

# LUCIFER

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## CULTURAL INSIGHT

In common Christian usage, Lucifer is another name for the devil, the common enemy of humanity. This is not, however, the original meaning of the word as it appears in Isaiah 14:12 (and parallelly in 2 Nephi 24:12). In Hebrew the name translated as Lucifer, son of the morning, is Hallal ben Shahar. The name Hallal ben Shahar is a mythological reference to a god who represented Venus as the morning star. Venus is the brightest object after the sun and the moon but does not rise high in the dome of the sky. This seems to have been explained with a mythological story about a deity's attempt to rise higher that ended with their being cast down. The prophet Isaiah uses this story as a symbolic representation for the king of Babylon in his day, who also attempted to rise above his station (see Isaiah 14:4).

Hallal ben Shahar is translated as Eosphorus ("dawn-bringer"), one of the names for the morning star, in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. In Latin, the name of the morning star was Lucifer (it used this way by Roman authors such as Pliny and Cicero), and so it was employed this same way by the translators of the Latin Bible. Because of the association of Isaiah 14:12 with clear New Testament references to the devil, such as Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:9, Lucifer began to be used in Christianity as a name for the devil.

### ***Related verses***

Isaiah 14:4–23

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