

alty). This vision raises the problem of false prophecy and how to detect it. After all, both Zedekiah and Micaiah were authentic prophets who deserved to be listened to. The idea that it was Naboth's spirit that enticed the prophets and not God, thus lets God off the hook, so to speak, as God is shown to allow this only reluctantly (Goldenberg: 96). Judah ha-Levi (*Kuzari* 3.73) explains the vision as a rhetorical strategy to bolster the argument and make it sound more convincing. In a similar vein, Qimḥi (at vv. 20–23) explains that Ahab was already sentenced to death by divine decree (*mitah la-shamayim*) and it was God who instilled the false spirit into the band of prophets. The whole scene Micaiah describes was his invention to drive home the point that Ahab was doomed.

Rashi cites an aggadah (most likely *ySan* 11:5, 30c), which seems to imply that Micaiah was wounded during the battle and his blood atoned for Israel and allowed them to escape punishment. Ginzberg (6:313) questions this, suggesting that the aggadah may actually refer to the suffering of the pious king Jehoshaphat.

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See also → Ahab (King of Israel); → Ahaziah;  
→ Jehoshaphat (Person); → Micah (Book and Person); → Ramoth-Gilead

## Michael (Angel)

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. New Testament
- III. Judaism
- IV. Christianity
- V. Literature
- VI. Visual Arts
- VII. Music
- VIII. Film

### I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Michael (MT *Mikā'el*, LXX Μιχαήλ), is the name of an angel, a heavenly figure, that appears in the HB/OT in Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1. The human name, which occurs in texts from the Persian period, such as Num 13:13, Ezra 8:8, 1 Chr 6:40; 7:3; 8:16, and 2 Chr 21:2, can be translated “Who is like God?” The career of the angel Michael starts in the Hellenistic period around the 2nd cent. BCE, which is the date of composition of the book of Daniel and probably also the oldest Enoch traditions in which he plays

an important role (1 *En.* 9:1; 20:1–7; 40; etc.). He becomes a very prominent figure in Jewish and Christian eschatological writings from the Roman period.

In his first appearance in Dan 10:13 and 21 he is portrayed as the patron angel of Israel and opposed to the angels of Persia (10:13) and Greece (10:20). According to this conception each nation has a guardian angel, who fights for that nation against the other angels. This contradicts the idea of Sir 17:17 that other peoples have “rulers,” but Israel is under the direct protection of YHWH (Bauer: 195). It has been argued that the angel Michael is a transformation of a Phoenician deity Mikal (Delcor: 210–11) but given the frequency of the name Michael in Persian and later times this hypothesis seems to be unwarranted (Mach: 569). In Dan 12:1 Michael is called the “great prince” and fights for his people in the eschatological battle. In later texts Michael is called ὁ ἀρχάγγελος = “the archangel” (1 *En.* 20:1–7; 71:3; 2 *En.* 22:6; 4 *Bar.* 9:5; Jude 9), but in Dan 12 the Greek versions translate the Hebrew text (ὁ ἀγγελος ὁ μέγας = “the great angel”). As the patron angel of Israel (cf. also 1 *En.* 20:5; 40:8–10; 2 *En.* 18:9; 3 *Bar.* 37:1; 44:10; 1QM 17,6–8) Michael also becomes an intercessor for the Israelites (Tob 12:15; *T. Dan* 6:2; *T. Levi* 5:5–6). The angel Michael becomes more prominent than any other angel, so that he could easily be identified with any unnamed angel.

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### II. New Testament

Michael, aside from Gabriel (Luke 1:19, 26), is the only angel mentioned by name in the NT. In Jude 9, Michael is called archangel (ἀρχάγγελος). He contends with the devil (διάβολος) for the body of Moses, whom God himself has buried, according to Deut 34:6. The same motif is found nowhere in pre-Christian texts, which is why it has been suggested that it refers to the lost ending of the *As. Mos.*, as presumed by early Christian authors (Origen, Didymus the Blind, Gelasius; see Bauckham; Berger). With this short narrative in Jude 9, the author wants to show in his argumentation that even the highest angel was afraid of the act of condemning the devil and so committed it instead to God.

Michael is the only angel in the book of Revelation who is called by name, although heavenly beings have an important role to play in this book. Revelation 12:7–9 describes a cosmic battle (cf. the War-Rule 1QM from Qumran) between Michael and the dragon (δράκων). Michael is the leading angel to whom other angels are assigned in the war against the devil and his angels. Michael fights in

the heavenly sphere for the people of God by throwing their accuser out of the presence of God (Rev 12:10; cf. Zech 3:1–3).

In addition, other texts in the NT are considered to refer to Michael. Thus, the “voice of an archangel” in 1 Thess 4:16, which accompanies the *parousia* of Christ, is occasionally associated with Michael (Fee), though most interpreters avoid this identification. Sometimes the “restrainer” (τὸ κατέχον/ὁ κατέχων) in 2 Thess 2:6–7 is interpreted in connection to Dan 10–12 as a hint to the figure of Michael (Hannah), but this is also a minority view.

The references to Michael in the NT are therefore found exclusively in apocalyptic passages, which corresponds to the mention of this angel in early Jewish writings (Dan; 1 *En.*; 1QM). Michael is described as a leading angel whose mission is to fight against evil for the cause of God and his people. Compared to early Jewish texts, the passages in the NT referring to Michael are rather scarce. Moreover, in all texts he is subordinated to Christ, who ultimately judges and will accomplish the eschatological victory.

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Michael R. Jost

### III. Judaism

■ Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism ■ Rabbinic Judaism ■ Medieval Judaism

#### A. Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism

The angel Michael appears often in the literature of the Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism. The references to Michael in the book of Daniel are particularly relevant (Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1). As in Dan, Michael is explicitly characterized as patron and protector of the people of God in 1 *En.* 20:5. Here he is listed as the fourth of seven angels (in the Eth. text only of six angels) (cf. Tob 12:15). Otherwise, he is often called the first of four angels and is therefore considered to be the highest archangel. In 1 *En.* 9, Michael sees together with Uriel (or Sariel), Raphael, and Gabriel the blood and the injustice on earth, which is why these four archangels ask God to instruct them as to what they ought to do (cf. 4Q201 1 iv:6 and 4Q202 1 iii:7). Later in the text,

Enoch engages in a conversation with Michael, who serves him as *angelus interpres* (1 *En.* 24:6–25:7). In the *Book of Parables* (1 *En.* 37–71), Michael is often mentioned next to Raphael, Gabriel, and Phanuel and is referred to as the merciful and long-suffering one (1 *En.* 40:9).

Michael is also described as a warrior, especially in various Dead Sea Scrolls. In the *War Scroll* (1QM), the names of four archangels are written on the shields of the towers (1QM 9:15–17), and the hope for victory in the eschatological battle is based on the assistance of Michael (1QM 17:6–7). The name is also found in the damaged Frg. 1 of 4Q285, a writing that also describes an eschatological battle. 4Q529, in turn, contains words of Michael that he sends to other angels. He also addresses explicitly the angel Gabriel. In 4Q470 1:2–5, Michael offers a new covenant with Zedekiah. In addition, it is debated whether Melchizedek and the Prince of Light in the Dead Sea Scrolls should be identified with the archangel Michael.

