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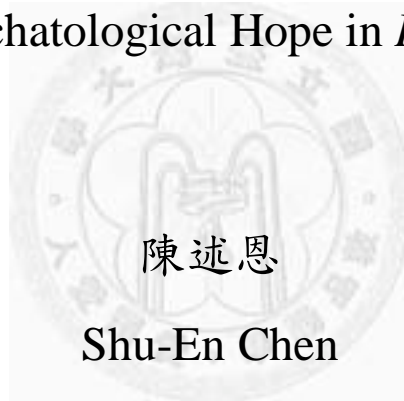
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密爾頓《失樂園》中對末世的盼望

Milton's Eschatological Hope in *Paradise Lost*



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Abstract

Modern studies of Milton's attitude toward politics and religion in *Paradise Lost* generally concern three issues: the inner-paradise, the political action, and the second-paradise. However, these concerns fail to address the issue of despair in Books 11 and 12. The aim of this thesis is to analyze Milton and his contemporary eschatological views. I argue that the juxtaposition of hope and despair in the revelation of history presented in Books 11 and 12 reflects Milton's questioning of the eschatological beliefs of his contemporaries: mainly the Presbyterians, Fifth Monarchists and Quakers. Through dialogue between Michael and Adam, Milton deconstructs the eschatological hope of his contemporaries and tries to establish a true eschatological hope.

論文摘要

當代學術評論密爾頓在《失樂園》中對政治及宗教的態度大致可分為三個閱讀取向：內在樂園取向、政治行動取向和第二樂園取向。但這些取向忽略了第十一卷和第十二卷中絕望的議題。本論文的主要目的是分析密爾頓及其當代英國人的末世觀點。我認為在第十一卷及第十二卷的歷史啓示中希望與絕望並列，反映出密爾頓對當時宗教及政治群體錯誤的末世觀提出挑戰：主要是長老會，第五君主制擁護者及桂格會。透過天使米迦勒及亞當的對話，密爾頓解構其當代錯誤的末世希望並試圖重建真正的末世盼望。

Chapter 1: Introduction

O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
 Lived ignorant of future

 my foreknowledge gaining birth
 Abortive to torment me ere their being,
 With thought that they must be. (Adam to Michael, *PL* 11. 763-64,
 768-70)¹

so shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad benign,
 Under her own weight groaning till the day
 Appear of respiration to the just,
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of him so lately promised to thy aid
 The woman's seed (Michael to Adam, *PL* 12. 537-43)

Michael's prophecy puts Adam in an awkward dilemma: a preview of postlapsarian history inspires him with hope, yet his inability in forestalling the coming moral degeneration also depresses him. Adam's depressing comment on the postlapsarian history constantly challenges Michael's interpretation of the divine will. However, through Michael's guidance, Adam gradually realizes that depressing prophecies concerning human history will conclude with hope because his descendants will patiently wait for divine justice and the promised savior. Adam learns to interpret

¹ All the quotations of *Paradise Lost* are from the Longman edition, edited by Alastair Fowler (London: Longman, 1971). *PL* stands for *Paradise Lost*.

the depressing events of history with faith and hope. Thus, with angelic guidance, Adam realizes that the tension between hope and despair will continue until the Second Coming of Christ.

On a deeper level, these passages reveal the late seventeenth-century English Protestants' hope and disappointment with the prophetic message in the Bible.² Works of Thomas Brightman (1562-1607), Joseph Mede (1586-1638), and Henry More (1614-1687) on the Book of Revelation and millenarianism greatly influenced Milton and his generation (Hutton 29-41). In terms of historical context, Milton's *Paradise Lost* reflects his contemporary's eager anticipation of the thousand-year kingdom of glory and bitter disappointment in the political and religious milieu (Kerrigan 263). *Paradise Lost* reflects upon an age that witnessed unprecedented political and religious conflicts. Milton's imaginative interpretation of the Book of Revelation challenges those contemporary depressing historical facts. Through Michael's revelation of postlapsarian history in Books 11 and 12, Milton demonstrates a postlapsarian world that involves a mixed sense of tragic despair and renewed hope. Therefore, *Paradise Lost* projects a hopeful vision of Christ's Second Coming and leaves the reader with hope in the end.³

Furthermore, in terms of Milton's role, the revelation of postlapsarian history in Books 11 and 12 of *Paradise Lost* presents the tension between Milton the historian's disappointment in his nation's political disorder and Milton the prophet's the hope in the millennium kingdom. At the end of *Paradise Lost*, Milton the historian reconciles with Milton the prophet. His hope in God's promise transcends his despair in degenerative human history.

² Seventeenth-century English Protestants' eschatological views will be discussed in detail in chapter 2 section 2.

³ I will discuss how Milton responds to the contemporary religious and political groups in *Paradise Lost* in later chapters.

The juxtaposition of despair and hope is by no means new to Milton's works; in fact, it owes much to his complex sense of history and his interpretation of prophecy in the Bible. In Books 11 and 12 of *Paradise Lost*, Michael's historical account is in some sense a rewriting of Milton's representation of history –combining tragic history and hopeful prophecy. Scholars such as Gribben, Knoppers and Lewalski have observed that Milton modified his eschatological views in accordance with his contemporary political and religious changes. Crawford Gribben reminds readers that “Milton's evolving eschatological understanding must be deduced in each case from the internal evidence of each particular text”(129). Barbara Lewalski also notices that “changing political circumstances led Milton to adjust his views as to the timing of the millennium” (15). Moreover, Laura Lunger Knoppers contends that Milton's ambivalent commentary in his three major post-Restoration poems reflect his distrust of Stuart kings and the Cromwellian government (97). From 1649 to 1674, England experienced dramatic political changes: the execution of Charles I, the failure of the Commonwealth and the Restoration of Charles II. These political changes greatly influenced Milton's interpretation of the timing of Christ's Second Coming. These influences can be seen in Milton's literary works from the 1640s to 1660s.

Besides politics, Milton's eschatological view was also greatly influenced by the thinking of one of his contemporary important millennium scholars, Joseph Mede. Joseph Mede's *Clavis Apocalyptica* greatly influenced Milton and his contemporaries. Similar to Mede, Milton believes in the synchronism of the events at the end of the world. Many events, for example, final judgment and millennium, will take place simultaneously and not consecutively (Popkin 112-34; Murrin 125-46; Hutton 29-41).

From *Of Reformation* (1641) to *Readie and Easy Way* (1660), it is clear that what Milton hopes for varies with political factors. In *Of Reformation* (1641), Milton eagerly anticipates a new heaven and earth. He concludes *Of Reformation* with his

anticipation of the “Eternall and shortly expected” Messiah King (YP 1:616).⁴ In that period of time, Milton imagines a vengeance on the prelates and himself as the prophet, celebrating a reformed England welcoming Christ’s millennial kingdom, in which there will be no more earthly tyrants.

In *Areopagitica* (1644), Milton stops emphasizing Christ’s Second Coming as imminent, but points out that England has been prepared by God for some great change: “all concurrence of signs” and “the generall instinct of holy and devout men” indicate, he declares, that God is beginning “some new and great period in his Church, ev’n to the reforming of Reformation it self,” and He is revealing this “as his manner is, first to his English-men” (YP 2:553).⁵ Furthermore, in *Areopagitica*, Milton emphasizes that England has the responsibility to respond to the challenges of this reforming age.

In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), Milton justifies the execution of Charles I as a necessary precondition for the coming of the Messiah. He reproves the Presbyterians’ rebuke of the regicide, reminding them that Christ alone “who is our only King, the root of David, and whose Kingdom is eternal righteousness, with all those that Warr under him, whose happiness and final hopes are laid up in that only just & rightful kingdom” (YP 3:256). This passage suggests that Milton hopes that the newly established Commonwealth is the only political organization that recognizes Christ as the head of the state.

In the first edition of *The Readie and Easy Way* (1660), Milton criticizes the Fifth

⁴ All the quotation of Milton’s prose are from the Yale edition, edited by Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1953-82). YP stands for Yale University Press.

⁵ Although a sentence in *Areopagitica* appears like a prediction of imminent apocalypse: “We reck’n more then five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already” (YP 2:554), this allusion to John 4:35 refers more to gathering a harvest of souls than an imminent apocalypse. In John 4:35, Jesus instructs his disciples: “Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” Jesus commands his disciples to preach the gospel diligently because there are still many who are eager to receive the Word of God.

Monarchists, calling them “[a]mbitious leaders of armies” whose aspirations toward theocracy and hypocritical pretence will soon be dissolved (YP 7:380).⁶ In the second edition of *The Readie and Easy Way* (1660), Milton appeals to Christ’s millennial kingship to strengthen his hopeless republican argument. For Milton, no man can rightfully hold royal dominion over other men, except for Christ, “our true and rightfull and only to be expected King . . . the only by him [God] anointed and ordaind since the work of our redemption finishd, Universal Lord of all mankinde” (YP 7:445). In *Paradise Lost*, Milton sought to explain the failure of Commonwealth government, feeling a great need to “assert Eternal Providence,/ And justify the ways of God to men” (1. 25-26). He understood that the reasons for failure, specifically why God’s kingdom on earth had been delayed and the new paradise so nearly attained had been lost, could be found in the very origins of humanity’s sinful nature. Disobedience to God’s primal laws led humanity to perversion by sin.

In Milton’s pre-Restoration treatises, he fearlessly and freely expresses his eager anticipation of Christ’s Kingdom of Glory. However, in *Paradise Lost*, which was published after the Restoration, Milton does not express his hope for Christ’s Kingdom of Glory as directly as before. Therefore, readers of *Paradise Lost* cannot restrain from asking two important questions: First, what could Milton hope after the Restoration? Specifically, what does he hope for England and for himself after the Restoration? Second, how does Milton build up his hope? In other words, what are the grounds upon which Milton’s hope takes root? These two questions concerning Milton’s post-Restoration hope will be discussed in terms of Milton’s

⁶ The “ambitious leaders of armies,” the target of Milton’s repudiation, refer possibly to Fifth Monarchists’ General Lambert and Fleetwood. See *The Readie and Easie Way* (YP 7:381), and also Barbara Lewalski, “Milton and the Millennium,” *Milton and the Ends of Time*, ed. Juliet Cummins. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003) 21.

criticism of his contemporaries' eschatological views. These two questions lead to the central argument of this thesis. I argue that through Michael and Adam's dialogue in Books 11 and 12, Milton deconstructs the false eschatological hopes of his contemporaries and rebuilds a true eschatological hope in God's promise. Milton realized that responding one's calling in life is far more important than fulfilling a life blueprint drafted by man.

The answer to the first has been a central question among Milton scholars: Does he hope for a Kingdom of God on earth or is he satisfied with a metaphorical paradise, a "paradise within"? Claude Stulting argues that Milton is satisfied with a metaphorical paradise, the inner transformation of an individual, but Juliet Cummins argues that Milton looks forward to a kingdom of God on earth, the return to an Edenic state. Stulting contends that Milton's description of the end of the world is different from the Edenic paradise because Michael tells Adam, "Whether in heaven or earth, for then the earth/ Shall all be paradise, far happier place/ Than this of Eden, and for happier days" (12.463-65). In Stulting's opinion, Milton advocates an inner paradise, which is divested of any material aspect, as Michael says to Adam: the "paradise within thee" is to be "happier far" (12. 587). According to Stulting, in the postlapsarian section of *Paradise Lost*, Adam and Eve's relationship with God is no longer grounded in the materiality of the created order, and is instead interiorized. For Stulting, Milton's new heaven and earth are "discontinuous with the original"(197), and the material world remains outside the realms of redemption. Stulting says, "All of these transformations in the epic describe the movement from pre- to postlapsarian humankind, and they represent a shift from a cosmic Greek patristic sacramentality to an interiorized Protestant spirituality" (193). That is, to Stulting, Milton's vision of the "end of time" focuses not on the restoration of the prelapsarian world, but on the inner reformation of an individual. However, in my

opinion, Stulting's argument overlooks Milton's belief in Christ's omnipotence and leads to the conclusion that the redemption of time and nature is beyond God's power.

In contrast to Stulting's opinion, Fixler and Cummins believe that Milton vehemently engaged in writing *Paradise Lost* to prove that he still hoped for the Second Coming of Christ and, though it may not have been imminent, the manifestation of His kingdom of Glory on earth. Fixler and Cummins propose that Milton's depiction of the prelapsarian Eden reveals a belief that the coming Kingdom is actually a restoration of the original paradise.

Both Michael Fixler and Juliet Cummins argue that the final conflagration is the prelude to the second paradise. Michael Fixler writes that "Milton apparently regarded the conditions of the beginning and the end as essentially identical, with history cyclically returning upon itself, so to speak, once man was absolutely restored to beatitude" (227). Similarly, Juliet Cummins argues that Milton's perspective on the end of the universe is a transfiguration of the matter of ordinary existence, adding, "material transformation of God's creatures at the apocalypse" results in a "material continuity between the existing world and the postapocalyptic world" (169, 170). Both Fixler and Cummins contend that Milton believes in a cyclical history in which the prelapsarian conditions and the end of the postlapsarian history are identical.

If we agree that Milton maintains his hope for the manifestation of Christ's kingdom on earth after the Restoration, then we must ask another question: What are the grounds for Milton's hope and how does he justify it? In *Paradise Lost*, in a preview of the degenerative postlapsarian history, Michael the Archangel offers Adam an assurance that Satan's power will be defeated and Christ's final victory will be achieved. Despite history's many turbulent periods, God does not abandon his chosen people; only the end can reveal the complete design of God. After the Restoration, when the hope of Christ's Second Coming seemed lost, Milton still

believed because God had promised that He would never abandon his children, writing, “The world was all before them, where to choose/ Their place of rest, and providence their guide” (12. 646-47).

This thesis proposes to read *Paradise Lost* in terms of its seventeenth-century historical and social context. By analyzing the religious and political environment of late seventeenth-century England, I aim to understand Milton’s post-Restoration eschatological views. *Paradise Lost* is contemporaneous a product of the religious conflicts of Milton’s age.

By tracing back to the beginning of the world, Milton seeks truth about the end of the world and discovers the correct attitude of acceptance of it. To Milton, a reading of history is a reading of the future, a view characteristic of the Christian tradition (Patrides, *Milton and Christian Tradition*, 264-84). Therefore, by analyzing Milton’s comment on human history, readers are able to understand Milton’s eschatological view.

