

Questions from Journal Entries, Paradise Lost, Books VI - VIII

Knowledge: Does Adam's desire for knowledge contradict the idea of a perfectly satisfying paradise? How does Adam know he has a maker? Is he created with the knowledge and desire to worship? After hearing about Satan's fall, how can A & E still be ignorant of good and evil? Does Adam and Eve's praise and worship of God depend on their ignorance, as Satan says? What is the point of Adam's and Raphael's discussion of celestial motion? Isn't the warning that it is bad to know too much suspect coming from an angel who seems to know it all? Is Adam curious by nature? How much knowledge were A & E given? Does knowledge equal power in some way (see p. 364, ll. 73-4)? Where is the limit on what is the right amount of knowledge to wish for?

The Son: Why does he do the creating? Is he needed to bridge the gap between a distanced God and humans? Does Christ's acceptance of the "reign" suggest he is ambitious? or simply obedient? Why does God reserve the victory for his Son?

Milton as Poet: Would Milton say that poetry brings one closer to God? If Raphael says humans can't understand the ways of God, then how can Milton claim to justify them?

Satan, Hell: Was Hell created before the angels fell (it seems to be ready and waiting for them)? Why is Hell personified in Bk. VI? Why can Satan and his angels be wounded, yet still remain immortal?

War: Why does Milton show a war in heaven? Aren't angels, and especially Christ, supposed to be peaceful? Why are they so violent?

Creation: Why did Milton place the creation story in Bk. VII and not at the beginning of his poem? Is the union of God and Nature meant to be as sexual as it sounds? God made man in his image; does this refer to a physical or intellectual image?

Eve: Are we to see Eve as unable to understand her proper role?