International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)
ISSN: 2319-7064
Impact Factor 2025: 7.089

Comparison of the Characters of Samson and Dalila in John Milton's Samson Agonistes and King James Bible

Dr. Ravi Rani

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Dr. V. S. Krishna Government Degree College, Maddilapalem, Visakhapatnam, India

Abstract: ***This research examines John Milton's Samson Agonistes, comparing the characters of Samson and Dalila with the biblical characters from the Old Testament, specifically Samson and Delilah in the Book of Judges, chapters 13-16. The research examines the similarities and differences between characters using juxta position and close reading of John Milton's Samson Agonistes and biblical texts, utilizing the Authorized King James Bible. This research explores the heroic character of Samson, depicted in the Bible, and John Milton's portrayal of him as blind, distraught, and captive by the Philistines, highlighting Milton's autobiographical feelings in Samson Agonistes. The research explores the deceitful biblical character Delilah and John Milton's Dalila, who contradicts herself, and the similarities between Samson and Dalila.***

Keywords: Samson Agonistes, Biblical Samson, Dalila and Delilah, Character Comparison, John Milton Literature

1. Introduction

The Book of Judges, an Old Testament book, tells the story of twelve judges who sought to free Israel from the oppressive power of the Mesopotamites, Moabites, Philistines, Canaanites, Midianites, and Ammonites, who ruled for 325 years. These judges were military leaders, warriors, or prophets. The Book of Judges, a biblical narrative, is not chronologically ordered but focuses on the lives of the elders who survived Joshua, ending with Eli and Samuel. It also features Samuel, who critiques the governance of the judges. Marc ZviBrettler (2009) argues that the book's primary purpose was to impart moral lessons. Two theories exist regarding the author of the Book of Judges: the first suggests it was written and edited by Deuteronomistic editors in the late 7th or 6th century, and the second suggests it was written long after the events described.

Many theologians believe that Samuel, a famous Israelite prophet and the last judge of Israel in the 11th century, is the author of the Book of Judges, a theory supported by numerous theologians who also claim to be a judge, writer, and priest. Samuel, chosen by God to be the counselor of the kings of Israel, played a significant role in the premonarchic period and the establishment of the monarchy. Some sources suggest he was born around 1070 and died in the 1020s before the common era, while others suggest he was around 1105 and died in 1039.The exact date of Samson's story varies among biblical specialists, with the most frequently mentioned dates being 1075 to 1055 before the common era, which are believed to be the birth and death of Samson. Samson's story, the longest among judges, spans four chapters and marks the first civil war in Israel. Samson fought individually without an army, with God's support, unlike other judges.

Between 1640 and 1649, England experienced significant unrest due to tensions between King Charles I, Parliament, Catholics and Protestants, and the marriage of King Charles I to Princess Henrietta Maria of France. The marriage of Henrietta Maria to the Protestant population led to social unrest and mistrust, as people believed the king would be under constant Catholic influence, potentially favoring or enforcing Catholicism on his people. King Charles I transformed the Church of England through interior changes and religious ceremonies, which Puritans viewed as Catholicizing the Anglican church. They complained and refused to attend services, leading to hostility from King Charles I. In the 1640s, Charles I lost authority due to poor financial strategies and attempts to collect money from the gentry, leading to England reaching its credit limit early. The crown became increasingly dependent on the aristocracy, and at the start of his reign, taxes were collected for military purposes and naval equipment.

King Charles I attempted to collect taxes for personal purposes, but the aristocracy rejected his attempts. The roles shifted due to the crown's lack of other income sources. The English Civil War was a dispute between a self-centered court and those imposed taxes, as per Trevor-Roper and Stone. The crown removed most clerics and magnates from Parliament in England, transforming it from a national assembly to a congress representing local interests. This shift, based on common unity, became a new opposition to English horizontal absolutism. Charles I, as per Joseph George Muddiman (1928), believed that his throne was unchallenged by any other jurisdiction. He continued his reign in the same spirit of divine right as his father, James I, with the goal of unifying Britain, Ireland, and Scotland. The reign of King James I was considered absolutist, but he failed to recognize the needs of his era, including the need for agreement between the Commons and Puritans, who were seen as the embodiment of opposition to the court, indicating signs of a renaissant reign.

