

THE NAMES OF THE ARCHANGELS

BY ELLEN CONROY MCCAFFERY, A. M.

SHOULD people render homage to the angels? The answer to this question proved to be one of the vexed disputes between the Puritans and the Catholics. The Puritans refused even to use the prefix of saint to the archangels regarding such a Pope-made honor as either presumption or desecration. They pinned their faith on the words in Revelations: "And I John saw these things and heard them, and when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then said he to me, 'See thou do it not for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God'."

John thus was rebuked when he would show divine honor to the angel, for John though still in the flesh was accounted a brother by the angel. It was one more way of saying that the measure of a man is the measure of an angel. (Rev. xxi.) The church has always stated that the angels are help mates and fellow workers of us all and we can ask their aid in our enterprises. We can render them full homage: we know they are far higher beings than ourselves, yet with all this we need be in no danger of confusing them with the Eternal One.

According to the artists of the Middle Ages there were nine orders of angels though I have sometimes seen them represented in three circles round the throne of God. The three divisions are Councillors, Governors and Ministers. The nine orders, according to Dionysius the Areopagite in his *De Coelestia Hierarchia*, are Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Virtues, Principalities, Archangels and Angels. The modern world, however, uses the term archangel for all the orders above that of angel. It has often been argued that there ought to be a tenth order, that of the

beatified souls of just men, but if you would have understood what is meant by the measure of a man being the measure of an angel, you will see that this tenth order is unnecessary. John saw these beatified souls clothed in white robes and on asking them who they were was told: "These are they which came out of great tribulation . . . therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple, they shall hunger no more . . ."

The whole of the Scriptures is full of this belief of the ministration of angels: Why? Well, because there are such beings. Read the records of the apostles after Jesus left them. Did not angels succour them? Did He himself not say that He could have their help if He so desired? In the Old Testament angels help Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Elshishah and many others. Curiously enough they are hardly ever recognized as angels until after the visit. They do not appear to have been winged. Certainly they were always male angels. Modern pictures rarely represent angels without wings and painters of today seem to prefer female angels. All ancient peoples seem to have believed in the ministration of angels. Hesiod, a Greek, seven hundred years before Christ speaks of:—

"Aerial spirits by great Jove designed
To be on earth the guardians of mankind.
Invisible to mortal eyes they go,
And mark our actions good or bad below
Th' immortal ones with watchful care preside
And thrice ten thousand round their charges glide
They can reward with silver or with gold
Such power divine permission bids them hold."

Our own poet Spencer sings most beautifully of the work of angels in Book Two of the *Faerie Queen*:

"Oh th' exceeding grace
Of Highest God that loves His creatures so
And all His works with mercy doth embrace
That blessed angels He sends to and fro
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.
How oft do they their silver bowers leave
And come to succor us that succour want!
How oft do they with shining pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying Pursuivant

Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
 They for us fight, they watch and duly ward
 And their bright squadrons round about us plant.
 And all for love and nothing for reward,
 O! why should heavenly God to man have such regard?"

The great hosts of angels are led by seven great ones, though in the Scriptures the names of only two of these are given, Michael and Gabriel. In the Apocrypha there are Raphael and Uriel. Yet the names of the angels are well known throughout Europe and Asia for formerly much more interest was taken in them than today. The astrologers said that each one of the seven ruled one of the seven planets, and as the planets are likenesses of all that is in the universe, so the seven spirits stand in their highest concept as the Elohim. The Rosicrucians say that the light we see from the planets is all we see of their bodies. Gabriel always seems the nearest to us, and so he is. He is the angel of the soul. His name means God's power. He brings the messages of God to man. He works largely through the inspirational mind. He it is that brings the message to Mary that she shall bear Christ, thus he is sometimes called the angel of the Messiah. By the Persians he is called the Angel of the Revelation, because he is so often employed by God to reveal great truths to man. The Kabbalists called him the Man-God because the soul has this duality in itself of aspiring unto God, yet being man, thus Gabriel is ever urging and helping the soul upwards. He is ready when asked, to make the dark things clear. You remember when Daniel could not understand his vision, God said, "Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision", and Daniel, though at first somewhat frightened, soon lost his fear in the sweet understanding of the great message. The Mohammedans say he dictated the Koran to Mahomet. He is also said to have led them to their early victories.

