

Placing the Heart in *Paradise Lost*

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A Thesis

In

The Department

of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Master of Arts at  
Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 2006

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395 Wellington Street  
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*Your file* *Votre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-30074-9*  
*Our file* *Notre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-30074-9*

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## ABSTRACT

### Placing the Heart in *Paradise Lost*

Judith Farris

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton's language for the heart reflects his monist belief in the inseparability of body and soul. As the voices within the epic speak with and through each other, the heart is characterised as the centre of the individual. This thesis reads Milton's view of the heart in the light of his theological context, particularly the various translations of the Bible available to him, beginning with that of William Tyndale, the first translation of the Bible directly from the original languages into English. Milton's figurative language and style are rooted in the scriptures, in which the New Testament interprets the Old. A New Testament book that is particularly illustrative of the revision of the Old Testament is the epistle to the Hebrews, which is an important biblical place in relation to *Paradise Lost*. Other intertexts include Tyndale's commentaries, the Authorised Version of the Bible, and Milton's own theological treatise, *On Christian Doctrine*. The first section of the thesis considers the place of the heart in the world, where it functions as a commonplace book, gathering and keeping the word. The second section examines Milton's language for hardness or fleshiness of heart. The final section considers the heart in worship in an argument that sees Milton entering into the theological debates of his day as he negotiates a place for outward religious rites and makes the heart the most important place of worship.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I extend many thanks to my helpful guide Dr. Judith Herz, to my supportive husband Allan Farris, to my careful editor Kelly MacPhail, and to my thoughtful readers, Darragh Languay and Kevin Pask. I also express my appreciation to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the generous Canada Graduate Scholarship given in support of this project.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
Chapter One: The Heart as a Container of the Word .....	12
Chapter Two: The Hardened Heart .....	38
Chapter Three: "Before all Temples": The Heart in Worship .....	60
Bibliography .....	77

## INTRODUCTION

“The mind is its own place,” Satan tells Beelzebub as they survey their new surroundings in Hell at the beginning of *Paradise Lost* (1.254). Other voices in the epic will dispute whether the mind and heart are places of their own, but the mind and heart are indeed places, connected with the whole person by a common participation in created matter. *Paradise Lost* engages with political, philosophical, and theological discourse while being an inward epic. The central site of action is the hearts of the characters, from Adam and Eve to Satan and Beelzebub. As Barbara Kiefer Lewalski argues, its “protagonists are a domestic pair,” and “the combats they fight and lose—but will ultimately win in conjunction with the ‘greater man’ Christ—are moral and spiritual” (“Politics” 146). In *Paradise Lost*, the heart is the integrative centre of the person, in which the spiritual and corporeal faculties are brought together. As Milton employs literary and biblical tropes for the heart, he diverges from the dualist tradition of Christian orthodoxy.

In the Bible and in the seventeenth century, the heart is considered an integrative centre. In *Paradise Lost*, the Father says of Adam, “his heart I know” (11.92). To know the heart is to fully know the individual. Early in the seventeenth century, George Herbert questions, “My God, what is a heart?” in the poem “Matins,” using the word “heart” for “man.” He invokes the language of Psalm 8:4, which reads, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” in both the Authorised Version and in Tyndale’s translation of Hebrews 2:6, “so myndfull” in the Coverdale Bible (l. 5). To Herbert, the heart is a synecdoche for the whole person, eyed and wooed by God as well as “minded” by him, as the Psalmist words it; Herbert associates God primarily with the heart (l. 10). As Dayton Haskin

usefully points out, such an integrative conception of the heart was common in seventeenth century religious language: “the ‘heart’ was not contrasted with the head. The heart was often said to be the locus of one’s most private and intimate thoughts” (133). In Haskin’s analysis, the heart was generally considered to be the spiritual and intellectual centre of the person. Milton grounds this integrative concept of the heart further, figuring the heart as a book and as a generative space, a space whose spiritual significance is indexed by physical characteristics such as size and stoniness.

In *Paradise Lost*, the heart, at its best, is an active and fleshly keeper of thoughts, and, at its worst, is a fixed, stony, infertile place. The concrete language for the heart used in *Paradise Lost* has its roots in Milton’s philosophy and also in the Old Testament. Northrop Frye considers Milton’s writing to be “exceptionally biblical even by the standards of English literature” (xii). The language that Milton employs for the heart is rooted in his reading of the Old Testament, in which the heart is rarely referred to as a physical organ but rather as the centre of the “personality and the intellect, memory, emotions, desires, and will” (Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman 368). *Paradise Lost* follows from the scriptures in placing the heart as the essential site of “moral and spiritual battles” (Brandon 499). Much of the action centres upon the inward movements of characters’ hearts: Satan’s heart is “quelled” by awe from above; Adam tells Eve not to be “disheartened”; Adam’s heart “relented” to Eve; Eve, “recovering heart,” calls Adam’s love “the sole contentment of my heart” (4.860, 5.122, 10.940, 10.966, 10.973). The Father announces his plans to make a new earth, lest Satan’s “heart exalt him in the harm / Already done, to have dispeopled Heav’n” (7.150-51). In *Paradise Lost*, as in the scriptures, the heart is the centre of the individual.

The language of the Old Testament tends to the concrete, according to what Leland Ryken terms its “elemental simplicity” along with its “grand style” (4). These two complementary tendencies are apparent in the language of the Authorised Version of the Bible, and Milton, proficient in both Hebrew and Greek himself, drew on this interpretive tradition. C. A. Patrides describes the language of *Paradise Lost* as neither negative nor abstract; rather, like the language of the Bible, “it is concrete and earth-bound” (“Language” 175). The concreteness of biblical language informs the language of inwardness used in *Paradise Lost*. C. S. Lewis famously defends Milton’s elevated style as that of the “secondary epic” which aims for and achieves “solemnity,” a “ritualistic or incantatory” quality (40). Milton’s writing is informed by the language of the Bible, including the Authorised Version (1611), which follows from the first translation from the original languages directly into English, the incomplete William Tyndale Bible (OT ca. 1530, NT 1534) that was finished by his former assistant Miles Coverdale after Tyndale was martyred (1535) (Grant and Wilbur 48). Both of these initial translations flowed into the Geneva Bible (1599) (“Introduction,” Tyndale NT x-xiv). Milton himself translated passages of the Bible into Latin for *Christian Doctrine*; the English translator of Milton’s theological treatise, John Carey, comments that Milton occasionally translates the same passage differently to suit the varying nuances of his argument as he draws together collections of biblical places, using them to interpret each other (“Translator’s Preface,” *CPW* 6:xiv; Haskin 1-2).

The Protestant tradition of which Milton is a part emphasises the centrality of scripture; the word informs and forms the literary imagination during the seventeenth century (Lewalski, *Protestant* ix). Georgia Christopher calls the word a “sacramental



medium” within this tradition (205). Illustrative of this emphasis on the word is Tyndale’s prefatory note to the reader, in which he argues that those who oppose vernacular translations of the Bible want “to keep the world still in darkness” (3). He considers the word to be illuminating and claims he translated the Old Testament “because I had perceived by experience how it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see *the process, order, and meaning of the text*” (4, emphasis mine). From such learning and internalising of the process, order, and meaning of the biblical text, seventeenth century Protestant poetry emerges, with the Bible as a “model of expression” (Madsen 82). Milton argues, in *Considerations Touching the Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church*, that the availability of vernacular translations should make it possible for all churches, wealthy and poor, to have preachers, because the scriptures have been “translated into every vulgar tongue, as being held in main matters of belief and salvation, plane and easie to the poorest: and such no less then thir teachers have the spirit to guide them in all truth” (302). In this argument, the word and the Spirit alone are needful for preaching, for seeking truth. With the printing of Bibles came the printing of glosses to direct people’s reading of the scriptures and, in Tyndale’s estimation, to mislead them. In his note to the reader, he warns against those “whose perpetual study is to leaven the scripture with glosses, and there to lock it up where it should save thy soul, and to make us shoot at a wrong mark, to put our trust in those things that profit their bellies only and slay our souls” (NT 4). He underscores the necessity of believers seeking true interpretation within their own hearts. The written word was understood as an active agent that reformed one’s heart, as in Tyndale’s

translation of Hebrews 4:12: “The word of God is quick, and mighty in operation, and sharper than any two-edged sword: and entereth through, even unto the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow: and judgeth the thoughts and the intents of the heart.” In this passage, the word enters the core of one’s being, the heart.

Milton’s language for the heart is also shaped by his monist philosophy, expressed in *Christian Doctrine* and *Paradise Lost*. He believed that the soul and body are not essentially divided, as he argues in *Christian Doctrine*: “the idea that the spirit of man is separate from his body, so that it may exist somewhere in isolation, complete and intelligent, is nowhere to be found in scripture, and is plainly at odds with nature and reason” (CPW 6:319). Milton distinguishes between soul and body but considers them to be inseparable (Hill 328). In *Paradise Lost*, the Spirit of God connects the whole person into a living soul. Adam learns about his own creation through Raphael, who explains that God breathed “the breath of life” into his nostrils: “in his own image he / Created thee, in the image of God / Express, and thou becam’st a living soul” (7.526, 7.526-28). This passage derives from Genesis 2:7, in which God forms Adam from the dust of the ground and breathes life into his nostrils: “thus man became a living soul” (*Christian Doctrine*, CPW 6:317). In their morning prayer, Adam and Eve call, “join voices, all ye living souls” (5.197). In *Christian Doctrine*, Milton also states that “man is a living being,” which he defines as “intrinsically and properly one and individual” (CPW 6:318). This view accords with that found in Old Testament anthropology, which is marked by its “awareness of totality” within the individual: “man is not a body plus a soul, but a living unit of vital power, a psychophysical organism” (Brandon 498). Milton’s view of the living soul accords with this model: “the whole man is the soul, and the soul is the man: a

body, in other words, or individual substance, animated, sensitive, and rational” (*Christian Doctrine*, CPW 6:318). The individual thus functions as a whole and cannot dissociate from the body.

In Milton’s monist philosophy, all things are united; meaning and being are integrally connected. Therefore, his view of matter is essential to his political and theological views; it is at the heart of his beliefs (Rumrich, *Unbound* xii). Raphael articulates to Adam how foundational this philosophy is when he explains that angels and humans can eat the same food because their natures are connected: “one Almighty is, from whom / All things proceed” (5.469-70). To Raphael, all things are one, as God is one; his view of matter is rooted in his view of God’s unitary nature. Raphael distinguishes between different kinds of matter but establishes that God “created all / Such to perfection, *one first matter all*, / Endued with various forms, *various degrees* / *Of substance*, and in things that live, of life” (5.471-74, emphasis mine). All things are part of a continuum of being, spirit comprised of matter rather than coexisting with it as a separate substance. As Stephen Fallon argues, instead of “being trapped in an ontologically alien body, the soul is one with the body. Spirit and matter become for Milton two modes of the same substance: spirit is rarefied matter, and matter is dense spirit” (80). The epic narrator, in the catalogue of Hell’s heroes, explains that Spirits’ bodies are unencumbered. They can assume either sex or both sexes, so pure is their essence, “Not tied or manacled with joint or limb, / Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones, / Like cumbrous flesh” (1.426-28). Spirits are higher than cumbrous, brittle humans on this ontological chain. Raphael explains that spirits, “dilated or condensed, bright or obscure, / Can execute their airy purposes, / And works of love or enmity fulfil”

(1.429-31). Spirits move up and down the continuum of being, and morality is integrated with ontology in this model; works of love are paralleled with dilation and brightness, works of enmity with condensation and obscurity. At each part of the continuum, flesh and spirit are integrated.

Milton's monism is closely connected with his belief in the mortality of the soul. He demonstrates this mortalism when Michael describes Abel's death, saying Abel "groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused" (11.447). In this theory, the soul and the blood are of the same substance, both dying and being resurrected at once: "Milton . . . includes the human soul itself among the material objects which return to the sun after dissolution. All matter is indestructible because originally part of God's substance" (Hill 328). After the fall, Adam succumbs to despair, wishing for his eternal destruction, and he mistakenly distinguishes within himself between "the spirit of man" and his "corporeal clod," elevating the spiritual aspect rather than viewing them as integrated, of the same essence (10.784, 10. 786). He says he fears "lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man / Which God inspired, cannot together perish / With this corporeal clod" (10.784-86). He wants to deny the inseparability of body and spirit in himself, viewing his spirit as of a different essence than his "clod," and attempting to dissociate himself from it.

Milton's monism is distinguished from the Christian orthodoxy articulated by Augustine, which considers the mind and soul to be immaterial, following from the Platonic tradition (Hankey 563; Teske 807). Augustinian doctrine, though "a moderation of the dualistic tenets" of its intellectual milieu, nonetheless "sponsored in practise an ethical dualism" (Rumrich, "God" 1044 n. 5, 1037). To Milton, all matter originates in God, who "produced all things not out of nothing but out of himself" (*Christian Doctrine*,

CPW 6:310). In this view of matter, Milton diverges from the traditional, Augustinian notion of creation *ex nihilo*. John Peter Rumrich claims that in Milton's theology, "a benevolent God takes the place of ominous nothingness as matter's source" (Van Fleteren 548; "God" 1038). Milton attempts to separate from traditional Christian views of the duality of soul and body. He views the heart as the centre of the person and as the temple of the Spirit, expressing his monism through figurative language. With William G. Madsen, I believe that the symbolic method of *Paradise Lost* is more aptly described as Christian than as Platonic or Neoplatonic (83). Leland Ryken points to the antithetical language in both the Bible and *Paradise Lost* as an important way in which Milton connects with the scriptures, but in his argument, antithesis is synonymous with dualism (25). To believe in antitheses such as good and evil, however, does not necessitate having a dualist philosophy. Matter and spirit, to Milton, are not opposites that do not mingle and shall never meet but are part of one continuum of being.

I will examine the language of inwardness Milton uses by employing a technique used by translators of the Old Testament, according to Peggy Samuels in "Riding the Hebrew Word Web": the drawing together of places. As Hebrew scholars draw biblical places together in order to understand the varying implications of the Hebrew words, I will examine the language for the heart that develops in *Paradise Lost* by drawing together places from inside and from outside of the text. A productive way of reading Milton is in dialogue with other utterances, considering the words of *Paradise Lost* as part of a textual conversation—what Mikhail Bakhtin terms a "double-voiced discourse" (*Problems* 185). I will consider Milton in dialogue with the scriptures, in several translations, and with other theologians and poets, including Tyndale, Laud, and Herbert.

