



## Daniel – Michael Warfarer

An address for the Cosmic Mass ● 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2002 ● Rev Heather

*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasu-e'rus, by birth a Mede, who became king over the realm of the Chalde'ans -- in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession...*

*While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy hill of my God; while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He came and he said to me, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the word and understand the vision.*

*In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshaz'zar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold of Uphaz. His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the noise of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me; my radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. Then I heard the sound of his words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in a deep sleep with my face to the ground. And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, give heed to the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.*

*Daniel 9:1-4a, 20-23, 10:1-12*

Last Sunday the speaker talked about what it means to be one of 'Michael's mates'. In *The Ultimate Vision*, Mario uses another term – one you won't find in the dictionary. It is a real Marioism, and like many Marioisms, it grows on you and you wonder why it isn't in the

dictionary. He talks about being a Michael **warfarer**, which brings together the sense of being engaged in a spiritual struggle and of journeying, or of being a wayfarer. It is a telling description of what it means to be attuned to the working of Michael and the Christ in this present age.

### **Daniel – a Michael Warfarer**

Whenever the Archangel Michael has been the ruling Archangel of a period of history, great figures have appeared on the scene. This was so in the Michael age before the present one, which ended about 200 years before the Christian era.

That was an age of remarkable human development. In India, the Buddha attained enlightenment, and remained on earth to teach others the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path through which they too might become enlightened. In Greece, Plato, Aristotle and the great philosophers pushed forward the development of human thought. In Persia, an inspired teacher appeared who renewed the teachings of Zarathustra and who was able to perceive the Christ being in the sun as he was drawing nearer to the earth. This being he called Ahura Mazda. He also perceived the being who opposed Ahura Mazda – Angra Mainyu or Ahriman. In Israel, the prophets arose as the messengers of the Lord, towering above the mass of the people. It truly was a golden age in which the impulse of Michael was evident in many places and peoples.

Among the great prophetic figures of Israel at this time was Daniel. Whether Daniel was an actual historical figure or not is something for biblical scholars and theologians to debate. We are more concerned with the spiritual meaning of his story and of the book that bears his name. For Daniel is an archetypal figure, and his story presents us with a picture of a Michael warfarer.

### **The Story of Daniel**

We all probably know parts of his story. We read one part of the story earlier. Perhaps the thing most people know about him is that he was thrown into a den of lions. So let's just take a look at the story as we have it in the book of Daniel.

This young man was a member of the princely family of Judah and was carried off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar when he invaded Jerusalem. Along with three other young men from the nobility of Judah, he was chosen to be trained for the king's service. These youths had to be "without blemish, handsome, skilful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, learning, and competent to serve in the king's palace". This was no ordinary service. It did not mean being a butler or footman. It meant being a wise man who could advise the king and assist in the affairs of the kingdom. In those days, spiritual perception was required for such a task. (It would be great if this was still the case!)

The king commanded that these Hebrew youths should be given the finest food and wine from his table, like the youths of his own nation who were also undergoing training in the palace. Daniel did not want to partake of this rich diet and persuaded the master in charge to allow them to eat a simple diet of vegetables and water. At the end of the training period, Daniel and his three companions were found to be superior to the Babylonian youths in every way. The king declared that they were ten times better.

Daniel and his three friends became proficient in Babylonian learning and were given positions of prominence within the land. At the same time, they refused to compromise the spiritual principles by which they lived. This led to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (whose names we were taught to remember by chanting, "Shake the bed, make the bed, and into

bed you go”) being thrown into a fiery furnace because they refused to bow down to the golden statue set up by the king. They were delivered unharmed from this ordeal by fire.

Daniel had the gift of prophetic vision and of seership. When Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream, Daniel alone of all the wise men in Babylon was able to tell him its meaning. Later he was called on to interpret the alarming visions of the king which pointed to a coming period of madness. When others might have quailed with fear, Daniel interpreted the vision truly to the king.