Another common name for Michael is “chief commander” (ἀρχιστρατήγος), especially in 3 *Bar.*, 2 *En.*, and *T. Ab.*, even though the context is not always related to warfare. Michael is the figure who mediates between God and Abraham and at the same time appears as an angel who leads the soul of the deceased into heaven (*T. Ab.* A 20:10–12 and B 14:7; cf. *Apoc. Mos.* 37:4–6 and 4 *Bar.* 9:5, here called “archangel of righteousness”). Probably in the lost end of the *As. Mos.* Michael contends with the devil (διάβολος) for the body of Moses (cf. *Jude* 9). Although called the “first of the angels” (*T. Ab.* B 4:5), in *T. Ab.* A 4:6–11 (B 4:9–12), Michael tries to avoid his mission to remove Abraham from the earth, which contradicts the picture of a sovereign warrior. Michael also has a prominent role in Greek apocalypses. He acts as a mediator between God and the visionary (*Apoc. Mos.*; *Apoc. Ezras*) and as guardian of the gate to the fifth heaven, where he receives human prayers and leads the angels, who fight against the godless people (3 *Bar.* 11–16). However, the provenance of these texts, whether they are early Jewish or Christian, is controversial.

Michael thus plays a decisive role in early Jewish texts, especially in apocalyptic literature. He is one of the leading angels who is responsible in a special way for the people of God. On the one hand, he serves as mediator and intercessor. On the other hand, he is the psychopomp of deceased believers and the protector of the people of God in the eschatological war.

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Michael R. Jost

#### B. Rabbinic Judaism

Though the Bible allows for myriad angels in heaven, they are in nearly all cases nameless; Michael is one of the few exceptions. In rabbinic litera-

ture the book of Daniel's brief asides on Michael and Gabriel's guardianship of Israel provided the basis for the midrashic elaboration of their various roles. The ostensible Persian setting of the book of Daniel may have given rise to the rabbinic statement that the names of angels came from exilic settings in Babylonia (*yRH* 1:2, 6a and *BerR* 48.9). Michael and Gabriel remain the most prominent and oft-mentioned angels in rabbinic literature with Michael accorded the highest honor in later Palestinian and Babylonian sources, when issues of hierarchy arose (*BerR* 48.9; *bYom* 37a). That said, a heroic feat attributed to Michael in Palestinian rabbinic sources might be attributed to Gabriel in Babylonian sources (cf. who founded Rome in *yAZ* 1.2 [39c] and *bShab* 56b and *bSan* 21b; who saved the three from the fire in *BerR* 44 or *bPes* 118a, etc.).

Rabbinic literature does not reflect any systematic angelology, but elaborates on biblical references to Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, as well as other anonymous angels on a case by case basis.

Michael is the only named angel to be found in early rabbinic sources: the Tosefta (ca. 250 CE) prohibits sacrificing to "Michael the great prince of hosts," suggesting some Jews may have carried adoration of Michael beyond acceptable bounds (*tHul* 2:18 and compare *mHul* 2:12 and *bHul* 40a). The title accorded Michael here is somewhat related to the title associated with Michael in Dan 10:21, where he is called a prince (*šar*). This might be interchangeable with archangel, a term found only in Greek sources and their translations (cf. Jude 9). While there is no extant evidence for organized communal Jewish worship of Michael, *yBer* 9:1, 13a records another tradition that indicates an interest in prohibiting angels from assuming too central a place in Jewish worship: "if a trouble comes to a person, he should not exclaim to Michael or to Gabriel, rather to me [God] he should exclaim, and I will answer him immediately."

In amoraic literature, Michael is often mentioned alongside Gabriel, and a few times alongside both Gabriel and Raphael. The rabbis assign Michael a wide range of roles, both within and outside the biblical corpus. In the Pentateuch all the angels are anonymous but the rabbis often assign specific identities to these unnamed angels. For example, late antique rabbinic sources agree that Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael were the three who visited Abraham in Gen 18, each tasked with his own mission (Michael being the herald, Gabriel the warrior, and Raphael the healer); the rabbis say that Michael is the angel who stopped Balaam's ass, is one of the angels that Isaiah saw (*bBer* 4b), and is the one who defended Jacob from Laban (*PRE* 36), and more. In some aggadic sources Michael is assigned a role even when no angel is mentioned: Michael and Gabriel are said to have been among the first created angels, the ones to attend Adam's wedding, and the ones to

assist Jacob in tricking his brother (see *BerR* 3.5; 8.13; 63.14). He appears as a helpful mentor to Moses during the construction of the menorah or during the performance of purification rituals in the desert wanderings of the Exodus generations (*Mekh-Dev* 5; *SifZ* 8).

Michael seems to have had a reputation as the most important angelic prince among Jews. According to Rav (2nd cent.; *bMen* 110a), Michael the archangel in the heavenly temple sacrifices before the Lord.

Whereas in rabbinic texts one can observe an anxiety about preoccupation with the angels Michael or Gabriel (*yBer* 9.1, 13a), in ancient Jewish magical texts, practitioners freely appealed to Michael alongside a plethora of other named angels (e.g., Montgomery: nos. 7:8; 9:11; 14:4; Shaked et al.: 1:11; 2:11; 3:12; etc.). Michael appears alongside Gabriel and Raphael, but also without them and in lists among unpronounceable angelic names.

Michael and seven other named angels appear in the Targums to the Pentateuch and Targums to the Prophets, with Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and the so-called Toseftot Targum showing a tendency to name angels much more frequently than the other Targumim (Kasher; Shinan). Michael is the most commonly named angel in the Targum to the Pentateuch, fulfilling such roles as announcing Levi's role in establishing the Levitical priestly line (*TPsj* to Gen 32:24), helping Judah's daughter-in-law Tamar prove her righteousness (*TPsj*, *TNeof*, *TFRag* to Gen 38:25), and calling on Moses to ascend Mount Sinai (*TPsj* to Exod 24:1).

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Mika Ahuvia

### C. Medieval Judaism

In view of his position in rabbinic angelology, Michael was considered by medieval Jews to be the most prominent of the angels on high. For example, according to Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1167) in his long commentary on Exod 23:20 (Rottzoll: 746–47), Michael "is called the great(est) because he is more honorable than the many other (angels)." For Ibn Ezra, and other Bible exegetes such as Isaac Abarbanel (1437–1508), the unnamed angel who guided Moses during the exodus and guarded over the people of Israel during their lengthy wandering in the

wilderness was therefore none other than “the great prince” (Dan 12:1), Michael.

The idea that Michael was the advocate and protector of the Jews secured his place in Jewish liturgy, even though direct appeals to Michael and other angels seem to have been less common in medieval times. Michael is one of the guardian angels included in a collection of bedtime prayers structured around the *Shema*’ prayer that Jews may recite before going to sleep. In the Sephardi rite, in the fourth *piyyut* belonging to *tefillat tal*, the prayer for dew sung on the first day of Passover, God is requested to send Michael and redeem Israel.

Michael’s name pops up here and there in other *piyyutim* written by early Byzantine Palestinian *payyotanim* like Yannai (6th cent.) or Qillir (late 6th or early 7th cent.) and by later Spanish authors such as Solomon ibn Gabirol (ca. 1021/2–1056). Interestingly enough, according to one mystical midrash, Qillir is said to have ascended to heaven in order to learn from the archangel Michael about the compositional techniques of the angels (Idel 2005: 35–37; a 13th-cent. French figure even took on the name Rabbi Michael the Angel after his ascension to heaven). Ibn Gabirol, for his part, confirms Michael’s status as “the eminent prince at the front,” i.e., the highest ranking angel, in one of his *ofanim* (hymns about the angels; Cole: 59–60; 303–5).