Mary Nyquist, in “Textual Overlapping and Dalilah’s Harlot-Lap,” seeks to open up the text through the interpretive lens of intertextuality, which in theory ought to demonstrate the “radically contingent and anonymously layered character of literary discourse” (341). Milton’s language is exceptionally allusive, and his utterances depend on other utterances in the ongoing discourse within the language system: “any utterance is a link in a very complexly ordered chain of other utterances” (Bakhtin, *Speech-Genres* 18). Milton enters into dialogue with his contemporaries and with the scriptural tradition, his words resonating with and diverging from previous utterances of words and speech patterns as he writes in reference to “a socio-historical context” that is the seventeenth century, “a period of dissent” (Sauer 289). As he vacillates between Christian orthodoxy, which C.S. Lewis focuses on, and heresy, which interests theorists such as William Empson, his belief in the freedom of the heart to faithfully search for and find right understanding holds his philosophy together.

The Bible, Milton’s principle source and model, moves from the Old Testament to the New in a teleological and richly intertextual way. The epistle to the Hebrews’ intertextual interest in interpreting the Old Testament makes it an important biblical place within this thesis. In William Tyndale’s introduction to his translation of Hebrews, he comments that it, more than any other biblical place, “plainly declareth the meaning and significations of the sacrifices, ceremonies and figures of the old testament” (347). He goes on to say that this book speaks specifically to his contemporary theological and political context, warning against Catholic innovations in public worship. Tyndale makes his own position clear, saying that this book could convict ceremonialist Catholics, “if wilful blindness and malicious malice were not the cause” (347). This epistle, he claims,

“were enough to weed out of the hearts of the papists that cankered heresy of justifying of works, concerning our sacraments, ceremonies and all manner traditions of their own invention” (347). In his charges of inventions, of the hearts of “papists” being full of weeds and wilfully, maliciously hardened against the scriptures, Tyndale brings the book of Hebrews into the fray of religious controversy (347). Tyndale argues that religious sacraments of the Old Testament prefigure Christ, and he sees no place for further ceremonial innovations on the scriptures in the contemporary context. Milton enters this debate a century later as he finds a place for the heart and for outward worship in *Paradise Lost*.

By asserting the importance of righteousness of heart over rightness of physical structures, Milton speaks through the epic narrator to the debates surrounding the reforms Archbishop William Laud initiated in seventeenth century England. Laud’s projects attempted to make physical spaces sacred by means such as raising and railing the altar away from the congregation (Guibbory 13). Also, particular liturgies were made sacred in the prescribed Book of Common Prayer. Indeed, the Book of Common Prayer was placed on what “the ‘holy table’ . . . which occupies the place of the altars removed after the Reformation” (OED). In contrast with consistently true temples like the “temple of [the Son’s] mighty Father throned / On high” and “th’ earth’s great altar” with its fragrant “morning incense,” the epic narrator portrays temples built by human hands as potential sites for corruption that is inspired by the chiefs among demons (6.890-91, 9.194). In contrast, the epic narrator, in the opening invocation, says the Spirit “dost prefer / Before all temples th’ upright heart and pure”; presumably, this Spirit also dost prefer before all prescribed prayers, the original prayer (1.17-18). The epic narrator’s claim is that the

Spirit prefers the heart before other temples, not to their exclusion, but the place of the heart is spiritually central within this inward epic. In the first chapter of this thesis, I will examine the ways in which Milton characterises the heart as a container of the word, with the potential of measured growth and of excess in the context of his monism. His monist understanding of the individual is also important to the second chapter, in which I consider the trope of the hardened or generative heart. In the third chapter, I will examine Milton's view of the heart in worship, in the context of seventeenth century debates.



## CHAPTER ONE: THE HEART AS A CONTAINER OF THE WORD

“This is the testament that I will make with the house of Israel:  
After those days saith the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds,  
And in their hearts I will write them.”  
Hebrews 8:10, *Tyndale's New Testament*

In *Paradise Lost*, the heart can be understood as a living book that keeps one's reading. This book ought not to be an unopened, musty tome, but rather the generative keeper of an active intellect. The heart contains the world, writ small. Idios, a speaker in John Donne's "Ecclogue: 1613. December 26," employs this trope, saying that "as man is of the world, the heart of man, / Is an epitome of God's great booke / Of creatures" (ll. 50-52). That the heart is an inward book which contains and makes coherent one's understanding of the world is a common seventeenth century concept; Milton's innovation within this tradition is to highlight the connection between the physical and the spiritual, rendering the metaphoric almost real. In a common seventeenth century practise, one might collect pieces of knowledge and wisdom that encapsulate the themes of larger works. These "commonplaces," bits of truth, would be written in a commonplace book, such as the one Milton kept, that would serve as an outward representation of a person's inward thoughts, a gathering of "good furniture" for the mind in the words of Thomas Cooper (*CPW* 1:344-513; qtd. in *OED*). In such a book, "passages important for reference were collected, usually under general heads," to be "especially remembered or referred to" (*OED*). In *Paradise Lost*, the heart functions as the seat of memory and keeps words, as does a commonplace book, to be reconsidered and interpreted in reference to each other. It is a storehouse for pieces of truth, a book compiled by reading the world as a book. In *Paradise Lost*, as this storehouse is filled, the characters enter the discourse of correct measure and its opposite, excess; in the

discourse surrounding God's, Adam's, Eve's, and Satan's hearts, the language of size matters.

As early as *Areopagitica*, both the heart and books are understood as living and active spaces, sharing in the common stock of enlivened matter; books participate in some of the best faculties of humans, as they “are not absolutely dead things” (*CPW* 2:492). Rather, books inscribe language on the heart. They “doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a viall the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them” (*CPW* 2:492). In this argument, an author's book expresses his inward “book,” his “living intellect.” These visceral images liken the words of a book to the author's blood and progeny, enlivening the text. The written words a person leaves behind can then continue to live after he dies, for “a good Booke is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalm'd and treasur'd up on purpose to a life beyond life” (*CPW* 2:492-3). These images take up the figurative language of the gospel of John's invocation that links the word with Christ: “the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw the glory of it, as the glory of the only begotten son of the father, which word was full of grace and verity” (Tyndale 1:14). Milton's reverence for the written word, including but certainly not limited to vernacular translations of the Bible, leads to his vehement opposition to censorship and book-burning, such as the burning of most copies of Tyndale's vernacular translation of the Bible a century before. As a book contains an active intellect, so a person contains an inward book.

## The Father's Omniscient Heart

In *Paradise Lost*, the Father's heart inscribes all being; all creation is his great book, which the human mind cannot fully contain. Raphael prefaces his account of the creation story by asking "what words or tongue of Seraph can suffice" to explain the Almighty's works, "or heart of man suffice to comprehend" them (7.113, 7.114). Adam and Eve are "sufficient to have stood," yet their hearts are not sufficient to fully understand the Almighty (3.99). Only God is all knowing; Raphael cautions them that some things are meant to be concealed, "which th' invisible King, / Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night, / To none communicable in earth or Heaven" (7.122-24). Some aspects of creation remain impenetrable to Adam and Eve and even to the angels. God is, by definition, the "only omniscient," the only all knowing one (7.123). The angels intuit what is directly before them, but God alone knows all by his omnipresence. The epic narrator's only use of the word "heart" in reference to God is to say that his heart is omniscient, that it fully knows, and that it cannot be fully known. Book Ten begins with the epic narrator claiming that all things, including Satan's, Eve's, and Adam's actions, are well known to God, "for what can 'scape the eye / Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart / Omniscient" (10.5-7). Beyond claiming its omniscience, the epic narrator does not hazard to define God's heart. Another reference to God's heart occurs when Michael describes God as "grieved at his heart" when observing the violence of mankind before the flood, a phrase quoted directly from Genesis 6:6 in the Authorised Version (11.887). After the fall, Adam says to Eve that God has graciously provided for them before they called on him: "how much more, if we pray to him, will his ear / Be open, and his heart to pity incline" (10.1060-61, emphasis mine). Adam speaks of God's heart inclining to them

in forgiveness when their prayers enter his open ear. These descriptions of God's heart claim it to be the seat of his knowledge and emotion.

The omniscience of God's heart and the falseness of Satan's rhetoric are revealed through Satan's misreading of God's knowledge. After a day of the war in heaven, Satan encourages the demons, saying that "Heaven's Lord" has miscalculated what is "sufficient to subdue us to his will" (6.425, 6.427). He claims God has revealed himself to be fallible of the future, "though till now / Omniscient thought" (6.429-30). Till then they had considered God to be omniscient in his thought; their momentary success gives Satan an opportunity to cast doubt on his omniscience. The demons are inwardly elevated, although falsely, by Satan's words; they are "heightened in their thoughts beyond / All doubt of victory" (6.629-30). In Satan's speech in the midst of the war in heaven, he claims the power to discern their opponents' strength, saying, "if other hidden cause / Left them superior, while we can preserve / Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound, / Due search and consultation will disclose" (6.442-45). Satan is a strict empiricist in this passage, claiming that due search will discover all knowledge, although he includes a caveat that this is true only for unhurt minds of sound understanding; the overly heightened thoughts of the demons are incapable of such analysis. After their failure of both foresight and strength, Satan claims that they could not have known God to be all-knowing. In his speech to rouse the demons, he argues that it was impossible for them to know that God was more powerful than they. He conjectures that if someone were to have searched all knowledge, the demons would have seemed stronger, suggesting that God withheld knowledge to trick them into war. He questions "what power of mind," having searched "the depth / Of knowledge past or present," could then

have “feared, / How such united force of gods, how such / As stood like these, could ever know repulse?” (1.626, 1.627-28, 1.628-30). He portrays their defeat as surprising to anyone who can read knowledge past or present. This conjecture is based on choosing the wrong reading material, employing the powers of the mind to analyse the united force of the demons’ power, not God’s; such a search is purely self-centred and deeply flawed.

In contrast to Satan, the Father exemplifies perfect sight and insight. David Lyle Jeffrey explains that the heart, according to Old Testament usage, is associated with both wisdom and knowledge (337). The Father knows appearances and their significance, and he is capable of discerning hypocrisy. Angels learn by intuiting unless they are faced with hypocrisy, “the only evil that walks / Invisible, except to God alone” (3.683-84). Uriel, despite the fact that he is “held / The sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav’n,” is tricked by Satan’s feigned cherubic appearance (3.690-91). Mistaken as to Satan’s identity, Uriel praises his desire to know God’s works and rhetorically questions “what created mind can comprehend / Their number, or the wisdom infinite / That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep” (3.705-7). Even Belial, in the demonic conclave, grants that only God knows and discerns all: “what can force or guile / With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye / Views all things at one view?” (2.188-90). Belial attributes omniscience to the Father’s mind; he avoids mentioning God’s heart. To Belial, then, the only hope the demons have is to lie low, knowing that God, described by the epic narrator as the “Eternal eye,” might forget them, might “not mind us not offending” (5.711, 2.212). Belial argues that God may then slacken the fires that surround them and that they may begin to conform to the place “in temper and in nature” (2.218). Belial does not recognise that they have already become hellish, but his hope that God might pay no mind to any

corner of the cosmos is a false one according to the epic narrator, who claims the omniscient mindfulness of God's heart, as when he paraphrases the angels' song of praise at creation: "what thought can measure thee or tongue / Relate thee" (7.603-4). All matter in the universe originates and holds together in the mind and heart of the Father, who remains mindful of it.

### **Writing and Reading the Heart**

To read the world is to begin to understand its invisible essence. The epic narrator claims the universe itself is inwardly infused with goodness when he observes Satan approaching "on the bare outside of this world" (3.74). Further, the narrator observes that the sun by "his magnetic beam" warms "the universe, and to each inward part / With gentle penetration, though unseen, / Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep" (3.583, 3.584-86). The sun initially inseminates all things with inward goodness, its light a conduit of virtue into the very core of the earth, into all matter, in this monist view. The book of nature has been created and is sustained by God, filled with visible and invisible goodness. The epic narrator, in the invocation at the outset of Book Three, explains that he cannot read the "Book of Knowledge fair" (3.47). Instead, he is "presented with a universal blank / Of Nature's works to me expunged and razed, / And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out" (3.48-50). As he cannot see the book of nature, he claims to rely on inward sight alone, asking the Spirit, "thou celestial Light," to "shine inward, and the mind through all her powers / Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence / Purge and disperse" (3.51, 3.52-54). The epic narrator invokes divine illumination for his work, asking God to give him inward eyes with which to read the book of things unseen, that he

may “see and tell / Of things invisible to mortal sight” (3.54-55). In Milton’s universe, gaining true knowledge requires divine help, and all matter originates in goodness, thereby being fit reading material.

To Milton, the unforced, Spirit-filled heart is free to search the book of knowledge as its lifelong task. In his sonnet “On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament,” he rails against the Presbyterians of the new parliament, who dare “adjure the civil sword / To force our consciences that Christ set free” (ll. 5-7). In *Areopagitica*, the search for truth involves the freedom of “much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making” (CPW 2:554). Individual engagement, questing for truth, is essential: “heretics were not only those who assert ‘traditions or opinions not probable by scripture’ [CPW 7: 249], but also those who follow set doctrine without confirmation of conscience [CPW 3: 543]” (Dobranski and Rumrich 1-2). Milton encourages active and continuous searching for truth, arguing against those who would censor and therefore stifle this search, “forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking” (CPW 2:549). He likens truth to the fragmented body of Osiris sought by Isis, saying, of truth’s scattered pieces, “we have not yet found them all . . . nor ever shall doe, till her Masters second coming; he shall bring together every joynt and member, and shall mould them into an immortall feature of lovelines and perfection” (CPW 2:549). His words evoke Paul’s in the first epistle to the Corinthian church: “for now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (CPW 2:549, n. 221; AV 13:12). Milton’s image is even more visceral than the apostle Paul’s; truth is a broken body whose parts are tangible and should be gathered with devotion. However, this gathering

cannot enliven truth without a divine breath, such as that of Isis who gathers the parts of Osiris's dead body and breathes life into them. The search must continue in actively engaged minds and hearts, despite the perpetually incomplete result; it will be fulfilled by the Son, truth's master.

