

Who is Michael the Archangel

Release 2.0

May 25, 2021

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Appendix D – Who is Michael the Archangel

Michael as a name for an angel or spirit being is only used five times in the Bible.

[Daniel 10:13](#) "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, **Michael**, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. [Daniel 10:13 NKJV](#)

[Daniel 10:21](#) "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except **Michael** your prince. [Daniel 10:21 NKJV](#)

[Daniel 12:1](#) "At that time **Michael** shall stand up, The great prince who stands [watch] over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, [Even] to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. [Daniel 12:1 NKJV](#)

[Jude 1:9](#) Yet **Michael** the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" [Jude 1:9 NKJV](#)

[Revelation 12:7](#) And war broke out in heaven: **Michael** and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. [Revelation 12:7-8 NKJV](#)

The first thing to note is that this being is only referred to as the archangel in the book of Jude.

Old Testament

Let's start by looking at the three references in Daniel in a broader context.

[Daniel 10:1](#) In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message [was] true, but the appointed time [was] long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. ² In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. ³ I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

⁴ Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that [is], the Tigris, ⁵ I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist [was] girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶ His body [was] like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

⁷ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

¹⁰ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and [on] the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, **Michael**, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ "Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision [refers] to [many] days yet [to come]."

¹⁵ When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. ¹⁶ And suddenly, [one] having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷ "For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me."

¹⁸ Then again, [the one] having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹ And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace [be] to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

²⁰ Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. ²¹ "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except **Michael** your prince. [Daniel 10:1-21 NKJV](#))

The broader context is that the whole latter half of the book of Daniel is about the dreams and visions he received about future events. This is the last one, but interestingly he does not describe the contents of the vision as he did for the previous ones he recorded in chapters 7-9. In fact the only telling of the vision will be the interpretation of it given by the angel, presumably Gabriel who also appeared to him in ([8:16](#), [9:21](#)), recorded in chapters 11-12. For this one, he only says that he had a vision, and understood that it was true and that it contained great conflict. I'm not sure why it says that he understood the message in the NKJV, because he had been fasting and mourning for three weeks trying to understand it. The NLT translates it a little different:

[Daniel 10:1](#) In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) had another vision. He understood that the vision concerned events certain to happen in the future—times of war and great hardship. [Daniel 10:1 NLT](#)

The NLT combined the last two phrases to say that he understood the vision to be about future events, of war and hardship.

Getting back to the broader context, Daniel 10-12 is all about his last vision, how he struggled to understand it, and how an angel finally came to him to explain it. The problem is that the explanation given by the angel, is in great need of further explanation, but that is a topic for another study. Since, chapters 10-12 are all related in this way, it is very clear that the three references to Michael in Daniel are all about the same being. So Michael is referred to as:

- [10:13](#) - One of the chief princes¹

English	Hebrew	Pronunciation	Meaning
one	אֶחָד	'echad	one
of the chief	רִאשׁוֹן	ri'shown	first, former, foremost, chief

¹ http://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/dan/10/13/p0/t_conc_860013

Princes	שָׂר	sar	prince, ruler, leader, chief, chieftain, official, captain
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- [10:21](#) - Your prince²

English	Hebrew	Pronunciation	Meaning
your prince	שָׂר	sar	prince, ruler, leader, chief, chieftain, official, captain

- [12:1](#) - The great prince³

English	Hebrew	Pronunciation	Meaning
the great	גָּדוֹל	gadowl	great, large, older, important, God Himself
Prince	שָׂר	sar	prince, ruler, leader, chief, chieftain, official, captain

So, Daniel could have intended, *foremost chief*, or *captain*, or even *great God Himself, ruler and captain*. In any case, Michael seemed to be one who was more powerful than even the angel Gabriel.

New Testament

Now let's take a look at the New Testament references to Michael.

