

Lucifer

Traditions can be good (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Traditions can be bad (Matthew 15:3-9). So, what is the deciding factor? The metric by which all right and wrong is judged is the Bible!

Therefore, in an interesting email recently, a sincere Bible student used “Lucifer” to make a point, assuming that the traditions surrounding this name were biblical. Such is not the case and Isaiah 14:12 is the only place it is found in the Bible; and, to add to the confusion, it’s not translated well in many versions of the Bible.

“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!”

The term “Lucifer” comes from the Latin Vulgate Translation by Jerome around AD 382, not the original Hebrew. The word comes from the Hebrew term, *heylel*, means “light bearer,” “shining one” or “morning star” (usually assigned to Venus, as it is seen first thing in the morning). Since the Latin term “Lucifer” comes from two words, *lux* (light) and *ferous* (to bear or carry), hence, “light-bearer,” Jerome thought is appropriate to elaborate a bit and coin a term more to his liking - a common danger in which creative translators dabble.

It wasn’t long before Catholic “scholars,” inventively assigning allegorical meaning to literal texts, assigned the term “Lucifer” to Satan, who had fallen from Heaven (Revelation 9:1 - and this reference is highly figurative). So, the traditions began.

However, if one looks clearly at the text, verse four of this passage clarifies the subject to whom this “morning star” refers.

*“...that you will take up a proverb against **the king of Babylon**, and say: ‘How the oppressor has ceased, The golden city ceased!’”* (Isaiah 14:4).

The text is referencing the King of Babylon. And, whether or not you believe it to be Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar or any other Babylonian king, one thing a Bible student can figure out immediately is that it is not referring to Satan. In fact, Satan has various names mention in the Bible: “Satan” in Matthew 4:10, “the Devil,” “the dragon,” and “that serpent of old” (a reference to the Garden of Eden) all three in Revelation 20:2. So, we have biblical names for this evil entity, but “Lucifer” is not among them.

The source of the tradition is the real litmus test: if your tradition doesn’t come from the Bible, it doesn’t come from Lucifer but it does come from the Devil (John 8:44).