

Luciferian Gnosis

Asenath Mason



From: "The Sinister Path, Vol 1" by Magan Publications, 2011

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven"
(*Paradise Lost*, John Milton)

The story of Lucifer and the legend of his fall seems to be plain and commonly known. However, is it really so obvious? Perhaps an answer to this question will be found in this essay which will guide you step by step through numerous forms of this fascinating archetype which has inspired philosophers, artists and poets throughout many centuries. We will take a closer look at his mythological origins and the mystical interpretation on such spiritual paths as Alchemy or the Qabalah. We will also discuss his meaning on the Left Hand Path, in which his symbolism has an enormously significant role. Perhaps this analysis will shed more light on Lucifer as a character, and also on the type of the esoteric gnosis which he represents.

The Christian Legend

We will start the discussion of Lucifer's myth with the legend spread by the Christian sources, as it is the most known version of the story and at the same time the most erroneous and full of ambiguities. It is based on incorrectly interpreted short quotations from the Bible, the key fragment being a quote from the Book of Isaiah:

„How art thou fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning!
how art thou cut down to the ground,
which didst weaken the nations!
For thou hast said in thine heart,
I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation,
in the sides of the north:
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the most High.
Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell,
to the sides of the pit." (Isaiah 14:12-15)

In the Christian tradition this fragment served as a basis for a legend of a proud angel who sought to be equal to God, and for his conceit he was cast down to the infernal abyss. The story of Lucifer illustrates the archetypal sin of *Superbia*, one of the seven deadly sins. As the legend shows, for this sin one can be punished with the worst of all punishments - condemned to eternal separation from God and plunged in darkness devoid of heavenly light.

The same story of sin as a cause of fall and rebellion against God is presented by Ezekiel: "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God... and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." (Ezekiel 28:12-15) According to these quotation, Lucifer fell and lost his original perfection because he forgot about his roots, about the fact that he was God's creation and could not be equal to his Creator. He was blinded by pride, insolence and conceit, which made him feel divine and for which he was punished with the exile from Heaven.

Other fragments from the Bible, describing the fall of angels, also were ascribed to Lucifer ("He was thrown down, that ancient serpent", Revelation 12:5), who was at the same time identified with Satan, the Adversary, the first angel who rebelled against God and was cast down to Sheol, the dark abyss, where he established his own infernal kingdom.

This is the outline of the Christian legend of Lucifer. However, if we take a closer look at these biblical fragments which supposedly are its source, we will find that they have not much to do with the mythological figure of this name. It is essential to notice that before the original writings, which now constitute the Bible, were translated into Latin, Lucifer's name did not appear in any of them. The quotation from the Book of Isaiah, which is regarded as a source of the legend, might be in fact interpreted in a completely different way: the term "son of the morning" (in original: "helel ben-shahar") probably refers to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar or the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser. The fragment from Ezekiel is sometimes said to refer to the same person, and sometimes it is regarded as the description of the fall of Adam, the first man, and the exile of first humans from the Garden of Eden. The king of Babylon has a similar legend, told in the Bible in a metaphoric way. The term "morning star", "son of the morning", refers to his boastful pride which evoked his desire to conquer the whole world and rule it in the same way as God rules the universe. His symbol is the planet Venus, sometimes called "Helel", "the bright one".

But when the Old Testament was translated into Latin (the Vulgate), the term "helel ben-shahar" appeared in the new version as "lucifer", from the Latin word "lux" (light) and "ferre" (to bring). In the Vulgate the word appears in many different contexts, not always referring to the fallen angels, and sometimes quite opposite: it means "the Morning Star" (the planet Venus), "light of the morning" (in the Book of Job), "the aurora" (Psalms), "signs of the zodiac" (also in Job). And it refers to such figures as "Simon son of Onias" (Ecclesiastes), or even "Jesus Christ" (Revelation).

