

Paradise Lost BOOK 6
John Milton (1667)

THE ARGUMENT

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his Angels. The first Fight describ'd: Satan and his Powers retire under Night: He calls a Council, invents devilish Engines, which in the second dayes Fight put Michael and his Angels to some disorder; But, they at length pulling up Mountains overwhelm'd both the force and Machins of Satan: Yet the Tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserv'd the glory of that Victory: Hee in the Power of his Father coming to the place, and causing all his Legions to stand still on either side, with his Chariot and Thunder driving into the midst of his Enemies, pursues them unable to resist towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horreur and confusion into the place of punishment prepar'd for them in the Deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless Angel unpursu'd
Through Heav'ns wide Champain held his way, till Morn,
Wak't by the circling Hours, with rosie hand
Unbarr'd the gates of Light. There is a Cave
Within the Mount of God, fast by his Throne, [5]
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heav'n
Grateful vicissitude, like Day and Night;
Light issues forth, and at the other dore
Obsequious darkness enters, till her houre [10]
To veile the Heav'n, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here; and now went forth the Morn
Such as in highest Heav'n, arrayd in Gold
Empyrean, from before her vanisht Night,
Shot through with orient Beams: when all the Plain [15]
Coverd with thick embatteld Squadrons bright,
Chariots and flaming Armes, and fierie Steeds
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
Warr he perceav'd, warr in procinct, and found
Already known what he for news had thought [20]
To have reported: gladly then he mixt
Among those friendly Powers who him receav'd
With joy and acclamations loud, that one
That of so many Myriads fall'n, yet one
Returnd not lost: On to the sacred hill [25]
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supream; from whence a voice
From midst a Golden Cloud thus milde was heard.

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Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintaind [30]
 Against revolted multitudes the Cause
 Of Truth, in word mightier then they in Armes;
 And for the testimonie of Truth hast born
 Universal reproach, far worse to beare
 Then violence: for this was all thy care [35]
 To stand approv'd in sight of God, though Worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse: the easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return
 Then scornd thou didst depart, and to subdue [40]
 By force, who reason for thir Law refuse,
 Right reason for thir Law, and for thir King
Messiah, who by right of merit Reigns.
 Go *Michael* of Celestial Armies Prince,
 And thou in Military prowess next [45]
Gabriel, lead forth to Battel these my Sons
 Invincible, lead forth my armed Saints
 By Thousands and by Millions rang'd for fight;
 Equal in number to that Godless crew
 Rebellious, them with Fire and hostile Arms [50]
 Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heav'n
 Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into thir place of punishment, the Gulf
 Of *Tartarus*, which ready opens wide
 His fiery *Chaos* to receive thir fall. [55]

So spake the Sovran voice, and Clouds began
 To darken all the Hill, and smoak to rowl
 In duskie wreathes, reluctant flames, the signe
 Of wrauth awak't: nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal Trumpet from on high gan blow: [60]
 At which command the Powers Militant,
 That stood for Heav'n, in mighty Quadrate joyn'd
 Of Union irresistible, mov'd on
 In silence thir bright Legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental Harmonie that breath'd [65]
 Heroic Ardor to advent'rous deeds
 Under thir God-like Leaders, in the Cause
 Of God and his *Messiah*. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious Hill
 Nor streit'ning Vale, nor Wood, nor Stream divides [70]
 Thir perfet ranks; for high above the ground
 Thir march was, and the passive Air upbore
 Thir nimble tread, as when the total kind

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Of Birds in orderly array on wing
 Came summond over *Eden* to receive [75]
Thir names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a Province wide
 Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last
 Farr in th' Horizon to the North appeer'd
 From skirt to skirt a fierie Region, stretcht [80]
 In battailous aspect, and neerer view
 Bristl'd with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid Spears, and Helmets throng'd, and Shields
 Various, with boastful Argument portraid,
 The banded Powers of *Satan* hasting on [85]
 With furious expedition; for they weend
 That self same day by fight, or by surprize
 To win the Mount of God, and on his Throne
 To set the envier of his State, the proud
 Aspirer, but thir thoughts prov'd fond and vain [90]
 In the mid way: though strange to us it seemd
 At first, that Angel should with Angel warr,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in Festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire [95]
 Hymning th' Eternal Father: but the shout
 Of Battel now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst exalted as a God
 Th' Apostate in his Sun-bright Chariot sate [100]
 Idol of Majesty Divine, enclos'd
 With Flaming Cherubim, and golden Shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous Throne, for now
 'Twixt Host and Host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful intervall, and Front to Front [105]
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length: before the cloudie Van,
 On the rough edge of battel ere it joyn'd,
Satan with vast and haughtie strides advanc't,
 Came trowing, armd in Adamant and Gold; [110]
Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.
 O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and realtie [115]
 Remain not; wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where Vertue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest; though to sight unconquerable?

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His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aide,
I mean to try, whose Reason I have tri'd [120]
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he who in debate of Truth hath won,
Should win in Arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foule,
When Reason hath to deal with force, yet so [125]
Most reason is that Reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed Peers
Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens't, and thus securely him defi'd. [130]
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reacht
The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The Throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd at the terror of thy Power
Or potent tongue; fool, not to think how vain [135]
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in Arms;
Who out of smallest things could without end
Have rais'd incessant Armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitarie hand
Reaching beyond all limit at one blow [140]
Unaided could have finish't thee, and whelmd
Thy Legions under darkness; but thou seest
All are not of thy Train; there be who Faith
Prefer, and Pietie to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone [145]
Seemd in thy World erroneous to dissent
From all: my Sect thou seest, now learn too late
How few somtimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe with scornful eye askance
Thus answerd. Ill for thee, but in wisht houre [150]
Of my revenge, first sought for thou returnst
From flight, seditious Angel, to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provok't, since first that tongue
Inspir'd with contradiction durst oppose [155]
A third part of the Gods, in Synod met
Thir Deities to assert, who while they feel
Vigour Divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comst
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win [160]
From me som Plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswerd least thou boast) to let thee know;

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At first I thought that Libertie and Heav'n
To heav'nly Soules had bin all one; but now [165]
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministring Spirits, trair'd up in Feast and Song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the Minstrelsie of Heav'n,
Servilitie with freedom to contend,
As both thir deeds compar'd this day shall prove. [170]

To whom in brief thus *Abdiel* stern repli'd.