The King's absolutist demeanor escalated with his decision to dissolve Parliament, despite opposition from the Parliament. However, this was temporary and the King had to reassemble the Parliament due to financial distress at the court. The issue at stake was the authority of Parliament and the rights of the subjects against the King's unlimited

prerogative, supported by his subservient churchmen. The stakes were peace, prosperity, and freedom, or the apparent ruin and destruction of the Kingdom. The English Civil War, a religious revolution promoting classical republicanism, began in 1642 when the King refused to compromise for a peaceful government. Parliamentarians clashed with Royalists, leading to regicide in 1649.Milton defended the act as lawful and well-deserved. After the King's beheading, Oliver Cromwell replaced monarchy with the English Council of State of the Commonwealth, later known as the Protectorate, unified England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Oliver Cromwell, a Lord Protector, ruled the Protectorate from 1653 to 1658. John Milton, Cromwell's Latin Secretary, translated political texts into Latin and served as a diplomatic figure, issuing texts supporting the Protectorate.

Excessive writing led to Cromwell losing his eyesight, but the Commonwealth aimed to create a system that promoted public interests and opposed the tyrannical monarchy. Milton admired Cromwell as the chosen one by God, believing he was able to create the system the Commonwealth was established for. The King of England governs his people through a civil government, governed by their own laws. The Protectorate experimented with religious liberty, as Cromwell believed no single church should have universal control over truth, beliefs, and acceptable standards. The people are governed by their own laws, not an absolute king. Milton wrote a sonnet to Oliver Cromwell at the start of his rule, urging him to shift his focus from military to civil matters, aiming to establish peace and stability. Milton emphasized the importance of establishing a new national church and transforming England into the new Israel.

Cromwell and Milton believed in a national church with subchurches based on different worship methods, with state-licensed clergy. However, they rejected those who rejected the Holy Trinity, approved of sexual misconduct, or had other liberties, such as rejecting the Holy Trinity.

Cromwell's dislike for Catholicism disrupted his religious tolerance, but Catholics were moderately oppressed when exercising their beliefs in private. In Parliament, royalists, who supported the Crown, emerged, but soon after meeting with Cromwell, they raised taxes.

During the Civil War, Cromwell imposed additional taxes on those fighting for the Crown, leading to "puritanization" and strict codes. Commissions were formed to investigate legal reforms, tithes, profanity prohibition, intoxication, and theatrical performances, resulting in a ban on such activities. Cromwell ruled independently, similar to his previous rule. After his death in 1758, the Protectorate's short lifespan ended when his successor, Richard Cromwell, ruled unfavorably for eight months, leading to its collapse in 1759. This event highlights the instability of the British rule.

In 1759, Milton's Letter to a Friend Concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth aimed to convince the Parliament to restore the monarchy and appoint King Charles II, who remained in exile. He emphasized religious tolerance, except for Catholicism, and rejected the idea of one person as the head of the state ruling independently. The individual may have been deeply opposed to the concept of a king or protector, possibly due to disappointment in Oliver Cromwell's final years of rule. After the Monarchy was restored, Milton faced a desolate life, fighting against tyranny for over a decade. Despite escaping the death penalty due to his political involvement in the Protectorate and close ties to Cromwell, his writings were destroyed, as noted by Wolfe, Don M., 1936.Milton struggled to create texts arguing that absolutist monarchy and Christianity are interconnected, as he relied on Aristotle's ideas and the Old Testament, which favored the concept of Commonwealth over monarchy. The author continued his political views during Cromwell's reign, working on Paradise Lost. In his final years, he remained active in writing and passed away in 1674.

Professor John Rogers (2007) suggests three main theories about Milton's composition of Samson Agonistes. The first theory suggests that it was written in the late or after 1660s during the restoration of the Stuart monarchy, making it Milton's final poetic work. The theory suggests that Milton's blindness, historical background, and political engagement during the Israelite revolution mirror his own life, with Samson's involvement as a leading figure complementing his role in the revolution. The poem expresses frustration with the political situation, making it considered John Milton's last work. Some academics believe it was written in the 1640s as a reaction to his blindness, highlighting the poem's poignant sentiment. The theory suggests that Samson's strong and intimate descriptions of his feelings suggest he wrote the poem before Paradise Lost. Another theory suggests it was written in the 1640s, focusing on Milton's partnership with Mary Powell. Both theories provide evidence for Samson's writing.

