

Michael the Archangel is another Name and title for Jesus the Ruler of the angels.

The phrase “Michael the Archangel” is mentioned once in holy Scripture. Let’s read the verse.

“Yet Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee (Jude 1:9)

The word “*archangel*” is also mentioned in Thessalonians. Let’s read that verse.

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first (1 Thess 4:16)

Now “*Michael*” is mentioned a few more times in holy Scripture and we will get to those passages shortly.

For the time being let’s state the SDA position. Seventh-day Adventist Christians believe that Michael is another Name for Jesus and Archangel is a title that indicates His role as Ruler of the angels.

While this is a minority view, there have been numerous other Christians, throughout history and from a variety of denominations, who have held to the same view, not the least of them being Matthew Henry, Adam Clarke, John Lange, J.D Glasgow, William Kinkade and Charles Spurgeon. Let’s actually quote from some of these individuals so that all will see the truth of my claim.

"Michael and his angels" on one side, and "the dragon and his angels" on the other. Christ, the great angel of the covenant, and his faithful followers; and Satan and all his instruments. - Matthew Henry on Rev 12

"Michael was the man child which the woman brought forth."—Clarke's Commentary.

"This being 'a war in the heaven,' and waged by Michael, who is Christ (whose warfare is not like that of earthly kings), and by His messengers, is an intellectual and polemical warfare."—J. D. Glasgow, Commentary on the Apocalypse

"We have shown elsewhere that the Archangel Michael is an image of Christ victoriously combatant. Christ is an Archangel in His quality of judge; and He appears as judge, not only at the end of the world, but also in the preservation of the purity of His Church."—Lange's Commentary (1874), on Rev. 12:1-12, Exegetical and Critical Synoptic View, p. 238.

"From all this it is evident, that Michael is a name for our Lord himself, in his particular character of the champion of his faithful people, against the violence of the apostate faction, and the wiles of the Devil. In this point, I have the good fortune to have a host of the learned on my side.- Samuel Horsely, message on Dan 4:17

"Some think the word Michael represents Christ, and I do not object to this opinion. - John Calvin Commentary on Daniel Vol 2 pg 243

"And may not Christ himself be this Michael the Arch-angel, the Prince of Israel? It has been observed by some writers, that the scripture never speaks of arch-angels in the plural number; perhaps there is but one arch-angel and that is Christ. - Isaac Watts, The Glory of Christ as God-Man pg 223

"To me this evidence proves beyond reasonable dispute, that Michael is one of the names of Christ; because if the Church is the seat of this war, and if Christ is the Captain of our salvation, and the leader of his people, he must be the person who is here mentioned under the name of Michael. - William Kinkade, The Doctrine of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, atonement, faith and election pg 153

"We read that Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels, and the dragon was cast down. The fight is going on every day. Michael is the Lord Jesus, the only Archangel." - Charles Spurgeon 'The Angelic Life' Nov. 22, 1868

Now how was this conclusion reached? The answer is through Bible study. There are several good lines of reasoning in Scripture to believe that Michael the Archangel is Jesus the Ruler of angels so let's explore them.

To begin with we need to understand what the word "archangel" means. Many erroneously define it as meaning a type of created being, like a seraph or cherub but this is not correct.

The English word "archangel" is a translation of the Greek word "archaggelos." This Greek word is a composite of two Greek words- "archo" meaning "to be chief, to lead, to rule" and "aggelos" meaning "a messenger, envoy, one who is sent, an angel, a messenger from God." Thus, the word is rightly understood as "Chief/Leader/Ruler of angels/messengers."

A similar English word that can help us to rightly understand this is "architect" [from the Greek- "archi-tekton]. Now "tekton" means a builder but is an architect a builder or is he the one in charge of the builders? You know the correct answer! Architect is a word indicating a title or function not the nature of a type of being. An architect may actually be a builder but then again he/she may not. In the same way the composite word "archangel"- as evidenced by its root words- indicates a title or function and not the nature of the being.

So, now that we know what "archangel" means [a leader, chief, or ruler of angels] let's examine some other Bible data. This next verse is talking about Joshua. He saw a man standing with a sword drawn near Jericho. When Joshua approached Him and asked him if he was for Israel or their enemies, he got this response.

