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MINISTRIES

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Is Michael the Archangel Another Name for the Messiah?

Michael the archangel is mentioned in the books of Daniel, Jude, and Revelation. Some claim that Michael was actually Jesus, whose Hebrew name was Yeshua. In this teaching, we will examine this claim. Is Michael the archangel another name for Yeshua the Messiah?

To begin, we should establish why this question is being asked. What would cause us to think that Michael might be Yeshua? Well, there are similarities between the way the Scriptures describe Michael and the way they describe Yeshua. The question before us is, are those similarities significant enough to conclude that they are the same person? Not only that, but are there any scriptures which indicate that they are different people? Let's look at what the Scriptures say about Michael, and compare that to what they say about Yeshua, so that we can see if they are actually the same person.

Commander of the Heavenly Armies

Michael leads angels into battle. We see this in Revelation 12:

Revelation 12:7

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back

Just a few chapters later, Yeshua is also depicted leading angels into battle:

Revelation 19:11-14

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

Now, some may object, saying that the armies of heaven from Revelation 19 are not necessarily angels (see Revelation 19:8). However, other scriptures make it clear that Yeshua does have angels under his command. Here are two examples:

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

...the Lord Jesus [Yeshua] is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus [Yeshua].

1 Peter 3:22

who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

(see also: Matthew 24:30-31; 26:53; Revelation 22:16)

So, both Michael and Yeshua are described as commanding angels and leading them into battle. This is one similarity between them.

Contending With the Devil

In Revelation 12, the “dragon” that Michael fights against is revealed to be the devil:

Revelation 12:7-9

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 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.

This is not the only time that Michael contends with the devil. We also see this in Jude:

Jude 1:9

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.”

So, the devil is the main opponent that Michael is depicted fighting against. Yeshua is also described as fighting against the devil:

Hebrews 2:14

...he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

1 John 3:8

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that Yeshua is said to be *destroying* the devil, whereas Michael is

depicted as merely *contending* with the devil, not destroying him. But, the fact remains that both Michael and Yeshua are described as fighting against the devil. This is another similar feature.

Do These Similarities Prove Anything?

Both Michael and Yeshua are described as commanders over angelic armies, and both are depicted battling against the devil. Are these similarities enough to prove that Michael and Yeshua are the same person?

Some claim that these similarities are sufficient proof. Here is what the Jehovah's Witnesses say:

“The Bible states that “Michael and his angels battled with the dragon . . . and its angels.” (Revelation 12:7) Thus, Michael is the Leader of an army of faithful angels. Revelation also describes Jesus as the Leader of an army of faithful angels. (Revelation 19:14-16) And the apostle Paul specifically mentions “the Lord Jesus” and “his powerful angels.” (2 Thessalonians 1:7) So the Bible speaks of both Michael and “his angels” and Jesus and “his angels.” (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:31; 1 Peter 3:22) Since God's Word nowhere indicates that there are two armies of faithful angels in heaven—one headed by Michael and one headed by Jesus—it is logical to conclude that Michael is none other than Jesus Christ in his heavenly role.”

—Excerpt from *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Appendix 11 “Who Is Michael the Archangel?” (<https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/bible-teach/who-is-michael-the-archangel-jesus/>)

The premise of this argument is that there is only one angelic army. Since both Michael and Yeshua are depicted as leading an angelic army, and the Scriptures do not say there are multiple angelic armies, therefore we can conclude that Michael and Yeshua must be the same person.

There are many things that can be said in response to this argument, but the most straightforward response is to point out that it is based on a faulty premise. Yeshua tells us that the angelic armies are in fact subdivided into multiple parts. Here is what he said:

Matthew 26:53

Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?

A “legion” is a regiment of soldiers (λεγεών Thayer's Greek Lexicon). Yeshua here describes angels being organized into at least twelve fighting legions. This means that there is in fact more than one army of angels. Therefore, it is entirely possible for there to be multiple commanders over these armies. The fact that both Michael and Yeshua are called commander over heavenly armies is not proof that they are the same person.

Now, someone may say, if Michael and Yeshua are not the same person, then why are they described using similar language? Why are they both depicted as commanding heavenly armies and contending with the devil if we are not meant to think that they are the same person? Well, the simple answer is that they are on the same team. Since both Yeshua and Michael are fighting on behalf of God's people, they are going to share similar features. King David is also described as a commander of the army (2 Samuel 18:2) and contending with the devil (1 Chronicles 21:1), but we do not take this to mean that David and Michael are the same person. They are simply fighting for the same side.