Milton’s post-Restoration attitude toward politics and religion has been argued by many modern scholars, and the issues they are concerned about can be grouped into three arguments: the inner-hope argument, the man-centered hope argument, and the hope based on God’s promise argument. I will analyze these three arguments in the following three sections.

1.1 Inner Hope Argument

The Inner Hope Argument is a traditional argument of Milton’s eschatological view after the Restoration. Milton’s post-Restoration perspective on England’s future was conventionally interpreted as pessimistic and conservative by scholars. Critics who support the inner hope argument include Patrides, Fixler, Dobbins, Freeman, Wilding, and Hutton. They argue that Milton’s distrust of war reduced him

to despair and seeking only spiritual reform. C. A. Patrides argues that Milton adopted the pacifism espoused by Restoration Quakers. Patrides suggests that there is a decreased significance on timing and “increasing emphasis on its spiritual aspects” in *Paradise Lost* (“Something like Prophetik Strain’ 226). Michael Fixler contends that the conclusion of *Paradise Lost* is that the Kingdom of God would come as a “trial of faith,” not a “miraculous displacement of an oppressive reality” (14). Furthermore, Fixler contends that Milton does not take the prophecy literally; rather, Milton is increasingly reluctant to believe in the imminence of the Last Judgment. Dobbins argues that Milton reads the Bible’s prophetic messages metaphorically, not literally. According to Austin C. Dobbins, after 1660, Milton no longer anticipated “an imminent, earthly regnum Christi” (70).

Similar to Dobbins’ argument, James Freeman argues that *Paradise Lost* is a powerful satirical attack on the practice of war (45-54). For Michael Wilding, the Pandemonium meeting exposes the evil of violence and political rhetoric, while the true paradise “needs no government because man contains his own government within” (231). Sarah Hutton argues that although Milton was deeply influenced by Mede, he adopted a conservative stance in response to the unfavorable political milieu of the 1660s. Hutton believes that Milton maintained an internal millennialist spirit (29-41).

The aforementioned scholars consider Milton as a conservative who supported amillennial theology, arguing that upon the failure of the Good Old Cause, he did not hold onto his millennial ideas as firmly as in the 1640s and 1650s. The inner hope argument allows inner transformation to count as a substitute for the final tribulation, final conflagration and the final kingdom of glory. However, in my opinion, the switch from a macrocosmic “eternal paradise of rest” (12. 314) to a microcosmic “paradise within” (12. 587), is not what Milton advocated at the end of *Paradise Lost*.

In my opinion, this inner-hope argument presents two problems. First, this argument suggests that Milton encourages spiritual reform as well as escape from reality. However, *Paradise Lost* does not advocate escape from reality. It presents a bold challenge to the ideology of the Restoration. Such a challenge is especially clear in Book 12, where Milton expresses his opposition against tyranny through Adam's voice:

Authority usurped, from God not given:
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl
 Dominion absolute; that right owe hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself
 Reserving, human left from human free. (12. 66-71)

This passage echoes Milton's justification of regicide in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649). Thus, this passage shows Milton's challenge to Charles II's right of succession.

The second mistake of the inner-hope argument is its suggestion that Milton embraces the abstract form of hope and rejects the concrete manifestation of hope. However, based on my reading of *Paradise Lost*, Milton has a clear picture of final judgment (12. 456-62, 544-47), final conflagration (11. 898-991, 12. 548) and final kingdom of glory (12. 463-65, 12. 549-551) in his mind. Based on his interpretation of the Bible and Mede's *Clavis Apocalyptica*, Milton vividly pictures the events that will take place at the end of the world. Therefore, Milton's eschatological hope is not abstract. His hope is based on God's promise in the Bible.

The inner-paradise argument has attracted strong criticism. Critics, such as Robert Fallon, John Coffey, and Michael Wilding, contend that Milton did not abandon violence after the Restoration.

1.2 Man-Centered Hope Argument

Studies done by Robert Fallon, John Coffey and Michael Wilding have challenged the inner hope argument. Robert Fallon alleges that Milton reprobated escapism and approved of regicide and wars fought in preparation for the kingdom of glory. Fallon points out that during the closing pages of *The Readie and Easie Way*, Milton reflects upon his disappointment, not with the military, but with the English people as a whole for rejecting the leaders of the true reformation. John Coffey suggests that Milton's post-Restoration political stance is between the Fifth Monarchists and the Quakers (171). To Coffey, Milton is neither a supporter of radical movements nor a conservative amillennialist. Michael Wilding argues that Milton never rejected earthly ambition after the failure of the Old Cause, writing that he "does not reject those earthly ambitions as totally ignoble. To do so would be utterly to condemn utterly those twenty years of labouring for the republic. Instead, he rejects them as immature" (249). Hence, according to Fallon, Coffey and Wilding, Milton does not consider war, when fought for the right cause, as totally evil. For example, the angels in *Paradise Lost* are not evil for engaging in a war in heaven against Satan and his followers. However, in my opinion, these critics overlook Milton's argument against the Fifth Monarchists' rebellion. In *Readie and Easie Way* (1660, first edition), Milton criticizes the Fifth Monarchists' violence,

He who cannot be content with this libertie to himself, but seeks violently to impose what he will have to be the only religion, upon other men's consciences, let him know, bears a mind not only unchristian and irreligious, but inhuman also and barbarous. (YP 7: 380)

In this passage, Milton contends that the Fifth Monarchists' implication of violent means is not based on the teaching of the Bible. Therefore, those critics who

contend that Milton builds his eschatological hope on a man or a group of men fail to see Milton's faith in God's promise. The man-centered hope argument has also attracted strong criticism. Critics such as Barbara Lewalski, William Kerrigan, Laura Lunger Knoppers and Mary C. Fenton argue that Milton believed in the second paradise after the Restoration because he had hope in God's promise.

1.3 Hope based on God's Promise Argument

The man-centered hope argument has attracted strong criticism from critics such as Lewalski, Kerrigan, Knoppers and Fenton. Barbara Lewalski argues that Milton never surrendered hope for the ultimate victory of the Good Old Cause; yet he was deeply disturbed by questions of the timing and means of that victory. Lewalski writes, "His [Milton's] core belief, sometimes intimated, sometimes stated explicitly, is that the millennium will come when the English (and presumably others) have become virtuous and free." Lewalski argues that even though Milton might have adjusted his views about the timing of the millennium according to changes of political circumstance, he never abandoned hope for the coming of the Messiah (15).

Similar to Lewalski's opinion, Kerrigan also contends that Milton believes in a paradise of the future, writing, "the failure of his [Milton] countrymen would not, as he feared, preclude the Lord from granting revelation to an English prophet, but would prompt Him to define a community of solitary exiles dissociated from the barbaric communities of history" (263). Hence, Milton not only believes in a "paradise within," but also a paradise of the future. Furthermore, Knoppers also states,

The paradise within is a temporary limited instantiation of that future age in which 'God will be all in all.' And yet the turn to the paradise within is not escapist but a deliberate alternative to the external, bacchic joy of

the fall in *Paradise Lost* – and of the Restoration court in Milton’s England. The joy within is not a final end, but a precondition for the golden age on earth to which the poem nonetheless looks forward (94).

Significantly, Knoppers indicates that Milton’s inner paradise is only a “temporary limited instantiation” and the internal joy is only a “precondition for the golden age.”

Fenton argues that Milton’s hope is connected to place, to the real land. Fenton argues that “hope is bound to both the internal and external, the spiritual and the material” (33). For Fenton, hope should have characteristics of abstractness and materiality.

To sum up, Lewalski, Kerrigan, Knoppers and Fenton all agree that Milton did not relinquish his eschatological hope and maintained his vision of a new heaven and earth after 1660. Although their arguments appear to be more convincing than the previous two arguments, they neglect to mention the tension between hope and despair after the fall, which lasts until the end of Book 12.

1.4 The Problem of Despair

If delivering a hopeful message is Michael’s intention, then why are readers left with a sense of loneliness at the end of Book 12?

The world was all before them, where to choose
 Their place of rest, and providence their guide:
 They hand in hand with wandering steps and slow,
 Through Eden took their solitary way. (12. 646-49)⁷

⁷ Weinfield indicates that the end of *Paradise Lost* can be interpreted in two ways and the answer will depend on how pessimistically we view the presence of error in Creation and, how optimistically we view the emphasis on an eternal providence that enables Adam and Eve to find their way. Weinfield argues that the emphasis of Milton’s concluding passage is not only about the Fall and its aftermath, but is also about having faith in that everything has been ordained and is moving toward its proper end. See Henry Weinfield, “With Serpent Error Wand’ring Found Thir Way”: Milton’s Counterplot Revised.” *Milton Quarterly* 37.1 (2003): 11-20.

At the conclusion of *Paradise Lost*, it seems that Milton has not resolved the tension between a cyclical, degenerative history and an eschatological, progressive divine history.

Although admittedly Milton retains his faith in God and Christ's coming kingdom, the eschatological dialogue between Michael and Adam shows Milton to be questioning and analyzing why Christ's kingdom fails to be materialized in the immediate future. Through Michael and Adam's dialogue, Milton challenges his contemporary acceptance of the Stuart Restoration, formulates his own solutions to the crises of the times and rebuilds true eschatological hope for his readers. Thus, the purpose of the prophetic history in Books 11 and 12 is to restore eschatological hope for both himself and his reader. Polkinghorne says, "Hope, must involve the redemption of the past as well as promised fulfillment in the future" (96). Therefore, Milton builds up true hope by looking back to divine mercy in Genesis and looking forward to God's promises in Revelation. Without looking back into history, hope will have no foundation. True hope looks backward into past and forward into future. Therefore, Milton examines the causes that have led to the degeneration in human history while simultaneously correcting the mistaken eschatological views of his contemporaries.

In chapter 2 section 1, I will explain why I stick to the term "eschatological" and not "apocalyptic." I contend that Milton's view is eschatological and not apocalyptic because Milton does not perceive the coming of Christ as imminent in *Paradise Lost*. In chapter 2 section 2, I will analyze the eschatological views of some of Milton's contemporaries in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. In chapter 2 section 3, I will analyze how Milton's *Areopagitica* deconstructs his contemporaries' false eschatological hope and reconstructs true eschatological hope. I will employ *Areopagitica* as a point of entry for analyzing the tension between eschatological

despair and hope in *Paradise Lost*. By juxtaposing *Areopagitica* and *Paradise Lost* with seventeenth-century religious and political controversies, I will demonstrate that Milton not only aims to deconstruct false hope, but also aims to rebuild true hope. The visions of the last two books of *Paradise Lost* in particular reminds readers to be cautious not to make mistakes in discerning true prophecy from wrong prophecy.

In Chapters 3 to 5, I will analyze Milton's criticism of the eschatological hopes of the Presbyterians, the Fifth Monarchists, and the Quakers. I argue that these mistaken eschatological hopes contribute to the sense of despair in the dialogue between Michael and Adam in Books 11 and 12. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of hope and despair in Books 11 and 12 is indebted to Milton's experience of polemical engagement with a diversity of contemporary eschatological beliefs during the 1650s and 1660s, including the Presbyterians, Fifth Monarchists, and Quakers. In the last two books of *Paradise Lost*, Milton challenges these three groups, showing that their misinterpretation of eschatological prophecies could lead them to despair. Milton's struggle to understand God's purpose for late seventeenth-century English Protestants caused him to look far beyond his contemporary difficulties to the point where eternity intersected with the present. By connecting tragic human history to hopeful divine prophecy, Milton realized that he and his contemporaries were not hopeless. Despite their inability to realize a godly state, Milton believed that Providence would ultimately establish a final restoration on earth: Christ's Kingdom of Glory.

My own perspective on Milton's eschatological hope largely parallels that of Barbara Lewalski, David Loewenstein, and Mary C. Fenton. They offer insights into Milton's deep concerns about the relationship between history and prophecy. However, this paper will focus more closely on how, in writing *Paradise Lost*, Milton constructs a true eschatological hope by deconstructing his contemporary eschatological hopes first. I argue that the juxtaposition of hope and despair at the

revelation of postlapsarian history in Books 11 and 12 reflects Milton's challenge to the mistaken eschatological beliefs of his contemporaries.

By looking to the past and the future, Milton establishes true eschatological hope. For the present, he finds consolation in the paradise within; and with regard toward the future, he finds consolation in God's promise of a coming kingdom.

In short, Milton's silence about political upheaval after the Restoration may be interpreted as a sign of despair, yet his great dedication to the writing of *Paradise Lost* reveals his determined eschatological hope. His deconstruction of contemporary eschatological beliefs, achieved by a series of questions and answers, prepares the way and restores hope for the Second Coming of Christ.



Chapter 2: Milton's Perspective on the End of the World

2.1 Distinguishing Between Apocalypse and Eschatology

Based on my reading of *Paradise Lost*, Milton's hope is eschatological, rather than apocalyptic because he does not perceive the coming of Christ as imminent after the Restoration.¹ Nevertheless, it is easy to confuse the two terms or use them complementarily. Both apocalyptic and eschatological writings deal with what happens at the end of time: e.g., final tribulation, final judgment and final conflagration. Separating eschatological and apocalyptic material is often impossible since the former is often contained in the latter and vice versa.

I employ the terms 'eschatology' or 'eschatological' in place of 'apocalypse' or 'apocalyptic' to define Milton's varied stances between the 1640s and 1670s. Based on my reading of *Paradise Lost*, Milton does not insist on the urgency of final judgment and final conflagration. To associate Milton with apocalyptists, a subcategory of eschatology, would be to suggest that he advocated the imminent destruction of the world (Wagenknecht 144).

Milton Encyclopedia defines Milton's eschatological views as "orthodox," stating, "Milton characteristically formulates his own eschatology by extracting all pertinent biblical texts and making a synthesis, although, except for mortalism, his conclusions are orthodox" (3.68). In the seventeenth-century English Protestant context, "orthodox" implies amillennialism. Amillennialists do not believe in a future thousand-year reign of Christ on earth. They consider the millennium described in Revelation 20 as a metaphorical description of the interim time between Christ's first and second comings (Barnes 163). To this extent, Milton's eschatological views were not "orthodox" because his prose and poems often present

¹ Barbara Lewalski argues that Milton stopped emphasizing the imminence of Christ's Second Coming since *Areopagitica* (18).

his hope for Christ's Second Coming and His thousand-year kingdom of glory on earth.

