

¹⁶Baumgartner, p. 211.

through his submissive attitude. Like Job, Adam is saved "at the moment of his surrender," in effect, if not in immediate fact.

Theodicy

We arrive ultimately at the issue of theodicy in both Job and Paradise Lost. But before we examine the parallel ideas justifying God to man, we should make a quick digression to examine an editorial problem raised by this issue in both Paradise Lost and the Book of Job. Both the Joban poet and Milton show that man's knowledge of God's ways is limited by the difference between His nature and man's. Yet, each writer provides explanations for God. This can be acceptable only if we understand the purpose and sincerity of both writers. Each has in mind describing God to man in order to educate man about the nature of God so that the enlightened man will understand, love, and better worship God. John T. Shawcross writes that the theme of Paradise Lost is "love-- Man's love of God and God's love of Man. Once we understand the latter, we understand providence; once we understand providence, we see God's justice; once we see God's justice, we should love God with all the attendant responsibilities of that love."¹⁷ The area of relative unknown with which the writers deal falls in the area of knowledge approved by Raphael since the end of the theodicy is a better worship of God.

¹⁷John T. Shawcross, "The Son in His Ascendance: A Reading of Paradise Lost," MLQ, 27 (1966), 401.

Accommodation, combined with divine inspiration, also plays a part in justifying the actions of the poets. Since God allows man to know of Him what he needs to know, the poets are writing what God would have them know so long as they are divinely inspired. Appropriately, Milton's epic contains several prologues in which the poet sincerely asks for such inspiration. In fact, the two lines (22-23) just before Milton's statement of his proposed theodicy are a plea for assistance:

What in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great Argument
 I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men (P.L. 1.22-26).

Theodicy, the justification of God's ways to man, is the stated purpose of Milton's epic (1.24-26). George Buchanan Gray maintains that this is also the issue of the Book of Job, although the Joban poet's purpose probably was never so highly formalized as was Milton's.¹⁸ Nevertheless, a study of Job quickly brings us to the realization that theodicy is the overall issue. Napier writes: "The real problem of Job is not his suffering, but his status in existence. It is not affliction and anguish that he cannot accept, but his own fundamental impotence to control the terms of his total environment."¹⁹

¹⁸Gray, p. li.

¹⁹Napier, p. 337.

Critics of both the Book of Job and Paradise Lost have expressed doubt that the issue of theodicy is resolved in either book. Mathé Allain seems to feel that Paradise Lost fails because Milton leaves unresolved, in Allain's opinion, the conflict between the desire of creature to make use of his free will and the divine decree which "alone validates the moral order."²⁰ Allain is not satisfied with the explanation of theodicy in Paradise Lost which states that man was created with free will and that God's foreknowledge does not necessitate foreordination. Critics who are not satisfied with this common explanation are right to feel as they do. The mistake is in seeing this as the complete answer. We may note the title of chapter VIII of Book I of De Doctrina Christiana: "OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD, OR OF HIS GENERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE UNIVERSE" (C.E. 15.55). "His GENERAL GOVERNMENT is that whereby GOD THE FATHER REGARDS, PRESERVES, AND GOVERNS THE WHOLE OF CREATION WITH INFINITE WISDOM AND HOLINESS ACCORDING TO THE CONDITIONS OF HIS DECREE" (C.E. 15.55). Further limited to the subject of man's disobedience, as Milton defined the topic of the argument of his epic, we may see Providence in relation to the Fall. "The Providence of God as regards the fall of man, is observable in the sin of man, and the misery consequent upon it, as well as in his restoration" (C.E. 15.179). Too often a critical examination

²⁰Mathé Allain, "The Humanist's Dilemma: Milton, God, and Reason," CE, 27 (Feb. 1966), 381:

of Paradise Lost becomes fixed on the problem of whom to blame for the Fall, blanking out the rest of the epic. We must allow ourselves to examine all the issues of the epic, including man's restoration, a key element of Providence related to the Fall. Shawcross reminds us that God has provided for man. "God has provided the Son to defeat evil at all stages of Man's life, to guide Man, and to judge Man. This is Milton's concept of eternal providence, and this justifies God's ways to Man since all things are provided to save Man."²¹