"And He said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my Lord unto His servant?

¹⁵ *And the Captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so (Joshua 5:14, 15)*

Now this Being who appears to Joshua said He was “Captain of the LORD’s host.” He also received worship from Joshua and told him to take his shoes off because the ground was holy. Now this was a Divine Being because a holy angel will not receive worship (see Rev 19:10; 22:8,9)

As stated previously “Archangel” is a composite word meaning “Ruler/Leader/Chief of angels/messengers” and when we look at Joshua 5:14 which speaks of the “Captain of the hosts of the LORD” it becomes apparent that the two titles are synonyms! This is a theological basis for (or at the very least a starting point for an investigation into) Michael as another Name for this Divine Captain!

Now, as another important point, I am going to quote Joshua 5:14, 15 in the ASV because they render the Hebrew word “**sar**” as “prince.” This will be important later on when we see some other verses about Michael. He is called that same Hebrew word.

*“And He said, Nay; but as Prince of the host of Jehovah am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?
¹⁵ And the Prince of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua, Put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. (Joshua 5:14, 15 ASV)*

For the time being though let’s remember that the Divine Being in Joshua is serving as the Leader or Ruler of the angelic host. And coincidentally this function- captaining or leading the angelic host- is what we see Michael doing in Scripture in Revelation 12:7!

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels” (Rev 12:7)

Notice that in this particular passage the loyal angels are presented as Michael’s angels while the soon to be cast out disloyal angels are presented as belonging to the dragon.

If you study the Scriptures, you will see that the expression “his angels” appears 16 times in the KJV. With the exception of the two times in Rev 12:7, 9 which mentions some of the angels who gave their allegiance to satan thus becoming “his (satan’s) angels” and this one disputed Michael’s angels reference- in every other place the Scripture presents them as “His [God or Christ’s] angels!” [See Job 4:18; Psalm 91:11; 103:20; 104:4; 148:2; Matt 4:6; 13:41; 16:27; 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 4:10; Heb 1:7; Rev 3:6).

What does that hint to us regarding Michael and His angels? Certainly, it is not a conclusive proof, but I would say that it *favours* the conclusion that Michael is a Divine being, none other than the pre-incarnate Christ, the Captain of the LORD’s host.

Let's keep studying. I want to draw your attention back to the Hebrew word "Sar." In Joshua 5:14 the Hebrew is "Sar -Tsaba '-Yehovah." [Captain (Prince) of the host of the LORD].

If you examine the Scriptures you will see that Michael is called "Sar" in the book of Daniel and so also is Christ! Let's deal first with the references that are about Jesus.

"Yea, he magnified himself even to the Prince of the host [Sar-HaTsaba'], and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away and the place of His sanctuary was cast down (Dan 8:11)

"And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand" (Dan 8:25)

Now this "Prince of the host" aka: "Prince of princes" is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ! (Compare with Dan 11:36).

Now let's deal with the references about Michael.

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes [Miyka'el 'Ahad HaSariym HaRi'shoniym], came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia (Dan 10:13)

"But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince. (Dan 10:21)

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. (Dan 12:1,2)

Notice that Miyka'el is presented as Daniel's Prince. He is the "great Prince" who stands for "the children of thy [Daniel's] people." If you study the Scriptures carefully you will see that there is a Divine Angel who defends God's people. Jacob mentions "*the Angel* [capitalized in the KJV] *which redeemed me from all evil...*" (Gen 48:16) and Isaiah says that "*In all their affliction He was afflicted and the Angel of His presence saved them...*" (Isa 63:9) and God told Moses, "*Behold, I send an Angel* [capitalized in the KJV] *before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him, and obey His voice, provoke Him not; for He will not pardon your transgressions: for My Name is in Him.*" (Exodus 23:20,21).

This Divine Angel, if you study Scripture carefully, is equated with God frequently and He is none other than the Son of God. This can be proven in a variety of ways. And notice that this Angel is the One who "*redeemed [Jacob] from all evil.*" He is the One who "*saved [Israel]*" and He was sent "*to keep [Israel] in the way.*" What is this except the very same function of

Miyka'el the “*Prince*” [Sar] who stands for God’s people and delivers them in this great time of trouble? It's another evidence added to the pile.