Apostat, still thou errst, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of *Servitude* to serve whom God ordains, [175]
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excells
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebelld
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, [180]
Thy self not free, but to thy self enthrall'd;
Yet leudly dar'st our ministring upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell thy Kingdom, let mee serve
In Heav'n God ever blest, and his Divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd, [185]
Yet Chains in Hell, not Realms expect: mean while
From mee returnd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious Crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell [190]
On the proud Crest of *Satan*, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his Shield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoild; the tenth on bended knee
His massie Spear upstaid; as if on Earth [195]
Winds under ground or waters forcing way
Sidelong, had push't a Mountain from his seat
Half sunk with all his Pines. Amazement seis'd
The Rebel Thrones, but greater rage to see
Thus foil'd thir mightiest, ours joy filld, and shout, [200]
Presage of Victorie and fierce desire
Of Battel: whereat *Michael* bid sound
Th' Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven
It sounded, and the faithful Armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze [205]
The adverse Legions, nor less hideous joyn'd
The horrid shock: now storming furie rose,
And clamour such as heard in Heav'n till now

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Was never, Arms on Armour clashing bray'd
 Horrible discord, and the madding Wheelles [210]
 Of brazen Chariots rag'd; dire was the noise
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
 Of fiery Darts in flaming volies flew,
 And flying vaulted either Host with fire.
 So under fierie Cope together rush'd [215]
 Both Battels maine, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage; all Heav'n
 Resounded, and had Earth bin then, all Earth
 Had to her Center shook. What wonder? when
 Millions of fierce encountring Angels fought [220]
 On either side, the least of whom could weild
 These Elements, and arm him with the force
 Of all thir Regions: how much more of Power
 Armie against Armie numberless to raise
 Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb, [225]
 Though not destroy, thir happie Native seat;
 Had not th' Eternal King Omnipotent
 From his strong hold of Heav'n high over-rul'd
 And limited thir might; though numberd such
 As each divided Legion might have seemd [230]
 A numerous Host, in strength each armed hand
 A Legion; led in fight, yet Leader seemd
 Each Warriour single as in Chief, expert
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
 Of Battel, open when, and when to close [235]
 The ridges of grim Warr; no thought of flight,
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 That argu'd fear; each on himself reli'd,
 As onely in his arm the moment lay
 Of victorie; deeds of eternal fame [240]
 Were don, but infinite: for wide was spred
 That Warr and various; sometimes on firm ground
 A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
 Tormented all the Air; all Air seemd then
 Conflicting Fire: long time in eeven scale [245]
 The Battel hung; till *Satan*, who that day
 Prodigious power had shewn, and met in Armes
 No equal, raunging through the dire attack
 Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
 Saw where the Sword of *Michael* smote, and fell'd [250]
 Squadrons at once, with huge two-handed sway
 Brandisht aloft the horrid edge came down
 Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand

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He hasted, and oppos'd the rockie Orb
Of tenfold Adamant, his ample Shield [255]
A vast circumference: At his approach
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toile
Surceas'd, and glad as hoping here to end
Intestine War in Heav'n, the arch foe subdu'd
Or Captive drag'd in Chains, with hostile frown [260]
And visage all enflam'd first thus began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest
These Acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thy self [265]
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
Heav'ns blessed peace, and into Nature brought
Miserie, uncreated till the crime
Of thy Rebellion? how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright [270]
And faithful, now prov'd false. But think not here
To trouble Holy Rest; Heav'n casts thee out
From all her Confines. Heav'n the seat of bliss
Brooks not the works of violence and Warr.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along [275]
Thy ofspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broiles,
Ere this avenging Sword begin thy doome,
Or som more sudden vengeance wing'd from God
Precipitate thee with augmented paine. [280]

So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus
The Adversarie. Nor think thou with wind
Of airie threats to aw whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turnd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise [285]
Unvanquisht, easier to transact with mee
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? erre not that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but wee style
The strife of Glorie: which we mean to win, [290]
Or turn this Heav'n it self into the Hell
Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
And join him nam'd *Almighty* to thy aid,
I flie not, but have sought thee farr and nigh. [295]

They ended parle, and both addresst for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things

Liken on Earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such highth [300]
 Of Godlike Power: for likest Gods they seemd,
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms
 Fit to decide the Empire of great Heav'n.
 Now wav'd thir fierie Swords, and in the Aire
 Made horrid Circles; two broad Suns thir Shields [305]
 Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood
 In horror; from each hand with speed retir'd
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' Angelic throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion, such as to set forth [310]
 Great things by small, If Natures concord broke,
 Among the Constellations warr were sprung,
 Two Planets rushing from aspect maligne
 Of fiercest opposition in mid Skie,
 Should combat, and thir jarring Sphears confound. [315]
 Together both with next to Almighty Arme,
 Uplifted imminent one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeate,
 As not of power, at once; nor odds appeerd
 In might or swift prevention; but the sword [320]
 Of *Michael* from the Armorie of God
 Was giv'n him temperd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of *Satan* with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheere, nor staid, [325]
 But with swift wheele reverse, deep entring shar'd
 All his right side; then *Satan* first knew pain,
 And writh' d him to and fro convolv'd; so sore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Passd through him, but th' Ethereal substance clos'd [330]
 Not long divisible, and from the gash
 A stream of Nectarous humor issuing flow'd
 Sanguin, such as Celestial Spirits may bleed,
 And all his Armour staid ere while so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aide was run [335]
 By Angels many and strong, who interpos'd
 Defence, while others bore him on thir Shields
 Back to his Chariot; where it stood retir'd
 From off the files of warr; there they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame [340]
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbl'd by such rebuke, so farr beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.

