

POETRY

(M.A. English Sem. I)



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UNIT-2 Paradise Lost

Character List

Satan

Called Lucifer in heaven before the his disobedience, Satan is one of God's favorite angels until his pride gets in the way and he turns away from God. Satan brings many of heaven's angels with him, however, and reigns as king in hell. He continues an eternal battle with God and goodness for the souls of human beings. Satan, at first, is an angel with a single fault, pride, but throughout the story he becomes physically and morally more and more corrupt.

God

The Absolute, ruler of heaven, creator of earth and all of creation. God is all seeing, though he seems to pay less attention to things further away from his light. He is surrounded by angels who praise him and whom he loves but, when Satan falls and brings many of heaven's population with him, he decides to create a new creature, human, and to create for him a beautiful universe in the hopes that someday humans will join him in heaven. God has a sense of humor, and laughs at the follies of Satan and seems to be a firm and just ruler.

Son of God

God's begotten Son, later to become fully human in the form of Jesus, the Christ. God's Son will continually beat down Satan, first in the three day battle in heaven, then, as Jesus, when he sacrifices himself for the salvation of man. The Son of God is more sympathetic to the plight of mankind and often advocates on behalf of him in front of God.

Holy Spirit

Third of the God/Son Trinity. Although the Holy Spirit does not play a large part in the narrative (leading some critics to think that Milton did not even believe in the Trinity), he is continually referred to as Milton's inspirational "muse" in the writing of the epic. The Holy Spirit is, in fact, the creature through whom the Old and New Testament were written according to Christians, therefore he is the best vehicle from which Milton can draw the truth.

Sin

Daughter of Satan born when Satan first disobeyed God. Satan later rapes Sin and they have Death. The three form the unholy trinity in contrast to God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Sin is sent to hell with Satan and stands guard at hell's gates. She is a horrible looking thing, half serpent, half woman, with hellhounds circling her. She will invade earth and mankind after Satan causes Adam and Eve to fall.

Death

Spawn of Satan and Satan's daughter Sin. He is a dark, gigantic form who guards the gates of hell with Sin. He, too, will reign on earth after Satan causes the Fall. Death, however, will

plague not only men and women, but all living creatures on earth down to the smallest plant. Death, as a terminal end, will be defeated when God sends his Son Jesus Christ to earth.

Adam

First created man, father of all mankind. Adam is created a just and ordered creature, living in joy, praising God. Lonely, Adam will ask for a companion and will thereafter feel deep and uncontrollable, though ordered, love for her, named Eve. This love will ultimately get Adam in trouble, as he decides to disobey God rather than leave her. Adam has free will and, by the end of the poem, also has the knowledge of good and evil.

Eve

First created woman, mother of all mankind. Eve is rather a fickle and vain woman, easily flattered by Adam and Satan. Her weakness becomes her downfall, as her vanity drives her to disobey God. She loves Adam as well, though the implication is that she loves herself much more.

Raphael

Gentle archangel sent to befriend and warn Adam of the dangers in the Garden. Raphael is traditionally seen as a friendly and sociable angel and, in fact, sits down to eat and gab with Adam for most of an afternoon. Raphael is a gentle guide and appears as a luminous, soft being.

Michael

General in God's army. In contrast to Raphael, Michael is a firm, military type of angel. He is more of an instructor and a punisher than he is a friend and a guide,. He and Gabriel are sent to battle Satan's forces in the heavenly war, and he is sent to evict Adam and Eve from Paradise.

Gabriel

Another archangel who is a general in God's army. He, too, was sent to lead God's forces into battle against Satan and it is he who, with a squadron of angel soldiers, finds Satan in the Garden of Eden the first time.

Abdiel

The only angel who stands up to Satan and his thousands of minions when Satan first suggests rebellion. He is praised as being more courageous than even those who fight in God's army because he stood up in the middle of evil and used words to battle it.

Beelzebub

Lord of the Flies, one of the Fallen Angels and Satan's second in command. Beelzebub is the name of one of the Syrian gods mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. He is the first with whom Satan confers when contemplating rebellion and he is the first Satan sees when they are in hell. Beelzebub relies totally on Satan for what he thinks and does. Later, Satan uses Beelzebub as a plant to get hell's council of fallen angels to do what he wants them to do.