I agree with Christopher Hill's and David Loewenstein's arguments that Milton is neither a traditional nor a radical millennialist. Christopher Hill argues that Milton was influenced in the 1650s by his contemporary Protestant radical groups that were pursuing a thousand-year kingdom without divine reign, stating, "Milton's position is somewhere between that of traditional millenarian Puritanism and activist plebeian Fifth Monarchism" (*Milton and the English Revolution* 284). In other words, Hill suggests that Milton had his own eschatological views and kept his distance from his contemporary religious radicals. Similarly, Loewenstein contends, "He [Milton] respects diverse radical Protestant groups yet maintains independence from them – preferring his own strenuous exertions in scriptural hermeneutics and 'constant reading' as the means of discovering and grappling with spiritual truths" (*Milton among the Religious Radicals and Sects* 240).

The word 'apocalypse' itself originally meant a 'revelation,' communicating of a kingdom of divine things unknowable to human beings except through the intermediary of an inspired visionary. *Milton Encyclopedia* defines apocalypse as a "communal and individual negative forebodings of an ending to civilization in some holocaust of complete destruction, or a positive anticipation within a traditional Christian perspective of a millennial consummation, including the Last Judgment and the glorification of the saints in a new earth and a new heaven" (1. 58).

The definition of eschatology extends beyond apocalypse. When the term was created in the seventeenth century, Lutheran theologians generally introduced discussion of the last things, under the title "eschatology" or *De Novissimis*, as the end

piece of a general presentation of theology (Sauter 3).² Eschatology (from the Greek meaning last, farthest), defined by the *Milton Encyclopedia*, is “the branch of theology that deals with the last things, such as death, resurrection, judgment, glorification, and damnation” (3. 68). It refers to the expectation of an evolving world, i.e. a world that has no end.

The major difference between the two is the timing of Christ’s return. Bernard McGinn writes, “What differentiates ‘apocalypticism’ from the more general term ‘eschatology’ has traditionally been a sense of the imminence, or nearness, of that end or goal. But imminence has been conceived of as much in psychological as in chronological terms” (McGinn xvii). To call Milton’s viewpoints apocalyptic is to suggest that they are based on a conviction that the world as we know it is already or necessarily will be coming to an end. However, based on my reading of *Paradise Lost*, I argue that Milton’s post-Restoration view is in fact eschatological because *Paradise Lost* ends with peace and consolation. Furthermore, the end of *Paradise Lost* also reflects Milton’s optimistic anticipation for Christ’s kingdom of Glory. In chapters 3 to 5, I will analyze how Michael’s correction of Adam’s and Eve’s mistaken hopes in Books 11 and 12 not only represents Milton’s post-Restoration eschatological view but also serves as a contrast to Milton’s contemporary Presbyterians’, Fifth Monarchists’ and Quakers’ eschatological concepts.

2.2. Eschatological Views of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English

Protestants

For fifteen hundred years, from the patristic period to the Reformation period,

² Of course, one could say that the term “eschatology” is not biblical and did not emerge until the seventeenth century. It was not until Johannes Gerhard (1582-1637), one of the most influential teachers of Lutheran orthodoxy, and his *Loci theologici* (theological loci) (1601-21), that we find the first comprehensive teaching on *de novissimis* (literally: “the latest” or rather “the teachings about the end”).

the orthodox Augustinian view of the end of the world dominated the official Latin Western view of history. The conventional Augustinian amillennialism remained unchallenged in England until the Reformation, during which the freedom to interpret the Bible created an unprecedented eschatological frenzy. Increasing numbers of doctrines and denominations appeared in England, and various interpretations of the prophetic books flourished. These Protestant groups challenged the Catholic doctrine and used the prophetic books to endorse causes of their movements (Richard Connors and Andrew Gow viii).

The sixteenth-century English Protestants lived under the shadow of the Final Judgment. They believed that the history of the Christian church was near its end. As Capp states, “[f]or sixteenth-century Reformers the Apocalypse was a key to the past and present” (93), but not the future. In other words, it connected them to the history of the true church but not a future Millennium. One of the fundamental works of the sixteenth century that influenced the apocalyptic views of the time was John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* (Latin ed. 1559, English eds. 1563 et seq.). Throughout his huge compilation of narratives, Foxe historicizes prophecies and contends that saints have been persecuted since the time of the first church. Readers of *Acts and Monuments* considered the apocalyptic prophecies as directed at them, and the reiteration of the persecution of the righteous allowed them to take the apocalyptic sense of urgency literally.³

However, Foxe and his contemporaries were unable to solve the dilemma of final conflagration and the millennium kingdom. On the one hand, they wish for the rapid destruction of the cosmic universe, and on the other hand, they wish for the long reign of Queen Elizabeth I. As Escobedo notes, “as a Christian, Foxe eagerly awaits the

³ Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, given the widest circulation through its use as propaganda by the Elizabethan government, depicted the Englishmen throughout the centuries battling against Antichrist, especially since the days of Wycliff (Escobedo 6-13).

Promised End; as a nationalist, Foxe at times reveals ambivalence about this End” (15). Deeply concerned with the martyrs’ sacrifices in Christian history, Foxe perceived special deliverance in Constantine’s ceasing of the persecution and adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. In Foxe’s view, Emperor Constantine prepares the way for a millennium kingdom by stopping Antichrist’s assault on the churches (Escobedo 6-13).

Vehemently embracing scripture as their sole spiritual authority and rapidly setting themselves against the Catholic Church, the Protestants of the sixteenth century rediscovered the connection between prophecy and history. They identified the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church as the Antichrist.⁴

Moreover, sixteenth-century Protestants believed that the Christian monarchy played a crucial role in the defeat of the Antichrist. It is this basis upon which the Marian exiles described Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) as the new Zerubbabel, the latter-day restorer of God’s broken church, in the epistle dedicated to the queen. The epistle, addressed to Queen Elizabeth I, writes,

God has laid upon you in making you [Queen Elizabeth I] a builder of his Spiritual Temple...and therefore endeavor ourselves by all means to aid and to bestow our whole force under your grace standard, whom God hath made as our Zerubbabel for the erecting of this most excellent Temple.” (Geneva Bible, 1560)

The inauguration of Queen Elizabeth I raised hopes for sixteenth-century English Protestants that the Catholic persecution might cease and the church would evolve

⁴ The marginal notes to the Protestant Geneva Bible and Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible served as a battlefield for the ideological war between Protestantism and Catholicism. Antichrist, or the Beast, was not merely the Pope as a person, but the papacy as an institution. The word Antichrist occurs in the Bible only in the Epistles of St. John, where it is applied to deceivers who deny that Jesus is the Messiah. The Second Beast in Revelation 13 and the Man of Sin in 2 Thessalonians 2 have been traditionally identified with the Antichrist of John’s Epistles, and all three with the Pope. See Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England*, rev. ed., (London: Verso, 1990) 4.

toward perfection. Although the sixteenth-century English Protestants historicized the eschatological prophecy and also recognized that their primary duty was to assist their monarch in combating Antichrist, they still assumed that human action was not completely effective in shaping the cosmic story. As Escobedo says,

Elizabethan Protestants were unequivocal about the moral obligation to resist Antichrist, an obligation made all the more urgent by their interpretation of history. But their sense of what their efforts can contribute to the cosmic conclusion of the apocalyptic story was, in the end, quite modest: Christ would soon return whether or not the earthly forces of the true church had the upper hand over Antichrist (20).

The sixteenth-century English Protestants in general subscribed to postmillennialism: that Christ would come again after one millennium of peace and justice (Barnes 143-84). During this thousand-year period, they believed that they had an obligation to resist the Roman Catholic Church and Papacy, both historical manifestations of Antichrist. This struggle, they maintained, was not an everlasting fight for Christians, but the last fight for the final age of the Church. The Book of Revelation gave the sixteenth-century English Protestants religious and political authority in the struggle against the Roman Catholic Church.

In the early seventeenth century, these end-of-the-world Protestant perceptions significantly evolved. The early seventeenth-century English Protestants' apocalyptic view was premillennial, that is, they believe that Christ would come again to establish a thousand-year kingdom on Earth (Escobedo 22). The eager anticipation of an earthly millennium led many mid-century Englishmen to assume that their political activity can hasten the Second Coming of Christ.

There are two possible explanations for the modification of eschatological view in seventeenth-century England. First, the seventeenth-century English Protestants

moved from understanding history as “tradition and precedent” to understanding it as “novelty and progress” (Escobedo 2). The notion of historical progress emerged in seventeenth-century English Protestant thought. They ceased to consider the second coming of Christ as the end of earthly temporality, believing that Christ’s second coming would imply the beginning of the establishment of Christ’s thousand-year kingdom of glory on earth.

Second, England experienced a series of political successes in the late sixteenth century that inspired them to seek to fulfill the prophecy of the Bible as they understood it. As Capp states,

The switch from expectation of the imminent end of the world to belief in a future golden age appears a dramatic reversal, but the change was probably evolutionary. Political successes in the later sixteenth century encouraged Protestants to place more emphasis on the eventual overthrow of Antichrist, which in turn aroused interest in the triumphant period between Rome’s fall and Christ’s return to Judgment. This ‘latter-day glory’ could lead quite naturally to the idea of a full millennial age (101)

The political successes, like the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the expansion of English New World colonization, as well as the victory of Gustavus Adolphus in the Thirty Years War, motivated seventeenth-century English Protestants to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ. Moreover, for many foreign Protestants in the seventeenth century, Britain became a refuge of hope. Firth says, “Both at home and abroad, conviction grew that England had a special role to play in the defence of the Protestant faith” (253). The major difference between the sixteenth- and the seventeenth-century English Protestants was that the seventeenth-century English Protestants perceived the apocalypse not as an end but rather as an opportunity to

carry out their divinely appointed roles. Political successes inspired them to emphasize the active role of the Protestants rather than the passive suffering of martyrs.

The belief that men were living in the last age of the world, when history might reach its golden climax, profoundly influenced the behavior of seventeenth-century Englishmen, motivating them to take actions that they believed to be of great importance. Seventeenth-century Englishmen in general believed that human action could make impact on God's plan. The premillennial vision inspired the seventeenth-century English Protestants with new missions and tasks.

The premillennial eschatological view allowed seventeenth-century English Protestants to perceive the future as an earthly opportunity reserved for them to prepare the way for Christ's Second Coming. They believed that the timing of Christ's second coming largely depended upon their participation in social and political movements (Popkin 127). The seventeenth-century eschatological vision made worldly activity correspond with millennial paradise and reconciled the expectation of an imminent end to earthly life with an earthly effort to create a national future.

Despite the common fascination with Revelation, deep divisions existed within the late seventeenth-century English Protestants, and diverse eschatological interpretations flourished. As Gribben writes, "the millenarian school of interpretation grew in popularity and influence in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, finding a focus in the Independent and Presbyterian churches, but split into competing factions roughly aligned with England's various ecclesiastical groupings" (30). Eschatological visions proliferated within various seventeenth-century English religious groups and their apocalyptic views came to define their political stance and ecclesiastical affiliations.

Radical political and religious groups adopted apocalyptic language in their polemics to justify their own stances and confute opposition's arguments. Barnes states, "apocalyptic and millenarian visions could function either to support or to undermine established political structures" (147). The apocalyptic and millenarian visions lend English radical groups the power to subvert political hierarchy and ecclesiastical power. In the eyes of the radicals, the allegedly pro-papist bishops and government as well as the royalists, were members of the anti-Christian party.

In the midst of the struggle for religious and political power, apocalyptic terms that these seventeenth-century English Protestant groups adopted in their polemics appeared ambiguous. Loewenstein says,

The inflammatory language of rebellion and sedition was exploited by both political sides during the upheaval of the 1640s and 1650s. This age of rebellion and overturning could stimulate alarming innovations and reversals, so that political language and names themselves became dangerously malleable and unstable (*Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries* 178-79).

Radical seventeenth-century English Protestants were enthusiastic in trying to use military force or civil rebellion to establish Christ's kingdom of glory on earth. Even after the Restoration, the Fifth Monarchists still organized uprisings for this cause. Most radicals were united by a desire for a 'fifth monarchy,' the political manifestation of the apocalyptic reign of the saints. Among radical groups, the Fifth Monarchists held to the millenarian interpretation of the Apocalypse more steadfastly than any other radical group.⁵ They considered the period described in Revelation

⁵ The Fifth Monarchy was a radical sect that aimed at establishing the "Fifth Monarchy" (Daniel 2:44) to succeed the four old monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Daniel's vision of five great empires inspired the Fifth Monarchists with the idea that they were the saints who would 'possess the fifth kingdom.' Their political power ended when Cromwell dissolved the Barebone's Parliament in 1653. Cromwell was afraid that the Fifth Monarchists' obsessive reforming enthusiasm was going to

20 as a future golden age in which they would reign with Christ in a New Jerusalem.

However, their radical movements were based on a mistaken apocalyptic vision, exaggerating the worldly pleasures of the millennium while minimizing messages about the Final Judgment. Through military force, they adhered to this vision in which they were the saints who would judge the world, believing that “the persecuted saints would be raised as the judges of the people; they would witness the earth’s reversion to an Edenic state” (Gribben 30). The Fifth Monarchists believed that God had put the fate of the world in their hands, or as Escobedo says, “they feel that their temporal efforts can influence it [earthly paradise], perhaps even hasten it or help shape its dimensions” (4). Thus, on the one hand, the religious radicals actively sought social reform in England, and, on the other hand, they sought ways to convert the dispersed Jews to Christianity because they believed that Jews’ complete conversion would mark the beginning of the millennium. Popkin states,

The millenarians were convinced that if the Jews could be brought back to England, and there experience the pure Christianity of the Puritan world, they would of course convert, and then the millennium would begin The popular millenarian movements of Ranters, Diggers, Levellers, and so forth agitated to create the preconditions for the millennium in a classless society (117).

Furthermore, the seventeenth-century Fifth Monarchists anticipated a new Parliament composed by godly people which would conduct political and social reforms (Capp 116).

The Fifth Monarchists hoped that they might influence the apocalypse and determine the fate of the world. But in *Readie and Easie Way* (1660 first edition), Milton condemns the Fifth Monarchists’ use of religion rhetoric as pretext to

lead the nation toward disorder (See Gribben 50-51).

challenge the Parliament. Milton says,

[a]mbitious leaders of armies would then have no hypocritical pretences so ready at hand to contest with Parlements, yea to dissolve them and make way to thir own tyrannical designs; in summ, I verily suppose ther would be then no more pretending to a fifth monarchie of the saints (YP 7:380).