We would do well to consider the effect of the Yahweh speeches in the Book of Job, for the theodicy of that book assists an understanding of theodicy in Paradise Lost. First, God appears, thereby showing that He cares. He illustrates His grace by forgiving Job when he repents, allowing regeneration. What God states in His speeches is His power and magnificence in creation. And He remains silent on the charges that He had caused Job's suffering, refusing to be caught in a trap built by man's ethical system. The theodicy of the Book of Job is in the combination of these aspects of God--His presence, His grace, His power and glory, and His vertical, rather than horizontal relationship with man. An examination of these same points in Paradise Lost will likewise explain the theodicy of Milton's epic.

When Yahweh appears to Job, he immediately settles Job's worries that God had abandoned him. Because he could not

²¹Shawcross, "The Son in His Ascendance," p. 392.

explain his situation, Job had feared that the gap which separated him from God was not only wide but hostile. He could remain faithful to God even through intense suffering if only God were his friend. As Hulme explains, through the experience of knowing, the knowledge that man "exists not only in relation to himself and his fellows but also before God,"²² Job experienced the reaffirmation that God is with man. Adam shows similar worry in Book XI, and Michael reassures him that God is ever present. Adam frets:

This most afflicts me, that departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
His blessed count'nance (11.315-17).

In yonder nether World where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footsteps trace?
(11.328-29).

Michael reassures Adam:

Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the Earth,
Not this Rock only (11.335-56).

surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise or Eden (11.340-42).

Yet doubt not but in Valley and in Plain
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal Love, his Face
Express, and of his steps the track Divine
(11.349-54).

The sufficiency of God's grace has been discussed. God's plan encompasses mercy which is extended to the repentant sinner. Man is given an opportunity for restoration.

²²Hulme, p. 12.

Prevenient Grace prepares man to receive his opportunity, increasing the probability of restoration. While man's repentance is necessary, Milton indicates that grace is extended even before man confesses his guilt. "Even before man had, properly speaking, confessed his guilt, that is, before he had avowed it ingenuously and in the spirit of repentance, God nevertheless, in pronouncing the punishment of the serpent, previously to passing sentence on man, promised that he would raise up from the seed of woman one who should bruise the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15. and thus anticipated the condemnation of mankind by a gratuitous redemption. Hence the Father is often called 'our Savior,' inasmuch as it is by his eternal counsel and grace alone that we are saved" (C.E. 15.253-55).

The power and glory of God as shown in His creation of the world are often overlooked. God's seemingly stern, legalistic character is discussed. Man's distance from God is presented. What seems to be ignored is His positive act in creation, His tremendous part of Milton's epic. As J. R. Watson notes, the creation was a result of the war in heaven. Therefore, the creation demonstrated on a grand scale Milton's belief that God brings good out of evil.²³ Perhaps because the story of creation takes so much of the space of Paradise Lost we overlook it, or perhaps we are unable to appreciate

²³J. R. Watson, "Divine Providence and the Structure of Paradise Lost," Essays in Criticism, 14 (1964), 153.

the magnificence of God's act. Yet, it is this same creation that forms the content of God's speeches to Job. And as Gordis has shown, we see in Job that while God asserts that man will never understand His ways, yet he can rejoice in the majesty of that which has been revealed to him.²⁴ Louis L. Martz writes that creation serves the same purpose in Paradise Lost. "It is here, in Milton's treatment of the Creation, that one may find the best answer to those who contend that Milton's God is wicked, or that Milton's view of religion is too legalistic, intent on the justice and power of the Deity, to the sad exclusion of Faith, Hope and Charity--especially Charity."²⁵

Finally, the relationship between God and man is vertical, not horizontal. This is a throwback to the experience of knowing, with a greater definition of the manner of the ways of God to man. What is important is the need for direct experience between God and man (which, of course, must be in the mind or understanding of the man). Northrop Frye suggests the following explanation of Yahweh's speeches to Job:

After the dialogue with the three friends and Elihu has reached a deadlock, God enters the argument himself with a series of rhetorical questions asking Job if he knows as much as God does about the creation. He seems to be trying to bully Job into submission by convicting him of ignorance of the divine ways. But perhaps his meaning

²⁴Gordis, p. 134.

