

## Who Is Michael, the Archangel?

Daniel 10:15-21

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We return this Lord's Day to consider the last recorded revelation God gave to Daniel through the agency of angels (Daniel 10-12). This amazingly detailed prophecy of future events is so accurate that skeptics claim this is not a prophecy of events to come but is rather a summary of historical events that have already occurred, written hundreds of years after Daniel by a Jew claiming to be the prophet, Daniel. However, this Book of Daniel was received by the Jewish Church as part of the Hebrew Old Testament Canon (written more than 500 years before Christ). Also, in various places of the New Testament, Jesus and the apostles refer to passages found in Daniel as being Scripture. Jesus Christ, who has supreme authority given to Him as Mediator, confirms that Daniel, the prophet, penned these revelations as stated in this inspired book.

Daniel 10 is more of a preface to the prophecy found in Daniel 11-12. In Daniel 10, the Lord prepares Daniel for what is about to be revealed to him by way of this amazing vision of the Lord Jesus in Daniel 10:5-6 (very similar to the vision received by John in Revelation 1:13-16). Lest Daniel become so enthralled by the prophetic events revealed to Him, it was necessary for him (and for John) to have a vision of the glorious One who made known these events to come—the exalted Prophet, Priest, and King, Jesus. As we acquire knowledge in Scripture, when that knowledge is not turning us to behold the glory of Jesus Christ, our knowledge is falling short of the goal/end of true knowledge—to glorify and enjoy the Lord Jesus through a blessed nearness and communion with Him.

Let us consider the following two questions from our text: (1) When Are We Strong in the Lord? (2) Who Is Michael, the Archangel?

### I. When Are We Strong in the Lord?

#### A. A Brief Review of Where We Are in Daniel 10.

1. After Daniel received the vision of the exalted Lord Jesus (Daniel 10:5-6), Daniel was left in a physically helpless condition (Daniel 10:7-9). The angel, Gabriel, appeared to him, strengthened him, and encouraged him (Daniel 10:10-11). We see Gabriel in Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:21.

2. Gabriel then informed Daniel that he had been sent by the Lord to give Daniel a revelation of things to come in answer to Daniel's prayer (Daniel 10:14), but had been delayed 21 days due to a spiritual battle that was waged between himself and the fallen angelic prince of Persia (Daniel 10:12-13). This spiritual battle was won by Gabriel and Michael who was called to help Gabriel in defeating the demonic influence of the prince of Persia over the human King of Persia so that he would not only send forth the Jews from captivity to Jerusalem, but also defend the Jews and supply all they needed to rebuild the temple/city.

3. This battle in the spiritual realm in nations, churches, families, and individuals continues even today (Ephesians 6:10-18). Jesus and His holy angels are not losing the battle no matter how dark and desperate it may seem to us. Satan is not winning. Jesus gives Satan enough room to work so as to reveal that the devil cannot destroy Christ or His kingdom. Even if there are ages in history in which it seems the devil has won, the Lord will reveal at such times His power and salvation from the power of the enemy (Job, Jesus delivers the demon possessed).

4. The decisive victory has already been fought/won by Jesus in His death, resurrection, and enthronement at God's right hand. Therein is our hope no matter how dark the tunnel may seem—He will rescue us by either removing that trial from us or by giving us the grace to persevere and grow in Christ through the trial. Perseverance and patience are graces that only grow through hardship, affliction, delay, and suffering (James 1:3-4). Our natural inclination is to want out of that trial immediately and entirely, but that is not how we learn in the School of Christ to be steadfast and to wait upon the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:13). God

is more concerned with our character/growth in Christ than in our comfort. Even when it is darkest, our precious Jesus is still on the throne.

B. Once again, Daniel is brought to see his own weakness before receiving the revelation of God through Gabriel (Daniel 10:15-17).

1. Daniel had just gone through great weakness and was strengthened (Daniel 10:8-9), and now again, he is brought to see his weakness. Why? Daniel became weak again that he would not forget that such great revelations from God were not due to his strength, his greatness, his holiness, but rather due to God's mercy—"that no flesh should glory in His presence" 1 Corinthians 1:29.

2. Even the great heroes of faith were shown their weakness that they might look to the strength of the Lord to uphold and sustain them (Moses in being slow of speech; Gideon in fearing the Midianites; Peter in denying the Lord; Paul and the thorn in the flesh).

3. God reveals to us our weaknesses/sins that we might turn from ourselves to behold our Savior and King as our strength, as our defense, as our fortress, as our provider, as our deliverer. Why would we flee to Christ if we thought we were strong enough in ourselves? Our weaknesses reveal our constant need of Jesus and communion with Him.

4. But are we not also told by the world/culture that we are to believe in ourselves, to be self-confident, to be strong and not weak? All of the gifts that we have are given not to glorify ourselves, but Christ. Boasting in our abilities is pride, robbing God of His glory. We can do many things in our own strength, but we can do nothing to the glory of God in our own strength. We are most vulnerable to revealing our weakness when we glory in our own strength (like Samson). Let us rejoice in our gifts, but let us be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

5. Paul (in 2 Corinthians 12) was given a thorn in the flesh (a messenger of Satan to afflict him) in order to keep him from boasting in the revelation he had received of heavenly glory. This was likely true of Daniel as well—weakness was to humble him. It is also true of us. Pride is more likely to exalt itself in us when all is going just as we want, not when we are prostrate with our face upon the ground due to what we are suffering. Weakness turns us from ourselves to find our strength in Christ. Note how this was true of Paul (2 Corinthians 12:8-10).