Moloch

another fallen angel, one of the generals of Satan's army. Moloch is an authoritarian military angel, who would rather fight and lose battles than be complacent and passive. Victory over God is less important to Moloch than revenge against him.

Belial

a complacent, passive fallen angel. Belial doesn't want to fight. He represents a part of all the fallen angels that secretly wishes God would take them all back.

Mammon

another fallen angel. Mammon thinks that the fallen angels should try to build their own kingdom and make their life as bearable as possible in hell. He is the ultimate compromiser, and, though his compromise is illogical and will not work, the crowd loves him.

Summary

Milton's epic poem opens on the fiery lake of hell, where Satan and his army of fallen angels find themselves chained. Satan and his lieutenant Beelzebub get up from the lake and yell to the others to rise and join them. Music plays and banners fly as the army of rebel angels comes to attention, tormented and defeated but faithful to their general. They create a great and terrible temple, perched on a volcano top, and Satan calls a council there to decide on their course of action.

The fallen angels give various suggestions. Finally, Beelzebub suggests that they take the battle to a new battlefield, a place called earth where, it is rumoured, God has created a new being called man. Man is not as powerful as the angels, but he is God's chosen favorite among his creations. Beelzebub suggests that they seek revenge against God by seducing man to their corrupted side. Satan volunteers to explore this new place himself and find out more about man so that he may corrupt him. His fallen army unanimously agrees by banging on their swords.

Satan takes off to the gates of hell, guarded by his daughter, Sin, and their horrible son, Death. Sin agrees to open the gates for her creator (and rapist), knowing that she will follow him and reign with him in whatever kingdom he conquers. Satan then travels through chaos, and finally arrives at earth, connected to heaven by a golden chain.

God witnesses all of this and points out Satan's journey to his Son. God tells his Son that, indeed, Satan will corrupt God's favorite creation, man. His Son offers to die a mortal death to bring man back into the grace and light of God. God agrees and tells how his Son will be born to a virgin. God then makes his Son the king of man, son of both man and God.

Meanwhile, Satan disguises himself as a handsome cherub in order to get by the angel Uriel who is guarding earth. Uriel is impressed that an angel would come all the way from heaven to witness God's creation, and points the Garden of Eden out to Satan. Satan makes his way into the Garden and is in awe at the beauty of Eden and of the handsome couple of Adam and Eve. For a moment, he deeply regrets his fall from grace. This feeling soon turns, however, to hatred.

Uriel, however, has realized that he has been fooled by Satan and tells the angel Gabriel as much. Gabriel finds Satan in the Garden and sends him away.

God, seeing how things are going, sends Raphael to warn Adam and Eve about Satan. Raphael goes down to the Garden and is invited for dinner by Adam and Eve. While there, he narrates how Satan came to fall and the subsequent battle that was held in heaven. Satan first sin was pride, when he took issue with the fact that he had to bow down to the Son. Satan was one of the top angels in heaven and did not understand why he should bow. Satan called a council and convinced many of the angels who were beneath him to join in fighting God.

A tremendous, cosmic three-day battle ensued between Satan's forces and God's forces. On the first day, Satan's forces were beaten back by the army led by the archangels Michael and Gabriel. On the second day, Satan seemed to gain ground by constructing artillery, literally cannons, and turning them against the good forces. On the third day, however, the Son faced Satan's army alone and they quickly retreat, falling through a hole in heaven's fabric and cascading down to hell.

This is the reason, Raphael explains, that God created man: to replace the empty space that the fallen angels have left in heaven. Raphael then tells of how God created man and all the universe in seven days. Adam himself remembers the moment he was created and, as well, how he came to ask God for a companion, Eve. Raphael leaves.

The next morning, Eve insists on working separately from Adam. Satan, in the form of serpent, finds her working alone and starts to flatter her. Eve asks where he learned to speak, and Satan shows her the Tree of Knowledge. Although Eve knows that this was the one tree God had forbidden that they eat from, she is told by Satan that this is only because God knows she will become a goddess herself. Eve eats the fruit and then decides to share it with Adam.

