

### Study Guide #7: *Paradise Lost* (1667) by John Milton<sup>1</sup>

**Questions:** Type up your answers to THREE of the following questions and submit them through Sakai. I will grade them according to the guidelines that I laid out in the packet on writing that I handed out (it's also available on Sakai). Out of the three questions that you answer, at least ONE must be a traditional question as I want you to become familiar with academic discourse. This means that you may choose up to TWO creative options:

1. *Paradise Lost* is an epic in the grand style. Identify and explain three (3) of the epic conventions that Milton uses. (Think back to our discussion of both *Beowulf* and *The Faerie Queene*.)
2. Why is Satan's fall more serious and irredeemable than those of the other characters? Refer to specific passages in your answer.
3. Examine the passages in which Milton discusses the nature of women as compared to men, including their creation. Would you call Milton a misogynist? Does he apply Eve's sin to all women? Note in particular Eve's creation, Eve's argument with Adam before separating to do their work, Satan's temptation of Eve and his use of flattery. What does his comparison suggest about Milton's attitudes toward Eve (and perhaps women more generally)?
4. Compare Milton's Satan to *Beowulf*'s Grendel (and/or Grendel's mom). What similarities and differences do you notice? What accounts for these? What does it suggest about religious perspectives at the respective times?
5. Compare the passage of Eve and Adam's temptation with the Biblical description (Genesis 3). What similarities and differences do you notice? How do these impact the story? Think particularly about the characters' physical locations.
6. From Milton's perspective, why is the "fall" fortunate?
7. Creative Option: Read Lanyer's "Eve's Apology in Defense of Women" and then write your own Defense, responding to the explicit and implicit charges Milton lays at Eve's door. Write in Eve's voice.
8. Creative Option: Spenser and Milton both write biblical tales about temptation, redemption, and virtue. After the Fall, Adam and Redcrosse meet in a tavern and, over several mugs of mead, share their respective tales. How would each respond to the other's story? Choose one character (either Adam or Redcrosse) and write his response either in prose or in the poetic form from his tale.
9. Creative Option: Satan observes *Beowulf*'s defeat of Grendel, and it moves him. Write Satan's response to what he witnesses in the poetic style of *Paradise Lost*.
10. Creative Option: Choose ONE book from *Paradise Lost* that you think would be worth teaching to high school students. Explain why you chose this particular book and write a lesson plan explaining how you would introduce the book and its themes to your students using supplementary texts from pop-culture. (NOTE: A text does not mean only something written; it could refer to a song, television series, film, meme, blog, tweet, etc.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Guide adapted from Dr. Kathleen Sell's study guide for her English 6, Fall 2006, course at Riverside Community College.