The Fallen Angels in Milton's Paradise Lost

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Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad

2014

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Filozofski fakultet**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:142:581120

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-03-29**

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DIGITALNI AKADEMSKI ARHIVI I REPOZITORIJI

Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku

Filozofski fakultet

Preddiplomski studij Engleskog jezika i književnosti i pedagogije

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The Fallen Angels in Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Završni rad

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Osijek, 2014.

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Summary

Paradise Lost is an epic poem written by the seventeenth-century poet John Milton, in which the poet symbolically describes the fall of man beginning with the fall of the angels. This paper focuses only on Book 1 of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in order to describe how the fallen angels are depicted in the poem, and what they represent today. Many of the angels that rebelled against God have throughout the history of mankind established their own religions where they are worshiped by Non-Christian world. The estimated number of the fallen angels is immense, but only twelve of the angels that are more or less commonly known are elaborated upon in this paper.

Key words: Milton, *Paradise Lost*, fallen angels, pagan deities

Introduction

Paradise Lost is an epic poem, written by the famous seventeenth-century poet John Milton. *Paradise Lost* consists of twelve sections, or "books", written in blank verse. The first version of Milton's epic poem was published in 1667, and was edited and revised by Milton in 1674 when he turned initial ten books into twelve.

The poem narrates the Biblical story of the fall of man. In Book 1 of the poem, the reader meets Satan and his followers who are already in Hell, or as they call it Pandemonium, because they were expelled from Heaven by the Creator. The rest of the poem describes in great detail the fallen angels' nine-day fall into Hell, the temptation of Adam and Eve by the evil serpent and their disobedience to God.

The fallen angels defy the Almighty, and their defiance ensues from their awareness of their free will and wish to be free from His laws. Satan is the first angel that realizes the greatness of his power, intelligence and beauty given by God, and he manages to persuade other angels to rebel.

Milton's angels are magical creatures with human features. Their similarity with humans is evident in the fact that they also "eat, digest, make love for pleasure, suffer pain, and feel isolated" (Raymond 10). To Milton, angels are crucial characters since the poem is about them and told by them. As Raymond (2010) points out, Milton uses un-fallen angels to retell the history timeline, to communicate with humans and lead them, but also to protect them from evil. The main difference between un-fallen and fallen angels is that "the angels who turned to God (*conversio*) were granted grace that enabled them to develop wisdom, merit, and therefore glorification; and those who turned from God (*aversio*) were confirmed in envy and hatred. Both retain freewill, but in order to will towards good, the fallen angels would need the grace that had been withdrawn from them" (Raymond 71).

At the time when the poem was being written, there was a general interest in angels, as it was a part of early modern spiritual vocabulary. In this literary period there are also other epics with the same or similar theme, such as Thomas Heywood's *Hierarchy of Blessed Angels* (1635), then the first epic written by a woman in the English language *Order and Disorder* (1660-79) by Lucy Hutchinson, and Samuel Pordage's *Mundorum Explicatio* (1661). Therefore, it was not so strange a coincidence that Milton decided to use angels as his central characters.

Gustav Davidson in his *Dictionary of Angels* (1967) provides the exact number of the rebel angels that have fallen from Heaven. Davidson reports that "the rebel host aggregated one-third of the angels in Heaven. Their number was estimated in the fifteenth century to have been

133,306,138” (352). The reader can only muse over this number, bearing in mind that all of them yielded to one rebel angel.

The aim of this paper is to describe how the fallen angels are represented in Milton’s poem *Paradise Lost* and to what effect Milton represents the fallen angels as non-Christian deities worshiped in various cultures. Some fallen angels that had more influential power than others were idolized and worshiped as pagan deities, such as Moloch who is worshiped by Ammonites, Astarte idolized as an ancient Middle Eastern goddess, or Isis and Osiris who originated from Egypt.

1. Milton's Angels in General

When a person thinks of angels, probably his or her first association is angel Gabriel from the Bible as Daniel described him, flying in white clothes, with white feather wings and pure heart (Bible, Daniel 10.5-6). Milton's angels are probably of the same origin as the angel that Daniel saw in his vision, but the fallen angels of *Paradise Lost* are anything but of pure heart and good as they have fallen from Heaven. Nevertheless, around fifteen hundred, people did not found their beliefs about angels or how they imagined them on what they have read in the Scripture. Raymond states that this mental picture of angels people had, and the doctrine concerning them, "were absorbed from pre-Judaic as well as pre-Christian culture, from patristic sources, from the fifth or sixth century writings attributed to Dionysius, from scholastic writings that strayed far from Scripture and, probably, from popular culture" (Raymond 4).