Nevertheless in the following centuries Lucifer came to be identified with Satan and considered a symbol of evil. His legend intertwined with the story of the biblical Tempter who in his serpent form seduced the first humans and led them away from God. He became the leader of the fallen angels who rebelled against God and descended to the earth in order to unite in flesh with daughters of man (the myth about the rebellion of angels presented in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, where the leader of the rebels was Shemyaza, sometimes

identified with Lucifer). In the doctrine of certain Christian sects Lucifer became the Demiurge, the evil creator of the material world who imprisoned souls in human bodies. In writings of the Cathars (a Christian / gnostic movement which flourished in the area of the western Europe and Asia Minor in 5-15th centuries) we read that he was the son of Satan, who created the world consisting of the earth and seven heavens. It was him who broke into the Heavenly Kingdom and tempted the spirits with vision of things they had not known before, after which one third of them followed him and left Heaven ("And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth", Revelation 12:4):

"... They descended from heaven when Lucifer took them out of there with a deceitful claim that God has promised them only the good; while the devil, as he was cunning, promised them good and evil, and told them that he would give them women whom they will adore, and that he would give some the authority over the others... and that all who would follow him and descend with him, would have the power to do evil and good, just like God, and that it would be better for them to be gods who may do good and evil than to remain in heaven where God has given them only good"¹

Lucifer is "the God" who creates the world in six days as it is described in the Old Testament. It was him who divided the prime matter into elements and shaped the world from them. Then he created humans from clay and breathed the soul into them: the soul of man was the angel from the second heaven, the soul of woman - the angel from the first one. After that he seduced the woman in his serpent form and taught her how to obtain carnal pleasures, thus revealing to humans the fruits from the Tree of Knowledge. According to certain theories, Lucifer is the second God. The first one is He who created things spiritual and invisible. Lucifer is the creator of things material and visible. He imprisoned in human bodies the souls of angels who followed him and left Heaven. For this reason human souls are demons who fell from the heights and atone for their sin on the earth, awaiting the return to the Light. There were also certain Gnostic sects which regarded Lucifer as the first born son of God, the one who left Heaven when his father decided to give supremacy to his second son, Jezual.

According to Christian legends, Lucifer was one of the Cherubim, those angels who stay closest to God. He was most perfect and most beautiful of all angels, and he was God's favourite. His name then was Lucibel and referred to his beauty. But he fell because of his free will, when he realized his divinity and desired to become equal to God in all respects. His desire was judged as a sin and rebellion, and he was exiled from Heaven in order to become the lord of Hell - the realm completely separated from God. In the Christian tradition Hell is the symbol of eternal torments, the darkness of the soul which has been deprived of God's presence. But from the other perspective, it is also the symbol of freedom, independence, the potential allowing for an individual deification and aspiration to become one's own creator. In this way Hell is interpreted by the Left Hand Path, where Lucifer is the emblem of the ultimate liberation.

The Origin of the Archetype

Among the sources of the word "Lucifer" the one mentioned most often is the ancient Roman poetry. There it means "the morning star" and is related to the Greek term "eosphoros" ("bringer of the Dawn"). It appears in Homer's *The Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Theogony*,

¹ *Catharism, the History of the Cathars*, J. Duvernoy

Virgil's *Georgics*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. And even though "the morning star" is most often identified with Venus, there are also theories that this term refers to the ancient god of light, also related to this planet. In the ancient Greece this concept was symbolized by two deities: Eosphoro (Phosphoros) and Hespero (Vesper, Nocturnus, Noctifer), which corresponded to two distinct aspects of Venus: the Morning Star which appeared at dawn, and to its light in the darkness of the night. The description of these two divine brothers is found in *The Iliad*, when Phosphoros emerges from the ocean to proclaim the coming of the divine light, while Hespero is seen as the most splendid star in the night sky. Phosphoros, the god of the dawn, was the son of the goddess Eos. He was depicted as a nude winged boy with a torch, in front of his mother or the sun god Helios. The Roman translation of the name "Phosphoros" is "Lucifer".

This myth might be the earliest source of the legend about this bright angel. But we cannot forget about another Greek tale which is associated with this figure in modern interpretations. This is of course the famous story of Prometheus. Let us briefly remind this mythical legend: Prometheus was one of the Titans and the creator of mankind whom he shaped from clay mixed with tears, and whose soul was the spark of divine fire which the Titan stole from the Sun's chariot. Then, seeing that man is weak, he stole the fire of gods again and brought it to the earth. He taught humans how to use fire to create arts and crafts. In this way he awakened human spirit and gave mankind the potential to rule the world. For his love of humans he was severely punished by the gods: they chained him to a rock and each day his liver was eaten by an eagle (or a vulture) and grew again so that his pain could last forever. This legend was identified with Lucifer because of his role as the initiator of humans: the one who endows man with the soul, the divine fire, and shows him how to become equal to gods. The esoteric interpretation of the myth explains the gift of fire as the awakening of the inner spark in man, the source of the spiritual power which corresponds to the Tantric concept of the Kundalini serpent. The Promethean fire is the spark of divinity which when awakened, might become the torch of an infinite spiritual potential. Just as Prometheus teaches mankind how to become like gods, so Lucifer shows man the path of independence and the way to one's own divinity.

