Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

THE SON OF THE MORNING AND THE GUARDIAN CHERUB IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Theology

By

José M. Bertoluci

June 1985

THE SON OF THE MORNING AND THE GUARDIAN CHERUB IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

A dissertation presented

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree

Doctor of Theology

by

José M. Bertoluci

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE

William H. Shea, Chairman
Professor of Old Testament

Lawrence T. Geraty, Professor of Archaeology and History of Antiquity

Gerhard F. Hasel, Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology

Jacques B. Doukhan, Associate Professor of Old Testament Interpretation

John H. Sailhamer, Associate Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Gerhard F. Hasel, Dean
SDA Theological Seminary

10 May 1985
Date Approved

ABSTRACT

THE SON OF THE MORNING AND THE GUARDIAN CHERUB
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN
GOOD AND EVIL

By

José M. Bertoluci

Chairman: William H. Shea

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE SON OF THE MORNING AND THE GUARDIAN CHERUB IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

Name of researcher: Jose M. Bertoluci

Name and title of faculty adviser: William H. Shea, Ph.D.

Date completed: June 1985

Problem

Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 have been used, since the times of the Church Fathers, to explain the origin of sin in the universe, and interpreted as depicting the fall of Satan from heaven. However, through the years--especially from the end of the nineteenth century and on--theologians have affirmed that those passages report historical events, making use of mythological material in their narratives; and therefore have not to do with the origin of sin or Satan. It is the aim of this dissertation to verify these claims.

Method and Results

Chapter I reviews the interpretations of the passages from the first centuries of the Christian Era till the present. Until

the end of the nineteenth century, both passages were interpreted in two main ways: (1) referring to Satan or (2) referring to some historical figure, perhaps some Babylonian ruler. From that time the mythological view has added to the interpretation.

Chapter 2 examines the alleged origins and parallel material found in Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Greek, Ugaritic, as well as Biblical literature. The research demonstrated that although similar motifs and imagery are present in the passages under study as well as in literature of Israel's neighbors, a myth of Helel ben Shahar and of the Guardian Cherub, which would reflect the Biblical account in its main aspects, could not be found. It seems the similarities in the use of the terms and pictures are due to cultural continuity or common elements in the ancient Near East.

Chapter 3 examines the structure of Isa 14 and Ezek 28 in relation to the immediate context and the whole books; and exegetes the passages in the light of the whole Bible.

The exegesis shows that: (1) these passages depict Helel and the Cherub in a language which transcends the earthly realm; (2) the immediate context and the whole books (especially Isaiah) shows a tension between earthly and cosmic dimensions, as well as a struggle between the forces of good and evil; (3) Isa 14 uses the words mashal and Babylon in a particular way; and (4) a comparison between these two passages shows they depict the same figure. These factors carry us to the conclusion that the two passages portray the fall of the chief angel Satan from heaven and his role in the controversy between good and evil.

To Nancy

without whom . . .

. . . זכרתי לך

Jeremiah 2:2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

II. (Continued)

Chapter

III. (Continued)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The way we face, interpret, and understand the matter of the origin of evil--and its implications--in the Scriptures affects and determines in great measure the outcome of our exegesis of many biblical passages.

Depending on the view we take in the matter, our theological understanding of the main basic doctrines of the Bible varies from one extreme to the other in the spectrum of biblical theology.

It is important, therefore, that we should carefully study those passages in the Scriptures, the understanding of which should enable us to arrive at a sound comprehension of that aspect of Bible truth.

It is well established in Scripture[1] that there is a struggle between the forces of good and forces of evil going on in the universe which transcends the particular affairs among the inhabitants of this world.

In the scholarly world,[2] this struggle is known as "the conflict between cosmos and chaos" and can be perceived from the

---

[1]Cf. Gen 3:6; Job 1, 2; 26:12-13; Ps 82; Zech 3:1-3; Matt 4 (and parallels).

[2]H. Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895); J. Gray, "The Hebrew Conception of the Kingship of God: Its Origin and Development," VT 6 (1956):268-85.

beginning to the end of the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible reflects the presence of a kind of disorder which is resisted by God and those who are on His side. And it seems that the plan of salvation itself is God's answer to overcome such disarray of the universe's order, the result of which would be the restoration of perfect harmony planned by the ruler of the universe.

When, according to the Genesis record, God created this world and set Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He did it perfectly.[1] God had created the world as a harmonious whole; but when the first couple disobeyed God, something extraneous or outside of God's creation of this world came in. Childs affirms that Gen 2 can be understood as an antithesis of chap. 3, "wholeness versus fragmentation; trust versus suspicion; faith versus unbelief."[2]

It seems that the seed of disorder or disharmony was already present even before the fall of Adam and Eve; it transcended the affairs of our own world. The Scriptures offer implicit and explicit information about this struggle which develops itself in this world, but whose seed came before the world and transcends the affairs of this world.[3] This cosmic war appears as a theme in such books of the Bible as Job, Habakkuk, etc.

Despite the information we can obtain about the struggle between these opposing powers and the presence of evil in our world which came through the disobedience of our first parents, nothing

---

[1]Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.

[2]B. S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1960), p. 47.

[3]Gen 3; Job 1, 2; Zech 3; etc.

is explicitly said in the OT about the origin of evil in God's universe.

However, we have in the Bible two very interesting passages--Isa 14:4b-23 and Ezek 28:1-19--which have provoked several interpretations. Among these is one which holds that the passages speak about the origin of sin in heaven.

Since the OT does not explicitly explain why and how evil originated before the events occurred in the Garden of Eden, and since the two poems concerning Babylon and Tyre are among the few texts which a number of theologians have used to explain the origin of evil in the universe, it is worthwhile to pursue a detailed exegetical and theological examination of the passages. Such an examination should take into account the immediate and the larger biblical context of the material that bears upon this interpretation and of other related passages.

It is proposed here, therefore, that we investigate the historical and theological contents of Isa 14:4b-23 (especially vss. 12-15) and Ezek 28:1-19. This study also includes a comparative study of the two passages. The reason for choosing to examine these two passages together seems obvious, for throughout the centuries they have been identified as being related to each other in their language, nature, and content. This study also intends to demonstrate that these two particular passages complement each other in a possible identification of the main figure to which they refer.

A Survey of the Literature on the Interpretation of Isaiah 14

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Probably the first attempts to interpret Isa 14:12-15[1] are found in the pseudepigraphical works relating to the OT. In one of these, The Life of Adam and Eve, the devil is quoted as saying: "I will set my seat above the stars of heaven, and will be like the highest."[2] Since this statement obviously is derived from Isa 14: 13-14, it indicates that the author of this work probably interpreted the passage in such a way as to apply it to the devil. A similar idea is referred to in Slavonic Enoch, a pseudepigraphical work currently dated in the second century A.D.

> One from out the order of angels, having turned away with the order that was under him, conceived an impossible thought, to place his throne higher than the clouds above the earth, that he might become equal in rank to my power. And I threw him out from the height with his angels, and he was flying in the air continuously above the bottomless.[3]

---

[1] Although we are going to deal with the whole song (vss. 4b-23), in searching the history of the interpretation of the passage, we are more concerned with the author's understanding and interpretation of vss. 12-15.

[2] Vita Adae et Evae 15.3 [c A.D. 100-c. 200], in R. H. Charles, APOT 2:137. Julian Morgenstern ("The Mythological Background of Psalm 82," HUCA 14 [1939]:109), besides admitting that the author of The Life of Adam and Eve could have copied the expression literally from Isa 14:13, thinks the more probable was that "the wording of this statement was used in the version of the myth still popularly current in oral form at the time of composition of the book." In the Apocalyptic book of Sybyline Oracles [c. A.D. 70], a reference is made concerning a battle of the stars (which Charles [APOT 2:373] thinks is in the future where it is said that "Lucifer waged battle . . . the might of doughty Lucifer burned up Aquarius. Heaven itself was stirred till it shook the warriors, and in anger cast them headlong to the earth" Sib or 5:516, 527-29 (Charles, APOT 2:406).

[3] Slavonic Enoch 29. 4-5 [c. A.D. 2nd Cent.] (Charles, APOT 2:447).

Although we cannot say for certain the writer of 1 Enoch is quoting from or commenting on the Isaianic passage, he seems to have had it in the back of his mind in the two references to this same idea:

> And I saw, and behold a star fell from heaven. . . . And again I saw in the vision, and looked towards the heaven, and behold I saw many stars descend and cast themselves down from heaven to that first star.[1]

> And I saw one of those four who had come forth first, and he seized that first star which had fallen from heaven, and bound it hand and foot and cast it into an abyss: Now that abyss was narrow and deep, and horrible and dark.[2]

Jewish Interpreters

The Jews in the Talmudic period[3] interpreted the Isaianic passage as having to do with immediate historical events in which Nebuchadnezzar was identified as the "Oppressor."[4] In the Midrash Rabbah this passage is applied to that same king.[5]

---

[1] 1 Enoch 86.1-3 (Charles, APOT 2:250).

[2] Ibid., 88.1 (Charles, APOT, 2:251). George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr. (Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Interestamental Judaism, HTS 26 [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972], p. 79) thinks the account of Antiochus' (Epiphanes) death (2 Macc. 9.7ff.) was influenced by the language of Isa 14.

[3] From the third century to the fifth century A.D.

[4] Shab. 149b; Pes. 94a, 94b; Hag. 13a; Hul. 89a.

[5] See Midr. Gen 36:33; Midr. Exod 7:1; 12:2, where it interprets Isa 14:12 as saying that Nebuchadnezzar used to worship the sun; Exod 14:15; Midr. Lev 16:1ff., where Isa 14:13 is applied to Nebuchadnezzar before his sickness, and vs. 17 is applied with reference to Evil-Merodach, who was set in Nebuchadnezzar's place during Nebuchadnezzar's years of sickness, and was later confined in prison after the senior king's healing; "and whoever," says the commentary, "entered prison in his days never came out, as it is said 'He opened not the house of his prisoners'." See also Midr. Num 22:2; Midr. Esth 1:1, which comments on Isa 14:22 affirming that "'name' refers to Nebuchadnezzar; 'remnant' refers to Evil-Merodach; 'offshoot' refers to Belshazzar; and 'offspring' refers to Vashti. Another explanation: 'Name' refers to their Script; 'remnant' refers to their language; 'offshoot' and 'offspring' refer to son and grandson

Church Fathers

Origen (c. A.D. 185-c. 254) applied the passage to Satar, emphasizing that he had been in heaven at one time, but had fallen and had his glory turned into dust. He connects Luke 10:18 with the Isaian passage.[1] Origen is one of the first to interpret this passage in relation to Ezek 28. Tertullian (c. A.D. 160-c. 225) espoused the same view as Origen and said that the text referred to the one "who has raised up children of disobedience against the Creator Himself."[2]

From the beginning of the third century, the Church Fathers interpreted the Isaian passage in two different ways:

1. Applied to Satan. Among those who followed the view of Origin and Tertullian are Cyprian (c. A.D. 200-c. 258),[3] Gregory Thaumaturgus (c. A.D. 205-c. 265),[4] Gregory Nazianzen (c. A.D. 329-c. 390),[5] Gregory of Nyssa (c. A.D. 331-c. 400),[6] Jerome (c. A.D.

(Evil-Merodach and Belshazzar)." Midr. Cant 2:12; 3:1-3; commenting on Cant 8:14, it is said that "the Holy One, blessed be He, does not punish a nation on earth till He has cast down its guardian angel from heaven. This is borne out by five scriptural verses" (verses cited: Isa 24:21; Isa 14:12; Isa 34:5; Ps 149:8; Ps 149:9); Midr. Lam 1:4.

[1]Origen De Principiis 1.5.5 (ANF, 4:259); Against Celsus 6.43 (ANF, 4:593).

[2]L. Tertullian Against Marcion, 5.11, 17 (ANF, 3:454, 466).

[3]Cyprian Epistles 54:3; Treatises 12.3.118 (ANF, 5:339, 556).

[4]Gregory Thaumaturgus Second Homily (ANF, 6:64).

[5]Gregory Nazianzen Oration on the Theophany 38.9 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 7:347).

[6]Gregory of Nyssa Cantica Canticorum Homiliae 5:14 (PGM 44:881, 1081); Christi Resurrectionem Orat 1 (MPG, 46:608).

342-420).[1] Prudentius (c. A.D. 348-420?).[2] In singing in his poems about the origin of sin and the fall of the angels, Prudentius used the thought of Isa 14. In his interesting comments on "the Spirit of Pride," John Cassian (c. A.D. 360-c. 448) identifies the figure of vss. 13-14 as Satan and equates him with the serpent which deceived Adam and Eve.[3] From Augustine (A.D. 354-430)[4] to Gregory

---

[1]Jerome Against Pelagians 3.14; Against Jovinianus 2.4; Letters, 22.4; 133.1 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 6:272, 391, 480). Commentariorum in Isaiam Prophetam, 5.14.12-14; 6.14.12 (PLM, 24:161-62; 219-20); The Life of St. Hilarian of Gaza 4, in the Fathers of the Church, ed. Roy J. Deferrari (Washington, D.C.: Fathers of the Church, 1952), 15:248; Homilies 14, 41, in The Fathers of the Church, 48:107.

[2]"The author of iniquity is not God.
In mind of fallen angel sin was bred,
Of one that like a mighty star once shone (cf. Isa 14:12)
And with created splendor brightly burned.
All things created are from nothing made;
Not so is God, true Wisdom, and Holy Spirit,
The living Trinity that ever was,
But even angel ministers He made.
One from their number, fair of countenance,
Fierce in his might and by his strength puffed up,
Upraised himself with overweening pride (cf. Isa 14:13-14)
And of his brightness made a bold display,
Till he persuaded some he was begot
Of his own power, and being from himself
Had drawn, to no creator owing birth."
Prudentius Poems, vol. 2, trans. M. Clement Eagan, in FaCh 52:50. Prudentius is refuting a Manichaean heresy about the origin of Satan.

[3]John Cassian Institutes 12.4 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 11:280-81); Conferences 5.7; 8.25 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 11:342, 386).