There has been a number of disputes regarding the gender of Milton's angels. C.S. Lewis deals with this issue in his *Preface to Paradise Lost* (1969) in the chapter named "The Mistake about Milton's Angels". Lewis says that "an angel is of course, always He (not She) in human language, because whether the male is, or is not, the superior sex, the masculine is certainly the superior gender. But there exists among these creatures, according to Milton, something that might be called trans-sexuality" (Lewis 113). Lewis concludes with the thought that if angels do not die, they need not breed.

Raymond (2010) states that angels appear not only in systematic and practical theology, masses, prayers and catechisms, in some of the works dedicated to the doctrine of angels, but they also appear in secular genres, including threadbare books, and poetry in which Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the most thorough and complete.

Milton decides to place the beginning of *Paradise Lost* before Creation of the world as we know it. The timeline of *Paradise Lost* stretches throughout the making of the universe, until its very end. Raymond (2010) pronounces the poem *Paradise Lost* as "the grandest poem in the Renaissance epic tradition", which at the same time "puts an end to that tradition" (9). Angels are not only the main characters of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, but they are also the narrators of the entire poem. Angels are placed in the poem in order to "to make mistakes, to sin, to argue, to bind together the celestial narratives with the terrestrial" (Raymond 9). The fallen angels are antagonists; the un-fallen angels are protagonists, but all of them are the narrators at the same time.

In more recent times, an entire study of angels called "Angelology" has been developed which is nevertheless a branch of theology concerned with angel doctrine. Angels were found as

part of many world religions and cultures, throughout Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Raymond (2010) observes that angels have a variety of terminology in world's religions: in Hebrew they are referred to as *mal'ach*, in Greek they are called *aggelos*, both of them meaning "messenger". Angels are generally divided into orders, such as seraphim, cherubim, and watchers. Seraphim is the highest rank of angels; each of the angels that belong to this rank has six wings, stands right above the God's throne, and protects it by covering it (Bible, Isaiah 6.2).

To confirm Raymond's theory that imagery of angels is founded far from Scripture, Gustav Davidson in his *Dictionary of Angels* (ix) writes: "At first I thought that angels, named angels, were to be found only in the Bible. I soon learned that on the contrary, the Bible was the last place to look for them. True, angels are mentioned frequently enough in both the Old and New Testaments, but they are not named, save in two or three instances" (Davidson ix). After extended and elaborate research of angels, Davidson divides them into nine celestial orders: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions (Dominations), Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels.

A logical conclusion could be drawn that fallen angles must have once been members of celestial orders of angels, or at least they belonged to regular angels in Heaven. As stated in the introduction, the number of the fallen angels is extremely high and it was estimated in the fifteenth century to have been 133,306,138. Of course, many of them are not so publicly or commonly known, and Davidson named only one hundred and three of them in his *Dictionary of Angels* (1967). Davidson reports from that list that many known fallen angels, such as Astarte, Beelzebub, Moloch and Satan have once belonged to celestial orders: Astarte once of the order of seraphim and of thrones, Beelzebub once of the order of cherubim, Moloch is a fallen cherubim, and Satan is the highest angel; therefore he belonged to the highest order, seraphim.

I have chosen twelve fallen angels from Book 1 of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in order to examine Milton's representation of angels in the poem. Each one of them will be represented in the context of one pagan religion that it stands for, and also they will be described to what people connect them today. The fallen angels that will be discussed in the following passages are Satan, Beelzebub, Moloch, Chemos, Baal, Astarte, Thammuz, Dagon, Rimmon, Osiris, Isis and Belial.

2. Milton's Fallen Angels as Pagan Deities

Satan is known in every culture; he is even worshiped by people through his followers. He has been given many names, but he is probably most known by the name of Satan or Lucifer. Gustav Davidson in his *Dictionary of Angels* explains the origin of the name "Satan" and the nature of the archangel itself. Davidson points out that in the Old Testament, Satan is still considered to be "a great angel, one of the most glorious, certainly not evil, and with no hint of his having fallen. He goes by his title of adversary (*ha-satan*). It is only in Christian and post-Biblical Jewish writings that Hebrew word *ha-satan* of the Old Testament is turned into an evil spirit" (Davidson 21).

In Milton's *Paradise Lost* Satan is not clearly separated from one of his fellow fallen angels. In Book 1, the character of Satan is blended with the character of fallen angel under the name of Beelzebub. Even though Beelzebub and Satan are thought to be one entity in some literary works, and in the Bible itself (Mathew 12.24), the two of them should, nonetheless, be considered as separate entities or fallen angels. Milton divides the two at the very beginning of Book 1: "and, weltering by his side, / One next himself in power, and next in crime, / Long after known in Palestine, and named / Beelzebub" (1.77-80). Milton draws a line between them on another occasion, right after Beelzebub's speech, when Satan is about to speak: "Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate" (1.192). It is evident that Satan is at the top of his hierarchy, but Beelzebub is next to him in power.

