

MICHAEL—THE GREAT PRINCE

Excerpts from a sermon by the Rev. Patrick A. Rose

“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).

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon...” (Revelation 12:7).

The name Michael, from its derivation in the Hebrew, means “who is like God,” therefore Michael signifies the Lord as to the Divine Truth that the Lord is God even as to the Human (Apocalypse Explained 735:3).

What exactly is meant by the name Michael? The name does not refer to a particular person or particular angel, but to an angelic function or ministry. The name is actually a question, meaning, literally, “Who is like God?” And it is the answer to this one simple question which can, more than anything else, fight against the abominable spheres of the dragon. [Much is said about the dragon in the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church. In general, the dragon is a flying snake. It represents those who are capable of thinking on a high plane, but who think they can be saved while living just how they please, by continuing to live a life immersed in sin—in dirt—just like a snake.]

Who is like God? The angels who taught the answer to this question were called Michael, and they were instrumental in bringing about the Last Judgment. On earth this same question is answered in the Heavenly Doctrine. Indeed, this is its essential purpose—to tell us who it is who is like God.

This question, “Who is like God?” is a most important question, indeed *the* most important question a person can ask. The greatest conflict of the present age centers upon the way in which this question is to be answered. Even in the time of Daniel, Michael the prince is spoken of—a prince meaning a primary truth—and even at that time, this primary question and the conflict of the present day was prophesied: “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...” (Daniel 12:1). And so, from the time of Daniel, and indeed from even earlier times (cf. *Apocalypse Explained* 735:4), it was prophesied that there would someday be a great controversy, a spiritual war, concerning this question of Michael—the question of “Who is like God?”

The conflict arises from the fact that there are two answers to this question—the false answer, and the true answer. The dragon, and those associated with it, have their answer. “*We* are like God,” they say. Or, if they do not say it, they certainly live as if this were the case. *They* are good. *They* are important. God is not important. What He says in Divine revelation is not important. They do not worship, and if they do, it is merely an empty gesture, for their hearts and

their lives are not within their worship. After all, if you think you can decide for yourself how to live your life, then who really needs religion?

But drawn up against this false view, in full battle array, is Michael, that great prince or primary truth—the truth which answers the question, “Who is like God?” This truth is that the Human of the Lord Jesus Christ is Divine. Who is like God? No human is, except for one—namely that Man or Human assumed by Jehovah when He was born into the world. Jesus Christ is like God, for Jesus Christ *is* God.

Through the process of glorification, by which He was united to the Divine soul within, the Lord became God Himself in human form. And so the answer to the question posed by Michael, “Who is like God?”, is a simple one: Jesus Christ, our Lord, is God.

Jesus Christ is God. Such an idea seems so simple to understand. But within it there is tremendous power. There is hope for this world because of this truth which has now been revealed, hope for the day when the Lord Jesus Christ will reign, not merely in the lips and memories of men and women, but in their hearts, in their understandings, and in their lives.

Suggested Readings: Revelation 12:1-9; *True Christian Religion* 791; Daniel 12:1-4; *Apocalypse Revealed* 548