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Yet soon he heal'd; for Spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man [345]
In Entrailes, Heart or Head, Liver or Reines;
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in thir liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more then can the fluid Aire:
All Heart they live, all Head, all Eye, all Eare, [350]
All Intellect, all Sense, and as they please,
They Limb themselves, and colour, shape or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like deeds deservd
Memorial, where the might of *Gabriel* fought, [355]
And with fierce *Ensignes* pierc'd the deep array
Of *Moloc* furious King, who him defi'd
And at his Chariot wheeles to drag him bound
Threatn'd, nor from the Holie One of Heav'n
Refrein'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon [360]
Down clov'n to the waste, with shatterd Armes
And uncouth paine fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and *Raphael* his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a Rock of Diamond Armd,
Vanquish'd *Adramelec*, and *Asmadai*, [365]
Two potent Thrones, that to be less then Gods
Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in thir flight,
Mangl'd with gastly wounds through Plate and Maile,
Nor stood unmindful *Abdiel* to annoy
The Atheist crew, but with redoubl'd blow [370]
Ariel and *Arioc*, and the violence
Of *Ramiel* scorcht and blasted overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and thir names
Eternize here on Earth; but those elect
Angels contented with thir fame in Heav'n [375]
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort
In might though wondrous and in Acts of Warr,
Nor of Renown less eager, yet by doome
Cancel'd from Heav'n and sacred memorie,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. [380]
For strength from Truth divided and from Just,
Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise
And ignominie, yet to glorie aspires
Vain glorious, and through infamie seeks fame:
Therefore Eternal silence be thir doome. [385]
And now thir Mightiest quell'd, the battel swerv'd,
With many an inrode gor'd; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground

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With shiverd armour strow'n, and on a heap
 Chariot and Charioter lay overturn'd [390]
 And fierie foaming Steeds; what stood, recoyl'd
 Oreweari'd, through the faint Satanic Host
 Defensive scarse, or with pale fear surpris'd,
 Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of paine
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought [395]
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear or flight or paine.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable Saints
 In Cubic Phalanx firm advanc't entire,
 Invulnerable, impenitrably arm'd: [400]
 Such high advantages thir innocence
 Gave them above thir foes, not to have sinnd,
 Not to have disobei'd; in fight they stood
 Unweari'd, unobnoxious to be pain'd
 By wound, though from thir place by violence mov'd. [405]
 Now Night her course began, and over Heav'n
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious dinn of Warr:
 Under her Cloudie covert both retir'd,
 Victor and Vanquisht: on the foughten field [410]
Michael and his Angels prevalent
 Encamping, plac'd in Guard thir Watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part
Satan with his rebellious disappeerd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd, and void of rest, [415]
 His Potentates to Councel call'd by night;
 And in the midst thus undismai'd began.
 O now in danger tri'd, now known in Armes
 Not to be overpowerd, Companions deare,
 Found worthy not of Libertie alone, [420]
 Too mean pretense, but what we more affect,
 Honour, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne,
 Who have sustaind one day in doubtful fight
 (And if one day, why not Eternal dayes?)
 What Heavens Lord had powerfulest to send [425]
 Against us from about his Throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, [430]
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and paine,
 Till now not known, but known as soon contemnd,
 Since now we find this our Emphyreal form

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Incapable of mortal injurie
 Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound, [435]
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small as easie think
 The remedie; perhaps more valid Armes,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes, [440]
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In Nature none: if other hidden cause
 Left them Superiour, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our mindes, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose. [445]
 He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroc, of Principalities the prime;
 As one he stood escap't from cruel fight,
 Sore toild, his riv'n Armes to havoc hewn,
 And cloudie in aspect thus answering spake. [450]
 Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard
 For Gods, and too unequal work we find
 Against unequal arms to fight in paine,
 Against unpaid, impassive; from which evil [455]
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what availes
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of Mightiest. Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, [460]
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfet miserie, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturnes
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend [465]
 Our yet unwounded Enemies, or arme
 Our selves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less then for deliverance what we owe.
 Whereto with look compos'd *Satan* repli'd.
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright [470]
 Believst so main to our success, I bring;
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this Ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorn'd
 With Plant, Fruit, Flour Ambrosial, Gemms & Gold, [475]
 Whose Eye so superficially surveyes
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,

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Of spiritous and fierie spume, till toucht
 With Heav'ns ray, and temperd they shoot forth [480]
 So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light.
 These in thir dark Nativitie the Deep
 Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame,
 Which into hallow Engins long and round
 Thick-rammd, at th' other bore with touch of fire [485]
 Dilated and infuriate shall send forth
 From far with thundring noise among our foes
 Such implements of mischief as shall dash
 To pieces, and orewhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmd [490]
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour, yet ere dawne,
 Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joind
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaird. [495]
 He ended, and his words thir drooping chere
 Enlightn'd, and thir languisht hope reviv'd.
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how hee
 To be th' inventor miss'd, so easie it seemd
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought [500]
 Impossible: yet haply of thy Race
 In future dayes, if Malice should abound,
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With dev'lish machination might devise
 Like instrument to plague the Sons of men [505]
 For sin, on warr and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from Councel to the work they flew,
 None arguing stood, innumerable hands
 Were ready, in a moment up they turnd
 Wide the Celestial soile, and saw beneath [510]
 Th' originals of Nature in thir crude
 Conception; Sulphurous and Nitrous Foame
 They found, they mingl'd, and with suttile Art,
 Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd: [515]
 Part hidd'n veins diggd up (nor hath this Earth
 Entrails unlike) of Mineral and Stone,
 Whereof to found thir Engins and thir Balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. [520]
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious Night
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespi'd.

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Now when fair Morn Orient in Heav'n appeerd
Up rose the Victor Angels, and to Arms [525]
The matin Trumpet Sung: in Arms they stood
Of Golden Panoplie, refulgent Host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning Hills
Lookd round, and Scouts each Coast light-armed scoure,
Each quarter, to descree the distant foe, [530]
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in alt: him soon they met
Under spred Ensignes moving nigh, in slow
But firm Battalion; back with speediest Sail
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing, [535]
Came flying, and in mid Aire aloud thus cri'd.