6. Don't despair in your weakness. There is hope. Jesus wants you to know and experience that you can be strong in your weakness. If we focus on the weakness, that's where we will stay. If we focus on Jesus, His power will be made perfect in our weakness.

C. In his weakness, Daniel was strengthened by God through His angel (Daniel 10:18-19).

1. Daniel did not get up on his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord and in the power of His might (Ephesians 6:10). We have to learn this lesson every day (Philippians 4:13). Communion with Christ throughout the day is the means to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might—being near Him, not far from Him.

2. There is no power to lamp unless it is plugged into the electrical receptacle—the cord may be far away or closer, but if the lamp cord is not abiding in the receptacle there will be no power.

D. Gabriel then relates to Daniel that he is on a mission from God (Daniel 10:20-21). That mission of Gabriel is to reveal to Daniel the truth of what is to come in the future AND to return to spiritually battle the demonic prince of Persia once again who is apparently exerting his influence with the King of Persia against the Jews. The victory is certain, though the battle is fought day by day. Once again, Gabriel, explains that there is one who stands with him in his battle against these demonic forces in high places—Michael your prince (Daniel 10:21). Michael had been mentioned earlier in Daniel 10:13, but I reserved our consideration of Michael until the sermon today.

## II. Who Is Michael, the Archangel?

A. Although all such questions are relevant and we should seek to understand what Scripture teaches, this is a question over which Bible-believing scholars (even among the Reformed) do not speak with unanimity. Thus, in seeking to answer the question, we do seek (as always) to speak the truth in love. This will not be an exhaustive study. Certainly more might be said—but I seek to summarize the two positions.

B. The two positions that we will briefly consider are these: (1) Michael is a created angel, and one of the chief angels of God; (2) Michael is a name for the uncreated Son of God—Jesus Christ. Michael means “who is like God”. He is mentioned by name five times in Scripture (Daniel 10:13,21; Daniel 12:1; Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7). He is given the title of “prince (Daniel 10:21) and the title of “archangel” (Jude 1:9).

1. **Michael is a created angel and one of the chief angels.**

- a. Angels are created beings and are distinguished from the Son of God (Hebrews 1:4-14; Revelation 22:8-9).
- b. Michael is given the title of “archangel” (Jude 1:9)—chief/prince of the angels.
- c. Michael is said to be “ONE of the chief princes” i.e. one of the chief angelic princes (Daniel 10:13). Michael has co-equal “chief princes”; Jesus does not.
- d. Michael, the archangel did not rebuke Satan in his own name, but rather rebuked Satan in the Lord’s name (Jude 1:9).
- e. Michael comes to help the angel, Gabriel, as an angel like Gabriel—though more powerful than Gabriel (Daniel 10:13,21).

2. **Michael is a name for the uncreated Son of God—Jesus.**

a. The word “angel” in both Hebrew and Greek means “messenger”. There are created “messengers” and there is an uncreated “messenger” or angel of God who is called God and is worshipped as God (**Hagar**—Genesis 16:13; **Abraham**—Genesis 18-19; **Moses**—Exodus 3:1-6; **Joshua**—Joshua 5:13-15; **the Angel of the Covenant**—Malachi 3:1).

b. Just as Michael is the Prince of God’s people (Daniel 10:21), so is Jesus Messiah the Prince (Daniel 9:25; Isaiah 9:6—“Mighty God”, “Prince of Peace”). Just as Michael is Prince over God’s people (the Visible Church at that time) so Jesus is King over God’s people (the Visible Church). Jesus was crucified as the King of the Jews.

c. Michael is not “one [cardinal] of the chief princes” (Daniel 10:13), but may also be translated “first [ordinal] above the chief princes” (i.e. superior to all spiritual and earthly princes, Ephesians 1:20-22). This also explains how Jesus is the “archangel”—He is not a created angel—He is the uncreated messenger of the Lord over all created angels.

d. Jesus reveals the invisible Father (John 1:18; John 14:9).

e. If Michael, the archangel, is Jesus, why does He rebuke Satan in the name of the Lord rather than in His own name (Jude 1:9)? Consider Zechariah 3:1-2 (not uncommon).

f. This position is often associated with that of the JWs and immediately discountenanced. But a created Michael the archangel and an uncreated Michael the archangel are two different beings altogether. Long before the JWs false interpretation, Protestant and Reformed scholars of the First and Second Reformations were interpreting Michael to be the uncreated Angel (Messenger) of the Lord that appears in Scripture. Jesus is not confined to the New Testament, but was active in ministry to His people throughout Scripture. This ties together so beautifully the unity of God’s covenant in Scripture.

g. Michael is said to come to the help of Gabriel (Daniel 10:13) does not mean he is a created angel any more than God being our helper means He is a created being like us (Hebrews 13:6)?

h. The Lord is not simply “a helper”. He is “my helper”. How does He become your personal helper? By faith in receiving Him as Savior and Lord, the Lord becomes your helper. Regardless of your struggles with your health, relationships, temptations/sins, the spread of evil throughout society, the defection within Christ’s Church, the tyranny of government, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me.”

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