It is likely that there were numerous medieval Jews who for magical purposes wrote the names of angels (including Michael’s) within their *mezuzot* (doorpost amulets), for this practice was condemned and prohibited by Maimonides (1138–1204) in *MishTilkhhot tefillin* 5:4.

In kabbalistic literature, other prevailing notions of Michael were further developed, including the idea of Michael as high priest, his conception as chaperone of the souls of the pious, his frequent pairing with another archangel, Gabriel, and his association with the figures of Enoch and particularly Metatron (Paluch). In Abraham Abulafia’s (1240–ca. 1291) writings, Michael is identified with Metatron, the personification of the “Active Intellect” (i.e., the highest mystical degree), whereas Gabriel is identified with Sandalphon, who administers the corporeal realm (Idel 1988: 27).

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## IV. Christianity

■ Patristics and Orthodox Churches ■ Medieval Times and Reformation Era ■ Modern Europe and America ■ New Christian Churches and Movements

### A. Patristics and Orthodox Churches

Veneration for Michael the Archangel stems in large part from his four scriptural appearances and the roles associated with them. As one of the “chief princes” (ἀρχων), Michael champions and protects the Chosen People in Dan 10:13, while in 10:21 he presides over the resurrection of the dead at the end of the apocalyptic struggle that establishes God’s kingdom. This eschatological dimension contextualizes his advocacy for the dead at their judgment (Jude 9), as well as his battle with, and defeat of, Satan (Rev 12:7–9). In each case, the Archangel preserves purity by extinguishing evil. The subjugation of Satan allowed Michael to assume leadership of the angelic Host, thus earning him the title of ἀρχιστράτηγος.

Greek Patristic authors drew upon these passages to articulate theological constructs for Michael’s formal veneration. According to Chrysippos of Jerusalem (d. 479 CE), the Archangel’s defeat of Satan, in addition to his title of ἀρχιστράτηγος, signified his leadership of the angels as well as his protection of God’s Kingdom. The passage from Jude underscored these contentions: Michael’s argument with Satan before the Throne of Judgment regarding the body of Moses refers to the Archangel’s protection of the entire Israelite people, and by extension the entirety of the Chosen People. Dionysius the Areopagite (late 5th cent. CE) echoed this theme in his characterization of Michael as the protector of the Jews, while John Chrysostom (d. 407 CE) expanded Michael’s roles and deeds by seeing scriptural references to anonymous archangels as allusions to the Archangel. Thus, he saw Michael as the Angel of the Lord that opposed Balaam and admonished him for beating his donkey (Num 22:21–35); that showed a sword to Joshua at Jericho and ordered him to fight (Josh 5:13–15); and that slaughtered the 185,000 Assyrian soldiers that threatened Israel (2 Kgs 19:35). Curiously, Origen (d. 253), one of the first of the church fathers to seriously discuss a comprehensive Christian angelology, mentioned none of these. Origen instead described Michael as having “care of the prayers and supplications of mortals.” He may have had in mind the apocryphal *3 Bar.*, in which Michael offers to God a bowl of flowers, symbolic of the prayers of humanity.

Extra-scriptural writings serve as the richest sources of information about the Archangel and his powers, including not only apocryphal texts, but also magic texts and hagiographies. The best known hagiography of Michael describes his apparition and miracle at Colossae, where Michael saved a healing spring dedicated to him by turning aside rivers diverted by “pagans” to destroy it. The text is still

read on September 6 during the Orthodox commemoration of the miracle.

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John Arnold

### B. Medieval Times and Reformation Era

Michael enjoyed widespread popular veneration during the Middle Ages. In England and Wales, the archangel was second only to the Virgin Mary and St. Peter in church dedications. Abundant textual and physical evidence suggests that the cult of the archangel flourished in Ireland and Scotland as well. John Arnold has charted the archangel's journey from a potentially transgressive object of veneration among pagans, Jews, and Christians in the first few centuries CE to his role as a powerful symbol of orthodoxy and imperial authority in Byzantine Italy and the Carolingian West. Based on his roles as champion of the Chosen People (Dan 10:13, 21, and 12:1), commander of the heavenly host and vanquisher of Satan (Rev 12:7–9), and advocate of souls to judgment (Jude 9), his *cultus* and *legenda* are preserved in a vast body of material evidence, including vernacular homilies and literature.

By the end of the 10th century, evidence of devotions to Michael exists in the form of private and public liturgical prayers, often associated with formal mass-sets and offices for the celebrations of his feast day, September 29. References in calendars, many with liturgical distinctions, and martyrologies further mark the establishment of a formal liturgical celebration. His place in the litanies immediately following Christ and Mary underscores his stature as a powerful intercessor on behalf of the faithful.

The two principal pictorial traditions of the archangel are associated with the biblical passages mentioning him. The iconographic tradition based on the book of Daniel represents the archangel as a singular, princely individual, nimbed and dressed in a long, flowing tunic and holding a staff, scepter or a sword in his right hand with a globe topped by a cross in his left. Other iconographic traditions derive from Jude 9 and Rev 12:7–9. These representations depict the archangel in his militant role against Satan, thrusting a sword or spear into his mouth. Less common, and without scriptural warrant, are representations of the archangel bearing the Scales of Judgment. These images constitute an intriguing dimension of Christian eschatology. While there are references in the book of Job and in the writings of Augustine and John Chrysostom to a post-mortem weighing of good and evil deeds, the most likely line of tradition leads back to the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

The reformers of 16th century rejected much medieval angelology as mere speculation. They revised the celebration of liturgical holidays and saint

days in order to give greater prominence to the work of Christ. The archangel's feast day of September 29, Michael and All Angels, was retained in the Lutheran liturgical calendar because it was perceived as a christological feast that represented the archangel and his holy angels' roles comforting Christians and delivering them from the predations of Satan.

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### C. Modern Europe and America

During early modernity, Michael never disappeared from popular piety. He was, however, subject to renewed interest in the beginning of the 19th century. In opposition to the rationalistic worldviews of the 18th-century Enlightenment, the romantics in Germany as well as in France and in England developed a narrative of "enchantment." This narrative was characterized by a less traditional ontology, allowing for the supposition of an invisible world's possible existence. This supposition prompted a new interest in figures, images, and rhetorics of transition (Bohrer) between the scientifically measured world and a presumed deeper reality beyond that. Politically, "the Archangel Michael and all the angels" can, in this sense, be seen as part of a counterrevolutionary ontology.

The thread of an alternative modernity appears in the cultural fabric of the late 19th century in the shape of a renewed esotericism, both of theosophy and anthroposophy (Steiner). The crisis of modernity deepened after World War I. The imagery of Michael found its place in a theology of crisis, which reinvented the eschatological and, in particular, the apocalyptic aspects of the Christian tradition. This development was shaped by the re-discovery of the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation (Peterson, orig. 1935). Radical politicians were quick to draw on Michael's new image for their own narratives. In Germany, the tradition of the belligerent archangel (Rev 12:7) served as a point of reference for humiliated German nationalism; and in Romania the "Iron Guard," identifying itself as the "Legion of the Archangel Michael," became a mass movement in the 1930s. The architects of Fascist aesthetics found the apocalyptic imagery easy to incorporate. On the other hand, in Germany, the figure of Michael saw use by a spiritual renewal movement. The "Fraternity of St. Michael" (Evangelische Michaelsbruderschaft), founded in 1931 at the University of Marburg (Stählin; Ritter/Zippert), appreciated Michael's representation of spiritual warfare as popularized in Rev 12:7 (and Eph 6:10–17). However, this primarily referred to personal piety much more

than political struggle – despite aspirations to subsequently leave an impact on culture. The movement influenced ecumenism and the liturgical renewal of the evangelical churches, particularly during the 1950s.

