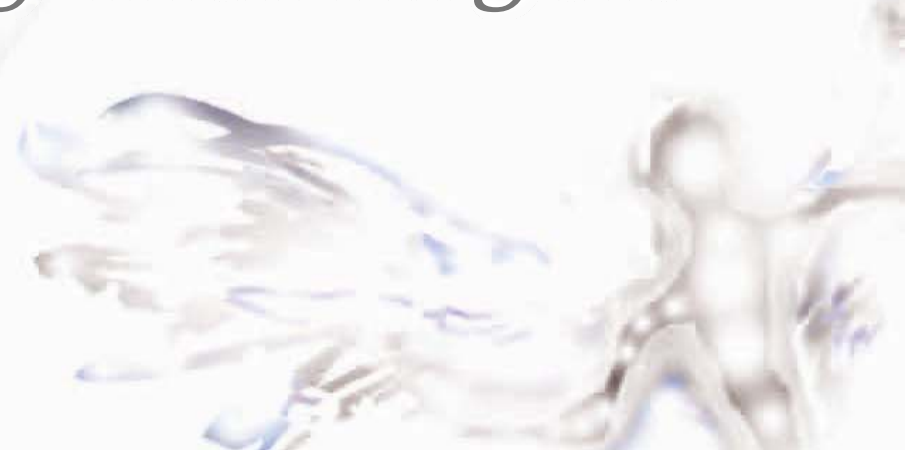


Pastor Nathan Mains - August 31, 2008

# Angels

Allies and  
Adversaries

*Living with Angels*



## So far we've learned that...

- ❑ There is much happening that we do not see and more at stake that we realize.
- ❑ The Bible is our trustworthy guide for all we need to know about angels.
- ❑ We people are the trophies in a cosmic struggle between God and Satan.
- ❑ Awareness of unseen allies (angels) should encourage us – There is more help than we realize.
- ❑ Awareness of unseen adversaries (fallen angels = Satan & demons) should keep us continually alert.
- ❑ Our adversaries use schemes to attempt to distract us from God and His ways and to destroy us.

A long time ago in a kingdom far away

*Daniel 3:1 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.*

*2 He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up.*

*3 So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.*

*4 Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: (NIV)*

# What were they to do?

*Daniel 3:5 As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.*

**□What if someone didn't?**

*6 Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.“*

**□So what do you think the people did?**

*7 Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. (NIV)*

**□But what about those who believe in the one true God, what should they do?**

# Tattletales

Daniel 3:8 *At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews.*

9 *They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10 You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, 11 and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace.*

12 *But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon— Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego -- who pay no attention to you, O king.*

*They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up."* (NIV)

# What?

Daniel 3:13 Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king,

14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up?

15 Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good.

But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace.

Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?" (NIV)

# Time to concede?

*Daniel 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.*

*17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king.*

*18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."*

*19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. (NIV)*

# What did he do?

Daniel 3:19 ...*He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual*

20 *and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace.*

21 *So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.*

22 *The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,*

23 *and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. (NIV)*

This cannot be happening!

Daniel 3:24 *Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"*

*They replied, "Certainly, O king."*

25 *He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."*

26 *Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"*

*So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, (NIV)*

## How can this be?

*Daniel 3: 27 and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them.*

*They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.*

*28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants!*

*They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. (NIV)*

No other god can save in this way

Daniel 3:29 *Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way.*

30 *Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon. (NIV)*

# What is the point of this story?

□ Was it the angel?

It pleases God and can powerfully impact others when we believers are willing to give up our lives rather than serve or worship anything other than the true God.

□ And something else that's kind of cool (but not the main point of the story):

**When we are willing to give up our lives rather than serve or worship anything other than God, He can and may send an angel to rescue us.**

**--Or-- He may honor us with the privilege and rewards of suffering or dying for Him**

> see Hebrews 11

Remember: We are the trophies

Ephesians 3:10 *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*

Jesus: *I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.*

*He will come in and go out, and find pasture.*

*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. -- John 10:9-10*

So we stay alert

*...that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes. 2 Cor 2:11*

*... do not give the devil a foothold. – Eph 4:27 (NIV)*

And we resist, stand & run

**James 4:7** *Resist the devil,  
and he will flee from you.*

**Ephesians 6:10-11** *...be strong in the  
Lord and in his mighty power.*

*Put on the full armor of God  
so that you can take your stand  
against the devil's schemes.*

**Hebrews 12:1** *...let us throw off everything  
that hinders and the sin that so easily  
entangles, and let us run with perseverance  
the race marked out for us. (NIV)*

# Our Different War Strategy

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5** *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.*

*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.*

*On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (NIV)*

And we always seek to rescue others

What Jesus asked Paul to do is a good guide:

**Acts 26:17-18** *I am sending you to them to  
open their eyes*

*and turn them from darkness to light,  
and from the power of Satan to God,  
so that they may receive forgiveness of sins  
and a place among those who are sanctified  
by faith in me.* (NIV)

# Take Away

As protective and helpful as good angels are, and as deceitfully dangerous as bad angels are, God does not encourage us to make them our focus.

God wants us to make Him our focus, trusting Him to protect and transform us as we live lives devoted to worshipping and obeying Him.