Adam, clearly, is upset that Eve disobeyed God, but he cannot imagine a life without her so he eats the apple as well. They both, then, satiate their new-born lust in the bushes and wake up ashamed, knowing now the difference from good and evil (and, therefore, being able to choose evil). They spend the afternoon blaming each other for their fall.

God sends the Son down to judge the two disobedient creatures. The Son condemns Eve, and all of womankind, to painful childbirths and submission to her husband. He condemns Adam to a life of a painful battle with nature and hard work at getting food from the ground. He condemns the serpent to always crawl on the ground on its belly, always at the heel of Eve's sons.

Satan, in the meantime, returns to hell victorious. On the way, he meets Sin and Death, who have built a bridge from hell to earth, to mankind, whom they will now reign over. When Satan arrives in hell, however, he finds his fallen compatriots not cheering as he had wished, but hissing. The reason behind the horrible hissing soon becomes clear: all of the fallen angels are being transformed into ugly monsters and terrible reptiles. Even Satan finds himself turning into a horrible snake.

Adam and Eve, after bitterly blaming each other, finally decide to turn to God and ask for forgiveness. God hears them and agrees with his Son that he will not lose mankind completely to Sin, Death and Satan. Instead, he will send his son as a man to earth to sacrifice himself and, in so doing, conquer the evil trinity.

Michael is sent by God to escort Adam and Eve out of the Garden. Before he does, however, he tells Adam what will become of mankind until the Son comes down to earth. The history of

mankind (actually the history of the Jewish people as narrated in the Hebrew Bible) will be a series of falls from grace and acceptance back by God, from Noah and the Flood to the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people.

Adam is thankful that the Son will come down and right what he and Eve have done wrong. He holds Eve's hand as they are escorted out of the Garden.

UNIT- 3 The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Character List

Ancient Mariner

The poem's protagonist. He is unnaturally old, with skinny, deeply-tanned limbs and a "glittering eye." He sets sail from his native country with two hundred other men who are all saved from a strange, icy patch of ocean when they are kind to an Albatross that lives there. Impulsively and inexplicably, he shoots the Albatross with his crossbow and is punished for his crime by a spirit who loved the Albatross. He is cursed to be haunted indefinitely by his dead shipmates, and to be compelled to tell the tale of his downfall at random times. Each time he is compelled to share his story with someone, he feels a physical agony that is abated only temporarily once he finishes telling the tale.

Wedding Guest

One of three people on their way to a wedding reception; he is next of kin to the bridegroom. The Ancient Mariner stops him, and despite his protests compels him to sit and listen to the entirety of his story. He is afraid of the Ancient Mariner and yearns to join the merriment of the wedding celebration, but after he hears the Ancient Mariner's story, he becomes both "sadder and...wiser."

The Sailors

Two hundred seamen who set sail with the Ancient Mariner one clear, sunny day and find themselves in the icy world of the "rime" after a storm, from which the Albatross frees them. They feed and play with the Albatross until the Ancient Mariner inexplicably kills it. They begin to suffer from debilitating heat and thirst. They hang the Albatross's corpse around the Ancient Mariner's neck to punish him. When Life-in-Death wins the Ancient Mariner's soul, the sailors' souls are left to Death and they curse the Ancient Mariner with their eyes before dying suddenly. Even though their souls fly out, their bodies refuse to rot and lie open-eyed on the deck, continuously cursing the Ancient Mariner. After the rain returns, the sailors come alive and silently man the ship, singing beautiful melodies. When the ship reaches the harbor, they once again curse the Ancient Mariner with their eyes and then disappear, leaving only their corpses behind. The Ancient Mariner is destined to suffer the curse of a living death and continually be haunted by their cursing eyes.

Albatross

A great, white sea bird that presumably saves the sailors from the icy world of the "rime" by allowing them to steer through the ice and sending them a good, strong wind. The Albatross,

however, also makes a strange mist follow the ship. It flies alongside the ship, plays with the sailors, and eats their food, until the Ancient Mariner shoots it with his crossbow. Its corpse is hung around the Ancient Mariner's neck as a reminder of his crime and falls off only when he is able to appreciate the beauty of nature and pray once more. The Albatross is loved by a powerful spirit who wreaks havoc on and kills the sailors while leaving the Ancient Mariner to the special agony of Life-in-Death.