Arme, Warriours, Arme for fight, the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day, fear not his flight; so thick a Cloud
He comes, and settl'd in his face I see [540]
Sad resolution and secure: let each
His Adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his Helme, gripe fast his orb'd Shield,
Born eevn or high, for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling showr, [545]
But ratling storm of Arrows barbd with fire.
So warnd he them aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took Allarm,
And onward move Embattel'd; when behold [550]
Not distant far with heavie pace the Foe
Approaching gross and huge; in hollow Cube
Training his devilish Enginrie, impal'd
On every side with shadding Squadrons Deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood [555]
A while, but suddenly at head appeerd
Satan: And thus was heard Commanding loud.

Vanguard, to Right and Left the Front unfould;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open brest [560]
Stand readie to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt, however witness Heaven,
Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part; yee who appointed stand [565]
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words he scarce
 Had ended; when to Right and Left the Front
 Divided, and to either Flank retir'd. [570]
 Which to our eyes discoverd new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of Pillars laid
 On Wheels (for like to Pillars most they seem'd
 Or hollow'd bodies made of Oak or Firr
 With branches lopt, in Wood or Mountain fell'd) [575]
 Brass, Iron, Stonie mould, had not thir mouthes
 With hideous orifice gap't on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce; at each behind
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a Reed
 Stood waving tipt with fire; while we suspense, [580]
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,
 Not long, for sudden all at once thir Reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent appli'd
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscur'd with smoak, all Heav'n appeerd, [585]
 From those deep throated Engins belcht, whose roar
 Emboweld with outrageous noise the Air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foule
 Thir devilish glut, chaind Thunderbolts and Hail
 Of Iron Globes, which on the Victor Host [590]
 Level'd, with such impetuous furie smote,
 That whom they hit, none on thir feet might stand,
 Though standing else as Rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel rowl'd;
 The sooner for thir Arms, unarm'd they might [595]
 Have easily as Spirits evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foule dissipation follow'd and forc't rout;
 Nor serv'd it to relax thir serried files. [600]
 What should they do? if on they rusht, repulse
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubl'd, would render them yet more despis'd,
 And to thir foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood rankt of Seraphim another row
 In posture to displode thir second tire [605]
 Of Thunder: back defeated to return
 They worse abhorr'd. *Satan* beheld thir plight,
 And to his Mates thus in derision call'd.

O Friends, why come not on these Victors proud?
 Ere while they fierce were coming, and when wee, [610]
 To entertain them fair with open Front
 And Brest, (what could we more?) propounded terms

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Of composition, strait they chang'd thir minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance, yet for a dance they seemd [615]
Somewhat extravagant and wilde, perhaps
For joy of offerd peace: but I suppose
If our proposals once again were heard
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesom mood, [620]
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbl'd many, who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand; [625]
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They shew us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant veine
Stood scoffing, highthn'd in thir thoughts beyond
All doubt of victorie, eternal might [630]
To match with thir inventions they presum'd
So easie, and of his Thunder made a scorn,
And all his Host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble; but they stood not long,
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms [635]
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd)
Thir Arms away they threw, and to the Hills
(For Earth hath this variety from Heav'n [640]
Of pleasure situate in Hill and Dale)
Light as the Lightning glimps they ran, they flew,
From thir foundations loosning to and fro
They pluckt the seated Hills with all thir load,
Rocks, Waters, Woods, and by the shaggie tops [645]
Up lifting bore them in thir hands: Amaze,
Be sure, and terrour seis'd the rebel Host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the Mountains upward turn'd,
Till on those cursed Engins triple-row [650]
They saw them whelm'd, and all thir confidence
Under the weight of Mountains buried deep,
Themselves invaded next, and on thir heads
Main Promontories flung, which in the Air
Came shadowing, and opprest whole Legions arm'd, [655]
Thir armor help'd thir harm, crush't in and bruise'd
Into thir substance pent, which wrought them pain

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Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light, [660]
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest in imitation to like Armes
 Betook them, and the neighbouring Hills uptore;
 So Hills amid the Air encounterd Hills
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, [665]
 That under ground, they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise; Warr seem'd a civil Game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heapt
 Upon confusion rose: and now all Heav'n
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspred, [670]
 Had not th' Almighty Father where he sits
 Shrin'd in his Sanctuarie of Heav'n secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
 That his great purpose he might so fulfill, [675]
 To honour his Anointed Son aveng'd
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All power on him transferr'd: whence to his Son
 Th' Assessor of his Throne he thus began.
 Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov'd, [680]
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by Deitie I am,
 And in whose hand what by Decree I doe,
 Second Omnipotence, two dayes are past,
 Two dayes, as we compute the dayes of Heav'n, [685]
 Since *Michael* and his Powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient; sore hath been thir fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such Foes met arm'd;
 For to themselves I left them, and thou knowst,
 Equal in thir Creation they were form'd, [690]
 Save what sin hath impaird, which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend thir doom;
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found:
 Warr wearied hath perform'd what Warr can do, [695]
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reines,
 With Mountains as with Weapons arm'd, which makes
 Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the maine.
 Two dayes are therefore past, the third is thine;
 For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus farr [700]
 Have sufferd, that the Glorie may be thine
 Of ending this great Warr, since none but Thou

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Can end it. Into thee such Vertue and Grace
 Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
 In Heav'n and Hell thy Power above compare, [705]
 And this perverse Commotion governd thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
 Of all things, to be Heir and to be King
 By Sacred Unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then thou Mightiest in thy Fathers might, [710]
 Ascend my Chariot, guide the rapid Wheelles
 That shake Heav'ns basis, bring forth all my Warr,
 My Bow and Thunder, my Almighty Arms
 Gird on, and Sword upon thy puissant Thigh;
 Pursue these sons of Darkness, drive them out [715]
 From all Heav'ns bounds into the utter Deep:
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God and *Messiah* his anointed King.

He said, and on his Son with Rayes direct
 Shon full, he all his Father full exprest [720]
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd,
 And thus the filial Godhead answering spake.

