

Once only is the adjective so used. It is the same passage. 'Else,' says the apostle, 'were your children unclean, but now are they holy.' Dr. Drummond believes that the reference is to the custom of reckoning the children of mixed marriages as Christians. They are not really 'holy' no doubt. But it is no true exception. For the less is covered by the greater. The Christian community as a whole is holy in fact, the children

are reckoned so as forming part of it. A single soldier may not be brave, but the army is, and he gets the shelter of its good name.

So St. Paul called his fellow-Christians 'saints' because they were saints. We, whom it costs nothing to be Christians, are not saints; at least there are not enough of us saints. We have lost our right to this desirable name.

## The Contest for the Body of Moses.

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MICHAEL (the name means, 'Who is like God?') was one of the princes of the angelic host. He is called 'the great prince' in Dn 12<sup>1</sup>, 'one of the chief princes' in Dn 10<sup>13</sup>, and 'the archangel' in Jude v.<sup>9</sup>. The mention of 'principalities and powers in the heavenly places' (Eph 3<sup>10</sup>, cf. 1<sup>21</sup>, Col 2<sup>10</sup>) shows that the primitive Christian Church adopted the Jewish conception of gradations in the heavenly hierarchy, a conception according to which there were four archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel (*Enoch* 9). Another tradition adds three others, but their names are not constant. Michael the merciful (*Enoch* 40<sup>9</sup> 68<sup>2</sup>) was believed to stand at the right hand of the throne of God, and Gabriel at the left.

There are three principal functions which the Jews believed Michael to fulfil. (1) He is the *guardian angel of Israel* (Dn 10<sup>21</sup>). In Dn 10 we read also of the angelic 'Prince of Persia' and 'Prince of Greece.' Indeed, it was an article of the Jewish faith, that 'for every nation God has appointed a governor' from among the angels (Sir 17<sup>7</sup>). In Dt 32<sup>8</sup>, the LXX reads, 'He fixed the boundaries of the nations (cf. Ac 17<sup>26</sup>) according to the number of the angels of God.' The Palest. Targum on Dt 32<sup>8</sup> speaks of seventy nations 'according to the seventy angels'; and also 'according to the seventy souls which went with Jacob into Egypt'; thus interpreting the Massoretic text, 'according to the number of the children of Israel.' The Targum on Ps 137<sup>7-8</sup> calls Michael 'the prince of Jerusalem' and 'the prince of Zion.'

(2) The Jews conceived of Michael as the *Cus-*

*todian of Heaven*. In the Jewish-Christian hymn of Jeremiah, 3 Bar. 9, he is designated 'the one who opens the gates to the righteous'; and in 4 Bar 11 he is 'the key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven' (*Texts and Studies*, v. 1, lv.). And as, without his leave, no one may enter the heavenly gates, we are not surprised to find that it is Michael and his angels who are commissioned to *expel* Satan and his angels from heaven (Rev 12<sup>9</sup>) when they cause discord there; as in *Enoch* 10<sup>11</sup> it is Michael who is instructed to bind Semyaza and his associates who have defiled themselves with women, and to bind them fast under the hills of the earth for seventy generations.

(3) The chief function which Michael fulfilled was that of *Conductor of pious souls to Paradise*. When we read in Lk 16<sup>22</sup> that the soul of Lazarus 'was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom,' the following references from Jewish and early Christian literature render it all but certain that it was Michael and his angels who were intended. In the *Testament of Abraham* we find that Michael was bidden by God to warn Abraham of his impending death; but he found himself unable to introduce even the mention of death into so happy a home, and he wept in Abraham's tent. Eventually he caused Isaac to dream (cf. *Hermas*, *Sim.* 8<sup>3</sup>) of his father's death, and Isaac recited his dream to his father. Then Michael took Abraham upon a chariot of cherubim, and led him upon the cloud with sixty angels (*Texts and Studies*, ii. 2; *Ante-Nicene Library*, Addl. Vol. 183 ff.). In *Midrash Rabba* it is said that Michael demurred