According to C. S. Lewis, Milton draws Satan's character better than any other character in *Paradise Lost*. Lewis states that the reason for this lies in the fact that the character of Satan is the simplest one to draw. All it takes to make up such an evil character and antagonist is to "release imaginatively from control some of the bad passions, which, in real life, are always straining at the leash" (Lewis 100). As Satan is about to speak to Beelzebub, Milton gives a description of the main fallen archangel: "Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate, / With head uplift above the wave, and eyes / That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides / Prone on the flood, extended long and large, / Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge / As whom the fables name of monstrous size..." (1.192-197). Lewis further argues that Satan takes various forms throughout the *Paradise Lost:* "from hero to general, from general to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bedroom or bathroom windows, and thence to a toad, and finally to a snake – such is the progress of Satan" (99). Some scholars emphasize that Milton might have over glorified the character of Satan, as he gives the character of Satan the ability to become what he wants to become, to change his disguise when he wishes,

making him seem a bit flawless. Be that as it may, the concept of Satan will always be looked upon as an enemy, or as Milton calls him in Book 1, line 81: "the arch-enemy".

According to Catholic Encyclopaedia, Satan is "the name commonly given to the fallen angels, who are also known as demons" (newadvent.org). The name also denotes Lucifer. When the name "Lucifer" is mentioned in the Bible, it actually means "the Devil and his angels" (newadvent.org). Catholic Encyclopaedia clearly states that the Devil and the other demons were created by God in the state of innocence; they were initially good, but that they became evil by their own act. It is of great importance that man did not sin by his own will, but "by the suggestion of Devil, and that in the next world the wicked shall suffer perpetual punishment with the Devil" (newadvent.org). This doctrine was rejected later on, as Rationalist writers wanted to show that Judaism and Christianity borrowed this concept from other sources of religions, such as Animism.

Satan is often "the enemy of the system" in many religions, but in many other aspects of life there is an obstacle that prevents people from making progress (humanreligions.info). This enemy is always the one that suspects everybody and everything, who doubts and tries to conquer supreme power, and who "leads mankind away from cosmic ideals of subservience and acquiescence" (humanreligions.info). Many world religions, if not all, have adopted the origin of the name "Satan" from Hebrew word *ha-satan* with the meaning of "accuser" or "the adversary". The word *diabulous* comes from Septuagint Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which is very likely the origin of the word "devil" we use today. Satan is in Christianity known as the devil; Shaitan is the word used for devil in Islam, and Māra denotes the devil in Buddhism (humanreligions.info). These evil spirits are known for one thing, and one thing only, which is to "promote the materialism of this world, rather than the more spiritual route of abstaining materialistic in order to obtain the next world" (humanreligions.info). The persuasion of people to strive to materialistic and to reject their true belief in one entity is the Satan's real goal. He achieves this by disguising in every possible form he finds suitable.

All in all, Satan is not alone. Nowadays, even Satan has managed to defy the Almighty directly. New religion called "Church of Satan" consists of Satan's fanatical followers, who openly accept the Man's true nature. These followers express their beastly nature, confident that the Devil himself has spoken to them.

Satan, as God himself, has followers who are entities, but in Milton's *Paradise Lost* they are recognized as evil entities, prepared to do anything in order to be accepted in Satan's Pandemonium. These followers are the fallen angels who have established their own religions, now known as pagan religions.

3. Beelzebub

The fallen angel that needs to be listed first is certainly Beelzebub, often confused with Satan in the Bible (Mathew 12.24). Beelzebub is mentioned for the first time in Milton's *Paradise Lost* in Book 1, right after the awakening of the fallen angels. Milton addresses Beelzebub only in relation to Satan: "weltering by his side, / One next himself in power, and next in crime, / Long after known in Palestine, and named / Beelzebub" (1.79-81). It is evident that in hierarchical order Beelzebub is placed right after Satan. Beelzebub can also be interpreted as Satan's right hand, and his most reliable ally. Having in mind that Beelzebub is almost as strong as Satan, one would presume that the two of them belonged to the same rank in the heavenly hierarchy of angels. But, Beelzebub did not belong to the highest rank of seraphim as Satan; he was a member of cherubim, a rank right beneath the seraphim (Davidson 352). The second time the reader meets Beelzebub in *Paradise Lost* is in line 271, right after Satan's opening speech, when Beelzebub reassures him that all the other angels will soon revive and regain their strength, but they need some time as they have "fallen such a pernicious height!" (1.282)

