

# Angels Encamping

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7. God commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity, to guard them from “the pestilence that walketh in darkness” and “the destruction that wasteth at noonday.” Psalm 91:6. Again and again have angels talked with men as a man speaketh with a friend, and led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful and, carrying their minds above the things of earth, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne. AA 153.2

It is the work of the angels to come close to the tried, the suffering, the tempted. They labor untiringly in behalf of those for whom Christ died. When sinners are led to give themselves to the Saviour, angels bear the tidings heavenward, and there is great rejoicing among the heavenly host. “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” Luke 15:7. A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host. AA 153.3

The principalities and powers of heaven are watching the warfare which, under apparently discouraging circumstances, God's servants are carrying on. New conquests are being achieved, new honors won, as the Christians, rallying round the banner of their Redeemer, go forth to fight the good fight of faith. All the heavenly angels are at the service of the humble, believing people of God; and as the Lord's army of workers here below sing their songs of praise, the choir above join with them in ascribing praise to God and to His Son. AA 154.1

We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God's right hand, “all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Hebrews 1:14. AA 154.2

Special direction was given to the armies of Israel that everything in and around their tents should be clean and orderly, lest the angel of the Lord, passing through the encampment, should see their uncleanness. Would the Lord be particular to notice these things? He would; for the fact is stated, lest in seeing their uncleanness, He could not go forward with their armies to battle. CH 101.2

So, in all ages, angels have been near to Christ's faithful followers. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against all who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them. From what dangers, seen and unseen, we have been preserved through the interposition of the angels, we shall never know, until in the light of eternity we see the providences of God. Then we shall

know that the whole family of heaven was interested in the family here below, and that messengers from the throne of God attended our steps from day to day. DA 240.3

Only the sense of God's presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden. Let him fix in his memory the promise, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7. Let him read that wonderful story of Elisha in the mountain city, and, between him and the hosts of armed foemen, a mighty encircling band of heavenly angels. Let him read how to Peter, in prison and condemned to death, God's angel appeared; how, past the armed guards, the massive doors and great iron gateway with their bolts and bars, the angel led God's servant forth in safety. Let him read of that scene on the sea, when the tempest-tossed soldiers and seamen, worn with labor and watching and long fasting, Paul the prisoner, on his way to trial and execution, spoke those grand words of courage and hope: "Be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you.... For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." In the faith of this promise Paul assured his companions, "There shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you." So it came to pass. Because there was in that ship one man through whom God could work, the whole shipload of heathen soldiers and sailors was preserved. "They escaped all safe to land." Acts 27:22-24, 34, 44. Ed 255.4

Angels are sent on missions of mercy to the children of God. To Abraham, with promises of blessing; to the gates of Sodom, to rescue righteous Lot from its fiery doom; to Elijah, as he was about to perish from weariness and hunger in the desert; to Elisha, with chariots and horses of fire surrounding the little town where he was shut in by his foes; to Daniel, while seeking divine wisdom in the court of a heathen king, or abandoned to become the lions' prey; to Peter, doomed to death in Herod's dungeon; to the prisoners at Philippi; to Paul and his companions in the night of tempest on the sea; to open the mind of Cornelius to receive the gospel; to dispatch Peter with the message of salvation to the Gentile stranger—thus holy angels have, in all ages, ministered to God's people. GC 512.1

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" Job 1:9, 10. The agency by which God protects His people is presented in the words of the psalmist: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7. Said the Saviour, speaking of those that believe in Him: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father." Matthew 18:10. The angels appointed to minister to the children of God have at all times access to His presence. GC 512.2

Though the rulers of this world know it not, yet often in their councils angels have been spokesmen. Human eyes have looked upon them; human ears have listened to their appeals; human lips have opposed their suggestions and ridiculed their counsels; human hands have met them with insult and abuse. In the council hall and the court of justice these heavenly messengers

have shown an intimate acquaintance with human history; they have proved themselves better able to plead the cause of the oppressed than were their ablest and most eloquent defenders. They have defeated purposes and arrested evils that would have greatly retarded the work of God and would have caused great suffering to His people. In the hour of peril and distress “the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7. GC 632.1

The birth of Isaac, bringing, after a lifelong waiting, the fulfillment of their dearest hopes, filled the tents of Abraham and Sarah with gladness. But to Hagar this event was the overthrow of her fondly cherished ambitions. Ishmael, now a youth, had been regarded by all in the encampment as the heir of Abraham's wealth and the inheritor of the blessings promised to his descendants. Now he was suddenly set aside; and in their disappointment, mother and son hated the child of Sarah. The general rejoicing increased their jealousy, until Ishmael dared openly to mock the heir of God's promise. Sarah saw in Ishmael's turbulent disposition a perpetual source of discord, and she appealed to Abraham, urging that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away from the encampment. The patriarch was thrown into great distress. How could he banish Ishmael his son, still dearly beloved? In his perplexity he pleaded for divine guidance. The Lord, through a holy angel, directed him to grant Sarah's desire; his love for Ishmael or Hagar ought not to stand in the way, for only thus could he restore harmony and happiness to his family. And the angel gave him the consoling promise that though separated from his father's home, Ishmael should not be forsaken by God; his life should be preserved, and he should become the father of a great nation. Abraham obeyed the angel's word, but it was not without keen suffering. The father's heart was heavy with unspoken grief as he sent away Hagar and his son. PP 146.2