Gabriel is also said to be the Angel of the Spirit of Truth, the eternal truth which is true in all ages, which transcends the mere facts of the moment. He is the angel who gives vision and where he has to withhold the vision the people perish, for there is no divine inspiration and message coming to them.

Longfellow in his "Golden Legend" gives the work of the great planetary angels. He makes Gabriel say:—

"I am the angel of the Moon:
 Nearest the earth is my ray

That best illumines the midnight way
I am the angel of Hope."

Thus we should always ask Gabriel to give us hope and strength until the Day-Star awake in our hearts.

The strangest mediaeval conception of Gabriel was that of the divine huntsman. On many old engravings and in pictures we can see Gabriel represented as a huntsman with four dogs following in the chase. Sometimes these are labelled Veritas, Justitia, Misericordia and Pax. Gabriel is hunting the unicorn. We must here remember that the unicorn was a favorite symbol of Christ,—thus how beautifully did the men of olden time portray the quest of the soul for the spirit of life. By divine guidance we hunt for the Christ helped by Truth, Justice, Pity and Peace. Sometimes in these pictures the unicorn is portrayed as rushing so violently into the garden of the Virgin Mary that it seems he will pierce her breast showing that the Christ searches for the soul as well as the soul being in search for the Christ. Gabriel is sometimes said to be the Angel of the West, since the West is the home of the soul.

The name Michael means "Like Unto God." Sometimes Michael is portrayed as a young man in beautiful white robes, but more usually he is in shining silver or gold armour holding a great sword. In this latter case it is difficult not to mistake him for St. George. Michael fought the great fight against the dragon just at St. George did or Horus of Egypt or Apollo of Greece, or Thor of Scandinavia or Hu of Wales or Indra of India. Michael stands for the divine all knowing mind. In his lesser aspects he is the angel of prudence. The Jews accept him as this and he is their chief angel. They remember the words of Daniel concerning Michael, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince, which standeth for the children of the people." He was said to weigh the deeds of the souls of the departed and then if their good deeds outweighed the bad he would lead them to the gates of heaven. Now this had been also the office of Mercury, Hermes and Thot. What does it all mean but that the divine spirit of Wisdom is also Justice? We cannot cheat the eternal verities, externals are nothing. It is this all seeing justice that will place us in the next world.

You will find that most of the hills and the churches on the hills in Europe are sacred to St. Michael. In Cornwall is St. Michael's Mount, and across the Channel is Mont. St. Mihiel. In the same way high places were sacred to Mercury, Hermes and Thot. In

South London is Tooting where Thot worship was once carried on as it was at Toot's Hill in Epping Forest or at Tewkesbury. When we sing, "There is a green hill far away" we do not realize the vast symbolism built round this hill of the Lord by almost every nation.

Sometimes Michael in his capacity of Judge of the Dead carries a scroll or book which makes us think of the "Lamb's Book of Life". How ridiculous says the sceptic to say that there can be any record of our lives and thoughts, when we ourselves forget these experiences. Occult experience however proves that this is not so, that there are world records of everything that has happened. Psychometrists can, to a certain extent, tell the life history of an object placed in their hands. Under abnormal circumstances people are able to recall and tell all kinds of information that they had completely forgotten in the normal life.

We are not surprised then that astrologers assign Michael the governorship of the planet Mercury. In books and in sculpture I have sometimes seen him assigned to the Sun, but this is incorrect. Longfellow makes him say:—

"The planet Mercury whose place
Is nearest to the Sun in space
Is my allotted sphere.
And with celestial vision swift
I wear upon my hands the gift
Of heavenly prudence here."