According to Catholic Encyclopaedia, Beelzebub is also given the name of Baalzebûb. He is known as the Philistine god at Accaron or Ekron, which is situated barely twenty five miles west of Jerusalem. The name Beelzebub is commonly translated as "The Lord of the Flies" and has the very same meaning in Hebrew. The name "Lord of the Flies" is given to this pagan deity because as "a sun god, he brings the flies, though the Ba'al was probably not a sun god, or more likely he is invoked to drive away the flies from the sacrifice" (newadvent.org).

The traces of Beelzebub can be found in the Bible, as well. In 2 Kings, beginning with line 2, it says that Beelzebub, who was a god of Ekron, would be consulted by a king named Ahaziah from Samaria. This king summoned the god of Ekron because he wanted to know if he would recover from a disease. In the Bible, Beelzebub is known as "Baalzebub the god of Ekron" (2 Kings 1.2).

As already mentioned, Beelzebub is in the Bible often confused with Satan, as is in the New Testament, when Beelzebub is called "the prince of the devils". This is, at the same time, the second occasion that Beelzebub is mentioned in the Scripture: "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the Devils casteth he out devils" (Mark 3.22).

All in all, Beelzebub has two roles. In the first one he is a follower of the most vicious Archangel, and in the second one he is the leading Philistine pagan deity in Accaron.

4. Moloch

After the awakening of the fallen angels and introducing the Beelzebub, Milton proceeds with naming the rest of the fallen angels. The second listed fallen angel is Moloch. In *Paradise Lost* Milton describes him as a "horrid king, besmeared with blood / Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears" (1.392-393). Apparently, Moloch is a sanguinary demon, who demands sacrifice of young human souls. Such was the horror of Moloch's ritual that children's cries were muffled: "for the noise of drums and timbrels loud, / Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire / To his grim idol" (1.394-396).

The name "Moloch" comes from Hebrew and literally means "a king". Moloch was worshiped by "the children of Ammon". This pagan deity is also mentioned in the Bible, but there he is known by the name of Milcom: "and for Milcom, the abomination of the children of Ammon" (2 Kings 23.13). Moreover, in *Paradise Lost*, Milton points to the exact place where he was worshiped: "Him the Ammonite / Worshiped in Rabba" (1.396-397). The Scripture provides information that Moloch was a pagan deity, a national god of the Ammonites, and Milton adds that they worshiped him in Rabba, which is nowadays Amman, a town in modern Jordan.

Catholic Encyclopaedia describes Moloch and confirms the concept of sacrifice that Milton has in mind. The horrible sacrifice of children was included in the worship of Moloch. Moreover, they did not use a literal expression in reference to this horrible act, but they rather called it "passing through the fire", as Milton says in line 395: "Their children's cried unheard that passed through fire." This rite with fire was "carried out after the victims have been put to death" (newadvent.org). The place where the worshipers carried out these sinful deeds was right before Jerusalem: "Then did Solomon build a high place in the hill that is before Jerusalem for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon" (3 Kings 11.7). For a certain period of time, this ritual was disrupted, but later the "traces of Moloch worship appear in both Juda and Israel" (newadvent.org).

This monstrous worship of Moloch Milton firstly described in the *Nativity Ode* (1629). Even here, Milton did not try to diminish the terrifying acts that inevitably come with the worship: "His burning Idol all of blackest hue, / In vain with Cymbals ring, / They call the grisly king, / In dismall dance about the furnace blue" (XXIII; 207-210). The verses from *Paradise Lost* originated from the *Nativity Ode*. While the concept is the same, the musical instrument has changed – from cymbal in *Nativity Ode* to drums and timbrels in *Paradise Lost*.

5. Chemos

Chemos, also known under the name of Chemosh, is another pagan deity, third listed in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Milton describes Chemos in the following way: "Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons, / From Aroar to Nebo and the wild / Of southmost Abarim" (1.406-408). Chemos is one of the fallen angels that has been worshiped by pagans. He was worshiped by "Moab's sons". In other words, those were the Moabites, and Chemos is therefore a Moabite deity. Chemos was known in parts of today's Jordan. The "Aroar" is actually a town named Arair in modern Jordan. "Nebo" was a southern Moabite town, and "Abarim" is a nearby hill overlooking Jordan and the Dead Sea. All this makes it evident that Chemos was not so popular among people. The popularity of this pagan deity was limited. There were no special rituals as in the case of Moloch.

