

St. Michael and All Angels – Daniel 10:10–14; Daniel 12:1–4

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the first part of the Old Testament reading today, Daniel prayed, but for three weeks nothing seemed to happen. Then a heavenly messenger came and told him something remarkable: *“From the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard.”*

God had heard Daniel from the beginning.

Yet the messenger explains that *“the prince of the kingdom of Persia”* had opposed him for twenty-one days, until *“Michael, one of the chief princes,”* came to help.

The prince of Persia is a demonic power. Daniel is praying on earth, but Michael is fighting in the heavenly realm. Daniel cannot see the battle. He does not know that God’s messenger has been opposed for twenty-one days. He only knows that he has prayed and waited. But God allows Daniel—and us—to see behind the curtain. There are spiritual realities our eyes cannot perceive, enemies of God we cannot see, and armies of holy angels carrying out God’s commands whom we also cannot see.

Into this hidden conflict comes Michael, *“one of the chief princes.”* He is no harmless ornament with wings. He is one of God’s mighty angelic warrior princes, coming to the aid of God’s messenger against the demonic power opposing him. And we can find comfort here: before Daniel knew there was a battle, God had

already heard his prayer; before Daniel knew heavenly help was needed, God's servants were already at work.

Michael appears again in Daniel 12. Now Daniel hears: *"At that time, Michael, the great prince who stands over your people, will arise."*

Here we learn that Michael is the guardian archangel of God's people. The words "stands over your people" describe his particular responsibility for us. The Michael who fights in chapter 10 is the Michael who arises in chapter 12 in heavenly warfare in defense of God's saints.

And we will need defending.

Daniel is told that there will be *"a time of distress that has not happened from the time there was a nation until that time."* Yet the message is not about the distress. It is a promise of God's deliverance: *"At that time your people will be delivered, everyone who is found written in this book."*

This is the book of life. Even in the midst of terrible distress, God knows His people. They are not forgotten. Michael stands over them, and God delivers them.

But Daniel gives us an even greater comfort. God's deliverance extends beyond the grave. *"Many of those sleeping in the dusty earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to contempt, to everlasting abhorrence."*

This is the resurrection of the dead. “Many” does not mean merely a portion of humanity. The dead are raised: believers to everlasting life and unbelievers to everlasting condemnation.

Then comes the beautiful promise: *“Those who have insight will shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who bring many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”* Their shining is **Christ’s own shining righteousness** reflected in them. “The righteous will shine like the sun” in the resurrection. The glory that belongs to Christ will be reflected in His saints.

Our bodies, now subject to weakness, suffering, and death, will be raised in glory, like His glorious body. What is hidden now by suffering and mortality will then be revealed: these are the people who belong to Christ and share in His resurrection victory.

So why does the Church remember St. Michael and All Angels? Because Michael’s service reminds us that God has not abandoned His people. There are battles we cannot see. There are troubles we cannot understand. There are times when our prayers seem unanswered.

But God hears. God knows His people. God sends His servants.

And God will deliver His people even from the dust of death. Until that day, Michael stands at his appointed post fighting for and defending you. All the while you live by faith. And the promise remains: *“those who belong to God will awake to everlasting life and shine like the stars forever and ever.”* Amen.