When what he foresaw came about, a new king came to the throne. Belshazzar gave a great feast at which he called for the sacred vessels from the Jerusalem temple which were kept in the storehouse, and he and his company profaned them by using them in their feasting. Immediately a hand appeared and wrote on the wall of the banqueting hall. The wise men of Babylon were unable to tell the meaning of the words, so Daniel was called. He fearlessly told the king that the writing foretold the end of his kingdom. That night Belshazzar died, and Darius became king in his place.

Many were jealous of the prominence Daniel had attained and plotted against him. Knowing his faithfulness to his God, they had the king proclaim an edict that no one should pray to any god but the gods of Babylon for thirty days. Anyone who disobeyed was to be thrown into a den of lions. When Daniel continued his prayers as usual, not in secret but openly, his enemies charged him before the king, who was forced to carry out the edict he had made. The king spent a sleepless and troubled night and first thing in the morning he hurried to the lions’ den to see what Daniel’s fate was. When Daniel greeted him, the king learned that an angel had shut the lions’ mouths and Daniel was unharmed.

The book of Daniel then records some of Daniel’s own visions. In the first he saw the succession of empires that would rise and fall until the time when one like a son of man would come with the clouds of heaven to bring about a lasting spiritual kingdom. A second vision came to him, and from the spiritual worlds the Archangel Gabriel was called upon to interpret it to Daniel.

Through study the ancient writings, Daniel discovered that his country would be desolate for seventy years. He began to pray and to confess the sins of his people. As he prayed, he was in touch with the angelic realms and Gabriel came to him to bring him wisdom and understanding. Gabriel said to Daniel, “At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the word and understand the vision.” It was revealed to him what the future of his people would be.

Then Daniel beheld a great vision. Let me read part of it. It is in Daniel 10:1-12. This picture of a radiant being, clothed in linen, is very similar to the vision John had of the son of man, recorded in the first chapter of Revelation. Daniel was given a vision of the Christ who was coming into the world, and also of Michael and his role in relationship to Christ. This great being told Daniel that Michael had come to his aid in standing against the prince, or folk spirit, of Persia. “There is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.” Then followed a vision of the future which included the rise of Michael and the final conflict between the powers of this world and the heavenly powers.

### **The Marks of a Michael Warfarer**

The book of Daniel contains the only reference in the Old Testament to Archangel Michael, even though this being was the inspirer of the nation of Israel. He does get a mention in the later literature of Israel and in the New Testament, in the letter of Jude and in Revelation. Like Gabriel, the other archangel who is mentioned by name in the Bible, he is there behind

the scene, rarely revealing himself, except to a few souls like Daniel, who stand out as Michael warfarers.

They were souls who were able to see the changes taking place in the world. Daniel's story is set in a time of transition between the age of Gabriel and the age of Michael. It is significant that Gabriel appeared to Daniel first to interpret his vision, and that then he saw Michael and the Christ being in his vision. As the Christ drew nearer to the earth, the impulse of Gabriel, the archangel of the moon, was giving way to the impulse of Michael, the archangel of the sun. But more than this was happening, for Michael, who had been recognised as the folk spirit of a nation was now seen to be at the side of the Christ, bringing in a new age in which racial and political and religious barriers would be broken down. What was begun back then has now to come into reality in our present Michael age.

Last week we were reminded of the need to spiritualise our thinking, our feeling and our willing if we would attain to a Michael consciousness and become bearers of the Christ spirit. In the life of Daniel, we see some of the marks of a Michael warfarer and this gives us another way of looking at what we must express in our lives.

1. **Love for truth.** Not the outer truth of a creed or dogma, but the truth of our own being. Daniel was uncompromising in this. We have been taught that you can't mix spiritual paths, but this is exactly what Daniel and his friends were asked to do when they were offered the food eaten by the youths in training in the Babylonian schools. Daniel had been trained in the mystery tradition of the Hebrews, and the Nazirite diet undertaken by such great figures as Samson – no meat, no wine, simple food only - was part of that training, undertaken for the effect it had upon the etheric levels. Daniel knew that he could not compromise this without harm to himself, and his stand proved to be the right one.