O Father, O Supream of heav'nly Thrones,
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou alwayes seekst
 To glorifie thy Son, I alwayes thee, [725]
 As is most just; this I my Glorie account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleas'd, declarst thy will
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Scepter and Power, thy giving, I assume, [730]
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be All in All, and I in thee
 For ever, and in mee all whom thou lov'st:
 But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on, [735]
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Armd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,
 To thir prepar'd ill Mansion driven down
 To chains of darkness, and th' undying Worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, [740]
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy Saints unmixt, and from th' impure
 Farr separate, circling thy holy Mount
 Unfeigned *Halleluiahs* to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief. [745]
 So said, he o're his Scepter bowing, rose
 From the right hand of Glorie where he sate,

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And the third sacred Morn began to shine
 Dawning through Heav'n: forth rush'd with whirl-wind sound
 The Chariot of Paternal Deitie, [750]
 Flashing thick flames, Wheeles within Wheeles, undrawn,
 It self instinct with Spirit, but convoyd
 By four Cherubic shapes, four Faces each
 Had wondrous, as with Starrs thir bodies all
 And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the wheels [755]
 Of Beril, and careering Fires between;
 Over thir heads a chrystal Firmament,
 Whereon a Saphir Throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the showrie Arch.
 Hee in Celestial Panoplie all arm'd [760]
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended, at his right hand Victorie
 Sate Eagle-wing'd, beside him hung his Bow
 And Quiver with three-bolted Thunder stor'd,
 And from about him fierce Effusion rowld [765]
 Of smoak and bickering flame, and sparkles dire;
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
 He onward came, farr off his coming shon,
 And twentie thousand (I thir number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen: [770]
 Hee on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the Chrystallin Skie, in Saphir Thron'd.
 Illustrious farr and wide, but by his own
 First seen, them unexpected joy surpriz'd,
 When the great Ensign of *Messiah* blaz'd [775]
 Aloft by Angels born, his Sign in Heav'n:
 Under whose Conduct *Michael* soon reduc'd
 His Armie, circumfus'd on either Wing,
 Under thir Head imbodyed all in one.
 Before him Power Divine his way prepar'd; [780]
 At his command the uprooted Hills retir'd
 Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
 Obsequious, Heav'n his wonted face renewd,
 And with fresh Flourets Hill and Valley smil'd.
 This saw his hapless Foes but stood obdur'd, [785]
 And to rebellious fight rallied thir Powers
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heav'nly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what Signs availe,
 Or Wonders move th' obdurate to relent? [790]
 They hard'nd more by what might most reclame,
 Grieving to see his Glorie, at the sight

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Took envie, and aspiring to his highth,
 Stood reimbattell'd fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevaile [795]
 Against God and *Messiah*, or to fall
 In universal ruin last, and now
 To final Battel drew, disdainning flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his Host on either hand thus spake. [800]
 Stand still in bright array ye Saints, here stand
 Ye Angels arm'd, this day from Battel rest;
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous Cause,
 And as ye have receivd, so have ye don [805]
 Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs,
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints;
 Number to this dayes work is not ordain'd
 Nor multitude, stand onely and behold [810]
 Gods indignation on these Godless pourd
 By mee, not you but mee they have despis'd,
 Yet envied; against mee is all thir rage,
 Because the Father, t' whom in Heav'n supream
 Kingdom and Power and Glorie appertains, [815]
 Hath honourd me according to his will.
 Therefore to mee thir doom he hath assig'n'd;
 That they may have thir wish, to trie with mee
 In Battel which the stronger proves, they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength [820]
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excells;
 Nor other strife with them do I voutsafe.
 So spake the Son, and into terrour chang'd
 His count'nance too severe to be beheld [825]
 And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies.
 At once the Four spred out thir Starrie wings
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the Orbes
 Of his fierce Chariot rowld, as with the sound
 Of torrent Floods, or of a numerous Host. [830]
 Hee on his impious Foes right onward drove,
 Gloomie as Night; under his burning Wheelles
 The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout,
 All but the Throne it self of God. Full soon
 Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand [835]
 Grasping ten thousand Thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in thir Soules infix'd

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Plagues; they astonisht all resistance lost,
 All courage; down thir idle weapons drop'd;
 O're Shields and Helmes, and helmed heads he rode [840]
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
 That wist the Mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Foure, [845]
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living Wheels,
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes,
 One Spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
 Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among th' accurst, that witherd all thir strength, [850]
 And of thir wonted vigour left them draind,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
 His Thunder in mid Volie, for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n: [855]
 The overthrown he rais'd, and as a Heard
 Of Goats or timerous flock together throngd
 Drove them before him Thunder-struck, pursu'd
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 And Chrystal wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide, [860]
 Rowld inward, and a spacious Gap disclos'd
 Into the wastful Deep; the monstrous sight
 Strook them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urg'd them behind; headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrauth [865]
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
 Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw
 Heav'n ruining from Heav'n and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. [870]
 Nine dayes they fell; confounded *Chaos* roard,
 And felt tenfold confusion in thir fall
 Through his wilde Anarchie, so huge a rout
 Incumberd him with ruin: Hell at last
 Yawning receavd them whole, and on them clos'd, [875]
 Hell thir fit habitation fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and paine.
 Disburdnd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repaired
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rowld.
 Sole Victor from th' expulsion of his Foes [880]
Messiah his triumphal Chariot turnd:
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood

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Eye witnesses of his Almighty Acts,
With Jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
Shaded with branching Palme, each order bright, [885]
Sung Triumph, and him sung Victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him Dominion giv'n,
Worthiest to Reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid Heav'n, into the Courts
And Temple of his mightie Father Thron'd [890]
On high: who into Glorie him receav'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus measuring things in Heav'n by things on Earth
At thy request, and that thou maist beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd [895]
What might have else to human Race bin hid;
The discord which befel, and Warr in Heav'n
Among th' Angelic Powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelld
With *Satan*, hee who envies now thy state, [900]
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereavd of happiness thou maist partake
His punishment, Eternal miserie;
Which would be all his solace and revenge, [905]
As a despite don against the most High,
Thee once to gaine Companion of his woe.
But list'n not to his Temptations, warne
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard
By terrible Example the reward [910]
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

The End of the Sixth Book.

