

## Comment on Milton's use of epic similes in *Paradise Lost*, Book 1.

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**Comment on Milton's use of similes in “Paradise Lost,” Book 1.**

**Or, Write a note on the use of epic similes in “Paradise Lost, Book-1.”**

**Or, Illustrate the significance of epic similes in “Paradise Lost.”**

**Discuss the use of epic similes in *Paradise Lost*, Book I.**

*Paradise Lost* is an epic poem written by John Milton (1608-1674). In Book I, Milton uses many epic similes to make the story grand and powerful. An epic simile is a long comparison, usually introduced by words like “as” or “like.” Milton compares supernatural things with familiar objects from nature, history, and daily life. These similes help the reader understand the greatness of Satan, the horror of Hell, and the scale of the epic action. In Book I, epic similes play a very important role.

**Epic Simile of Satan as a Huge Sea Monster:** One of the most famous epic similes in Book I is the comparison of Satan to a sea monster. After the fall, Satan lies unconscious on the burning lake. Milton compares him to Leviathan, a giant sea creature. He writes that Satan lies on the lake like the huge Leviathan.

*“Leviathan...*

*...hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:”*

Here, Milton shows how huge and terrifying Satan is. Just as sailors mistake Leviathan for an island, Satan’s body is so large that it seems endless. This simile helps us imagine Satan’s enormous size and power. It also reminds us that Satan was once a great angel.

**The Fallen Angels as Autumn Leaves:** Milton also uses an epic simile to describe the number of fallen angels. He compares them to leaves that fall in autumn. He says they lie scattered,

***“Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks.”***

This simile is very easy to understand. Just as countless leaves fall from trees in autumn, countless angels fell from Heaven. This simile shows the huge number of rebels who followed Satan. It also shows loss and decay, because autumn leaves are dead and dry. In this way, Milton shows the greatness of the fall.

**The Fallen Angels as Ancient Warriors:** Milton compares the fallen angels to famous warriors and giants from ancient stories. He compares them to the Titans, who once fought against the gods. This makes the war in Heaven feel like a great historical battle. The simile connects Satan’s rebellion with old myths of pride and rebellion. It shows that the fallen angels were once powerful and glorious. Now they are defeated, but their pride still remains.

**Satan’s Shield Like the Moon:** Another important epic simile appears when Satan rises from the lake. Milton describes Satan’s shield and compares it to the moon seen through a telescope. The poet says the huge shield,

***“Hung on his shoulders like the Moon.”***

This simile shows the huge size of Satan’s armor. It also gives a scientific touch, because Milton mentions a telescope. This makes the poem modern as well as epic. The simile again reminds us that Satan is larger than ordinary beings.

**Significance:** Milton uses epic similes to make abstract and supernatural things clear. Hell, angels, and Satan are not things we see in daily life. Epic similes help us imagine them easily. They also slow down the action and make the poem more serious and majestic. Through these similes, Milton shows Satan’s greatness, the sadness of the fall, and the vastness of the epic world.

In conclusion, epic similes are used with great skill in Book I of *Paradise Lost*. Milton compares Satan and the fallen angels to sea monsters, autumn leaves, ancient warriors, and heavenly bodies. These long comparisons give beauty, clarity, and greatness to the poem. They help the reader feel the power of Satan and the tragedy of his fall. Thus, epic similes are one of the strongest poetic devices in *Paradise Lost*, Book I.