

Quotes from the Word: The Lord Protects Us

OLD TESTAMENT

Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.
For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name.
Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, just as we hope in You.
(Psalm 33:20-22)

O Lord my God, in You I put my trust;
Save me from all those who persecute me;
And deliver me, lest they tear me like a lion,
Rending me in pieces, while there is none to deliver.
(Psalm 7:1-2)

In his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks to his God, as was his custom since early days. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing is true."

So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you." Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

(See Daniel 6:10-12, 16-23)

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.
It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.
(Psalm 118: 8-9)

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Let all those rejoice who put their trust in You;
Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them;
Let those also who love Your name
Be joyful in You.
For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous;
With favor You will surround him as with a shield.
(Psalm 5:11-12)

Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O Lord;
Let Your loving kindness and Your truth continually preserve me.
Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me;
O Lord, make haste to help me!
(Psalm 40: 11,13)

Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.
He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth shall be your shield and buckler.
(Psalm 91: 3-4)

You have delivered my soul from death,
My eyes from tears,
And my feet from falling.
(Psalm 116:8)

The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
And the Lord shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them,
Because they trust in Him.
(Psalm 37:39-40)

NEW TESTAMENT

“Lo, I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20).

“Deliver us from evil” (see Matthew 6:13).

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

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HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN

Noah, Daniel, and Job symbolize those who are reformed by means of truths from the Word and temptations (see *Apocalypse Explained* 724:28).

By a lion is symbolized Divine truth. Therefore the Lord is also called a lion in the Word. In the opposite sense, a lion symbolizes infernal falsity as to the power of destroying Divine truth, and thus the Word (see *Apocalypse Explained* 782).

“The teeth of lions” stands for falsities destructive of truths, “lions” being falsities arising from evil in their power (*Arcana Coelestia* 9052:3).

A tearing to pieces of good by falsities and evils is meant in the internal sense of the following: “They opened their mouth against me—a lion tearing and roaring (Psalm 22:13)” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5828:6).

THE LORD'S PROTECTION

If the Lord did not protect a person moment by moment, and in every shortest instant, he would immediately perish, for there is such murderous hatred reigning in the world of spirits against all forms of love and faith in the Lord as to defy description (*Arcana Coelestia* 59:2).

The Lord by means of Divine truth protects His own, for He surrounds them with a sphere of light (see *Apocalypse Explained* 395:2).

Good and its affection do not protect themselves, but are protected by truth and the understanding of it (see *Apocalypse Explained* 1121).

The Lord's combat against hell may also be compared, though imperfectly, to a conflict with all the wild beasts on the earth and their slaughter and subjugation, until not one of them dares come forth to attack any person who is in the Lord. By a like Divine power the Lord fights at this day against hell in every person who is being regenerated; for hell attacks all such with diabolical fury, and unless the Lord resisted and tamed that fury, a person could not but succumb. For hell is like one monstrous human, or like a huge lion, with which indeed it is compared in the Word (see *True Christian Religion* 123:4,6).

The Lord protects against all evils and falsities that are from the hells (*Arcana Coelestia* 8273).

As for temptations themselves, they are going on while a person is in the actual process of being regenerated, for no one can be regenerated unless he also undergoes temptations. The evil spirits around him are the means through which those temptations are brought about. In temptation the person is brought into a state in which the evil that possesses him, that is, possesses his own essential self, is dominant. Once he enters this state evil and hellish spirits surround him, and when they realize that inwardly he is protected by angels those evil spirits reactivate the false ideas he has previously contemplated and the evil deeds he has committed.

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But the angels defend him from within. This conflict is what the person experiences as temptation, yet the experience is so vague that he is aware of it as scarcely anything more than a feeling of anxiety (*Arcana Coelestia* 5036:2).

Nothing at all could harm people whom the Lord is protecting, not even if the whole of hell were surrounding them, both from without and from within (*Arcana Coelestia* 968).

WHO CAN THE LORD PROTECT

The Lord cannot protect a person unless he acknowledges the Divine and lives a life of faith and charity; for otherwise a person turns himself away from the Lord (see *Heaven and Hell* 577:3).