Death

Embodied in a hulking form on the ghost ship. He loses at dice to Life-in-Death, who gets to claim the Ancient Mariner's soul; instead, Death wins the two hundred sailors.

The Night-mare Life-in-Death

Embodied in a beautiful, naked, ghostly woman with golden hair and red lips. She wins at dice over Death and gets to claim the Ancient Mariner's soul, condemning him to a limbo-like living death.

Pilot

The captain of the small boat that rows out to the Ancient Mariner's ship. He loses his mind when the Ancient Mariner abruptly comes to life and begins to row his boat.

Pilot's Boy

The assistant to the Pilot; he rows the small boat. He loses his mind when the Ancient Mariner, whom he thinks is dead, abruptly comes to life and takes the oars from him.

Hermit

A recluse who prays three times a day and lives in communion with nature in the woods. He accompanies the Pilot and the Pilot's boy on the small boat because "he loves to talk with mariners / from a far countree." The Ancient Mariner reveres the Hermit as a righteous and holy man, and asks him to absolve him of his sin. The Hermit is the first person to whom the Ancient Mariner is compelled to tell his tale.

First Voice

One of two voices presumably belonging to a spirit. The Ancient Mariner hears the First Voice after he is knocked unconscious when the ship jolts forward. He explains that the Ancient Mariner offended a spirit by killing the Albatross, because the spirit loved the bird. Other than this moment, the First Voice relies on the Second Voice to explain the Ancient Mariner's situation to him.

Second Voice

The second of two voices presumably belonging to a spirit. The Second Voice is softer than the First Voice-"as soft as honey-dew"-and more knowledgeable. He explains to the First Voice that the Ancient Mariner will pay for his crime much more dearly than he already has. Even

though the First Voice tells the Second Voice that the Ancient Mariner angered a spirit who loved the Albatross, the latter explains that the Moon and air move the ship in lieu of wind, and not the spirit who loved the Albatross. Then he urges the First Voice onward, as they are hurrying somewhere.

Summary

An Ancient Mariner, unnaturally old and skinny, with deeply-tanned skin and a "glittering eye", stops a Wedding Guest who is on his way to a wedding reception with two companions. He tries to resist the Ancient Mariner, who compels him to sit and listen to his woeful tale. The Ancient Mariner tells his tale, largely interrupted save for the sounds from the wedding reception and the Wedding Guest's fearsome interjections. One day when he was younger, the Ancient Mariner set sail with two hundred other sailors from his native land. The day was sunny and clear, and all were in good cheer until the ship reached the equator. Suddenly, a terrible storm hit and drove the ship southwards into a "rime" - a strange, icy patch of ocean. The towering, echoing "rime" was bewildering and impenetrable, and also desolate until an Albatross appeared out of the mist. No sooner than the sailors fed it did the ice break and they were able to steer through. As long as the Albatross flew alongside the ship and the sailors treated it kindly, a good wind carried them and a mist followed. One day, however, the Ancient Mariner shot and killed the Albatross on impulse.

Suddenly the wind and mist ceased, and the ship was stagnant on the ocean. The other sailors alternately blamed the Ancient Mariner for making the wind die and praised him for making the strange mist disappear. Then things began to go awry. The sun became blindingly hot, and there was no drinkable water amidst the salty ocean, which tossed with terrifying creatures. The sailors went dumb from their thirst and sunburned lips. They hung the Albatross around the Ancient Mariner's neck as a symbol of his sin. After a painful while, a ship appeared on the horizon, and the Ancient Mariner bit his arm and sucked the blood so he could cry out to the other sailors. The ship was strange: it sailed without wind, and when it crossed in front of the sun, its stark masts seemed to imprison the sun. When the ship neared, the Ancient Mariner could see that it was a ghost ship manned by Death, in the form of a man, and Life-in-Death, in the form of a beautiful, naked woman. They were gambling for the Ancient Mariner's soul. Life-in-Death won the Ancient Mariner's soul, and the other sailors were left to Death. The sky went black immediately as the ghost ship sped away. Suddenly all of the sailors cursed the Ancient Mariner with their eyes and dropped dead on the deck. Their souls zoomed out of their bodies, each taunting the Ancient Mariner with a sound like that of his crossbow. Their corpses miraculously refused to rot; they stared at him unrelentingly, cursing him with their eyes.

