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Book VII:Adam asks Raphael about how he, man, came to be, how the earth was created, and why? Raphael tells him that after Satan's fall, God saw that heaven had lost half its population. Not wanting Satan to claim even that victory, God decides to populate heaven with a creature who, given free will, would earn their way into his glory. God then creates darkness and light, the universe, earth and ocean, and plants and animals (in the same order as the Genesis story of the Hebrew Bible) in seven days. Analysis:With a direct Biblical allusion, Raphael relates the story of creation. Here, Milton uses the order and, in some cases, word for word description used in the first and second chapter of Genesis, in the first book of the Hebrew Bible. Theologically, Raphael is giving God's reason for creating man, and man's universe, in the first place: in order to repopulate heaven. Man is designed to work his way to an angelic state by keeping correct, rational order to his passions, as discussed in Book IV. Raphael story, and Adam's remembrances, will parallel with Michael's narration of the history of man after the Fall starting in book XI. The contrast between the two histories starts with the messengers who are narrating them. Raphael is a friend coming over for dinner. He is a soft, kindly angel who serves as a warning friend to Adam. Michael, on the other hand, traditionally a militant angel, comes in with full military regalia, as well as a squadron of angels behind him, to tell Adam the story as well as evict he and Eve from the Garden. Raphael is soft to Michael's hardness, Raphael is amiable to Michael's firmness. Raphael comes with gentle advice, Michael comes with strict enforcement of orders. The opposites stand as a pre-Fall/post-Fall contrast of the nature of interaction between God's emissaries and man. Milton reminds us throughout the poem that he is writing an epic and tying himself to a grand tradition by calling for the muse before he begins writing many of the episodes. In this Book , Milton actually calls on the Holy Spirit to be his inspiration, setting up a competition with Homer and Vergil who called on pagan muses to be theirs. Milton has already admitted he believes he is tackling a much bigger subject than they did in their poems. In this case, however, Milton is backing his greatness, and his authority to write, with the element of the Chrisitan trinity that has inspired the writers of the scriptures. Book VIII:Adam asks Raphael about the heavens. In the meantime, Eve goes to take care of her garden. Raphael talks about heaven a bit, and even mentions creatures living on other planets, but ends by saying that Adam and Eve should not get too curious about other worlds or how heaven functions. Such questions and curiosity may lead them astray of their function on earth. Adam then tells Raphael what he remembers about when he was created. (Raphael was guarding hell while Adam was being created so missed the whole thing.) Adam remembers only waking up in a beautiful place and wondering about his own existence. He has a dream and God answers him that it was he, God, that created him. God warns him not to eat from the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. God tells Adam that all the rest of creation is his to own and name. Adam tells God that he would like a companion, a mate. Adam notes that all the other animals were given consorts or mates. God tells him that he, God, is alone and is doing fine. God finally relents, however, and tells Adam that he planned a mate for him all along. Adam is put to sleep and God takes a rib from his side. From it, God forms a woman, the most beautiful to Adam of all God's creatures. Adam and Raphael have a discussion about love: how love must be pure, not a carnal or a passionate love. Carnal love is what the beasts enjoy and God gave Adam a woman, not a beast, so he should practice a higher love. Analysis:The creation of Eve foreshadows what will ultimately become the cause of Adam's fall: following the guidance of his own baser, more animalistic elements that are convinced by Eve's beauty. Adam tells Raphael of his concern for how he feels about Eve. Although he knows her to be a weaker creature by nature, Adam is sometimes fooled by her beauty in believing that she is "...wisest, virtuousst, discreetst, best." Milton, who had three wives himself, is saying some pretty strong things about women in this passage. Basically, he places Adam, the male, not only at the head of the household, but naturally placed there because he is wiser, more virtuous, more discreet and best. As the theme of Fall is a recurring theme in the work, it is interesting to compare the various reasons for their disobedience: Satan falls because of his pride, Adam because of his love/seduction by Eve, Eve because of her vanity. As well, we have the theme of the trinity repeated in the three fallen species. Despite Raphael's and Adam's rather misogynist conversation, the two hash out some valid points on love. The animalistic love that Raphael alludes to is, in modern terms, an objectification of Eve. Adam, after all, is responding to Eve's beauty, her shape, her outer physical nature. Raphael says this is for the animals. Man's love should be a rational love, based on person and respect for the living as opposed to corrupted lust. Book IX:Twilight falls on the Garden of Eden. Then darkness. Satan slips into the garden in the form of mist. He then hides himself in the snake. While going though Eden, Satan again laments his loss of heaven when he sees how beautiful a creation paradise is. "Revenge, at first though sweet, bitter ere long back on itself recoils."" Morning