

impressive figure comes merely to communicate a revelation, while in the celestial contest which he recounts he seems to rank himself along with Michael and is in need of his support. While it is true that the high-priest in Israel was dressed in linen, it does not follow that the description here implies that the angel is 'a celestial high-priest' (Jeffery). The tarshish-stone to which the colour of his body is compared is now supposed to be the yellow jasper.

The numinous character of the experience is heightened by the circumstance that men who were in company with Daniel, though they did not see what he saw, were seized with panic and left him alone (cf. Acts 9.7). The effect on Daniel himself was that he collapsed and lay on the ground in a trance and had to be revived by the action of a mysterious hand (cf. II (4) Esd. 5.14-15). Once again, as in 9.23, Daniel is addressed as 'man greatly beloved'; that is to say, he is favoured by God and chosen to be the recipient of divine revelation. Indeed he is assured that, from the very moment when he began his fast, mortifying or humbling himself and earnestly desiring to understand God's purpose for Israel, there had been a response from God's side. The angel (Gabriel?) had been immediately commissioned to take the revelation to him.

[10.10-11.2a] And now comes a curious passage, in which Daniel tells how the angel explained to him why there had been a delay of three weeks, the period of Daniel's fast, between the sending out of the angel and his coming to Daniel with the revelation. It had been due to angelic opposition in heaven. The language used does not make it absolutely clear whether the celestial contest was of a legal nature or took the form of actual warfare. The idea of warfare in heaven appears picturesquely in the strange passage in II Macc. 5.1-4 and supports (so Jeffery, p. 510) the second alternative: 'Now about this time Antiochus made his second inroad into Egypt. And it so befell that throughout all the city, for the space of almost forty days, there appeared in the midst of the sky horsemen in swift motion, wearing robes inwrought with gold and carrying spears, equipped in troops for battle; and drawing of swords; and on the other side squadrons of horse in array; and encounters and pursuits of both armies; and shaking of shields, and multitudes of lances, and casting of darts, and flashing of golden trappings, and girding on of all sorts of armour. Wherefore all men besought that the vision might have been given for good.' In the present passage, however, the contest, of whatever nature it was, seems to be confined to the angel who may be Gabriel and to the

patron angels of the nations, and the thought is that in some way the fortunes of the nations are dependent on what happens in the celestial sphere. There is an obvious parallel to this, of course, in the Homeric poems and in Virgil's *Aeneid*. As a way of expressing the importance of historical events and of asserting belief in the divine control of history this thought of the contest of angelic representatives is not particularly helpful today, but may be accepted as witness to the truth that men are not left to themselves in the bitter contests which seem to make up so much of the human story. History cannot simply be summed up in the words of Matthew Arnold:

We are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

It is interesting that in the Middle Ages the Archangel Michael should have been believed in as the celestial champion of Christendom, against the Saracens at Roncesvalles and again when the orders of German knights were engaged in their long struggles against the barbarians on the eastern frontier. Faith assumes strange forms and so, when we read in chapter 11 of the Book of Daniel what the history of several centuries looked like to this Jewish observer, we may be glad that he saw a meaning in it which enabled him and those who accepted his message to come through one of the great crises of history, in however bizarre a way he expressed his faith.

The idea that each nation had its patron angel had its roots in Jewish tradition. Deut. 29.26 reflects the curious view that the God of Israel, as the Supreme God, had allotted to each nation its own subordinate deity. The LXX version of Deut. 32.8-9 says:

When the Most High gave to the nations
their inheritance,
when he separated the sons of men,
he fixed the bounds of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.
For the Lord's portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.

In the Massoretic Text of this passage 'sons of God' is 'children of Israel'. The Targum of pseudo-Jonathan on these verses refers to the nations proceeding from Noah (see Gen. 10) which were reckoned as seventy and to the seventy angels who were allotted to them and adds that this number seventy was determined by the number of the seventy

souls of Israel who went down into Egypt (see Ex. 1.5). It will be noticed that the passage in Deuteronomy implies that no angel was allotted to Israel, but that it was placed under the direct control of God himself (cf. Eccles 17.17 and also Jub. 15.31-32 where the function of the angels is to lead the nations astray!). In Enoch 81.59 there is a reference to the seventy angels who were appointed to shepherd Israel with disciplinary intent when it refused obedience to its true Shepherd, the God of Israel—a curious variant of the tradition.