Samson Agonistes is a political and private poem, as the character of Dalila is considered an essential element in the plot line, rather than a secondary one, as she left him after a few weeks of marriage. Dalila's situation mirrors Mary Powell's family's support for royalists during the revolution. Milton's adaptation of Samson's story reflects his feelings towards his failed marriage, without focusing on his blindness, as he became blind years after composing. This theory suggests a third theory. The practical part of Samson's story requires familiarity with the original story in the King James Bible, Book of Judges, chapter thirteen. An angel visits Samson's infertile mother and promises her a powerful child who will deliver his people from the Philistines. The angel imposes certain restrictions, including not cutting the child's hair. In the fourteenth chapter, Samson's adulthood is marked by his attraction to Timnath, a Philistine woman, despite his parents' objections, arguing that a Nazarite marriage to a Philistine woman is unacceptable.

The chapter concludes with Samson's marriage being a part of God's plan. He demonstrates his strength by being attacked by a lion while proposing to Timnath's woman. The Spirit of the Lord gives him strength, and he uses his bare hands to defeat the lion. The protagonist encounters a bee swarm and a honey-filled carcass, offering it to his parents. He uses this moment as a riddle for young Philistian men, offering them thirty sheets and garments. As they fail, they

emotionally blackmail Samson's wife into telling her husband the riddle's meaning, causing her to become emotionally attached to the situation.In the fourteenth chapter, Samson convinces his wife to give the right answer to the Philistine men, leading to his anger and the murder of thirty men and taking their garments. Samson leaves for his father's house, leaving his wife living with another man. In the fifteenth chapter, Samson, driven by rage, catches three hundred foxes, ties them together, attaches a torch to their tails, and lets them run, causing the Philistines' fields to catch fire.

The Philistines burned Timnath's woman and her family, and Samson slays many Philistines in response. He prays to God and spends the night with a harlot in Gaza. The Philistines attempt to kill Samson but fail. Samson meets Delilah, a Philistine woman, who offers silver if she discovers his strength. Samson lies to Delilah three times about his strength source, but she fails and reveals the secret to the Philistines. He finally tells her the truth, claiming it's God's long hair that he cannot cut. Delilah weaves his hair into braids while he sleeps, and a servant is then hired to cut it. Samson, once imprisoned and blinded by Philistines, works at a mill in Gaza. The Philistines gather in a temple to sacrifice Dagon for Samson's hand. Samson's hair grows back, and he prays to God for strength to avenge his loss of sight. As he entertains the Philistines, Samson's hair grows back. God restores Samson's strength after his prayer. Samson causes the temple of Dagon to collapse, killing more Philistines than before. His family burys his body next to his father's, and the sixteenth chapter concludes that Samson had judged for twenty years in Israel.

The research aims to analyze the significant differences between Samson and Delilah, characters from the Old Testament Book of Judges, and Samson and Dalila from Milton's Samson Agonistes. The biblical Samson, a story from the Old Testament, is divided into 21 chapters, each containing verses, and is part of the Former Prophets, along with the book of Joshua. Samson, an Old Testament story, is divided into 21 chapters, each containing verses, and is part of the Former Prophets and the book of Joshua. The biography, written in the present tense and chronological order, follows the political situation in Israel before Samson's birth and culminates in his heroic death. John Milton portrays Samson being held captive in Gaza prison and his last hours before his death. John Milton's novel, spanning eleven verses in the Old Testament, introduces a psychological layer by adding three new characters (Harapha, Messenger, Officer) and their encounters with visitors in prison. Each character plays a crucial role in the story's development and development.

Milton aimed to enhance Samson's character, gain sympathy, and maintain the poem's form by creating a believable storyline with them, aiming to make him a favorable character. Michael Krouse introduces a unique interpretation of Manoa, Dalila, and Harapha, representing three temptations: Petty 9 humankind, fear, and ease, which Samson manages to resist. Milton employs retrospection to depict key events in Samson's life, derived from the Book of Judges, utilizing poetic language and various tenses to enhance the reader's comprehension of the story, distinct from the biblical version. In Milton's story, Samson's friends sing parts, represented by the Chorus or Samson himself. The story ends with Samson's death and an ostentatious funeral, similar to the biblical version. Both texts contain interesting features and are organized with similar features. Professor YairahAmit (2009) argues that the Book of Judges consists of a cyclical pattern that judges fail to break, leading to the creation of the monarchy.