[4]Augustine The Confessions 10.36.53 (NPNF, 1st ser. 1:159); The City of God 11:15 (NPNF, 1st ser. 2:213-14); Homilies on the Gospel of St. John 3.17; 17.5.16 (NPNF, 1st ser. 7:21, 116) Exposition on the Psalms 36.15; 48.3; 89.12 (NPNF, 1st ser. 8.90, 164-65; 432-33; Augustine maintained that Satan fell through pride, and Isa 14 and Ezek 28 were used to support his view. Martin de Braga Writings of Martin de Braga, in FaCh 62:45, 46. Aurelius Cassiodorius [c. A.D. 468-] Expositio Psalmorum (CCL, 97:352, 426, 535; 98:784, 806, 1113); Primasius [A.D. 6th Cent.] Commentariorum Super Apocalypsim Libri 5.9 (PLS, 4:1213).

the Great (c. A.D. 590-604)[1] most of the church fathers followed the interpretation of Isa 14:12-15 as referring to the devil. As had happened to Prudentius, several poets from the fifth century on were influenced by the earlier interpretation of Isa 14 and Ezek 28 in connection with Rev 12. In their compositions they sang Satan's fall from heaven in peculiar ways.[2]

2. Applied to immediate historical context. The Syrian father Aphrahat (c. A.D. 220-c. 350)[3] and Chromatius Aquileiensis (A.D. 4th century)[4] applied the words of Isa 14:13 simply in an immediate historical sense and attributed them to Nebuchadnezzar. Chrysostom (c. A.D. 347-407) says they refer to a "barbarian king" and relates them to Ezek 28.[5] Hippolytus (c. A.D. 170-c. 236) related this passage to the Antichrist and saw it as depicting an event to happen in the future. He quotes Ezek 28 side by side with Isa 14.[6]

---

[1]Gregory the Great Book of Pastoral Rule 2.4 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 12:14-15); Epistles 18, 21 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 12:166, 172); Gregory says that Satan's first war was provoked because of his pride (he quotes Isa 14), and connects Rev 12:7-9 as referring to the same event. XL Homiliarum in Evangelia 2.34 (MPL, 76:1251).

[2]Claudius Marius Victorius [A.D. 5th cent.] Alethia (CCL, 128:127); Dracontius Carmen Deo (MPL, 60:808-09). There were times in the epoch of the Church Fathers and in the Middle Ages when the subject of Satan and his war in heaven was not discussed so much in theological treatises as it was sung in poetry.

[3]Aphrahat Demonstrations 5.4 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 13:353).

[4]Chromatius Aquileiensis Tractatus 50 (CCL, 9a:445).

[5]Chrysostom Homilies on the Statues 11.4 (NPNF, 1st ser. 9:414).

[6]Hippolytus Treatise on Christ and Antichrist 53 (ANF, 5:215).

Middle Ages

Throughout the Middle Ages several writers such as Walafridus Strabus (c. A.D. 808-849)[1] and Haymo (A.D. 9th cent.)[2] applied the passage to the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar and to Satan. Others adhered to the traditional view of the fathers.[3] Peter Lombard (1100-1160) contended that Lucifer was the most eminent of all angels. When Satan became proud, he decided to make himself equal with God, and God cast him down from heaven. The angel's pretentions and fall are cited from Isa 14 and Ezek 28.[4]

Albertus Magnus (1205-1280), who relied much upon Lombard's writings, saw Lucifer (Isa 14:12) as the principal angel who led the revolt and attracted a large number of other angels to his cause. Lucifer's sin was that of desiring equality with God. Pride which proceeded from envy was the devil's first sin.[5]

---

[1]Walafridus Strabus, Glossa Ordinaria-liber Isaiae Prophetae, 14.5ff. (PLM 113:1253).

[2]Haymo, Commentariorum in Isaiam, 214 (MPL, 116:790-93).

[3]Ambrosius Antpertus [c. A.D. 710-784] Expositious in Apocalyptsin 2.2.24; 3.5.1b; 4.8.8-0; 4.9.12b-13; 9:20.8 (CCL, 27:149, 244, 334-56; ibid., 27A: 760). Rupert of Deutz [c. A.D. 1075-c. 1129] Commentariorum Apocalypsim Joannis Apostoli 7.12 (MPL, 169:1051-1055); De Victoria Verbi Dei 1.1-30 (MPL, 169:1217-1243); where the writer makes Rev 12 the basis for his prose epic on Satan's war against God, besides Isa 14 and Ezek 28 which are used extensively in the presentation. Herveus Burgidolensis Monachus [12th cent.] Commentariorum in Isaiam 2.14 (MPL, 181:164-66); Saint Bernard [1090-1153] Sermons on Songs of Songs xvii.5 (MPL, 183-857, 1113, 1190).

[4]Peter Lombard Four Books of Sentences 2.2-6 (MPL, 192: 1031-1035).

[5]Albertus Magnus Summae Theologie 2.21-31 (Basilee: Jacobi de Pfortzheim, 1507), quoted by Edward Langton, Satan, A Portrait (London: Skeffington & Son, 1947), p. 69.

Although he does not explicitly quote the thought of Isa 14:12-15, the Italian poet and theologian Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) makes use of it in describing the acts of Lucifer, whom he interprets as being Satan.[1]

The most important and influential scholastic theologian and philosopher of the Catholic Church, Thomas Aquinas (c. A.D. 1225-1274),[2] and the so-called "Morning Star of the Reformation," John Wycliff (c. A.D. 1330-1384),[3] shared the Church Fathers' view, seeing in the passage the acts of the fallen angel from heaven.

From the Reformation to the Nineteenth Century

Although Caspar Schwenckfeld (1490-1561)[4] maintained the traditional view of the Fathers, the two great reformers Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564) broke with the traditional interpretation held by the fathers and scholars in the Middle Ages. Luther affirmed that "this (14:12) is not said of the angel who once was thrown out of heaven (Luke 10:18; Rev 12:7-8)

---

[1]Dante Alighieri, "Paradiso," 19.46-57; 27.22-32; 29.55-66; in Divine Comedy, trans. and comm. Charles S. Singleton, 3 vols. Bollingen Series 80 (Princeton: University Press, 1975), 2:211, 303, 327; "Inferno," 31.142-145; 34.121-39. Ibid., 1:337, 369. Dante makes use of his poetic imagination saying that Satan should fall to earth at a point directly antipodal to Jerusalem.

[2]Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 3 vols. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947), 1:314-17.

[3]John Wycliff, "Sermon 19," in John Wycliff's Latin Works, ed. Johann Loserth (London: Wycliff Society, 1883-1907), 7:475; "De Antichrist," ibid., 15:204.

[4]Caspar Schwenckfeld, "Exposition of Ezekiel 17, Galatians 5:5, and Hebrews 3:14," Letters and Treatises of Caspar Schwenckfeld von Ossign--1552-1554, in Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum, 14 vols., ed. Ellsworth Schultz (Leipzig: Breitkopf E. Härtel, 1935), 13:34.

but of the King of Babylon, and it is figurative language."[1] Calvin repudiated the application of the passage to Satan and interpreted it totally in historical terms:

> The exposition of this passage, which some have given, as if it referred to Satan, has arisen from ignorance; for the context plainly shows that these statements must be understood in reference to the king of the Babylonians. But when passages of Scripture are taken up at random, and no attention is paid to the context, we need not wonder that mistakes of this kind frequently arise. Yet it was an instance of very gross ignorance, to imagine that Lucifer was the king of devils, and that the Prophet gave him this name. But as these inventions have no probability whatever, let us pass by them as useless fables.[2]

In his commentary on Isaiah, Calvin identified the figure of Isa 14 as Nebuchadnezzar,[3] while in his commentary on Psalms he identified him as Sennacherib,[4] and since Calvin was the first to see in the figure an Assyrian king, it is a high point in the history of the interpretation of this passage. Post-reformation theologians such as Thomas Manton (1620-1677) followed the view of Luther on this passage.[5] J. Lightfoot (1602-1675) applied Isa 14:12 with Luke 10:18 to Satan, stating in addition that "Lucifer falling from

---

[1]Martin Luther, Lectures on Isaiah 1-39, in Luther's Works, ed. Jaroslav-Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1969), 16:140.

[2]John Calvin, Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, 4 vols., trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 1:442.

[3]Calvin, Commentary on Isaiah, 1:443.

[4]John Calvin, Commentary on the Book of Psalms, trans. James Anderson, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 2:219.

[5]Thomas Manton, Epistle of Jude, in Works of Thomas Manton, 22 vols. (Worthington, PA: Maranatha Pub., 1970), 5:191-92, says that "the fathers usually quote Isa 14:12-13 to explain the origin of sin. But it is but a metaphorical passage concerning the king of Babylon, and the ground of the mistake was because the angels are often in Scripture set forth by stars, as Job 38:7."

heaven (vs. 12) is the King of Babylon, divested of his throne and dominion."[1]

From the seventeenth century come two great works of Puritan literature: John Milton's Paradise Lost and John Bunyan's Holy War. In interpreting and commenting[2] on the Isaian text, Bunyan

---

[1]John Lightfoot, Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations upon St. Luke, in Whole Works, 13 vols., ed. John R. Pitman (London: J. F. Dove, 1823), 12:92.

[2]John Milton, Paradise Lost, 1.40; 5.689, 715-16, 766 in The Works of John Milton, ed. Frank A. Patterson et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-38), 2:9, 11, 168-69, 176. See also Areopagitica, 4:353; Eikonoklastes 15, 5:218. It is very interesting that Milton himself, in De Doctrina Christiana, omits Isa 14 and Ezek 28 from the texts used to present Satan's character and history. There is much dispute concerning the sources Milton used to produce his "War in Heaven" description; see Harris F. Fletcher, Milton's Semitic Studies (New York: Guardian Press, Inc., 1966), pp. 111-13; and J. M. Evans, The Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 34-36, 86-99, 219-22. For the view that Milton's material came to him not from Hebraic or other Semitic books or manuscripts. On the view that the basis for his picture of the war in heaven is the Bible and not the writings of the poets of the past, see Austin Dobbins, Milton and the Book of Revelation: The Heavenly Cycle (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1975), pp. 26-52. Milton presents "envy" as Satan's first sin; this was also the view of the author of the apocryphal book of Wisdom of Solomon (2.24); of the Pseudepigraphical Book of Adam and Eve (13-16, Charles 2:137); and of Lactantius [c. A.D. 260-330] (The Divine Institutes, 2.9; 4.6 [ANF 7:52-53; 105]). For comments on the sin of Satan, from the seventeenth century on, see S. P Revard, The War in Heaven (Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1980), pp. 70-85.

John Bunyan, Holy War, in Complete Works of John Bunyan, ed. John Gulliver (Philadelphia: Bradley, Garretson & Co., 1873), p. 371, depicts in a very imaginative and metaphorical way the struggle that has been going on between man and the enemy of the soul, and ultimately between God and the devil. In his description Bunyan says that

> "This Diabolus is indeed a grand and mighty prince, and yet both poor and beggarly. As to his original, he was at first one of the servants of King Shaddai, made, and taken, and put by him into most high and mighty place; yea, was put into such principalities as belonged to the best of his territories and dominions. This Diabolus was made son of the morning, and a brave place he had of it; it brought him much glory and gave him much brightness, an income that might have contented his Luciferian heart, had it not been insatiable and enlarged as hell itself." (p. 371)

This is without doubt an interpretation of Isa 14:12-15 as applied to Satan.

and Milton used what scholars call the "method of accommodation,"[1] advocating that the passage referred to Satan and his fall. Basing their views on the OT passages of Isa 14 and Ezek 28, along with texts from the NT, material of Semitic origin, in general, views and comments of the Church Fathers, and possibly some materials from the Renaissance, they enlarged the vision concerning Lucifer.

The American theologian and philosopher Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) interpreted the passage under discussion as applying to the King of Babylon, but he did not provide a detailed interpretation of the text.[2] In preaching about evil angels John Wesley (1703-1791) applied Isa 14 to Satan: "There is no absurdity in supposing Satan . . . styled 'Lucifer Son of the morning' to have been at least one of the first, if not the first archangel."[3] Bishop R. Lowth (1710-1787), along with his poetic analysis of this passage,[4] interpreted

---

[1]The "Theory of Accommodation" had its origins in the first centuries of our era and was frequently used by the intellectuals of the Renaissance. It was an attempt to explain some biblical anthropormophism, especially that of the OT. Theologians such as St. Augustine, Thoras Aquinas, and Calvin made use of accommodation. For quotations and comments on the matter, see Roland M. Frye, God, Man and Satan (Princeton: University Press, 1960), pp. 7-13; C. A. Patrides, "Paradise Lost and the Theory of Accommodation," in Bright Essence, Studies in Milton's Theology, ed. W. B. Hunter et al. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), pp. 159-63; Edward A. Dowey, Jr., The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 3-17.

[2]Jonathan Edwards, Freedom of the Will, in Works of Jonathan Edwards, 6 vols., ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 1:402.

[3]John Wesley, "Sermon on Evil Angels," in Wesley's Works, 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1831), 6:372.

[4]Robert Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews (London: J. T. Buckingham, 1815 [first published in 1753]), pp. ix, 396, 397.

it as a prophecy foretelling the fall and destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians.[1]

In the nineteenth century some new developments occurred in the study and interpretation of Isa 14. Kelly for example saw in the Babylonian power depicted in Isa 14

> . . . a type of him who will wield imperial power against the glory of God in the last days. . . . What we have in Isaiah furnishes the groundwork for that which meets us in the Revelation. Thus the strong language in vss. 9-14 could scarcely be said to have been exausted in Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar. There was pride and self-exaltation in the one, and most degrading and profane luxury in the other; but what we have here will be fully verified in the last days and not before. After taking this place of power, the lofty one is to be abased as no Babylonish monarch ever was historically.[2]

Kelly was the earliest commentator noted who clearly applied the Isaian passage to the "Beast" of Revelation and identified him as Rome and the papal power. Franz Delitzsch remarked that

> Lucifer, as a name given to the devil, was derived from this passage, which the fathers interpreted, without any warrant whatever, as relating to the apostasy and punishment of the angelic leaders. The appellation is a perfectly appropriate one for the king of Babel, on account of the early date of the

---

[1] R. Lowth, Isaiah: A Translation with Preliminary Dissertation and Notes (London: Thomas Tegg & Son, 1837), pp. 215-24. Bishop Lowth dramatizes vss. 4-28 presenting several scenes which depict the fall of Babylon, of the tyrant, his arrival at the regions of the dead ones, etc., and gives his appreciation of the poem in the following words:

> "I believe it may with truth be affirmed, that there is no poem of its kind extant in any language, in which the subject is so well laid out and so happily conducted, with such a richness of invention, with such variety of images, persons, and distinct actions, with such rapidity and ease of transition, in so small a compass as in this ode of Isaiah. For beauty of disposition, strength of colouring, greatness of sentiment, brevity, perspicuity, and force of expression, it stands among all the monuments of antiquity unrivalled." (p. 218)

[2] An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah (1871) (Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1979 [Reprint]), pp. 165-66.

