

# Michael According to Manichean Conceptions

The Manicheans taught that the really good was nothing but the transformed evil. This conception appears in the following legend. Michael succeeds Satanael as leader of the Heavenly Hosts. He obtains his full power by taking one syllable from Satanael's name and adding it to his own name. Thus Satanael becomes Satan, while Michael is invested with his mission.

## Michael and Evil

And Satanael saw that the Lord God was worshipped and praised by all the angels. He became envious and decided to be equal to God. He bethought himself in his pride: I will place my throne on the clouds High up in Heaven and be equal to the Almighty. The Lord God, Who guessed Satanael's thoughts, wanted to hurl him and his evil hosts down from Heaven. And God sent the Archangel Michael unto Satanael. Michael went unto him. But Satanael singed the Archangel Michael with his fire.

Michael went unto the Lord, saying: "I did as Thou hast commanded. But Satanael has singed me with his flames." Then the Lord God raised Michael's rank. Michael, who heretofore had been called Michel, was now called Michael; while Satanael was henceforth called Satan. And the Lord God commanded the Archangel Michael to strike Satan's shoulder with the scepter of the Lord and hurl him, together with his evil hosts, down from Heaven.

Then the Lord God sent Michael anew to Satan, but Michael succeeded not to come near his throne. Again he was singed by the flames. Yet Michael, gathering up all his strength, struck Satan with the scepter and hurled him into the depth together with his hosts. These, like unto raindrops, flew for three whole days and three nights through the air. On the third day, all the angels came together in Heaven and Michael was chosen by God as Leader of the Heavenly Hosts. And the gates of Heaven were closed. But the fallen angels remained outside. Some were suspended on the mountains; some fell into abysses; some remained in the air; some came down to earth where they became the tempters of man. And here they have remained ever since.

– Ancient Bulgarian Legend

## Michael and the Doubter

A hermit, who had been assailed by doubts concerning the justice of God, went forth in search of this justice. Leaving his hut and the quiet forest, he wandered towards the next road. Here a youth joined him and followed him on his pilgrimage. At night they came to a castle, where both were courteously received. When they wandered on the next morning, the youth brought forth a cup which he had stolen in the castle.

The second night they spent with a miser, to whom the youth presented the stolen cup. They passed through a village. Here the uncanny youth entered a miserable house and asked for a drink. No sooner had they left the village when the house went up in flames and burned down. Then they hastened towards the mountains. Lamenting and wailing came out of a lonely hut. They found parents bewailing their child's illness. The youth prepared a potion and gave it to the child, which died at once after drinking it.

The hermit became frightened and he hesitated to follow his suspicious companion, who had engaged the child's father as guide. But the hermit was overcome by wrath, when his fearful companion threw the guide from the nearest bridge into an abyss. But the companion soared upward, transforming himself into the Archangel Michael. "Thou hast," spake Michael, "been on the search for the justice of God. Now thou hast seen a part of it. The cup that I took away from the good people was poisoned. The miser, to whom I gave it, will receive the reward for his sins. The poor people, whose house I burned down, will build it anew and find a treasure in the rubbish. The child whose death I caused would have become a criminal and sinner, for his father, whom I hurled into the abyss, was a robber and murderer. Thus things that may seem unjust to men are just in the eyes of God." Thereupon the hermit returned to his cell and was healed from all doubts.

– German Legend