Notes:

Council. See 1.754-75 for a description of Satan's first "council." It is not clear whether this meeting bears resemblance to the first, but even if it does not, the word "council" links the two events and associates the negative connotations of the first with the second.

dreadless Angel. Abdiel, a fearless angel.

circling Hours. The Horae, also known as the Hours or the Seasons are daughters of Zeus and Themis. Most accounts identify three - Thallo (Spring),

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Auxo (Summer), Carpo (Harvest, Autumn, Fall). In Athens, Auxo was often omitted. They became associated with ethical properties, possibly from their connection with the order and regularity of nature — the change of seasons. Hesiod names them Eunomia (law and order), Dike (justice), and Eirene (peace). They also served as the wardens of the sky, rolling the clouds back from the gates of Mt. Olympus, permitting the gods to come and go in their chariots. See Homer's *Iliad* 5. 745, and Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 7.7. 45.

with rosie hand. As at the opening of book 5, Milton echoes Homer's image of the "rosy fingered dawn" (*Odyssey* 2.1).

vicissitude. Change as a result of natural phenomena (*OED2*).

Lines 1-10. This passage is borrowed from Hesiod's *Theogony*, lines 736-757. But in *Theogony*, the cave is in the underworld and follows the description of the battle.

her. The "Morn" is here gendered feminine. Though in book 7 Raphael speaks of the sun as masculine, light, the first of created things, he speaks of as feminine (7.243-249 and 7.359-382).

procinct. Readiness; war is in readiness in Heaven (*OED2*).

one/ Return'd not lost. Milton's emphasis on the importance of one righteous individual surrounded by wickedness is supported by many biblical passages, from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18: 20-19) to Moses (in Exodus), and culminating in the life of Jesus. Milton also may have regarded himself as one just man surrounded by evildoers, since often he had to defend his religious convictions to those in power, and on the issue of divorce he was virtually alone among his English contemporaries.

Golden Cloud. The Bible sometimes describes God as speaking from a cloud. See Exodus 34: 5-7, for example.

Servant of God, well done. This is addressed to Abdiel whose name literally means "servant of God." The phrase also echoes the words of the master to the faithful servants in Jesus' parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 21). Milton's fascination with this parable is evident in Sonnet 19.

The better fight. This echoes 2 Timothy 4:7.

perverse. This term, in another form, will later be used to describe Satan.

Michael. Michael is Hebrew for "God-like" or "strength of God." See below, line 67.

Gabriel. Another archangel, Gabriel, like Raphael, was a heavenly messenger.

my Sons. All angels, as all men are God's sons. No angels, in Milton's writings, are female. This poem frequently refers to Eve as "daughter of God and man." See Satan's musing over the expression "son of God" in *Paradise Regain'd* 4.517.

armed Saints. Milton's angels resemble in some ways the biblical descriptions of the church militant in Ephesians 6. Homer's and Virgil's epic heroes were also armed or protected by gods. By alluding to the biblical armor of God, however, Milton suggests that the angels' armor was spiritual.

Equal in number. Satan drew off a "third" of heaven's host in his rebellion (see 5.710 and below 156); the Father, presumably sends exactly the same number of loyal angels into battle against them.

Tartarus. Classical name for Hell; see Apollodorus *Library* 1.2. On Chaos in relation to hell, see Schwartz, *Remembering and Repeating* 8-39.

the signe. Milton models the presence of God on Exodus 19: 18, where God appears to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Quadrate. A military term denoting a square or cubic troop formation.

Thir names of thee. Genesis 2: 19 tells the story of God bringing all beasts and birds before Adam for naming. Adam retells this story in 8.349-354.

terrene. This earthly world (*OED2*).

Apostate. One who forsakes his religious faith, a pervert (*OED2*). Note also the numerous uses of variants and synonyms of the word used in Book 6.

Sun-bright chariot. Satan's chariot is bright, but it does not burn with the "thick flames" (see lines 750-1) of the Son's divine chariot. Although Satan's chariot is impressive, it will pale in comparison to the Son's.

Idol of Majesty Divine. In portraying himself as a god, Satan has violated what will be handed down in Exodus 20:3-5 as the first commandment.

undaunted heart explores. The phrase recalls Homer's introduction of Hector's speech before his battle with Achilles in *Iliad* 22.98.

resemblance of the Highest. Abdiel acknowledges that Satan retains some celestial beauty, despite his rebel nature. Since Raphael tells this story to Adam

in the form of a warning, he may be cautioning Adam not to admire beauty overmuch, as he later advises Adam to be wary of attributing overmuch to Eve's beauty (8.565-570). Satan's sin affects his appearance, especially after he has fallen to Hell. He becomes unrecognizable to other angels (4.827-834).

realtie. Sincerity, honesty (OED2).

Most reason is. It is most reasonable. The notion that a contestant who prevails in truth should also prevail in combat underlies the practice of trial by combat.

Sect. Often used in the 17th century as a term to designate religious schismatics, like Baptists, Familists, or Quakers. Milton speaks almost approvingly of sectarian and schismatic differences of opinion in Areopagitica. See also the Preface to *Eikonoklastes*.

askance. Sidewise, with a side glance; see (OED2).

seditious Angel. From Satan's point of view loyalty to God appears as sedition.

Synod. A gathering, especially of church dignitaries (OED2). See also 2.391.

Plume. An ornament symbolizing dignity or rank, often attached to a military helmet (OED2). Satan accuses Abdiel of turning to God only to curry favor and advancement in Heaven.

pause between. That is, between your challenge and your destruction.

Unanswer'd least thou boast. That is, lest you boast that I left your challenge unanswered.

through sloth had rather serve. Milton often expressed the notion that certain people, sometimes whole races, are content to become slaves to tyrants. See 12.99-104; Samson Agonistes 240-46, and The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.

God and Nature bid the same. The central tenet of natural law philosophy. See the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce 1.1 and 2.3.

to thy self enthrall'd. For a similar definition of loss of liberty, see 12.90-101. For the Son's theory of a just king, worthy of obedience, see Paradise Regain'd 2.463-72.

crest. That is, the heraldic crest apparently worn on his helmet.

Cope. The sky.

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Both Battels maine. The main body of both armies.

no unbecoming deed. No deed unbecoming to a warrior. Even the rebel angels, though their rebellion is condemned, behaved, says Raphael, like exemplary soldiers.

his ample Shield. The shield is apparently made of rock, or diamond. Satan's shield is described in epic style in 1.284-291.