> Babylonian culture, which reached back as far as the grey twilight of primeval times, and also because of its predominant astrological character.[1]

But he adds that

> A retrospective glance is now cast at the self-deification of the king of Babylon, in which he was the antitype of the devil and the type of antichrist (Dan. xi. 36; 2 Thess. ii. 4), and which had met with its reward.[2]

Although a little confused in his assertion, Delitzsch seems to be the first theologian to say that the historical figure typologically related to the figure of Satan standing behind it.

From the end of the nineteenth century, theologians began to see mythological elements in the passage. Thus, from that time on, interpretation of the passage would in general be classified in three main views: Satan View, Historical View (which sometimes was blended with the previous view), and Mythological View.

Satan View

From the end of the nineteenth century on, when critical methods for the interpretation of the Bible were begun and scholars had in hand more comparative material with which to interpret the OT, the Satan view has been held by very few theologians.[3] In the 1930s Roberts revived the Church Fathers' view--seing in the passage the figure of Satan.[4] Roberts also saw the overthrow of Babylon as necessary for the return of Judah, but he believed that it was not only the city the prophet had in view. He compared

---

[1] Isaiah, pp. 311-12. [2] Ibid., p. 312.

[3] Even conservative biblical exegetes such as Vanderburgh, etc., did not see Satan behind Isa 14.

[4] L. G. A. Roberts, Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (London: Covenant Pub. Co., 1931), pp. 39-41.

it to the mystic-Babylon, the ecclesiastical-political system presented in the Book of Revelation. Besides seeing in the passage the figure of Satan, Roberts affirmed that "we can only attribute this language to the pope himself, impersonated by Satan, or to the eight heads of the beast who may occupy his place and go into perdition (2 Thess 2:3; Rev 17:11-18; 19:19-20)."[1] He also connected the persecutor power of Dan 10-12 and the figure in Ezek 28 with the Isaianic passage.

Among those who have seen the figure of Satan in the passage in this century we may note: Fausset,[2] Chafer,[3] Ironside,[4]

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

[2] A. R. Fausset, "The Book of the Prophet Isaiah," in A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1945), 3:610. Fausset thinks the passage applies

> "to the Babylonian king primarily, and at the same time to shadow forth, through him, the great final enemy, the man of sin of St. Paul, the Anti-christ of St. John, and the little horn and blasphemous self-willed king of Daniel. He alone shall fulfill exhaustively all the lineaments here given. . . . The fall of Babylon as a self-idolizing power, the type of mystical Babylon in the apocalypse (Rev 17:4, 5), before the providence of God, is described in language drawn from the fall of Satan himself, the spirit that energized the heathen world-power, and now energizes the apostate Church, and shall hereafter energize the last secular Antichrist. Thus Lucifer has naturally come to be applied to Satan (Luke 10:18; Rev 12:8, 9; Jude 6)." (p. 610)

[3] L. Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, 8 vols. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947-48), 2:44-50.

[4] H. A. Ironside, Expository Notes on the Prophet Isaiah (New Jersey: Loiseaux Brothers, 1952), pp. 88-92, states that "Lucifer is a created angel of the very highest order . . . this passage is highly poetical, but describes in no uncertain terms the other destruction of the last great enemy of Israel in the day of the Lord" (pp. 88, 90).

Unger,[1] Papini,[2] Nichol,[3] Archer,[4] Lockyer,[5] Feinberg.[6]

Historical View

In 1830 A. Jenour applied the passage historically to Babylon and equated Lucifer to "Venus, the brightest . . . star in the heavens."[7] A few years later J. A. Alexander related the

---

[1]Merrill Unger, Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen Press, 1953), pp. 184-5. Unger sees in vss. 12-17 the entire career of Satan, from his primeval state as Lucifer till his fall to the depth of the pit (Rev 20:3). He goes on saying that Satan was placed in charge of the earth when this plane was originally created, and it was then, says Unger, quoting G. S. Faber, that he (Satan) said in his heart, "I will ascend into heaven . . ." (Isa 14:13-14). "Evidently for this presumptuous act God pronounced judgment upon this pre-Adamite earth and it became chaotic as described in Gen 1:2" (p. 184).

[2]Giovani Papini, The Devil (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1954), pp. 31-32. Papini makes the following interesting comment:

> "The chapters in Isaias (13-14) where these verses appear, have, as their basic theme, the war between Good and Evil and therefore it is by no means impossible that the Prince of Evil himself is sketched in it also. All the more so, since the kings of Babylon, like other kings of the ancient Orient, believed themselves--or passed themselves off as being--of divine origin, come from heaven to reign despotically over the earth. So, in a certain sense, they were, by virtue of their dual claim, like Satan, 'diabolic'. The end of one of them could very well recall another pride, another fall, that of the Prince who used to trample and who still tramples the nations under his foot." (p. 32)

[3]"Lucifer" [Isaiah 14:12], SDABC, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1953-1957), 4:170. Here it is clearly affirmed that the passage "applies to Satan before his fall, as next to Christ in power and authority and head of the angelic hosts" (p. 170).

[4]G. L. Archer, "Isaiah," WBC (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), pp. 621-22.

[5]Herbert Lockyer, All the Doctrines of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1964), pp. 134-35.

[6]Charles L. Feinberg, The Prophecy of Ezekiel (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), p. 163. For strong reaction to these views, see Robert L. Alden, "Lucifer, Who or What?" JETS 11 (1968):35-39. See also Meadors, pp. 46-65, for extensive discussion of the Satan view in relation to the Isaianic passage.

[7]A. Jenour, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah I (London: R. B. Seeley, 1930), pp. 269-73.

passage to the antichrist of 2 Thess 2:4, as well as to Ezek 28. He also attempted to retain the immediate historical application. As Calvin had done before him, he challenged the traditional Church Fathers' application to Satan, stating that from such an explanation "has arisen the popular perversion of the beautiful name Lucifer to signify the Devil."[1] E. Henderson also opposed the traditional view: "The scope and connexion then that none but the King of Babylon is meant. . . . The application of this passage to Satan, and to the fall of the apostate angels, is one of the gross perversions of sacred writ. . . ."[2]

C. W. E. Nägelsbach observed that "as early as the LXX, this passage (vss. 12-15) seems to have been understood of Satan. It points that way if they change the second person into the third; τὸς ἐξέτεσεν, etc."[3] He interpreted the passage as referring to Babylon and its exaltation, but added, "The world-power is by its very nature inimical to God: its aim is to supplant God and put itself in His place. This tendency is indwelling in the world-power derived from its transcendental author, Satan, and is realized in every particular representative."[4] Ewald went a step further in studying the literary structure of the poem[5] but did not comment much on the identification of the figure, treating the passage as

---

[1]J. A. Alexander, Isaiah (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1851), pp. 200-204.

[2]E. Henderson, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah (London: Hamilton, Adams Co., 1857), p. 132.

[3]C. W. E. Nägelsbach, The Prophet Isaiah, CHSL, vol. II (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1878), p. 190.

[4]Ibid., p. 188.

[5]See below, pp. 149-50.

a prophetic utterance more concerned with Babylon than with an individual.[1]

F. Delitzsch affirmed that the application of the passage to the apostasy of the angelic leader is without warrant; but he stated that the King of Babylon in his self-deification was the antitype of the devil and the type of antichrist (Dan 11:36; 2 Thess 2:4). He still emphasized the predictive nature of the text.[2]

In his famous study on Biblical laments,[3] C. Budde discussed the structure and nature of the passage, but he did not interpret it in specific terms; it seems that he accepted Lowth's view that the song refers to the fall and death of the King of Babylon. B. Duhm applied the passage to the immediate historical events at the end of the Babylonian empire and also saw some mythic elements in it.[4]

In 1896 Cobb made a study of the poetical structure of the poem. He advocated that a redactor inserted the word הֵילֵל in the text to apply it to Babylon. From the deletion, he held that originally "the ode says nothing about a city, but is a song of

---

[1]Heinrich Ewald, The Prophet Isaiah, trans. O. Glover, (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), pp. 158-62.

[2]F. Delitzsch, "The Prophecies of Isaiah," BCOT, 1877 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), pp. 311-13.

[3]C. Budde, "Das hebräisch Klagelied," ZAW, 2 (1882), p. 14. His study's discussed in chapter 3 in relation to the קִינָה meter when we consider the structure of the passage.

[4]Bernhard Duhm, Das Buch Jesaia, GHK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1892), pp. 117-20. It seems that Duhm was the first theologian who attempted a possible link between the biblical Helel story with the Greek fable of Phaeton, p. 119.

triumph and derision over the fall of some king."[1] He went on to reject the application of the passage to any king of the Neo-Babylonian period, affirming that only Sennacherib of Assyria would fit the text and context of the passage.[2] Early in the twentieth century Vandenburgh assigned different dates and authors to the "oracle" (chap. 13) and the "Ode" (chap. 14) on the King of Babylon.[3] He affirms that the Ode was not composed with reference to any particular Assyrian or Babylonian king but was ready-made when the Book of Isaiah was completed in post-exilic times.[4] "The Ode was written with the purpose of inspiring the Israelites with hope for deliverance from a domination of which Sennacherib was an antitype."[5] In 1927 Williams affirmed that the reference to the fall of Lucifer in Isa 14:12 is merely a metaphorical description of the collapse of the Babylonian power.[6]

The prince of twentieth-century theologians, Karl Barth, did not discuss Isa 14:12-15 beyond mentioning it as a description of

---

[1]William H. Cobb, "The Ode in Isaiah XIV," JBL 15 (1896): 18-19.

[2]Following Hugo Winckler, Cobb asserts in the article that the Ode came from the eighth century B.C., resisting the increased views begun by the turn of the century against Isaiah's authorship of many parts of the book which bears his name.

[3]Frederick A. Vandenburgh, "The Ode on the King of Babylon, Isaiah XIV:4b-21," AJSL 29 (1912-13):114-16.

[4]Vandenburgh, p. 25, holds the view that the book of Isaiah was not completed until the second century B.C.

[5]Nabonidus, at the end of his reign, is also presented as a possible subject to which the Ode refers (ibid., p. 120).

[6]N. Powell Williams, The Idea of the Fall and of Original Sin BaL (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1927), p. 495. Cf. Eduard König, Das Buch Jesaia (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1926), p. 181, who has a similar view.

the King of Babylon as the radiant morning star (Lucifer) cast down from heaven. He thinks the text is "so uncertain and obscure that it is inadvisable to allow it to be a basis for the development of the doctrine of a fall of angels and therefore of an explanation of the existence of the devil and demons."[1]

Several other theologians have applied the passage historically, but since their interpretation is blended with mythic views they are discussed in the next section.

Mythological View

In discussing the mythic view we perceive there is some overlap with the Satan and historical views; but since the major emphasis is on the mythical elements it is advisable to include them in this section.

T. K. Cheyne was one of the first commentators to see in the passage some relics of a mythical stage, and to relate the morning star with Venus.[2] In his pride the King of Babylon had

---

[1]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, 12 vols., ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958-1969), 3:530-31. Barth goes on to say that this interpretation

> "arises from the superfluous need to ground our knowledge of the fall of man upon the notion of a metaphysical prelude which it was quite inappropriately thought should be located in heaven. . . . To bring angels and demons under the common denominator of this fatal concept of freedom is to confuse and obscure everything that is to be said of both. A true and orderly angel does not do what is ascribed to some angels in this doctrine (in obscure speculation concerning this derivation). And on the other hand it cannot be said that a real demon has ever been in heaven. The demons merely act as if they came from heaven. But the devil was never an angel. He was a murderer [illegible]. He never stood in the truth. No truth was ever in him." (p. 531)

[2]T. K. Cheyne, The Prophecies of Isaiah, 2 vols. (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1890), 1:90-91. Attention is called to the fact that in the Assyrian texts we find reference to a masculine and a

been like the morning star in anticipating his lordship over the sacred mountain of Israel. Cheyne admits, on the other hand, a possible link with Ezek 28:13, 14 in which talks of the "holy mountain" by the garden of God. Skinner follows Cheyne in the matter of interpreting the passage (vss. 12-15) as a probable reference to the planet Venus and believes it derived from "some Babylonian astral myth."[1]

Gunkel also saw in the passage a nature myth which he tried to reconstruct. He suggested that it could have had either a Babylonian or a Phoenician origin.[2]

Twentieth Century

By the turn of the century scholars began to press the view held by some previous scholars[3] concerning the date and authorship

---

feminine Venus: "The former had a title (Mustelil) closely related to the Hebrew hélél, rendered here 'Shining One'; its period was from sunset onwards, that of the feminine Venus from sunrise onwards."

[1]J. S. Skinner, The Book of Isaiah, 2 vols., CBSC (Cambridge: University Press, 1896), 1:122.

[2]H. Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos, pp. 133-34. In the myth, Hēlal ben Shahar (The Morning Star, or the Son of the Dawn), who shines in the skies in the morning, has his brightness dimmed by the sun's rays. Gunkel, following Duhm, also talks about the similarity of the Greek myth of Phaeton, son of Eos, p. 134; Otto Procksch, Jesaia I, KAT (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 197, agrees with Gunkel in the view that an astral myth glitters in vss. 12-13, and discusses several aspects of Babylonian myths which, according to him, parallel the material of this passage. Cf. also Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. P. R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 36; Gottfried Quell, "Jesaja 14:1-23," in Festschrift Friedrich Baumgärtel, ed. J. Herrmann and L. Rost (Erlangen: Universitätsbund Erlangen, 1959), pp. 150-53.

