

## Lucifer or Morning Star?

In Isaiah 14:12 the King James Holy Bible reads: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

The reason this passage is attacked by the modern bible version proponents is because the NASB, RSV, Holman Standard, NIV, St. Joseph New American Bible, Jerusalem Bible, and many others have translated this section in a VERY different way. Instead of, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O LUCIFER. . .", they say, "How you have fallen from heaven, O MORNING STAR. . ." or "DAY STAR." There are several problems with the translation "O morning star", but first let me point out that there are as many opinions in Bible commentaries as to who or what is being referred to as there are bible versions. Some absolutely deny that it has anything to do with the fall of Satan. Others believe this passage refers to the king of Babylon, whom many identify as king Nebuchadnezzar; others believe it refers to Belshazzar, some say it speaks of the Antichrist, and others as the kingdom of Babylon itself.

Many others see Isaiah 14:12 as referring to the Satanic spiritual power behind the king and kingdom of Babylon. There is little agreement among scholars as to who or what is being addressed in this passage or how to translate it. The problem with the translation, "MORNING STAR" (#1966- haylale), is that the words "morning" and "star" are not found here in ANY Hebrew text. (Morning is #1242- boker and star is #3556- kokawb) The word for star IS found in verse 13, where it says: "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." The two words, morning and star, are found together in Job 38:7, where God is asking Job in verse 4, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" This might be a reference to the angels who rejoiced at God's creation, or the "morning stars" that sang may well be an anthropomorphism of the first created literal stars "singing". God also describes mountains and hills as singing and trees of the field clapping their hands (See Isaiah 55:12).

Another serious problem with rendering this word (#1966 Haylale) as "morning star" is that Jesus Christ himself is called the morning star in Rev. 22:16 where he says: "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." The NIV and NASB make it possible to identify Satan with Jesus Christ. I believe this is Lucifer's ultimate game plan and that the new versions have taken a giant step forward in advancing Satan's deception. The word translated as Lucifer in the KJB occurs only once in the Hebrew, just as the word Lucifer occurs only once in the Holy Bible. It is a noun and it comes from a very interesting verb #1984 hawlal. This verb is used many times and has many very different meanings including: "to shine, to be foolish, to boast, to glory, to praise, and to be mad (insane or crazy)".

Isn't it interesting that Satan boasts and glories in his wisdom and power, wants to receive praise as god, shines as an angel of light to deceive, and his madness in wanting to be like the most High is ultimately the height of foolishness? The reasons I believe the King James Bible reading of Lucifer is correct are many. First, if this passage is not referring to the fall of Satan, also known as the dragon, the old serpent, the devil, leviathan, Beelzebub, etc., then we have no account in Scripture as to how he, who was originally created by God as good, became what he is today.

In I Timothy 3:6 we are told that a bishop should not be a novice "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." We are also told that Satan wishes to be worshipped. We see in the temptation in the wilderness that he came to Jesus Christ and said: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Where are this desire to be like the most High God and the pride that resulted in his condemnation recorded in the Scriptures except here in Isaiah 14:12-15? The fall of Satan is not found anywhere else in the whole Bible except here. Secondly, I disagree with those that argue that only the king of Babylon is being referred to in Isaiah 14:12 and not the fall of Satan. Many say it refers to king Nebuchadnezzar. A big problem with this view is that Nebuchadnezzar became a worshipper of the true God and his miraculous conversion is recorded in Daniel chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar will not "be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit", but rather will be with the Lord Jesus Christ and his redeemed for all eternity. Praise God for his mercy. Another problem is that if the passage refers to an earthly king, then how did he get into heaven from whence he fell?

Thirdly, I and many others believe that Lucifer or Satan's fall is recorded here, and that he, the devil, was the real spiritual power behind the kingdom of Babylon. Babylon also appears prominently again in the book of Revelation as the kingdom of the beast and both are spiritually empowered by Satan and his devils. David Guzik's commentary notes (Caps are mine): "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! Here, the prophet identifies the king of Babylon as Lucifer, son of the morning. Some debate if Lucifer is a name or a title... The prophetic habit of speaking to both a near and a distant fulfillment, the prophet will sometimes speak more to the near or more to the distant. HERE IS A GOOD

EXAMPLE OF ISAIAH SPEAKING MORE TO THE DISTANT, ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT. It is true that the king of literal Babylon shined brightly among the men of his day, and fell as hard and as completely as if a man were to fall from heaven. BUT THERE WAS A FAR MORE BRIGHTLY SHINING BEING WHO INHABITED HEAVEN, AND FELL EVEN MORE DRAMATICALLY - THE KING OF SPIRITUAL BABYLON, SATAN."

