



## ***Biblical Misconceptions: Lucifer***

Poems. Plays, movies and other forms of expression have long used the name Lucifer, among others, for Satan. In the social mainstream this is profoundly fixed in popular culture that this is the name of the Devil. This biblical misconception is based on the similarity of a passage in the New Testament that uses similar language from a prophetic statement in the Old Testament. The name itself appears in the writing of the prophet Isaiah. ***“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!”*** (Isa 14.12). In the preceding verses there is a reference to “Hell” and to the spirits of kings that have arisen to speak of how “Lucifer” is weakened as they were. The misconception arises from a similar statement that is used by Christ as seventy disciples return from what we term the limited commission. ***“And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”*** (Luke 10.18). At first glance we see that the language in these two passages is similar in that they refer to one who has “fallen”. From this there are those who also conclude that Satan, or Lucifer is a fallen angel who has been cast from Heaven. This is based on the account of John in the book of Revelation concerning a battle between Satan and Michael after which Satan and his angels were cast out (Rev 12.7-9). For the purpose of this discussion we will focus on the identity of the one in Isaiah who is specifically mentioned by the name Lucifer. This is one example of how the context of a passage must be understood and preserved in order to see the meaning clearly. For this we turn to the full text of Isaiah 14 to see if there is an indication of who is being referred to. We read, ***“...thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon...”*** (Isaiah 14.4). The verses which follow are the pronouncement of judgment against the ***“king of Babylon”***. The scriptures indicate that the Babylonians, or Chaldeans, were being raised up as an instrument of vengeance against the erring people of God (Hab 1.6-10). God had prophesied through Moses long before that this would happen if

the people took on the evil ways of the Canaanites that they were to drive out (Deut 28.36,49-52). This nation would ascribe their success to their own gods (Hab 1.11) and be filled with pride. Eventually God would allow a remnant to return which would continue the work of preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Turning to the account of the conquest of Judah by the Babylonians we find that they indeed did this but were in turn judged and overthrown for their own evil (Dan 5.22-28). Having a specific statement in Isaiah rules out the application of the name Lucifer to Satan. The similarity of the language however is significant. God uses a variety of expressions throughout the scriptures to denote the overthrow of earthly powers. The writings of the prophets are filled with such references and by the similarity of language we can know that they have come from God. Christ came into the world to overcome the power of Satan. This is stated simply and clearly by the writer of Hebrews. ***“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil...”*** (Heb 2.14). Does this mean that Satan is powerless at the present time? Peter states, ***“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*** (1 Pet 5.8). It is Satan who continues to work to deceive the world according to the apostle Paul (2 Cor 4.4). Satan is defeated by the presence and power of the gospel. Individually we can overcome his influence and that of the world by understanding the will of God as revealed in the scriptures. When we come to a knowledge of the truth and obey it, we are translated from the kingdom of darkness into the church, the body of Christ (Col 1.13). The written word has the power to dispel all misconceptions and lead us home to Heaven.