

Michael the Archangel – The “Chief Messenger”

by Eric Greene

“Michael” is often considered to mean “Who is like God?” Yet, it can also be understood as a statement “He who is like God”. We can see a clear difference between “He who is like God”, and the fallen angel (Satan) who wrongfully tried to “be like the Most High” (Isa. 14:14). This paper points out that Michael is not a created angel, but rather a manifestation of God Himself who sometimes functioned as the “Chief Messenger” (Arch- Angel) leading all the other angelic host which He created. The following are the few occasions where “Michael” is mentioned in the Bible:

1. He helps a lesser-ranked angel get through to answer Daniel’s prayer (Dan. 10:13, 21).
2. He will stand up for Israel during a very difficult time. (Dan. 12:1).
3. He disputes with Satan concerning the body of Moses (Jude 9).
4. He fights against Satan in the heavenlies (Rev. 12:7).

The summary point is that the second person of the Trinity (God the Son) appears in the OT as “The Angel of the LORD” who was referred to as “Michael”; then later in the NT God the Son becomes incarnate receiving the name “Jesus”. Angels referred to Him as Michael, after His incarnation we refer to Him as Jesus. “He who is like God” is the same person as “the Lord saves” (the meaning of the name “Jesus”).

We can make these claims about the Son of God through the simple logic of $A=B=C=D$. All the variables are the same though they are identified with different letters. In the same way many passages follow this formula: “The Lord” = “the Angel of the Lord” = “Michael” = “Jesus” = “the Son of God”. They are different variable names, but the same person. Let me *briefly* point this out.

First, there are many passages that equate “the Lord” to the “Angel of the Lord”. The following is one among many. In Zechariah 3:1-2 the Angel of the LORD mentioned in verse 1 is the same person as the LORD who rebukes Satan in verse 2. This is one example where “the LORD” equals “the Angel of the LORD”.

Second, Michael is equal to the Angel of the Lord because Jude 9 quotes Zechariah 3:2. The LORD rebuked Satan in Zechariah 3:2. However, Jude 9, commenting on that passage says “Michael, the archangel” said “the Lord rebuke you!” So Jude 9 equates Michael to an “archangel”, quoting His words which *were the LORD’s words* in Zechariah 3:2. Therefore, “Michael” equals “the LORD”. Now there is no problem with Him being labeled as an “archangel” because this simply means “Chief Messenger”. The LORD is the Commander in Chief of His angelic host, and as their Creator, He also functions as that Chief Warrior, Chief Messenger, the ultimate Arch – Angel. Also, the “body of Moses” which was in dispute was the nation of Israel during Zechariah’s time. That was the corporate body of Moses of that era, just as the church is now the corporate body of Christ. The covenant through Moses identified God’s OT people as the body of Moses. The covenant through Christ identifies God’s NT people as the body of Christ. So, Satan was opposing the Jewish people in Zechariah 3 by accusing Joshua the high priest of his filthy garments. Those filthy garments demonstrated the filthiness of Moses’ corporate body. When Satan hurled those accusations against the brethren, the LORD said, “The Lord rebuke you.”

Third, we can say that Michael equals the Son of God because of the descriptions of Michael are the same as the Son of God. The physical descriptions of Jesus in Revelation chapter 1 are very similar, if not the same, as the descriptions of Michael in Daniel 10:5-6. These descriptions are also similar to the Man mentioned in Ezekiel 40:3 and Ezekiel 1:27. The Bronze Man, Fire Man, Amber-color Man is certainly a manifestation of God functioning as the Chief Messenger of His people.

Fourth, Michael does things that only God can do. Michael walks on water. He stands on the Tigris River (Dan.10:4, 12:7) and the Ulai River (Dan.8:16); and by all implication He drives His glorious temple-chariot upon the waters of the Chebar River in Ezekiel 1. Ezekiel was by that river when God showed up in His angelic temple glory. The Chief Messenger came to give a message to Ezekiel. Later this God would also walk on water and calm the waves of the storm when He became flesh and dwelt among us. All of this is significant because in Genesis 1. God created His angelic throne room above the upper waters, which is above the outer-space firmament. Heaven above is founded upon the upper waters, which is why there is a crystal sea before God's throne. Therefore, when God walks on water, or appears to His people standing on the water, He is showing that heaven's Ruler has appeared. He has a message, "Hear Him!" (Mt.17:5).

Lastly, we know that any visible manifestation of God Himself is a manifestation of the second person of the Trinity because Jesus said "no one has seen the Father" except for Him (John 6:46). Certainly we can not see the Spirit (John 3:1-11), thus God visibly shows Himself through the person of His Son (I John1:1, 3:2).

Putting all of this together we can see that the eternal Son of God, through Whom all things were created, first entered history as the Command-in-Chief of all His angelic host; angels referring to Him as Michael, the Angel of the Lord, or the LORD. Later the same person would become flesh and dwell among us, winning the war against evil, sin, and death, in His death and resurrection. His good news is now the *chief message*.

The following are quotes from Jim Jordan:

"In the Book of Daniel, the nations had angels that kept them. Michael is the Angel over Israel. In Revelation Jesus as Michael, The Archangel, leads the good angels to defeat Satan and his demon angels. The defeat of Satan comes from the atoning death of Christ. The second person of the Trinity wears different hats throughout scripture." (James Jordan/"Reading the Bible again for the First Time").

"Michael proved, by Bishop Horsley, to be a name of the Saviour-The same proved by another train of argument-Meaning of the name, "He who is like unto God" (James Farquharson/1838).

"Ezra could see from Daniel 12: 1-2 that at about the time of the death of the Godless King, Michael will stand up, and will be the last of the line of kings to stand up. Given everything else that is said here, Ezra might guess that Michael will come not simply as archangel, as previously, but as the promised Messiah"

"In Daniel 10:4-21 Michael appears to Daniel in a vision in which He "walks on water" (Tigris). This would equate with Christ walking on water in the NT." (James Jordan/"The Handwriting On The Wall").

"The OT ministry of Jesus Christ is recorded in a number of theophanies. A theophany is a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Christ. In Gen 48:16, He is the angel that "redeems". Only Christ can redeem."