Another mythical figure, often identified with both Prometheus and Lucifer is Scandinavian Loki. Like two above-mentioned characters, he represents forces which threaten the divine and cosmic order. He is the bringer of light/fire and at the same time he is the destroyer with a huge destructive potential. His name refers to "logi" ("flame", "fire") or to the verbs "lúka", or "lukijan", meaning "to lock", which points at his role in the end of the existing world (Ragnarök), the final fire in which the world and its gods will burn. He is the father to mythological monsters: the Fenrir wolf who will devour Odin in the time of Ragnarök, the corpse goddess Hel, and the cosmic serpent Jormungandr. He is the trickster who constantly challenges gods and their fixed order and laws. He is also the father of dispute and lies. But he is also the initiator of mankind to whom he brings the gift of the divine fire - just like Prometheus. Finally, he also suffers a similar kind of torments: he is punished by being chained to rocks, above his head there is a venomous snake whose poison drips on Loki's face. When the god shivers with pain, his convulsions cause earthquakes and other disasters.

Also a similar character is found in the Spanish / Mexican lore where he bears the name Luzbel. Luzbel is mentioned in sixteenth century Spanish texts written in Mexico or grimoires such as *El Libro de San Cipriano (El Tesoro del Hechicero)* and *El Libro Infernal*. He seems to be a dark form of Lucifer, a challenger to the divine order and the bringer of Light as a fire of individual divinity.

The Qabalistic Interpretation

In Qabalistic theories Lucifer corresponds to the hidden sephira Daath. However, in order to understand this attribution, we must first go back to the moment when the Tree of Life was an ideal cosmic harmony and its dark counterpart did not exist. The perfect Cosmic Tree, like now consisted of ten levels and twenty-two paths, but there was no material plane then. Instead, the Tree of Life contained Daath as the integral part of the cosmic harmony. Daath was closest to the highest triad: Kether, Chokmah and Binah, above the central sephira Tiphereth. It was the second sun which shone upon the neighbouring sephiroth. While Tiphereth was the lower sun which cast its rays upon the lower regions, Daath illuminated the upper part of the Tree as the second, mystical sun. Their lights marked two "worlds" represented by the sephiroth: the lower (below Tiphereth) and the upper (surrounding Daath). Both were harmoniously bound to each other. The lower sun was ruled by the archangel Michael, the upper by Lucifer: the Bringer of Light. Lucifer was then the angel who resided closest to the divine trinity. He was the guardian and mediator between the divine light and the lower spheres, which is reflected in an ancient legend that he was God's messenger on earth who observed all earthly events and reported them to the Creator.

On the original Tree of Life, Yesod, the lowest sephira, was an ideal reflection of Kether, the highest one. Because it was the astral world of man, he was regarded as the ideal image of God. Yesod, however, is also the sphere of sexuality, existing on the Tree of Life in a subtle and dormant form. The reasons of Lucifer's and other angels' fall are not clear from this perspective. Perhaps they started to lust for man because of his perfection ("That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" Genesis 6:2). Lucifer-Daath fell / descended to the level of man and awakened in him the power of creation and sexual energy, which is represented by the gift of fruits of Knowledge, offered by the biblical Serpent. In this way man gained access to knowledge which until that moment had been reserved for God and higher entities. The fall of angels and their sexual union with man was the forbidden union of worlds. Man gained the potential of creation (of giving birth to a new life), and the ideal cosmic harmony was lost. Where once Daath existed, an abyss opened and separated the divine triad from the lower levels. Man was cast down from his astral Eden and inhabited the new sephira Malkuth, on the material plane, while the gates to the divine Garden were closed for him: "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24). The Daath sephira together with Lucifer lost its place near the throne of God (Kether) and became the abyss, the gate to Qlipothic anti-worlds in which Lucifer established his Pandemonium.

An adept of the path of Light seeks to reconstruct the original cosmic order and the reunion with the divine perfection. The death of Christ on the cross is a metaphor of creating the bridge over the abyss and uniting man with God. The adept of the Left Hand Path seeks to deepen the Fall and to bring the process of destruction to the end, in order to light one's own spark of divinity in the absolute darkness of the abyss. By fulfilling the work which has started with the tasting of the fruits of Knowledge, man might reach for the fruits from the Tree of Life.