In Hebrew, the name Chemos most likely meant "subdue" or "destroyer". The traces of this pagan deity go back to Ammonites, which means that Chemos was probably worshiped by "the sons of Ammon" as well. Moreover, in line 412, Milton says that Chemos was sometimes called by the name of "Peor his other name, when he enticed / Israel in Sittim" (1.412). Apparently, Chemos is often identified with Baal-Pëor, who was also a national god of Moabites. Unfortunately, it still remains unclear if this is true "as many localities had their local deities, apparently distinct to the popular mind" (newadvent.org).

The Bible can in this case certainly provide more information, for Chemosh is more frequently mentioned in the Bible than in any other sources. This deity first appears in the Numbers: "Woe to you, Moab! / You are destroyed, people of Chemosh!" (Numbers 21.29). He then appears in the first book of Kings, when east of Jerusalem Solomon built "a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab" (1 Kings 11.7). In this section, the reader is provided with a very accurate piece of information, enough to convince a sceptic. Also, it becomes evident what inspired Milton, for every event is convincingly similar or related to that from the Bible. To corroborate this thought, it is evident that both Milton and Solomon had the same concept in mind; Solomon built a place for Chemosh on a high place, whereas Milton described the same place as a "hill of scandal" (1; 416).

6. Baal and Astarte

The two pagan deities that always come together when mentioned are Canaanite god and goddess named Baal and Astarte. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton addresses them in plural, as Baalim and Ashtaroth, which are probably their original names by which they were known among ancient Israelites. As Milton emphasizes in the text, Baal is the male version of the fertility god and Astarte a female version: "Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts / Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names / Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male, / These feminine" (1.420-423).

The name Baal comes from the Semite vocabulary and originally bears the meaning of "lord" or "owner" (newadvent.org). Baal was fanatically worshiped by ancient Israelites, as they were unable to hold on to their belief in one true God: "No sooner than the Israelites (…) been brought into contact with Baal-worshippers (…) than they were (…) easily seduced from their allegiance to Yahweh" (newadvent.org). This deity was often recognized and described as a calf, but there are cases where he takes a form of another beast. Such was also depicted by Milton: "His righteous altar, bowing lowly down / To bestial gods" (1.434-435).

The female version of this god is Astarte, also known as Ashtaroth by ancient Israelites. Astarte is sometimes considered to be the same entity as Baal, but that of the opposite sex: "For Spirits, when they please, / Can either sex assume, or both; so soft / And uncompounded is their essence pure" (1.423-425).

Astarte is especially known as a great goddess of the ancient Middle East. She was worshiped as a goddess of war and fertility. The fact that one can come across Astarte in Scripture in many places can be accounted for "a deliberate conflation of the Greek name Astarte and the Hebrew word *boshet*, 'shame', indicating the Hebrews' contempt for her cult. Ashtaroth, the plural form of the goddess's name in Hebrew, became a general term denoting goddesses and paganism" (britannica.com). The worship of the goddess Astarte included offerings that were formerly burned as stated in the Bible: "They aroused my anger by burning incense to and worshiping other gods that neither they nor you nor your ancestors ever knew" (Jeremiah 44.3).

In Book 1 of *Paradise Lost*, Milton adds Astoreth to this couple of deities, insinuating that she is a version of Astarte: "With these in troop / Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called / Astarte, queen of heaven with crescent horns" (1.437-439). According to the Bible, Jeremiah gives her the same name: "The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women kned the dough and make cakes to offer to the Queen of Heaven" (Jeremiah 7.18). The worship of this deity did not consist solely of bringing burned offerings, but they also sang to it: "Astarte,

queen of heaven, with crescent horns; / To whose bright image nightly by the moon / Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs" (1.439-441).

Davidson assigns these two deities to different heavenly ranks of angels. It is evident from his *Dictionary of Angels* (1967) that Astarte was a member of the order seraphim and of thrones. On the other hand, Baal is listed under the name of Belphegor, and he once belonged to the order of principalities. Nevertheless, Milton describes Astarte as a half woman and half beast. If Astarte is to be judged by her looks, she certainly had strong connection with Baal, because both of them were described similarly.

The reason Milton listed them together in *Paradise Lost* is most certainly because at the time of ancient Israelites Baal and Astarte were perceived as the god and goddess of fertility. It was not until later that the modern translations attributed them the meaning of pagan deities in general.

7. Thammuz

Next in line came a Mesopotamian deity, known by the name of Thammuz. His name was apparently derived from a Sumerian version, which has the meaning of “the flawless young”. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Thammuz was initially a pastoral deity. It was not until centuries later that he was worshiped as a god of agriculture, probably because of the variety of translations of his name.