comes and Adam and Eve go out to tend the garden of Eden. Eve suggests they split up and divide the work to get more of it done. Adam doesn't think this is a good idea, but relents when Eve implies that he doesn't trust her. Satan, of course, finds Eve alone and, for a moment overcome by her beauty, finds himself "stupidly good." In the form of a serpent, then, Satan flatters her, telling her how beautiful she is. Eve is amazed that the serpent knows how to speak and asks how this is possible. Satan replies that it is because he ate from a tree in the garden. He brings her to the Tree of Knowledge to show her. Eve, at first, says she cannot eat from the tree, but Satan tells her that God doesn't want her to eat because knowledge of good and evil will make her equal to a god. Eve takes an apple and devours it. She then decides, because of her love, to involve Adam. They meet in front of the tree. Adam is upset, but decides he cannot live without Eve, so he takes the apple as well. When he eats the apple, the two are seized with lust, and Adam leads Eve back to the bank where they first lay together. They sleep and arise, "destitute and bare of all their virtue." They realize for the first time that they are naked. Adam sews together fig leaves to cover themselves. Adam blames Eve for their torment. Eve blames Adam for letting her work in the garden alone. Adam blames Eve for being angry about that, and they spend the afternoon blaming on another. Analysis:Milton is writing at the cusp of the Renaissance. The emerging sciences, arts, and literature point to a different sense of the individual than that of the dark ages. Milton was straddling the heavy hand of the church and religion of the Middle Ages and the humanism and individualism of the future, both in his personal philosophy and in his historical context. Milton was, in many ways, a humanist and believed in the value of human life as well as the rights and freedoms which are inherent in that life. However, Milton continually balanced this with the idea that true freedom can only be had if it is in line with the ordered, rational will of God. Adam loves Eve and so, by joining her in eating the apple, sacrifices his own happiness for love. This, in itself is good act, motivated by love. A true humanist would say that Adam is acting freely and he has done a good thing. Milton, however, shows that even good acts are evil and corrupt if not done in line with God's will. Adam is disobeying God and no matter what he does outside of obedience, it will be bad. William Blake said that "Milton was of the devil's party without knowing it." He was referring to what we have described before, namely, the rather sympathetic nature in which Milton seems to treat Satan. Indeed, Satan's rebelling against the all seeing tyranny of God would appear to be right in line with Milton's own political views that tyranny was wrong. However, just as with Adam in good works done in disobedience, Satan is wrong because he is acting outside the will of God, no matter his courage, bravery, or justification in rebelling against tyranny. Despite his humanism, therefore, Milton believes that no acts can be considered good if they are against God's law. It is quite clear in this book that right after Adam took a bite of the apple, Adam and Eve had lustful, passionate sex. Referring back to Book IV, where it is inferred that they were having sex all along, one can see the difference in sex in pre-fall uncorrupted mankind and post-Fall irrational man. Pre-Fall Adam and Eve were guided by reason and order and so therefore all acts, even acts of love, brought him closer to God. Post-Fall Adam and Eve are using his animal appetites which brought him closer to animals than God. One can see in the language where post-Fall Adam grabs Eve's hand and pulls her to their bed, where before it was Eve who gently took Adam's hand. Continuing on Milton's use of numerology, we go a little deeper this time with the interesting fact that the pause before nature itself shudders in revulsion from Adam eating the apple occurs exactly on line 999 of Chapter IX. Line 1000 actually begins the storm. Although we may be unsure what Milton had in mind by these numbers matched with events, we can be sure that it was not incidental (and probably has something to do with numerology of ancient Mesopotamian religions). Once again, Milton is showing the physical, macro results of a internal, micro moral decision. The earth, i.e., nature itself, shutters when Adam takes a bite of the apple. In this chapter and the next, the natural elements of earth will crumble and become corrupted in the sense in the sense that natural disasters, and violence between species, will become the norm. Earth will then become a mixture of the types of nature seen in both heaven and hell. It will, at times, be spectacularly beautiful, full of light and blooming in colors. It will also, however, have its dark times, be engulfed in floods and flames, and look more like an unordered hell. The physical descriptions of Adam and Eve have changed as well. They no longer glow with joy, they are less angelic in their nature, and, within hours of eating the apple, they are prone to new, irrational emotions ranging from anger to deep depression. As well, they see each other differently as well. Specifically, they are more interested, and worried, about their genetalia than ever before. The reproductive organs suddenly take on a value (they are evil in that they lead to lust) which was hereto unheard of when Adam and Eve lacked knowledge. For Milton, the interior state of the soul is displayed visibly in the physical. Sin is always visible.

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