In recent times, along with the decline of Western mainstream churches, the reverence of angels has become part of a highly commercialized and individualistic spirituality, in which the figure of Michael plays a dominant role as the most powerful prince of the angels (cf. Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1). Such individualized integrations/use of Michael could, in time, constitute a new form of popular piety (Knoblauch) with its own discourses and practices, such as pilgrimage and, conceivably, a new type of religious topography and holy places. Theologians have revisited angelology in some of the great dogmatic projects, most prominently in Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* 3.3, § 51, in the context of the theology of creation (Barth), but also in the work of Karl Rahner (Rahner; Seemann/Zähringer). Reception of apocalyptic figures received growing attention in a theology of history, its advocates tending to be critical of political power. It was also important to the theological ethics of the political (Wink; Ruster). A spiritual theology, frequently drawing inspiration from C. G. Jung's "complex psychology," deciphers the angels as metamorphoses of anthropological "Ur-symbole" (Rosenberg; Ströter-Bender). Also, Giorgio Agamben's influential secular political philosophy traces the genealogy of modern systems of rule back to the economy of the heavenly court under the domination of Michael (Agamben; Agamben/Hiepko). (For recently published monographs with both a phenomenological and dogmatic approach see Dürr; Hafner).

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#### D. New Christian Churches and Movements

The Adventist tradition equates Michael with Jesus Christ in his spirit form, a teaching that can be traced back to William Miller (1782–1849) and which was reaffirmed by Ellen G. White (1827–1915). Jehovah's Witnesses make a similar identification; however, Adventists are at pains to dissociate themselves from the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, on the grounds that Adventism affirms the full deity of Christ and his eternally begotten nature. In contrast, Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus was the Son of God but not God himself, and that he was created rather than eternally begotten. The identification between Michael and Christ draws on Dan 12:1, where Michael is described as the "great prince" who protects Israel, and who will arise in the end times.

Michael is the only being to be described as "the Archangel" (Jude 9). The only other occurrence of the word is at 1 Thess 4:16, where Michael is associated with Christ's return on the clouds. Although the Bible teaches that God created the angels (Ps 148:2, 5), Michael is not believed to be part of the angelic creation. The identification of Michael with Christ was made more explicit in the publication of *The Clear Word Bible* (1994; revised 1996) by Jack J. Blanco, who was Dean of the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University. His translation of 1 Thess 4:16 reads, "When Christ descends from heaven, He, as the archangel, will give a shout of command – the trumpet call of God to the dead – and the dead in Christ will rise first." Although Blanco's translation has met with some approval in Adventist circles, the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church stated in 2007 that: "The Clear Word Bible is not produced, nor endorsed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but is the private enterprise of an individual." Blanco himself acknowledged that his *Clear Word Bible* was a paraphrase, to be used as an aid to devotion, rather than for serious scholarly study.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints equates Michael with Adam, who received the priesthood in his pre-mortal life (*Doctrine and Covenants* 27:11). Michael was instrumental in the world's creation, and in the casting out of the devil and his angels from heaven. He is also equated with the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:9, 13, 22), and will return at the end of the millennium to engage in battle and prevail against Satan and his armies. Brigham Young affirmed Michael's role in governing earthly affairs, together with "Eloheim" and "Yahovah."

Saint Michael also features in Western esotericism, particularly in the thinking of Eliphas Levi (the French occultist), the Catholic philosopher and theologian Franz von Baader, and Theosophist Louis Claude de St. Martin – all of whom held that 1879 was the year in which Michael would over-

come the Dragon and inaugurate a new Michaelic age. Some believe that Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) had a special relationship with Michael and was initiated to further his mission.

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## V. Literature

A landmark in the literary treatment of Michael was Alcuin's poem for the Emperor Charlemagne, "Michael, Archangel" (*Summi regis archangel/ Michahel*, ca. 790 CE) which celebrates Michael as the supreme agent of God, strengthening the arm of the Christian emperor, with Gabriel on hand to defeat "our foes" and Raphael to "heal our sick." It is the classic expression of the cult of Michael. The poem celebrates Michael as "Archangel of the King of Kings" and appeals to him to listen to the supplications of his followers, defeating the enemy as he defeated Satan:

Thou with strong hand  
didst smite the cruel dragon,  
Emperor, thy scholar made  
these melodies for thee.

(Latin text and trans: Waddell: 90–93)

The tendency here to subordinate the other archangels to Michael is reflected also in the legends surrounding the Assumption where again Michael tends to supplant Gabriel as the dominant angelic figure (Johnson: 77–82). Alcuin's poem marks the beginning of the long process by which Michael became central to narratives of political legitimation in Europe. The same tendency was amplified in the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, completed around 1260 and published in a large number of editions across Europe (see "Legenda Aurea"). In this work the archangel Michael was accorded the status of a saint and was associated with numerous interventions to rescue both individuals and whole populations. The chapter on Michael contains a major amplification of the account in Rev 7 of the defeat of Satan by Michael and concludes with a didactic lesson about the value of angels in human life (Voragine: 205). The expansion of the Rev 7 passage became very significant for depictions of Michael in the visual arts, for example in Anglo-French apocalypses, and forms part of the hinterland to Milton's epic treatment of the topic in *Paradise Lost*. (For the depiction of Michael as dragon-slayer in Anglo-French apocalypses, see Emerson/McGinn: 324.)

Just as important was the recounting of the Garganus legend in which Michael appeared to the people of that mountain in Apulia after a tyrant named

Garganus was killed by his own poisoned arrow after attempting to punish a bull which had wandered off. The miracle of the arrow's return to the bowman caused much consternation among the locals and the bishop of the region commanded a three-day fast which resulted in Michael appearing to him to explain that he was the guardian of the mountain (Voragine: 201–2). This appearance was the first of a series connected with holy mountains and which set a pattern for the later legends associated with Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy and St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall. The remainder of the chapter treated Michael as representative of the generic angel and went on to describe the appearance of other angels at critical moments in biblical history, culminating in the visitations to Tobias and Job (Voragine: 207–11). The tone was that of a didactic lesson about the value of angels in human life.

Other texts that played a decisive part in the cumulative tradition included the *Gospel of Nicodemus* and the *Visio Pauli* in their many and varied recensions. The biblical justification in the case of these two works might be identified as Jesus' parable of Dives and Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31 with its short visit to the underworld (see "Lazarus and Dives"). Michael is the figure in the *Gospel of Nicodemus* who appears to Seth at the gates of paradise to tell him that in 5,500 years God's son will arrive on earth to anoint all believers with the oil which he is seeking for the healing of his father, Adam (Owen: 7). In the various versions of the *Visio Pauli* the role of the Archangel Michael was to conduct Paul around the horrors of hell. It was the model for the tour of hell on which Virgil leads Dante in the *Inferno*. Michael is mentioned in the text when Virgil reminds Plutus of the defeat of the rebellious angels by Michael. Later, Dante includes Michael and Gabriel in his list of scriptural figures which allow the human mind to comprehend the mysteries of heaven and hell (Reynolds: 105–6, 132, 140–45, 344).