Thammuz was also considered to have been the lover and spouse of earlier described goddess, Astarte. The worship and rituals connected with Thammuz were mainly performed around two events during the life of this divine being. The first was connected to the marriage with the goddess Astarte. This event was celebrated between February and March. If it is to believe the legend, the day when Thammuz wed Astarte, they were to consummate their marriage for the first time. While the priests were incarnating Astarte just before their first night together, all the nature of the following year was magically fertilized. The second event is connected to the death of Thammuz, which is annually celebrated between June and July, when people set up a couch for the god to lay in. The body of the god was made up from honey, vegetables and other foods. These rituals were repeated every year for centuries (britannica.com).

Some sources further suggest that Thammuz was also a sun god. That belief was held maybe because of the fact that he was often confused or identified with Adonis. Allegedly, his annual death and revival was a sign of changing of seasons. Milton, however, brings up Thammuz’s wound in the text, which caused the river to change its colour: “Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured / The Syrian damsels to lament his fate / In amorous ditties all a summer’s day, / While smooth Adonis from his native rock / Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood” (1.447-451). Apparently, Thammuz was wounded in the battle that was held in Lebanon, and the blood from his wound caused the river to turn red. The ancient Mesopotamians used this belief to explain the phenomenon of the river Adonis, today known as Beirut River in Lebanon, which turns red after the summer solstice.

There are many interpretations of this pagan deity, and one must choose which one to believe. The fact is that Thammuz was one of the Satan’s followers, and his main purpose was to seduce people to believe in him, which he successfully achieved among ancient Mesopotamians.

8. Dagon

Dagon is a very interesting pagan deity, worshiped mainly among the ancient Philistines. He is known as a Philistine sea-god. Traces of Dagon are recorded in the Bible. Milton described Dagon as a "sea-monster, upward man, / And downward fish" (1.462-463). The name Dagon is explained in Catholic Encyclopaedia being a diminutive form, originally coming from Semitic root *dag*, which means "a little fish". The name "Dagon", therefore, indicates that the god was a half-man and a half-fish.

Scholars agree that the name Dagon and the worship of this god were imported from Babylonia (newadvent.org). The depiction and representation of this god is not so surprising, given that he was mainly worshiped among Philistines in maritime cities located on the Mediterranean coast, such as Azotus (today known as Ashdod), Gaza, Ascalon and Arvad. Milton confirms in *Paradise Lost* the sites where this god was worshiped: "yet had his temple high / Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast / Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, / And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds" (1.463-466).

The sea-god is described in the Bible as well. In the book of Samuel, there is an entire chapter titled "The Ark in Ashdod and Ekron" in which the paganism of the people in Ashdod is described, the centre of Dagon's worshiping. It says in the Bible that after the Philistines captured the ark of the lord, they brought it into Dagon's temple and put it next to his idol. When the people woke up the next morning, they found the idol of Dagon fallen flat on its face. After they put it back in its place, the same thing happened the next morning. On the third day "there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained!" (1 Samuel 5.4). Milton included the same event in *Paradise Lost*: "when the captive ark / Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off, / In his own temple" (1.458-459). The idol of the Dagon was found dismembered, and it obviously happened due to the presence of the item that was built in the name of the Lord. This incident shows how all these little self-proclaimed gods and deities have absolutely no power in comparison with the God of Israelites.

9. Rimmon

In the *Dictionary of Angels* (1967), this pagan deity is to be found under number seventy-six. Unfortunately, Davidson did not include the origin of this angel; in other words, he did not clarify from which rank of angels Rimmon originated. Evidently, Milton did not pay much attention to this god, as there are only a dozen of lines in *Paradise Lost* that refer to Rimmon.

Milton states that Rimmon was mainly worshiped in Damascus, nowadays' Syria. Milton, furthermore, gives detailed information of the whereabouts of that town by mentioning the two rivers that streamed through Damascus: "Rimmon, whose delightful seat / Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks / Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams" (1.467-469). The river "Abbana" is today known as the river Barada, which is also the main river in Syria's capital city Damascus. The latter river is not as big as Barada, but also had its name changed into Away. The location of this deity points to the fact that pagan gods were openly worshiped in larger towns, and people did not find it strange, or sinful.

Rimmon is largely identified as god "Hadad", spelled also as "Had", or "Hadda". Beside the fact that Rimmon was worshiped by Syrians in Damascus, he is also thought to have been a Northwest Semitic god of rain, storm and thunder (britannica.com). Under the name of Hadad, this deity was worshiped on a wider scale. He was the chief deity on the banks of the Euphrates River as well as on the Phoenician coast. Rimmon or Hadad, was often described "as a bearded deity, often holding a club and thunderbolt and wearing a horned headdress" (britannica.com).