The Jewel of the Abyss

When Lucifer was falling from Heaven into the abyss of darkness, a jewel fell off his forehead, the emblem of his beauty and perfection. It was the emerald, the jewel regarded by

alchemists as the stone of Mercury, the character who belongs to the middle sphere, both in alchemical and mythological sense. Mercury is the heavenly messenger, the intermediary between the worlds, and the guide of dead souls (*psychopompos*) onto the Other Side. In Alchemy he is the emblem of the flow and transformation – transmutation of matter and spirit from the lower into the higher, from ephemeral into solid. He is therefore the link between Heaven (spirit) and Earth (matter). In the biblical vision of St. John: “And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald” (Revelation 4:3). The rainbow is a popular symbol of a bridge between worlds (e.g. the Norse Bifröst). The emerald which fell off Lucifer’s forehead is also the link between Heaven and Earth, it represents the loss of monopoly of immortality which until that moment had been reserved only for the divine trinity. According to the legend, from this jewel the angels carved the Grail and when it was filled with the blood of Christ, the gates of Heaven, which were locked after Lucifer’s fall, now opened again. The emerald also resembles the pearl from the forehead of Shiva which in the Hindu symbolism represents the third eye and is related to the concept of infinity.

The emerald is also the jewel which the ancient Romans associated with the planet Venus. As we have already said, Venus is related to Lucifer in many mythological aspects. It was regarded as the planet representing both life and light, as well as darkness and death. It was called the Morning Star and the Evening Star. The ancient Romans believed that it heralded both death and rebirth. In Mexico it was feared as a star of doom. Jacob Boehme, the famous mystic, identified it with the Divine Light of the Creator.

The search for the Grail signifies the wandering on diverse spiritual paths in order to find the inner light and hidden power that underlies the whole existence. It is illustrated by the alchemical principle V.I.T.R.I.O.L. (*Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*), and the jewel which represents the crowning of the spiritual path is the emerald or diamond – the emblem of perfection and light that shines even in the utmost recesses of the abyss.

The Guiding Star on the Way to Divinity

On the Draconian Path Lucifer makes appearance at least several times. For the first time the Luciferian energies might be experienced in full on the level of A’arab Zaraq, the fourth (counting from Malkuth/Lilith) qlipha on the Qabalistic Tree of Night. It is the level connected with the planetary energies of Venus and one of its significant symbols is the goddess known in mythologies as Aphrodite or Venus. On the bright Tree of Life the counterpart of A’arab Zaraq is the sephira Netzach which bears correspondence to the bright form of the Goddess. Her dark image is Venus Illegitima, the goddess of perversion. She represents barren love on the material plane, which however bears fruits on higher levels. Through her the adept is reborn as one’s own child and becomes one with the Daimon, one’s higher self. The Black Venus is the mother to Daimon, the principle that belongs to the next level of the cosmic Tree – the Thagirion qlipha.

A’arab Zaraq is the sphere of the dark side of feelings and emotions which arise to the light of consciousness and manifest in the form of creative expression. Hence this qlipha is associated with art and music. Here we experience the Luciferian freedom, which is liberation from structures and boundaries that bind consciousness. It is the rebellion against the surrounding reality – full of passion and creative energy. In Rudolph Steiner’s demonosophy Lucifer is Christ’s brother, the one who rejected God’s plan of world’s

salvation and dared to propose his own. He embodies the eternal dream of self-deification, the path of the individual spiritual progress and the pursuit of perfection. He is the patron of arts, especially ecstatic ones, emotions, imagination, and creativity:

„Luciferic Outlook is based on idealism, spirituality is incomparably more important than the existence in the material world... The goal of Luciferic initiation is limitless Freedom, which is possible to achieve only when one transcends his human nature and becomes a god. Liberation from limits imposed by material world and dogmas binding the ego gives us an unlimited possibility of creating. Luciferic initiation is close to the magical Left Hand Path.”²