The Quakers, another fundamental religious group in Milton's time, honored inner hope after the Restoration. Their spiritual enemy shifted from the Papacy and Roman Catholic Church, to the Church of England, and after the Restoration, to the "internal Antichrist." The Quakers suggested that the "Antichrist is in the heart of every man and woman" (Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeen-Century England* 145). However this shift from the macrocosmic to the microcosmic battlefield reduced Christ and Antichrist to merely qualities within an individual's heart: Christ as righteousness and Antichrist as sin. The Quakers considered Christ's kingdom primarily an inward, spiritual transformation (Capp 116).

However, not only did the Quakers adopt the amillennial apocalyptic view, the Presbyterians lost hope in the millennial kingdom of Christ since 1640s. As Gribben says, "the 1640s witnessed a general public rejection of millenarian theology as well as the withdrawal as a body of the Presbyterians from the millenarian brotherhood (140). Nevertheless, Barnes argues that apocalyptic anticipation did not die out after 1660, writing, "powerful underlying stains of mixed fear and hope remained very much alive in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth" (144). The apocalyptic visions provided the late seventeenth-century English Protestants with high expectations for the future, and at the same time, a growth in anxiety.

2.3. Milton and Contemporary Eschatological Beliefs

Sometimes 5 Imprimaturs are seen together dialogue-wise in the Piazza of one Title page, complementing and ducking each to other with their shav'n reverences, whether the Author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his Epistle, shall to the Presse or to the sponge. (*Areopagitica*, YP 2:504, emphasis added)

In *Areopagitica*, Milton analyzes the beliefs of his contemporaries and challenges the theoretical implications of each. The passage mentioned above shows how Milton situates the text as a “piazza,” a meeting place for the Catholic and the Presbyterian beliefs to converse (Gribben 140). Gribben says that while Milton “juxtaposes the rhetoric of the orthodox and the radicals, and attempts to distinguish between their eschatological beliefs; in this manner, he puts different eschatological hopes against each other in order to reveal truth” (Gribben 140). In *Puritan Millennium: Literature & Theology 1550-1682*, Gribben clearly analyzes Milton’s linguistic subversion of the Presbyterian’s and Catholic’s eschatological beliefs. Gribben states, “[a]ctually Milton seems to be voicing these ideas to present a kind of synopsis of contemporary millenarianism which he immediately deconstructs... *Areopagitica* becomes a site where the literal and figurative pull equally strongly and equally consistently in opposite directions” (147).

In the 1640s, the Presbyterians gradually withdrew their support from millenarian belief and support the Catholic amillennial belief. Thus, in *Areopagitica*, Milton argues against the Catholics’ and the Presbyterians’ eschatological beliefs. In his treatise, he gives the eschatological beliefs of the Catholics and Presbyterians a space to interact with his eschatological belief. Through dialogue, Milton points out the mistakes of the Catholics and the Presbyterians’ eschatological beliefs (Gribben

140).

Furthermore, Gribben argues that *Areopagitica*'s Milton is like Satan in *Paradise Lost*, who is reduced to “fracturing God’s rhetoric in an attempt to achieve significance” (146). In my opinion, Gribben’s argument emphasizes Milton’s deconstruction of Catholics’ and Presbyterians’ beliefs and overlooks Milton’s effort to reconstruct true eschatological hope. In the following, I contend that, on the one hand, *Areopagitica*'s Milton deconstructs the mistaken eschatological hopes of the Presbyterians and Catholics, and on the other hand, Milton also reconstructs true eschatological hope.

In *Areopagitica*, Milton opposes the amillennial belief of the Catholics. In his argument, his characterization of the Imprimaturs presents the dialogue typology which is common in Puritan millenarian texts (Gribben 140). Milton refers to the amillennial eschatology of the Augustinian tradition and highlights its Catholic legacy; for instance, in criticizing the censorship controlled by “glutton Friars,” he argues that “they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broken prison, that his quadruple exorcism would barre him down” (YP 2:504). Milton makes sarcastic remark on the Catholics here. To Milton, the assumption of the supercilious Catholics that censorship of book, like exorcism, can reduce evil in one’s mind is ridiculous. In other words, Milton contends evil cannot be totally removed from this world until the Final Judgment when Satan will be bounded in hell forever.

Moreover, Milton opposes censorship laws proposed by the Presbyterians since he saw the censorship of books as an attempt to remove all possibility of future revelations. To Milton, the censorship law not only threatens the progression of truth, but also deprives people’s freedom to reason. In Milton’s words, censorship law is like “second tyranny” (YP 2:539). Milton writes:

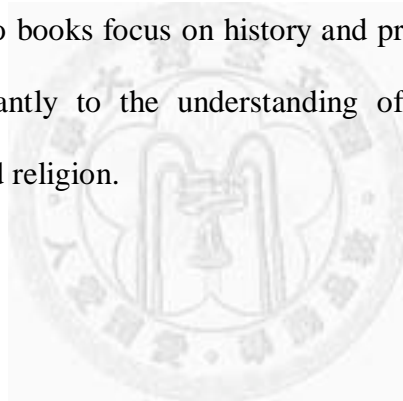
And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the

genrall murmur is; that if it come to inquisitioning again, and licencing, and that we are so timorous of our selvs, and so suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of every leaf, before we know what the contents are, if some who but of late were little better then silenc't from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot be gust what is intended by som but a second tyranny over learning: and will soon put it out of controversie that Bishops and Presbyterians are the same to us both name and thing (YP 2: 539).

Milton's *Areopagitica* emphasizes the continual revelation of truth, from the past to the present. To Milton, the Presbyterians' proposal of censorship is a threat to the Second Coming of Christ. He believes that readers should actively search out truth in Scripture, and light will be revealed to them in their active search. Loewenstein writes that *Areopagitica* is not free from "the tension between Milton's sense of the extraordinary potential for social transformation, which accompanies his apocalyptic conception of history, and his sense of the tragic shortcomings of reformation in his age" (*Milton and the Drama of History* 39). On the one hand, Milton realizes that there are "many sectaries and false teachers busiest in seducing," (YP 2:566) yet on the other hand Milton sees hope and God's intervention in history. Milton says, "yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities, and more then common industry not only to look back and revise what hath bin taught heretofore, but to gain furder and goe on, some new enlightn'd steps in the discovery of truth" (YP 2:566). Milton balances hope's role in this life and in the next, knowing hope to be different from simple wishful thinking. To Milton, hope demands not only envisioning a changed future but also envisioning how and where that future can be realized. Hope is an ongoing construct that must undergo trials.

Milton believes that the search for truth will never end until the Second Coming of Christ: “We have not yet found them all [pieces of Truth] nor ever shall doe, till her Masters second coming; he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection” (YP 2:549). To Milton, both the search for Truth and the building of true eschatological hope won’t end until the Second Coming of Christ.

In Chapters 3 to 5, I will compare and contrast Adam’s hope with Milton’s contemporary Presbyterians’, Fifth Monarchists’, and Quakers’ eschatological hopes. In my opinion, Books 11 and 12 provide a good entry into understanding Milton’s post-Restoration attitudes.⁶ Books 11 and 12 are selected for the focus of this research because these two books focus on history and prophecy. To me, these two books contribute significantly to the understanding of Milton’s post-Restoration attitude toward politics and religion.

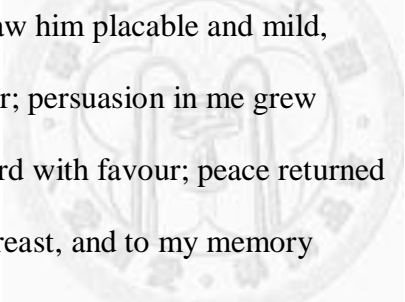


⁶ C.S. Lewis criticizes Books 11 and 12 of *Paradise Lost* as “an untransmuted lump of futurity” in which “the actual writing is curiously bad.” He argues that Milton’s historical summary, from the Fall to the Last Days, is disappointing, dull, and even “inartistic” (129). However, in my opinion, Lewis’ unsympathetic comments on Milton’s view of the last days overlook his eschatological hope and response to the eschatological beliefs of his time.

Chapter 3: Milton and the Presbyterians

I contend that Michael's correction of Adam's and Eve's mistaken hopes in Books 11 and 12 not only represents Milton's post-Restoration eschatological view but also serves as a contrast to Milton's contemporary Presbyterians' eschatological concept. From Milton's criticism of the Presbyterians' political attitude in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, I deduce the Presbyterians' attitude toward eschatology. I argue that Adam's and Eve's mistaken hopes in Book 11 (11.151-80) allude to the mistakes of the Presbyterians attitude toward the end of the world.

Adam builds up false hope at the beginning of Book 11. His repentance prayer inspires him with the hope that God might not sentence Eve and him to death. Adam says to Eve:



Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favour; peace returned
 Home to my breast, and to my memory
 His promise that thy seed shall bruise our foe;
 Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail thee,
 Eve right called, Mother of all Mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee
 Man is to live, and all things live for men (*PL* 11. 151-61)

According to my reading above (11. 151-61), I contend that Adam's hope is illusionary and false because he has wrong perception of God, peace and world order.

The first mistake of Adam's hope is that he builds up a "placable and mild" (11. 151) godlike image in his mind. Adam overlooks God's righteousness and assumes

that God can forgive their sins without punishments. In Adam's illusionary future world, God is one who is lenient and incapable of carrying out judgment.

Furthermore, to Adam, the role of his "memory" (11. 154) transcends the role of God in his mind. Adam bases his argument on his memory of God's words. To Adam, what links past to the future is his memory of God's promise and not God Himself. Adam substitutes his memories of God for God. He tries to project a hopeful future based on his memory of God's promise (11. 155). We notice that Adam attempts to inspire Eve with hope by making contrast between "now" (11. 156) and "past" (11. 158), "death" (11. 157) and "live" (11. 158), and "peace" (11. 153) and "dismay" (11. 156). However, Adam's words are partially true and partially false. His words present a mix of hope and despair, a mix of death and life. The illusionary hope that Adam tries to build up for Eve by making contrast with despair subverts truth and exposes the mistakes of his fantastic hope.

Adam here is like Milton's contemporary Presbyterians who have wrong perception of God, peace and world order. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, one of Milton's arguments against the Presbyterians' withdrawal from the Good Old Cause is that the Presbyterians have misconception of how God works in history. The Presbyterians argue that the execution of a Christian king is unprecedented in history, but Milton draws evidences from Scripture and history to show them that nothing in history is unprecedented. Milton argues that "justice is the onely true sovran and supreme Majesty upon earth" (YP 3:41) and "justice don upon a Tyrant is no more but the necessary self-defence of a whole Common wealth" (YP 3:55). To Milton, God can overthrow a corrupted king, like Saul, and raise another humble man, like David, to be a king. In other words, in Milton's opinion, a world without a God capable of carrying out justice is a world in chaos.

In *Paradise Lost*, Michael offers Adam a hope that is different from the false hope that Adam has built for himself at the beginning of Book 11. To Michael, the first step to build up true hope is to have a correct image of God in one's mind. Michael builds up Adam's hope in Christ through a recount of God's four main characteristics: mercy, justice, omnipresence and omnipotence. In his recount of God's characteristics, Michael assures Adam that expulsion from Eden is neither the end of the world nor the end of his life.

Thus, Michael corrects the false image of God in Adam's mind. Michael instructs Adam that the Father is both merciful (11. 252-58) and just (11. 259-62).

Michael says to Adam:

Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days
 Given thee of grace, wherein thou mayst repent
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord appeased
 Redeemed thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permit not; to remove thee I am come,
 And send thee from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil. (11. 252-62)

To Michael, the fact that God tempers justice with mercy does not suggest that He overlooks Adam and Eve's sin. On the one hand, God shows Adam and Eve mercy by delaying the "rapacious claim" of Death (11. 258), and on the other hand, God also shows Adam and Eve His justice by expelling them from paradise (11. 259-62). To

Milton, the Presbyterians made a wrong political decision because they have overlooked God's hand of justice in history.

The Father is merciful because He delays the encroachment of Death and saves Adam and Eve from "death's rapacious claim" (11. 258). Death was first a fearful thing in life, but God has turned it into something mankind can observe less fearfully. Death becomes a gate to eternal life for those who are redeemed by Christ.

In Genesis, there is no mention of God's mercy to the sinful couple or the delay of divine judgment.¹ Therefore, the idea of the delay of death appears to be Milton's own interpretation of the Bible.² His interpretation suggests that he understands the punishment to be a physical and not spiritual kind of death. He uses this example of God's mercy shown through the delay of his previous will to tell his contemporaries that God can also delay the Second Coming. In *Christian Doctrine* Chapter XXXIII, Milton writes, "Christ will delay his coming" (*C.D.* XXXIII, 508).³ It is not because God is not trustworthy; rather, it in fact means that God is merciful, and allows them more time for repentance. However, the fact that Christ delays His Second Coming does not imply that He tolerates sins. In fact, God tolerates not sin but sinners. The demonstration of God's mercy is not to overlook the righteousness of God.

After Adam has learnt that God's just and merciful characteristics, Michael begins to explain to him that God is omnipresent. God is the God of the past, the present and the future. He is not only God of Eden but also God of the universe. Even though Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden, God's presence is everywhere they go.

¹ In Genesis, God announces Eve's and Adam's sentences right immediately after they have committed the sin (3: 17-19). Eve will experience tremendous pain in giving birth and Adam will have to work hard to earn his living. Their punishment will continue till the day they die.

² Although God's mercy is not clearly mentioned in Genesis, Peter the Apostle confirms the Lord's mercy and promise to the first-century Christians. In 2 Peter 3.9, Peter says: "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

³ All the quotations of *Christian Doctrine* are from the London edition, translated by Charles R. Sumner, M.A. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1825). *C.D.* stands for *Christian Doctrine*.

Adam and Eve have not yet understood fully the relationship between their new identities as fallen beings and their new place in the world, as mortal earth-dwellers. Thus, Adam will later lament the loss of God's immediate, perceptible responsiveness and presence in Eden. Nevertheless, Michael reassures Adam that God will be omnipresent in a different way; in fact, their leaving paradise does not signify His abandonment of them. Michael affirms God's everlasting presence to Adam. Michael says:

Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
 God is as here, and will be found alike
 Present, and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face
 Express, and of his steps and track divine. (11. 349-54)

Adam's departure from Eden marks the beginning of his spiritual journey. God's presence is a proof that eternity exists. To Milton, knowing that God is omnipresent gives one a sense of security.

