



On the Role of Our Guardian Angels

I. That We have Guardian Angels –

- a. St. Basil sees in Genesis a text indicating our Guardian Angels: *And Israel...blessed Joseph and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, the angel who has delivered me from all evil, bless these sons; and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac (Gen 48:15-16)*
- b. He also indicates Matthew: *See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. (Mat 18:10)*
- c. Psalm 91:11-12 says: *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.*
- d. We can further cite the Book of Tobit in whole.
- e. And there is a text in Acts: *Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision....When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me....He went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!" (Acts 12:6-15 selected)*
- f. Origen says "We must say that every human soul is under the direction of an angel who is like a father."
- g. Basil says, "An angel is put in charge of every believer, provided we do not drive him out by sin. He guards our soul like an army."
- h. Eusebius says, "Fearing, lest sinful mankind should be without government and without Guidance, likes herds of cattle, God gave us protectors and superintendents, the holy angels in the form of captains and shepherds. His First-Born Son is set above all these."
- i. St. Hilary says, "In the warfare we carry on, to remain strong against the evil powers, the angels are our helpers."



II. On the Roles of our Guardian Angels

- a. St Athanasius says, “In opposition to the turmoil into which demons throw the soul, the vision of the angels works softly and peaceably, awakening joy and exultation.”
- b. Other terms among the Fathers and in Scripture delineate function of the Guardian angel
 - i. Guardian
 - ii. Guard
 - iii. Protector
 - iv. Superintendent
 - v. Overseer
 - vi. Assistant
 - vii. Shepherd
 - viii. Herdsman
 - ix. Instructor
- c. Angels do not only protect and console, they reprimand and punish. They exhort us to penance.
 - i. The Shepherd of Hermas says, “We are not at first chastised by the Father of the family Himself, but by the angels whom he has sent as masters over us, with the office of chastising and correcting each one of us.”
 - ii. Origen says, “If there are good thoughts in our heart, let there be no doubt that the angel of the Lord is speaking to us. But if evil things come into our heart, let there be no doubt that an angel of the evil one is speaking to us.”
- d. Angels also assist in prayer and transmit our petitions to God.
- e. Opinion is divided over whether non-believers have guardian angels. St. Thomas, says yes, but adds that the guardian angel has an entirely new role after baptism. For indeed, before baptism, Satan has certain “legal rights” over people and the angels can only set limits. Baptism reverses the situation and increases the power of the angel to defend.
- f. Chrysostom says that among the faithful, those who have higher offices in the Church are the object of special protection: “The virtues of heaven are always with those who are charged with such offices.”
- g. We live therefore in the middle of a supernatural world, a spectacle wherein everything that appears as empty space is in fact filled with the angels. Yes, we are surrounded by the angels!

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