[3]J. G. L. Eichhorn (Einleitung in das Alte Testament [Leipzig: Weidmanns, 2nd ed., 1787], quoted by G. B. Gray, The Book of Isaiah 1-39, ICC [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912], p. 233), treated the entire oracle (13:1-14:23) as post-exilic; W. Gesenius,

of the "oracle against Babylon." G. B. Gray saw the date of the composition of the prose oracle as coming no earlier than the exile.[1] He held that the poem (14:4b-21), for which it is difficult to propose a date, refers to the fall of Babylon. Babylon could be to the writer a symbolic name for all those that oppress Israel. Concerning vss. 12-15, Gray affirms that "the tyrant is half compared half (for the moment) identified with the radiant hero of some astral myth."[2] This could have originally come from Babylon or Phoenicia, but we cannot determine its exact original form. In his dissertation on the prophecies against Babylon in Isaiah,[3] Lohmann proposed that the passage was a reference to a version of a known myth of Helal ben Shahar. The king is compared to the radiant morning star. He suggests that the poet could have had the Babylonian

---

Der Prophet Jesaia (Leipzig: Vogel, 1821), quoted by Gray, Isaiah, 233, dated chap. 13 in the Exile, etc. See Gray, Isaiah, pp. 233-34, for more discussion on the matter.

[1]G. B. Gray, p. 233, considers 14:1-4a (22-23) as post-exilic and that the author of 14:4b-21 is not the author of 14:1-4a. He believes that a post-exilic editor wrote 14:1-4a to connect the two poems (13:2-22 and 14:4b-21) and possibly added 14:22-27. Gray says,

> "If v. 19 be imaginative prophecy, then it is simplest to see in the entire poem a paean over Assyria, or Babylon, personified (cp. 10:5-13), or 'totum corpus Regum Assyriorum et Babylonicorum,' rather than over a particular Assyrian or Babylonian king. So it is of the character and achievements of a people rather than of a single definite monarch that Ezekiel thinks, even when he uses the term 'king of Tyre,' 'king of Egypt,' in prophecies that have several points of contact with this poem: see Ezek 28-32. For a briefer example of a lament written to suit merely anticipated and not actual conditions, see Amos 5:1f.
>
> But if v. 19 refers to an actual historical event, it refers to details of which nothing is otherwise known, whether the king in question be Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, or Nabonidus." (p. 251)

[2]G. B. Gray, Isaiah, p. 525.

[3]Paul Lohmann, Die anonymen Prophetien gegen Babel aus der Zeit des Exils (Berlin: Rostock University Press, 1910), pp. 24-25.

Ishtar myth in view, and it has nothing to do with the Itana myth. The concept of the mount of meeting in the north, says Lohmann, was taken up by the Israelites in older times from Babylon through the Canaanites.

After the discoveries of Ras-Shamra in 1929, the primacy of the alleged myth became strong because there was a tendency to replace the old Pan-Babylonian approach with Pan-Ugaritism.[1] De Vaux[2] presented several correspondences[3] in phraseology which he saw between the Isaianic passage and the material from Ras-Shamra. From those he arrived at the conclusion that the poem of Isa 14 was inspired by a Phoenician model. De Lange,[4] Jacob,[5] and Gray[6] are a sample of those who have adopted a similar view.

In his lengthy article on Psalm 82, J. Morgenstern held the

---

[1]Donald E. Gowan, When Man Becomes God PTMS, 6 (Pittsburgh, PA: Pickwick Press, 1975), p. 50.

[2]Roland de Vaux, "Les Textes de Ras-Shamra et L'Ancien Testament," RB 46 (1937):566-447.

[3]Hll and Šḥr form the two parties of the Ugaritic Pantheon. Hll is the father of goddess Kosharôt. Šḥr forms with šlm the couple of the "graceful gods," sons of El; the Mount of Assembly (הר מועד) may be compared to the "Assembly of the sons of God" shown in one text, or with the Mount of El Ṣaphon, the mountain of the gods, etc. See CTA 1:17.2.27; 1:23.52-53; 1:24.5-6, 40-42.

[4]R. de Langhe, Les Textes de Ras Shamra-Ugarit et leurs rapports avec le milieu Biblique de l'Ancien Testament, 2 vols. (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1945), pp. 239-44.

[5]Edmond Jacob, Ras-Shamra-Ugarit et L'Ancien Testament (Neuchatel: Delachaux et Niestle, 1960), pp. 104-05; "Les Textes de Ras Shamra-Ugarit," RHPR 27 (1947):255-58.

[6]John Gray, The Legacy of Canaan, VTSUP 5 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), p. 288, thinks the fall of the bright Venus-star who proved an inadequate substitute for Baal is reflected in Isa 14:12-15.

view that the passage (vss. 12-14) is a combination of two variant versions of a myth which had been current in Israel for some time prior to the composition of Isa 14, but which was not native in Israel. It is his conclusion that

> . . . the myths we have found cited in several variant forms in apocalyptic and N.T. writings, the myth of the fall of Satan and his associate angels from heaven to earth, or even into the abyss, is identical with the myth of Helel ben Shahar of Isa. 14:12-14, that, in other words, we have to do in all these passages with only one myth, which must have been current in Judaism for a very long period and which quite naturally in the course of its evolution and its adaptation to various purposes, historical and theological, developed several slightly variant forms. . . .[1]

He assigns the chapter a date of composition (c. 486-476 B.C.) and identifies the figure of the King of Babylon with either Darius or, more likely, Xerxes.

Walther Eichrodt, in his famous OT Theology, thinks Isaiah used the figure of Hēlāl as "a poetic simile for the outrageous self-aggrandisement of the earthly world-ruler. But behind it stands a myth stemming indeed from paganism, of the rebellion of an angelic being against the most high God, which ended in his being thrown down into the underworld."[2] In his extensive

---

[1]"The Mythological Background," p. 109. Morgenstern identifies Helel ben Shahar with the figure of Ps 82:6, but is criticized by Matitiahu Tsevat ("God and the Gods in Assembly," HUCA 40-41 [1969-1970]:131), who says that "if the chief protagonist was generally known, this name could hardly remain unmentioned in our Psalm passage."

[2]Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker, OTL, 2 vols. (London: S.C.M. Press, 1967 [original German, 1950]), 2:208. Two decades later Eichrodt (Der Herr der Geschichte BAT 17, II [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1967], p. 25) rejects the identification of Lucifer with Satan, but thinks that the prophetic usage of the story of the rebellion of the morning star prepared the way for the new insight concerning the career of Satan which (according to him) obtained its impression through the NT message.

discussion of the Lucifer theme in the Bible, Schmidt applies the song primarily to the king of Babylon.[1] He goes on to say that

> Hinter solchen angeblich nur bildhaften, übertragenen Wendungen steckt doch viel mehr, und damit geraten wir in den Bereich des Mythus. Ein solcher Mythus gilt einem letztlich hintergründigen Vorgang, einem dämonischen, einem göttlichen Geschehen, dessen Hintergründigkeit die Vordergründigkeit der Geschichte, des menschlichen Geschehens erhellt.[2]

And he says further,

> Das ein asiatischer Grosskönig als Lucifer, Sohn der Aurora, auftritt, ist zu spezifisch, als das da eine abgegriffene, übertragene Sprache vorliegen könnte. Man möchte ja wohl an sich den Vergleichspunkt zwischen Babelkönig und Morgenstern allein darin sehen, dass beiden Gestalten strahlende Macht eignet. Der Prophet ist aber in seinen Drohworten nicht nur damit beschäftigt, sondern er weist sofort auf den Sturz beider Grössen aus der Höhe in die Tiefe. Und dazu dommt, dass der Grosskönig sich die Bezeichnungen Hêlal und Sohn des Šachar beilegt bzw. sich beilegen lässt.[3]

Eichrodt said, "The myth no longer has a life of its own . . . but belongs to the treasure-house of poetry, on which poets and prophets liked to draw in order to clothe their thoughts in rich apparel."[4] K. L. Schmidt criticized this by saying that myth and history should not be "played off" against each other. The Isaianic Lucifer-declaration manifests richness and power when one understands it in its complexity of heavenly and earthly, of demonic and human, of enigmatic and evident. Finally he adds, "Ist es durchaus keine metabasis eis allo genos, wenn der als Lucifer apostrophierte Babel-König mit dem Teufel gleichgesetzt worden ist."[5] Marvin

---

[1] Karl L. Schmidt, "Lucifer als gefallene Engelmacht," ThZ 7 (1951):161-69.

[2] Ibid., p. 166. [3] Ibid. [4] Eichrodt, Theology, 2:115.

[5] Schmidt, "Lucifer," p. 173; cf. Rivkah Schärf Kluger, Satan in the Old Testament (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967). Kluger affirms: "It therefore might not be going too far to see in them (passages, including Isa 14:12-15) the real germ cells of the later concept of Satan as the fallen Lucifer" (p. 117).

Pope[1] believes that due to information available from the Kumarbi and Ullikummi myths[2] and from what is known of the fall of El[3] in the Ugaritic myths, we can say that the background of the Isaianic passage and related texts (Ezek 28, Ps 82, etc.) is pre-Israelite and originally had nothing to do with YHWH;

> . . . the ultimate mythological background of this allegory, as also in the case of the Prince of Tyre in Ezek. xxviii, is a theomachy or Titanomachy, similar to the Hurrian and Greek versions, in which El and his champion (Prince Sea) and his cohorts were defeated and banished to the netherworld.[4]

In one of the most detailed studies of Isa 14:12-15, P. Grelot has taken up Gunkel's suggestion that the "Morning Star" is Phaeton.[5] He has endeavored to reconstruct the so-called "original myth" which he thinks lies behind the Isaian passage. This he has done especially by examining South Arabic, Ugaritic, and Greek materials. He concludes that the same myth is found--although in variant forms--in the literature of Ugarit, Greece, and Israel. This evidence suggests to him that Helel is the same figure as

---

[1]Marvin H. Pope, El in the Ugaritic Texts, VTSup 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), pp. 103-05.

[2]Cf. Arvid S. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras-Shamra Texts (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952), p. 89.

[3]E. Theodore Mullen, Jr. (The Assembly of the Gods, HSM 24 [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980], p. 242) criticizes Pope, saying that "it is impossible to agree with M. Pope that the myth underlying Isa 14 and Ezek 28 was a revolt by ʾĒl himself in an attempt to regain the position taken by Baʿl. Both texts make it perfectly clear that the revolt was against, not by the god ʾĒl."

[4]Pope, p. 103.

[5]P. Grelot, "Isaie XIV 12-15 et son arrière-plan mythologique," RHR 149 (1956):18-48. Cf. Walter Baumgartner, "Israelitisch-Griechische Sagenbeziehungen," in Zum Alten Testament und Seiner Umwelt (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), pp. 157-58. Baumgartner draws attention by a North American Indian myth to the universal character of this motive and is doubtful concerning the identification of Helal and Phaeton.

Phaeton-Venus.[1] Grelot suggests that vss. 12-15 could be a possible portion of the 'Attar myth which is partially preserved in the Ugaritic material.[2]

At the end of his article Grelot points out that the biblical prophet utilized themes from pagan myths and applied them in the biblical context, or in the context of the battle of Yahweh against His human enemies, as well as against the angels, etc. In the end he admits that the utilization by the ancient Christian theologians of Isa 14 to evoke the fall of Satan was not an arbitrary decision; Helel the son of the dawn became, with good reason, the poetic prototype of the fallen angel.[3]

In an extensive article on the Isaian passage, Quell has held that vss. 4b-21 were not produced by Isaiah but derived from a pagan source. Vss. 12-15 especially bring evidence from the mythical sphere of the ancient form. The poem has nothing to do with God; it deals with gods. A minor prophet may have obtained a work of pagan poetry, translated into Hebrew, and then Yahwehized it. Quell thinks that originally the poem had nothing to do with Babylon, that it must have originated in a myth. He did not apply this passage to any specific figure.[4]

---

[1] See below, pp. 80-81, for criticism of this view held by Grelot.

[2] "Isaie XIV," pp. 43-45. In his itnerpretation of Helel as being equivalent to 'Attar, Grelot is supported by Nickelsburg, Resurrection, p. 69; Mullen, The Assembly of the Gods, pp. 238-42; and J. Gray, "Day Star," IDB, 1:785.

[3] Grelot, RHR 149 (1956):45-48.

[4] Quell, "Jesaia 14:1-23," pp. 131, 150, 157. Cf. G. Fohrer, Das Buch Jesaia I (Stuttgart: Zwingli-Verlag, 1966), pp. 190-92; A. S. Herbert, Isaiah 1-39, CBC (Cambridge: University Press, 1973), p. 103.

Brevard Childs[1] agrees with Gunkel that the old translations of Helal as the morning star, and the reference to Baal Zaphon indicate that the passage (vss. 12-15) derives from Canaanite mythology as a nature myth. According to Childs, the prophetic writer reworked the old myth[2] into his taunt song. Childs rejects the suggested parallels from Babylonian literature and points towards a Canaanite provenience of the myth, although he recognizes that an exact parallel in Canaanite literature has not yet been found. He sees the use of the myth in this passage as of "only illustrative value as an extended figure of speech."[3]

W. H. Schmidt holds the view that in Isa 14:13-15 originally separate traditions are fused:

> Der Text ist nicht nur literarisch, sondern auch traditionsgeschichtlich spät. . . . Deshalb ist von hier aus kein Schluss auf die alten Traditionen statthaft; der Text lässt sich nicht ohne weiteres auf einen kanaanäischen Mythos zurückführen.[4]

In comparing the Isaian passage with Ezek 28:11-17 he adds:

> Ident so die Vertreibung aus dem Gottesgarten zur Verstossung vom Gottesberg wird, gleicht sich die Erzählung vom Fall des irdischen Königs dem Mythos vom Sturz des Himmelswesens (Jes 14:12ff.) an.[5]

---

[1] Myth and Reality, pp. 68-71. Among those who have the same idea at this point we note John Bright, "Isaiah," PCB (London: Nelson, 1962), p. 500.

