

**Theology English 12 / Harrell**  
**Timed Writing Test**  
**Milton's *Paradise Lost***

Using the text included with this prompt to get you started, use two additional Milton texts found in parts of *Paradise Lost* other than Book III to help you explore this central question:

**Do we really possess “free will” in the fallen condition?**

You may (or may not) also wish to consult or refer to the following words from St. Paul found in Romans 1: 18-25

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice: 19 Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity: so that they are inexcusable.

21 Because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified him as God, or given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. 23 And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of fourfooted beasts, and of creeping things. 24 Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies among themselves. 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie; and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

**From *Paradise Lost*, Book III (line numbers are for this excerpt for the purposes of this test and do not correspond to the line numbers in the text)**

And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay  
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,  
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,  
And easily transgress the sole command, 5  
Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall  
He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?  
Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of me  
All he could have; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall. 10  
Such I created all the ethereal Powers  
And Spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love, 15  
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,  
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?  
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When will and reason (reason also is choice)  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd, 20  
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,  
Not me? they therefore, as to right belong 'd,  
So were created, nor can justly accuse  
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,  
As if predestination over-rul'd 25  
Their will dispos'd by absolute decree  
Or high foreknowledge they themselves decreed  
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,  
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown. 30  
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,  
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,  
They trespass, authors to themselves in all  
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so  
I form'd them free: and free they must remain, 35  
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change  
Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.  
The first sort by their own suggestion fell, 40  
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd  
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
The other none: In mercy and justice both,  
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;  
But Mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine. 45