Third, Michael instructs Adam that God is omnipotent and His will transcends human understanding. Michael wants Adam to realize that God provides prosperity and adverse conditions for men to grow and learn. Michael says to Adam:

I am sent
 To shew thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inured

By moderation either state to bear

Prosperous or adverse. (11. 356-64)

Michael shows Adam that God's power transcends Eden and time. Though adversity is ahead of him, Michael wants Adam to know that God is in control of the future.

Thus, by knowing God's four characteristics--mercy, justice, omnipresence and omnipotence--Adam and Eve begin to build true hope and true vision. This true hope and true image of God is what Milton wants to present to his contemporaries. To Milton, the true restorer is Christ and only He, and no earthly agent, would be able to restore both the world and humanity at the end of time, because "man over men/ He made not lord" (12. 69-70). Milton believes that the true Restoration has not occurred because Christ the true restorer has not arrived. In Book 10, the Father tells the Son, "Destined restorer of mankind, by whom/ New heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,/ Or down from heaven descend" (10. 646-48). Furthermore, Charles II is not the promised restorer of the Golden Age because he possesses no power to restore what has been lost, i.e. "happiness and immortality" (11. 58-59). The regime of Charles II is too powerless to purge the sins of the nation and establish a harmonious society. The world remains in darkness until Christ's return, when "God shall be all in all" (3. 341). Milton's true restoration implies the restoration of the world to its blessed state.

The second mistake of Adam's hope is that he assumes that death is over and Eve and he will live in peace (11. 157-58). Adam assumes that once his prayer has been heard he can take peace as granted.

Adam's mistake is also the Presbyterian's. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, one of Milton's arguments against the Presbyterians is that the Presbyterians should not take peace for granted. Milton criticizes the Presbyterians for withdrawing their

support from the Good Old Cause and the execution of the king. To Milton, the Presbyterians are “malignant backsliders” (YP 3:27), whose fear of the failure of the execution (YP 3:33), disqualifies them to enter that “just and rightful kingdom” (YP 3:57). Milton argues that the Presbyterians are blinded by a “ridiculous and painted freedom” (YP 3:40) and they will be under tyranny and servitude forever if they do not stand up for their freedom and overthrow a corrupted king.

In *Paradise Lost*, in the revelation of postlapsarian history, Michael makes Adam realize that peace should not be taken as granted (11. 356-64). Michael wants Adam to be aware that in the postlapsarian world, “good and bad” (11. 358), “grace” and “sin” (11. 359-40), “joy” and “sorrow” (11. 341-42), and “prosperous” and “adverse” (11. 364) coexist. To Michael, the interweaving of good times and bad times, the mix of hopeful and depressing events, serve as trials of men’s patience (11. 361). In Book 12, Michael repeats this principle of God. Michael says:

Meanwhile they in their earthly Canaan placed
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies:
 From whom as of the saves them penitent
 By judges first, then under kings (12. 315-20)

Michael wants Adam to know that he should not expect to enter a static world where he needs not fight for peace, freedom and truth. To Michael, when sins threaten “peace,” God would raise wars. This is a Christian paradox. The Father told Michael that by revealing to Adam “what shall come in future days,” Adam and Eve can leave paradise “in peace”(11. 114, 117).

Michael’s picture of a future is different from Adam’s picture of a future. Adam assumes that he and Eve will have a bright future (11. 151-61). But Michael

reminds him that he should expect many bad things to take place (11. 356-64). However, the chaos of this world also reminds one that this world and everything in it is temporary. One should not develop desire to live in it for eternity since everything on earth will pass away. Thus, to Michael, Adam should not assume that he and Eve will enter a world like Eden. The world ahead of Adam and Eve is going to be a battlefield. Through the trials, Adam and Eve will develop patience and moderation.

The third mistake of Adam's hope is that he assumes that "all things live for man" (11. 161). Adam subverts the order that God has established and establishes himself as a tyrant in his own illusionary world. From Adam's point of view, everything is going to turn out as he has expected. His words begin with "me" (11. 151) and end with "men" (11. 161). He creates a world in which everything follows his order and command. Adam assumes himself as the center of the universe and time beings and ends with him.⁴ Besides giving Eve a false image of God, he also gives Eve a false image of themselves. Adam tells Eve that perhaps there will be a "New Law" (11. 228) imposed.⁵ His imagination of the establishment of a new law inspires him with the belief that the world evolves around them. Adam believes that the world will change for them and God will not abide by His law because of them. But Adam is wrong.

After eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve turned themselves into tyrants. They assume that they are the masters of Garden of Eden. Their impaired judgment after the Fall affect their understanding of the world. Both

⁴ In Revelation, God affirms John the Apostle that He is "the First and the Last," and "holds the keys of death and Hades" (1.17-18).

⁵ In the Book of Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples that he has come to fulfill the Law and not to abolish the Law. Jesus says: "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will be any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:17-19). Thus, Adam's assumption that there will be a new law imposed is wrong.

Adam and Eve are afraid of the Father because they have doubts and uncertainties about God and their destiny.

The Presbyterians committed similar mistake like Adam and Eve. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton criticizes the Presbyterians for showing mercy to a tyrant. To Milton, all men bear resemblance of God and are born “to command and not to obey” (YP 3:8). However, due to Adam’s transgression, earthly kings and magistrates are required to establish social order and maintain common welfare. Nevertheless, Milton reminds the Presbyterians that kings and magistrates derive their authority from the people (YP 3:10). Thus, when kings or magistrates become lawless, people should exercise their abolition power and bring lawless tyrants and magistrates to justice. Milton reminds the Presbyterians that giving up their right to abolish a tyrant is a “violation of their natural birthright” (YP 3:10). Therefore, like Adam who possesses an inner tyrant, the Presbyterians’ unwillingness to support the Commonwealth reveals their inner pride and inner tyrant.

Moreover, to Milton, those who defend tyrants and do not fight for their conscience and for the kingdom of eternal righteous will not enter the kingdom of glory at the end of the world. Milton believes that if they remove their earthly king, God will bless England. Milton writes: “[He] will bless us, and be propitious to us who reject a King to make him onely our leader and supreme governour in the conformity as neer as may be of his own ancient government” (YP 3:39). Based on my reading, the issue of tyrant in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* is further elaborated by Milton in *Paradise Lost*.

There are three types of tyrants mentioned in *Paradise Lost*: inner tyrant, earthly tyrant, and supernatural tyrant, that is, Antichrist. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton mentions only the visible earthly tyrants, but in *Paradise Lost*, Milton mentions the other two invisible tyrants: one, inward; another, spiritual.

Adam's pride turns himself into a tyrant (11. 161). Moreover, Adam's inner tyrant alludes to the Presbyterians' inner pride, to their "ensorious and *supercilious lording over conscience*" (YP 3:44, emphasis added). Thus, in showing mercy to a tyrant, the Presbyterians turn themselves into tyrants instead.

In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton states his argument against monarchy. As Bryson writes, to Milton, "government must persuade; if government does not function in this manner, then it becomes tyranny, however benevolent its manifestation" (125). Furthermore, in Milton's opinion, Bryson reminds us, "the purpose of government, just as of education, is to repair the devastation, wrought by the Fall and restore the original relationship between humanity and divinity" (138).

To Milton, the Presbyterians place truth in bondage and enslave their own conscience. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton argues that if the Presbyterians stop insisting on the execution of the king, they will have no hope for the future. Milton writes:

Without which natural and essential power of a free Nation, though bearing high thir heads, they can in due esteem be thought no better then slaves and vassals born, in the tenure and occupation of another inheriting Lord. Whose government, though not illegal, or intolerable, hangs over them as a Lordly scourge, not as a free government; and therefore to be abrogated. (YP 3: 40)

Milton argues that even if the Presbyterians assume that they are free, they are, in Milton's view, "no better than slaves."

Furthermore, to Milton, the Presbyterians' persecution of the revelation of truth coincides with the work of Antichrist at the end of the world. Milton writes in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*:

Let them beware an old and perfect enemy, who though he hope by sowing discord to make them his instruments, yet cannot forbear a minute the op'n threatening of his destined revenge upon them, when they have servd his purposes. Let them, fear therefore if they be wise, rather what they have don already, then what remains to doe" (YP 3:42).

Milton contends that the Presbyterians have worked hand in hand with "an old and perfect enemy." To Milton, if the Presbyterians are not afraid of an earthly tyrant, they should, if they are wise, be afraid of the spiritual tyrant.

In *Paradise Lost*, Michael also reminds Adam to be aware of persecution from the spiritual tyrant. Michael says:

heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward Rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfi'd; Truth shall retire
 Bestuck with sland'rous darts, and works of Faith
 Rarely be found (12. 531-37)

Michael reminds Adam that those who worship in spirit and in truth will be persecuted by Antichrist, the spiritual tyrant, at the end of the world. Antichrist will impede the revelation of truth and destroy the works of faith.

The three types of tyrants share similar characteristics. First, they all behave arrogantly; second, they aim to destroy the work of God; and third, they persecute and enslave truth. Thus, to Milton, not only should his contemporaries be aware of earthly tyrants, they should also be aware of inner tyrants and supernatural tyrant.⁶

⁶ In the Book of Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples that they should not be afraid of "those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul." What they should be afraid of is the one "who can destroy both body and soul in hell" (Matt 10:28).

False hope, like the Presbyterians' belief in monarchy and peace, brings despair, as one can see in Adam's case. Upon learning his sentence, Adam expresses his lament:

if by prayer
 Incessant I could hope to change the will
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries:
 But prayer against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit (11. 307-14)

Adam assumes that it is useless to waste time on hopeless desires. He hopes that he can change God's will, though he immediately understands that this is not possible. God has given an absolute decree which cannot be contradicted. Even though Adam finds banishment painful, he humbly submits to God's command.

Adam's despair is a continuation of his fear in Book 10. The hope he had tried to hold after praying cannot stand any challenge. Thus, in my opinion, Milton seems to say that hope and joy granted from above (11. 138-39) is weak if they have not been challenged by life trials. In Book 10, Adam thinks he will soon be reduced to dust. He assumes the Earth to be his deathbed. He says:

That dust I am, and shall to dust return:
 O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
 His hand to execute what his Decree
 Fixd on this day? Why do I overlive,
 Why am I mockt with death, and length'nd out
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet

Mortality my sentence, and be Earth
 Insensible, how glad would lay me down
 As in my Mothers lap? There I should rest
 And sleep secure. (10. 770-79)

Death has become the ultimate hope because it implies the termination of psychological and spiritual torment: “Why comes not Death”; “Death comes not at call, Justice Divine/ Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries” (10. 855, 858-59). Adam’s hope for death is similar to Satan’s hope for escape from the torture of Hell – simply a wish for the absence of affliction.

Eve, like Adam, entertains a false hope, but in a different way. The mistake of Eve’s hope is that her hope has no futurity (11. 177-80). Eve says to Adam:

Where’er our day’s work lies, though now enjoined
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content. (11. 177-80)

Eve’s hope focuses on the present. She uses the word “now” and “here” to emphasize her hope because future is beyond her imagination. However, her hope soon perishes with the news of expulsion. Thus, just after receiving hope from Adam (11. 151-61), Eve quickly turns into despair. Eve is in despair not only because her hope has no futurity but also because her hope is linked to the static ground and not to the Father. Eve laments:

O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
 Must I thus leave thee Paradise? Thus leave
 Thee native soil, these happy walks and shades,
 Fit haunt of gods? Where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day

Thust must be mortal to us both. (11. 268-73)

Eve wishes to stay in Garden of Eden for the rest of her life. However, she realizes that has become impossible.

Similar to Adam, Eve's false hope brings despair. Eve's despair is a continuation of her misjudgment in Book 9. Her false imagination causes her downfall. The poet writes:

For Eve

Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else

Regarded, such delight till then, as seemed,

In Fruit she never tasted, whether true

Or fancied so through expectation high

Of Knowledge, nor was the God-head from her thought.

Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint (9. 785-91)

From above passage, it is clear that when Eve satisfies her flesh, she loses her reason. In her attempt to gain knowledge, Eve loses her judgment and her wisdom.

In my opinion, the relationship between man's despair and God's hope is a Christian paradox. Only when one realizes that he/she is hopeless, would he/she regain true hope from God. The end of man is the beginning of God. Only by losing man's illusionary, imaginative hope can he/she gain true hope from God. Thus, to Michael, the first step of building true eschatological hope is to destroy the hopes that Adam and Eve have built for themselves. Adam's hope is false because his hope is based on his memory (11. 154) of God and not on God himself. Adam's wrong perceptions of God, of the coming world and of his role impede the building of true hope. Like Adam, Eve also has false hope because her hope has no futurity.

Before the world reaches its final restoration, hope and despair are in constant tension from the beginning of the world to the Second Coming of Christ. Michael teaches Adam that he has to learn to develop temperate habits. Michael tells Adam:

So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
 Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
 Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
 To withered weak and gray; thy senses then
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
 To what thou hast, and for the air of youth
 Hopeful and cheerful (11. 535-43)

Michael reminds Adam that death will come when the time is ripe but they should not need to seek death. Hope and despair are in tension, just like Christ and Antichrist are in tension. It is interesting to notice that Michael also presents a contrast here. Like Adam who presents a contrast between past and future, Michael also presents a contrast between old age and youth. But the acceptance of old age, and the words of Michael do not bring one despair. The acceptance of life as it is, and the knowledge of what life and time will transform brings peace and consolation. There might be some sadness in this statement, but it does not bring despair. The contrast between "old age" and "youth," between "withered weak and grey" and "hopeful and cheerful" are contrast between hope and despair. But Michael tells Adam that the wisdom is that not to rush. Adam should live in accordance with God's schedule. When time comes for him to get old, he should accept that fact. Old age implies that one's time remaining on earth is short. Things will change (11. 539). The knowledge that

everything on earth is temporary helps one not to create desire to stay on earth forever or to make earth one's permanent home.