[2] See Childs, Myth and Reality, p. 69, for his suggested reconstructed myth.

[3] Childs observes that "it was a serious misunderstanding of this passage when Christian commentators (Tertullian, Gregory the Great, etc.) interpreted the fall of Helal in the light of Luke 10.18 as referring to the pre-history of Satan and revived a mythology already overcome in the Old Testament" (p. 70).

[4] Werner H. Schmidt, Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel, BZAW 80 (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1966), p. 35.

[5] Ibid., p. 35.

In her studies on the mythological elements in the OT, Ohler[1] affirms that Helel ben Shahar became a model of the conduct of arrogant kings, as well as the first created model for the city of Tyre. Ohler emphasizes that Helel ben Shahar strives to reach up into the highest regions of heaven, but he is, nevertheless, in heaven itself already. He is thrown out of heaven into earth, into the pit. A myth, otherwise unknown to us, is reckoned as according the highest honor to the arrogant aims of this Helel ben Shahar. Several reasons are presented by Ohler to show that the being in Ezek 28:11-17, and Helel are two different figures. Each is based upon a different myth.[2]

Oldenburg has made a detailed study on 'Attar's myth in South Arabia, but he was unable to demonstrate any trace of it present in Isa 14.[3] He thinks that El of the Ugaritic pantheon, who had his residence upon Mount Sapân, may be reflected in the words of Isa 14:13.[4] Summing up, Oldenburg admits that there are no myths in the Hebrew Bible. However,

> Illustrations from Gentile mythology are used as parables expressing spiritual truths. Whereas El is Yahweh, who is indeed the only true god, every other rival deity was identified with the devil. Thus the myth of the fallen star in reality describes Satan's downfall in primeval times.[5]

---

[1]Annemarie Öhler, Mythologische Elemente im Alten Testament KBANT (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1969), pp. 176ff.

[2]Ohler points out that a distinct difference between these two stories is the fact that they take place in different realms: the divine realm from which it falls down in the one myth is heaven and in the other is the earthly mount of God (p. 176).

[3]Ulf Oldenburg, "Above the Stars of El: El in Ancient South Arabic Religion," ZAW 82 (1970):206-08.

[4]Ulf Oldenburg, The Conflict between El and Ba'al in Canaanite Religion (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 104.

[5]Oldenburg, "Above the Stars," p. 206.

J. W. McKay[1] examined Grelot's article and points out that his analysis of the Greek material is interesting and illuminating and agrees with him in "that the Hebrew and the Greek myths correspond." McKay goes even further in fitting the correspondence and admitting "that Phoenician mediation may still be maintained." However, he sees some remaining serious difficulties such as the non-correspondence of the parent-deities, "for Eos was a goddess whose beauty the Greeks extolled, while Shahar, with his brother Shalim, is a voracious young male god who roams the desert fringes. . . ."[2] In continuing his efforts to solve the "alleged mythological allusions" in Isa 14:12-15, McKay has made a study of the use of the word הילל.[3] Generally it is taken as referring to a personal being, according to the MT. It is thus taken as a reference to a natural phenomenon. McKay admits the possibility of its being found in the mythological motifs of the myths of Helel and Phaeton, but he is aware that "there is no known Canaanite or Phoenician myth which shows close correspondence with those myths."[4] Finally he thinks it possible that upon its entrance into Canaan, the Greek myth underwent change and modification in a way which made it into a wholly Canaanite tale even though the roles of its characters were modified. McKay suggested a list of steps by

---

[1]"Helel and the Dawn-Goddess," VT 20 (1970):451-64; for other difficulties pointed out by McKay, see p. 456. Cf. Fritz Stolz, Strukturen und Figuren im Kult von Jerusalaem, BZAW 118 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970), p. 111. See Herrmann Barth, Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit, WMANT 48 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1977), p. 134, for criticism on McKay's views.

[2]McKay, "Helel," p. 455. [3]Ibid., p. 461. [4]Ibid.

which the Greek myth came to be altered.[1]

Seth Erlandsson sees mythological allusions in vs. 12 and a relationship of it with Ezek 28:11-19. Components of a myth have been used to represent the king's arrogance and fall. Besides that Erlandsson believes "allusion is also made to Oriental royal ideology with divine kingship as an example of hybris."[2] Since Erlandsson's central contention is that Isa 13 and 14 have their "linguistic and historical context in the accounts of the prophet Isaiah on the occasion of the Assyrian occupation," he obviously must see behind the poem (vss. 4b-21) the figure of an Assyrian king, i.e., Sargon II or Sennacherib.

Craigie[3] carries further Fohrer's[4] view that Isaiah 14:12-15 is an adaptation of certain themes associated with the Canaanite god Athtar by finding a better translation for an epithet of Athtar which would be "luminous" and would stress the character as a "shining one." He emphasizes that the name ben Shahar is not an indication of genealogy but a reference to in descent (the fall of the Venus star at dawn); this stresses Athtar's character as a warrior.

In his commentary on Isaiah,[5] Wildberger holds the view that the poem was written later than Isaiah's times. He presents,

---

[1]Ibid., pp. 463-64.

[2]Seth Erlandsson, The Burden of Babylon, CBOT 4 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1970), pp. 121, 123, 161, 166.

[3]P. C. Craigie, "Helel, Athtar and Phaeton (Isa 14:12-15)," ZAW 85 (1973):223-25.

[4]Jesaja, 1:179-80.

[5]Hans Wildberger, Jesaja, BKAT 10 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neuchirchener Verlag, 1974), pp. 542ff.

with some reservation, the idea that Nebuchadnezzar could fit the figure in the passage. He holds that it was written before the death of this monarch. Wildberger points out that this personage is not identified. Since it was common in those days to identify such figures in presenting the oracles against the foreign nations, this figure could represent a more general world power--in the same way "Babel" has become a general code name for a world power. The text, according to Wildberger, would have some historical reference, but not of any ultimate signicance. Hence, the passage could deal primarily with the type.

In 1975 D. Gowan presented some considerations concerning the interpretation of the Isaian passage through the years. He sees considerable affinities with the Ugaritic material in it and agrees that the Ras-Shamra texts have shed new light on many terms which occur in Isa 14. These include the rephaim, Saphon, etc. However, Gowan criticizes the idea that because of such similarities in both materials there must have existed a Canaanite myth like Isa 14:12-15, from which the latter was derived.[1]

Gowan takes the great mythological themes which appear in Isa 14; (1) the ascent into heaven, (2) the fall from heaven, (3) war in heaven, etc., and compares them with similar themes in related literature from other cultures. From these comparisons he arrived at the following conclusions:

1. "No one has yet discovered a close parallel to the myth recounted in Isa 14; even though each of the elements in it

---

[1]Donald Gowan, When Man Becomes God, p. 45.

appears in other literatures they are always combined in significantly different ways."[1]

2. "The structure of Isa 14.4-21 makes a human being the subject of all these themes."[2]

3. "The passage tells of a rebellious god, with the subject changed; now it is a human being."[3]

In concluding he observes that the Israelite writer has almost "exalted man to heaven, at least to the point that he can dream of equality with the most high."[4]

O. Loretz[5] declares that equating the hybris of the ruler of Babylon and his fall with the myth of הילל בן־שחר mythologizes its destiny. The myth, he affirms, appears in the passage already in the casing of the astral angelology which appears also in Isa 24:21-22. The following then would be seen in Isa 14:12-15:

1. The poem on the fall of the king reaches back to the tradition of the Canaanite poetry.

2. It transferred to the fate of the King of Babylon.

3. The fall of the King of Babel was explained by the Helel ben Shahar myth.

4. This interpretation that occurred through the myth of Helel ben Shahar came to supply the background of the views about the origin, work, and fate of the good and evil spirits and angels. Babylon and its ruler thus developed into a manifestation of the

---

[1]Ibid., pp. 65-66. [2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid. [4]Ibid.

[5]O. Loretz, "Der Kanaanäisch-Biblische Mythos vom Sturz des Sahar-Sohnes Hêlēl," UF 8 (1976):135.

fallen heavenly beings who are contrary to God.

Loretz adds:

> Babylon wird auf diese Weise als eine dämonisch-satanische Macht beschrieben und der überlieferte Text im Sinne der neuen Theologie interpretiert, die wohl unter iranischen Einfluss den bösen Geistern oder Engeln Einwirkung auf das Geschehen in der Welt zuschreibt.[1]

Hermann Barth, in his well-researched commentary on Isa 14:12-15,[2] sees in Shahar, El, and Elyon the mount of assembly, the top of Saphan, mythical unity-motives; but he adds that

> Jedoch stellt der Abschnitt nicht einfach eine ad hoc komponierte Addition solch einzelner Traditionselemente dar, sondern greift einen mythologischen Stoff auf, in dem verschiedene einzelne Vorstellungselemente bereits innerhalb der Darstellung eines Vorgangs verbunden waren.[3]

Barth believes that the origin of the imagery employed come to this myth from Canaanite sources, but he does not think it is very likely that vss. 12-15 are based upon the reconstruction from a myth. He thinks the identification of Helel with 'Attar is doubtful, holding that the episode in the Baāl cycle contains important differences from the acts described in Isa 14:12-14. He also rejects the identification of Helel with the Greek Phaeton. He compares Isa 14:12-15 with Ezek 28:11f.[4] and arrives at the conclusion that the former is to be seen against the backdrop of a concept in which the king or primitive man is banished from the mount of God because of his self-exaltation. From there he was cast down to earth.

---

[1] Ibid., p. 136.

[2] H. Barth, Die Jesaja-Worte, pp. 131-35.

[3] Ibid., p. 132.

[4] Ibid., p. 134.

Our conclusions derived from this review of the literature on the interpretation of Isa 14 are summarized below after the literature on Ezek 28 has been reviewed.[1]

A Survey of the Literature on the Interpretation of Ezekiel 28

Jewish Interpreters

Among the Jewish commentators we find the passage (Ezek 28) applied to Hiram, King of Tyre,[2] to Nebuchadnezzar,[3] and to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.[4] We also find a very interesting commentary on Ezek 28:13-14 which says:

> Adam deserved to be spared the experience of death. Why then was the penalty of death decreed against him? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, foresaw that Nebuchadnezzar and Hiram would declare themselves gods; therefore was death decreed against him. Thus it is written, Thou wast in Eden the garden of God (Ezek. xxviii, 13): was then Hiram in Eden? Surely not! But He said thus to him: "It is thou who causedst him who was in Eden [sc. Adam] to die." R. Hiyya, the son of R. Berekiah's daughter, quoted in R. Berekiah's name: Thou wast the far-covering cherub--kerub: It was thou who didst cause that youth (robeh--sc. Adam) to die.[5]

We see in this quotation the Ezekiel passage connected to Isa 14 (Nebuchadnezzar being the oppressor), and the Cherub, who is represented by the King of Tyre, as being the one who caused Adam to fall.

From the Church Fathers to the Reformation

As we have seen in the case of Isa 14, the passage of the "Guardian Cherub" (כרוב הסכך) of Ezek 28 has--from the time of

---

[1] See pp. 48-51.

[2] Baba Bathra, 75a; Hull, 89a; Midr, Gen 38:1; Exod 7:1; Lev 15:1.

[3] Midr. Gen 47:29. [4] Midr. Lev 16:1. [5] Midr. Gen 1:31.

Origen to the Reformation--been connected with the "Morning Star" (הילל בן שחר) and generally been applied to Satan. Besides that we have seen some other instances in which the Ezekiel passage was interpreted or commented upon independently. In refuting the dualistic theogonies of Gnosticism, Origin refers to Ezek 28 by saying that the passage (vss. 12-17)

> cannot be understood of a man, but of some superior power which had fallen away from a higher position. . . . These powers (angels) were not formed or created so by nature, but fell from a better to a worse position, and were converted into wicked beings.[1]

Tertullian furthers Origen's view, stating:

> For in the person of the prince of Tyre it is said in reference to the devil: "Moreover . . ." (Ezek 28:12-16). This description, it is manifest, properly belongs to the transgression of the angel, and not to the prince's: for none among human beings was either born in the paradise of God, not even Adam himself, who was rather translated thither; nor placed with a cherub upon God's holy mountain, that is to say, in the heights of heaven, from which the Lord testifies that Satan fell; nor detained amongst the stones of fire, and the flashing rays of burning constellations, whence Satan was cast down like lightning (Luke 10:18). No, it is none else than the very author of sin who was denoted in the person of a sinful man: he was once irreproachable, at the time of his creation, formed for good by God, as by the good Creator of irreproachable creatures, and adorned with every angelic glory, and associated with God, good with the Good; but afterwards of his own accord removed to evil.[2]

Cyril of Jerusalem (c. A.D. 315-c. 386)[3] and Ambrose (c. A.D. 340-397) held the same view.[4] Jerome has an interesting comment on this passage which we quote at length:

---

[1]Origen De Principiis 1.5.4 (ANF, 4:258).

[2]Tertullian Against Marcion 2.9-10.

[3]Cyril of Jerusalem Cathechetical Lectures 2.4 (NPNF, 7:8-9).

[4]Ambrose De Paradise 1.2.9 (MPL, 14:294).

> He is the one to whom the words of Ezechiel are addressed: "You were stamped with the seal of perfection." Notice exactly what the prophet says: "the seal of perfection." He did not say to the devil, you are the sign of perfection, but the seal of perfection. God had set His impression upon you and made you like unto Himself; but you afterwards destroyed the resemblance. You were Created in the image and likeness of God.
>
> In that same prophecy it says, moreover: "With the Cherub I placed you; you were in the Garden of God among precious stones, the beryl and the garnet. And you fell," Ezechiel says, "and were banned from the mountain of the Lord." This prince is the king of Tyre, the king of Tyre from the time he fell--inasmuch as Tyre in Hebrew means SOR, that is tribulation. That prince, therefore, who at first was in heaven, has now become the king of Tyre, the king of the tribulation of this world. "You shall fall like one of the princes." Since it says "like one," it shows that there are others also.[1]

Throughout the centuries scholars such as Gregory the Great,[2] Rabanus Maurus (c. A.D. 776-856),[3] Thomas Aquinas,[4] and Caspar Schwenckfeld[5] shared the view of the Church Fathers in the interpretation of Ezek 28 as being applied to Satan.