Adam and Eve both demonstrate the process of gathering and reflecting upon experiences and conversations as they retell their stories of origin. They enact the process of coming to knowledge in and through finding relationship. In Adam's account, he describes his heart as a container that is filled, even to overflowing. He describes the relationship between his heart and the world to Raphael when he tells of his first moments of consciousness. In this retelling, he, in effect, re-reads his first commonplace book entries. He recalls that "with fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed" (8.266). In his description, he internalises his initial sensory experience of external excess as he looks outward at the world and the heavens. Adam's heart fills with emotion and sensation, a combination of joy and of the physical fragrance that surrounds him. Later in *Paradise Lost*, Adam's joy overflows again when Michael shows him a symbol of the covenant, the rainbow: "The heart of Adam erst so sad / Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth" (11.868-69). His heart's physical response contrasts with that of a "belated peasant" of a medieval forest who appears briefly after the introduction to Hell in Book One and hears the "jocund music" of a group of moderately sinful demons (1.783, 1.787; *PL*, Leonard 307 n. 1.781-8). The peasant's heart also has a visceral response: "at once with joy and fear his heart rebounds" (1.788). In Paradise, Adam's response to his creation is a physical experience of pure joy, in which the physical and emotional are experienced together; the peasant's heart rebounds between joy and fear, and Adam's joy



breaks forth out of sadness when he sees the rainbow. Within the heart, opposites are experienced together, and the external and internal are analogically related in the language of the heart's response.

During Adam's brief preverbal infancy, he identifies with elements of the outward world. He recalls that during this, his short-lived preverbal state, "all things smiled" (8.265). Adam stores up physical sensations in his heart, the initial excess giving way to his careful surveying and indexing that prompt him to discern the cause of his being, "some great Maker" (8.278). Adam reports that in his first moments, even before he has language, he reads the book of the world and inscribes what he reads on his heart. He exemplifies what the writer of Proverbs instructs the reader to do: "apply thine heart to understanding" (AV 2:2). Through his collected observations, and by coming into language, he discerns who creation's author is. To Adam, the world is a book to be read and interpreted, epitomised by the heart, which is itself a living book that inscribes what he reads and produces a new reading. As he reads and learns, he expresses the gifts given to him by God. When engaging in discussions with Adam, Raphael says of Adam's graceful and eloquent speech that God has poured his gifts into Adam, who expresses, "inward and outward both, [God's] image fair" (8.221). Raphael claims that Adam, in his inward self, stores up what he has learned and expresses it well: "speaking or mute all comeliness and grace / Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms" (8.222-23). As Adam develops, his speech and even his silence become expressions of his maker.

An important part of Eve's initial self-constitution is her reading of her first moments. Eve's story of origins precedes Adam's and therefore is his model; she constructs "the first autobiographical narrative" in Paradise, "with the implications

autobiography carries of coming to self-awareness, probing one's subjectivity, interpreting one's own experience, and so becoming an author" (Lewalski, "Politics" 161). In Book Eight, Adam prefaces his account by saying, "for man to tell how human life began / Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?" (8.250-51). Eve undertakes this hard task of her own initiative, claiming to "oft remember" her story (4.449). Her identity is not created in isolation but is enacted in a community. To be "conscious," according to the seventeenth century use of the word, is to share "the knowledge of anything, *together with another*," and to be "privy to anything *with another*" (*OED*, emphasis mine). Consciousness is made possible in relationship; Eve becomes conscious in relation to Adam. Therefore, it is fitting that she begins with an invocation that authorises her account by gesturing to another. Eve reads herself in relation to Adam, from whom she was formed and, in her words, "without whom am to no end, my guide / And head," and in relation to God, to whom she and Adam "indeed all praises owe, / And daily thanks" (4.442-43, 4.444-45). To be conscious in Milton's world is to be in relation to another and to understand the hierarchy of Paradise (Pruitt 34-35).

Significant in Eve's account is the mirror moment, in which she is enamoured of her own reflection. The now-experienced Eve recalls awaking from what she describes as a sleep, wondering "where / And what I was, whence thither brought, and how" (4.51-52). She recalls seeking her origins and her identity from her first moments. She soon wanders to a "liquid plain" of water where she sees a reflection of her image, without recognising it as herself (4.455). This incident has traditionally been referred to as "Eve at the pool," although this—her first mirror—is actually a lake, not a self-enclosed pool (*PL*, Leonard 345 n. 459). The parallels between Eve and Narcissus of Ovid's

*Metamorphoses* have often reflected badly on Eve throughout the history of Milton scholarship, yet there are significant distinctions between them. Narcissus loses himself in his own reflection in a small woodland pool (3.407-12). In *Paradise Lost*, associations with such stagnant bodies of water are reserved for the lustful demon Chemos, who is linked with the Dead Sea, and for Satan, who tries to hide in a pool after he converts himself to a vapour (1.411, 9.77). In *Areopagitica*, Milton comments that “truth is compar’d in scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetuall progression, they sick’n into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition” (CPW 2:543). Eve is not associated with such a muddy pool; in contrast, she is drawn to the sound of living, flowing water (McColley 79). The epic narrator has introduced the reader to this lake a few pages earlier. The “murmuring waters” of Paradise fall “down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake, / That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned, / Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams” (4.261-63). This is the mirror in which Eve sees herself, drawn by the “murmuring sound / Of waters issued from a cave” (4.453-4). The water in which Eve’s face answers to itself is living water.

Eve recalls being captivated by this image until an outside voice calls her out of her mirror stage and into both language and relationship. She tells of bending to look at this reflective surface and observing that, “just opposite, / A shape within the wat’ry gleam appeared / Bending to look on me” (4.460-62). She desires to create a relationship with this shape: “I started back, / It started back, but pleased I soon returned, / Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks / Of sympathy and love” (4.462-65). When retelling her story, she recognises the appeal of her image and admits she would have stayed at the pool had the voice not called her from it. She says, “There I had fixed /

Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire” had not a voice warned her that what she sees is herself (4.465-66). Eve can certainly be excused from being enamoured with her image. The epic narrator says she is so beautiful that it would even be understandable for Raphael to fall love with her: “if ever, then, / Then had the sons of God excuse to have been / Enamoured at that sight” (5.446-48). In the hearts of the angels, the “sons of god,” however, “love unlibidinous reigned” (5.447, 5.449). Unlike Narcissus, Eve turns from the mirror and eventually teaches herself to see beauty in another (*PL*, Leonard 345 n. 460-68). She concludes that “beauty is excelled by manly grace / And wisdom, which alone is truly fair” (4.490-91). In the biblical account, she is not given the task of deciding whether to choose relationship with Adam. In Milton’s *Paradise*, she and Adam will continue to learn, to grow, and to employ all human faculties.

While many critics have read the mirror moment as a foreshadowing of Eve’s fall, or even as a “fall before the fall,” Eve, by showing she can read this incident and learn from it proves herself sufficient to stand and to grow. Her story reflects the proverb, “As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man” (AV Prov. 27:19, italics in original). In the lake, Eve’s face answers to her face. The true mirror in this passage is that of her poem, a representation of the commonplace book of her heart, in which she has gathered up and reflected upon all she has learned. Like so much of *Paradise Lost*, Eve’s story of origins is told by a character within *Paradise Lost* rather than by the epic narrator. By giving voice to many characters within the epic, Milton demonstrates the process of learning, of identity formation through becoming a fit reader of one’s experiences. In the evening of the day that she tells her story, Eve speaks another poem to Adam that demonstrates the knowledge she has written in the commonplace book of her

heart and her ability to read it. In this poem, she surveys all of creation, as she knows it, and reflects upon it:

Neither breath of morn when she ascends,  
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun  
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flow'r,  
Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,  
Nor grateful ev'ning mild, nor silent night  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,  
Or glittering starlight without thee is sweet. (4.650-56)

In poetry, Eve constructs her increasing understanding of creation, of her relationship to Adam, and of herself. Herbert writes in his sonnet "Prayer (1)" that prayer is, among other images, "the soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage" (l. 3). Eve's poem to Adam at this point can be seen in the same terms, a paraphrase of her inward thoughts and a lyric portrait of herself at this stage of her developmental journey; as Eve rehearses her identity, she becomes what Milton claims "a poet must be, the pattern of a true poem" (McColley 80). As in water, Eve sees her face, so in her poems, she reads her heart. At this point in *Paradise Lost*, she and Adam have already been at work in Paradise for a period of time; Eve will continue to mature and to grow.

### **Beyond First Impressions: Filling the Book**

If Adam's and Eve's hearts are ever-growing containers of commonplaces, compendiums of what they have learned, it follows that the physical attribute of size has moral significance. David Masson comments that "Shakespeare lived in a world of time, Milton in a universe of space" (qtd. in Cope 497). Physical space is an important motif to Milton, which he employs in the language of inwardness as well as in the language of

cosmology. The size and shape of his thoughts are lauded by Andrew Marvell in “On *Paradise Lost*,” which prefaces the second edition of the epic. Marvell writes,

Thou hast not missed one thought that could be fit,  
And all that was improper dost omit:  
So that no room is here for writers left,  
But to detect their ignorance or theft. (ll. 27-30)

In Marvell’s acclamation, Milton’s thoughts and words are fitting, a complement according to the discourse of size employed within *Paradise Lost*, in which Adam’s and Eve’s prayers are “in fit strains pronounced” (5.148). Marvell goes on to question rhetorically, “Where couldst thou words of such a compass find? / Whence furnish such a vast expense of mind?” (ll. 41-42). “Expense” refers primarily, as John Leonard notes, to the expenditure of mental effort, yet it also evokes the word “expanse,” especially as it follows the adjective “vast” and the spatial metaphor of the compass for Milton’s apt word choices (*PL* lviii n. 42). To Marvell, Milton’s mind has been well furnished for the mental labour he takes up in *Paradise Lost*. Thoughts ought to be fit, not merely increased in size.

To those at the early stages of putting together the pieces of truth, it may seem that increased size indicates improvement, but the individual is meant to mature holistically in *Paradise Lost*. A voice tells Adam as he comes into consciousness, “of every tree that in the garden grows / Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth” (8.321-22). Adam can partake with a glad and temperate heart of almost all the fruit of the garden, just as he can partake of knowledge in the book of creation within bounds. Adam’s educational conversation with Raphael follows their meal; when, “with meats and drinks they had sufficed, / Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose / In Adam, not to let th’ occasion pass” to ask about the nature of things “above his world” (5.451-53,

5.455). Adam and Eve are inwardly prompted to exercise all human faculties in Milton's Paradise, in which there is room for intellectual inquiry. Raphael instructs Adam to be "lowly wise," to consider only "what concerns thee in thy being"; he speculates, however, that through this lowly wisdom, it may be possible for Adam and Eve to eventually become more like angels, changing in degree, because they share a common kind of matter (8.173, 8.174). In Book Five, he establishes that, at this point, angels and men use different kinds of reason, that "discourse / Is ofttest yours," and that intuitive reason "most is ours, / Differing but in degree, of kind the same" (5.488-89, 5.489-90). Raphael theorises that Adam and Eve may learn to become more like angels, "more refined, more spiritous, and pure, / As nearer to him placed or nearer tending" (5.475-76). The angels, Raphael explains, are "vital in every part" (6.345):

All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,  
All intellect, all sense, and as they please,  
They limb themselves, and colour, shape or size  
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare. (6.350-53)

Angels are pure in their nature, in heart and in sense, which Raphael suggests Adam and Eve may become as well. He attempts to balance his speculations about Adam's and Eve's possible ascent to the status of angels with the discourse of temperance and proportion. He claims that this ascent could happen in a rightly proportioned way, "each in their several active spheres assigned, / Till body up to spirit work, in bounds / Proportioned to each kind" (5.477-79). The discourse surrounding Raphael's speculations of inner growth is couched in terms of temperance. Adam's and Eve's growth is to be measured and moderate. As the Psalmist writes, in Christopher Smart's translation, "Thy wholesome dictates are imprest, / And treasur'd up within my breast" (119:11). When

written upon by this wholesome word, one's heart is increasingly able to discern and to choose righteously.

If knowledge is food, then it is governed by natural law. In Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes suggests the lawfulness of digestion when he says, "if this be magic, let it be an art / Lawful as eating" (5.3.110-11). In one of Milton's inventive epic similes, knowledge, as food, can be consumed in excess, immoderately. Raphael claims that, like food, knowledge also needs "temperance over appetite, to know / In measure what the mind may well contain" (7.127-28). Without such temperance, knowledge "oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns / Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind" (7.129-30). As the body passes a glut of food as gas, the mind turns even wisdom to folly when stuffed to excess. According to Raphael, surfeit, "an excessive amount" of knowledge, oppresses the mind (*OED*). This visceral image underscores the material nature of the mind and figures learning as part of a natural order. In *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton says that unreasoning people close "the womb of teeming Truth" if the offspring of this womb conflicts with their "unchew'd notions and suppositions" (*CPW* 2:224). This is the first documented use of the word "chew" in reference to processing knowledge (*CPW* 2:224, n. 12). The language of moderation and proportional growth connects with a digestive metaphor used by the writer of Hebrews. In Tyndale's translation, he writes that those believers who do not understand the basic principles of the word of God "have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (5:13). The writer to the Hebrews suggests that, as there are different levels of physical development, there are different stages of spiritual maturity, each of which requires a different type of nourishment: "every man that is fed with milk, is inexpert in the word of righteousness.



For he is but a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect . . . to judge both good and evil” (5:12-14). Tyndale comments in his note to the reader explaining why he wrote a translation of the New Testament that his task is “distributing unto my brethren and fellows of one faith, their due and necessary food: so dressing it and seasoning it, that the weak stomachs may receive it also, and be the better for it” (3-4). His purpose is to dress and season the word so that all can internalise it. As in *Paradise Lost*, knowledge is part of a natural order on which ascent occurs in measured ways.

In *Paradise Lost*, Raphael curbs Adam’s curiosity while acknowledging that it prompts growth. Adam, having learned of the war in heaven, “repealed / The doubts that in his heart arose” and turns his attention to the origins of the world in which he lives, a topic that “nearer might concern him” (7.59-60, 7.62). The epic narrator says Adam is “yet sinless” in his desire to know, emphasising Adam’s blamelessness as he seeks knowledge and comprehension (7.61). Raphael answers Adam’s questions about the justness of God in relation to cosmology by premising that the sky is indeed an open book, there to be read. Raphael says,

To ask or search I blame thee not, for heav’n  
Is as the Book of God before thee set,  
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn  
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:  
This to attain, whether heav’n move or earth,  
Imports not. (8.66-71)

While Raphael deems Adam blameless, the syntax and line breaks imply, momentarily, that “whether heav’n move or earth” is the goal to be attained, before the next line brings the qualification, “imports not” (8.70, 8.71). All of the speculations as to the limits of excess are called into question, however, on account of Uriel’s earlier assessment of the

disguised Satan's desire to know God's works. He assesses the hypocritical Satan's condition as follows:

Fair angel, thy desire which tends to know  
The works of God, thereby to glorify  
The great Work-Master, leads to no excess  
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
The more it seems excess. (3.694-98)

Uriel's misidentification of Satan's actual motive casts doubt upon the truth of his assessment that heightened excess is correlated with increased blamelessness. True growth occurs through love. Before the fall, Adam is drawn to Eve's beauty, a beauty deeply connected with her goodness. He recalls that, upon first seeing Eve, he felt she was the epitome of all that is fair; her looks "infused / Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before, / And into all things from her air inspired / The spirit of love and amorous delight" (8.474-77). Raphael invokes the concept of enlarging the heart when counselling Adam not to be degraded in his love for Eve but to love that in Eve which refines virtue, thereby growing. He advises Adam that

love refines  
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat  
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale  
By which to Heav'nly love thou may'st ascend,  
Not sunk in carnal pleasure. (8.589-93)

Raphael contrasts the higher virtues possible in a marriage relationship with the lower "carnal" pleasures (8.593). Adam fumbles as he seeks the right measure.