Commentator Dr. Henry M. Morris states: "Although the prophecy (in Isaiah 14) is directed toward the earthly king of Babylon, here it goes far beyond him (he could never fall from heaven) to the wicked spirit possessing his body and inspiring his actions. Just as Satan possessed and used the serpent's body in Eden, so he does here with Babylon's king..." Smith's Bible Dictionary of 1901 says regarding the name Lucifer: "Its application, from St. Jerome downward, to Satan in his fall from heaven arises probably from the fact that the Babylonian empire is in Scripture represented as the type of tyrannical and self idolizing power, and especially connected with the empire of the Evil One in the Apocalypse." Rev. 18:2 says: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit...", and very significantly we read in Revelation 13: 1-2, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having SEVEN HEADS and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a LION, and THE DRAGON GAVE HIM HIS POWER, and his seat, and great authority."

I understand this beast which has 7 heads and 10 horns to be a combination of the four world powers depicted in the book of Daniel, of which the king of Babylon was the lion and one of the 7 heads mentioned. In the book of Revelation we see that the dragon gave him his power. Satan himself is the spiritual power behind the kingdom of the beast and he finally gets the worship he has always wanted - "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast..." Revelation 13:4. Fourthly, many Bible critics say Lucifer is a mistranslation of the Hebrew and that the KJB has been responsible for this misconception and confusion. It should be pointed out that the KJB is not the first or the only Bible version to so understand and translate this passage in Isaiah 14:12. All English Bibles before the KJB of 1611 also have the word Lucifer in them. This includes Matthew's Bible, Coverdale's, the Great Bible, Bishop's Bible, and the Geneva Bible. Lucifer is also found in the Latin Vulgate, the Douay 1950 Catholic bible (though all later Catholic versions now agree with the NIV, NASB versions), Daniel Webster's 1833 translation and Darby's 1890 version. Lucifer is also the reading in the NKJV, the 21st Century KJV, and the Third Millennium Bible.

There is a brand new Hebrew-English translation put out in 2003 called the Judaica Press Complete Tanach. It can be seen online here:

<http://www.chabad.org/library/archive/LibraryArchive.asp?AID=63255>

In Isaiah 14:12 it reads just like the King James Bible saying: "How have you fallen from heaven, LUCIFER, the morning star? You have been cut down to earth, You who cast lots on nations.

Ryrie's Scofield bible and Dakes annotated bible make reference to the fact that many early church fathers (among these Tertullian, Origen, and Gregory the Great), saw the passage in Isaiah 14 as referring to the fall of Satan. The idea that the passage refers to the fall of Satan did NOT originate with Jerome (384 A.D), though he also believed this. Tertullian (197 A.D.) lived almost 200 years before Jerome, and he held this view. Bible versions that contain the Scofield notes, including the NIV Scofield edition, say regarding the Lucifer of Isaiah 14:12: "Verses 12-14 evidently refer to Satan, who, as prince of this world-system (See Scofield "Revelation 13:8") is the real unseen ruler of the successive world- powers. Tyre, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, etc. (see Ezekiel 28:12-14) Lucifer, "day-star," can be none other than Satan. This tremendous passage marks the beginning of sin in the universe. When Lucifer said, "I will," sin began.

The Encyclopedia Britannica says: "The Church Fathers interpreted the words of Jesus in Luke 10:18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven," as a reference to this passage in Isaiah, so that "Lucifer" came to be regarded as the name of Satan before his fall."

The Random House 1999 Webster's dictionary gives the following definitions of Lucifer. The first one listed is "a proud rebellious archangel, identified with Satan, who fell from heaven." The second one is: "the planet Venus when appearing as the morning star." Of these two, I don't think it was the planet Venus that wanted to be like God and exalt its throne above the stars of God, do you?