The King James' version of the story lacks detailed descriptions of emotions, leading to the emergence of repetitive patterns. The first pattern is evident from the 14th to 15th chapters, where Samson, despite his parents' objections, desires to marry a Philistine woman, the woman of Timnath. The 16th chapter reveals two patterns in Samson's life: a secret kept by him, revealed through betrayal, and his prayers to the Lord, leading to his execution of 12 Philistines, illustrating his actions. Samson encounters Philistine woman Delilah, repeating the first pattern. Delilah betrays Samson and reveals his secret, a pattern from the 14th chapter. The 16th chapter ends with Samson praying to God and being heard, illustrating the pattern of God's intervention. The Bible employs repetitive patterns to emphasize the significance of characters, themes, or events. These patterns are evident in biblical stories, which are familiar to readers who have observed numerous recurring themes. This repetition helps to further explore the topic of the story.

Samson's story shares similarities with the biblical story of Adam and Eve, which inspired John Milton's Paradise Lost. The biblical version features themes of God's selection, a female character's mistake, and God's presence despite disobedience. However, the biblical version's patterning is absent in Milton's adaptation, highlighting the similarities between the biblical and Samson's stories. The text uses repetition of words to add rhythm to the poem's meter, not to highlight important information. Milton, a classical writer during the Restoration, followed the Greek aesthetic framework, which drew from the dramatic principles of Aristotle. The repetitions are not meant to highlight important information but to add a rhythm to the poem's form. Samson Agonistes follows the unity of time and action, focusing on Samson's last day from morning to noon. The plot is centered around his psychological development, with no digressions. The prison in Gaza fulfills the unity of place, as the psychological development overpowers the action itself.

The story, portrayed by Milton, is believable due to the detailed descriptions of Samson's heroic acts and his death, which are only announced by the Messenger, and the addition of characters to fulfill the principle of likelihood, making it a believable narrative. The ending of Samson Agonistes differs from the King James Bible's, possibly due to the principle of likelihood. In the King James Bible, Samson's father is deceased, while in Samson Agonistes, Manoah is alive, unlike the 16th chapter where Samson is buried next to Manoah. The poem ends with praise for Samson, a heroic figure born to common people with no extraordinary lineage. He became a nazarite before he was 13 due to his mother's obedience to nazarite rules during pregnancy. Samson was both devastated and happy upon

receiving the news of his death. The nazarites were characterized by abstinence from alcohol, a symbol of power, and a lack of contact with the dead. In Samson's story, he violates the law of contact with a corpse, aiming to liberate Israel from the Philistines. Samson's long hair and extraordinary strength are also mentioned in the 14th chapter.

Samson, a prominent Israelite leader, demonstrated manhood through his strength, eloquence, and social status. He was able to tear apart a lion and even fight against Philistine troops. His muscular physique was further exemplified when he carried the city gate on his shoulders. However, Milton's portrayal of Samson is not as heroic as in the Book of Judges. In the poem's opening, Samson is locked in Gaza prison, transforming from Israel's strongest man to a weak slave working at the mill. This stark contrast highlights the difference between the two characters, but Milton further emphasizes Samson's uniqueness. The character's fragile appearance and dirty rags make him stand out, making visitors think his physical state mirrors his mental state. The storyline shares similarities with Job and his friends, Manoa, Dalila, and Harapha, highlighting the character's vulnerability and strength.The poem highlights that the protagonist lost his physical strength but gained spiritual strength by doing so.

In the Book of Judges, Samson is not a typical hero, but rather a depersonalized and isolated character who acts as he pleases while fulfilling God's plan. His actions are primarily driven by desire, without considering God's premeditated plan for him. The story's pivotal moment occurs when Samson, the chosen son, desires to marry a Philistine woman from Timnath, despite his parents' opposition to marrying a woman belonging to the oppressive Israelites, as evidenced by the story's onset. The text emphasizes the importance of circumcision for purity and devotion to God from a young age, as emphasized in the Old Testament. The use of the adjective "uncircumsised" in the text is significant, as it highlights the rejection of women from the daughters of brethren or among the people. The adjective used in the text implies the impurity of the Philistines, who practiced polytheistic religion and were forbidden from marrying a Philistine woman, despite God's intention for Samson to marry her.

