Milton’s **Paradise Lost**: Discussion Outline and Questions

**Major Themes in Paradise Lost**
- Justifying the ways of God to Humanity
- Free Will, Predestination, and God's Omnipotence and Omniscience
- Freedom and Responsibility
- Reason: Human and Divine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remember the hierarchy, the natural order of things</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
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<td>Angels</td>
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<td>Humans</td>
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<td>Men</td>
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<td>Women</td>
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<td>Beasts</td>
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**Passages to Discuss**

1. **Book 1, Lines 34-44**
   Milton’s subtle art and complexity

2. **Book 1, Lines 83-124: Satan's First Words**
   - What is your impression of Satan?
   - What is there to admire about him?
   - What are his flaws?
   - Where is Satan's logic questionable?
   - Why does Satan think God won the war in Heaven?
   - What does Satan think is worse than Hell?
   - What does Satan think of his chances of fighting God now?

3. **Book 1, Lines 199 to 220**
   - What is the epic simile in this passage? What does it suggest?
   - What is suggested about Free Will, Fate, and God’s Omniscience?
   - What will be the effects of Satan’s malicious treatment of Humanity?
4. **Book 1, Lines 238-270**
   - What is Satan’s attitude toward God?
   - Where is Satan’s logic questionable?
   - What does Satan want?

5. **Book 1, Lines 314-338**
   - What do you think of Satan as a leader?

6. **Book 1, 643 to 662**
   - What is Satan’s plan?
   - Where is Satan’s logic questionable?
   - What effect does Satan’s words have on the fallen angels?

7. **Options for the Fallen Angels (Book 2)**
   
   A. Moloch (pagan god associated with violence and bloodshed) = Open war against God (What could be worse that their present situation?)

   B. Belial (“weak and slothful”) = Wait and see what will happen; in favor of “ignoble ease” (Perhaps God will lessen their punishment.)

   C. Mammon (“wealth”) = Make the best out of their situation (There is wealth to be found in Hell.)

   D. Beelzebub = Avenge themselves on God by invading and corrupting Eden (Satan’s original plan): Lines 345-389 (pages 691-692)

8. **Book 2, Lines 746 to 802: The Allegorical Figures of Sin and Death**

   A. Sin (portrayed as a woman) was born from the left side of Satan’s head when he first conceived of the idea of rebelling against God. (cf. the birth of Athena from the head of Zeus.)

   B. Satan has (incestuous) intercourse with Sin soon after she is born (she appears attractive).

   C. Death is born from this union of Satan and Sin.

   D. Immediately after Death is born, he has (incestuous) intercourse with Sin (his mother).

   E. The hell hounds are the product of this union between Sin and Death.

   F. Satan, not God, brings about both Sin and Death.
G. Satan convinces Sin and Death to allow him to pass out of the gates of Hell.

   - “from Hell / One step no more than from himself can fly” (20-21)
   - Why does Satan hate the sun?
   - What does Satan (privately) admit?
   - How does Satan still blame God?
   - Why won’t Satan repent?
   - What does Satan mean by “Ease would recant / Vows made in pain” (95-96)


   Adam and Eve
   
   Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
   For contemplation he and valor formed,
   For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
   He for God only, she for God in him. (296-299)

11. Book 4, Lines 356 to 392: Satan sees Adam and Eve
   
   A. How does Satan feel about Adam and Eve?
   
   B. How do Satan’s feelings for Adam and Eve turn “grisly and sardonic”??
   
   C. How does Satan once again blame God?

12. Book 5, Lines 451 to 467: Adam’s curiosity

13. Book 9, Lines 226 to 375: Humankind’s First Argument

14. Book 9, Lines 679 to 833: “she plucked, she eat”

15. Book 9, Lines 886 to 916: Adam’s Fall

16. Book 9, Lines 1143-1189: Another argument

17. Book 10, Lines 1086-1104: Repentance and Forgiveness