The Garganus legend was particularly important in giving prominence to Michael in the medieval period when Michael was adopted as the warrior angel emblemizing successively the Lombard and Carolingian dynasties. The developed Christian legend represented by the story of Garganus is recorded in the MS *De Apparatione Sancti Michaelis*. It is arguable that if the Qumran War Scroll had been available to the medieval tradition it might have constituted a further plank in the trajectory of Michael as the belligerent upholder of dynasties. As we saw earlier, the cult of Michael was particularly prominent in the exaltation of Charlemagne, migrating westward from Italy to become the narrative which underpinned the cultus at Mont Saint-Michel and by extension St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall.

English literary highlights include the legend's presence in *Mirk's Festial*, *Piers Plowman*, the *Life of Wilfrid*, the *Life of St Christina*, the OE text of *The*

*Gospel of Nicodemus*, the English metrical version of *Pseudo-Methodius*, the *Cursor Mundi*, and the Judgment Play of the *Chester Cycle* (ca. 1375). Of particular note are the passage in the *Blickling Homily 16* for Michaelmas with its graphic vision of hell and Alcuin's interpolation of the Monte Gargano legend into a reading of Matt 18:1–10 set in the calendar for the third nocturne of Michaelmas, as though (Johnson observes) to mitigate the deleterious effects of using apocryphal material (Johnson: 56).

*The Song of Roland* (12th cent. CE) is remarkable for the prominence given to the Archangel Michael (here Saint Michel de Peril) and to Gabriel (Saint Gabriel) as the protectors of armies. Yet Penn Szittyta has shown that the work exhibits a sharp bifurcation between the view of Roland as an impulsive Germanic hero inspired by Michael and Charlemagne as the Christian general inspired by Gabriel. Counter to the tendency of the overall medieval tradition to promote the cult of St Michael at the expense of that of Gabriel, this great poem sets up a binary contrast which, whilst celebrating Roland's prowess in battle under the patronage of Michael, transfers the glory ultimately to Charlemagne, the leader sponsored by Gabriel. The crucial moment becomes the Battle of Roncevalles in which Roland is defeated and killed, albeit finally enjoying the tribute of having his body conveyed to heaven jointly by the two archangels. In writing against the grain of medieval tradition, the author differentiates his work from convention and adds a tone of piquancy to his poem. Indeed, it might be argued that the author implicitly adds a layer of Christian triumphalism, to the extent that Gabriel represents a very specifically Christian form of archangel.

In Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581) Michael has a lesser role than Gabriel, though he is the archangel sent by God to drive devils at Jerusalem back to hell (9.58–65). He also appears to Godfrey to tell him that the moment has arrived to march upon Jerusalem and shows him a vision of the heavenly army which will support his forces (18.92–96). In the early parts of Vondel's play *Lucifer* (1654) he is also slightly recessed, though by act 5 he is in full command of the defeat of Lucifer. He and Gabriel are the emblematic good angels as opposed to Beelzebub and his demonic crew. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) Michael's chief role is as the prophet of the events which will ensue after the Fall and as the agent of the eviction of Adam and Eve from Paradise. The expulsion of the protoplasts at the end of *Paradise Lost* also marks the removal of angels from close involvement in the human scene until the Final Battle led by Michael. Human history henceforth will be spun out between Michael's violent struggle against Satan portrayed in ch. 6 and that Final Battle in which Michael destroys Satan predicted in ch. 12, but it will proceed without the intervention of archangels in the new Puritan dispensation.

Despite this sense that the era of angelic intervention was over, the literary imagination was not content to let the matter rest. Or, one could say, that it was the folkloric imagination which clung to the prospect of angels and archangels rescuing humanity *before* the salvific events scheduled for the end of history. Amy Hale in a recent article discusses the part played by the archangel Michael in British nationalism, including William Blake's work and culminating in such British Israelite-leaning works as C. G. Harrison's collection of essays *The Transcendental Universe*, Dion Fortune's *Glastonbury*, and John Michell's *View over Atlantis*.

Cees Nooteboom's novel *Lost Paradise* (2008) inverts the title of Milton's epic in its English title, though the original Dutch title is *Paradijs Verloren*. Either title, however, invokes Milton's work in its recuperation of the narrative of the conditions for human flourishing. Recovering from trauma, in this case a rape attack in São Paulo, the character Alma travels with her friend Almut to Australia where they eventually encounter the Angel Project in Perth, an artistic experiment in which actors dressed as angels roam the city and meet the public at random moments. Although a very contrived event, it does have a healing effect on the women and the novel concludes with an epilogue in which Almut draws Alma's attention to the closing scene in *Paradise Lost*, book 12. The effect is to recontextualize Milton's epic as the framework for a rite of passage in the jet-travel world of the 21st century. Now the angels are stage-managed by a human production team and Eden takes the form of Australia as visited by tourists who enjoy the encounter and then are exiled again back to their homeland.

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## VI. Visual Arts

The source material regarding the archangel Michael is as scarce as it is disparate. This is especially true of the Bible, where Dan 10:13–21 recounts Michael's battle for Israel against the angel princes of Persia. Another passage, Dan 12:1–2, describes Michael's role as the angel who helps his people at the end of days. Jude 9 recounts Michael's battle with the devil for Moses' soul, and Rev 12:7 describes his



battle in heaven against the dragon. Other apocryphal, as well as legendary (*Narratio de miraculo a Michaelae archangelo Chonis*) and historiographic, sources relate further aspects of Michael's character. While not all of these appear directly in the iconography, taken together they illustrate two major roles: as servant and protector of mankind (1), and as an agent active in heaven (2). Alongside these, an independent hagiographic pictorial tradition developed in the West (3) based partly on texts such as the *Legenda Aurea*.

**1. Servant and Protector of Mankind.** Depictions of the deliverance of Chonai exemplify the first category. With the devil's help the heathens there had dammed two rivers, threatening the Christian shrine of Archippos. Just in time, the Archangel Michael struck a cleft (χώνη = funnel) in the ground and diverted the water into it. A cult in his honor subsequently developed at the shrine. The imagery, primarily disseminated in the East, depicts two streams of water, which sometimes divide the image by descending from the upper right and upper left to meet in the middle. At the bottom, the combined streams disappear at the point where the Archangel Michael, standing at the left, thrusts his lance into the ground. Archippos sometimes stands across from him, in front of his shrine (1st half of the 12th cent., Icon, Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai).

Apart from this, the angel holding the scales in images of the Last Judgment is often interpreted as Michael, although he is never named as such, at least not in Byzantine art. For the West, Michael is clearly identified in Hans Memling's *Last Judgment* (15th cent., Triptych, National Museum, Gdąnsk) due to his (Western) attributes (lance and scale). Michael Pacher's altar (1481, parish church, St. Wolfgang) provides another example, this time outside of the context of judgment.

Other forms of assistance attributed to Michael, for example his role as a psychopomp, have left no apparent traces in visual imagery. The angels guiding the souls of the dead are always nameless.

