

three great figures, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ignatius Loyola, the subsequent history of the world would be vastly different. These men stood for varying principles and their attitudes differed at many points, but the influence of each of them has gone out into all the world. Each had a comparatively humble beginning. No one of them accomplished what he did by position or by physical force. Each of them made use of the movements and situations of his day, but the outcome would have been very different if any one of these three men had been absent from the scene of history.

This passage shows that among the great forces that oppose God there is a personality that is dominant and central. This personality, particularly described in verses 12-14, exalts himself against God and desires to establish himself as supreme in the heavens. He declares that he intends to exalt his throne above the stars of God and to be like the Most High. There is no record of any king of Babylon that fits this picture, either in the character of the man or in the end to which he came. It is a picture of a great personality who is behind Babylon and behind all the great forces that oppose God. He is the central ruler in all the wickedness of the world. The name "Lucifer" in the King James Version of verse 12 is the Latin equivalent of the Hebrew word used in the verse. It indicates the morning star, and its bearer is further designated as "son of the morning." The American Standard Version has "daystar" instead of "Lucifer." Our passage describes an individual who was not content with a very great position in the universe, but desired a still greater one, and tried to usurp the place of God Himself. Some of these verses describe the condition of rest and quiet which follows the removal of the great wicked leader, but the emphasis is principally upon the manner of his fall. The lesser forces of evil are astonished as they see how he has been brought down, so that he is now no greater than any of them. He who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, and would not open the houses of his prisoners, is to be cast out of the grave like an abominable branch, thrust through with a sword. He is as one who goes down to the pit. Surely this is a picture of Satan cast into the pit, as described in Revelation 20:2-3.