More background about Rimmon can be found in the Bible. Rimmon is here mentioned in relation to king Ahaz, who was more biased towards worshiping foreign gods. While king Ahaz travelled to Damascus to a meeting, he saw an altar built to a foreign god. He then ordered his priest to build an exact same altar until he returned. According to the Bible, "when the king came back from Damascus and saw the altar, he approached it and presented offerings on it" (2 Kings 16.12). In *Paradise Lost* Milton writes that Rimmon tempted king Ahaz to build him an altar: "Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew / God's altar to disparage and displace / For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn / Hid odious offerings, and adore the gods / Whom he had vanquished" (1.472-476).

At the time of the reign of the king Ahaz, one could not be overcautious. Pagan gods were round every corner, tempting people to abandon their true god, even in such a big city as is Damascus.

10. Osiris

The most famous of all is probably the triplet of Egyptian pagan deities. First comes Osiris, the second is Isis, and the last one is Orus. These gods were mainly recognized and worshiped in Egypt. Pictures of these gods decorate the inner walls of Egyptian pyramids. Milton himself calls them "a crew": "After these appeared / A crew who, under names of old renown / Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train" (1.476-478). The legend has it that when Typhon, the deadliest monster in Greek mythology, attacked Olympus, some gods ran away and wandered Egypt in disguise. These gods used beasts for their cover. Osiris and Isis, for example, were often described as humans that had the heads of a bull and a cow.

The first of them, Osiris, also known under the name of "Usir", was one of the most important gods in ancient Egypt. Apparently, neither Osiris nor the rest of the triplet did take human forms as Milton describes: "With monstrous shapes and sorceries" (1.479). But, the ancient Egyptians painted Osiris as one of the most beautiful gods that ever ruled the world. Supposedly it was easier for them to believe in god who was beautiful and dressed in elaborate clothes than to believe in a monstrous god that would frighten them. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, the first depiction of Osiris is dated to about twenty three hundred years before Christ. In that picture this god is a mummy "with his arms crossed on his breast, one holding a crook, the other a flail. On his head was the atef-crown, composed of the white crown of the Upper Egypt and two ostrich feathers" (britannica.com).

Osiris was considered to be the underworld god of fertility, but later he got another role which was the embodiment of a dead and resurrected king. Therefore, Osiris was also given the role of the only ruler of the dead. This connection with the underworld and the ability to rule over life and death "did not imply resurrection, (…) instead, it signified the renewal of life both in the next world and through one's descendants on Earth. In its universalized form Osiris's cult spread throughout Egypt, often joining with the cults of fertility and underworld deities" (britannica.com).

The festivals that were dedicated to Osiris were annually celebrated in the entire Egypt in various places. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, the main element of such festivals was creating the "Osiris garden", which was actually a mold filled with soil. That same mold was "moistened with the water of the Nile and sown with grain. Later, the sprouting grain symbolized the vital strength of Osiris" (britannica.com).

Osiris was very probably often worshiped in the shape of a beast or animal, as Milton states in *Paradise Lost*: "Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms / Rather than human"

(1.481-482). Furthermore, Milton reminds the reader of a Biblical event, which obviously had much to do with Osiris. Namely, Milton mentions “The calf in Oreb” (1.484) which is actually the golden calf made by Israelites, while Mosses was up on Mount Sinai. This event is precisely depicted in the Bible: “They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto” (Exodus 32.8). Osiris had, in this case, materialized into a calf and even so, in that beastly appearance, was fanatically worshiped by Israelites.

11. Isis

The Egyptian goddess Isis is believed to have been married to the pagan god Osiris. Her name, Isis, is a Greek variation from Egyptian, and bears a symbolical meaning of "throne". Isis is known throughout the whole world, but was mostly worshiped in Egypt, next to her husband, Osiris.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Isis's cult has spread from Egypt to the rest of the world during the reign of Roman Empire, and it reached as far as England. This goddess was important because she was connected to several important aspect of life. She was a healer, a role model for all women as a mother and a spouse, and moreover, she was known to resurrect the dead. The women of Egypt looked up to her, for Isis gave a birth to Osiris's son Horus, who later revenged the death of his father. Also, she was considered to be a protector as she guided and looked after her only son throughout his life. But her main attribute was the possession and usage of magic, which was far stronger than that of her spouse and even of the sun god Ra. Therefore, it is no wonder this goddess was widely known and worshiped, because people invoked her when they needed help and believed that they would receive it.