Yet it was almost with reluctance that many left the place where they had so long encamped. They had come almost to regard it as their home. Within the shelter of those granite walls God had gathered His people, apart from all other nations, to repeat to them His holy law. They loved to look upon the sacred mount, on whose hoary peaks and barren ridges the divine glory had so often been displayed. The scene was so closely associated with the presence of God and holy angels that it seemed too sacred to be left thoughtlessly, or even gladly. PP 376.4

Did Daniel cease to pray because this decree was to go into force!—No, that was just the time when he needed to pray. “When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and, his window being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforesaid.” Daniel did not seek to hide his loyalty to God. He did not pray in his heart, but with his voice, aloud, with his window open toward Jerusalem, he offered up his petition to heaven. Then his enemies made their complaint to the king, and Daniel was thrown into the den of lions. But the Son of God was there. The angel of the Lord encamped round about the servant of the Lord, and when the king came in the morning, and called, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt

me.” No harm had come to him, and he magnified the Lord God of heaven.—(The Review and Herald, May 3, 1892.) Pr 145.2

Jesus, the mighty Commander of the hosts of heaven, sent His angel to close the mouths of those hungry lions that they should not hurt the praying man of God; and all was peace in that terrible den. The king witnessed his preservation and brought him out with honors. Satan and his angels were defeated and enraged. The agents he had employed were doomed to perish in the same terrible manner in which they had plotted to destroy Daniel. 1T 295.2

“Fear not,” was the answer of the prophet; “for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” And then, that the servant might know this for himself, “Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see.” “The Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” Between the servant of God and the hosts of armed foemen was an encircling band of heavenly angels. They had come down in mighty power, not to destroy, not to exact homage, but to encamp round about and minister to the Lord's weak and helpless ones. PK 256.4

God's faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with Him. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded. Urged on by Satan, the rulers of this world are seeking to destroy them; but could the eyes of God's children be opened as were the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan, they would see angels of God encamped about them, holding in check the hosts of darkness. PK 590.3

As Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him. And when he saw them, he said, “This is God's host.” He saw the angels of God, in a dream, encamping around about him. Jacob sent a humble conciliatory message to his brother Esau. “And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; and said, if Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape. 1SP 117.2

For your soul's sake, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of others, work at home. Pray as you are not accustomed to pray. Let the heart break before God. Set your house in order. Prepare your children for the occasion. Teach them that it is not of so much consequence that they appear with fine clothes as that they appear before God with clean hands and pure hearts. Remove every obstacle that may have been in their way,—all differences that may have existed among themselves or between you and them. By so doing you will invite the Lord's presence into your homes, and holy angels will attend you as you go up to the meeting, and their light and presence will press back the darkness of evil angels. Even unbelievers will feel the holy atmosphere as they enter the encampment. Oh, how much is lost by neglecting this important work! You may be pleased with the preaching, you may become animated and revived, but the converting, reforming power of God will not be felt in the heart, and the work will not be so deep, thorough, and lasting as it should be. Let pride be crucified and the soul be clad with the priceless robe of

Christ's righteousness, and what a meeting will you enjoy. It will be to your soul even as the gate of heaven. 5T 164.4

We should feel that we are representatives of truth of heavenly origin. We are to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We should ever bear in mind that angels of God are walking through the encampment, beholding the order and arrangement in every tent. To the large numbers of people who come to the ground, all the arrangements are an illustration of the belief and principles of the people conducting the meeting. It should be the very best illustration possible. All the surroundings should be a lesson. Especially should the family tents, in their neatness and order, giving a glimpse of home life, be a constant sermon as to the habits, customs, and practices of Seventh-day Adventists. 6T 35.2

The faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with God. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded. Urged on by Satan, the rulers of this world are seeking to destroy them; but could their eyes be opened, as were the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan, they would see the angels of God encamped about them, by their brightness and glory holding in check the hosts of darkness. 2TT 178.1

Only by spiritual vision can we discern heavenly things. The spiritual ear alone can hear the harmony of heavenly voices. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7. God commissions angels to guard His chosen ones from "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" and "the destruction that wasteth at noonday." Psalm 91:6. TT 81.4

Every day some of our workers go out into the suburbs with [copies of the Bible] Echoes, notices, and invitations to come to the meeting, where such wonderful things are presented from the Word of God. The Lord is pouring into the chambers of the mind and the soul temple fresh light, as precious as gold. I never heard the Word presented with greater fervency and power. I know it must be through the constraining power of God upon the human instrument. It is remarked by many that there is no manner of disturbance upon the ground. Every time I enter the encampment, I think the angels of God are here.—Letter 82, 1895. VSS 390.2