Through spatial metaphors of excess, Satan's inner nature is revealed, as are Milton's political beliefs. Following the epic catalogue of demons with which *Paradise Lost* begins, the narrator says, "their number last [Satan] sums. And now his heart / Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength / Glories" (1.571-73). The physical

image of a heart that has distended associates swollenness with the “monarchal pride” of a leader who is “conscious of highest worth” in his own person (2.428, 2.429). This image checks the admiration the reader might have for “the whole battallion” of demons Satan views, “their visages and stature as of gods”—descriptions that immediately precede this spatial characterisation of the heart (1.569, 1.570). The physical characterising of Satan’s heart as distended reveals the hollowness of his claim to power. Before eavesdropping on Adam and Eve, Satan explains his own motivation for conquering them in terms of “public reason just, / Honour and empire with revenge enlarged” (4.389-90). Satan’s minions are, in Gabriel’s assessment, fit followers: “army of fiends, fit body to fit head” (4.953).

In Milton’s politics, true largeness of heart is evidenced by interest in the common good, as opposed to tyrannical self-interest. Raphael attributes largeness of heart to the first of the few animals he mentions in his account of the creation story. He teaches Adam that the first animal that crept was

The parsimonious emmet, provident  
Of future, in small room large heart enclosed,  
Pattern of just equality perhaps  
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes  
Of commonality. (7.485-89)

To Raphael, it is the emmet’s, or the ant’s, orientation to its fellows and its disinclination to usurp power that makes its heart so disproportionately large to its small stature. To be “parsimonious” is to be “very unwilling to . . . use resources”; the emmet’s fellow feeling renders this adjective a positive statement on its lack of selfishness (*OED*). In contrast, Michael says of Nimrod, who initiates building the tower of Babel, that “one shall rise / Of proud ambitious heart . . . not content / With fair equality, fraternal state” (12.24-26).

Michael does not name Nimrod, thereby insulting this leader whose ambition in life was to make a name for himself (Sauer 264). The just and fair equality of which the angels speak contrasts with the pride and ambition of someone who seeks to elevate himself, whose heart is swollen with pride. In *The Readie and Easie way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*, Milton glosses Solomon's proverb about the industrious ant for his political purposes: "*Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, saith Solomon; consider her waies, and be wise; which having no prince, ruler, or lord, provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest*" (CPW 7:427, italics in original). Milton pointedly uses monarchical terms for the ant's absent "prince, ruler, or lord," while the Authorised Version refers to a "guide, overseer, or ruler," the Coverdale Bible to "no gyde, no teacher, no leader," and the Geneva Bible to a "guide, gouernour, [and] ruler" (Prov. 6:7). Milton employs the image of the ant in a politically direct way.

To Milton, kings are often like the monarchal Satan; despite their socially sanctioned role, they are usurpers of a role appropriate only in heaven, where the one true King is fit for absolute power (Lewalski, "Milton's Politics" 146). Within *Paradise Lost*, characters in Satan's tradition such as Nimrod are "archetypal tyrants," beginning a tradition of kings that includes the Stuarts who, paradoxically, are rebels (Leonard 444 n. 30-32, 36). The tyrannical Satan falsely proclaims to the fallen angels that their "portion is so small" that none of them will have "ambitious mind / [And] covet more," allowing them the advantage of "union, and firm faith, and firm accord" (2.33, 2.34-35, 2.36). Even as he disclaims any possibility of envious seizing of power, his words jar with his earlier assessment that "to reign is worth ambition though in Hell" (1.262). He may sound like a "parsimonious emmet" when speaking of the demons' union and small portion, but

he is a tyrant (7.485). As Christopher Hill comments in *Milton and the English Revolution*, Satan represents tyranny in many manifestations; he is not a “flat allegorical figure” to be equated with one particular group, such as the “Royalists, Ranters, or major-generals. Milton saw the Satanic in all three” (343). In Milton’s description of Satan’s heart, in material terms, he effects a characterisation of Satanic tyrants throughout history, manifested in different forms in seventeenth century England. A tyrant, in this analysis, has a heart that, though distended with pride, is essentially reduced to a smaller inward stature than that of an emmet, the least of all the living creatures.

Satan’s body often changes in size, but his hypocrisy is revealed when Gabriel challenges him as he trespasses on creation. Anticipating this challenge, Satan manipulates his shape: he “alarmed / Collecting all his might *dilated* stood” (4.985-86, emphasis mine). This dilation, expansion of his being, is extreme; in recent memory, he has been a small toad, croaking at Eve’s ear. Now he is transformed to physically enormous proportions, likened to “Teneriffe or Atlas,” as “his stature reached the sky, and on his crest / Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp / What seemed both spear and shield” (4.987, 4.988-90). Satan seems expansive and impressive in this visual image. However, he is revealed to be a lightweight according to the scales God has hung in the heavens in the form of a constellation,

his golden Scales, yet seen  
Betwixt Astraea and the Scorpion sign,  
Wherein all things created first he weighed,  
The pendulous round earth with balanced air  
In counterpoise, now ponders all events. (4.997-1001)

In this case, the scales indicate that Satan should depart; God puts into the scales two weights, one which would result in parting, one in conflict: “The latter quick up flew, and

kicked the beam” (4.1004). Gabriel concludes that God ultimately controls both his own and Satan’s strength; he invites Satan to know himself by reading the heavens: “for proof look up, / And *read thy lot* in yon celestial sign / Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak, / If thou resist” (4.1010-13, emphasis mine). Satan is now forced to read God’s message, a message like the one Daniel interprets in the Old Testament, in which the prophetic word “tekel” means “thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” (AV Dan. 5:27). Satan reads this message rightly, knowing the meaning of the scales and fleeing, his claim to power unsubstantiated (4.1013-15).

Satan, as the serpent, encourages Eve to grow beyond her measure as he desires to grow beyond his. In her dream, he attempts to raise “at least distempered, discontented thoughts, / Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires / Blown up with high conceits engend’ring pride” (4.807-9). In this dream, Satan offers the fruit, which Eve “could not but taste,” after which she feels exhilarated: “up to the clouds / With him I flew, and underneath beheld / The earth outstretched immense” (5.86, 5.86-88). Later, in the temptation scene, he attributes the “capacious” mind which enables a serpent to speak to having eaten the fruit; the adjective “capacious” subtly implies Satan’s true nature, as it indicates both large size and empty, hollow space (9.603; *OED*). He claims that he then used his capacious mind to consider “all things visible in heav’n, / Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good,” and he flatters her by calling her the pinnacle of all this goodness, which she earlier said was not sweet without Adam (9.604-5). In effect, he claims that he has acquired a more God-like heart, and that, in knowing all, he knows her to be the epitome of creation and most worthy of worship—compliments that enter into her heart. In turn, Eve’s tempting words to Adam echo Raphael’s suggestion that they can improve

in nature; she tells him that partaking of the fruit has resulted in her “growing up to godhead” (9.877). She credits eating the fruit with the following effects: “*opener* mine eyes, / Dim erst, *dilated* spirits, *ampler* heart” (9.875-76, emphasis mine). She claims that her eyes, spirits, and heart have enlarged and have therefore become more God-like. Eve allies herself with the apparently capacious-minded serpent and asks Adam to join her, so that they may not be disjoined because of being of different degrees on the ontological chain. She urges him to eat, “that equal lot / May join us, equal joy, as equal love; / Lest thou not tasting, different degree / Disjoin us” (9.881-84). She suggests she may have outpaced Adam, to the point that they cannot relate to one another.

Adam is himself tempted, in part, by the serpent’s capaciousness. He notices that the serpent lives, having eaten the fruit, and that he

gains to live as man  
 Higher degree of life, inducement strong  
 To us, as likely tasting to attain  
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be  
 But to be gods, or angels demi-gods. (9.933-37)

Adam recognises the increased degree of the serpent’s rational abilities and disregards the prohibition, speculating about what his proportional ascent could look like. He forgets what he has observed of the fruit’s deteriorating effects on Eve moments earlier. Inwardly staggering from the shock, he observes that she is “defaced, deflow’red, and now to death devote” (9.901). He forgets Raphael’s call for temperance. When both Adam and Eve have eaten of the “fallacious fruit,” it merely plays with their spirits and “inmost powers / Made err”; having done so, its “*exhilarating* vapour bland” is soon “*exhaled*” (9.1046, 9.1048-49, 9.1047, 9.1049, emphasis mine). The vapour leaves them flat; its apparent transformation of their state of being is short-lived, being nothing but wind. Adam and

Eve, having exhaled this vapour, are no longer hale, whole. Prompted by Satan, they seek rapid growth to godhead, but they are played upon by the fruit's vapour rather than becoming more refined in matter by this search for knowledge.

In the postlapsarian world, inward and outward realities are increasingly incongruous, and the search for truth is complicated. In Adam's postlapsarian state, his senses mislead him as Michael unfolds history before him. Adam watches a "bevy of fair women" and is drawn to it, seeing it as a welcome improvement over the earlier violence (11.582). The epic narrator records the sights and sounds of "songs, garlands, flow'rs, / And charming symphonies" (11.582, 11.594-95). The seeming loveliness of the scene "attached the heart / Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight, / The bent of nature" (11.595-97). In the bent world, Adam's heart is misled, and his thoughts are also bent. His inclination to admit delight is mistaken in the fallen world. Frank Kermode comments on Michael chastising Adam for using pleasure as a guide after the fall, pointing out that "the evidence of the senses, the testimony of pleasure, is no longer a reliable guide" (120-21). In the postlapsarian world, ontology and epistemology are less congruous than they are in Paradise; the task of interpretation is rendered even more difficult. The image of bent thoughts is also applied to the demons. In the epic catalogue of Hell's heroes, Mammon is characterised by such thoughts; even while he was in Heaven,

his looks and thoughts  
Were always downward bent, admiring more  
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,  
Than aught divine or holy. (1.680-83)

Ironically, by closely examining the materials of heaven, Mammon misses its essence. Satan also misses the essence of heaven when he claims that to look at the landscape of



Heaven is to survey it “superficially”; to Satan, its essence is found “deep under ground, [in] materials dark and crude,” materials the demons use in making implements of war (6.476, 6.478). Beelzebub, when suggesting an attack on earth in the demonic conclave in hell, speaks of thoughts as physical beings that can be shaped. He says, “let us bend all our thoughts” to learn about earth’s creatures’ substance and weaknesses (2.354). The demons learn by their bent use of mental substance, and Adam struggles to read rightly in the postlapsarian world, in which his thoughts are likewise bent.

Milton demonstrates the struggle to straighten bent thoughts in the postlapsarian world. He uses the trope of writing on the heart to argue for freedom of thought. In *Paradise Lost*, after Michael describes human history, Adam asks who will guide the people. Michael replies that the Father will send a Comforter, his Spirit, who will dwell within them and, by “the law of faith / Working through love, upon their hearts shall write, / To guide them in all truth” (12.488-90). This conception of the Spirit’s working “through love” and in truth conforms to the Augustinian principle that love and knowledge are interconnected (Crouse 488). It is important that the Spirit does not force, but rather guides. In Milton’s view, there is a “double scripture”; he claims, “there is the external scripture of the written word and the internal scripture of the Holy Spirit which he, according to God’s promise, has engraved upon the hearts of believers, and which is certainly not to be neglected” (*Christian Doctrine CPW* 6:587). The external scripture becomes internal according to the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, who uses this trope: “after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts” (AV 8:10; see also Heb. 10:16 and Jer. 31:33). In *Christian Doctrine*, Milton interprets what the “law” refers to in Hebrews, saying that it may “be taken to

mean merely religious doctrine, or alternatively it may mean the will of God as expressed in the law or in the gospel” (*CPW* 6:516). In Milton’s translation of 2 Corinthians 3:3, this law is written “not on tablets of stone but on the fleshly tablets of the heart” (*CPW* 6:526). The heart is ultimately defended by this inward scripture, the “umpire conscience” implanted by the Father (3.195). Michael claims that the heart’s “spiritual armour” against “Satan’s assaults” is connected with the inward writing of the Spirit (12.491, 12.492). Thomas Fuller holds this military view of the words kept in a literal commonplace book, which he likens to “many notions in garrison, whence the owner may draw out an army into the field” (qtd. in *OED*). The heart needs defending against those Michael describes, who will use “carnal power” to force “spiritual laws” on other people’s inward books (12.521, 12.521). These false laws do not correspond with “what the Spirit within / Shall on the heart engrave” (12.523-24). The inward book of the individual offers a living and active defence against forcers of conscience and of “the Spirit of grace itself” who bind the Spirit’s “consort Liberty” (12.525, 12.526). Forcers of conscience unbuild God’s “living temples, built by faith to stand, / Their own faith not another’s” (12.527-28). The heart, the Spirit’s temple, is a sacred space. To force another’s conscience becomes the true iconoclasm, destroying, part by part, God’s true temple.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE HARDENED HEART

“As it is rehearsed: this day if ye hear his voice, be not hard-hearted . . .  
There remaineth therefore yet a rest to the people of God.”  
Hebrews 4:6-7&9, *Tyndale's New Testament*

In *Paradise Lost*, the heart becomes hardened when it is no longer a generative place for the living word of God. The heart loses freedom as it hardens. Milton draws out of the scriptures this concept of the heart hardening unless it holds the word of God and, as in the epistle to the Hebrews, is in community with others who share the word with one another: “exhort one another daily, while it is still called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (AV 3:13). The heart hardens unless it is written upon by the Spirit; turning from the inner and outer word of God results in a hardening of the spiritual centre, the heart. In *Paradise Lost*, the Father foresees the hardening deceitfulness of sin in humanity, that “hard be hardened, blind be blinded more, / . . . they may stumble on, and deeper fall; / And none but such from mercy I exclude” (3.200-2). To be continuously hardened is to be increasingly removed from God’s word and, eventually, from his mercy. Michael explains to Adam that the increased hardening of the heart caused by sin results in a lack of inward freedom corresponding to a loss of outward freedom: “since thy original lapse, true liberty / Is lost, which always with right reason dwells / Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being” (12.83-5). Inward freedom is possible only when one does not allow “unworthy powers to reign / Over free reason” (12.91-92). True liberty, to Milton, is found in allowing the word a generative space within, preventing hardness of the heart.

