The text I’m going to analyse is an extract from the epic poem Paradise Lost by John Milton,from line 242 to line 270.

Those lines comprehend Satan’s speech to his followers right after their arrival to Hell. This can be understood by the expression “the lost Arch Angel”, which is Satan, and by the fact that the character is using the first person plural.

The speech opens with Satan’s description of Hell, which is constantly compared with Heaven. Indeed
Hell is called a “mournful gloom” full of “horrors”, an “Infernal world” that is opposed to Heaven’s “celestial light”, made of “happy Fields where Joy for ever dwells”. This opposition seems to convey regret, but in reality, Satan doesn’t regret his actions, but only the place where he’s exiled, since he’s aware to be in the opposite of Paradise. Indeed he accepts his situation, and after making a short description of God, that is positively connoted, he states “farthest from him is best” and greets the Hell as his new possession.

Now Satan describes himself as “One who brings a mind not to be chang’d by Place or Time.”, telling that Hell won’t make him regret his actions or change in general, since “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heav’n out of Hell, a Hell out of Heav’n.”. These lines underline the power of reason, that can overcome any difficulty and make heaven out of hell.
However, while he’s in hell, he finds a positive aspect of the place: “Here at least we shall be free”, and God won’t send them away from hell since he had not built it “for his envy”. To Satan, freedom is having the ability to reign: “in my choice to reign is worth ambition though in Hell: better to reign in Hell than serve in Heav’n”.

Satan knows that heaven is way better than hell, and his ambition makes him set a greater goal at the end of the extract: “with rallied Arms to try what may be yet regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?”.

In conclusion Satan’s character is ported as an epic hero. He’s as intelligent as God, proud, ambitious and confident of his own power. Those characteristics, his ability as a leader and his search for “freedom” make the reader sympathies with him, and portray him as a hero. However, this portrayal vanishes, since Satan calls “freedom” his ambition, he uses the first person plural to tell that hell is everyone’s region, but calls himself hell’s “new Possessor”.