The Reformers

Luther comments very briefly on Ezek 28, and says, "For thus Ezekiel says to the Devil under the name of the prince of Tyre (Ezek 28:3): 'Behold, you are wiser than Daniel'."[6]

---

[1]Jerome Homily on Psalm 82, in FaCh, 48:107-08. Note Commentariorum in Ezechielem Prophetan 10.28 (MPL 25:273), where Jerome relates Ezek 28 to Isa 14 and Luke 10. See also, Against Rufinus 2.2 (MPL, 23:449).

[2]Gregory the Great Expositio Librum Job 32.40.23 (MPL, 76: 664-65).

[3]Rabanus Maurus Commentariorum in Ezechielem 11 (MPL, 110: 792).

[4]Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologica 1.317.

[5]Caspar Schwenckfeld, "Fragment of a Letter to Leonhart Hieber?" 13:142.

[6]Luther, First Lectures on the Psalms, in Luther's Works, 10:347.

Calvin stopped his commentary on Ezekiel in chap. 20, so we do not have his comments on chap. 28, but it is almost certain he rejected the patristic application to Satan as he did with Isa 14.[1]

In the Nineteenth Century

W. J. Schroeder held the view that the Cherub in this passage has little or nothing at all to do with paradise. He supposed that the designation Cherub simply points to the temple at Jerusalem, and especially to the most holy place there. He connects it with the influence Tyre had there in the time of David and Solomon when the Tyrians helped in the building enterprises in Israel.[2]

In 1876, Fairbairn, the great typologist, interpreted the passage as applying only to the historical Tyre. He criticized the Church Fathers and others who had applied this text as having to do mystically with Satan.[3] The passage is taken as an historical parable in which the kings of Tyre were first personified as one individual--an ideal man.

Keil interpreted this passage (vss. 1-10) as applying to historical events that occurred in Tyre in the sixth century B.C.: "The threat applies, not to the one king, Ithobal, who was reigning at the time of the siege of Tyre by the Chaldeans, but to the

---

[1]Calvin, Isaiah, 1:442.

[2]W. J. Schroeder, Der Prophet Hezekiel, Lange Bibelwerk (Bielefeld und Leipzig: Velhagand und Klasing, 1873), p. 260.

[3]Patrick Fairbairn, Ezekiel and the Book of His Prophecy: An Exposition (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1876), pp. 306-8, 314.

King as the founder and creator of the might of Tyre. . . ."[1]

Concerning the lament (vss. 12-19), Keil says Ezekiel compares the situation of the prince of Tyre with that of the first man in Paradise; drawing in vss. 15, 16 a comparison between the fall of the King of Tyre and the fall of Adam.

Keil dedicates nine pages of his commentary to citing ancient sources with which he tries to explain the fulfillment of this prophecy about Tyre, from the famous thirteen-year siege by Nebuchadnezzar, the struggle of Alexander the Great to overcome it, etc. In the end, he says, the prophecy finally was fulfilled.[2]

At the close of the nineteenth century Bertholet saw this passage not as referring to an individual but merely to a typical individual who represents Tyre's sin; his guilt is that of considering himself a god. For him the paradise conception is the same here as that in Gen 3, and thus it probably was borrowed from that source.[3]

Toy affirmed that "the prophet had before him not the latter (Gen 2), but a fuller Babylonian narrative, out of which that in Genesis also was probably drawn up";[4] and interpreted the Cherub as

---

[1]K. F. Keil, The Prophecies of Ezekiel, BCOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952 [first ed., 1877]), p. 408.

[2]Ibid., pp. 417-25.

[3]A Bertholet, Das Buch Hesekiel, KHC (Leipzig: J. C. Mohr, 1897), pp. 147-49.

[4]C. H. Toy, The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, SBOT 12 (New York: Dodd, Mead. & Co., 1899), p. 154; he adds that "the Jewish exiles in Babylonia, however, appear to have transferred Paradise to the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris in the north, because they believed that God dwelt in the north, and not, as of old, at Horeb. Cf., the notes on Ezek 1:4, Isa 14:13, and Jastrow, Religion of Babylonia and Assyria (Boston, 1898), pp. 506, 577" (p. 154).

guardian, not as the king. Kraetzschmar viewed the passage as an imaginative handling of the Paradise story by Ezekiel,[1] while Gunkel calls it an older and more mythological recension than Gen 2-3.[2]

The Twentieth Century

By the beginning of the twentieth century most interpreters held the hypothesis that the Israelite and neighboring peoples probably knew an ancient myth from which these two passages (Ezek and Gen) derived. Both of these Hebrew writers are thought to have adapted the legend of a glorious being who dwelt in a Paradise to their purposes, which explains the similarities in the accounts.[3]

One of the commentators representative of this group is John Skinner, who in 1908 wrote that "the king here is simply the representative of the genius of the community."[4] Skinner held that the Prince in vss. 1-10 is conceived as a man, and the King in vss. 11-19 appears as an angelic being, an inhabitant of Eden, and

---

[1]R. Kraetzschmar, Das Buch Ezechiel, HAT (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, Ruprecht, 1900), p. 217.

[2]H. Gunkel, Genesis GHK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, Ruprecht, 1901), pp. 34.

[3]See, e.g., O. Procksch, Geschichtsbetrachtung und geschichtliche Überlieferung bei den Vorexilischen Propheten (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1902), pp. 161-64; and A. A. Bevan, "The King of Tyre in Ezek XXVIII," JTS 4 (1902-1903):500-05, who held similar ideas, and affirms that "the legend of the primeval garden served to explain the decorations of the Sanctuary, and the Sanctuary, in its turn, seemed to an uncritical age a standing witness to the truth of the legend. . . . The functions ascribed to the living Cherub in Paradise may, by a very natural figure of speech, be ascribed also to the symbolical Cherub in the Tyrian Temple."

[4]John Skinner, The Book of Ezekiel, Exp B 13 (New York: A. G. Armstrong and Son, 1908), p. 252.

a companion of the Cherub, sinless at first and falling from his high state through his own transgression. ". . . The passage only clothes in forms drawn from Babylonian mythology the boundless self-glorification of Tyre."[1] According to Skinner, Ezekiel must have obtained a knowledge of some fragments of these mythical notions during his sojourn in Babylon.[2] Several authors have suggested mythological origins for the passage such as "a theomachy or Titanomachy similar to the Hurrian and Greek versions";[3] the myth of Prometheus;[4] but except for the mentioned Prometheus myth, no myths have been presented upon which the allusions are based.[5]

Most twentieth-century scholars see this passage in Ezekiel, to a greater or lesser degree, as derived from or reflecting the Genesis narrative.[6]

---

[1]Ibid., p. 253. [2]Ibid., p. 257. [3]Pope, El, p. 103.

[4]T. Gaster, Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969), pp. 322-23.

[5]Cf. McKenzie, JBL 75 (1956):322-23.

[6]A. B. Davidson and A. W. Streane, The Book of Ezekiel, CBSC (Cambridge: University Press, 1916), p. 223; J. Herrmann, Ezekiel übersetzt und erklärt, KAT 11 (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Werner Scholl, 1924), p. 182; N. P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall, p. 56; G. A. Cooke, The Book of Ezekiel, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936), pp. 313-20. A. Bertholet ("Hesekiel," HAT [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1936], pp. 102, 103) viewed the passage as a parallel of the Paradise story of Gen 3, but it seems to project a much older mythic setting of individual features. He presents a series of mythical scenes which he says Ezekiel intermingles with the personality of the king of Tyre as a personification of the mercenary creature. See also J. H. Kroeze, "The Tyre-Passages in the Book of Ezekiel," in Studies on the Book of Ezekiel (Pretoria: University Press, 1961), 10-23; D. M. G. Stalker, Ezekiel, TBC (London: SCM Press, 1968), p. 216. J. W. Wevers, Ezekiel, NCB (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1969), pp. 213-19, thinks vss. 1-10 are almost free from mythological overtones and are "a judgment against the city as personified under the figure of its king," vss. 11-19 deal with the person of the king, and must refer to Ittobaal. The Paradise myth can be seen behind this

In 1954 J. L. McKenzie,[1] following Cooke,[2] took the position that Ezek 28:12-18 contains a variant form of the tradition which appears in Gen 2-3. He admits "indisputably common features" in the two passages but recognizes some remarkable divergences.[3]

---

passage, but the lament has been considerably expanded. Wevers tries to recover the original text by removing what he thinks were redactorial insertions. Walther Eichrodt, Ezekiel, OTL (London: SCM Press, 1970), p. 392, has the opinion that the passage is closely realted to the story of Gen 2-3, but Ezek 28 has clear traces of its heathen origin. This suggests other traditions besides the Paradise story which were known to Israel and dealt with the beginnings of the human race. C. Westermann, Genesis, BKAT (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), p. 335, recognizes similarities and sees more mythical elements in the Ezekelian passage than in Genesis. Walther Zimmerli, Ezekiel, 2:90, 91, 95, believes that the passage deals with the person of the first man and sees in the text a kind of older form of the paradise tradition; the clear distinction the passage makes of creature and Creator shows its Yawehist saturation. Like Wevers, he sees redactional insertions in several parts of the text and makes an attempt to remove then so the original can be recovered. He applies the lament to the king of Tyre, where he is compared to a mythical figure; but at the same time he thinks that it was transformed by a post-exilic interpreter to a permanent paradigm (p. 689). Norman C. Habel, "Ezekiel 28 and the Fall of the First Man," CTM 38 (1967):516-24, believes Ezek 28:12-19 is a "reformulation of a Fall tradition in terms which are meaningful and appropriate for the Tyre situation of the time of Ezekiel. Ezekiel made the Fall event relevant for the king of Tyre by describing the downfall of that king as though he were the first man" (p. 523).

[1]J. L. McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristics of Gen 2-3," TS 15 (1954):531-53. In an article McKenzie wrote two years later ("Mythological Allusions in Ezek 28:12-18," JBL 75 [1956]:322-27), he again criticizes the authors who say Ezekiel "either recounts a foreign myth or alludes to one" but cite no myth upon which the allusions are based. He concludes by restating his previous view that Ezek 28:1-18 "has more points of contact with the Paradise story than with any other biblical passage or with any known mythological pattern" (pp. 322, 327).

[2]Ezekiel, p. 313.

[3]Cf. Ernst Haag, Der Mensch am Anfang, TTS 24 (Trier: Paulinus Verlag, 1970), pp. 73-100, who has made a detailed study of Gen 2-3, comparing it to Ezek 28:1-19 (especially vss. 12-16) arriving at the conclusion that the affirmations of Genesis have directly furnished the structural principle for Ezekiel's prophetic utterances, Ezek 28 being a real variant of the Yahwistic original form.

After criticizing some aspects of the views of Kraetzschmar,[1] Gunkel,[2] Cooke,[3] and Hölscher,[4] McKenzie stressed the superiority of the Hebrew account in comparison to the Mesopotamian cosmogony and affirmed that there is a similar circle of ideas in which the Hebrew account and Mesopotamian mythology move; there was a general common knowledge about the paradise story among the Semitic peoples. He views the figure in vss. 12-19 as no more than a human one.[5]

G. Fohrer[6] holds the view that the myth of the Garden of Elohim is originally from Mesopotamia, and that later it was identified with Eden in Israelite tradition. He also thinks Ezekiel may have been enriched by the Canaanite-Phoenician myth with Babylonian motifs or vice-versa.[7] Herbert G. May believes that the Ezekelian

---

[1]Ezechiel, p. 217; Kraetzschmar thinks that this passage is an imaginative handling by Ezekiel of the paradise story.

[2]Genesis, p. 34; Gunkel has called Ezek 28 an older and more mythological recension than Gen 2-3.

[3]Ezekiel, p. 313; Cooke believes that "the folklore upon which Ezekiel drew had been steeped in Babylonian mythology from early times."

[4]G. Hölscher, Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch, BZAW 39 (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1924), p. 142, held that the material was a Babylonian myth.

[5]McKenzie, "Mythological Allusions," pp. 232-24; "The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3," TS 15 (1954):552. Cf. Herbert G. May, "The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12-19," in Israel's Prophetic Heritage (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 168.

[6]Georg Fohrer, Ezechiel, HAT 13 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [P. Siebeck], 1955), p. 162.

[7]McKenzie, "Mythological Allusions," pp. 322-23, disagrees with Fohrer, saying that although the existence of mythological allusions in the OT cannot be denied, "experience shows that it is rarely possible, if ever, to reconstruct these myths from biblical allusions alone with any degree of accuracy."

passage must have been based on a story of a royal first man and "Adam" who was king.[1]

Kalman Yaron has published a detailed article on Ezek 28: 12-19, in which he starts with the crucial question concerning whether the dweller in the Garden of God was a Cherub (MT) and if the Cherub (reading vss. 14-16 with the LXX) plays the same role as it does in Gen 3:24.[2] He holds that it is important to determine the function of the Cherub in order to correctly interpret this passage.

At the end of his article Yaron concludes, "in opposition to McKenzie and in agreement with Pope, that the allegory describing the descent of the Prince of Tyre to the pit is built of exactly the same elements as the Phoenician epic of El, and does not fit any lesser godlike being, such as the cherub."[3] He finds that the dweller of the Garden of God was modeled after the pattern of the "kingship ideology" of the Ancient Near East, i.e., the king-priest, etc. He also admits that Ezekiel's ideas are in accordance with the monotheistic story of the Garden of Eden.

In his commentary on Ezek 26-28, Van Dijk clearly sets himself on the side of MT when exegeting 28:14-16. He identifies

---

[1]Herbert G. May, "The King in the Garden," pp. 169-76. For more on the king ideology or a royal first man, see Aage Bentzen, King and Messiah (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), pp. 17-18; "King Ideology--'Urmensch'--'Troonsbestifgingsfeest'," ST 2 (1950):152; Sigmund Mowinckel, "Urmensch und 'Königsideologie'," ST 2 (1949):83ff.