To hope or not to hope is a good question. Adam and Eve had hope that they might not be punished. Presbyterians had hoped that they can depend on earthly kings. Satan had hoped that he can have revenge on God. But how to hope, how to inspire a hope that can last and not draw one into deeper despair once that hope is gone, is a big lesson for Milton's contemporaries to learn. False hopes bring despair, while true hopes bring motivation and persistence.

Thus, the first step of planting the seed of eschatological hope is identifying Christ and Antichrist. Michael plants the seed of hope in Adam's heart. This hope is only a seed which will grow when Adam face the trials later in his life. Michael cannot grow hope for Adam because Adam has to develop his own hope.

In short, by comparing and contrasting the development of Adam's hope with the Presbyterians' hope in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, we can draw a brief summary of Milton's post-Restoration eschatological view. First, Milton believes that God is just and merciful. Milton believes that on the Final Judgment Day, God will punish the wicked ones and reward the righteous ones. Second, Milton believes that the tension between hope and despair will continue until the Second Coming of Christ. Natural disasters and wars are trials of faith and patience for those who live at the end of times. In the chaotic postlapsarian world, no earthly peace can be achieved. Third, Milton believes that before the Second Coming of Christ, Antichrist will appear and persecute truth and the saints.

In the next chapter, we will see how Adam and Eve derive hope from divine promise. After the Fall, the promise of God is their hope. The divine promise gives them hope for salvation after their spiritual death.

Chapter 4: Milton and the Fifth Monarchists

I contend that in the second stage of building up true hope, Adam constantly makes errors and these errors allude to the mistakes of Milton's contemporary Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope. In *Readie and Easie Way* (1660, first edition), Milton criticizes the Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope. Michael's correction of Adam's hope reflects Milton's post-Restoration political and religious attitude.

Adam's first mistake is that during the revelation of postlapsarian history, he often tries to interpret visions from his point of view. For example, to Adam, the third vision presents a harmonious and peaceful community. However, Michael warns Adam to be aware of the hidden hypocrisy and disguise in the community, and not to be fooled by the "pleasant" (11. 607), "studious" (11. 609), "polish" (11. 610), and "beauteous" (11. 613) appearance of the community people. Michael teaches Adam not be fooled by their beautiful outlook and pleasant life. Michael says:

To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy,
 (Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep. (11. 621-27)

Michael's words echo Milton's contemporary Fifth Monarchists' political movements. Adam's incorrect interpretation of the vision alludes to the mistakes of the Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope. The seventeenth-century English Fifth Monarchists justified their movement and ambition with religious pretexts. However, Milton discerns their hypocrisy. In *Readie and Easie Way* (1660), Milton criticizes the Fifth Monarchists' selfish ambition.

In *Readie and Easie Way* (1660), Milton criticizes the Fifth Monarchists' adoption of prophetic verses from the Bible as pretexts of their political movements.

Milton writes:

If ther were no medling with Church matters in State counsels, ther would not be such faction in chusing member of Parliament, while every one strives to chuse him who he takes to be of his religion; and everie faction hatht the plea of Gods cause. Ambitious leaders of armies would then have no hypocritical pretences so ready at hand to contest with Parlements, yea to dissolve them and make way to thir own tyrannical designs in sum, I verily suppose there would be then no more pretending to a fifth monarchie of the saints: but much peace and tranquillitie would follow (YP 7:380).¹

Milton argues that the Fifth Monarchists do not have correction vision of the future. They use religion as a pretext to carry out their political aims. Milton is against mutual dependence of religion and politics. To Milton, the Fifth Monarchists must make a clear distinction between ecclesiastical and civil matters.

The Fifth Monarchists believed that they were able to work hand in hand with God and make history. Their eschatological hope is burdened with a mission to bring about the end of the world. However, Milton seems to suggest that what they have done for the establishment of Commonwealth, resulting in failure, was all in vain. God seems not to have granted them the power to hasten the coming of His Kingdom. The Fifth Monarchists have hope, but this hope is not God's will. Their hope is selfish and not of divine origin. The Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope

¹ This passage is part of a long passage that was deleted by Milton in the second edition of *Readie and Easie Way*. The note to this deletion suggests that Milton perhaps thinks that his argument on separation of church matters and state matters cannot support his plea for Commonwealth at this time.

is based on human agent and not on God. The mistake of their hope is further elaborated by Milton in *Paradise Lost*.

Michael's warning to Adam in *Paradise Lost* echoes Milton's criticism of the Fifth Monarchists in *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*. In Book 12, Michael says:

Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous Wolves,
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n
 To their own vile advantages shall turn
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written Records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood. (12. 508-14)

Michael warns Adam that the "sacred mysteries of Heav'n" (12. 509) will be misinterpreted by "grievous wolves" (12. 508) on purpose to satisfy their "vile advantages" (12. 510) and "ambition" (12. 511). According to my reading above, the wolves allude to the Fifth Monarchists and those radical seventeenth-century millenarian scholars. The Fifth Monarchists disguise themselves as divine representatives sent to earth to carry out God's will. However, to Milton, the Fifth Monarchists' ambition and selfishness blind their conscience and make them misinterpret the scripture.

Milton especially felt the bondage of truth after the Restoration. The political situation after the Restoration did not allow Milton to openly oppose or write anti-monarchical pamphlet or treatises. He had to adjust to the changed ecclesiastical circumstances. The post-1660 Milton realized that the hope of the imminent coming would not be fulfilled, although many contemporary signs had corresponded to the apocalyptic signs of the Book of Revelation. He might realize that God had His own schedule, which was unfathomable by either man or Satan.

To Milton, the aim of the Fifth Monarchists' effort to hasten the Second Coming of Christ is not to glorify God but to satisfy their own desires.

Milton's contemporary radical groups transformed millenarian faith into revolutionary ecclesiastical and political movements (Gribben 30; Popkin 117; Capp 116). Millennial hope gave rise to phenomena such as the Leveller's fight against land enclosures, the Fifth Monarchists' belief that the thousand-year earthly reign of Christ was approaching, and the Diggers' contention that the poor should cultivate common land (Bryson 117). The seventeenth-century millenarian ideas inspired the Fifth Monarchists to argue that the Kingdom of God was at hand and urged not only reformation of Church and State, but also absolute submission to new prophets.²

Through Michael and Adam's dialogue, Milton corrects the Fifth Monarchists' eschatological view. Milton indicates that judgment is "from above" (11. 668), and not up to the Fifth Monarchists or any radical groups to do the justice.³ Michael says to Adam:

God would come
 To judge them with his saints: him the most high
 Rapt in balmy cloud with winged steeds
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
 Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment (11. 704-10)

² The Fifth Monarchists followed the preaching of preachers from various Baptist and Independent congregations who advocated a radical social and political program in preparation for the millennial rule of the saints. Furthermore, the Fifth Monarchists followers criticized the inconsistency of some of their leaders like John Owen and Goodwin, when they began to distance themselves from the Fifth Monarchists (Gribben 55).

³ At the end of *Of Reformation*, Milton declares that Messiah will "open the clouds to judge the severall Kingdomes of the World, and distributing National Honours and Rewards to Religious and just Common-wealths" (YP 1:616).

Michael reminds Adam that at the end of the world, there will be a Final Judgment Day, on which God will reward the good ones and punish the wicked ones.

Adam's assumption that "God with man unites" (12. 382) to defeat the enemy alludes to the Fifth Monarchists' belief that God and they could work hand in hand to defeat the enemies. However, Michael argues that there will not be a duel between Christ and Satan. Michael says:

Dream not of their fight,
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
 Satan, whose fall from heaven, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
 Which he, who comes thy saviour, shall recure,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 In thee and in thy seed (12. 386-95)

To Michael, Christ's power transcends Satan; therefore, man need not join with God to overcome Satan. Adam's ambition alludes to the Fifth Monarchists' ambition to work with God. Through Michael's correction of Adam's hope, Milton points out the mistakes of the Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope. To Milton, the Fifth Monarchists overestimate their role at the end of the world and underestimate God's omnipotence.

Beside the mistake of overemphasizing the role of human at the end of the world, Adam's second mistake in constructing his hope is that during the revelation of postlapsarian history, he often rushes to make comments. In *Readie and Easie Way*, Milton criticizes the Fifth Monarchists because they assume that they can use military

means to overthrow the restored regime and hasten the golden age. The Fifth Monarchists assumed that they could use military means to overthrow the restored regime and hasten the golden age. The idea that a human agent could participate in the cosmic design was popular in Milton's time (Firth 253; Popkin 127). But Milton did not participate in any of the Fifth Monarchists' post-Restoration movements. Milton believed that it was God, not human being, who was in control of history.

In *Paradise Lost*, neither man nor Satan has an understanding of God's schedule. After the Fall, Adam laments,

Be it so, for I submit, his doom is fair,
That dist I am, and shall to dust return:
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fixed on this day? (10. 769-73)

Adam cannot comprehend the cause of the delay of death. He refers to it as a "cruel expectation," (10. 782) finding himself unable to appreciate God's decree. In doubt of God's mercy, Adam would rather "meet mortality" (10. 775-76) than "die a living death" (10. 788).

Similar to man, Satan cannot comprehend and tolerate delay and considers it a pretext of the defeated. After the descent from Heave, Satan gathers and motivates his comrades,

sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? (2. 56-60)

He urges them to seize the moment, convincing them that their present situation can be ameliorated if they act immediately. He persuades one-third of the angels, turning them from sympathizers into soldiers. Lowenstein says:

In *Paradise Lost* the protean Satan can give that ‘likeness of Truth and Righteousness’ and especially provocative political form. By fashioning himself as a political leader and alluring legions of angels with ‘ambiguous words’ (5: 703), he assumes the likeness of a defiant radical voicing the rousing language of freedom and spurning the politics of submission to Heaven’s kingly power and rituals” (*Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries* 203).

Satan rushes his followers into pursuing false hope. He never waits with patience. He is almost constantly in motion, often moving with speed and haste, as when he “Puts on swift wings,” (2. 631) to travel toward the Gates of Hell. He “eagerly” pursues his way through Chaos (2. 947), and Uriel notices that his way is “Bent all on speed” (4. 569). When Satan arrives in Eden, Satan admits that his hope is simply to succeed in achieving revenge:

But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav’n
To dwell, unless by maisting Heav’ns Supreme
Nor hope to be my self less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease (9. 124-29)

The answer to Beelzebub’s question, “whom shall we find/ Sufficient?” (2. 403-4) marks the beginning of the fallen angels’ construction of hope after their fall:

None among the choice and prime
Of those Heav’n-warring Champions could be found

So hardie as to proffer or accept

Alone the dreadful voyage (2. 423-26)

The fallen angels choose Satan because he provides hope and a quick relief to their immediate misery.

To fulfill the expectation of his subjects, Satan travels to earth. When he arrives at paradise, he quickly changes shape because it “might work him danger or delay” (3. 635). Before tempting Eve, he

Stood in himself collected, while each part

Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,

Sometimes in highth began, as no delay

Of preface brooking through his zeal of right (9. 673-76)

Satan prefers aggressive and prompt action. As if under the pressure of time, he hastens his every movement. At the gate of Hell, he tells his daughter Sin,

I haste

To know, and this once known, shall soon return

And bring ye to the place where thou and Death

Shall dwell at ease (2. 838-41)

He travels “in haste” (3. 500) to paradise to carry out his evil mission. After learning that Christ has been anointed as the Son of God, Satan commands Beelzebub to assemble the angels:

I am to haste

And all who under me their banners wave,

Homeward with flying march where we possess

The quarters of the north, there to prepare

Fit entertainment to receive our king

The great Messiah, and his new commands,

Who speedily through all the hierarchies

Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws (5. 686-93)

When they are gathered, Satan says to them, “us eclipsed under the name/ Of king anointed, for whom all this haste/ Of midnight march” (5. 776-78). His rebellious intention is disguised by his ‘ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound/ Or taint integrity” (5. 703-4) which infuses “bad influence into the unwary breast/ Of his Associate” (5. 695-96). This ambiguous speech makes his conspiracy against God appear as a hasty response to divine call.

Yet Satan’s hasty movement is not a sincere response to divine call. Satan keeps telling himself to hasten, but makes little progress. His concept of time influences his comrades and Eve. His fellow comrades’ distorted vision fails them and they falsely judge Abdiel’s proposal as rash. When the loyal angel Abdiel suggests that they repent and ask for God’s forgiveness, they consider it as a rash proposal: “None seconded, as out of season judged,/ Or singular and rash, whereat rejoiced/ The apostate, and more haughty thus replied” (5. 850-52). When their chief returned from paradise, they “forth rushed in hast the great consulting peers, Raised from their dark divan” (10. 456-57).

Eve, who has been influenced by Satan’s concept of time, plucks the forbidden fruit with her “rash hand”:

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour

Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate:

Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat

Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,

That all was lost. (9. 780-84)

Eve's attempt to hasten the evolution from human to a god alludes to the contemporary religious radicals' eschatological view.⁴ Similar to the Fifth Monarchists' attempt to hasten the golden age, Eve eats the forbidden fruit because she thinks she can quickly become a god. What the Fifth Monarchists and Eve have in common is their rashness.

Analogously, seventeenth-century English Fifth Monarchists adopted several tactics to hasten the millennium because they hoped to be saints and reign with God in New Jerusalem. But Milton thinks the radicals' efforts are prelude to their fall, believing their movement is not a genuine response to divine call.

When Eve commits the sin, she "delayed" her return (9. 844). After the fall, time becomes the tool of Sin and Death; as Sin says, "The scythe of time mows down, devour unspared" (10. 606). But after Eve has repented, and been told of the future in her dream, she says to Adam: "In me is no delay; with thee to go" (12. 615).

Milton makes his point especially clear here. Eve's wish to rush is motivated by selfishness, not divine calling. Before her fall, Eve said to herself:

What fear I then, rather what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty?
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to they eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind? (9. 773-79)

⁴ The Fifth Monarchists believed in the description of a golden age mentioned in Revelation 20. They believed that the persecuted saints would be raised as the judges of the people and they would witness the earth's transformation to an Edenic state. In my opinion, the Fifth Monarchists' ambitious desire to possess power of judgment echoes Eve's challenge to Adam's and God's positions in Edenic hierarchy.

Eve persuades herself that the fruit of knowledge is good for both her body and mind. In her words, we can see that Eve thinks only about what she can achieve from the fruit and does not realize that the grievous consequence of her action. The poet writes: “Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat/ Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,/ That all was lost” (9. 782-84).