²⁵Louis L. Martz, The Paradise Within (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1964), p. 127.

can be taken differently. Perhaps he is merely discouraging Job from looking horizontally along a cause-effect sequence until he reaches a First Cause at the creation. Job is not even given the explanation that has been given the reader in the story of Satan's wager. It is not how he got into his calamity but how he can get out of it that is important, and this latter involves a direct and vertical relation between God and Job in the present tense.²⁶

Similarly, Frye states that we should not look for a great cycle of events in Paradise Lost. We should not look along a horizontal line to find God as the prime agent. Disclaiming foreordination means that God is not to be seen as the prime agent of a chain of events that starts with begetting the Son, causing a revolt in Heaven, causing the temptation of Adam and Eve, and ultimately causing the Fall. Frye suggests that we look instead at God as traveling above such a line, traveling along with it.²⁷ While God decreed all things from eternity, yet "God decreed nothing absolutely, which he left in the power of free agents, a doctrine which is shown by the whole canon of Scripture. Here then is a rule laid down by God himself, according to which he would always have his decrees understood; namely, that regard should be paid to the conditional terms attached to them" (C.E. 14.65-67). Frye writes:

The great events in Paradise Lost should be read rather as a discontinuous series of crises, in each of which there is an opportunity to break the whole chain.

²⁶Frye, p. 103.

²⁷Ibid., p. 102.

We see these crises forming when Satan argues himself out of the possibility of submission to God, and when Adam . . . absolves God from any responsibility for his own sin. The failures, like the two great falls, look inevitable because they are failures, but the crucial victory, Christ's victory recorded in Paradise Regained, is not inevitable at all, at least from any point of view that we can take. At each crisis of life the important factor is not the consequences of previous actions, but the confrontation, across a vast apocalyptic gulf, with the source of deliverance.²⁸

Thus, in the issue of theodicy we find the greatest correspondence between the ideas of Milton and the Joban poet. The issue is inevitably one of man's relation to God in faith. Kurth describes the significance of God's role. "Readers and critics of later ages have tended to emphasize as novel Milton's ambitious request of the Heavenly Muse that he 'may assert Eternal Providence / And justify the ways of God to men,' yet it is doubtful that a seventeenth-century reader would have found this new or pretentious. Probably he would have assumed that if Milton succeeded in portraying effectively the significance of the vast design, he would thereby have shown the justness of God's dealings with man in the most meaningful way."²⁹ As Napier states, the purpose of the Book of Job is essentially "to restore a lost faith and lost meaning in existence."³⁰ Likewise, in Paradise Lost, as Shawcross notes, the "stated

²⁸Ibid., pp. 102-103.

²⁹Kurth, p. 111.

³⁰Napier, p. 335.

subject is Man's disobedience, but the thesis is that eternal providence will justify to Man God's ways toward him, and the theme is God's love. God's love for Man best illustrates His providence and best justifies His ways. The intention of the poem is thus the didactic aim of inculcating virtue in Man by showing God's truth, justice, and mercy, leading to peace, and Satan's deceit, injustice, and hate, leading to war."³¹ Milton's statement of the purpose of theodicy (P.L. 1.24-26) in his epic is too often shortened to the words "justify the ways of God to men." It is through the totality of lines twenty-four to twenty-six of Book I that the problem of theodicy is underlined. Milton hoped that at the "highth" of his epic he could "assert Eternal Providence" and, thereby, "justify the ways of God to men."

³¹Shawcross, "The Style and Genre of Paradise Lost," p. 17.

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