

Friday 29th September 2017

Michael and All Angels

White



Collect

Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted the ministries of angels and mortals in a wonderful order: grant that as your holy angels always serve you in heaven, so, at your command, they may help and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Revelation 12:7-12 English Standard Version (ESV)

Satan Thrown Down to Earth

12 ⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers^[a] has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. ¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. ¹² Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

Footnotes: a. or *brothers and sisters*

COMMENT: Sometimes authors use a form of writing called “chiasm,” where the central idea of a passage is found not at the beginning or end but in the center, with similar, identical, or contrasting language and/or ideas flowing out from the center in both directions. This passage interrupts the flow of Revelation 12:1-6, which is continued from verse 13 onwards. Chiasms help us see major points the author is trying to convey. In verses 7-12 the curtain is pulled aside so we can see and understand the cosmic conflict that began in heaven. The devil, Satan, that serpent of old began his attacks in heaven (verses 7-9), continued them here on earth and focuses them particularly on Jesus faithful followers after Jesus is no longer on the earth (verse 10, cf. verses 5-6). He intensifies his attacks as he sees that time is short (verse 11-12). Is the author calling us to increase our vigilance as we see where we are living in the sweep of history? Is he inviting us to put all our trust in the Lamb and to be far more active in living and professing our faith (verse 12)? Essentially the passage is the war between good and evil, and the triumph of good.

John 1:47-51 English Standard Version (ESV)

1⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”⁴⁸ Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”⁵¹ And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,^[a] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Footnotes: a. The Greek for *you* is plural; twice in this verse.

COMMENT: Nathanael makes a good, orthodox confession: “You are the son of God. You are the King of Israel.” However, Jesus questions why he believes. It is not enough just to say the right words or experience something miraculous (Jesus’ perception). These things are just the beginning of following Jesus. He (and us?) will see even greater things. The allusion to the ladder takes up back to Jacob’s vision (Genesis 28:12-22).

℟ The Lord is compassion and love.

¹ My soul, give thanks to the Lord!

¹⁹ The Lord has set his sway in heaven
and his kingdom is ruling over all.

²⁰ Give thanks to the Lord, all his angels,
mighty in power, fulfilling his word,
who heed the voice of his word. ℟

²¹ Give thanks to the Lord, all his hosts,
his servants who do his will.

²² Give thanks to the Lord, all his works,
in every place where he rules.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord! ℟

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: God is praised by his heavenly Council and by all he has created, thus human praise echoes this heavenly praise – a significant theme of Jewish prayer. The Psalm ends as it began with thanks and thus the first and last verses form an ‘inclusio’ – a literary device where a section of text is placed within a frame. The inclusio could consist of a word or a phrase, and forms an emphasis for the text in-between, and provides the theme.

Short Preface

And now we give you thanks that your glory is revealed in St Michael and all the saints. In their lives you have given us an example of faithfulness to Christ. In their holiness we find encouragement and hope. In our communion with them we share the unity of your kingdom.

Post Communion

Lord of heaven, in this Eucharist you have brought us near to an innumerable company of angels and to the spirits of the saints made perfect: as in this food of our earthly pilgrimage we have shared their fellowship, so may we come to share their joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

God give you grace to follow his saints in faith and hope and love; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**