

THE BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS IN JOHN MILTON'S PARADISE LOST

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Abstract:

This paper tries to trace out some of the Allusions that are found in the Passages of Paradise Lost to references in the Bible. A list of important quotations is taken from "Paradise Lost" by John Milton that would help me to support the statements. All of the important quotes from "Paradise Lost" listed here correspond, at least in some way, to the topic above and by themselves can give great ideas for an essay by offering quotes about the theme of Biblical Allusions in "Paradise Lost".

Keywords: Milton-Paradise Lost-Biblical Allusions

Introduction:

John Milton was a very important English poet, author of the monumental *Paradise Lost* (1667), which was one of the great literary masterpieces of the seventeenth century, which was also to have a major influence on literature in his country, and especially on the romantic poets. He was born in 1608 on Cheapside Street in London. Born into a cultured religious bourgeois family, Milton is intended to take holy orders, but a trip to Italy after his mother's death together with reading the Italian poets Torquato Tasso (1544 - 1595) and Dante (1265 - 1321) would make him want to become a writer.

After studying at Cambridge, he decides against all odds to abandon the all-ready mapped out career in either the church or even at university in order to be able to dedicate him to the art of writing. Some say today that already then Milton would have a sense he would leave the world the gift of his production. In any case, at this point, he would retire instead to the family home and would spend a lot of his time reading Greek and Latin classics, as well as studying political and religious history.

It is then also he would start writing his first poems. During the 1640s John Milton wrote a series of political pamphlets. Some would be against the church, both the Catholic and the Protestant, always as a fierce advocate of the freedom of worship. Others would for the freedom of the press and for the right to divorce and civil liberty, becoming the foremost speaker of his day. He composed the ten books of *Paradise Lost* between 1658 and 1663. He had first prearranged the work as early as 1640, expecting to write a tragedy titled *Adam Unparadised*. *Paradise Lost* was first published in 1667 despite the fact that it had been written almost 10 years before. Milton was actually getting blind by the time he started work on it. In order to help him with his writing he would get assistance, and most notably the English metaphysical poet Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). A second edition embellished with minor revisions would follow in 1674.

The present paper tries to ground how Milton has used the Biblical Allusions as an influential theme in his remarkable epic *Paradise Lost*. The poem concerns the Biblical story of the Fall of Man and tells the story of Lucifer, the fallen angel the temptation of Adam and Eve by the fallen angel Satan. More specifically, the poem deals with the Christian view on the origin of man and refer to the temptation of Adam and Eve by Satan as well as their eventual expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The way in which they are rendered by Milton in "*Paradise Lost*" offers a new reading of the biblical Adam and Eve.

A kind of theological settlement through poetry on the origin of man, the work gets its inspiration as much from the Bible for its content as from Virgil's (70 - 19 BC) twelve-book Latin epic poem *Aeneid* for its form.

Milton's intent, expressed clearly in the epic poem's opening lines, was to "justify the ways of God to men" (Book I, l. 26) that Milton wished to justify where he really succeed in fulfilling his purpose to the maximum extent.

Then God created the Son, the angels, Man, Heaven, Earth and everything else. Milton faced a difficult task with creating tension about what would happen since God already knew. Also, He is referred to as Lord God, instead of God, as Milton refers to Him. So, in close the start and fall Man to summarize the creation and reason for human nature is "God gave Man free will, from Man's free will, sin and death came into the world."

Biblical Allusions:

Blind Milton might be when he wrote "Paradise Lost", but to him, the Bible remained an open book. After reading his "Paradise Lost", anyone shall appreciate the exactness of his knowledge in using the allusions from the Bible. No doubt there were passages and certain sections of passages of the Scriptures over which Milton had long brooded as being especially suitable for his great project. A study of the allusions emphasizes the specialized theme of Paradise Lost. It is not to look for a balanced treatment of Christianity or of religion. Genesis is used in great detail for the story of the Fall and for the Creation and the early history of the race and of Israel. Isaiah alludes to a good many times. The allusion is made to the worldwide extension of the blessing given to Abraham and his seed. Ezekiel furnishes a useful source, especially in the passages about the wheels and eyes instinct with spirit, from which Milton enriches his description of the war in Heaven. The Apocalypse is a very valuable basis for his descriptions of Heaven and Hell.