Anyhow, the point here is this “Prince of princes” “Prince of the host” from Daniel is “Sar” over the angelic hosts. This is the same title as the “Captain” [Sar] over the angelic hosts from Joshua. And in Daniel, Miyka'el is called “one of the chief princes,” the “great Prince” [Sar] who stands for Israel! And we know from our other verses that Michael is also called the Archangel (Ruler of the angels) who leads the loyal angels to battle.

If we put two and two together we can see who He is. This is why SDAs and even many non-Adventist Bible commentators correctly identify the Michael as Christ!

Now I want to pause for a moment and deal with “Michael, one of the chief princes.”

The Hebrew transliteration here is “Miyka’el ’Ahad HaSariym HaRi’shoniym.”

If you examine Scripture you will see evidence that Michael is presented as the strongest Prince. Notice in vs. 13 that the angel which appeared to Daniel needed help from Michael for he says “*but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me*” (Dan 10:13). And this angel, who needed the help, was obviously a very high ranking one (possibly Gabriel) because he stated that he had knowledge which no other being held except, you guessed it, Michael!

“But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince.” (Dan 10:21).

With that said, who would be the higher? Michael or the angel who needed His help? Again, remember Michael is the Archangel.

Also, the word in Hebrew which describes Him as “One” of the chief princes is “’Ehad” and it not only carries the meaning of “one” but also “first.” Here is the outline of Biblical usage for this word:

- 1)** one (number)
- a)** one (number)
- b)** each, every
- c)** a certain
- d)** an (indefinite article)
- e)** only, once, once for all
- f)** one...another, the one...the other, one after another, one by one

g) first

h) eleven (in combination), eleventh (ordinal)

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H259&t=KJV>

Hence an alternative translation of Daniel 10:13, and one that fits the overall context of Scripture better considering that Michael is the Archangel, is that He is “First of the chief princes.” In other words, He’s the top honcho! The Archangel (Ruler of the angels)!

Now I want to pause and touch upon Zechariah 3 and Jude 1:9 because we will see another clue that helps us to properly identify Michael.

The language that the Divine Angel who is the Lord uses against Satan in Zech 3 is the exact same as what Michael the Archangel uses against Satan in Jude

*“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before **the Angel of the LORD**, and satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And **the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee**, O satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? (Zech 3:1,2)*

*“Yet **Michael the Archangel**, when contending with the devil He disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but **said, The Lord rebuke thee**.” (Jude 1:9)*

This is a linguistic hint that this Divine “Angel of the Lord” is One and the same as “Michael the Archangel.” And notice that the Angel of the LORD in Zechariah 3 is also called the LORD Himself. In other words, this is the Son of God who also has the Name of YHWH or Jehovah just like His Father.

Let’s move forward and deal with Michael and the resurrection.

As Jude revealed to us, Michael was the One who disputed with the devil regarding Moses body. What was this dispute about specifically? Obviously, God wanted to do something with Moses’ body that the devil did not want to happen. A simple examination of Scripture provides a clear answer.

The devil is presented in holy Writ as the one who “*had the power of death*” (Heb 2:14). Michael had come to resurrect Moses and the devil contested this invasion of his domain. Now we know from Scripture that Moses was resurrected for he appeared with Elijah (who did not die but was taken directly to heaven in a fiery chariot- See 2 Kings 2) upon the Mt. of transfiguration, and this was a bodily appearance for Peter wanted to build 3 tabernacles to house the glorified Jesus along with Moses and Elijah (Matt 17:1-4). This fact, that Moses was resurrected, is the probable reason why no man could ever find his sepulcher (See Deut 34:6).

Now what does all of this show us? When God wanted to resurrect his faithful servant Moses whom did He send? What does this imply about who Michael is? Who else could this be but the pre-incarnate Christ? Again, Adventists aren't the only ones to see these things and reach the inevitable conclusion.

