

Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels - September 29, 2020

Rv 12:7-12ab, PS 138:1-2AB, 2CDE-3, 4-5, JN 1:47-51

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Our reading from Revelation recalls the story of the first battle between good and evil. Before the beginning of time ... God created the angels. But one of the angels God created was smarter, more beautiful and greater than all the others. And God trusted him with the very first thing that God would create at the beginning of time ... Light ... so the angel was called "The Bringer of Light" or "**Lucifer**". But ... Lucifer grew to love himself above all ... even to the exclusion of God Himself. He **knew** that he was the cleverest, most beautiful and greatest of all the angels. He decided that he was in every way be equal to God and so why should God rule. He even convinced many of the other angels to join him in a **war** ... a war against God. One of the other angels took up God's banner and led the other angels in battle against the proud rebel. His name was **Michael**, which means, "**Who** is like God?" Michael and his angels fought against Lucifer and his angels. And Michael won ... for **no-one** is like God. So Lucifer ... no longer called Lucifer or "Bringer of Light", would henceforth be called the Great Dragon or ... **Satan**, which means: "**the Accuser**". Then Satan and his angels were sent to Hell where he could finally rule.

In the Book of Tobit ... we are introduced to the Archangel **Raphael** ... whose name means "**God heals**". We learn how Raphael was the companion who guided and protected young Tobiah on his Journey to Media ... where he would meet and marry his bride. We further learn how Raphael protected Tobiah from the demon who had killed the seven previous husbands of Tobiah's wife Sarah ... on their wedding nights ... out of lust for her. And ... finally ... we see how God ... working through Raphael ... would cure Tobit of his blindness.

In the Gospel of Luke we hear how the Archangel Gabriel ... whose name means "**God's Strength**" ... was sent first to Zechariah ... to announce the birth of John the Baptist ... and then to Mary to announce the birth of the Savior of the World.

Thus ... the most important angels ... the Archangels are given proper names to denote the ministry they are empowered to perform. So today we celebrate the three Archangels revealed to us in Holy Scripture: **Michael** or "**Who** is like God?" ... **Raphael** ... "**God heals**" and Gabriel ... or "**God's Strength**". In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.