Every person and every spirit is under the Lord's protection, the evil equally as the good. No evil can happen to him who is under the Lord's protection, for it is the Lord's will that no one should perish or be punished. Everyone is under the protection of the Lord, so far as he abstains from doing evil, but in the measure that he does not abstain, so far does he remove himself from the protection of the Lord. And in the measure that he thus removes himself, so far he is hurt by evil spirits from hell (*Apocalypse Explained* 643:2).

The Lord protects those who are in the good of charity (*Arcana Coelestia* 2379).

All in heaven are protected by the Lord through states of innocence (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3519:5).

People who are strong in truths are kept safe from harm wherever they go, even if they are in the midst of hell (see *Arcana Coelestia* 6769).

When, therefore, evil is done from an evil heart, because it thereby discards all protection from the Lord, infernal spirits rush upon the one who does the evil, and inflict punishment (*Heaven and Hell* 550).

When a person focuses on injuring the goods of love and the truths of doctrine, he is possessed by evils and falsities and spiritually dies. This consequence is not from the Lord but from the very evil which the person does (see *Apocalypse Explained* 643:3).

Those who trust in the Lord are constantly receiving good from Him. For whatever happens to them, whether it seems to be advantageous or not advantageous, is nevertheless good, for it serves as a means contributing to their eternal happiness. But those who trust in themselves are constantly bringing evil on themselves, for whatever happens to them, even if it seems to be advantageous and fortunate, is nevertheless bad, and consequently acts as a means contributing to their eternal unhappiness (*Arcana Coelestia* 8480:1,3).

TRUSTING IN THE LORD'S PROVIDENCE

Peace holds within itself trust in the Lord, the trust that He governs all things and provides all things, and that He leads toward an end that is good. When a person believes these things

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about Him he is at peace, since he fears nothing and no anxiety about things to come disturbs him. How far a person attains this state depends on how far he attains love to the Lord. Everything bad, especially trust in self, takes away the state of peace (*Arcana Coelestia* 8455:1,2).

Conjunction with the Lord is effected by faith in Him and by a life according to His commandments. By faith in Him is meant confidence that He will save, and they have this confidence who immediately approach Him, and shun evils as sins; with others it is not given (see *Apocalypse Revealed* 949:2).

When the Lord is with someone He leads him and makes provision so that all that happens, whether sad or joyful, may bring him what is good (see *Arcana Coelestia* 6303).

Those who trust in the Divine are altogether different. Though concerned about the morrow, yet are they unconcerned, in that they are not anxious, let alone worried, when they give thought to the morrow. They remain even-tempered whether or not they realize desires, and they do not grieve over loss; they are content with their lot. They know that for those who trust in the Divine all things are moving toward an everlasting state of happiness, and that no matter what happens at any time to them, it contributes to that state. Be it known that the Divine Providence is universal, that is, in things the most minute; and that they who are in the stream of Providence are all the time carried along toward everything that is happy, whatever may be the appearance of the means. Those are in the stream of Providence who put their trust in the Divine and attribute all things to Him. Those are not in the stream of Providence who trust in themselves alone and attribute all things to themselves, because they are in the opposite, for they take away providence from the Divine, and claim it for themselves. Be it known also that insofar as anyone is in the stream of Providence, so far he is in a state of peace (see *Arcana Coelestia* 8478:3,4).

The angels through whom the Lord leads and also protects a person are near his head. Their function is to impart charity and faith, to notice the direction in which the person's delights turn, and to modify and bend those delights toward what is good, so far as they can do so in the person's freedom. The angels call forth the forms of good and truth residing with a person and set them opposite the evils and falsities activated by the evil spirits. As a result the person is in the middle and is not conscious of the evil or of the good; and being in the middle he is in freedom to turn toward one or toward the other. Angels from the Lord employ means like these to lead and protect a person, doing so every instant and fraction of an instant. For if the angels were to let up merely for a single moment the person would be plunged into evil from which after that he cannot possibly be brought out. The angels are motivated to do all this by a love they receive from the Lord, for nothing gives them greater delight and happiness than to remove evils from a person and lead him to heaven. Scarcely anyone believes the Lord has that kind of concern for a person, a constant concern lasting from the very beginning of a person's existence to the final moment of his life, and for evermore after that (see *Arcana Coelestia* 5992:1,2).