In the Book of Judges, Samson kills thirty Philistine men and takes their garments, promising them to solve a riddle. He knew that the Philistines would not find the answer without his first wife's help, demonstrating questionable motives.He fulfilled his promise to the Philistines by punishing them, as seen in the Book of Judges' 15th chapter, demonstrating his debatable motivation. Samson visits his wife in Timnath, but her father tells him he gave her to another man. Samson offers his younger daughter to him, punishing him and his people by setting their corn-fields on fire. Samson's actions are paradoxically supported by God, as shown in the 15th chapter, verse 18. He prays to God, who listens and gives him what he asks. Despite his personal schedule, God appears in every battle he fights. In the 16th chapter, Samson's strength is highlighted, but in another incident, God's presence is absent, unlike previous militant situations. God's disappointment with Samson's behavior began, but his strength remained even when God disapproved. Samson's actions were viewed positively, but his personality remained unchanged until the end, as depicted differently in Miltonic Samson.

Milton's Samson Agonistes is a dramatic poem that emphasizes the human side of Samson, blending biblical inspiration with complex human struggles. The title reflects the poem's atmosphere, with the aim of capturing Samson's humanity and complexity to evoke sympathy from readers. Milton's meticulous approach to delivering Samson's story ensures a well-crafted narrative. Milton shifts the focus from Samson's heroic past to his miserable life in Gaza prison. The choir narrates his past as a powerful Israelite warrior, contrasting with Samson's current, less heroic, and more human persona. This shift diverts readers' attention from Samson's heroic side. The text uses long monologues to depict Samson's regrets and sorrows, contrasting with his Old Testament counterpart. Lines 46 to 59 show Samson's deep regret for his flaws, such as weakness towards women, susceptibility to desires, and acting out of spite without considering the consequences. This contrast highlights Samson's different side from the Old Testament Samson.

Samson's most prominent weakness is women, particularly the woman of Timnath, the prostitute, and Delilah. His enemies recognize this weakness and use it to defeat him. Samson kills many of his nation's enemies out of rage, demonstrating his ability to defeat his enemies through women.

Milton's version of the story differs from the original by highlighting the protagonist's deeper connection to God and shifting his motive of marrying the woman of Timnath from a lustful act to a conscious decision to save his people, as they were unaware of the divine nature of the story.

The poem "Samson Agonistes" by Milton, Jon, describes Samson's intimate impulse to urge marriage and begin Israel's Deliverance. However, there is a slight deviation from the biblical version in lines 240-276. Samson admits not being guilty of not saving Israel from their oppressors but blames others for their actions. This serves as a line of reasoning in the poem.

Milton's text, "Samson Agonistes," discusses the role of Samson as a Judge of Israel, implying that he should be the head of Israelites and should not be blamed for the situation he finds himself in. This reflects Milton's own feelings towards the Revolution, rather than Samson's, as he was appointed as the head of Israelites.

Krouse's three temptations influence the characters' differences. Samson in Samson Agonistes acknowledges that he is the author of his destiny, resisting the temptation to shift blame and accepting what has befallen him. He acknowledges that nothing of these evils has befallen him, but justly, as he has brought them on.In the poem, Samson's character's personal development is highlighted, with Krouse stating that his father, Manoa, offers Samson the temptation to ease his mental and physical punishment by allowing him to be set free. The last temptation in Samson's story ties Dalila's religious argument to a political issue, introducing a

new character, Harapha, not present in the 16 biblical version, and highlighting a significant shift in Samson's character.Milton initially suggests a similar reading to the biblical model of the Philistines and their god Dagon being inherently bad and Samson and his God inherently good through rational arguments in back-and-forth dialogues between two warriors, initially presenting a taunting character.

Harapha teases Samson about his blindness and his rebellion against his rulers, Samson, who killed Philistines due to their geographical location. Samson's response is hypocritical, as he relies on his marriage to Philistine women to free his people, despite being married twice to Philistine women. Harapha, initially taunting Samson, turns into insults, questioning his militant abilities and beliefs. Samson backfires, and their quarrels escalate into religious combat. Harapha counterarguments Samson's God, questioning how he could allow his enemies to imprison and force him to work at the Mill for his enemies. In Milton's novel, Samson's personal growth is highlighted by his response to his past, where he acknowledges his well-deserved experiences and transforms from a foolish and easily influenced individual to a wise and thoughtful individual, supported by the character of Harapha, which further reflects his psychological development and redemption.