**2. Active Agent in Heaven.** The battle with the dragon primarily illustrates the second function of Michael. This scene figures prominently in Western iconography, as popular in the West as images of the Chonai miracle are in the Byzantine pictorial tradition. Images of Michael, usually standing on the dragon and killing it with his lance, appear in countless variations. The story is perhaps most elaborately depicted on the West wall of the church of San Pietro al Monte, near Civate (around 1100), where the heavenly battle is associated with a *Maiestas Domini*. A host of angels surrounds Christ in Majesty, while Michael, clad in armor, stands by the raised right hand of God, stabbing the dragon's head with his lance. An inscription above the image identifies the event and includes the archangel's

name (see fig. 23). The Fall of Lucifer, by contrast, is seldom illustrated. A manuscript of Ambrose's commentary on Genesis (around 1165–70, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 14399, fol.1v) shows Lucifer twice: once in Byzantine courtly costume, flanking the enthroned Christ with Michael; and also bound under the feet of the archangel, who stabs his lance into his vanquished enemy's head.

Michael's role as a guardian of the throne, which appears primarily in Byzantine art, also illustrates the heavenly theme. Examples include tablets with the enthroned Christ (2nd half of the 10th cent., ivory, Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg, MS theol. fol. 66) as well as with the empty throne (Hetoimasia; late 10th cent., steatite, Paris, Musée du Louvre, OA 11152). Additional examples are found in monumental art: for example, the side apses in the church of Nea Moni on Chios (around 1050), which flank an image of the Madonna Orans in the main apse. In all these cases, the two archangels are named as Michael and Gabriel. An image in the church of Sant' Apollinare in Classe (549) precedes that in Nea Moni. Here, the two archangels flank the chancel arch, except that in this image they hold a 'labarum' bearing the text of the Sanctus (Isa 6:1–3), referencing the throne motif in Isaiah's vision. Finally, in the Cappella Palatina in Palermo (1143), four archangels, including Michael and four further angels, surround the image of Christ Pantocrator in the dome, upon which heaven is depicted.

**3. Independent Hagiographic Pictorial Tradition.** The category of hagiography includes, above all, those depictions related to the local tradition in Southern Italy. In one example, the archangel is believed to have appeared three times in a dream to a local bishop (according to the *Legenda Aurea*, the bishops of Siponto, of Tumba, and of Rome). We find depictions of this story on the bronze door of the church at Monte Gargano (1076), in which Michael is only named in inscriptions and on the first image of the left wing of the door lintel with the angel (Rev 12:7–9). This means that the other angels depicted on the door – for instance, the angels with Jacob, with the Three Holy Children in the fiery furnace, and in Joseph's dreams – cannot be clearly associated with Michael. (The *Legenda Aurea* and the painters' handbook from Athos (§ 424 [Ἐϋμνητα § 414]) ascribe further acts to Michael that are not presented here; however, they are not associated with him in the iconography, with the exception of the scene of the Three Holy Children on the Gargano door.)

The only Byzantine image that does not fit within this category, and in which the angel can clearly be identified, depicts Joshua's encounter with the "Archistrategos of the army of the Lord" (Josh 5:13–14: Ἐγὼ ἀρχιστράτηγος δυνάμεως κυρίου) (Joshua Roll, 1st half of the 10th cent., Vatican, Palat. gr. 431; end of the 13th cent., Athos, Ba-

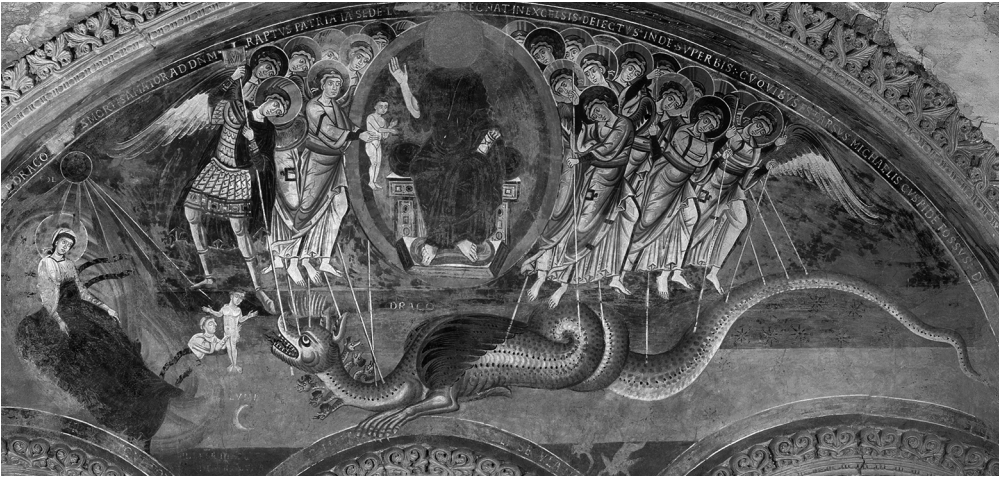


Fig. 23 “Victory over the Dragon of the Apocalypse” (ca. 1100)

topaidi, Kod. 602, fol. 350v). Joshua appears twice here, first standing in front of Michael, and then falling down before him. Origen first associated this Archistrategos with Michael (Εἰς Ἰησοῦν Ναυῆ Ἐκ-λογαί [Selecta in Jesum Nave]: PG 12,821C).

The image in the church of S. Maria Maggiore (432–440) in Rome, often mentioned in this context, portrays the Archistrategos simply as a haloed man with a staff.

Michael also appears alone, identified by an inscription. Such images date back as early as the 6th/7th cent. – for instance, on an intaglio (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles, Inv. N 4954), or on two Byzantine icons of gilded silver with enamel and gemstones in the Tesoro of San Marco in Venice (around 1000 and around 1100). Such pictures appear more commonly in the East (often with the attributes of lance and orb common of that region) than in the West.

In any case, the Archangel Michael enjoys a higher status in Byzantium than in the West. He was, however, particularly venerated in medieval Italy, and later achieved a new nationalistic popularity in Germany in the 19th to 20th centuries as the “German Michel” (1898–1913, Völkerschlacht-Denkmal, Leipzig).

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Michael Altrip

## VII. Music

**1. Classical and Liturgical Music.** As pointed out in “IV. Christianity B. Medieval Times and Reformation Era” above, the archangel Michael was venerated in the medieval Church on September 29.

Numerous chants were composed for his feast, among them the following responsory:

*Venit Michael archangelus cum multitudine angelorum cui tradidit deus animas sanctorum ut perducatur eas in paradysum exultationis.*

(The archangel Michael comes with multitudes of angels, he to whom God has handed over the souls of the saints so that he shall lead them into the paradise of joy; *Cantus Database*, q.v. “Michael”).

This responsory points to the same idea about Michael as the most frequently set medieval liturgical text to reference the archangel Michael. This, undoubtedly, is the Requiem mass (or mass of the Dead), in which the Offertory, a prayer for the delivery of the souls of the faithful departed from the pains of hell, includes the line *sed significat sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam* ([but] “Let St. Michael, Thy standard-bearer, lead them into the holy light,” Chase: 7). This offertory text is documented since the 9th century CE (Sicard: 188). In addition to its early medieval chant setting, the Requiem mass has been set to music in polyphony or grand setting with soloists, chorus and orchestra by a great number of composers including e.g., Johannes Ockeghem (15th cent.), Josquin des Prez (16th cent.), W. A. Mozart, Giuseppe Verdi, Benjamin Britten, and many others (see “Requiem” and “Mass III. Music A. Liturgy and Classical Music”).