It is a biblical trope that Pharaoh’s heart is hardened against Moses in the exodus account, making him unwilling to follow the commands Moses mediates to him from

God. In the biblical account of the story, both God and Pharaoh play a role in the hardening. In the majority of cases, God is the agent, as in Exodus 14:4 where God says “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart,” although in several places, such as Exodus 8:15, Pharaoh is the agent: “he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them” (Moo 533; AV). When hard, Pharaoh’s heart is impenetrable and impervious to God’s word. In *Paradise Lost*, Michael narrates Milton’s account of the exodus story, and he uses the word “hardened” only once in his account. Michael attributes this hardening to Pharaoh’s active denial of the word of God given in Moses’ message: “the lawless tyrant . . . denies / To know their God, or message to regard, / [and] Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire” (12.173-75). Michael says that after the plagues, when Pharaoh allows the Hebrew people freedom, he “oft / Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice / More hardened after thaw,” resolves to pursue them (12.192-94). Milton, using Michael’s voice, takes up the commonplace that Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, and he innovates by figuring it as water which freezes, melts, and is eventually more hardened than it was before, increasing the visceral nature of this image of the “river-dragon” Pharaoh’s cold, hard heart (12.191). There is an analogue between tyrannical inflation and hardness; when frozen, water expands. Pharaoh is thus linked with Nimrod, Satan, and the other tyrants within the epic and within history, whose hearts are falsely inflated and impervious to God’s word.

Pharaoh’s heart may be twice-hardened, but the demons in hell who cope with their fallen state by engaging in philosophy are triple-hardened. Their endless discussions “charm / Pain for a while or anguish, and excite / Fallacious hope, or arm th’ obdured breast / With stubborn patience as with triple steel” (2.566-69). The word “obdured”

indicates stubbornness and has the Latin roots *ob*, “in opposition,” and *durare*, “harden”; Michael uses this term of Pharaoh, “th’ obdurate king,” and Raphael terms the demons “the’ obdurate” who are “hardened more” during the war in heaven (“Obdurate” *OED*; 12.205, 6.790, 6.791). Once in hell, the hardened breasts of the demons are fortified “as with triple steel” with stubbornness, an image that communicates the moral implications of hard-heartedness and the fruitlessness of their philosophical pursuits (2.569). Satan also exemplifies inner and outer hardness. His being is outwardly degraded, reflecting his fallen inner self: “his face / Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care / Sat on his faded cheek” (1.600-2). Satan has lost some of his angelic nature, the “essential ductility of angels; former tenuousness has hardened into rigidity. This congealing reaches within as Satan’s heart ‘hardens’ with his moral deterioration (1.572)” (Fallon 208). Satan is inwardly and outwardly hardened.

The discourse of hardness in *Paradise Lost* is vexed; while to be hard, stony, and fixed are associated with imperviousness to the word, inner firmness is needed to stand on that word. The tension within the figurative language is evident in a moment during Michael’s survey of biblical history. After Michael describes the illnesses to come, the epic narrator comments, “sight so deform what heart of rock could long / Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept” (11.494-95). Even a proverbial heart of rock would, and, it seems, should be moved by this sight. This passage suggests that hard-heartedness would be inappropriate in the face of this suffering. However, the epic narrator goes on to imply the importance of a measure of inner hardness; Adam weeps, “though not of woman born; compassion quelled / His best of man, and gave him up to tears / A space, till *firmer thoughts restrained excess*” (11.496-98, emphasis mine). Adam’s firm thoughts

are associated with manliness, uprightness, and restraint of excess. This inner and corresponding outer erectness is part of his essential nature, according to Raphael, who says that man, at creation, was “endued / With sanctity of reason [that he] might erect / His stature . . . upright with front serene” (7.507-9). This language of erectness has its counterpart when Satan rouses the demons to the war in heaven, questioning, “What if better counsels might erect / Our minds and teach us to cast off this yoke?” (5.785-86). In addition, Chemos, who is also named Peor, leads the Israelites “to do him wanton rites,” by Moloch’s grove, “lust hard by hate” (1.414, 1.417). This phallic double entendre demonstrates that the language of inner hardness is nuanced and one’s own inner state must be read rightly.

The demons are characterised by inward inflation and rigidity; to Milton, mind and matter are integrally connected. While Adam and Eve can learn in an integrated way in the newly created world, Satan cannot bear to understand his new surroundings in this manner. When faced with adversity, Satan resorts to dualism, albeit inconsistently, and asserts mind over matter; he attempts to master the degraded material surroundings in which he finds himself “chained on the burning lake” in the “heart of Hell” by reforming the place that is his mind, fixing it on one goal (1.210, 1.151). The situation he and the other demons find themselves in is thoroughly humiliating. In Beelzebub’s words, they remain conscious of their loss; they could do no worse, having fallen as far as heavenly essences can: “for the mind and spirit remains / Invincible, and vigour soon returns, / Though all our glory extinct” (1.139-41). Satan copes with his outwardly and inwardly painful situation by confronting and attempting to master his mind rather than be tormented by “the thought / Both of lost happiness and lasting pain” (1.54-55). To

Beelzebub, Satan calls the mind “its own place”; this place, he claims, has inward freedom that can transcend the limitations of physical surroundings to the point that it “in itself / Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n” (1.254, 1.254-55).

Fallon identifies Satan’s intellectual manoeuvres here as Cartesian dualism. The belief in the irrelevance of the body to the mind “seems for the moment a more serviceable philosophy for Satan’s predicament than . . . Milton’s monism” (204). Satan separates his mind from material circumstances, fixing it on the goal of taking power. His inward turning from a past paradise to a new, single focus is reminiscent of Hamlet after his conversation with the ghost that launches the plot of the play. Hamlet claims he will erase everything else from his mind:

Yea, from the table of my memory  
I’ll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past  
That youth and observation copied there. (1.5.99-102)

He determines to erase the stores of memory of his inner commonplace book, keeping only the direction of the ghost. Addressing the ghost, he says, “thy commandment all alone shall live / Within the book and volume of my brain, / Unmixed with baser matter” (1.5.103-5). Hamlet attempts to separate himself from his memory and Satan from his material circumstances, each focusing on a singular goal.

Satan’s resolve to adopt a dualist view is not carried out consistently. In *Paradise Lost*, erasure of past knowledge and fixation on a single purpose require constant diligence, as the mind slips into knowledge that unsettles this fixation. Initially, Satan determines that his inward self must be an inhospitable place for the Father’s goodness. As God’s goodness “proved ill” in him and “wrought but malice,” the demons follow Satan in disturbing God’s “inmost counsels from their destined aim,” attempting to

implant evil into his inner plans (4.48, 4.49, 1.168). However, while Satan flies to the earth to wreak his vengeance, he experiences doubts that trouble his single-mindedness: “conscience wakes despair / That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory / Of what he was, what is, and what must be / Worse” (4.23-26). His inner fixation has not entirely sedated his memory of what he has been. He comments to himself that his followers do not know “under what torments inwardly I groan,” lamenting that, “high advanced / The lower still I fall, only supreme / In misery; such joy ambition finds” (4.88, 4.90-92). Satan’s fixation is troubled from within in moments when he recognises the essential truth of his fallen condition.

Satan’s resolution is undermined by his recognition that he has changed, at least in outward lustre. While admitting this change, he uses rhetoric to convince himself and others that the change in him is merely superficial and not profound. Fallon puts it this way: “Satan admits alteration in his *res extensa*, but denies it in his *res cogitans*” (203). Having fallen, Satan sees Beelzebub and comments immediately, “how fall’n! how changed” he is from what he was in Heaven, when he, “clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine / Myriads though bright” (1.84, 1.86-87). Satan claims that, despite the misery that has been or will be inflicted by the arms of “that potent Victor in his rage,” he does not “repent or change, / Though changed in outward lustre; that fixed mind / And high disdain, from sense of injured merit” (1.95, 1.96-98). The word “lustre” derives, in part, from the Latin word *lustrare*, “illuminate.” The demons have lost both their illumination and their ability to illuminate. Satan’s throne is associated with mere external majesty, “placed in regal lustre” (10.447). Satan’s very head appears to be lustrous; it emerges star-shaped, as from a cloud, “with what permissive glory since his



Fall / Was left him, or false glitter” (10.451-52). Satan may be superficially lustrous, but he is not so essentially. The falseness of his glitter evokes the words kept in the golden casket of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*: “all that glitters is not gold” (2.7.65). Satan is superficially, not essentially, glorious.

The temporary intellectual refuge afforded by Satan’s inward fixation is also eroded by the sight of true beauty. In unguarded moments, he inadvertently allows delight and even goodness to grow within him, becoming unconscious of his malice. The epic narrator describes a scene in Paradise that “to the heart inspires / Vernal delight and joy, able to drive / All sadness but despair” (4.154-56). This scene fails to have this effect on Satan as he observes creation, seeing “undelighted all delight” (4.286). A greater threat to his fixation is posed by Adam’s and Eve’s beauty; he reflects that his “thoughts pursue” Adam and Eve “with wonder, and could love,” which would soften his inner hardness, but he remains conscious of his evil (4.362, 4.363). The morning of the temptation, Satan forgets himself and the new law by which he lives because of his unintentional love for Eve’s beauty:

Her graceful innocence, her every air  
Of gesture or least action overawed  
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved  
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought. (9.459-62)

He is enamoured by Eve’s beauty, says the epic narrator, like one who goes from the sewer-filled city to the country, where he “from each thing met conceives delight” (9.449). Such a heart is fertile soil in which delightedness is easily implanted; Satan relinquishes his inner hardness as he intuits what is good. His inadvertent connection to this essentially good matter renders his fierceness lifeless, as he “abstracted stood / From his own evil, and for the time remained / Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed, / Of guile,

of hate, of envy, of revenge” (9.463-66). Satan has been displaced from his “own place,” his fixed mind (1.254). He inadvertently understands goodness before consciously reorienting himself to his new moral centre, ending his temporary delight in Eve’s beauty by “the hot hell that always in him burns, / Though in mid Heaven” (9.462-3). Regretting that the pleasures he sees are not for him, “fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts / Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites” (9.471-72). By recollecting and exciting his thoughts of hate, he resurrects the single-mindedness he created during his first moments in Hell, rewriting the commonplace book of his heart and erasing the delight he has experienced.

The separation Satan makes between flesh and spirit does not hold up in Milton’s monist universe; Satan’s “high words” bear mere “semblance of worth, not substance” (1.528, 1.529). Satan is like Belial, whose words are “false and hollow,” and who “could make the worse appear / The better reason” (2.112, 2.113-14). If Satan were to take his cues about his new state from his degraded surroundings and body, he would be forced to admit “his essential, not merely his external, deterioration” (Fallon 204). He claims his spiritual nature is unchanged and attempts to ignore his total degradation. As Satan claims he has “a mind not to be changed by place or time,” he resists understanding the full meaning of his change of place (1.253). Satan does not acknowledge God’s spiritual victory, allowing only a physical one, when he proclaims to the fallen angels that he “who overcomes / By force, hath overcome but half his foe” (1.648-49). Satan’s argument that a true victory must be both material and spiritual is compelling and certainly has ideological force. He rhetorically questions, “what matter where, if I be still the same, / And what I should be, all but less than he / Whom thunder hath made

greater?" (1.256-58). It turns out, according to the epic narrator, that matter does matter, and that more than mere thunder has made God greater. Satan, who has attempted to conquer God by material means, resents God's material victory; he resists understanding it as a spiritual victory and exerts much effort in maintaining a separation between his mind and matter.

Satan's commendation of himself and the demons as "fixed" is revealed to be empty rhetoric (1.97). Satan's words are brought into question by the frame in which they are spoken; after his speech, the epic narrator gives his view: "so spake th' apostate angel, though in pain, / Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair" (1.125-26). The epic narrator considers Satan's bravado to be a mere facade, given his inward despair that is inconsistent with his vaunting. Satan acknowledges the changes in his own and the other fallen angels' outward beauty, yet he claims to retain the inward "fixed mind" and "high disdain" that stem from his sense of "injured merit" (1.97, 1.98, 1.98). He uses the term "fixed" in a positive sense, as in unmoved, with integrity to principles; to be fixed is to be securely attached or positioned, to "be directed unwaveringly toward" (*OED*). However, his self-commendation is at once a self-condemnation. The demons, like Satan, are described as having "fixed thought" that contrasts with the unfallen angels who firmly stand on the word of God (1.560). The angel Abdiel is an example of such an interpreter; he understands the emptiness of Satan's rhetoric. Abdiel explores "his own undaunted heart," a heart that has been informed by God's word, and he is able to discern Satan's true meaning when Satan begins the rebellion in Heaven (6.113). Sharon Achinstein argues that in *Paradise Lost*, "true interpretation comes from without, as God's word is rewritten in a man's heart" (222). Abdiel remains in the word, as this word remains

written in him. Fixed, inflexible, stony hearts are poor interpreters in comparison with those that remain in the word. Nyquist, when describing Abdiel's strengths, notes that, "understanding and its counterpart, standing, are presented as a continued abiding in the truth, a staying in touch with presence; both result from a still, constant, and unspectacular refusal to break into the world outside the Word" ("Father's" 191). Satan himself recognises Abdiel's power to stand as he reflects on his own fall. He comments that if he had been a more inferior angel, he might not have been as tempted to become greater, yet he recalls that, "other Powers as great / Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within / Or from without, to all temptations armed" (4.63-65). These angels, he says, are inwardly and outwardly armed against temptation. In a moment of honesty, he concedes that he had the freedom, as did the other angels, to inwardly and outwardly stand.