Samson, a character in Milton's poem, acknowledges his wrongdoings and blames himself. The poem's ending suggests his suicide was motivated by God's timing and his conscious effort to save his people. Milton gradually transforms Samson into a spiritually mature character, unlike his biblical predecessor. The biblical version of Samson's story does not portray him positively, as he remains self-centered until the end. In the Book of Judges, Samson asks for strength to take revenge on the Philistines, despite his two eyes being affected. Biblical Samson committed suicide for revenge for his blindness, not to protect his people. However, his actions were used by God to protect his 17 people, demonstrating that desire can drive actions. Biblical Samson, a unique nazarite, displays no remorse for his actions but instead feeds his anger towards Philistines, maintaining his character throughout the story. He possesses all signs of manhood, including long hair, incredible strength, rhetoric competence, and a social status of a leader.

Samson's mental maturity was characterized by childish behavior and immature behavior, contrasting with his manly appearance. According to Stephen M. Wilson (2014), Samson's inability to become a man, apart from his rashness, was due to his failure to fulfill his Israelite duty to bring his child. Samson, a perpetual man-child, cannot cross the border between boyhood and manhood. His immature character is similar to Israel, who are chosen by God and given advantageous positions but do not fully utilize their blessings, as noted by Stephen M. Wilson (2014). Individuals often find themselves stuck in destructive patterns, hindering their pursuit of personal, religious, and political growth. Professor John Rogers (2007) argues that Milton altered character names to enhance the poem's classicist appeal. He explains that Delilah in this research refers to a female character from the Bible, while Dalila refers to a character from Samson Agonistes. Hebrew names, like Delilah, have a meaning, representing "delicate, weak, or even languishing." This contrasts with Samson, a strong and masculine character, who is portrayed as weak and fragile. Despite her weakness, Delilah defeats the greatest warrior of her time.

J. Cheryl Exum suggests that Delilah's name is a play on Hebrew words, meaning "night," and Samson's name, originating from Hebrew "shemesh," meaning "the Sun," creating the perfect opposites of the protagonists, as they become the perfect opposites. Delilah, a woman from the valley of Sorek, was believed to have caused Samson's downfall. God could have predicted Delilah's downfall, so Samson was instructed to avoid the Valley of Sorek, meaning he should not drink wine or strong drinks.

Delilah, the main villain in Samson Agonistes, is not extensively depicted in character psychology and thought processes. She appears in the 16th chapter, providing limited information about her character, which is similar to Samson's previous love interest, the Philistine woman of Timnath. Samson reminisces about his desire for a Philistine woman, Delilah, marking the first time a woman is given a proper name in the story. The plot continues, and Samson meets Delilah, without any objections from his parents. This shift in focus highlights Delilah's significance. The Bible does not mention a marriage between Samson and Delilah, but in the 5th verse, Delilah must choose between her partner and eleven hundred pieces of silver, often contrasting with the woman of Timnath. In the Book of Judges, the Philistine woman of Timnath faces immense pressure from her own people, who threaten to burn down her and her father's house if she doesn't reveal Samson's secret. Delilah must choose between her partner or money, and her shallow portrayal earns readers sympathy for the previous woman's difficult decision. Milton's poem, Samson Agonistes, presents a stronger case for Dalila than Samuel's in the Book of Judges. According to Krouse, Dalila is the second temptation in Samson Agonistes, arguing on religion, civil duty, and love, as she must decide between betrayal of her husband or her people.

The poem by Milton focuses on the marriage of Samson and Dalila, contrasting with the biblical Samson who is not married to Delilah. The author also describes her appearance to create visual contrast, unlike the Book of Judges where Delilah's physique remains a mystery. Dalila, introduced in line 732, showcases her mastery of speech in the poem. She visits Samson in his cell, appearing timid and guilty. She admits her wrongdoings and still cares for her husband, expressing remorse and acknowledging her betrayal. Her behavior is filled with guilt and tenderness. In Milton's Samson Agonistes, Dalila is depicted as opportunistic, self-centered, and dissimulative. In her next entry, she explains her motives for betraying her husband, adding depth to her character. Dalila remorsefully seeks Samson's forgiveness, blaming her actions on her unconditional love, jealousy, being a woman, and fear of him leaving her, as she did to his previous wife. She emphasizes that women are curious but cannot keep secrets. Milton's old heroic self contrasts with his current state of weakness, blindness, imprisonment, and loneliness. Samson's response details the decision to marry

Dalila, which involved giving up his religion, parents, and nation, which Dalila reacts negatively to.