While setting on a quest in search of the Luciferian jewel, we gradually pass through successive levels of consciousness awakening, until on the level of Satariel (Binah) we experience the opening of “The Eye of Lucifer”. The Kundalini serpent unfolds its wings and becomes the Dragon. Then opens the eye which sees the unseen. This process begins on the first step of the Draconian Path when the adept enters the gate through the “womb of Lilith” – the first qlipha on the Qabalistic Tree of Night. It includes eleven qliphothic levels and nine stages. They represent nine nights and nine worlds in the mythological initiation of Odin. That is why the Eye of Lucifer is also called the Eye of Odin, as it is the symbol of completion of a certain stage in the initiatory process. The Draconian initiation is based on the nine phases of awakening of “the clear vision” (from Greek word “Drakon” – to see), and also includes the starting point and the goal to which the whole process leads. Together this makes eleven levels. The starting point is the world of illusion in which we live. When we become aware of the world existing beyond the perceived reality, our consciousness turns to the “Other Side”, or “the Left Side”. A crack in the veil of illusion opens and through it we can enter the alternative reality. Thus we pass through the gate of Lilith and begin the initiatory journey in the world of Darkness. Gradually the Eye of Lucifer opens in our consciousness and its light shines as a torch in the darkness of the abyss until it is fully opened on the level of Satariel (8.0.) and burns with the light of Divinity on the level of Ghagiel (9.0.)

Satanic Gnosis

In the discussion of Lucifer’s role we cannot forget about his function in the Western tradition of black magic and Satanism. Grimoires which have appeared over the last few centuries associate him with many attributes and qualities. In *Grimoirium Verum* Lucifer is one of the three main rulers of the world, the other two being Beelzebub and Astaroth. He rules Europe and Asia, together with two servant demons: Satanachia and Agalierap. In this grimoire he is described as a beautiful youth who turns red when angry or furious.

According to *Dictionnaire Infernal* by Collin de Plancy, Lucifer is the king of Hell. He has the face of a beautiful young child, which changes to monstrous and inflamed when he is angry. In the *Grimoire of Honorius* from the 16th century he is also the Infernal Emperor. The text contains the advice to summon him on Mondays, between three and four o’clock or between eleven and twelve. The operator has to sacrifice a mouse in a ritual, otherwise the operation will fail.

In other texts he is sometimes identified with Satan or superior to him in the infernal hierarchy. He is also identified with Lucifuge Rofocale, which however is an incorrect

² Rudolph Steiner’s *Demonosophy – a little bit Different View*, Przemysław Sieradzan. (In *Glimpses of the Left Hand Path*, Lodge Magan 2004)

attribution because "Lucifer" means "the Light Bearer", while "Lucifuge" is "the one who shuns the light", and these two figures are completely different characters in demonology. In texts on witchcraft we may find accounts that Lucifer often accompanies witches in their flight to the Sabbat. Sometimes he pulls them off their brooms and gives them a ride on his shoulders. There Lucifer is described as a gray figure with blue arms and red culottes decorated with ribbons.

In traditional demonology Lucifer rules the element of air and the direction of east, together with three other infernal kings who preside over the other elements and directions: Leviathan (water, west), Belial (earth, north), and Satan (fire, south). In the Faustian Tradition he is the chief ruler of Hell. It is him that Faust enters the pact with, while Mephistopheles is the mediator and executor of his orders.

A Word of Conclusion

It is believed that Lucifer is the main character in Milton's epic poem „Paradise Lost“, even though in the text he is called Satan. But the word "Satan" means "Adversary", "the Accuser", "the Opponent". And Milton's Satan is God's opponent indeed. However, his image is far from the stereotype of a gloomy and cunning demon, as he is described by the contemporary Christian tradition. Instead he is the angel who brings light, who dares to challenge God and leaves Heaven in order to create his own kingdom in the abyss of darkness. At the same time, however, he does not lose his beauty, splendour or pride. He is the Adversary, the rebel who rejects the obedience to God, the proud ruler and the prince of darkness. He represents the principle of "denial", so essential in the continuity of world's existence and the cosmic harmony.

On the Left Hand Path he embodies the pursuit of one's own divinity – he is not satisfied with the limited space and function which God assigned to him. Through his fall he becomes the emblem of the strong and free will which proves that one can exist without God and divine light, and that one may become one's own creator and shape one's own world in the depth of the abyss, where lies the infinite potential of creation. Lucifer inspires those whose will is strong enough to follow his steps and walk the Left Hand Path; those who like him believe that "It is better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven".

Bibliography:

John Milton: *Paradise Lost*

Alfonso Di Nola: *Diabet*

www.wikipedia.org

Grimoirium Verum

J.E. Cirlot: *A Dictionary of Symbols*

The Bible: all quotations from King James Version

Jean Duvernoy: *Catharism, the History of the Cathars*

Lodge Magan: *Glimpses of the Left Hand Path*

Thomas Karlsson: *Kabbalah, Qliphoth und die Goetische Magie*