[2]Kalman Yaron, "The Dirge over the King of Tyre," ASTI 3 (1964):28-57.

[3]Ibid., p. 54. See Mullen, p. 242, who criticizes Pope's and consequently Yaron's position on the matter. See above p. 27, n. 3.

the Cherub with the king of Tyre or with הכרוב of vs. 12.[1] Although Van Dijk does not explicitly identify the main figure of the passage, he quotes Cornill's thought: "For most evidently the prince is presented as a fallen angel," which he says is "a very relevant suggestion."[2]

Ohler contends that the passage is an independent myth which serves as an illustration of the threatening of the downfall of the city of Tyre. God cast down from the heavenly realm to the earth, a special creature who, on account of his pride, had sinned. The prophet could be applying to Tyre an old Israelite teaching concerning the fall of a special being which found expression in the myth. What may be related to the pagan notions about other gods, the writer ascribes to Yahweh.[3]

D. Gowan compared alleged mythological themes--as he did concerning Isa 14:12-15--with similar themes found in other related cultures.[4] From his comparison he arrived at the conclusion that the paradise myth in its particular Hebrew form was the main source of all the materials the prophet presented. He rejected any suggestion that Ezekiel was quoting a lost Phoenician myth. Both passages, Isa 14 and Ezek 28, have to do--in Gowan's view--with cases of hybris, when man wants to become God. He also rejects any interpretation of those passages which would relate them to the fall of angels.

---

[1]H. J. van Dijk, Ezekiel's Prophecy on Tyre, BO 20 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1968), p. 114.

[2]Ibid. [3]Mythologische Elemente, pp. 173-75.

[4]When Man Becomes God, pp. 19-25.

After discussing the views of several scholars who wrote from the end of the nineteenth century to the present, Williams recently wrote concerning this passage:

> It may be that in this passage we have less a derivation from a fully contained original tale but more a combination of elements from the traditions of the time, mythological as well as contemporary, used to make a satirical attack against an important figure utilizing phraseology which was well known at the time.[1]

> Thus an alternative explanation of Ez 28:12-19 is that it is not taken from a lost myth of a primeval being or even that it is a fuller version of the Genesis 2-3 story. Rather it is a castigation of the Tyrian ruler on the grounds of his hubris in commercial activities and his participation in the local sanctuary rites of sacral kingship. With firm use of illustrative metaphor the prophet drives home his attack using language and terms easily understandable at the time. If anything this should serve to show that he is not so much bound by the material he is using as employing it in an imaginative way for his own purposes.[2]

As he did with Isa 14, Loretz makes a stichometric analysis of the poem of Ezek 28:1-19.[3] After examining the passage in this way, he has selected some phrases upon which he believes the oracle was based. The connection between the basic original material from the myth of creation of man and the king took place later. The presence of the paradise myth in the Tyre oracle points out an ability of the prophet to incorporate new material. Finally Loretz thinks that a post-exilic interpreter transformed the directly impending events into a permanent paradigm. He adds: "Die verstärkte Hereinnahme des Mythos dient der Auswetung der

---

[1]Anthony J. Williams, "The Mythological Background of Ezekiel 28:12-19?" BTB 6 (1976):54.

[2]Ibid., pp. 60-61.

[3]O. Loretz, "Der Sturz des Fürsten von Tyrus (Ez 28:1-19)," UF 8 (1976):455-58.

Vorlage über ein historisch begrenztes Anliegen hinaus."[1]

Some scholars[2] have advanced the view that Ezek 28:12-19 has to do with aspects of the Tyrian religion and its temple, and that the city-god Melkart was meant by the King of Tyre.

Finally, there exists a very small group of scholars who apply the passage especially to Satan and/or to the antichrist typologically, as did the Church Fathers. They do not deny that the narrative has some historical bearing, but they say that Ezekiel discerned behind the earthly monarch attitudes of the motivating force and personality that were impelling him in his opposition to God. Those commentators usually resist the idea of any importation of a foreign mythology or pagan legends into the text. Among those theologians are Chafer,[3] Fausset,[4] SDABC,[5] Ironside,[6] Scofield,[7] and

---

[1]Ibid., p. 458.

[2]Bevan, "The King of Tyre," pp. 500-5; Cameron Mackay, "The King of Tyre," CQR 117 (1934):239-58; J. Dus, "Melek Sōr-Melqart? (Zur Interpretation von Ezek 28:11-19)," ArOr 26 (1958):179-85; see also Steven R. Pulley, "The Qinah concerning the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28:11-19" (M.Div. thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1982), pp. 22-25, for discussion of the view and bibliography on the matter.

[3]Systematic Theology, 2:39-44.

[4]A. R. Fausset, The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, CONT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1945), 4:309.

[5]"King of Tyrus" [Ezek 28:12], SDABC, (1953-57), 4:675.

[6]Isaiah, pp. 88-89. Ironside believes that the words of this passage "cannot apply to any mortal man," and that the Cherub of Ezek 28 is Lucifer of Isa 14. He was the greatest of all angels and perfect, till he fell through pride.

[7]C. I. Scofield, The New Scofield Reference Bible (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), comments on Ezek 28:12-17. He says:

> "Here, as in Isa 14:12, the language goes beyond the king of Tyre to Satan. . . . The unfallen state of Satan is here described; his fall in Isa 14:12-14. But more is here. The vision is not of Satan in his own person, but of Satan fulfilling

Feinberg.[1] This latter writer is one of the few contemporary theologians who goes against the mainstream in the interpretation of this passage. Feinberg strongly resists the views which say that (1) there is in this chapter an interpretation of foreign mythology or pagan legends; (2) Ezekiel was following a free imagination; (3) the narrative behind the prophecy was supposed to be an adaptation of the paradise story in Genesis; and (4) the prophet made use of irony in presenting his prophecy or lament. On the other hand, Feinberg takes his side on the interpretation of the passage stressing that (1) it is impossible, by any stretch of the imagination, to apply most of the passage to any earthly king; (2) the prophet saw the work of Satan, whom the king of Tyre was emulating in so many ways; (3) the anointed Cherub was none other than Satan himself in his position of honor about the throne of God; (4) only if we admit the two previous items can the passage be eminently intelligible and in place.

Conclusions

From the survey of the literature covering the interpretation of the passages discussed above, several conclusions emerge:

Observations Concerning Isa 14

From the first century A.D., when explicit interpretations of the passage (especially vss. 12-15) began to appear, through the

---

himself in and through an earthly king who arrogates to himself divine honors, so that the prince of Tyrus foreshadows the Beast (Dan 7:8; Rev 19:20)."

[1] Ezekiel, pp. 158-64. Cf. also G. T. Meadors, "The Identification of הילל בן שחר in Isaiah 14:12" (M.Div. thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1976), pp. 46-65.

era of the early Church Fathers, through medieval times, and up to the beginning of the Reformation, most of the interpreters applied the passage as referring to Satan. Jewish interpreters applied it as having to do with immediate historical events, such as the oppression by Nebuchadnezzar.

The two great reformers, Luther and Calvin, broke with the traditional interpretation of the fathers and repudiated the idea by applying the passage only in historical terms, i.e., to the king of Babylon.

In the seventeenth century, Milton and Bunyan, in their writings, accepted the traditional view of the Church Fathers.

New developments occurred in the study of Isa 14 in the nineteenth century when theologians started seeing mythical elements in it. By the end of the century the passage had undergone more detailed study on several aspects:

1. The nature of the passage. The lament form--which uses the Qinah Meter--was detected.

2. The structure of the poem. The textual boundaries of the song had tentatively been determined and its strophic division had been suggested. Proposals about possible textual corruptions began to appear.

3. Reidentification and relationships. New identifications for the main figure of the narrative had been suggested, and the relationship of the main elements in the passage to mythic materials was discussed.

4. The origin of the material. The possible relationship between the passage and the religious culture and mythic material

of the Fertile Crescent area was investigated by scholars. The Pan-Babylonian approach was strongly emphasized in this search, and a tentative reconstruction of an original astral myth behind it was proposed. New dates for the poem later than the time of Isaiah were proposed. The identification of the morning star with the Venus Star--identical to the Greek Phaeton--has been held by many scholars since the end of the nineteenth century till the present time.

After the discoveries of Ras-Shamra in 1929, the Pan-Babylonian approach has been replaced by Pan-Ugaritism and a more decided emphasis upon Canaanite sources in the background of this work. With it has come a tendency to interpret the passage in the light of that material. The Phoenician model has attracted most theologians but South Arabic and Greek parallels have also been suggested.

On the other hand, the twentieth century has produced many scholars who continue to defend the earlier position of the Church Fathers; nor has it lacked those who apply the passage to the work of the antichrist throughout the ages, past and future.

Summarizing the examination of the main body of literature on the matter, we presently have several views concerning the interpretation of the taunt against the King of Babylon in Isa 14 (especially vss. 12-15):

1. The lament constitutes a pure myth[1] of Canaanite-

---

[1]Among the interpretations of Helel and Shahar we find that they are identified with: (1) different aspects of the moon, (2) different aspects of the sun, (3) Helel is identified with Jupiter, (4) Helel is identified with Venus (Greek Phaeton and South Arabian Athtar), the brightest star in the morning.

Israelite setting with Arabic and Greek influence. This idea was first introduced into the text with the fall of Babylon and it was applied to that event. In this, the fall of Babylon or the king of Babylon has been compared to the fall of Helel. Some interpreters of this school of thought hold that "the myth no longer has a life of its own but belongs to the treasurehouse of poetry, on which poets and prophets liked to draw in order to clothe their thoughts in rich apparel."[1]

2. The passage also has an historical sense. Although fragments of mythic nature can be found in the lament, the composition is Isaianic, and the message of the passage has some bearing on a historical figure--Sargon II and others have been suggested.

3. The passage can be applied literally to immediate historical events, but it can also be considered symbolic of what happened, is happening, and will happen in a cosmic struggle between God and Satan, between good and evil. Human agents are shown as carrying on such a struggle in some biblical passages, but in this passage the mastermind of the cosmic war is clearly emphasized. In other words,

> Behind such alleged only illustrative transferable phrases, there is much more, and with it we get in the domain of myth. Such a myth applies to a finally enigmatic incident, to a demonic, to a godly event, which illuminates the foreground and background of the history of the doings of mankind.[2]

The number of different shades of meaning adopted by various interpreters in these three schools of thought can be multiplied, but all of them basically belong to one or another of these main views.

---

[1]Eichrodt, Theology, 2:115.

[2]K. L. Schmidt, "Lucifer," pp. 161-79.

Observations Concerning Ezekiel 28

The Ezekelian passage (especially vss. 12-19) has, from the time of Origen to the Reformation, been associated with that of Isa 14 and applied to Satan. The main exceptions to this view have been those of some Jewish commentators who applied it to Hiram of Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar, or to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

From the time of the Reformation to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the view of the Church Fathers was held. From the second half of the nineteenth century till the present, interpreters have developed the following trends and views.

1. One small group has followed the view of the Church Fathers and apply the passage especially to Satan and/or the antichrist typologically. This group admits that the narrative has some historical bearing, but the main objective of the passage transcends the historical reality.

2. A second group says the passage is a poetic lamentation which has to do only with the king of Tyre or the city of Tyre itself.

3. The third group, the one which is followed by the majority of modern interpreters, sees the passage as related to the Paradise narrative of Gen 2-3. This point of view has been developed with several different modifications:

a. It is borrowed directly from the Paradise narrative--a comparison between the fall of Adam and the fall of Tyre has developed from this idea.

b. The prophet had in mind a known Babylonian myth from which the Paradise story of Genesis and the Ezekelian

passage derived--this was applied to Tyrian self-glorification.

c. Although details of Ezekiel's ideas are in accordance with the monotheistic story of the Garden of Eden, the account is built rather upon the same elements as the Phoenician epic of El--the dweller in the garden of God being modeled after the pattern of the "royal ideology" of the ancient Near East.

d. There is a circle of ideas in which the Hebrew account and Mesopotamian mythology move and a generally common knowledge about the Paradise story among the Semitic peoples--from this millieu Ezekiel's account derived.

4. The fourth group believes the passage is an independent myth which serves as an illustration of the threat of the impending downfall of the city of Tyre. The prophet is here applying to Tyre an old Israelite teaching concerning a special creature who was cast down from the heavenly realm, an idea which also found expression in myth.

There is, of course, a rather broad variation in the details expressed by different interpreters of the passage, but the ones expressed above represent the main spectrum of the most representative views.

Aim and Plan of the Study

The main reason for our research on these two passages is to determine the degree to which they relate to the origin of evil. From the survey of the literature on the interpretation of these passages from the beginning of the Christian era to the present time,

a related problem has emerged: We are far from having developed consensus on the interpretation of these passages. A variety of views represents the thinking on such multiple topics as: (1) origins of the material; (2) dating of the lament in its present form; (3) identification of the figures, places, and expressions; and (4) the original form of the text as produced by the biblical writer.

Since a great number of scholars in the 1980s believe that these two texts have more or less drawn their ideas and content from mythical material of the nations in the Fertile Crescent, a useful approach is to commence this study with an examination of those extra-biblical materials and to compare them with biblical narratives to determine if the authors drank directly from similar literary sources of the ancient Near East and if there was a common belief about this subject among peoples of that world. Such an examination can also look at other Israelite texts to see if there was a particular Israelite background form which the texts specifically emerged. Chapter 2 is dedicated to that task.

In chapter 3 the passages are exegeted. The text, structure, and context of these two main passages are then examined in detail in order to determine, as far as possible, the most original form of the text.

Based on a linguistic and historical approach, an attempt is made to determine whether the text should be understood in the immediate historical context, prophetically--or eschatologically--or both. A comparative study of the two passages is carried out to determine whether the claim made by some commentators that "Lucifer"

and the "Guardian Cherub" are the same personage is accurate or not.

An effort is also made to discover, as far as possible within reasonable limits, the significance of the theological content of the passages in relation to their respective prophetic books. The context of the whole Scriptures--Old and New Testaments--is also kept in view in this process of carrying out this examination of these particular passages.