In a heated argument with a man, Dalila's actions often lead to worse outcomes, despite her intentions. To reconcile, she uses her words and impaired vision to seduce him, promising to care for his other senses herself, as she cannot win by gaining his forgiveness. Samson's character development significantly shifts as he no longer trusts her words, knowing her "trains though dearly to my cost" and "have learnt to fence my ear against thy sorceries" (Milton, John., Samson Agonistes, lines 932-933).In her final entry, Dalila reveals her old ways and lies, turning a defense into an attack. She claims to be a national female hero who defeated the Israeli warrior, and her betrayal will be highly regarded and celebrated by future generations of Philistines and other tribes. Her lies and insincere impulses are evident in her actions.

Milton portrays Dalila as a cunning traitor, blaming her previous behavior for betrayal of Samson. She blames external influences, her duty to her people, and Samson's past relationships. Despite her well-thought-out arguments, Dalila leaves the reader questioning if her motives were sincere, leaving the reader to ponder the truth. The arguments between Samson and Dalila, a separated couple, mirror Milton's personal experiences, as his wife's family supported Royalists, contradicting his own beliefs. This personal character reflects the author's imprinting of his values on them. Samson's marriage to Delilah is not mentioned, nor does Delilah visit him in prison. Instead, she is drawn to the promise of "eleven hundreth pieces of silver," which she chooses over her partner. Samuel stripped Delilah of her moral component and emotions, resulting in her demise. In Samson Agonistes, Milton portrays Dalila as an expert in treachery and manipulation, highlighting her greediness and remorse for betraying Samson. He creates a plot where she seeks reconciliation with her husband, but when she fails to achieve forgiveness, she uses her mightiest weapons to gain control over Samson once more. Milton's portrayal of Dalila highlights her human qualities and her manipulation skills.

Samson resists her flattery and insincere remorse, leading to a personal victory and a significant advancement in his character and psyche development, as she becomes the embodiment of temptation. Despite appearing opposites, there are some similarities between Samson and Dalila in Milton's poem. Samson represents the Israelites, while Dalila represents the Philistines. These similarities are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the poem and its characters. The characters Samson and Dalila aim to make their people proud and free, with Samson aiming to free the Israelites from Philistine oppression, and Dalila aiming to free her nation from revolting people. The poem offers a similar interpretation, highlighting their shared struggles. The interpretation suggests that Dalila, a woman who loves Samson, is a positive character rather than a treacherous one. They must balance individual and collective interests, with Dalila representing a forbidden fruit for Samson. Samson's parents have repeatedly disapproved of his choice of future spouse.

The situation is viewed as a nazarite, requiring extreme discipline and caution. Dalila, on the other hand, is falling for a man who should be her enemy, not her love interest. She must decide on her personal reasons or the reasons of her people, based on the sanctity of his status. Samson and Eve share a commonality in their ultimateity, representing the ultimate male and female character. Samson embodies manhood, possessing strength and power beyond ordinary men. He also possesses remarkable eloquence, a highly respected quality of an Old Testament man, and is known for his silver tongue. Samson's manhood was marked by his closeness to God and frequent, bold communication with Him. Milton attributed Dalila's exquisite femininity to her bedecked, ornate, and gay appearance, courted by winds and adorned with amber perfume. She appeared like a rich Philistian matron, like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, and was courted by all the winds that held them play. Milton attributes her beauty, eloquence, and bravery to her, while highlighting her femininity through her traitorous actions. He generalizes this traitorousness to all females, identifying it as the universal characteristics of an ultimate woman.

Samson and Dalila share a common trait of lying, often dishonestly. Samson lies about the origin of honey to his parents, despite it being from a lion carcass. His most significant lie is when he lies about his strength source to Dalila three times, demonstrating his reluctance to tell the truth.

Dalila and Samson's characters undergo mental development throughout the poem, with Dalila breaking his trust and Samson learning to resist his weakness for women. Their characters undergo a shift, causing them to change from their initial state, while Samson learns to resist his weakness for women. Samson learns to listen attentively to Dalila's words without falling into traps, becoming more fixed in his beliefs. Dalila, a fragile and defenseless woman, reconciles with her husband to take him back home, hoping to grow old with him. The protagonist leaves as an empowered woman, embracing her independence from traditionalist marriage views. She aspires to conquer the most powerful man in Philistian history on her own. Both characters, despite facing similar challenges, become archenemies but both gain national hero titles in their own people's eyes.