On one of the internet Bible clubs I belong to, I was discussing this passage with another Christian who said Lucifer was a bad translation of the Hebrew text. Here is part of our dialogue:

*"My aim has not been to argue that the Isaiah text is irrelevant to our understanding of Satan's downfall: we're probably not so far apart as it sometimes seems. Whilst "Lucifer" is a bad translation of heylel in Is 14:12 it is actually a good*

*exposition of the text from a biblical-theological perspective. Since our discussions here usually focus on the questions of translation we often miss the fact that we're largely in agreement doctrinally." (end of statement)*

*(My response) "Well, I'm glad we tend to see this passage in a similar way doctrinally, but I would disagree with you that Lucifer is a bad translation. We know that one of the primary meanings of the verb from which Hehleh is derived is "to shine". Lucifer literally means "light bearing or light bearer". The other passage that traditionally speaks of Satan is Ezekiel 28:12-19.*

*First the prince of Tyrus is addressed, then beginning with verse 12 the king of Tyrus is spoken to. The king seems to be the spiritual power behind the earthly prince. This "king" is also called the anointed cherub that covereth who was in the mountain of God. He was also in the garden of Eden. Part of his description is being covered with many precious stones and gold. He walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire, and verse 17 says: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness". Apparently this covering cherub was resplendent and reflected bright lights and colors - thus "light bearer" or Lucifer.*

*Many Christians have thought that the reason God made two cherubs facing each other over the mercy seat, was to provide an object lesson about pride. Lucifer was the only one of his kind before his fall. He was lifted up because of his beauty. So as an object lesson, God creates two cherubs facing each other. They can "see" that there is another one just like them and they are not so special or unique. Lucifer or Light bearer fits perfectly because Satan was a very bright, beautiful, light reflecting creature before his fall, and he now transforms himself into an angel of light to deceive. Those that say, like the NKJV footnote, that the Hebrew reads literally "morning star" are simply making this up (that is a kind way of saying they are lying). As you know, the words "morning star" are used in other places in Scripture, but not here in Isaiah 14:12. So I would say that the name Lucifer in Isaiah is exactly what it should be; it is an excellent translation." (end of response)*

Lucifer seems to be the personal name of this powerful spiritual entity who wants to be like the most High God and he is also known as Satan and the devil. A host of modern dictionaries and encyclopedias, including Webster's 1999 edition, Word Net. Dictionary, American Heritage Dictionary, Wordsmyth English Dictionary, and Encyclopedia Com., all define Lucifer as Satan and the devil. This is not a new doctrine, nor is it an old one that has passed out of favor.

Another objection I have heard raised against understanding Isaiah 12:14 as referring to the fall of Satan is this. Some have pointed to verse 16 where those who witness this fall say: "Is this THE MAN that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms...that opened not the house of his prisoners?" They then ask How is it possible to call Satan A MAN?

Initially this might seem like a good point, but if you read The Bible more carefully you will also see that God Himself is called a MAN, and the angels, and Satan too. In Exodus 15:3 Moses and the children of Israel sing a song of deliverance saying: "The LORD is A MAN of war; the LORD is his name." The Hebrew word "man" is in the text and is so rendered by the RV, ASV, ESV, NKJV and many others, though the NASB, NIV have paraphrased this as "The Lord is a warrior". Angels as well are referred to a "men" in the Scriptures. In Genesis 18-19 we see three MEN come to Abraham. Two of them are angels as seen from 19:1 and one of them is God. Yet they are called "men" several times in these two chapters. See Genesis 18:2,16,22; and 19:1,10,12 and 16.

Then in the New Testament, Mark 2:22-27 the Lord Jesus talks about casting out Satan and says: "No man can enter into a strong MAN'S house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong MAN; and then he will spoil his house." Those who attack the King James Bible and say that we who believe and defend it are not using the facts, may not be aware that there are many differing scholarly opinions and Bible versions, and many of them agree with the King James Bible. Those who criticize the KJB do not believe that any Bible or any text in any language is now the inerrant words of God. They have no final authority as to what are the true words of God and are left to their own changeable opinions and preferences.

The King James Bible is the perfect word of the living God. It alone, like the incarnate Word of God of Whom it testifies, is the faithful and true witness.

Will Kinney

Lucifer or Morning Star?