

# EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

"...FOR THE EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF SERVICE..." ~ EPHESIANS 4:12

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## THE CONIAH PROPHECY

By Andrew Dow

Premillennialism is a doctrine which primarily concerns the end of the world. It's adherents believe—as is popularly portrayed in the *Left Behind* series by Tim LaHaye—that when Jesus returns He will reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem for a thousand years. This view has gained widespread acceptance among evangelicals, but there is at least one problem with it: the Coniah prophecy.

**“Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar?  
Or is he an undesirable vessel?  
Why have he and his descendants been hurled out  
And cast into a land that they had not known?  
“O land, land, land,  
Hear the word of the Lord!**

**“Thus says the Lord,  
‘Write this man down childless,  
A man who will not prosper in his days;  
For no man of his descendants will prosper  
Sitting on the throne of David  
Or ruling again in Judah’” (Jer 22:28–30).**

This prophecy was delivered by Jeremiah in the midst of the political upheaval brought on by the impending Babylonian conquest. The last true king to reign over Judah was a man by the name of Jehoiachin (elsewhere known as Jeconiah or, as Jeremiah calls him, Coniah). It was during Jehoiachin's reign that Babylon took the southern tribes into captivity (2 Kings 24:8–16). The rulers

who followed Jehoiachin were nothing more than puppet rulers installed by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Just as God foretold through Jeremiah, however, none of Jehoiachin's descendants ever sat on the throne of David (Jer 22:30).

How does this play into our understanding of the premillennialists' teaching? Premillennialists suggest that Jesus will one day reclaim the throne of David and rule from Jerusalem for a thousand years. One major problem with this is that the Coniah prophecy assures us that Jesus will not sit on David's throne in Jerusalem.

You see, Jesus is a descendant of Jehoiachin (or Coniah as he is called in the prophecy). The genealogy of Jesus recorded in Matthew's Gospel is not exhaustive, but it highlights some of the more prominent people in His lineage. Among all of the great kings in Jesus's genealogy is Jeconiah (Matt 1:11–12). It cannot be denied that Jesus is a descendant of the same man, Coniah, that Jeremiah's prophecy spoke of all those generations ago. God foretold through Jeremiah that **“no man of [Coniah's] descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah”** (Jer 22:30). Therefore, Jesus will not reign on David's throne in Jerusalem for a thousand years.

Jesus's rule is far greater than a temporary kingship in Jerusalem and His throne is greater than David's. Jesus's kingdom is spiritual (cf. John 18:36) and His throne is at God's right hand (cf. Col 3:1; Heb 12:2). Jesus is reigning now and His rule far surpasses the rule of his forefather, Jehoiachin. Whereas the throne of David and Jerusalem were overthrown by the Babylonians, the Kingdom established by Christ will endure eternally (cf. 2 Pet 1:11). Serve the King!

## WHAT IS THE DEVIL'S NAME?

By Andrew Dow

Biblical names are often (though not always) symbolic. Sometimes a biblical author will call a character by another name or use words that sound similar to a character's name in order to lead us to draw particular conclusions about that character. Other times God Himself will rename an individual to indicate something about his mission or future. Although it is not true in every instance, much can be derived by considering the names of Bible characters. What, therefore, can we learn from the devil's names?

To begin, let me point out that, despite widespread belief to the contrary, the devil's name is NOT Lucifer. This misconception comes from a misunderstanding of Isaiah 14:12—**“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!”** (NKJV). First, this word “Lucifer” could better be translated as **“Day Star”** (ESV) or **“star of the morning”** (NASB). Second, the context is clear that this is not talking about Satan's fall from heaven, but rather the dramatic fall of **“the king of Babylon”** (v. 4). Lucifer is not the devil's name, but there are several names in Scripture attributed to him.

First, the term “devil” is a translation of a Greek term that means “slanderer.” The devil, therefore, is one who is an active opponent of God's people seeking to defame them by any means. Jesus informed us that **“the devil ... was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies”** (John 8:44).

Elsewhere the devil is described as **“the serpent of**

**old**” (Rev 12:9; 20:2). This is an obvious allusion to the devil’s first appearance in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3). This description denotes his cleverness. **“the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness”** (2 Cor 11:3). Peter uses another animal—**“a roaring lion”** (1 Pet 5:8)—to describe the devil’s great strength to oppose God and His people.

The Jewish leaders used the term **“Beelzebub”** to describe **“the prince of the demons”** (Matt 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15). This term may be translated “lord of the flies” and is likely a reference to his rule over all unclean things. Similarly, Paul calls him **“Belial”** in 2 Corinthians 6:15 which refers to his utter worthlessness.

Of course, the most common name for the devil is probably “Satan.” Again, this is not just a name, it is a description of his nature. This is actually a Greek term which refers to an adversary or one who opposes another.

From these designations we learn that Satan is a cunning and strong adversary who will do anything to trap us. Praise God for conquering our fiercest enemy!

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**“GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES...”**  
**(MATTHEW 28:19-20)**