[Jude 1:9](#) Yet **Michael** the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" [Jude 1:9 NKJV](#)

[Revelation 12:7](#) And war broke out in heaven: **Michael** and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. [Revelation 12:7-8 NKJV](#)

In his book, Jude introduces himself as the brother of James, but doesn't clarify which. He begins the book by talking about some people that have crept into the fellowship of the church, who it seems have some inappropriate sensual practices, reject the authority of the church, revile angels, and even deny Jesus (probably denying that He is God). He goes on to say that these people will be punished, giving examples of others who have received judgment from God. Who do they think they are, even Michael the archangel didn't rail against Satan when he went to resurrect Moses. The way this verse is written it appears that it was either common knowledge at the time, or he was quoting from another source. I say this because rather than elaborating on it or trying to substantiate it, he is using the circumstances of this incident it to make another point. Now that we've looked at the context, let's look at the linguistics. The word archangel is translated from the Greek word ἀρχάγγελος, är-khä'n-ge-los.⁴ It is only used in one other place in the Bible:

[1 Thessalonians 4:16](#) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an **archangel**, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. [1 Thessalonians 4:16 NKJV](#)

Archangel has the meaning, chief of the angels.⁵ Notice that it is not defined as chief angel, but chief of the angels. Let's see if we can find another verse in the Bible that identifies who the commander of the angels is.

[Joshua 5:13](#) And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "[Are] You for us or for our adversaries?" ¹⁴ So He said, "No, but [as] Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come."

² http://www.blueletterbible.org/nkjv/dan/10/21/p0/t_conc_860021

³ http://www.blueletterbible.org/nkjv/dan/12/1/p0/t_conc_862001

⁴ <http://www.blueletterbible.org/nkjv/jde/1/9/p0>

⁵ <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G743&t=NKJV>

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" ¹⁵ Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand [is] holy." And Joshua did so. [Joshua 5:13-15 NKJV](#)

How do we know that this wasn't an angel that appeared to Joshua? Well, there are a couple reasons. First, when Joshua bowed down to the ground, the angel didn't tell him not to bow down to him. Then the being told Joshua to remove his sandals from his feet because he was standing on holy ground. Let's see what God said to Moses when He appeared to Him in the burning bush.

[Exodus 3:1](#) Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush [was] not consumed. ³ Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." ⁴ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand [is] holy ground." ⁶ Moreover He said, "I [am] the God of your father--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. [Exodus 3:1-6 NKJV](#)

Now this is really relevant to this discussion especially because it begins in verse 2 by saying the angel of the LORD appeared to Moses, but then He tells Moses to remove his sandals because he's standing on holy ground. Then He goes on to tell Moses that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Let's see what happened when John bowed down to an angel that appeared to him.

[Revelation 19:10](#) And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See [that you do] not [do that]! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." [Revelation 19:10 NKJV](#)

[Revelation 22:8](#) Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ Then he said to me, "See [that you do] not [do that]. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." [Revelation 22:8-9 NKJV](#)

So, from these two verses in Revelation, we can see that angels who appeared to humans have been known to tell them not to bow down to them.

Conclusion

Let summarize the main points that that we have examined.

- Daniel saw someone in vision named Michael who was referred to as chief prince, which could also have been translated, *foremost chief*, or *captain*, or even *great God Himself*, *ruler and captain*
- Michael the archangel resurrected Moses (an angel does not have the power to give life)
- The Lord Himself, whom I believe to be Jesus at His second coming, shouts with the voice of the archangel, and resurrects the dead in Christ
- The only two verses that use the word translated to archangel say "the archangel" and not "an archangel," implying that there is only one
- The meaning of the Greek word for archangel is chief of the angels

- Revelation says, Michel and his angels, again implying that he is chief over the angels
- The being that appeared to Joshua:
 - Called Himself captain of the LORD's hosts (army, presumably angels)
 - Said Joshua was standing on holy ground (he could not be an angel). When God (clearly identified) spoke to Moses from the burning bush, he also said Moses was standing on holy ground.
 - Referred to the LORD's hosts, (presumably referring to God the Father) so this wasn't God the Father talking to Joshua

Considering these points, I don't see any way that Michael could be an angel. And with the Godly inferences, I am led to the inescapable conclusion that Michael is another of the numerous names for God the Son.

What do you believe?

- When the authors of the Bible wrote about Michael, do you think they knew they were talking about God?
- When Jude wrote of Michael the archangel, he spoke of it as if it was common knowledge. Where do you think that common knowledge came from, considering that it was not included in the Bible?
- When people had visions, do you think they could always tell if they were seeing Jesus or an angel?