In many ways, Daniel's life was one long series of tests as to whether or not he would hold to his truth. Imagine having to tell a king that he would go mad or that his days were numbered. Imagine openly doing the cosmic mass when you knew that this was against the law of the land. Daniel remained true to his spiritual path through all these tests.

The sword of Michael is a sword of truth. The Michael warfarer is faithful to his or her truth.

2. **Spiritualising life.** Mario puts it this way: *"The Michael warfarer of today takes life and spiritualises it. He doesn't fight life. Life is on his side."*

We see this very clearly in Daniel. Although he was torn away from his country, he did not despair. He did not allow the lifestyle of Babylon to overwhelm him or to change him. He carried his spiritual consciousness forward into the land of Babylon and continued to express this even in the most difficult of circumstances – like finding himself in a den of lions! No wonder he was regarded by successive kings as the wisest of men and that they were moved to recognize the power of the God he worshipped. He enabled others to see life as a spiritual experience.

Life is on our side. It has been given to us to enable us to raise matter up to the level of spirit. To take what is of the earth and to lift it up to spirit is the task of the Michael warfarer. It is to be able to say:

*So shall no part of day or night  
From sacredness be free.  
But all my life, in every part,  
Be fellowship with thee.*

3. **An imaging consciousness.** Daniel was a seer. He could interpret the dreams and visions of others and was able also to receive the revelations of the spiritual worlds to him. This is not something to be sought after for its own sake. Daniel was disturbed and alarmed by the visions that came to him. They affected him physically, mentally and emotionally. It was only the strength that he had developed in his inner being that enabled him to cope. During the vision in which he saw the one like the son of man, this being said to him:

*O Daniel, man greatly beloved, give heed to the words that I speak to you,  
and stand upright.*

This is a reminder to us that as we seek to develop our ability to image, so we also need to develop the inner strength to stand upright and not to be overwhelmed by the images that may come.

In Daniel we see how an imaging consciousness developed in a healthy and spiritual way.

4. **Looking to the future.** The Michael warfarer is oriented towards the future. That was the secret of how Daniel was able to survive in Babylon. He looked forward to the future – to the time when his people would return to their land, but much further even than that. He had a vision of the ages to come. He saw that what was taking place in the present was part of a much larger picture, and that events were not chaotic and meaningless but rather leading towards a culmination point when the kingdom of God would be triumphant.

So, too, we need to be always looking forwards, seeing the future that is opening up before us, understanding where current situations and trends are heading and being ready for this future, recognizing that this is a part of the panorama of God's plan for the world and for human beings.

5. **Seeing the relationship between Michael and the Christ.** During the exile in Babylon, the Hebrews came into contact with the teachings of Zarathustra as they were brought into consciousness once more by the great teacher of that time, commonly called Zoroaster. As we know, these centred around Ahura Mazda, the being of light whom we call the Christ. Daniel was among the first to recognize the closeness of the relationship between Michael and Christ. He understood that Michael stood by the Christ, that he opened the way for the Christ, that he would work to break through the barriers of race and creed to bring about the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of men and women. The Michael warfarer works with Michael to this end, seeing beyond the outer trappings of people's lives the spirit that lives in us all.

In Daniel we see these marks of the Michael warfarer. They are summed up in some words of Mario when he said that his task was to create giants out of us, not ants. The message of Daniel for us is: Be a giant, not an ant.

There is an old song that was running through my head all the time I was preparing this address. There was a Salvation Army version that went:

*Dare to be a Daniel  
Dare to stand alone.  
Dare to pass a public house  
And take the money home.*

But the actual version is:

*Dare to be a Daniel,  
Dare to stand alone.  
Dare to have a purpose firm  
And dare to make it known.*

As we enter into this season of Michaelmas, may we be filled with a spirit of daring and of courage, a love for truth, a spiritual perspective on life, true spiritual perception, an orientation to the future and a greater awareness of the work of Michael in preparing the way for the Christ within us.

So shall it be.

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