The Ancient Mariner drifted on the ocean in this company, unable to pray. One night he noticed some beautiful water-snakes frolicking at the ship's prow in the icy moonlight. Watching the creatures brought him unprecedented joy, and he blessed them without meaning to. When he was finally able to pray, the Albatross fell from his neck and sank into the sea. He could finally sleep, and dreamed of water. When he awoke, it was raining, and an awesome thunderstorm began. He drank his fill, and the ship began to sail in lieu of wind. Then the dead sailors suddenly arose and sailed the ship without speaking. They sang heavenly music, which the ship's sails continued when they had stopped. Once the ship reached the equator again, the ship jolted, causing the Ancient Mariner to fall unconscious. In his swoon, he heard two voices discussing his fate. They said he would continue to be punished for killing the Albatross, who was loved by a spirit. Then they disappeared. When the Ancient Mariner awoke, the dead sailors were grouped together, all cursing him with their eyes once again. Suddenly, however,

they disappeared as well. The Ancient Mariner was not relieved, because he realized that he was doomed to be haunted by them forever.

The wind picked up, and the Ancient Mariner spotted his native country's shore. Then bright angels appeared standing over every corpse and waved silently to the shore, serving as beacons to guide the ship home. The Ancient Mariner was overjoyed to see a Pilot, his boy, and a Hermit rowing a small boat out to the ship. He planned to ask the Hermit to absolve him of his sin. Just as the rescuers reached the ship, it sank suddenly and created a vortex in the water. The rescuers were able to pull the Ancient Mariner from the water, but thought he was dead. When he abruptly came to and began to row the boat, the Pilot and Pilot's Boy lost their minds. The spooked Hermit asked the Ancient Mariner what kind of man he was. It was then that the Ancient Mariner learned of his curse; he would be destined to tell his tale to others from beginning to end when an agonizing, physical urge struck him. After he related his tale to the Hermit, he felt normal again.

The Ancient Mariner tells the Wedding Guest that he wanders from country to country, and has a special instinct that tells him to whom he must tell his story. After he tells it, he is temporarily relieved of his agony. The Ancient Mariner tells the Wedding Guest that better than any merriment is the company of others in prayer. He says that the best way to become close with God is to respect all of His creatures, because He loves them all. Then he vanishes. Instead of joining the wedding reception, the Wedding Guest walks home, stunned. We are told that he awakes the next day "sadder and...wiser" for having heard the Ancient Mariner's tale.

UNIT- 5 Absalom and Achitophel

Character List

Corah

Corah led a rebellion against Moses. He stands for Titus Oates, who devised the Popish Plot and led the persecution of Catholics.

Barzillai

Barzillai lived beyond the Jordan River and sustained David during Absalom's rebellion. He stands for the Duke of Ormonde, a patron of Dryden and one of the most devoted servants of Charles. He accompanied Charles II during his exile and served him faithfully during his misfortunes.

Zadoc

David's friend who carried the Ark of the Covenant into the wilderness; he was then sent back to Jerusalem for God's judgment. He represents William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Sagan of Jerusalem

The Sagan of Jerusalem represents the Bishop of London.

Adriel

Adriel was the son of Barzillai. Here he stands for John Sheffield, 3rd Earl of Mulgrave. He supported Dryden and opposed Monmouth.

Jotham

Jotham stands for George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, and nephew of Shaftesbury. The Marquis of Halifax had once supported Shaftesbury but, alarmed at his excess, became a supporter of the Court. It was entirely by his eloquence that the Exclusion Bill was defeated in the Lords in 1680.