In Eve's temptation story, Milton demonstrates the danger of mental inertia, of inner slackness and lack of continuous engagement with the word. Lowered consciousness renders one less aware of one's conscience and therefore more prone to one's conscience being forced by another. The morning of the fall, Eve suggests to Adam that they work alone in order to be more productive, undisturbed by conversation, an activity that may have kept her mind more engaged. She is unaware of her danger as she works, propping up flowers that "hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays / Gently with myrtle band, *mindless the while*, / Herself, though fairest unsupported flow'r" (9.430-32, emphasis mine). Eve's flowers, which "at her coming sprung" one book earlier, are firmer, more engaged, and more supported than she (8.46). In the argument to Book Nine, Milton comments that Eve, who is "loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart" (ll. 7-8). She is mentally disengaged and is not firm,

despite her analysis that reason should be aware and “still erect” and her assurance to Adam that on account of their love, “I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me. / Firm we subsist” (9.358-59). Satan does not seem threatened by this inward enjoinder between Adam and Eve. He sees her as undefended without Adam nearby, “whose higher intellectual more I shun” (9.483). Alone and “mindless,” Eve is an undefended target for Satan’s attack, inwardly drooping when she should stand (9.431). Eve’s complacency renders her less attentive. She does not attend to the serpent as he approaches: “she busied heard the sound / Of rustling leaves, but *minded not*, as used / To such disport before her through the field, / From every beast” (9.518-21, emphasis mine). Satan does not attempt to startle her into sharp awareness but allows her to remain in a state of inner slackness. When he secures her attention, he flatters her before telling her of the fruit. Eve says that his “overpraising” makes her doubt the fruit’s virtue; however, the serpent’s words bypass the relatively unconscious gatekeeper of Eve’s mind and enter into her heart: “in her ears the sound / Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned / With reason, to her seeming, and with truth” (9.615, 9.736-38). The seeming reason and truth that the serpent’s words bear charm Eve’s ears and make their way into her heart, having “too easy entrance won” as she becomes “fixed on the fruit” (9.734, 9.735). The Father has allowed Satan to “attempt the mind / Of man, with strength entire, and free will armed”; the word “armed” at the end of the line makes the “strength entire” man’s, although it temporarily seems attributed to Satan (10.8-9). Satan now conquers the territory of Eve’s heart as he has possessed the serpent’s inward self with himself: “his brutal sense, / In heart or head, possessing soon inspired / With act intelligential” (9.188-90). Having

entered and conquered Eve's intelligence with his seeming reason, Satan "unminded slunk" into hiding, the master of mindlessness (10.332).

Adam's response to Eve's disobedience is the sudden hardening of his reasoning abilities. Prior to the temptation, his heart trembles as he works apart from Eve: "oft his heart, divine of something ill, / Misgave him; he the falt'ring measure felt" (9.845-46). Upon seeing that she has fallen, he, "amazed, / *Astonied* stood and blank" (9.889-90, emphasis mine). Although Adam outwardly stands, his "amazed, / *Astonied*" response to Eve mirrors her "amazed, unwary" response to the serpent (9.889-90, 9.614). In Adam's case, however, the paired words are enjambed, his amazement a sudden, staggering jolt. The word "astonied" indicates that Adam is stunned and astonished; it is a pun on the words "as stone," and yet, in the following line, Adam is characterised as drooping: "all his joints relaxed; / From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve / Down dropped" (9.890; *PL*, Leonard 414 n. 890, 9.891-93). In this image, Adam is simultaneously slackened and hardened. The word "astonied" resonates with the word "astonished," which Satan uses earlier to describe the newly-fallen angels in Hell who are, as he and Beelzebub were "erewhile, astounded and amazed" (1.281). The epic narrator concurs with this description of the fallen angels strewn in Hell, "under amazement of their hideous change" (1.313). The fallen angels are defenceless: "they astonished all resistance lost" (6.838). The astonied Adam has begun to enter this amazed, astonished, unreasoning state in Hell. Satan calls to the demons, telling them to shake off their astonishment, lest "the Conqueror" take advantage of their lethargy and with his thunderbolts "transfix us to the bottom of this gulf" (1.323, 1.329). Satan's rhetoric suggests that God will fix them yet further in Hell; Adam's mental stoniness in the place

of agile fleshiness directs him downwards in the ontology of *Paradise Lost*. Adam is inwardly turned to stone, as if he has already been touched by “Death with his *mace petrific*, cold and dry” (10.294, emphasis mine). Eve also becomes outwardly lifeless after the fall: “so much of death her thoughts / Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale” (10.1008-9). These physical changes are a result of turning to sin, which produces figurative and literal death. The allegorical character Sin says to her offspring Death, “I in man residing through the race, / His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect, / And season him thy last and sweetest prey” (10.607-9). Evidence of this infection and seasoning is inward and outward stoniness.

Adam’s astonished state is reminiscent of the Lady in Milton’s earlier work, the “Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle.” In the Masque, the Lady is literally turned to stone by Comus, having refused his sexual advances, and she is trapped, as the Attendant Spirit observes, “in stony fetters fixed, and motionless” (l. 819). John Guillory reads the Lady’s situation as Comus’ form of mockery: “The Lady defends herself against the magician’s power by a moral entrenchment; she has a ‘fixed mind,’ though this fixity is mocked by the predicament in which Comus places her” (72). She must be, and is, rescued from her stoniness by another, revived by an intervening presence. Her moral fixity, as Guillory terms it, is a clinging to the law, which Michael describes as “flesh” in Book Twelve of *Paradise Lost*. He says that the people will move from “works of law to works of faith” (12.306). The Lady follows the strict law to the letter, thus maintaining her virtue, but she cannot escape her captor by this power of denial. She depends upon others for salvation, which is effected through magic, creativity, and active mental engagement. Where the Lady is turned to stone by Comus’ manipulation of magic, to be made flesh again

moments later, Adam is astonished by shock and becomes more stony as he disobeys the one strict law he has been given. He is inwardly displaced by his shock at Eve's action, as Elihu is astonished by God's majesty in the Coverdale translation of Job 37:1: "My hert is astonnied and moved out of his place" (qtd. in "Astonied" *OED*). The Geneva Bible also translates the description of Elihu's heart as "astonied," while the Authorised Version says Elihu's heart "trembleth." In contrast with Elihu's heart, Adam's is moved out of its right place. In Adam's astonished state, he loses his ability to reason rightly. He becomes like the demons when they have just fallen and "lie thus astonished on th' oblivious pool" (1.266). Adam comments to Eve that God would be wrong to destroy them for their disobedience, that it would not be "well conceived of God" to uncreate what he has created and give Satan the victory (9.945). Adam's astonishment arrests his reasoning abilities, leaving him defenceless.

A contrasting image of astonishment turning individuals to stone occurs in Milton's earlier poem "On Shakespeare," written in 1630 and published in the Second Folio of Shakespeare's works. As in Elihu's speech, astonished astonishment is presented positively here. Where Adam is astonished by Eve's debased condition, Milton claims that he and all of Shakespeare's admirers are astonished by Shakespeare's creative greatness. The best, true monuments, for Milton, are Shakespeare's amazed readers: "Thou in our wonder and astonishment / Hast built thyself a livelong monument" (ll. 7-8). The poem responds to the common objection that Shakespeare's Stratford burial is too humble for so great a man. Milton opens the poem by questioning the need for a stone monument: "what needs my Shakespeare for his honored bones / The labour of an age in piled stones" (ll. 1-2). He expresses his view, consistent with his objections to physical



monuments expressed in *Paradise Lost*, that such a pile of stones or an excessive “star-pointing pyramid” full of relics would be a “weak witness” to Shakespeare (l. 4, l. 6). Rather, the delighted hearts of Shakespeare’s admirers become his astonished monuments, amazed by his imagination:

thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,  
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;  
And so sepulchered in such pomp dost lie,  
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die. (ll. 13-16)

Milton pays homage to Shakespeare’s powers by characterising them as astonishing.

The astonished Adam does not respond to his shock as creatively as Milton responds to his astonishment with regard to Shakespeare. Granted, Milton has more time to process his astonishment than Adam does, and for Milton, the stakes are much lower.

Adam’s fall is a failure of reason; he is temporarily struck dumb by his shock:

“speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length / First to himself he inward silence broke” (9.894-95). Adam’s consciousness becomes troubled as he deceives himself into eating the fruit, into believing that he has no other choice; he invokes his sharing of substance with Eve as his rationale, reasoning with himself:

So forcible within my heart I feel  
The bond of nature draw me to my own,  
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;  
Our state cannot be severed, we are one,  
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself. (9.955-59)

He claims to identify with Eve to the extent that, in the words of Regina Schwartz, “his will cannot be distinct from Eve’s . . . . Alarming enough, this identity with Eve makes Adam feel unfree to choose” in a situation that “seemed remediless” (8; 9.919). Adam invokes the sharing of substance with Eve, which he earlier described as “one flesh, one

heart, one soul” (8.499). He claims that on account of the sharing of substance, he lacks free and distinctive will, reflecting to himself, “I feel / The Link of Nature draw me” (9.913-14). C.S. Lewis argues, as Adam himself might, that Adam falls because of “uxoriousness,” defined as “doting or submissive fondness of one’s wife” (126; *OED*). He considers himself to be compelled by the “Link of Nature” connecting his whole being to Eve. Adam again experiences inward and outward paralysis when Michael tells him that he must leave the garden. In response, he “heart-strook with chilling gripe of sorrow stood, / That all his senses bound” (11.264-65). Adam’s inward paralysis binds all his senses and stuns his heart. The language of hard-heartedness in *Paradise Lost* suggests that arming oneself with inner firmness maintains true freedom, while inwardly fixing or drooping result in increased removal from the word. Milton invites the reader to discern the difference between these varying degrees of inner hardness.

In *Paradise Lost*, the hardening of the heart represents a lapse in spiritual and intellectual consciousness; interestingly, its opposite is the regeneration of the heart as more corporeal, as flesh. In comparison, to the Cambridge Neoplatonists, one becomes fleshly when moving away from God and more spiritual when moving towards him (Fallon 83). Adam and Eve become repentant and pray, because grace from Heaven has removed “the stony from their hearts, and made new *flesh / Regenerate* grow instead” (11.4-5, emphasis mine). In this passage, the opposite of a stony heart is a softened one of flesh. As the Father foresees the fall and the rest of redemptive history, he describes the means of regeneration: “I will clear their senses dark, / What may suffice, and soften stony hearts / To pray, repent, and bring obedience due” (3.188-90). Regeneration begins with a clearing of the senses, leading to a softening of the heart, in contrast with the

feeling of “power / Within me clear” that Satan claims the tree has given him; this kind of clarity congeals into hardness and obscurity of the senses (9.680-81). The literal meaning of regeneration is a living organism growing new tissue after loss or damage (*OED*). In the section entitled “On Regeneration” in *Christian Doctrine*, Milton writes, “Regeneration itself is sometimes called sanctification, and indeed this is the right name for it, regeneration itself being *merely a metaphorical term*” (*CPW* 6:464, emphasis mine). Milton referring to the word “regeneration” as a mere metaphor seems inconsistent with his other statements that describe regeneration as a renewal of the whole person, “supernatural renovation” (*CPW* 6:461). This renovation “restores man’s natural faculties of faultless understanding of free will more completely than before. But what is more, it also makes the inner man like new and infuses by divine means new and supernatural faculties into the minds of those who are made new” (*CPW* 6:461). Early in *Paradise Lost*, this kind of renovation is apparent when Adam is “as new waked” after conversing with Raphael (8.4). Regeneration involves complete renovation of all the inner faculties, a return to a state of inward freedom.

When regenerated, Adam’s faculties are restored to him. Adam hears Raphael’s words; “by this from the cold sudden damp” recovered, and “his scattered spirits returned” (11.293, 11.294). He becomes able to enter into dialogue with Michael. When the Father summarises his plan for Adam and Eve, he asserts that his intervention prompts repentance; Adam “sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, / My motions in him; longer than they move, / His heart I know, how variable and vain / Self-left” (11.90-93). Adam proves unable to maintain continuous engagement with the word on his own, becoming hardened without divine help. Regeneration is effected by God, “that is, by

God the Father, for generation is an act performed only by fathers” (*Christian Doctrine*, CPW 6:461). As Milton writes in *Eikonoklastes*, prayer is “conceav’d in the heart,” a womb-like space (CPW 3:504). In Milton’s view, the heart “which must be receptive (not stony) when God ‘raines down new expressions’ [CPW 3:505] is, like a woman, open to the impregnating spirit but also actively contributing to the creation of prayers with fertile ‘matter, and good desires’ [CPW 3:504]” (Guibbory 192). The inner movement to regeneration is first effected from without, by the Father.

This figurative language is rooted in the Old Testament prophecies of Ezekiel, in which receiving the law of God is closely linked with having a regenerated heart of flesh. Adam’s and Eve’s hearts are softened that they may again be fertile and productive keepers of the word and world. In the book of Ezekiel, the prophet claims that God gives the law to the people that they may keep it within their hearts. The prophesy reads, “I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh” (11:19). The Coverdale and Geneva Bibles refer to the “bowels” of the people, the centre of emotion, as the place in which God will put his spirit. Milton draws from the trope of what the Coverdale Bible translates as a “fleshy herte,” a heart that is receptive to the word of God (Ezek. 11:19). Milton translates this moment in Ezekiel as “a fleshy heart,” including it in the section about the regeneration of the whole mind in *Christian Doctrine* (CPW 6:462). Milton’s preference for material images of sanctification reveals his monism. In a similar metaphor, Milton translates 2 Kings 22:19 as “your heart was softened,” while the Authorised Version calls the heart “tender” (CPW 6:466). Milton attempts, in this text and in his theology, to integrate the corporeal and the spiritual. The concrete language of

the heart exemplifies the individual's spiritual condition; the ideal is not an unsubstantial heart, but a living and generative heart of flesh in place of a fixed, stony heart.

The renovation of Adam's and Eve's hearts is accompanied by a redefinition of place. The physical Paradise of the first books becomes an image of the inward paradise to be found in the fallen world. Adam is stirred back to full life, not by his own faulty reasoning, but by Michael's words to Eve. He tells her not to "set thy heart, / Thus overfond, on that which is not thine" (11.288-89). They must rather set their hearts on each other in love. Michael quiets Eve's concerns that when they leave the physical Paradise, they will not be able to breathe the "less pure" air of the "lower world" which they will enter because they are "accustomed to immortal fruits" of the ontologically and literally higher realm of the garden (11.283, 11.285, 11.285). He tells Eve that her "native soil," which she considers Paradise to be, will now be wherever Adam is (11.192, see also 11.270). Michael tells Adam and Eve, near the end of Book Twelve, that if they grow in virtue, "then wilt thou not be loath / To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess / A paradise within thee, happier far" (12.585-87). This new, inward paradise that Michael offers Adam and Eve in the postlapsarian world bears an alarming resemblance to Satan's mind, his self-serving own place. Both Satan's illusory heaven in Hell and Adam and Eve's inner paradise while outside of Eden are abstracted from their physical surroundings. Adam and Eve's divinely sanctioned inner place, however, comes into being through virtue and in relationship with each other, most importantly, through "love, / By name to come called charity, the soul / Of all the rest" (12.583-85). Another disturbing parallel of their paradise of relationship to Satan is his close connection to his offspring Sin, who sprang fully-formed from his forehead in Heaven, and who reminds him that "thyself in

me thy perfect image viewing / Becam'st enamoured" (2.764-65). Upon Satan's return, Sin says to him, "My heart . . . by a secret harmony / Still moves with thine, joined in connection sweet" (10.358-59). This incestuously self-serving relationship is both markedly different from and troublingly similar to Adam's and Eve's inward paradise.