In this chapter of the Book of Daniel and also in 12.1 Israel itself is represented as having a patron angel, *viz.* Michael. It is particularly interesting to find that in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, in *The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness*, ch. XIV, Michael is definitely mentioned as the patron angel of Israel, God intending to exalt among the gods the rule of Michael, which implies the supremacy of Israel. Michael's victory will mean the triumph of righteousness in the high places. Michael's name always appears in the lists of arch-angels, whether they are counted as four (Enoch 9.1) or as seven (Enoch 20.5 where Michael is assigned to Israel). Michael is mentioned twice in the New Testament, *viz.* in Jude 9, where he contends with the devil for the body of Moses, and in Rev. 12.7, where we read of the war in heaven in which Michael and his angels fight against the dragon.

The angelic visitant—to continue Daniel's narrative—explained to him that he had been delayed for the three weeks of Daniel's fast by the opposition of the patron angel of Persia, who is unnamed. Then he explained how Michael, the patron angel of Israel (see 10.21; 12.1) came to his help and how he had left him to carry on the struggle (unless the usual emendation of the text is not accepted as in RSV and the meaning is taken to be that Michael had come in view of the fact that the other angel had held out alone for three weeks). Daniel was now to be told what was to happen to Israel at the end of the age. For the second time he collapsed and this time he was struck dumb. A human-like being, whether the original angel (Gabriel?) or another is not clear, touched Daniel's lips (cf. Isa. 6.6; Jer. 1.9) and he recovered the power of speech, and explained to the angel somewhat unnecessarily how overwhelmed he had been by the experience he had passed through (cf. Isa. 21.3). For the third time he received the reviving touch and was addressed in encouraging words. In this somewhat strange fashion the author is seeking to convey the awesomeness of contact with the superhuman world. It has been pointed out that

the angel's words of encouragement to Daniel virtually consist of the opening and closing epistolary formulae, what Montgomery (p. 415) calls 'the Alpha and Omega of friendly greetings'. Daniel had had experience of the *tremendum* and required reassurance.

The Hebrew text of 10.20-21; 11.1-2a seems disordered and commentators have made numerous suggestions which can only be fully appreciated by study of the original. The simplest solution is perhaps to replace the 'And now I will show you the truth' of 11.2a by the similar but fuller sentence 10.21a, 'But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth', which, by its removal from its present context restores the natural sequence of thought. Most commentators agree that the words 'and as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede' are a gloss added by someone who did not realize that chapters 10 and 11 are continuous. The heading involves a quite unnatural leap back in time. A slight emendation enables the words which follow the gloss to be taken as applying to Michael, so that they would run, 'standing up for my help and support'.

A distinction should probably be drawn between 'the book of truth' here and 'the books' of 7.10, as Jeffery does (see pp. 458, 459, 510). As we saw, Heaton, probably wrongly, identifies 'the books' of chapter 10 with the Babylonian 'Tablets of Fate', associated with the Creation Epic and the New Year Festival (so also Montgomery, p. 418 but not p. 299). 'The book of truth', however, does seem to be something very like 'the Tablets of Fate'. Jeffery has a helpful note (p. 510): 'In the Talmud (Rosh-ha-Shana 16b) we read how on New Year's Day the books were opened and fates recorded. These tablets and the book are frequently mentioned in Jubilees and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs; and in the prayer of Joseph preserved in Origen, *Philocalia* xxiii, 15 we read, "For I have read in the tablets of heaven all that shall befall you and your sons."' In a note on Jub. 3.10 Charles, discussing a reference to the heavenly tables wisely remarks: 'The conception is not a hard and fixed one; in Enoch and Test. XII. Patriarch. it wavers between an absolute determinism and prediction pure and simple: whereas in our text, in addition to these significations, it implies at times little more than a contemporary heavenly record of events' (cf. also Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 1912, pp. 91-92). The tablet of good deeds and the tablet of sins, however, to which the celestial Judge makes reference do seem to be distinct. In the present instance the Book of Truth is represented as containing an account of events to come, though it is quite likely that readers of the Book of Daniel understood