Hushai

Hushai, David's friend, represents Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, Charles II's First Lord of the Treasury. He fought against the Exclusion Bill.

Amiel

Amiel traveled through the wilderness to bring David supplies. He represents Edward Seymour, speaker of the House of Commons and treasurer of the Navy.

Bathsheba

David committed adultery with Bathsheba and sent her husband Uriah into battle, where he was killed. David later married her. Here she stands for Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, one of Charles's mistresses.

Michal

She was the daughter of Saul and the wife of King David. She stands for Catherine of Braganza, the daughter of John IV of Portugal and wife of Charles II.

Saul

Saul was the first king of Israel; he defeated the Philistines in their first battle. He represents Oliver Cromwell, who ruled England after Charles's execution as Lord Protector.

David

The king of Israel, representing Charles II of England.

Absalom

David's beloved son who rebelled against him; stands for James, the Duke of Monmouth, who sided with the Exclusionists against his father Charles II. He was executed for treason.

Annabel

She represents Monmouth's wife Anne.

Amnon

Absalom's half-brother. Absalom had him killed for raping his sister.

Achitophel

David's counselor who betrayed him and encouraged Absalom to rebel against his father. He hanged himself when he saw that the rebellion would not succeed. He represents Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury.

Pharoah

Represents Louis XIV of France.

Zimri

Two biblical figures represent Zimri: a murderer in *Numbers*, and a usurping murderer in *1 Kings*. He is an allegory of George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham.

Balaam

A prophet who ignored God. He represents Theophilus Hastings.

Caleb

Moses's servant who entered the Promised Land with Joshua. He represents Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex.

Nadab

Aaron's eldest son; he was an idolater. He represents William, Lord Howard of Esrick, a Puritan preacher.

Jonas

Or, Jonah; he represents Sir William Jones, the attorney general. He prosecuted Catholics in the early stages of the Popish plot, became a member of Parliament, and supported the Exclusion Bill.

Shimei

A man who curses David. He represents Slingsby Bethel, a sheriff of London and Middlesex.

Agag

King of the Amalekites. God wanted Saul to kill him, but when Saul took Agag prisoner, he warned him God was angry with him. He represents Lord Stafford, a Catholic whom Oates accused of treason.

Issachar

One of Jacob's sons; he is greedy and very rich. He stands for Thomas Thynne, a friend of Monmouth's.

Summary

With a steady and mild hand, King David rules Israel in the time before polygamy is a sin and priest-craft begins. He spreads his seed throughout the land and has many offspring, though his true wife is Michal. Of his illegitimate children, none is more glorious and beloved than Absalom. Absalom wins renown in foreign fields and is pleasing in mind and countenance. David loves him and indulges his every whim.

David's reign does not remain peaceful, however. The Jews are capricious, tempestuous people who often throw off their ruler for a new one. They mutter and complain, but nothing comes of it while they are disunited. However, old plots are revived, stoking the Jews' fear of the heathen Jebusites, whose land they had taken long ago. Factions stir up and begin to threaten the government.

Achitophel, a wise and witty councilor of David's, sees this as his moment. He is restless and desirous of fame, so he decides he must find a way to ruin David. He is aware of how easily swayed the people are, and he turns to the handsome Absalom into his pawn. Achitophel compliments and charms Absalom, telling him that it is a shame his low birth seemingly precludes him from taking the throne. His father's legal successor is Absalom's uncle, a wretched man. Achitophel fills Absalom's head with praise; even though Absalom loves his father, Achitophel's subtle comments about his father's weaknesses begin to affect him. He sees himself as destined for greatness.

Achitophel devises his plan and sends Absalom out to the people to curry their favor and turn them against his father. He warns the young man of his uncle and tells him he must try for the crown while his father still lives. Achitophel begins to work within the populace, fomenting dissent and unrest. Absalom goes before the people and wins their love easily. His popularity and pomp distract from the plot at hand.

Dryden accounts for some of the most dangerous, corrupt men in the city, as well as the small but loyal band that stays with David as the tensions mount.

Finally, King David speaks, asserting his legitimacy and power in a manner that brooks no refutation or dissension. This secures his enemies' downfall and his own long rule.