The hastiness of God and his angels is different from that performed by the fallen. God and his angels, unlike Satan, work according to God’s schedule. The Son can command the creatures, angels, and humans to hasten their movements. For instance, at the Son’s command at the creation,

dark fled,

Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:

Swift to their several quarters hasted then

The cumbrous elements (3. 712-15)

Moreover,

Capacious bed of waters: thither they

Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled

As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;

Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,

For haste; such flight the great command impressed

On the swift floods (7. 290-95)

Whenever the Father summons the angels to heaven, they respond with haste steps.

When they know about man’s fall, they quickly return to heaven.

Up into heaven from Paradise in haste

The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad

For man, for of his state by this they knew,

Much wondering how the subtle fiend had stolen

Entrance unseen (10. 17-21)

Furthermore, they appear rapidly to plea for man's sin:

The etereal people ran, to hear and know

How all befall: they towards, the throne supreme

Accountable made haste to make appear

With righteous plea (10. 27-30)

The angels dash when they hear the trumpet, which would sound again on the Judgment Day, "The sons of light/ Hasted, resorting to the summons high" (11. 80-81). The Father commands Michael, "Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God/ Without remorse drive out the sinful pair" (11. 104-5). Also, when the angels inform the shepherds that God has come to earth, the shepherds gladly rush to Bethlehem: "His place of birth a solemn angel tells/ To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;/ They gladly thither haste" (12. 364-66).

Before the fall, Adam and Eve hustle to work in the garden. For example, in Book 5, it says, "so all was cleared, and to the field they haste" (5. 136) and later,

[so] prayed they innocent and to their thoughts

Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm.

On to their morning's rural work they haste

Among sweet dews and flowers (5. 209-12)

And when Angel Raphael visits them, Eve says, "But I will haste and from each brough and brake,/ Each plant and juiciest gourd will pluck such choice/ To entertain our angel guest" (5. 326-28). The purpose of these hasty movements is to show obedience to God.

Unlike Adam, Eve and the angels, who act according to God's commands and timing, Satan tries to run ahead of God's schedule. As a result, Satan does not progress. Delay is the result of sin and is not the original intention of God. Even

though sin can delay God's blessings, God still chooses to bless His people. For instance, the Israelites spent forty years in the desert because they disobeyed God; however, Milton contends that Israelites' system of government is a "gain by their delay." In Book 12, Michael accounts for the disobedience of the Israelites:

Through the wild desert, not the readiest way,
Lest entering on the Canaanite alarmed
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness lead not on.
This also shall they *gain by their delay*
In the wide wilderness, there they shall found
Their government. (12. 216-25, emphasis added)

Due to their disobedience, the Israelites were not able to enter the Promised Land immediately. However, they were not abandoned by God. God still blessed them in the desert. Therefore, Milton believes that God is in control of history. Christ will overcome Satan in the end event through the conditions are now "to the good malignant, to the bad benign" (12. 158).

God's angels and Satan have different concept of time. Their different concepts of time generate different kinds of hope. In *Paradise Lost*, there are two kinds of hope. Both Satan and Adam learn to overcome despair with hope, yet their hopes remain different because they have different concept of time. Satan has his own despair, but his approach to transform despair into hope is inaccurate. Satan gives his fellow angels the hope that they may regain heaven,

and from despair

Thus high uplifted beyond hole, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with heaven (2. 6-9)

Satan's hope continues from the vain war with heaven. He tries to inspire new hope in his fellow angels, who in turn nominate him as commander. His test of generalship, to overcome his despair, is to arouse his troops from their state of abject submission to a spirit of revived hope and defiance. He says, "We may with more successful hope resolve/ To wage by force or guile eternal war/ Irreconcilable, to our grand foe" (1. 120-22). Satan can turn hell into paradise and paradise into hell.

And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him, for within him hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step no more than from himself can fly
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair (4. 17-23)

Satan is not in despair for long because he is determined to turn paradise into hell. Satan starts productive action and refuses passive acceptance of his immediate situation in Hell. Satan's hope is undeniably functional and dynamic, a force that enables him to persist, to plan a new way toward a new kind of victory, to command and lead his troops.

Although Satan is evil, his hope serves him functionally, productively, and even heroically, in "raising" him from despair, as he is "uplifted" to new stature "High on Throne of Royal State" (2. 1). To me, Satan's illusionary hope to sit on the throne alludes to the Fifth Monarchists' hope to judge the world with God. Satan promises his comrades, that he may gain them some "reinforcement" (1. 190), to which despair

will add “resolution” (1. 191) to the plan that will “from the lowest deep/ . . . lift us up, in spite of Fate,/ Neerer our ancient Seat” (2. 393-94). Similar to Satan, the Fifth Monarchists assumed that they would be lift up to sit beside God on the Judgment Day (Popkin 127).

Though Milton identifies Satan’s hope as misled, only “false presumptuous hope” (2. 522) and “fallacious hope” (2. 568), after his fall from heaven, Satan’s hope is nonetheless always productive, inspiring him to ameliorate his immediate physical and political circumstances. Fenton argues that, for Satan, “hope is simultaneously his motivation and his goal as he transforms the verb into a noun, i.e. he hopes for hope, and he uses hope as part of his political vision to regain and augment his power” (47). However, Milton indicates that Satan’s hope is false since its aim is the deliberate challenge to virtue and righteousness.

We can make a comparison between Satan’s hope and joy (9. 631-42) with Adam and Eve’s hope and joy (11. 136-39). Adam and Eve’s hope is “from above” (11. 138), while Satan “elevates” (11. 633) his own hope and joy. “Intricacy” (11. 632), “mischievous” (11. 633) and “misleading” (11. 640) characterize Satan’s hope. In contrast to Satan’s hope, “strength” (11. 138), “joy” (11. 139) and “new” (11. 138) characterize Adam and Eve’s hope.

In the process of narrating the growth of Adam’s true hope, Milton also rebuilt his own hope. Kerrigan says, “Like the narrator, Satan accepts what he is and makes the best of it. The difference is that, for the devil, all is his and his alone” (155). Kerrigan’s words echo Satan’s loss of hope in *Paradise Regained*. Satan says:

Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
 Of my reception into grace; what worse?
 For where no hope is left, is left no fear;
 If there be worse, the expectation more

Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
 I would be at the worst; worst is my port,
 My harbour and my ultimate repose,
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My error was my error, and my crime
 My crime (*PR* 3. 204-13)

Since Satan has lost hope of salvation, he realizes that his final hope is to overthrow the Son. Satan's words reveal his determination and hope. However, Satan's hope is his alone and so is his crime and despair.

Satan's hope is false hope because he hopes for what he can see. Paul the Apostle defines true hope in Romans 8.24-25: "Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." Satan hopes for what he can see, but Adam has learnt to hope in what he cannot see. Adam says to Michael:

Measured this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fixed: beyond is all abyss,
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace and thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire. (12. 554-60)

Adam has realized that there are things in eternity that is beyond his imagination. However, he is content with the knowledge that he has learnt from the revelation of postlapsarian history.

Michael wants Adam to know that God is in control of time and He often intervenes in history. To the Fifth Monarchists, Milton may want them to know that

the end of war, no matter how war or violence is justified, could never produce peace (11. 779-84). True hope is grounded in the belief that God is in charge of human history and that He will abide by His promise (11. 704-11). People might think that God has delayed the Second Coming of Christ, but Milton argues in *Christian Doctrine* chapter 33 that God never delays.⁵ God sees a day like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day.

Perhaps Milton's short poem *On Time* can give us some inspiration on Milton's attitude toward time. At the end of the poem *On Time*, Milton writes, "Then all this earthly grossness quit,/ Attired with stars, we shall forever sit,/ Triumphant over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time!" To Milton, time confines human history and only eternity can free history from time's confinement. To Milton, the Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope does not transcend time. Prophecy aroused great hopes of freedom and eternity in the minds of the Fifth Monarchists. However, their insistence on making present the point at which time meets eternity confines them under time. In trying to shorten the distance between present and eternity, the Fifth Monarchists only turn themselves further away from the kingdom of glory.

Besides the misconception of time and human's role at the end of time, Adam's third mistake is that he desires to learn secrets from heaven. In *Paradise Lost*, Adam, like the Fifth Monarchists, has desire to know more about the secrets of the future. Angel Raphael tells Adam that heaven is like a book before him, for him to read and learn the seasons, months, and years set by God; however, they should not aim higher in their wisdom. God limits the knowledge that humans can obtain. Raphael says:

For heaven

⁵ Milton's argument in *Christian Doctrine* chapter 33 is based on 2 Peter 3:8-9. Peter says: "But do not forget this one thing, dear friend: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether heaven move or earth,
 Imports not, if thou reckon right, the rest
 From man or angel the great architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets to be scanned by them (8. 66-74)

Raphael instructs Adam not to attempt to learn secrets from heaven because God has concealed divine secrets from man.⁶

The teaching of not aiming higher is also intended for Eve. Like Adam, Eve also wishes to cross the boundary that God has measured for her. Eve's praise of the tree echoes the seventeenth-century Fifth Monarchists' attitude toward the Book of Revelation. After eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, Eve begins to praise the tree:

O sovereign, virtuous, precious of all trees
 In Paradise, of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
 Any thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created, but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches offer free to all
 Till dieted by thee I grow mature

⁶ In Deuteronomy 29:29, Moses writes: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law."

In knowledge, as the gods who all things know;

Though others envy what they cannot give (9. 795-805)

Like Eve who praises the Tree of Knowledge, the English Fifth Monarchists formed their eschatological view not from the Bible, but from particular prophet books: mainly the Book of Daniel, the Book of Revelation, and the Prophecy of Elias. Eve wants to achieve more knowledge, but in the process, she loses wisdom and the object of her praise shifts from God to the Tree of Knowledge. Eve trusts her own newly acquired is like the Fifth Monarchists' false belief in themselves once they are equipped with the knowledge from the prophetic books. Similarly, the Fifth Monarchists had focused their lives on the fulfillment of apocalyptic visions, considering themselves harbingers of God's kingdom of glory. Eve trusts her own newly acquired knowledge, just like the Fifth Monarchists who think they are independent from God, once they have gained a glimpse of knowledge from the prophetic books.

By comparing and contrasting Adam's hope and the Fifth Monarchists' hope, I contend that Milton has hope in God's promise. Although the Commonwealth had failed, Milton still kept his hope in God's promise. His eschatological hope proves to be true hope because he had passed the trials of Restoration. The Fifth Monarchists' eschatological hope reduced them to despair because their hope was not based on God's promise. Thus, at the end of sixth-vision, Adam has gained true hope because his hope is based on God's promise. Fenton says, "The epic culminates in a hopeful resolution that life after the lost paradise is still possible because of God's promise, faith and love They persist because they trust that they will indeed find 'their place of rest,' because they have faith and hope that the light of Providence will guide them" (Fenton 126).

We can make a brief conclusion of Milton's post-Restoration eschatological view here. First, Milton believes that true eschatological hope is not based on what one can see through one's physical eyes. Second, Milton believes that God has his own schedule and he will not delay. Third, Milton believes that decoding of divine signs and secrets cannot help one enter the kingdom of glory.

In the next chapter we will see how Milton's eschatological hope is different from Quakers' amillennial eschatological hope. I contend that the object of Milton's post-Restoration eschatological hope is New Heaven and New Earth.



Chapter 5: Milton and the Quakers

I contend that by comparing the last stage of the development of Adam's hope with the Quakers' hope, we can better define Milton's post-Restoration eschatological hope. In my opinion, Milton and the Quakers have different eschatological hope. Milton believes in New Heaven and New Earth but the Quakers only believe in inner paradise.¹

What kind of hope does Adam possess when he left paradise? Hope in inner paradise (12. 587)? Or hope in New Heaven and New Earth (12. 463-65)? What is the "happy end" that Michael refers to when he says to Adam:

That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one Faith unanimous though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more cheer'd,
With meditation on the *happy end*. (12. 602-5, emphasis added)

To answer this question, we need to first define kingdom of Christ and kingdom of glory. In *Christian Doctrine* chapter 33, Milton makes a distinction between the kingdom of glory and the kingdom of Christ. To Milton, the kingdom of Christ refers to the inner paradise, which began with the incarnation. However, the kingdom of glory refers to the final second paradise, which will be realized at the Second Coming of Christ. Milton writes:

[His] kingdom of grace, indeed, which is also *the kingdom of heaven*,
began with his first advent, when its beginning was proclaimed by John
the Baptist, as appears from the testimony of Scripture; but his kingdom

¹ The Inner paradise theory was supported not by the Quakers' only; however, I picked Quakers to represent the inner paradise belief in seventeenth-century England. The Quakers were famous for their fiercely resistance to any kind of secular authority. They were responsive to the will of God and willing to fight for their cause. However, after 1660, they adopted pacifism, and advocated the substitution of spiritual transformation for the restored kingdom of Christ on earth (See Gribben 147).

of glory will not commence till his second advent. (*C.D.* XXXIII 514-15).

In the synoptic gospels, Jesus uses a lot of parables to describe the kingdom of heaven.² To Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is like sower (Matt 13:1-23), weeds (Matt 13:24-29), mustard seed and the yeast (Matt 13: 31-35), hidden treasure and the pearl (Matt 13: 44-46), net (Matt 13:47-50), ten virgins (Matt 25: 1-13), and talents (Matt 13: 14-30). These parables all begin with the kingdom of heaven and ends with kingdom of glory because they share similar conclusion: those evil doers will be thrown into the fire, while those righteous ones will enter the kingdom of glory. In his parables, Jesus connects inner paradise with second paradise. In other words, one must possess inner paradise first before he/she can enter the second paradise.

Michael's emphasis of the second paradise is in opposition to the Quakers' eschatological hope. The Quakers' writings emphasized the interiorization of power and kingship. David Loewenstein states that "the early Quakers . . . represented the largest and most dynamic movement of social, political and religious protest" emphasized on the power of a spiritual kingdom within ("The Kingdom Within: Radical Religious Culture and the Politics and Paradise Regained" 64).

In my opinion, the Quakers' inner paradise belief presents two problems. First, the Quakers' hope is reserved and has no futurity, like Satan's hope. Satan attempts to create a hopeful vision for his followers and tries to appear "not in despair" (1. 525) before them. He tries to encourage his followers in the hope of restoring the lost paradise and the lost heaven. Satan tells his followers: "What reinforcement we may gain from hope,/ If not what resolution from despair" (1. 190-91). Nonetheless, Milton criticizes Satan's hope as being "high lifted *beyond hope*, aspires/ Beyond thus

² In Matthew 13:10-17, Jesus says that he only speaks to the people in parables.

high, insatiate to pursue/ Vain war with heaven” (2. 7-9, emphasis added). Satan’s hope is not true hope because it is self-centered and has vain objective.