What else can we learn from the Scriptures about Michael and the resurrection? Let's turn to Daniel:

*“And at that time **shall Michael stand up**, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan 12:1,2)*

The movement of Michael (**He stands up!**) is connected to the time of trouble, deliverance of God's people along with the resurrection of both the just and unjust! Hmm....that's interesting. Let's see what else the Scriptures say:

*“For the **Lord Himself** shall descend from heaven **with a shout**, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thess 4:16)*

Now there are two ways to understand this passage, both very reasonable. The first is that the Lord will shout but there will also be an archangel with Him who will speak and there will also be an unidentified individual with a trumpet. This is a reasonable position.

The other view focuses in on the Greek. The word for "**with**" here is "**en**" and it appears to be denoting instrumentality. In other words, the secondary clause "**with the voice of the Archangel**" is describing the **Lord's "shout."** In fact, the third clause might even be indicating this because, according to John the revelator, **the glorified Jesus' voice is like a trumpet!**

*“I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day and heard behind me **a great voice, as of a trumpet**” (Rev 1:10)*

We should also note that close parallel to the Greek 'εν φωνη αρχαγγελου, [en phone archangelou] (with an/the archangel's voice) of 1 Thessalonians 4:16 is found in 2 Peter 2:16: *“the dumb [donkey] speaking with man's voice”*. Here we have 'εν φωνη, en phone' (with the/a voice) together with a genitive. **The donkey was speaking with a man's voice - but it was the donkey that was speaking, not a man nearby. Likewise, in all other cases where 'en phone' is used in the NT, the voice in question always belongs to the subject of the sentence, not some unspecified third person-** See Revelation 5:2; 14:7, 9; 18:1

Now what does the Scripture say about Jesus and His voice in connection with the resurrection of the dead?

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His [the Son’s] voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28, 29).

Thus our evidence continues to pile up- it appears that the voice of the Michael the Prince [Sar], the Archangel (Ruler of angels) is no different from the voice of Jesus, the Prince [Sar] of the host, the only begotten Son of God!

Now let’s talk about the Name Michael for a moment. Here is what it means.

Mi- **“who”** (Holladay’s Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament pg 192)

Ke- **“particle of comparison: like, as much as, about, etc..”** (Ibid pg 149)

El- **“very old Semetic term for Deity, often appearing in compounds with proper names...and liturgical phrases”** (Ibid pg 15)

In other words Michael means **“Who like God?”**

Now, in terms of linear time, Michael is first presented to us in the context of a war! (see Rev 12:7) But to whom is this Name a challenge? Why is there even a war happening in heaven? If we understand the history of the Great Controversy, then it makes perfect sense that Christ would be the One bearing this Name. Through the type of the king of Babylon Isaiah reveals to us Lucifer’s intention, the very reason why he started the war in heaven in the first place:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High (Isa 14:12-13)

If you study your Bible carefully you will see that there is only One other visible Being who sits upon the throne with the Father. That is Christ, the Son of God. Hence the throne of the universe is the throne of God and of the Lamb! (See Rev 22:1) The only begotten Son of God shared in this Divine glory with the Father before the world was (John 17:5), yea, even from all eternity.

And so we see that Lucifer, in his foolish self-exaltation, desired to exalt his throne above the stars, to sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north, to ascend above the heights of the clouds and to be like the most High.

What was the Divine response? The manifestation of Michael! (Rev 12:7). A side of the Divine Person of Christ unseen before! A Warrior! Leading the angelic host to war.

When Christ comes as Michael He is not to be trifled with! Lucifer’s intent to be “like the most High” was an usurping of the prerogatives that belong to the Father and Son. And, interestingly enough, Jesus is seen in the book of Revelation leading the angelic host to war once again.

*“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness **he doth judge and make war.**”¹² His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.¹³ And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.¹⁴ **And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean** (Rev 19:11-14)*

It makes perfect sense that this is Jesus in His Archangel capacity – Him coming as Leader or Ruler of the angelic host.

I hope that all of the lines of Bible evidence have helped you to see why SDAs believe that Michael the Archangel is another Name and title for Jesus in His office work as Leader of the angels.