Benjamin Schmolck (1672–1737) wrote the lyrics for a church hymn addressing Michael, *Du Herr der Seraphinen* (You, Lord of the Seraphims). This hymn was included in several German Lutheran hymnals during the 19th century (*Hymnary.org*). Also numerous English language hymns referencing the Archangel Michael can be found at *Hymnary.org* (q.v. “Archangel Michael”), among these a

translation of a Latin hymn by the 9th-century abbot and poet Rhabanus Maurus.

In J. S. Bach's Cantata BWV 19, *Es erhob sich ein Streit* (1726, There arose a fight), for the Feast of St. Michael, based on texts by Picander (Christian Friedrich Henrici), the opening chorus and the following recitative (for the bass) paraphrase Rev 12:7–9 about how Michael and his angels defeat the Devil (Stokes: 29).

In the Orthodox churches, there are several hymns dedicated to Archangel Michael, who remains very popular (Coleman).

In the 20th century, Franz Schmidt's oratorio *Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln* (1935–37, *The Book with Seven Seals*) for soloists, chorus, organ, and orchestra based on texts from Revelation references the heavenly war between Michael and the dragon, setting a.o. Rev 12: 7–9 for a tenor voice (representing John). Between the vv. 8 and 9, a short and violent orchestral passage may represent the heavenly war. Also the Swiss composer Robert Blum (1900–1994) wrote the text as well as the music for his oratorio *Erzengel Michael* (1961, *The Archangel Michael*), based on biblical texts (Levitz).

Karlheinz Stockhausen's huge opera project, *Licht: die sieben Tage der Woche* (*Light: The Seven Days of the Week*), "a 'cosmic' seven-part operatic cycle" (Toop) was composed between 1977 and 2003. It features an opera for each of the seven days and has the archangel Michael as a throughgoing protagonist. Michael functions as an interpreter between God and man, a kind of "Christ-Michael" (Peters/Schreiber: 108, 129, n. 55); he is biblically conceived but also based on other sources. The opera *Donnerstag* (*Thursday*), the first of the seven operas (premiered at La Scala in Milan in 1981), includes Michael's heavenly fight against Lucifer in a scene in act 3 (Peters/Schreiber: 117).

**2. Other Musical Styles.** Curiously, Michael – as the archangel or as St. Michael, etc. – seems not to feature in non-classical or liturgical music in the modern era. While references to Michael as protector and warrior appear in denominational and self-produced devotional music (especially with reference to battling Satan during the War in Heaven, from Rev 12:7–9), the character and the biblical passages mentioning him seem barely, if at all, to appear in blues, country, jazz, rock, pop, or stage musical compositions. However, the traditional, popular, and vaguely biblical song "Michael, Row the Boat Ashore" (Allen et al.: 23–24), which exists in some variants, references the angel: "a real spiritual – it being the archangel Michael that is addressed" (Allen et al.: xvi).

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*Nils Holger Petersen and David Wilmington*

## VIII. Film

The angel Michael is featured in many fantasy and horror movies. In the fantasy-western *Heaven Only Knows* (dir. Albert S. Rogell, 1947, US; *Montana Mike*), celestial bureaucrat [Archangel] Michael confirms that Adam "Duke" Byron, the power-hungry owner of the Copper Queen gambling saloon, is missing from the Book of Life. Due to an error in heaven, Duke was born without a soul, and so the positive life that the Book of Destiny had predicted for him has been perverted. The maladroit Michael (aka Mike) arrives on Earth via a heavenly elevator (without his "shawl of immortality") to correct his department's mistake. There is one condition, though: he is forbidden to perform miracles. Initially mistaken for an Eastern tenderfoot gunslinger known as the "Kansas City Kid," Mike plays matchmaker and slowly reforms Duke's life. After various misadventures, earthly temptations, and devilish competition, Duke rescues Mike from a lynch mob and redeems himself. Mike returns to heaven in a flying stagecoach.

The fantasy-comedy *Michael* (dir. Nora Ephron, 1996, US) depicts Archangel Michael as a boozing, chain-smoking, pot-bellied slob with large white wings, who resides in widow Pansy Milbank's rundown Iowan motel (see fig. 24). Three *National Mirror* reporters, Frank, Huey, and Dorothy (along with the dog Sparky), meet Michael who had "battled Lucifer and threw him out of heaven, Revelation 12 verse 7," as Pansy explains. Michael says he is the author of Psalm 85, jokes, craves sugar, smells like cookies, sleeps upright, womanizes, sings, dances, fights, performs miracles and espouses wisdom. His "last blast" mission is to unite the cynical Frank with triple divorcee Dorothy. Whilst heading for Chicago, the beloved Sparky dies. Michael resurrects him, but this miracle weakens him, and eventually he begins to disintegrate. Later, he returns to reunite the estranged lovers who vow to marry. Michael boasts to a celestial Pansy: "I invented marriage," followed by "Let's go home." The two of them then dance into heaven.

The angel-horror film *The Prophecy II* (dir. Greg Spence, 1998, US), features an enigmatic, debonair-looking Michael, leader of the war in heaven, seek-

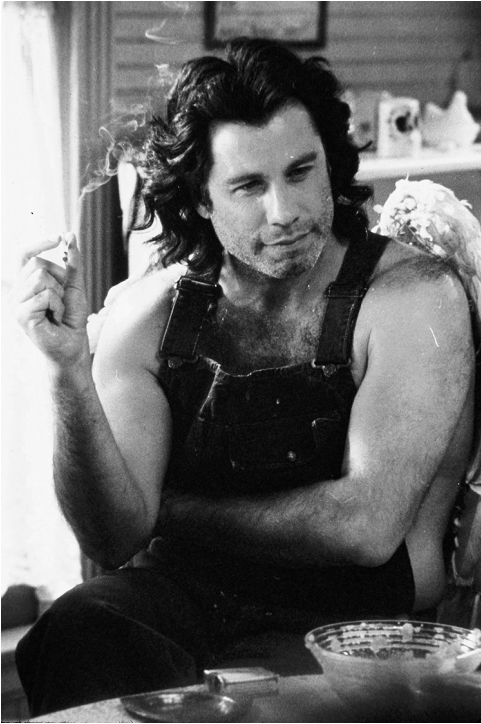


Fig. 24 *Michael* (1996)

ing victory by manipulating the creation of “a Nephilim, a child born of an angel and a human woman; it’s talked about in Genesis 6,” utilizing Valerie Rosales, R.N. (aka Val) and the angel Danyaël. However, Gabriel wants this “savior of humanity” dead and heads for modern-day Eden (now an American industrial wasteland with an apple tree), wherein Michael promises non-interference. Hearing God’s voice, Val grabs Gabriel, jumps from a great height, and impales him upon a fence pole, after which Michael turns Gabriel into a human. Val insists on raising “Danyaël, Jr.” herself, which Michael fleetingly acknowledges; he then looks heavenward for guidance.

In the religious-horror movie *Wishmaster 3: Beyond the Gates of Hell* (dir. Chris Angel, 2001, CA/US), Diana Collins, stationed inside St. Michael’s chapel, invokes the “spirit of the angel Michael,” which is transmitted, via Michael’s stained glass window figure, into Greg Janson’s body. Carrying a mystically materialized sword, Michael combats a recently-released, metamorphosing Djinn who reminisces about “the old days.” When Michael claims, “We won the war” the Djinn retorts, “You won the battle. The war goes on!” Michael and Diana flee, but when Michael reveals that he cannot defeat this evil, Diana impales the Djinn using Michael’s flaming “sword of justice,” and then both fall from a roof-

top. However, Michael heals the dying, cruciform-shaped Diana and releases the injured Greg before disincorporating with his sacred sword.