Michael is also the governor of the South and as such carries the spear rather than the sword. The Roman Catholics call him Sanctus Michael Signifier and say that at the Last Judgment he will show the cross, the nails, the spear and the throne.

Raphael means God Healeth, so that Raphael represents the Divine Physician who comes to us with healing in his wings. He is the angel of the Sun and of the East. It is from the sun that all healing comes and from the East that the glory of the Lord comes. Raphael is usually represented as a pilgrim for the Sun is the Great Pilgrim. He carries a staff and sometimes a fish. This latter is said to be given him as an emblem because in the Book of Tobit he befriends the young Tobias and makes the fish minister to his good instead of his harm. When the young man's father would have paid him he says: "I am one of the Seven Spirits which present the prayers of the saints and which go in and out before the glory of

the Holy One . . . not of any favor of mine I came, but by the will of God I came, wherefore praise Him forever."

The staff of Raphael, though merely a pilgrim's staff, is really the sun's sceptre of rulership. It is the symbol of the spirit force of the Lord of the East. Milton called him the "social prince". All through *Paradise Lost* it is Raphael who talks so kindly and gently to Adam and Eve and explains their estate to them. At the same time Milton does not lose sight of his majesty and attributes of power, hence we get that wondrous description of him in Book Five:

"Six wings he wore to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
 With royal ornament: the middle pair
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colors dipped in heaven; the third his feet
 Shadows from either heel with feathered mail,
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
 The circuit wide."

Raphael has always been looked upon as the guardian of the whole of mankind. The people of the Middle Ages said that it was he and the angels under him who sang the song to the Shepherds: of Peace on earth and good will to men. Longfellow makes Raphael say:

"I am the angel of the Sun
 Whose flaming wheels began to run
 When God's Almighty breath
 Said to the darkness and the night
 Let there be light and there was light
 I bring the gift of Faith.

The fourth great angel is Uriel, the light or fire of God. Milton calls him the sharpest sighted spirit of all in heaven. He is sometimes called the Regent of the Sun and is the angel whom John saw in the Sun. Astrologers call him the angel of Mars and thus Longfellow puts the following words into his mouth:

"I am the minister of Mars
 The strongest star among the stars
 My songs of power prelude
 The march and battle of man's life
 And for the suffering and the strife
 I give him fortitude."

Uriel is the angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. It was only by means of the divine fire that Moses was able to carry out his superhuman task. The planet Mars rules over those who are pioneers and who have hard battles to fight. Uriel is able to give the enthusiasm and the divine uplift that can carry even a physically weak person to victory. Uriel in his highest aspect is the pillar of fire that guided the Israelites across Mount Sinai. He is the Shechinah of the Presence.

Fire was an attribute of God originally though the modern theologians have given it to the devil. The ministers of God have to be baptised with the Holy Spirit *and with FIRE*. Tongue of fire were the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Malachi likens God to a refiner's fire for in the fire of God all that is not pure must be burnt away from the soul. When Jesus re-appeared to His disciples He had the fire made and the fish laid thereon to show that He ever has the fire, the sacrifice and the food for the disciples who are ready to follow his path and to feed his sheep. Vaughn in his deep mysticism realised this when he says:

"God's saints are shining lights: who stays
 Here long must passe
 O'er dark hills, swift streams and steep ways
 As smoothe as glasse;
 But these all night
 Like candles shed
 Their beams, and light
 Us to our bedd
 These are indeed our Pillar Fires
 Seen as we go;
 They are the cities' shining spires
 We travel to."

Uriel is the angel of the north, the direction of cold, of difficulty and trials, but if we face the north valiantly we also face the great Pole-Star which is symbolic of the unchangeable everlasting God. As Dante says:

“Then heard I the echoing from choir to choir
Hosannah to the fixed point.”

In the Book of Enoch we have another reference to him: “Then Uriel showed me twelve gates open for the circuit of the chariots of the O in Heaven, from which the rays of the O shoot forth.