2. Conclusion

The research explores the similarities and differences between the biblical Samson and the miltonic Samson, focusing on the structural differences between the two literary works, providing a new perspective on the messages in the dramatical poem and the author's identity. The poem's primary goal is to highlight Samson's psychological growth and evoke sympathy, utilizing vivid descriptions of emotions throughout the poem. The action is overshadowed by dialogues and monologues, written in the same meter, to emphasize his emotions. The biblical story emphasizes action over psychological character descriptions, using simple sentences without poetic devices to make the plot seem straightforward.

The literary devices used in this research include repetition and patterns to highlight key parts of the tale. The

differences between the second and third chapters are tied to the autobiographical features of the poem. The research emphasizes Samson's weak appearance, while the biblical adaptation portrays him as a heroic figure with superhuman strength. Samson Agonistes is an autobiographical masterpiece, often attributed to its protagonist's blindness. However, it's possible that John Milton related to Samson's character beyond his eyesight. Milton's depiction of a physically weak hero may suggest a similar desolate physical state to Samson, but it doesn't necessarily comment on his appearance, but rather his mental state. Samson Agonistes portrays Samson as a revolutionary figure supporting Israel's independence, fighting without a trained army. Milton's subtle alterations show sympathy for Samson's character, as he himself was a revolutionary figure, writing politically engaged literature and fighting for the English through the written word. Milton found himself in a similar position to Samson when imprisoned.

Milton's adaptation of Samson portrays him as a positive character, contrasting with the biblical character who is self-serving and flawful. The metaphor of physical distress reveals Samson's feelings of defeat, disappointment, and shame, contrasting with the biblical character's self-serving nature. This portrayal highlights the emotional impact of the monarchy's restoration.

In the Book of Judges, Samson, a judge of Israel, remains steadfast until the end, refusing to free his people from the Philistines. He uses God's gift of strength to fulfill his own needs, not those of his people or God. The climactic moment at the end highlights Samson's selfish motives, as he seeks God's strength to avenge his lost eyesight. Milton's career has been marked by escapades, allure, and absurd riddles, with little dignity. His undergraduate experiences, susceptibility to feminine allure, and absurd riddles have left a lasting impact. It is possible that Milton aimed to clear his name through a different approach to the story of Samson. Milton transformed Samson into a man who undergoes a mental transformation, acknowledges his wrongdoings, confesses his sins, and surrenders himself to God's hands.

John Milton, despite his name being associated with rebellion and the Licensing Act of 1662 during the Restoration of the monarchy, continued to write despite his name being synonymous with rebellion. He acknowledged his mistakes and remained faithful to God through Samson Agonistes. Milton applied a dissimilarity to the relationship between Samson and Dalila, stating that in the Bible, King James' Version, they are not married but live together. This is a significant point, as Samson visited a harlot, indicating his disobedience to God's laws and the degeneracy of the Philistines. Milton uses the name Dalila Samson's wife to shift the story's focus, aiming to gain readers' sympathy for Samson's betrayal, as betrayal of one's spouse is generally seen as malicious and beneficial. Professor John Rogers suggests that Milton's personal writing style in the dialogues of Samson and Dalila was due to his wife Mary Powell's support of the Crown during the Revolution, and their separation due to differing political beliefs, which explains the marriage between Samson and Dalila in Samson Agonistes.

The Book of Judges, an autobiographical addition to Samson's poem, features a self-serving protagonist who, despite being a nazarite blessed since birth, acts as he pleases, impacting the message of both Samson's stories. Milton's modifications significantly influence the message of the poem. The protagonist in this story appears to have a close relationship with God, receiving numerous blessings and fulfilling all his prayers, making it unique compared to other biblical stories. The biblical Samson highlights God's greatness and patience, while Milton's adaptation emphasizes the protagonist's character. Milton's story's objective is not theological, but to clear his name through the character of Samson, who shared similarities with him and faced admiration and dislike from many. Miltonic Samson, with God's support, fought for his people during the Revolution, aiming to create a democratic republic inspired by biblical theology. He believed Oliver Cromwell was the ideal leader obedient to God. However, this ideal failed, leaving John Milton and Samson alone and devastated.

Samson, a hero, made numerous mistakes and engaged in inner battles, leading to a significant character development and change in his character throughout the poem. The poem's climactic ending suggests Milton's desire to redeem his corrupted reputation due to the restoration of monarchy. The distinction between biblical and miltonic Samson Agonistes provides a deeper understanding of the author's intentions, suggesting that Samson Agonistes should be read as Milton's autobiographical literary work.

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