to convey the soul of Moses, because he was so loth to cause death to one he loved so dearly; and the duty was entrusted to Gabriel. In the *History of Joseph the Carpenter* Jesus prays to His Father that He would send His two angels Michael and Gabriel to convey the soul of the aged Joseph to heaven (c. 22; Tischendorf, *Evan. Apocr.* 133). In the *Descensus Christi ad Inferos* we are told of Michael that he 'introduces all into the glorious grace of Paradise' (*ibid.* 404).

It is in connexion with his duties as attendant on the dead, that Michael is said in Jude v.<sup>9</sup> to have come into conflict with Satan as to the disposal of the dead body of Moses. We are not told in the New Testament what Michael wished to do to the corpse of Moses, or on what grounds Satan objected; but extra-biblical Jewish and early Christian literature seems to give some light on the subject. The Targum on Dt 34<sup>6</sup> describes how Moses was laid by Michael and Gabriel on a golden bed, fastened with precious stones, and buried by four wise sages. Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and Didymus all say that the passage in Jude was derived from a work entitled *Assumptio Mosis*. For centuries this work was lost to the Christian Church; but in 1861 a copy was found by Ceriani in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, published in *Monumenta Sacra* in 1862, and afterwards edited by Volkmar in 1867. This copy, however, contains no incident resembling Jude v.<sup>9</sup>; and yet it is by no means certain that Origen was incorrect. Some leaves are lacking at the end, where the disposal of the body of Moses would most naturally be narrated; and there are some indications that the lost leaves contained the passage mentioned by Origen. A brief fragment has recently been discovered, called 'The Prayer of Moses,' which bears several marks of affinity with the *Assumptio*, and is believed by Dr. James to be a part of its lost pages (*Texts and Studies*, ii. 3, 166 ff.). This fragment says that 'the form' of Moses 'was changed in glory,' 'and he died in

glory.' This is interesting. The fragment does not mention Michael, and yet it bears a close resemblance to two passages where Michael's name is mentioned in a similar connexion. In the Slavonic *Book of Enoch* we are told (22<sup>8</sup>) that the Lord said to Michael, 'Go and take from Enoch his earthly garment, and anoint him with My holy oil, and clothe him with the raiment of My glory'; and in the *History of Joseph the Carpenter* we are told that the two angels, Michael and Gabriel, 'wrapped the body of Joseph in a luminous shroud' (cc. 22 and 25). These are great honours. To whom would a Jew be likely *first* to assign such honours? Would it not be to Moses? May not both these passages be derived from the tradition contained in lost pages of the *Assumptio*? And if those pages are ever recovered, shall we not probably find it stated that Moses 'died in glory,' *i.e.* that his soul was enswathed in glory (as Enoch), and had a glorious entrance into heaven (as Abraham, *see above*), and his body wrapped in a luminous shroud (as Joseph)? This honour Satan sought to prevent.

As to why Satan sought to prevent honour being paid to the body of Moses, Jewish tradition assigns two reasons. Cedrenus in his *Chronicle*, mentioned by Dr. James (*Texts and Studies*, ii. 3, 171), which seems derived in part from the *Assumptio*, states that 'the devil attempted to draw him (*συνελκύσαι*, cf. Ps 28<sup>8</sup>) with the wicked, on the pretext that he had sinned.' Ecumenius, in his *Com. in Ep. Jud.*, says that it was 'because of the murder of the Egyptian.' But in an apocryphal tract, the history of the Old Testament from Adam to Daniel, edited in the *Anecdota Græco-Byzantina* in Moscow 1893, by the late A. Vassiliev, it is said that 'Samael attempted to take the tabernacle of Moses down to the people that they might make it a god; but Michael, the chief captain, came and withdrew it' (*Texts and Studies*, v. 1, 156 f.).