The image of Isis is probably universal because all pagans imagined her the same way. Isis was "often represented as a beautiful woman wearing a sheath dress and the hieroglyphic sign of the throne or a solar disk and cow's horns on her head. Occasionally, she was represented as a scorpion, a bird, a sow, or a cow" (britannica.com).

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton writes that God of Israelites got furious as people started more and more worshiping foreign gods. Therefore, God decided to kill all of the firstborns, of both men and beasts: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the Lord" (Exodus 12.12). Even if pagan gods existed during that period and even if they were so fanatically worshiped, after that night they ceased to exist. When God of Israelites said "both man and beast", at that point He knew that these pagan deities tend to show themselves in various forms, such as bulls and cows.

21. Belial

Even though Belial is often identified with the Satan, Milton, nevertheless, indicates that Belial is a separate entity, or rather, a separate fallen angel. Belial comes last in the list of fallen angels in Book 1 of *Paradise Lost*: "Belial came last" (1.490). The origin of this entity is included in the list of fallen angels in Davidson's *Dictionary of Angels* (1967). Gustav Davidson indicates that Belial used to belong to the rank of virtues, and later he was partly of the order of angels before he fell to the Pandemonium together with Satan and other fellow rebel angels.

The reason Belial is often misidentified or considered to be a synonym for Satan is probably because of the meaning and the origin of his name. The Catholic Encyclopaedia indicates that the name "Belial" in Hebrew signifies "wickedness" and "extreme wickedness". In Hebrew Bible the name "Belial" is more often used as a common noun than a proper name, and as such was translated into English (newadvent.org). Moreover, the Bible confirms that this was probably the case: "While they were enjoying themselves, some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house" (Judges 19.22). It is evident that the term "wicked men" undoubtedly comes from Hebrew word "belial". Catholic Encyclopaedia further claims that the etymology of this name is not clear; for "it is usually taken to be a compound meaning of 'worthlessness'" (newadvent.org).

As Milton states in *Paradise Lost,* Belial was not a type of pagan deity that had a group of fanatic worshipers in a specific part of land: "To him, no temple stood / Or altar smoked" (1.492-493). Belial was powerful and influential enough not to need temples and churches, but regardless, he succeeded in doing harm do the devoted Christians and leading them to his dark side: "yet who more oft than he / In temples and at altars, when the priest / Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled / With lust and violence the house of God?" (1.493-496). Belial's power reaches its peak at night when his followers, Sons of Belial, act on his behalf: "and, when night / Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons / Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine" (1.500-502).

The nature of Belial is probably very close to the nature of Satan himself. This fallen entity was considered to be extremely evil and mischievous among the Israelites. Belial was the one responsible for all the rapes and unmoral sexual behaviour. Milton specifically illustrates his nature in *Paradise Lost:* "Belial came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd / Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love / Vice for itself" (1.490-492). Such was his aim, to lead people into unmoral actions and sinful lives. Milton did, however, mention Belial in *Paradise Regain'd* as well: "Belial the dissolutest Spirit that fell / The sensuallest" (2.150-151).

It is evident that Satan was armed with a vicious army capable of such unimaginable and unmoral deeds, and their goal was, nevertheless, to seduce people from their faith. Concluding with Belial, Milton finished listing Satan's followers: "These were the prime in order and in might: / The rest were long to tell" (1.506-507). The dozen of listed angels were the most vicious of Satan's army and they were probably the best known ones. There are, nonetheless, thousands and thousands of millions of them who are loyal to the greatest of them all, the archangel named Satan.

Conclusion

From thousands and thousands of millions of fallen angels, only a limited number of them are described in Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*. When Milton says, "These were the prime in order and in might" (1.506), it means that he concentrated only on the biggest and strongest angels that have the most influence over people.

The aim of this paper was to emphasize how all these fallen angels managed to establish their own religions. They did not have religions *per se* but rather ceremonies that were regularly held by their fanatic worshipers. It is interesting how many of these pagan deities were recognized in the places where the presence of God of Israelites was most evident, such as Israel, Jordan and Syria.

Israelites turned to these pagan deities when their faith in one true God was at its lowest, and when they wanted to see the momentary results of their prayers and obedience. They believed in different deities for different purpose; for example, ancient Israelites worshiped goddess Astarte as a goddess of war and fertility, and Rimmon was, on the other hand, worshiped by Syrians as a god of rain, storm and thunder.

All in all, the number of Satan's followers is immense. They were not active only in ancient times; they are still active today but are disguised in various forms. Their only purpose is to serve the great Arch-Angel and to seduce people to stray far from their beliefs.

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