

THE LUCIFER MYTH

Lucifer has nothing to do with Satan/the devil. He is not an angel of light and music who led a rebellion in heaven and was cast down to earth with a third of the angels. Lucifer is simply a title attributed to a long dead King of Babylon. The name Lucifer appears exactly once in some English translations of the Christian scriptures, in the Old Testament, in Isaiah 14:12:

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! (KJV)

How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! (NIV)

How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! (ESV)

So who is this Lucifer, this morning star, son of the dawn? If we read the beginning of the chapter we find in verse 4 that Isaiah is prophesying to the King of Babylon (probably Nebuchadnezzar II, conqueror of Jerusalem). So Lucifer is a title attributed directly to a living, real human person. The prophet is comparing him to the planet Venus because of his power and influence in the world, along with the image of this 'star' being cast down to the earth as a result of his wickedness.

To say that Lucifer is Satan/the devil is an anagogical interpretation rather than a historical-grammatical one, as given above (*sensus anagogicus* v. *sensus historicus*, Alexandrian school v. Antiochene, *Sod* v. *Peshat*). The anagogical method leads the interpreter to a mystical *gnosis*, while the historical-grammatical method leads to general *knowledge*. If one wishes to highlight the similarity that this image evokes to other passages that are attributed to the fall of Satan (Ezekiel 28:17, Luke 10:18, Revelation 9:1), then one could say that the King of Babylon IS LIKE Satan/the devil. This would be a typological form of allegorical interpretation. But to say that the King of Babylon IS Satan/the devil is pure anagoge.

Lucifer is dead.

SOURCES

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