The second problem with the Quaker’s eschatological hope is that this hope substitutes an inner paradise for the promised kingdom. This substitution is misleading. For if the word of God can be substituted for an inner spirit, then could God be also substituted by an inner good character?

In my opinion, it’s probably not wrong to say that Satan also processes a paradise within. In his speech to his fellow comrades, Satan advocates that hell can be turned into paradise, and vice versa. Satan’s hope looks forward to success and appears similar to any worldly hope. However, Satan’s hope cannot be fulfilled because his hope is not connected to God and love. In his conclusion to 1 Corinthians 13, Paul says: “[And] now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” In my opinion, hope without love is vain. If Adam and Eve do not live and support each other after they have left Eden, then there would be no hope for them either. One hopes because of his/her belief in God’s love to mankind. Hope and love are inseparable. The verses before 1 Corinthians 13:13 are also related to hope and prophecy. Paul says:

But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. (1 Corinthians 13: 8-12)

Paul the Apostle admits that we do not have sufficient knowledge of the phenomenon that will take place at the end of times. In *Christian Doctrine* chapter 33, Milton also admits that he does not know whether final conflagration is a total destruction of the world by fire or a transformation of all creatures. However, Milton thinks that is not important for him to argue. Through scriptures, human beings can only gain a glimpse of what is supposed to come at the end of the world, like seeing a vague reflection of New Heaven and New Earth in a mirror. Thus, the inner paradise foreshadows the coming kingdom of glory. Possessing inner paradise signifies that one has possessed the entering ticket to the second paradise.³

Unlike Satan's false hope, the poet possesses true hope. The new passage added to the second edition of *Paradise Lost* in 1674 mark the ceasing of visions and the beginning of narration history. In addition to that, these lines also serve as a dividing line between two worlds. The poet writes:

As one who in his journey baits at noon,
 Though bent on speed, so here the archangel paused
 Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
 If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
 Then with transition sweet new speech resumes (12. 1-5)

To me, the addition of these five lines in the second edition of *Paradise Lost* reflects Milton's condition after the Restoration. Like Michael who is standing "betwixt the world destroyed and the world restored," Milton was living in the middle of two worlds – the Commonwealth and the New Heaven and New Earth. To Milton, the illusory hope in the Commonwealth has been reduced to despair but the hope in the new world—the New Heaven and New Earth—is inspiring and everlasting.

³ I think possessing a paradise within coincides with the teaching of born again (John 3: 1-21). Jesus teaches Nicodemus that a man must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God.

After the Restoration of Charles II, the number of Protestants who expected Christ Himself to appear personally to inaugurate his reign on earth decreased. Gribben contends that Milton's contemporaries' eschatological visions did not bring them peace; rather, their misinterpretation of the prophetic books created divisions among them (Gribben 30). To me, the chaotic political atmosphere in seventeenth-century England was caused by mistaken interpretations of eschatological visions. Among the seventeenth-century English radical interpretations of the eschatological signs, the inner paradise theory seems to provide guidance to those who were living in midst of political disorder and religious chaos. However, in my opinion, for Milton, inner paradise is not the ultimate hope; instead, it is only a shadow of the real future paradise. Michael says to Adam:

only add

Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,

Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,

By name to come called Charity, the soul

Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath

To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess,

A paradise within thee, happier far (12. 581-87)

According to my reading above (12. 581-87), I conclude that paradise within is only a shadow of New Heaven and New Earth. Milton's epic not only recounts the loss of paradise but points to the true golden age, which will be restored at the Second Coming of Christ. What Michael intends to say here is that the inner paradise is happier than Eden. He does not intend to say that the inner paradise is happier than the second paradise. In my opinion, the second paradise cannot be substituted by the inner paradise. Without the second paradise, history becomes meaningless, and

inner paradise becomes meaningless too. Inner paradise has meaning only if it is connected to the second paradise.

Based on my reading of the last two books of *Paradise Lost*, Milton does not substitute the inner paradise (12. 587) for the eternal second paradise (12. 314).

Milton writes:

But Joshua whom the gentiles Jesus call
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wandered man
Safe to *eternal paradise of rest*. (12. 310-14, emphasis added)

In my opinion, this eternal paradise of rest not only implies to Canaan, the land of milk and honey, but also alludes to the kingdom of glory, the second paradise. Joshua of the Old Testament functions as a forefigure of Jesus Christ. Thus, like Joshua who leads the Israelites into the Promised Land, Jesus will also lead “the world's wilderness long wandered man” into second paradise. .

Furthermore, to Milton, besides inner paradise, one's repentance also cannot be substituted for the Final Tribulation and Judgment Day. Michael tells Adam that the Final Judgment is not self-judgment; instead, it is judgment from God. Michael says:

Above all names in heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead,
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in heaven or earth, for then the earth
Shall all be paradise, far happier place

Than this of Eden, and far happier days. (12. 458-65)

In my opinion, Milton hoped for the kingdom of God, but in the intermediate period, inner paradise gave him peace.

According to my reading above, I conclude that in *Paradise Lost*, there are three levels of paradise: Eden, inner paradise, and second paradise. These three paradises witnesses fall, consolation and redemption. Moreover, these three paradises record stories of loss, salvation and hope. These paradises also mark and reflect a Christian's life transformation process. Every newly-born Christian has to walk from paradise lost to inner paradise and to the second paradise. It's a step by step process. No one can jump from paradise lost directly to paradise regained. To me, these three paradises are consecutive and mutual complementary. These three paradises are consecutive because the inner paradise (12. 587), that is, the intermediate paradise, comes after Garden of Eden and will be followed by the "eternal paradise of rest" (12. 314). They are mutually complementary because the existence of each paradise provides the other two with meaning. Garden of Eden provides a historical base for inner paradise and eternal paradise. Inner paradise provides a bridge between paradise lost and paradise restored. The second paradise provides hope for people who ever experienced the loss of Eden and inner paradise.

To Milton, the New Heaven and New Earth will eventually replace the paradise within. Milton states in *Christian Doctrine*, "Hope differs from faith as effect from cause" and "the object of faith is the promise; the object of hope, the things promised" (YP 6:676). Thus, the "happy end" (12. 605) implies the second paradise.

In my opinion, the inner paradise does not negate the promise of the coming paradise, the coming Kingdom of Glory. The inner paradise foreshadows the coming kingdom. Possessing inner paradise signifies making one step toward the second paradise. As Fenton writes, "what distinguishes hope from mere wishful

thinking, and what restrains it from becoming merely self-serving ambition is recognizing that God must be both the source and the object of hope” (142-43).

To Milton, on the Final Judgment Day, Satan his fellow angels will be bounded:

Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend
 With victory, triumphing, through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The Serpent, Prince of air, and drag in Chains
 Through all his Realm, and there confounded leave;
 Then enter into glory. (12. 451-56)

In Milton's opinion, the final victory belongs to Christ. Christ will conquer Satan and overthrow all earthly powers. *Paradise Lost*, for all its emphasis on patience and prophetic hopes, counters the Restoration regime by deconstructing the hope in Charles the restorer.

From the end of Book 11 to the end of Book 12, Michael tries to help Adam build his hope on the second paradise. To Milton, holding hope for a second paradise is neither materialistic nor immature. Hope that has neither object nor foundation is weak and cannot survive trials in life.

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton assigns neither dates nor times to Christ's reign, nor does he employ the word millennium or thousand years (Revard 57). Nevertheless, Michael's account of the last days includes the assurance that the Lord will come in the clouds from heaven “to dissolve/ Satan with his perverted World” and raise “New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date” (12. 546-47, 549).

Through Michael's voice, Milton expresses his hope in a great eschatological triumph at the end of the world. To Milton, on the Final Judgment Day, Satan and his fellow angels will be bounded:

Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend

With victory, triumphing, through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The Serpent, Prince of air, and drag in Chains
 Through all his Realm, and there confounded leave;
 Then enter into glory. (12. 451-56)

The final victory belongs to Christ. He will conquer Satan and overthrow all earthly powers.

Adam and Eve leave paradise with the knowledge that the world will turn worse and worse day by day. However, at the same time, they also have peace in their mind because they know that God has prepared for them a savior and second paradise. Time will come to an end when all things will be renewed. Adam exclaims:

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
 Of utmost hope. Now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain,
 Why our great expectation should be called
 The seed of woman (12. 375-79)

As Fenton says: "The epic ends with Adam's proclamation of hope. What he and Eve have learned about the nature of their humanity and the promise that they have received from God about their future, will guide them and offer hope while they live" (125).

In short, we can draw a brief conclusion of Milton's post-Restoration eschatological hope here. First, Milton believes in the coming of New Heaven and New Earth. Second, Milton believes in the final conflagration of the world. Third, Milton believes in the Final Judgment: the reward of the righteous ones and the punishment of the wicked ones. Fourth, Milton believes that on the Final Judgment Day, Satan and his fellow angels will be bounded. Fifth, Milton believes the

possession of inner paradise serves as an entering ticket into the kingdom of glory at the end of times.



Chapter 6: Conclusion

So what dare Milton hope for after the Restoration? And what is the basis of his eschatological hope? In my opinion, Milton's *Paradise Lost* shows that the object of his post-Restoration eschatological hope is not a metaphorical kingdom, but the Second Coming of Christ and the manifestation of His kingdom. If Milton had abandoned hope for an actual transformation of this world into God's Kingdom of Glory, his faith would inextricably become empty and meaningless. Furthermore, for Milton, eschatological hope is more than just idealism about the future. His eschatological hope is based on the belief that history and prophecy, as well as the followers of Christ and followers of Antichrist, will continue in tension until the end of the world. Most importantly, his hope may help sustain him in finishing his assigned task – that of writing a great Christian epic.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* reveals the problems with the seventeenth-century eschatological views and inspires his contemporary Englishmen to shape a true eschatological hope. Through Michael and Adam's dialogue, Milton deconstructs the false hope of the Presbyterians, the Fifth Monarchists, and the Quakers and reestablishes a true eschatological hope. Michael and Adam's dialogue also represents Milton's own inner struggle, in which the historian within him reconciles with the prophet. As a historian, Milton presents a depressing picture of human history. But as a prophet, Milton connects the depressing history to a hopeful vision. History brings depression but prophecy brings a hopeful future. By connecting history with prophecy, Milton is able to regain his hope and announce God's second coming to his contemporary Englishmen.

In contrast to his despair after the Restoration, Milton was hopeful in the 1640s. In his early treatises, he freely expresses his ambition in turning England into a chosen nation of God. He busily engaged himself in political activities and writing

of argumentative treatises. However, after the Restoration, Milton realized that England was no longer the chosen nation. His contemporaries failed to prove their virtue of patience in the trials that God had provided for them.

After the Restoration, when Milton was isolated, he finally had time to recall his early life calling. Milton realized that trying to make England the chosen nation was not his primary concern. Therefore, he spent the remaining time of his life writing the three major poems in life. In doing so, Milton fulfilled his calling in life.

Milton recovered from his disappointment by writing *Paradise Lost*. By tracing back to the beginning of human history, Milton realized that history repeats itself. From the time of Adam and Eve to seventeenth-century England, human beings kept disobeying God. However, Milton realized that the weaknesses of human beings should not be the source of his despair. From Genesis to Revelation, Milton found God's mercy and judgment in every generation. He realized that he should look forward to the second paradise and trust God's promise. Hope is not what one sees; instead, it is what one does not see. Although, Milton knew that he might not have the chance to witness the manifestation of Christ's Kingdom of Glory in his lifetime, yet he knew that he did not need to worry because God is in charge of history and the future.

If we compare Milton's post-Restoration eschatological view with the Book of Revelation, we can find a lot of similarities. Milton believed in the eschatological events described in the Book of Revelation, such as, the New Heaven and New Earth, the Final Judgment, Antichrist and Millennium, except that he has his own interpretation of the sequence and duration of each event. Milton's understanding of the final events of the world was deeply influence by Joseph Mede (1568-1638). In Mede's opinion, the Final Judgment and the Millennium will take place at the same time. The Final Judgment Day will last for a thousand years. After thousand-year

Final Judgment Day, Satan will be released from hell. Following the release of Satan is the second judgment. The wicked ones will be condemned to eternal fire and the saints will be rewarded with eternal life. After the sentence of the wicked and the reward of the saints, final conflagration will take place.

I think Milton's post-Restoration eschatological view is optimistic and positive. Although Milton knew that the Second Coming of Christ, the Final Judgment and the resurrection of the dead might not occur in his lifetime, he still kept his faith in God's promise. He did not align himself with the eschatological views of his contemporary Presbyterians, Fifth Monarchists, or Quakers. He spent the last stage of his life waiting patiently for Christ's second coming and fulfilling God's calling his life.

Milton recovered from the disappointment in prophecies after the Restoration by writing *Paradise Lost*. In my opinion, Books 11 and 12 of *Paradise Lost* are a summary of Milton's faith building. By tracing back to the beginning of human history, Milton rebuilds his hope in God's promise step by step. After the Restoration, Milton did not appeal to God for a blueprint of England's future or his own future. Instead, Milton recalled his calling from early life and engaged himself vehemently in the writing of *Paradise Lost* (1667, 1674), *Paradise Regained* (1671) and *Samson Agonistes* (1671).

The lessons from Books 11 and 12 are not only intended for Adam but also for the seventeenth-century Englishmen. To his contemporaries, Milton announces God's judgment and consolation. To the Presbyterians, Milton announces God's judgment. To the Fifth Monarchists, Milton announces God's promise. And to the Quakers, Milton announces God's eternal paradise. To Milton himself, the tension between despair and hope will not end until the Second Coming of Christ but hope and peace are reserved for those who respond to their callings in life and wait patiently for the Lord.

Through the reading of *Paradise Lost*, I have gained insight into seventeenth-century English eschatological views and Milton's post-Restoration eschatological hope. Nevertheless, I think further investigation can be done on Milton's eschatological hope in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, which were also poems written after the Restoration. By comparing and contrasting the eschatological hope and despair in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, I think more insightful ideas will be induced.



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