Intestine War. Civil war.

once upright. Adam, too, will be reduced from his "upright" position due to his lack of obedience. In his case, though, it will be a specific "effeminate slackness" that leads him to disobey (see 11.634-6).

ofspring. Michael means Satan's followers as well as the two other members of the unholy trinity, Sin and Death, described in 2.643-58.

Hell. The geography of Milton's cosmos is both physical and spiritual. After the event of the battle, Satan will discover that he truly is his own Hell, even while in Heaven or on earth; see 4.75-77. For the converse, see *A Mask* 318-85.

parle. Parley; talk, especially the negotiations and posturing between opponents in battle.

jarring Sphears (lines 310-15). Raphael suggests that one way Adam may visualize war in heaven is by thinking of the constellations at war with each other, or two planets in single combat. Such a conflict would be a microcosm of the battle Raphael describes.

not of power. A difficult sentence. Both combatants (each one degree removed from "almighty") aimed one stroke each as if they meant only to strike once and determine the matter by that single stroke. To expect to repeat such a stroke would be nonsense, for that would indicate the first stroke was "not of power" to do the job. Some types of martial training aimed to teach soldiers to prevail with a single stroke.

odds appeerd. That is, there appeared no evidence that either the mighty stroke (Michael's attack) or its "swift prevention" (Satan's parry) would prevail.

shar'd. Sheared, or completely severed. Michael's first stroke cut Satan's sword in half; then his "swift wheele reverse" (as all one with the first stroke) cut Satan's right side completely away.

griding. Cutting.

discontinuous wound. That is, an open wound. The cut is continuous, but the resulting wound, being wide open, is technically called discontinuous.

Nectarous humor. This passage echoes one in the *Iliad* 5.334-417, which also describes a celestial battle. Aphrodite's hand is pierced and she bleeds the nectarous blood of the Gods (*ichor*), but is healed by Dione, her mother.

Reines. The kidneys or loins (*OED2*).

Ensignes. A rallying or battle cry (*OED2*).

Moloc furious King. Moloch was introduced in 1.392-396.

uncouth. Unknown. In this battle, the rebel angels first feel pain. Apparently the loyal angels, following Michael and Gabriel, can be pushed and moved, but not hurt or frightened (see below lines 404-405).

Raphael. Raphael speaks of himself in the third person; he has not introduced himself to Adam by name, nor does he ever. Thus, he is in some ways like Odysseus relating the stories of the Trojan War to Alcinous and his people (*Odyssey* 9). Unlike Odysseus, however, he does not reveal his identity nor focus his story on himself, but on the Son's authority and the moral victory of Abdiel.

Adramelec. Adramelec, the "mighty King," was a local version of the Babylonian sun god. 2 Kings 17:31 says that children were burned on his altar. Throughout, Milton uses the names of foreign gods from past ages to signify the false godhood of the rebellious angels.

Asmadai. The evil Asmodeus of the Tobit story. Also mentioned in 4.168-171.

meaner thoughts. Lower ambitions.

Ariel. In cabbalistic lore, Ariel is the name of an evil angel and pagan god. In Cornelius Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*, it is the name of one of the spirits of the earth. Ariel is the name of Prospero's familiar spirit in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* 1.2.

Arioc. The name means "lion-like." Abraham is said to have fought a King Arioch (Genesis 14: 1) amongst a list of other adversary kings some of whom are also named after their pagan gods. Another Arioch appears as a Babylonian captain in Daniel 2: 14. Perhaps Milton also found the name in books of demonology.

Ramiel. The name means "Thunder of God" and appears as "Rameel," one of the angels who descended to earth to copulate with the beautiful daughters of men, in the apocryphal Book of Enoch 1.6.7.

praise of men. Raphael stops his epic catalog of warriors; the heavenly ones do not seek fame and the evil ones should not have it.

Defensive scarce. Scarce able to defend themselves.

Phalanx. This battle formation was originally developed by the Greeks. It is yet another allusion to ancient war and epic. For an explanation of "phalanx," see [*Britannica Online*](#).

Libertie alone. Satan may serve here to satirize Oliver Cromwell as one for whom liberty alone was "too mean" a cause for struggle, but also sought worldly "Honour, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne." The Commonwealth proclaimed following the execution of Charles I in 1649 effectively became a Protectorate in 1654 when Cromwell assumed the title Lord Protector.

Nisroc. An Assyrian deity mentioned in 2 Kings 19: 37.

spiritous and fierie spume. The phrase represents sulfur and nitre, which in Milton's time, were thought to play a role in the creation of other matter. This would make them volatile in their creativity, a kind of gunpowder, somewhat like God's thunder is linked to His creativity through his control over matter.

hallow. Hollow.

The Thunderer. Satan uses Zeus's epithet from Hesiod's *Theogony* to speak of God.

originals of Nature. The basic elements.

Concocted and adusted. Alchemical processes of heating and drying.

Mineral and Stone. The rebel angels dig up "crude" materials and form cannons from them. By suggesting that Earth's "entrails" are much like heaven's Raphael supports the monistic theory that all substances were created out of "one first matter" (5.472), of God and by God. Therefore, they can only be made evil through evil use. By introducing the elements to the battle as weapons, putting them in their chaotic roles rather than the subservient roles of order created by God, Satan further imposes Chaos on Heaven (Schwartz 27).

refulgent. Radiant and gleaming ([*OED2*](#)).

in alt. In halt, halted.

Ensignes. Here "Ensignes" are battle banners or standards (OED2 Definition #5a).

Zophiel. Zophiel means "Spy of God." It is not a biblical name.

Adamantine. Having the hardness or luster of a diamond.

incentive reed. Fuse material.

conscious Night. Wakeful night; the rebel angels stay awake all night making cannons.

in hollow Cube. That is, in a quadrate formation with an empty center where the cannon is concealed.

perverse. It is ironic that Satan uses a word that is associated with his own crime against God.

discharge. As with the word "charge" in 566, Satan is a rather dry punster.

line 568. 1674 has a comma after "scarce"; this seems a mistake, so I have omitted it.

amus'd. Bemused.

chaind Thunderbolts. Chain shot: two cannonballs with a length of chain between used to take out a whole vanguard at one blast.