It was Uriel who helped Esdras to recollect the lost Scriptures, thus again he connects with the Holy Spirit “who shall teach you all things and shall bring all things to your remembrance.” The Early Church said it was Uriel who led the disciples to Emmaus which means the hot springs and was the place where they again saw Jesus.

The angel of Venus is Anael or Israfel. We all know the beautiful poem of Edgar Allan Poe on the Angel Israfel:

“In Heaven dwells a spirit
Whose heart strings are a lute
None sing so wildly well
As the Angel Israfel.”

It is the strains of this angel and of those under his care that we hear in our dreams or in our moments of communion with the unseen world. It is said that at the last day Israfel will sound the Resurrection trump and then Michael will call all men to judgment. Until then he delights the souls of the blessed with sweet music. Anael means the Sweet Song of God and is the spirit of all art, for art is beauty and beauty is one of the approaches unto God. We have to worship in the beauty of Holiness. So many people forget this.

Both Anael and Israfel are said to greet the souls of heroes and sing their praises: “A winged band commanded by Israfel, the angel of the Resurrection, came to meet Roland.”

We must be careful not to confuse Israfel with Azrael who is the angel of death. He is the angel who looks after the dying and helps them. Walter Besant speaks very beautifully of “those who listen in the watches of the night for the wings of Azrael”. Perhaps you know the beautiful Dream of Gerontius where the angel tells the dying man to be patient and—“I will come and wake thee on the morrow.” We know that to many who are dying it seems as though the gates of the next world were opened and they speak of old friends as though present and of glorious angels around. Such is the work of the angels of Azrael, but it is said that Azrael himself will die in the end—after the second trump, which is but another way of

stating that eternal truth, "There shall be no more death."

The angel Oriphel, whose name means the Hour of God, is attached to the planet Saturn though some people give Cassiel. It is Saturn who hinders and delays our works until the hour of God is ripe. Thus we look upon Oriphiel as an angel to be dreaded and feared whereas if we could but trust God to know the times and the seasons we should see that Oriphel was as beautiful, perhaps more so, than any of the other angels. We see so dimly and imperfectly now that we are continually in fear both of the governorship of our petty lives and for the guidance of mankind. God has great lessons to teach us—sometimes he has to hammer us into shape—sometimes He leads us—not the nearest way but by way of the wilderness. At the end we are to come into Canaan, the land of milk and honey,—the milk of human kindness and the honey which is the food of the gods, and what is the food of the Gods but spirituality?

Zacchariel means the Man of God, and is the ambassador of the planet Jupiter. When we come under this angel we do not need so much the hard lessons that Saturn has to teach. We have become more kindly, more generous, more open hearted and so we are more able to become leaders of men and more able to help humanity. This is what we have to strive after, each one of us to let the spiritual child within us grow and so become friends with man and with God.

There is an Eastern proverb which says "To every Moses there is a Pharoah. When Moses was struggling with Pharoah and he and the people were delayed, they were under the influence of Saturn. When the lessons of Egypt were learnt they then came under the influence of Jupiter and were allowed to go on their way. The sign of Saturn is the sign of Jupiter reversed.

Such then according to art and tradition are the names assigned to the seven great angels of the planets:

Gabriel—the Moon.

Michael—Mercury.

Raphael—the Sun.

Uriel—Mars.

Anael—Venus.

Orifel—Saturn.

Zacchariel—Jupiter.

According to the Kabbalah, they are assigned as follows:

Tzadkiel—Jupiter.

Samael—Saturn.

Michael—the Sun.

Haniel—Mars.

Raphael—Venus.

Gabriel—Mercury.

Sandalphon—Moon.

The meanings of the names of some of the other great angels is very illuminating :

Ariel—the Lion of God.

Ramuel—exaltation of God.

Abdiel—the servant of God.

Ithuriel—the discoverer of God.

Zephon—the searcher of secrets.

Uzziel—the strength of God.

Azazel—brave in retreat.

Jophiel—beauty of God.

Samael—the severity of God.

Salamiel—acquired of God.

Zadkiel—righteousness of God.

Chamuel—the wrath of God.