The regenerated, softened heart is figured as a calm geographical region. Having received two books of direction from Michael, Adam says, "now first I find / Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eased" (12.273-74). He tells Eve that he feels "some great good / Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress / Wearied I fell asleep" (12.612-14). His inward landscape has changed much since the epic narrator's description of him and Eve three books earlier as "not at rest or ease of mind" (9.1120). The writer of Hebrews connects his command "be not hard-hearted" with the story of the Israelites in the desert and with their eventual entry into the land of ease and rest (Tyndale 4:7, 4:6). He connects this Old Testament story with the contemporary situation of his readers when he states that, if they are not hard-hearted, "there remaineth therefore yet a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest dost cease from his own works, as God did from his" (Tyndale 4:9-10). In Tyndale's marginal notes, he writes, "sin is our work, from which all must cease that enter into the rest of a quiet conscience in Christ" (350). Adam's and Eve's rest is not found in a promised land of rest but in newly quiet consciences and in their relationship.

A rightly governed and eased heart exercises free will responsibly. After the fall, the epic narrator contrasts Adam's and Eve's restless state with their earlier condition: "their inward state of mind, calm region once / And full of peace [is] now tossed and turbulent" (9.1125-26). In their tossed and turbulent postlapsarian state, "understanding

ruled not”; both understanding and the will are “in subjection now / To sensual appetite” (9.1127, 9.1128-29). It is “in a troubled sea of passion tossed” that Adam accuses Eve and, by extension, her creator, for causing his fall (10.718). Similarly, the demons are restless and without ease in Hell. It is a place “where peace / And rest can never dwell” (1.65-66). Even Satan acknowledges the restlessness that is Hell when suggesting going to the shore of Hell’s lake to “there rest, if any rest can harbour there” (1.185). He uses his speeches to create a false sense of rest within Hell; after he addresses the demons, their minds are, falsely, “more at ease,” having been “somewhat raised / By false presumptuous hope” (2.521, 2.521-22). They wander apart, each seeking “where he may likeliest find / Truce to his restless thoughts” (2.525-26). Some engage in philosophy, retiring, “in thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high” (2.558). Although they are intellectually engaged, this engagement proves fruitless, their high thoughts as unsubstantial as Satan’s capacious mind. Meanwhile, Satan is in Paradise, viewing Adam and Eve as they experience “ease / More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite / More grateful” (4.329-31). Hell lacks the easy ease and grateful appetite of Paradise.

Regeneration returns the individual to a correct degree of inner firmness, allowing for true freedom. In *Paradise Lost*, this occurs when God calms the inward storm. Having repented and “humbled all my heart,” Adam feels that his prayer is heard favourably: “peace returned / Home to my breast, and to my memory / His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our Foe” (11.150, 11.153-55). Adam’s heart becomes peaceful again as he remembers and reflects on the page in his inner commonplace book bearing God’s promise, that the seed of Eve will crush Satan’s head. Reflection upon the word of God stills this inward storm, as does prayer; after Eve’s Satanically inspired dream, “prayed

they innocent, and to their thoughts / Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm”

(5.209-10). Regeneration is thus figured as a return to fleshly firmness after displacement by stony astonishment.



**CHAPTER THREE:  
“BEFORE ALL TEMPLES”: THE HEART IN WORSHIP**

“We have such an high priest that is sitten on the right hand  
of the seat of majesty in heaven, and is a minister of holy things,  
and of the very tabernacle, which God [pitched], and not man.”  
Hebrews 8:1-2, *Tyndale’s New Testament*

Milton wrote during a time of tension between two approaches to worship.

Writing on George Herbert, Robert Whalen defines these approaches as follows; in the first, “external forms and ceremonies were paramount,” while the other “placed relatively greater value on preaching, doctrine, and the development of a keen devotional interiority” (xii-xiii). Guibbory terms these two tendencies “ceremonialist” and “puritan” (5). Milton’s monist resolution of this forced choice between the body and the word is to find a place for each. He makes the place that is the heart the bearer of the word; hence, this physically characterised figurative space is the most important site of worship. As the epic narrator asserts, the “upright heart and pure” is the true temple that the Spirit prefers before all others (1.18). Milton draws outward worship into the living, fruitful space of the human heart.

The use of the contested language of ceremonial worship in his epic, even in his description of a prelapsarian state, marks Milton’s entry into the seventeenth century debates over religious ceremony. For example, in employing the imagery of incense rising from an altar in his depiction of Paradise and the incense of Adam’s and Eve’s repentant prayers in heaven, he engages with the ongoing dialogue about the place of external, physical forms in relation to one’s internal, spiritual devotion. In the true heavenly temple in *Paradise Lost*, earthly worship is received; Adam tells Eve that a prayer which consists of merely “one short sigh of human breath upborne” can rise as

incense “ev’n to the seat of God” (11.147, 11.148). In Paradise, as Adam and Eve sleep, their thoughts are lifted to heaven unseen (4.687-88). Their prayers join with the praises of the angels, who, the Father says, are sufficient in number “this high temple to frequent / With ministeries due and solemn rites” (7.148-49). The earthly worship of *Paradise Lost* enters the heavenly temple with its acceptable altar; in heaven, ceremonial worship is fitting.

The altar is an especially contested site in seventeenth century England. Laud’s speech at the censure of Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne articulated the tension surrounding this part of ceremonial worship. Laud held an elevated view of the altar and sacraments over the pulpit and preaching (Guibbory 22). He described the altar as “the greatest *place* of Gods *Residence* upon earth . . . yea greater then the *Pulpit*” (qtd. in Guibbory 22, emphasis in original). Laud’s reverence for the altar was based in the following assumptions; at the altar, “’tis *Hoc est Corpus meum*, This is my Body. But in the *Pulpit*, tis at most, but; *Hoc est Verbum meum*, This is my Word. And a *greater Reverence* (no doubt) is *due* to the *Body*, then to the *Word* of our *Lord*” (qtd. in Guibbory 22, emphasis in original). Laud privileged the body over the word of God, assuming both that the body is due greater reverence and also that believers must value one over the other. Thus, the special status of the altar was intended to counter the earlier Protestant reforms, which “had led to the dismantling of altars and erection of freestanding communion tables in church naves” (King 4). Dismantled altars indicated a new privileging of word over sacrament, and such an unfixed table symbolically allowed equal access to both the clergy and laity at the communion table.

Prior to the English Revolution, George Herbert had considered the place of the altar in worship and the relationship of the stone to inward religious experience. In his shaped poem "The Altar," a piece of his poetic temple, he considers the inward significance of this implement of outward religious worship, reconciling the corporeal and spiritual aspects of the stone. Herbert grapples with the legitimacy of human invention, such as that of poetry and of an ornate stone altar. In *Paradise Lost*, Michael critiques those artisans in human history who "studious . . . appear / Of arts that polish life, inventors rare, / Unmindful of their maker" (11.609-11). Such artistry is as false as that of Pandemonium, of which the epic narrator comments, "nor did there want / Cornize or frieze with bossy sculptures grav'n; / The roof was fretted gold" (1.715-17). He renders this self-serving place falsely ornate, its seeming majesty as hollow as Satan himself is characterised as being. The epic narrator makes the damning description of Beelzebub that he "in his rising seemed / A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven / Deliberation sat and public care" (2.301-3). Deliberation and public care are not written on Beelzebub's heart, merely seemingly engraved on his front. The falseness of this engraving contrasts with "what the Spirit within / Shall on the heart engrave," of which Michael speaks, and with the inward altar of the heart in Herbert's description, engraved by God and "such a stone / As nothing but / Thy power doth cut" (12.523-24; ll. 6-8). To Herbert, the speaker's very hardness becomes, then, a monument to God, "That, if I chance to hold my peace, / These stones to praise thee may not cease" (ll. 13-14). The words of the poem are the stones of the poetic altar. For both Herbert and Milton, the poem is itself a literary artefact, an offering, and a monument.

Milton presents *Paradise Lost*, like the Paradise described within it, as a true altar. Its twelve-book structure, in its second edition, is significant, because many monuments of the Old Testament were formed out of twelve unhewn stones, representing the twelve tribes of Israel; they were public commemorations of the covenants between God and his people (Exod. 24:4; Josh. 4:5,20; 1 Kings 18:31). The twelve books, while carefully hewn by Milton, communicate a sense of divine authority. As Milton draws outward aspects of worship inward, he does so in a public way which Lewalski terms the “biblical prophetic mode” in contrast with the language of inwardness employed by seventeenth century religious lyricists (*Protestant 4*). *Paradise Lost* becomes a verbal monument, its poet called and authorised by his creator to create, as surely as an angel is called to sing. The epic narrator paraphrases the angels in heaven as they sing praises through the night, joining his voice with theirs: “Hail Son of God, Saviour of men, thy name / Shall be the copious matter of *my song* / Henceforth” (3.412-14, emphasis mine). As John Leonard comments, the “song” the epic narrator refers to gestures to the epic itself (*PL 330 n. 413*). Milton sanctions a role for himself as poet-priest, writing a song that is, almost literally, of “copious matter” (3.413). Milton renders the inward word as physical.

### **“From Shadowy Types to Truth”**

In the final two books of *Paradise Lost*, the language used for worship in the now-fallen world tends towards dualism. Milton desires to integrate the body and soul, yet he suspects the body and its appetites; the possibility of ascent on the ontological continuum cannot be separated from the threat of descent. Prior to *Paradise Lost*, he warns of the dangers of corporeal worship. In *Of Reformation*, he writes that in bishops’

religious ceremony, “all the inward acts of *worship* issuing from the native strength of the SOULE, run out lavishly to the upper skin, and there harden into a crust of Formallitie” (CPW 1:522, emphasis in original). Fallon makes a case for Milton’s monism even in this passage, claiming that “this scabby crust” of outward ritual hardens the heart; the ritual, “not the body itself, imprisons the soul” (87). Milton warns against the Catholicism of the pre-Reformation church, calling its rituals “sencelesse *Ceremonies*” that put the church in danger of “sliding back to *Rome*” (CPW 1:526-27, emphasis in original). *Of Reformation* argues against formal religious ceremonies, saying that those who used them did so as if they could “make *God* earthly, and fleshly, because they could not make themselves heavenly, and *Spirituell*: they began to draw downe all the Divine intercoures, betwixt *God*, and the Soule, yea the very shape of *God* himselfe, into an exterior, and bodily forme” (CPW 1:520, emphasis in original). In this passage, Milton leaves little room for the body in worship because he sees little room for the spiritual in Catholic ceremonies.

In the final books of *Paradise Lost*, Michael tells Adam that worship will develop from strict ceremony to the freedom of acts of faith. He says that worship of God will move from “shadowy types to truth,” from Old Testament ceremonies to a new covenant (12.303). This language of types is a central theme of the epistle to the Hebrews, which refers to the Old Testament tabernacle as a place in which the priests “serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things”; this earthly structure is a model of the “true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man” (AV 8:5, 8:2). Michael claims that the corresponding religious laws and ceremonies on earth are limited: “Law can discover sin, but not remove, / Save by those shadowy expiations weak, / The blood of bulls and goats” (12.290-92). The shadows that are the altar of sacrifice and the religious

ceremonies are thus cast as types prefiguring what is to come. Michael says, of the law given at Sinai, that God ordains laws of civil justice and of “religious rites / Of sacrifice, informing them, by types / And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise / The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve / Mankind’s deliverance” (12.231-35). The Old Testament law is a type for the new covenant to be instituted by the Son, “that destined Seed” (12.233). The movement up the continuum from shadow to spirit is a movement to increasing free will, from flesh enslaved to the law to free spirit. Michael says it is a movement “from imposition of strict laws, to free / Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear / To filial, works of law to works of faith” (12.304-6). The Son sets people free from the limited rites of ceremonial worship.

The language of Michael’s instruction about worship verges on dualism, as opposed to the monism of the prelapsarian sections of the poem. The fall troubles the relationship between inward meaning and outward appearance, a relationship that is not entirely transparent even in Paradise. Guibbory claims that Milton’s monism falters when Michael speaks of ceremonies as shadows, concurring with Jason P. Rosenblatt’s argument in *Torah and Law in Paradise Lost* that the Hebraic monism of the first books gives way to Pauline dualism in the final two books; to Rosenblatt, the “joy in mere being” found in Paradise is replaced by “unease and anxiety” in the last books (211; 79). The language of “shadowy types” sounds Platonically dualist, as if the Old Testament world is but a cave of shadows. However, it can also be read as the language of typology, the law prefiguring what is to come (Madsen 88-89). Adam, recalling his creation, comments, “I waked, and found / Before mine eyes all real, as the dream / Had lively shadowed” (8.309-11). In Fallon’s argument, “the progression from type (‘shadowy

types') to antitype ('truth') is not from the false or the alien to the true, but from imperfect adumbration to the chronologically posterior but logically and epistemologically prior truth which contains it" (243). Fallon argues for the integration of the shadowy type, for a fit between this language and Milton's monism. Fallon claims that the passage can be read as both typological and Neoplatonic, provided the Neoplatonism is not dualist: "in insisting on an either/or, Madsen is not thinking Miltonically, which is to say, monistically" (242). Fallon applies Milton's monist view of body and soul as inseparable to a reading that engages with two hermeneutic approaches, which seems to be a misapplication of the term monism. *Paradise Lost* presents the possibility of a more integrated view of the world and of worship than does *Of Reformation*. In *Paradise Lost*, some dualist language remains, but formal religious ceremony does more than form a "crust of Formallitie" (*CPW* 1:522). *Paradise Lost* reflects Milton's movement to an increasingly, though not completely, monist vision.

There are moments in *Paradise Lost*—Michael's reference to shadowy types being one of them—in which the monist vision falters but does not fail completely. Monism is a difficult philosophy to hold in a postlapsarian world, yet it is not, for that reason, less valuable as an ideological goal. In the relationship between the self and the world, appearance and reality will eventually correspond in the eyes of the fit reader. Even when hypocrisy cloaks a demon in a cherub's body, the scales of heaven will eventually reveal the true nature of that individual. Monism has important implications for one's relationship with oneself. The individual acts as a whole being and cannot dissociate from the body. Many versions of monism hold to materialist determinism, denying the possibility of free will. Milton's monism is marked by his acceptance of the

body and his rejection of ascetic practises, such as celibacy (Hill 331). He seeks integrated worship in which appearance and reality are unified.