Every decade of the book of Psalms contributes references. To him, as to the Christian Church in his own and other ages, the Book of Psalms was a treasure-house of devotional and inspirational writings. It is perhaps surprising to find 360, more than 25% of the whole body of references in this single book. Similarly, there are more references to the theology of the Pauline Epistles than to the life or teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. The single page of Jude's Epistle has more references than the whole of the Gospel according to St. Mark. For Milton, in writing this poem must have had a special fascination in the first and last pages of the Bible. Rather than list every single possible allusion- which would probably take a few years, some of the more important ones are listed below.

Jesus Christ (1.4)

Moses (1.8; 1.338)

Adam and Eve (1.29)

Genesis 2:17 (1.32)

Leviathan, from Isaiah 27:1 and Job 41:34 (1.201)

Exodus 10:13-5 (1.338)

1 Kings 11:1-9 (1.383-91)

2 Samuel 12: 26-27 (1.396)

2 Chronicles 34:4-5 (1.418)
Genesis 11:4 (1.694)
Psalms 2:4 (2.191)
1 Kings 12:11 (2.701)
Revelations 21:19 (2.1050)
Genesis 6:4 (3.463; 11.573-627)
Genesis 11:1-9 (3.466-7)
Genesis 28.17 (3.510-5)
Exodus 28:17-24 (3.597)
Revelation 12:3-12 (4.1-5)
1 Corinthians 11:15 (4.308)
Psalms 2:6-7 (5.603)
2 Timothy 4:7 (6.30)
Genesis 2: 19 (6.76)
2 Kings 19:37 (6.365)
Matthew 3:17, 17:5 (6.728)
Mark 1:11 (6.728)
Ezekiel 10: 9-10 (6.749-59)
Proverbs 8: 25-30 (7.7-12)
Genesis 2:19-20 (8.350).
Genesis 2:18 (8.445)
1 Peter 3:7 (9.383)
Song of Solomon 6:2 (9.442)
Romans 2:14 (9.654)
1 Timothy 2:14 (9.916)
Samson and Delilah (9.1059-60)
Luke 10:18 (10.84)
Isaiah 61:10 (10.222)
Luke 1:28 (11.158)
Genesis 32:1-2 (11.214)
Ezekiel 40:2 (11.377)

The Direct References that Milton had taken for his Paradise Lost from the Old Testament

Genesis 360

Exodus 99

Leviticus 7

Numbers 19

Deuteronomy 21

Joshua 12

Total 518

Judges 11
1 Samuel 23
2 Samuel 8
1 Kings 37
2 Kings 39
1 Chronicles 7
2 Chronicles 2
Ezra 4
Nehemiah 2
Esther 2

Total 135

Job 32
Psalms 90

Total 122

Proverbs 9
Ecclesiastes 5

Total 14
Isaiah 50
Jeremiah 14
Ezekiel 37
Daniel 5

Total 106

Hosea 5
Amos 3
Micah 1
Habakkuk 2
Zechariah 3

Total 14

Total Allusions to Old Testament = 909

The Direct References that Milton had taken for his Paradise Lost from the New Testament

Matthew 55

Mark 9

Luke 36
John 45
Acts 20

Total 165

Romans 61
1 Corinthians 23
2 Corinthians 7
Galatians 13
Ephesians 19
Philippians 13
Colossians 10
1 Thessalonians 7
2 Thessalonians 1
1 Timothy 4
2 Timothy 2
Hebrews 32

Total 192

James 5
1 Peter 11
2 Peter 11
1 John 10
Jude 14

Total 51

Revelation 82

Total 82

Total Allusions to New Testament = 490

Putting all allusions together to the Bible $909 + 490 = 1399$

Conclusion:

And of course, the entire poem is one gigantic allusion to the book of Genesis, from which the story of Adam and Eve is taken. Likewise, Milton has taken many references from both the Old Testament and the New Testament as shown above.

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