



English 215  
Final Exam- Spring 1999



I. PART ONE

".....All is not theirs, it seems;  
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,  
Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden?  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their lord  
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?  
Can it be death? And do they only stand  
By ignorance, is that their happy state,  
The proof of their obedience and their faith?"

Paradise Lost (Book IV, ll. 513-20)

".....If they all things, who enclosed  
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,  
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains  
Wisdom without their leave? And wherein lies  
The offence, that man should thus attain to know?  
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
Impart against his will, if all be his?  
Or is it envy, and can envy dwell  
In heavenly breasts?"

Paradise lost (Book IX, ll.722-30)

Questions

- Who is the speaker in the above two quotations?
- What do the above two quotations reflect about the character of the speaker?
- Analyse the two passages, relating them to two major themes in the epic.
- Is there any distinctive stylistic pattern in the two passages?

II. PART TWO

Choose one of the following topics and write a well-organised essay:

- Discuss the treatment of man's relationship with God in two of the following writers: John Donne, George Herbert, Robert Herrick, Thomas Browne, John Milton.
- Discuss the theme of love in two of the following writers: John Donne, Thomas Carew, Andrew Marvell, John Milton.
- Whom do you think is the writer who best represents the seventeenth century in its political, religious, scientific and cultural conflicts? Discuss the work of this writer as a reflection of his age.

**GOOD LUCK**