### **Finding a Place: Outward Worship in a Fallen World**

Milton portrays true worship as emerging from the generative space of the reasoning and free heart; such worship is formally beautiful but is not primarily a form. His emphasis on creativity affirms the importance of free will; Raphael says to Adam, “how / Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve / Willing or no, who will but what they must / By destiny, and can no other choose?” (5.531-34). Free hearts choose to worship and find an individual means of expression. Prayer and worship ought to be as spontaneous and beautiful as Adam’s and Eve’s “unmeditated” prayers of “prompt eloquence” that, Guibbory notes, contain elements of the prescribed prayer book (5.149, 5.149; 205). Milton objected to the Book of Common Prayer; his objection was not to the prayers themselves but to the enforced use of prescribed liturgy, because such liturgy serves as an outward rather than inward guide to prayer, not leaving room for the inspiration of the Spirit. Adam’s and Eve’s prayers are models, but they are not to be repeated verbatim; rather, Adam and Eve model the process of collecting and collating their knowledge of God, the world, and language, in beautiful and original expressions of inward gratitude and love. Milton considers this worship to be part of man’s inherent responsibility as a creature, in Raphael’s words, “not prone / And brute as other creatures, but endued / With sanctity of reason” (7.506-8). Because of man’s reason, it is his task to “govern the rest, self-knowing” and to worship (7.510). Raphael characterises this reasonable task, worship, by saying that man is “grateful to acknowledge whence his



good / Descends, thither with heart and voice and eyes / Directed in devotion, to adore /  
And worship God supreme” (7.512-15). Raphael considers worship prompted by  
gratitude to be among the chief tasks given to man on account of his freely reasoning  
heart, a fit place for worship.

Milton protests against a primary emphasis on proper outward rites and argues for  
a sincere, spontaneous worship that originates in a faithful heart. Where ceremonialists,  
such as Laud, would argue that inner devotion follows the body’s outward postures,  
Milton makes a case for a primary emphasis on inwardness, even if outward rites are  
performed incorrectly. In *Christian Doctrine*, Milton argues that “internal worship,  
provided that it is sincere, is acceptable to God, even if the external forms are not strictly  
observed” (CPW 6:668). On the other hand, “opposed to true religion is hypocritical  
worship, where the external forms are duly observed, but without any internal or spiritual  
involvement. This is extremely offensive to God” (CPW 6:667). Hence, Adam and Eve  
pray “unanimous, and other rites / Observing none, but adoration pure / Which God likes  
best” (4.736-38). Milton likes best this adoration pure as well. The possibility of hollow,  
insincere worship is the centre of his objections to formal religious ceremony. False  
worship associated with physical structures is addressed in the first book of *Paradise  
Lost*; the epic catalogue of demons is rife with examples of false worship in both temples  
to God and to false gods. The demon known as Moloch leads Solomon to build a temple  
to him: “the wisest heart / Of Solomon he led by fraud to build / His temple right against  
the temple of God / On that opprobrious hill” (1.400-403). Moloch’s temple is fraudulent,  
but Solomon gives it equal status with the temple to God. The physical temple quickly  
becomes a symbol of corruption by its proximity to false temples, which include a temple

inspired by Athoreth, who was called Astarte. The epic narrator remarks that “her temple on th’ offensive mountain” was built “by that uxorious king whose heart though large, / Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell / To idols foul” (1.443, 1.444-46). This instance of false worship on Mount Zion builds on the previous one. The temple to Moloch earns Jerusalem the designation “opprobrious hill”; it is now named an “offensive mountain” (1.403, 1.443). Despite the large size of his heart, the mark of a truly great leader, Solomon falls, building two false temples and instituting false worship on the mountain on which Jerusalem is built.

Worse than these gods who have temples built in their honour is Belial, who demonstrates the seemingly inevitable result of creating physical spaces of worship: false worship within them. The epic narrator says that to Belial “no temple stood / Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he / In temples and at altars, when the priest / Turns atheist” (1.492-95). This infiltration of the temple makes Belial the figure of the worst kind of perversion; he is the one “than whom a Spirit more lewd / Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love / Vice for itself” (1.490-92). Belial represents the perversion of outward rites of worship in God’s temple by those who, like Eli’s sons, fill “with lust and violence the house of God” (1.496). In *Paradise Lost*, worship that occurs in earthly temples is suspect and frequently portrayed as debased. The rock out of which the temples are built is indicative of the frequently hardened spiritual condition of those who worship within them. The Psalmist says of idols that “they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: *so is every one that trusteth in them*” (AV 135:17-18, italics in original). In this passage, being too enamoured of a stone implement of worship, one becomes as stony as it is. Milton

sceptically views the altar as a place that is often the site for false worship where demons “fix / Their seats ... next the seat of God, / Their altars by his altar” (1.382-84). The epic narrator says that the altar is yet a seat of God on earth, despite the threat of idolatry. The site of the altar is contested, and Milton portrays earthly altars and temples as often being the sites at which people succumb to fraudulent worship.

Especially in the final two postlapsarian books, in which the connection between outward and inward meaning has become unsettled, Milton warns of the temptation to idolatry lurking in outward worship. For example, when Adam desires to build an altar commemorating the place of his divine encounter, Michael responds, “Adam, thou know’st Heav’n his, and all the earth, / Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills / Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives” (11.335-37). Michael cautions against Adam’s impulse to commemorate a certain location with an altar, which is strange, because this act is one many Old Testament figures are prompted to do. The language of the instruction given to Adam is not restricted to that of Genesis; Michael uses the discourse of worship within the new covenant as well in his instruction. Milton’s project of justifying “the ways of God to man” extends beyond the historical frame of Genesis (1.26). Historical time and biblical time are difficult to place; the events are those of the Old Testament, but Michael uses New Testament Pauline language, and Milton writes from long after both spans of time as he finds a place for true worship. Adam announces that he desires to ritually commemorate the place of his encounter with God and to pass this tradition on to the next generation: “here I could frequent, / With worship, place by place where he vouchsafed / Presence divine” (11.317-19). Having fallen, Adam stumbles into a superstitious love of place. His reason for frequenting this rock is that he

fears not seeing God's presence "in yonder nether world" (11.328). Adam says he plans to frequent this place and to build physical monuments upon it:

So many grateful altars I would rear  
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone  
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,  
Or monument to ages, and thereon  
Offer sweet smelling gums and fruits and flow'rs. (11.323-27)

Adam desires to offer the rites of worship at the place where he has met with God, and even before Michael corrects him, there is evidence that he is misguided in his efforts—it is the "rearing" of a grateful heart, not that of a grateful altar, that God will accept. Still, earthly altars are not entirely false; the epic narrator refers to God's "righteous altar" in comparison with those of the demons (1.434).

Through the voice of Michael, who looks at Adam with "regard benign," Milton separates spiritual significance from particular inanimate objects and attributes it instead to the whole earth (11.334). Michael points to God's omnipresence in animate creation as he corrects Adam's ceremonialist impulse:

Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth,  
Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills  
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed. (11.335-38)

Michael's words, though addressed to the Old Testament figure Adam, are also directed to Milton's contemporaries who see physical monuments and prescribed liturgy as the primary means of worship, rendering certain inanimate places more spiritually significant than others, as Charles I and Laud had done by instating the railing and raising altars in churches (Guibbory 13). Michael claims that to worship in one particular place is to deny God's omnipresence. The rock of Paradise and Adam's potential grateful altars are therefore not separate from God's presence, yet neither is his presence restricted to them.

Michael claims that all the earth, not only one mountain, has been given to humans as “no despicable gift” (11.340). On this basis, Michael cautions Adam, “surmise not then / His presence to these narrow bounds confined / Of Paradise or Eden” (11.340-42). To delineate a place of worship is, then, to attempt to put limits on God’s presence.

Michael reiterates the argument that outward places are not in themselves sacred later in Book Eleven; his argument is troubling. Adam is struck to the heart at the thought of leaving Paradise, a place that he loves, and Michael says Adam’s new Paradise will be an inward one—his relationship with Eve. At this point, Michael tells a pained Adam that even the rock that is the Mount of Paradise is ultimately unimportant. He foretells that the Mount of Paradise will slide into the sea during the flood and become an island that is “salt and bare, / The haunt of seals and orcs, and sea-mews’ clang” (11.834-35). This devastating image of a lush and fragrant garden reduced to a salty, bare waste is “to teach thee that God attributes to place / No sanctity” (11.836-37). This lesson is a difficult one, as it feels to Adam and to the reader that places do have some sanctity, and that this destruction of Paradise is as painful as the desecration of heaven’s landscape during the war of Book Six, despite the restoration of the heavenly landscape. Michael’s lesson is difficult and nearly impossible to learn. Milton rejects, as Achsah Guibbory claims he does, “the ceremonialist, Laudian idea that one place is more holy than another and that God is specially present in any one place” (207). One place may not be more holy than another, but neither is it less holy.

Michael explains that sanctity is found in what the person brings to the place, not in the place itself. God attributes no sanctity “*if none be thither brought / By men who there frequent, or therein dwell*” (11.837-38, emphasis mine). In *Of Reformation*, Milton

charges ceremonialists with “attributing purity, or impurity, to things indifferent” (*CPW* 1:520). The things in themselves may be indifferent, but, in *Paradise Lost*, holiness and perversity are brought to places in people’s hearts, as in the case of Adam’s sons Cain and Abel who bring offerings to an altar. Michael tells this story in his survey of biblical history, beginning the account with the physical setting, a field, in the middle of which “an altar as the landmark stood” (11.432). The altar is the physical centre of the story that contrasts the hearts of the two men who come to it. The shepherd Abel is “more meek,” offering “the firstlings of his flock / Choicest and best” on the altar “with incense strewed,” performing “all due rites” (11.437, 11.437-38, 11.439, 11.440). The acceptance of his offering is visual: “his off’ring soon propitious fire from heav’n / Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam” (11.441-42). Milton’s epic narrator calls Abel “more meek” than his brother in his act of worship, while several biblical translations compare the physical sacrifices. In the summary of the story recorded in Hebrews, which tells of Abel as an example of faith, the Authorised Version calls Abel’s sacrifice “more excellent” than Cain’s; the Tyndale Bible, “more plenteous”; the Geneva Bible, “greater” (11:4). The wording Milton chooses underscores his belief that sanctity and the lack thereof is in people’s hearts, not in physical sacrifices. It is Abel’s meekness that renders his outwardly correct physical sacrifice acceptable. Seeing the drama of his sons enacted before him, as Cain murders Abel, Adam is moved in his heart; the epic narrator says, “Much at that sight was Adam in his heart / Dismayed” (11.448-49). The altar of this story serves as a landmark for a drama in which much of the action takes place within Cain’s, Abel’s, and Adam’s hearts.

Before meeting with Michael, Adam decides to go to a certain place to repent and worship, choosing the particular place to which God came to him and Eve. He says to Eve, “what better can we do, than to the place / Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall / Before him reverent” (10.1086-88). Adam’s inclination to go to the place where God came to him and Eve establishes the relationship between God and them, but it is the sincere sorrow and humiliation born in contrite hearts that the Father, through the Son, will receive as true worship. To God, then, the place of this worship is immaterial; his acceptance of their repentance relates to their inner landscape rather than to their outward location. Nevertheless, there remains much spiritual symmetry and symbolism in the fact that Adam and Eve would meet God where he met them. Similarly, the fruit of repentance grows in their hearts because God has planted the seed; the human response follows divine action. Although the place has no sanctity in itself, Adam brings it by acknowledging that God acting first has enabled them to respond.

*Paradise Lost* allows space for the rites of religious ceremony almost only in heaven. Only in heaven does spiritual significance fit perfectly with corporeal religious objects, but readers’ appreciation of this religious ceremony depends upon their shadowy knowledge of worship in its earthly form. Beyond the gates of heaven, Adam’s and Eve’s inward contrition becomes literalised, “clad / With incense, where the golden altar fumed, / By their great Intercessor, came in sight / Before the Father’s throne” (11.17-20). There, the Son as High Priest intercedes to the Father, saying,

See Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung  
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs  
And prayers, which in this golden censer, mixed  
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring. (11.22-25)

The Son creates fragrant incense out of Adam's and Eve's prayers; he is the true, sufficient priest of *Paradise Lost*, and, on earth, the heart is the site of communion with God. The Son calls prayer, rather than a physical offering, Adam's and Eve's first fruits. Readers' understanding of and response to these scenes in heaven are mediated by the experience of ceremonial worship on earth. Milton evokes the grandeur and splendour of worship in heaven from human experiences of it. Through the Son, the Father accepts Adam's and Eve's prayers and sighs, "sent from hearts contrite, in sign / Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek" (10.1091-92, see also 10.1102-4). Milton includes Psalm 51:19 in his portion of *Christian Doctrine* on regeneration: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, God, you do not despise" (CPW 6:467). Adam's and Eve's prayers are accepted; Adam tells Eve that their prayers are to be "so prevalent as to concern the mind / Of God high-blest, or to incline his will," though "hard to belief [it] may seem" (11.144-45, 11.146). He claims that if God has come to them before they pray, his heart will lean towards them in mercy when they pray.

In *Paradise Lost*, an inner movement to repentance originates in the Father; the heart brings forth "fruits fit for repentance," in Milton's translation of Matthew 3:8 (CPW 6:468). The Son tells the Father that Adam's and Eve's repentance represents,

Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed  
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
Which his own hand manuring all the trees  
Of Paradise could have produced, ere fall'n  
From innocence. (11.26-30)

Adam's and Eve's contrition is more acceptable than any physical sacrifice they can offer from their manuring efforts. This fruit is implanted by the Father's "incorruptible seed," for, as Milton writes, "generation is an act performed only by Fathers" (1 Pet. 1:23 in



*Christian Doctrine*, CPW 6:461, 6:461). Generation occurs through prayer and also through the reading of poetry. In *Reason of Church-Government*, Milton writes that the abilities of the poet “are of a power beside the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the *seeds of virtue and public civility*, to allay the perturbations of the mind and set the affections in right tune” (CPW 1:816, italics in original). While the priest is called and sanctioned by the church, the individual poet is chosen by God (Guibbory 190). As the Father sows Adam’s and Eve’s hearts with his word, offering them freedom to allow this seed to bear fruit, Milton has offered, in *Paradise Lost*, seeds that may grow in the engaged minds and fleshly hearts of his readers. Milton claims the heart as the most fitting place of worship, the only space that draws all the different aspects of a person into an integrated whole.

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