The supernatural-slasher *The Curse of El Charro* (dir. Rich Ragsdale, 2005, US) features 20th century college girl Maria suffering repeated nightmares-cum-attacks by a vengeful spirit who carries a machete. The spirit is El Charro, a 19th-century murderous Mexican land baron who was spurned by a woman named Maria and who, before he died, cursed Maria’s lineage. Whilst under attack in Arizona, the modern-day Maria races to the religious shrine of Archangel Michael who manifests himself and destroys El Charro, thus ending the curse.

The angel-horror film *Gabriel* (dir. Shane Abbess, 2007, AU) follows Gabriel, the last of “seven archangels, protectors of the light” (Arcs) sent to bring light to the dark and seedy city of purgatory. This mid-world realm is dominated by the murderous, white-eyed Sammael, leader of the “seven fallen, soldiers of the dark” (Fallen), but both sides must assume human form and risk eternal soul death. Gabriel finds Michael’s apartment abandoned with a note to him reporting the other Arcs’ failures and the dangers of their new, judgement-clouding, feelings. An increasingly powerful Sammael (supposedly) defeated the missing Michael, their “greatest warrior”; nevertheless, a gun-toting, kung fu-fighting Gabriel finds, rescues, heals, and starts leading the remaining Arcs before their various demises. Sammael refuses to kill the slowly weakening Gabriel, but he then admits to protecting him. At that point, his true identity as Michael is revealed; he had “consumed” Sammael “with hatred” and stole his identity. Michael had trained Gabriel but despised his angelic “world controlled by fear and rules, we were slaves to a higher purpose ... created just so we can serve someone else’s wishes” whereas purgatory permitted Michael freedom to forge his own (power-hungry) destiny. During a rooftop battle, Gabriel shoots Michael, who restores himself and impales Gabriel’s chest with a metal pipe; the dying Gabriel uses this to impale Michael via a deadly bear hug, but he tells Michael that he forgives him. Unexpectedly, the mortally-wounded Michael heals Gabriel, then dies. This bewilders Gabriel, who seeks answers, so staring heavenwards he deliberately falls to his death saying, “I hope I see you again.” Light slowly returns to purgatory.

The angel-horror movie *Legion* (2010, Scott Stewart, US) opens with “Come, ye Children, Listen to Me. I will Teach You the Fear of the Lord” Psalm 34:11.” A mystically-tattooed, knife-wielding, rebellious Michael falls to Los Angeles, severs his wings, temporarily glows blue, loses his celestial collar, and steals numerous firearms. He then hijacks a police car and drives directly to an out-of-the-way, run-down Mojave Desert diner-and-gas station called Paradise Falls, now a cosmic battleground. God has

“lost faith in man” and has decreed their extermination via angelically-possessed, black-eyed, shark-toothed people. The possessed ones are determined to kill Charlie, a pregnant, unwed waitress who works at the diner and who is carrying a child destined to save humankind. People in the diner, notably Charlie’s smitten co-worker, Jeep, fight the possessed hordes using Michael’s stolen firearms and battle tactics. As “a soldier ... a general in His army,” Michael claims that “I was given an order I didn’t believe in. He lost faith. I didn’t” and so he protects Charlie’s unborn child – “the only hope humanity has of survival.” Furthermore, he says, “I was the first in all of heaven to bow down before you [humankind],” and Jeep’s love for Charlie “is the reason I still have faith.” Mid-siege, Charlie gives birth, which halts the possessed, but not the “eager-to-please” Gabriel. He cunningly kills the mortal Michael with a mace-spike rammed through both their chests. Michael’s body glows red-to-blue and disincorporates, and his tattoo-instructions mystically transfer to Jeep while Jeep is fleeing with Charlie their baby. Gabriel pursues them and battles Jeep who is rescued by a resurrected Michael-with-wings descending from heaven. Michael tells an astonished Gabriel, “You gave Him what He asked for. I gave Him what He needed.” Michael-with-sword defeats Gabriel, shows mercy (what Gabriel failed), and tells Jeep that he is the child’s “true protector.” Both archangels return to heaven, whilst Jeep, Charlie, and the baby (the new holy family) ride in a gun-filled car towards a small survivor settlement and their uncertain future.

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See also → Angels and Angel-Like Beings;  
→ Apocalypses and Apocalypticism; → Day of Judgment; → Dragon; → Esotericism; → Gabriel; → Legenda Aurea; → Phanuel; → Raphael (Angel); → Resurrection; → Revelation (General); → Satan; → Uriel (Angel)

## Michael (Person)

### 1. Introduction

The personal name, “Michael” (MT *Mikā’el*, LXX *Μιχαήλ*, “Who is like God”), refers to ten individuals in the HB/OT, with the vast majority of texts

dating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods. In fact, the name occurs predominantly in Chronicles (1 Chr 5:13, 14; 6:40; 7:3; 8:16; 12:20; 27:18; 2 Chr 21:2–4; Ezra 8:8). “Michael” is also the name of an angelic figure or “prince” (*šar*) found in the HB/OT (see Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; see “Michael [Angel]”), extra-canonical Jewish literature including the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g., 1QM 9:15–16; 17:6–7; 1 En. 9:1; 10:11), and the NT (Jude 9). Very little is known about the human bearers of this name, since most occurrences are found in genealogies, which are characteristically concise.

### 2. Father of Sethur

Canonically speaking, the first occurrence of the name Michael is in Num 13:13, where the character is described as an Asherite and the father of Sethur, who was among the men sent to spy out the land of Canaan (Num 13:2).

### 3. A Gadite

Michael is listed among the Gadites who lived in Bashan, “as far as Salchah” (1 Chr 5:11). According to 1 Chr 5:17, this character was among those “enrolled by genealogies in the days of King Jotham of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam of Israel” (NRSV).

### 4. Father of Gilead

A Gadite who lived in the land of Bashan as far as Salcha (1 Chr 5:11). According to the Chronicler’s reckoning, this Michael was the father of Gilead (1 Chr 5:14).

### 5. Great Grandfather of Asaph

Michael is the great grandfather of Asaph (1 Chr 6:39 [MT 6:24]), a levitical singer whom “David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the Lord, after the ark came to rest there” (1 Chr 6:31, NRSV [MT 6:16]).

### 6. Son of Izrahiah

Listed among the Issacharites (1 Chr 7:1), Michael is a son of Izrahiah. He is also listed among five “chiefs” (*raššim*, 1 Chr 7:3), and among 87,000 “mighty warriors” (*gibbôrê hayālîm*, 1 Chr 7:5).

### 7. Son of Beriah

According to 1 Chr 8:16, Michael was a Benjaminite and the son of Beriah, who in turn is the head of a house of the inhabitants of Aijalon who collectively “put to flight the inhabitants of Gath” (1 Chr 8:13). According to v. 28, the family of Michael also lived in Jerusalem.

### 8. A Manassite

A Manassite chief of “thousands,” Michael helped David against a band of raiders (1 Chr 12:21 [MT 12:22]), only after deserting Saul at Ziklag (1 Chr