The sooner for thir Arms. An example of Milton's disdain for arms and weapons in general. Other examples of this disdain can be found in PL 9.30-41, and in Samson Aqonistes 1119-1125. God's forces prevail again when they abandon their arms below in line 639.

serried. Of files or ranks of armed men, pressed close to each other (OED2).
displode thir second tire. Fire another round.

Belial. Belial, a Latin Vulgate name for devil or Satan, was first introduced in 1.490.

scoffing. Insults were commonplace in epic battles of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, but it is notable that the sinless angels do not participate in them, and are not concerned with their own honor; thus, they have no need to return scorn for scorn.

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pluckt the seated Hills. In Hesiod's *Theogony* 713-720, the heroes fighting for Zeus throw hundreds of boulders at the Titans. In Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Library* 1.6.3, we read the story of Typhon attacking Zeus by throwing mountains, which, nevertheless, fall back on him; Zeus finishes Typhon by throwing Mount Etna on him. Here the loyal angels in effect re-bury the cannon and gunpowder the rebel angels dug from the soil of heaven.

armor help'd their harm. Now armor hinders the rebels as before it had hindered the loyal angels. See above line 595 and note.

bruis'd. This is not the last time that Satan and his forces will be "bruis'd." See 10.178-181.

jaculation. *OED2*: The action of darting, hurling, or throwing; a hurl, a throw. From Latin *iacio, iaciere*.

Assessor. One who sits beside; hence one who shares another's rank, position, or dignity (*OED2*).

Visibly. The Son is the visible manifestation of the Father's invisible (3.375) power and being, and enacts his will. Thus "invisible" in line 681 must be read as a substantive meaning: "what is invisible." See also 3.139 where the Son is said to be the visible expression of the Father.

Insensibly. Imperceptibly.

perpetual fight. What Satan called "eternal Warr" (1.121) seen from God's perspective.

the third. Milton's emphasis on the Son's single combat against all of Satan's forces on the third day of battle also alludes to Jesus' passion, death and resurrection on the "third day" (Matthew 16:21).

Unction. Anointing; Messiah means anointed one.

Ascend my Chariot. The image alludes to the legend of Phaeton who stole his father Phoebus's (Apollo's) chariot (the sun) and wrecked it, destroying both himself and much of the earth (Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 2.42 and following). Unlike Phaeton, the Milton's Son is invited to ride the Father's chariot.

Ill Mansion. Here used as a contrast to Heaven. Christ says "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). "Ill Mansion," then, is a twisted version of Heaven.

Worm. Satan, unwittingly foretells the form he will assume when he tempts Eve (OED2 Definition #44).

Unfeigned. Sincere.

Paternal Deitie. The Son's "Chariot of Paternal Deitie" contrasts with Satan's earlier chariot, of lines 99-101, when he uses the image of power and will to try to elevate himself to God's position.

Wheeles within Wheeles. The imagery of the divine chariot comes from Ezekiel 1: 5-21 and Ezekiel 10: 6-19.

Victorie. Milton has chosen a Roman goddess, Victory, to represent the triumph of the Son.

Lines 750-766. Milton uses Ezekiel's vision of God's presence (Ezekiel 1: 4-14) to indicate the majesty of God the Father made manifest in the Son.

Beril. A transparent precious stone mentioned in Ezekiel 10:9 as part of the description of God's heavenly chariot (OED2).

showrie Arch. Rainbow.

arm'd. The Son's armor, like the armor of Aeneas and Achilles, is divinely wrought. However, this armor is made of light, which indicates its spiritual nature.

Urim. One of the types of mystical stones (along with the *thummim*) said to decorate the breastplate of Aaron the high priest and brother of Moses. See Exodus 28: 30 and 3.597-598.

on the wings of Cherub. As in the act of creation, recounted in 7.218, Milton seems intent on leaving the impression that the Son's activity here is similar both in the source of its power and in its purposes to the act of creation. Here he separates the rebel angels "farr" from the faithful; in creation he separates light from dark and the earth from the dry land.

reduc'd. That is, he led his army back under the command of the Son.

circumfus'd. Spread out.

obdur'd. Obdurate, hardened.

Wonders. Milton recalls Christ's alleged frustration with the Pharisees, saying, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But no sign will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and

three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 13: 39).

stand. The Son's command to stand echoes the final line of Milton's Sonnet 19.

to other hand belongs. That is, "to the Son."

Vengeance is his. God's vengeance is a major theme of the Hebrew Scriptures. You can search for examples using the Bible Gateway search engine. Paul repeats this theme in Romans 12: 19.

I alone. Whereas Satan and even Hesiod's heroic Zeus fight with all their power in the midst of their armies, the Son will battle Satan's whole army single-handed. Milton is fond of celebrating the triumph of the one just man.

the Four. The cherubim of lines 753-754.

Empyrean. Of the sphere of highest heaven (*OED2*).

Distinct with eyes. The Son's chariot is festooned with eyes. Raphael invites us to imagine the demise of the rebel angels as effected largely by the gaze of the Son and his cherubic servants, as if their eyes alone were the arrows of their ruin, and the Son's ire, and thunderous threats. Satan and his army "fall" without ever being really struck by anything but looks and sounds.

Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n. Similar to the descriptions of Adam after the Fall.

Goats. This allusion also prefigures the last judgment (as described in Matthew 25: 32), when Christ will separate "the sheep from the goats" and drive the goats from him, into the fire.

headlong themselves they threw. See William Blake's 1808 watercolor illustration of these lines.

Nine dayes. Milton compares the falling angels to the Titans, who challenged the Gods of Olympia. In Hesiod's *Theogony* 664-735, the Titans fell for nine days before they reached the underworld.

mural breach. The opening in the wall.

Triumphant. The palm branches and songs of triumph suggest the image of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem shortly before his crucifixion (Matthew 21: 8-11).

Thy weaker. Eve who, though present during Raphael's story, is spoken of as though absent. Perhaps she is clearing the food and dishes. The phrase "thy weaker" comes from 1 Peter 3: 7 where a "wife" is referred to as "the weaker vessel."

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