In view of the problems raised in the introduction and the above review of literature, the plan of study presented above is justified, especially since a dissertation, as far as can be determined, has not been written which studies these two passages together with the emphases and directions described above.

in some way. But since the characteristics of the Prince of Tyre and the terminology to describe him denote an earthly dimension, while the King of Tyre is described in terms of a heavenly being, it is my view that one solution is to view one as the archtype or propelling force behind the other.

Conclusions

After all that has been said in this dissertation, it is my view that there are enough facts which justify the interpretation of Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:12-19 as applying to the chief Fallen Angel known as Satan. Besides the fact that these passages offer a description which transcends the earthly or human realm. (1) They fit an angelic context[1] where a rebellion against God would have occurred. (2) The context of the Isaian passage presents eschatological features[2] and a tension between immediate historical events and a universal event with the text straddling two words. (3) The Isaian Apocalypse[3] shows that the prophet was aware of the sin of angelic beings and their fall, as well as of their punishment.[4] (4) The Book of Isaiah presents a kind of emphasis on the contrast between Babylon and Jerusalem (or Zion) and their final fate--which reinforces the point I am trying to make. In so-called First Isaiah, we find the oppression suffered by the people of God and Jerusalem and a promised happy end[5] in contrast to Babylon's

---

[1]Ezek 28:14-16 even uses the term Cherub(im) which is used in the Scripture to identify angelic beings: Gen 3:24; Ezek 10.

[2]See above, pp. 214-20.

[3]Chaps. 24-27; see above pp. 219-20.

[4]24:21-22.

[5]Chaps. 1-10:11; 11-12, etc.

(Assyria's) tyranny and her final defeat and destruction.[1] In the Book of Comfort, chaps. 40-45, 48-64, it is spoken about God's people; in chaps. 46-47, about Babylon--chap. 47 is for Babylon what chap. 54 is for Jerusalem.[2] It seems clear that Isaiah, in a typological fashion, picked up the term Babylon (בבל), which in Genesis is used in the sense of confusion, and through his māšāl (comparison, likeness, paradigm) depicted the career of a figure which is behind every self-sufficient, self-glorifying, and God-opposing power.[3] Babylon which was a constant enemy of God's people, becomes from the time of Isaiah and on a symbol of powers hostile to God and His people.[4] Thus it would be fair to admit that the prophet introduced in the middle of his poem on Babylon the real source of the enemies of God and His people. (5) The Pride-Motif is emphasized in the Book of Isaiah and fought by God who humbles the proud ones.[5] It is also clear that "the Pride-Motif is . . . the connecting motif in Isa 13:2-18, 19-22, and

---

[1] Chaps. 10:12-34; 13-14.

[2] Cf. Remi Lack, La Symbolique, p. 103.

[3] See above pp. 164-66.

[4] Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:1, 21.

[5] Isa 2:11 "The pride of man shall be humbled";
Isa 2:17 "The haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the pride of men shall be brought low";
Isa 5:15 "the eyes of the haughty are humbled";
Isa 9:9ff. God "raises adversaries" against those who speak "in pride and in arrogance of heart";
Isa 10:12ff. God fights against "haughty pride" of Assyria:
Isa 13:19 "God fights against 'splendor and pride' of the Chaldeans";
Isa 16:6; 25:11 God will lay low the "pride" of Moab;
Isa 23:9 God has purposed "to defile the pride of all glory";
Isa 37:22ff. "The pride-motif pervades the oracle against Sennacherib" (Erlardsson, p. 141; cf. Erlandsson, pp. 139-42 for discussion of the pride-motif in Isaiah).

14:1-21."[1] Furthermore, the supreme examples of pride and humbleness in Isaiah's prophecy seem to be shown in Isa 14 and Isa 52-53 respectively. Assuming that (a) the Suffering Servant song is Messianic;[2] (b) Jesus is the antagonist of Satan in the controversy between good and evil, and he came "to destroy the works of the Devil,"[3] to disarm the principalities and powers, and to make a public example of them and triumph over them;[4] and (c) the two supreme examples of pride and humbleness in Isaiah are found in chaps. 14 and 52-53[5] and belong to the personages of these passages, not to am immediate historical realm but to a heavenly one, the figure portrayed in Isa 14:12-15 can be interpreted as being Satan. (6) The language used to describe the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre is similar to that used to describe or portray Satan: (a) he attributes to himself God's prerogatives[6] and (b) his sin has to do with the beginning of sin.[7] (7) Finally, it is my conviction that this research has demonstrated that the use of Typology is a reality in Isaiah 14 as well as in Ezekiel 28, and that both passages were written with the same purpose: (a) To show--in a prophetic way--to future generations that these nations (Babylon [or Assyria] in Isaiah and Tyre in Ezekiel) in their characteristic wickednesses were a type of every power--political and religions--

---

[1] Erlandsson, p. 149.

[2] See above, pp. 210-13.

[3] 1 John 3:8.

[4] Col 2:15.

[5] See also Phil 2:5-11.

[6] Cf. Isa 14:12-14; Gen 3:1-5; Matt 4:8-9.

[7] Cf. Ezek 28:15-16; 1 John 3:8.

which in rebellious way are hostile to God and His people. This we call horizontal typology. (b) To show the power which is behind all wicked activities and to present the originator of the sins which are the source or fountainhead of every hostility against God and His government. This is introduced as Helel ben Shahar and the Guardian Cherub, which are the archtype of the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre as presented in these passages. This we call vertical typology. (c) To give the certainty that evil is an extraneous element in God's universe, and that it will have an end which is already determined; that at the end sin, its originator, and those who accept his politic, will have no "name or survivors"[1] and "will be no more for ever."[2]

---

[1]Isa 14:22. [2]Ezek 28:19; cf. Mal 4:1-3.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research endeavored to study Isa 14 and Ezek 28 in order to certify better the nature and identity of the figures mentioned in the two prophetic oracles (especially Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:12-19). Since for a long time both passages have been interpreted as having to do with the origin of sin in heaven--an idea which has been resisted by many notable scholars--this investigation attempted to examine the pertinent material from the beginning of the Christian era to the present time to ascertain the legitimation of the claims on both sides.

In the first chapter we surveyed the material written on the matter, examining the interpretations of the passages through the years. The pseudepigraphic material of the second century A.D. seems to be the first to identify the Isaiah passage with the fall of the chief angel. That idea was picked up by some of the Church Fathers such as Origen, Tertullian, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, who connected Isa 14 with Luke 10:18 and applied them to Satan. On the other hand, some of the fathers such as Aphrahat, Chromatius Aquileiensis, and Chrysostom applied the passage to the immediate historical context, the tyrant being Nebuchadnezzar or a "barbarian king." Hippolytus related the passage to the Antichrist and saw it as depicting an event to happen in the future; he also quotes Ezek 28 side by side with Isa 14.

The Jews of the Talmudic period interpreted the Isaiah passage as having to do with immediate historical events, Nabuchadnezzar being the "oppressor"; the Ezekiel passage they applied to Hiram, King of Tyre, or even to Nebuchadnezzar.

During the Middle Ages the Satan:Cherub:Lucifer view prevailed, having as its main exponents Dante Alighieri, Thomas Aquinas, and John Wycliff.

The two great reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, broke with the traditional interpretation held by the fathers and the scholars in the Middle Ages. Luther held that Isa 14:12 speaks not about the fallen angel who once was thrown out of heaven (Luke 10:18; Rev 12:7-9), but of the King of Babylon, in figurative language. But Ezek 28 he viewed as referring to the Devil under the name of Tyre. Calvin considered the application of Isa 14:12-15 to Satan as "very gross ignorance" and "useless fables"; he interpreted the passage in historical terms, with the tyrant being identified with Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar.

In the seventeenth century, Puritan John Milton and John Bunyan used the "method of accommodation" in interpreting the Isaiah and Ezekiel passages, applying them to Satan. Using some materials from the NT, Semitic sources, views and comments of the Church Fathers, and from the Renaissance, they enlarged the vision concerning Lucifer. Until the middle of the nineteenth century the traditional view was held by many scholars; the historical view, by a few with the Isaiah and the Ezekiel passages always being identified with each other.

At the end of the nineteenth century, some new developments

occurred in the study and interpretation of Isa 14 and Ezek 28. When serious Bible students began interpreting the Bible with critical methods and theologians had more comparative material to interpret the OT, scholars began to see mythical elements in both passages. From then on the interpretation of Isa 14:12-15 was generally classified by three main views: the Satan View, the Historical View (sometimes blended with the previous one), and the Mythological View. Concerning Ezek 28:12-19, four main views have been proposed since the beginning of the twentieth century: the Satan View, the Immediate Historical and Religious Context View, the Mythological View, and the Paradise Story View. The Mythological View has proposed several myths as being parallel to Isa 14:12-15. These include the Ishtar, Innana, Etana, and Zu myths from Mesopotamia; Kumarbi and Ullikummi myths from the Hittites; the Phaeton myth from the Greeks; and Ashtar and Šḥr and Šlm from Phoenicia. Scholars have suggested Babylonian and Ugaritic sources for some elements of the passage, and the Prometheus myth as a story parallel to the prophet's oracle. The Paradise Story View holds that the Ezekiel passage was a variant form of the tradition which appears in Gen 2-3.

In chapter 2 we examined the various myths (a myth of Helel ben Shahar and of the Guardian Cherub could not be found). A comparison of the available myths with the biblical passages demonstrated remarkable differences. Nevertheless, it seems that in Isa 14:12 the prophet used for a moment the natural phenomenon of Venus, the morning star, which vanishes by the time the sun rises. A knowledge of the behavior of Venus is well attested in some

cultures of the ancient world and it has been taken up into the expression of their myths: i e., Greek (Phaeton); Ugaritic (Attar). Elements were also found which are present in Isa 14 and Ezek 28 that make one think of them as the result of "cultural continuity" or having common elements from the ancient Near East area.

Biblical passages such as Gen 6:1-4, Ps 82, etc., which scholars have said are, in some aspects, parallel to Isa 14, were examined. It seems that Ps 82, Job 1-2, 2 Kgs 22:19-22, Isa 14:12-15, and Ezek 28:12-19 mention figures which are related to the heavenly council and behind Ps 82 and the Isaiah and Ezekiel passages there must have been an ancient Jewish myth of the fallen angel(s).

As for the Paradise story as the source for the Ezekiel oracle, our study shows that despite some similarities between the two accounts, remarkable differences are noted, thus it seems impossible to say that the two passages speak of the same event.

Chapter 3 examined the poetic structure of the two passages, discussed their form of material, made a detailed analysis of the two texts, and proposed a translation. An exegesis of the central parts of the passages was carried out.

The Isaiah passage seems to have been produced at the end of the eighth century at the time of the death of an Assyrian monarch, probably Sargon II. The poem seems to have been originally written in five perfect stanzas, each of seven pentameter verses. The clear delimitation of the stanzas and the change of realms among them show the third stanza (vss. 12-15) to be of different nature than the rest of the text. The central stanza is set in a prominent

position and presents an event which must have occurred in the heavenly realm.

Analyzing the Isaiah passage in its context in the whole oracle against Babylon and in the entire book of Isaiah, we perceive the prominence of the third stanza of the poem as depicting a power which opposes God's people and is hostile to God. It has been noted that in the book of Isaiah, Isa 14:12-15 and Isa 52-53 are the supreme examples of pride and humbleness, respectively. Assuming the Suffering Servant Song to be messianic, it seems that Isaiah 14:12-15 is referring to a more-than-human figure.

The views presented by the scholars through the years in interpreting Isa 14:12-15 have been faulty, except for one--the Satan View, which, despite the problems we face in adopting it, is the one that has gotten the closest to what I consider the truth. This view admits a heavenly realm for the passages; it is supported by the prophet's awareness of the existence of heavenly beings who assist God in heaven (Isa 24:21; Ezek 1, 10), and among whom are some who disobeyed and would have to be punished.

In order to present a view which would be more fair in the interpretation of Isa 14, and would help to analyze the passage in its several dimensions, I proposed what is called the Typological View. This view admits that the passage has to do with something on the historical level which is considered a type for something more universal still in the historical level, i.e., horizontal typology. On the other hand it sees in the passage a vertical typology where the figure depicted in the central stanza of the poem is an archtype of the political and religious powers which

through the ages are hostile to God and His people, and is, as well, the impellent force behind every evil activity. The use of the terms māšāl and bābhel, as well the different nature of vss. 12-15 demonstrate that the prophet is talking about a being who is the impellent force of evil behind the human activities and fulfills his role in the controversy between good and evil.

The Ezekiel passage must have been produced between the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the siege of Tyre (587-585 B.C.). The text shows more signs of textual disturbances and redaction than Isa 14 and does not have its parts delimitated by stanzas; but the divine formulae used make the first two parts of Ezek 28 very distinct. Vss. 1-10 seem to speak of a human figure, but vss. 12-19 speak about a different realm, a heavenly one. A comparison between Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:12-19 shows major similarities which make us believe they speak of the same figure.

As in the case of the Isaiah passage, we proposed the Typological View which sees vss. 1-10 as portraying activities carried out in the historical or earthly level, in a horizontal typology where the Prince of Tyre is the archtype for powers such as the one found in 2 Thess 2, etc., and other cases of hybris. A vertical typology is also present in which the Prince of Tyre is the type of the King of Tyre (vss. 12-19) who ultimately represents the originator of evil.

Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:12-19 are compared and the conclusions are that both of them describe, with slight nuances, the

same event which gave origin to sin in God's universe. Concluding, we would say with K. L. Schmidt,

> The Isaian Lucifer Declaration [and I add Ezek 28] wins richness and power when one understands it in its complexity of heavenly and earthly, of demonic and human, of enigmatic and foregrounding. . . . Behind such alleged only illustrative, transferable phrases there is much more. . . . Such a myth applies to a finally enigmatic incident, to a demonic, a godly event, which illuminates the foreground and background of the history of the doings of mankind.[1]

God, through his prophets, chose the expressions, King of Babylon and King of Tyre to portray the being who was the originator of evil and the propelling force behind every effort to disturb order in God's universe. These two passages also prophetically give us the certainty that evil is destined to be exterminated, and Satan and his followers will be no more forever.

---

[1] "Lucifer," pp. 166, 173. Translated by J. Bertoluci.