Can We Prove That Michael and Yeshua are Different?

The similarities between Michael and Yeshua may not be enough to prove that they are the same, but can we prove that they are different? Well, actually we can. Michael is called an *archangel* in the book of Jude:

Jude 1:9

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.”

The term *archangel* means “chief of the angels” (ἀρχάγγελος Thayer’s Greek Lexicon). The reason this is important is because the author of Hebrews tells us, in no uncertain terms, that Yeshua is *not* an angel. Most of Hebrews chapter 1, and part of chapter 2, are spent explaining the difference between Yeshua and the angels. Here are some excerpts from those chapters:

Hebrews 1:3-5

He [Yeshua] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”?

Hebrews 1:7-9

Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

Hebrews 1:13-14

And to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Hebrews 2:5

For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking.

The author of Hebrews makes it very clear that Yeshua is not an angel, and that his role far exceeds the role of any individual angel or of the angels as a whole. What’s more, several scriptures warn against the worship of angels (see Colossians 2:18; Revelation 22:8-9), but in contrast we are told that everyone will worship Yeshua (Philippians 2:9-11). The fact that Michael is called an archangel seems to be enough to preclude the idea that he could be the same person as Yeshua.

Is Messiah Called an Archangel?

There is one remaining argument that we will address. Some claim that, in spite of the book of Hebrews, Yeshua is actually called an archangel in 1 Thessalonians. Let’s read the passage and the argument that

is based on it:

1 Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Here is what the Jehovah's Witnesses write about this passage:

“Regarding the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thessalonians 4:16 states: “The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel’s voice.” Thus the voice of Jesus is described as being that of an archangel. This scripture therefore suggests that Jesus himself is the archangel Michael.”

—Excerpt from *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Appendix 11 *Who Is Michael the Archangel?* (<https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/bible-teach/who-is-michael-the-archangel-jesus/>)

So, the claim is that this passage describes Yeshua's voice as the voice of an archangel. Therefore, Yeshua is an archangel, specifically, the archangel Michael.

There are two problems with this argument. The first problem is that this verse does not say that the voice of the archangel is Yeshua's voice. It says that the voice of an archangel will be present when Yeshua descends. This does not mean that Yeshua himself will be the one speaking with that voice. This verse also says that “the sound of the trumpet of God” will be present when Yeshua descends, but this does not mean that Yeshua himself will be blowing the trumpet. In fact, we know that it will not be Yeshua who blows this trumpet, but an angel, as we read about in Revelation:

Revelation 11:15

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

Just as this trumpet is blown by an angel, not by Christ himself, so too the “voice of an archangel,” is not the voice of Christ himself. 1 Thessalonians does not say that Yeshua is an archangel, but rather that Yeshua's arrival will be announced by the sound of a trumpet and by the voice of an archangel.

The second problem is, even if this verse *was* saying that Yeshua had the voice of an archangel, that would not prove that he is an archangel. Revelation 1:10 says that Yeshua's voice was “loud,” “like a trumpet,” but that does not prove that Yeshua is actually a trumpet. Likewise, Revelation 1:15 says that Yeshua's voice was “like the roar of many waters,” but that does not prove that Yeshua is actually water. Even if 1 Thessalonians 4:16 was saying that Yeshua's voice was “the voice of an archangel,” that still would not prove that Yeshua himself is an archangel.

Conclusion

Michael the archangel is described in some ways that are similar to Yeshua, including being a commander of heavenly armies and a contender against the devil. Because of these similarities, some have argued that Michael is another name for Yeshua himself. However, these similarities do not prove that Michael and Yeshua are the same person. Rather, these similarities can be accounted for by the fact that Michael and Yeshua both fight for God's people. Hebrews says that Yeshua is *not* an angel, and that

alone seems sufficient to rule out this entire idea. While 1 Thessalonians 4:16 says that Yeshua will come “with the voice of an archangel,” this verse is simply saying that an archangel will announce Yeshua’s coming, not that Yeshua has an archangel’s voice; but, even if it was saying that Yeshua had an archangel’s voice, that still would not mean that Yeshua is literally an archangel. When we consider that the book of Hebrews takes great pains to draw a distinction between Yeshua and the angels, that seems to prove that Michael the archangel and Yeshua cannot be the same person anyway. Michael the archangel is not another name for Yeshua the Messiah.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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