

The background of the cover is a photograph of a desert landscape. A winding dirt road leads from the bottom center towards the horizon. A small car is visible on the road, moving away from the viewer. The sky is a deep orange and red, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, oranges, and blacks.

Monergism

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RIGHTEOUS
MAN'S
HABITATION

IN THE TIME OF PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE,
BEING A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THE 91ST PSALM

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In the Time of PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE. BEING

A brief Exposition of the XCI. PSALM.

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Cambridge, and late Preacher of the word of God at Yarmouth.

Psalm. 31. 2, 3. Be thou my strong rock, for a house of defence to save
me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's
sake lead me, and guide me.

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PSALM XCI.

HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust.

3. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: and from the noisesome pestilence.

4. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day:

6. Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, & ten thousand at thy right band: but it shall not come nigh thee.

8. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked.

7. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation:

10. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11. For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

14. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honor him.

16 With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

This Psalm (it's thought) was made on the occasion of the plague and pestilence that occurred in David's time. So Molerus; wherein you have the best antidote against the plague and pestilence. The whole Psalm is nothing else but a great promise of special protection for those who trust in the Lord in the time of the plague: wherein three or four things are most especially considerable, the Evil, Danger, and Misery of the Plague and Pestilence; protection and deliverance promised in the time thereof: the persons upon whom the promise is entailed; the way, mode, means, and manner, how God will deliver

and protect in the time of a plague. As for the evil, danger, and misery of the plague or pestilence, you have it in many terms expressed in several verses. In the third verse it's called the snare of the fowler; He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler; it's called the snare of the fowler because it takes people before they are aware; the word "and" that follows should not be in the line, so the next words do explain it, He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler: from the noisome pestilence: then it's called the noisome pestilence. In the Hebrew, it's called the pestilence of woes or calamity, that is, the most calamitous pestilence, that disease or sickness that is accompanied by the most calamity. In the 5th verse it's called the terror by night, and the arrow that flies by day: for with this arrow God does kill and hit people at a distance, a great way off, when they think to fly away and be at rest. It is said in the sixth verse that it walks in darkness; and it is called destruction that wastes at noon-day, in regard to the spreading and infective nature of it. At the thirteenth verse, it's compared to the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon, for the destructive and devouring nature of it, which nothing can stand before.

Secondly, as for the protection promised in the time thereof, you have that in general in the first verse, He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; more particularly at the third verse, Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, from the noisome pestilence: He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings, you shall trust. His truth shall be your shield and buckler, at the 4th verse. At the 5th and 6th verses again, You shall not be afraid of the terror by night; nor of the arrow that flies by day; nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor of the destruction that wastes at noon-day. And again, A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand: (in the 7th verse) but it shall not come near you. In the 10th verse,

No evil shall befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. And at the last verse, With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

As for the persons whom this promise of protection is entailed upon, they are such as trust in the Lord. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High; who says of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in Him I will trust, verse 2. And at the 9th verse, Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation: there shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night: nor of the arrow that flies by day, at the fifth verse. And as for the means, way, and mode of how God will deliver in the time of the plague, He will do it by His angels; There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, etc.

From all of this, I draw this Doctrine or Observation: Though the danger, evil, and misery of the Pestilence are exceedingly great, yet God will, in a special manner, protect and deliver those who trust in Him in the time of a plague.

For the clearing and prosecution thereof, first of all, I shall briefly labour to show you that the evil, misery, and danger of a Plague are exceedingly great. Secondly, that yet the Lord will protect and deliver those who trust in Him. Thirdly, what that Faith is and what that Trust is to which God has promised this protection in the time of a Plague. Fourthly, I would answer some objections, questions, or cases of conscience. Then fifthly, show how, and by what means God

will protect and deliver in the time of a Plague. Then, call upon you and myself to do our duty in this Day.

As for the first, I shall not dwell on it at length. The misery and danger of the Plague are well known. It is called the Plague above all other diseases, as if it were the Plague of plagues.

The various and specific judgments and evils that fell upon Pharaoh were called Plagues; they were all plagues. But now, the Pestilence carries the name of the Plague, as if it were the most dreaded of all diseases.

First and foremost, it is a most dreadful and terrible disease. It is here called in this Psalm, the terror by night (verse 5), "Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night." Why? The night itself is a time of fear and terror; darkness brings fear. But the Plague is the Night of nights, and the King of Terrors. How do people quake and tremble and flee at the sound of it? When God appeared in His greatness, majesty, and glory, giving a terrible manifestation of Himself, it is said in the third chapter of Habakkuk that the Pestilence went before Him (verse 3), "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran, Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise, and His brightness was as the light. He had horns coming out of His hand, and there was the hiding of His power. In the 5th verse, 'Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet.' Before Him went the Pestilence as His Officer and Executioner. Without a doubt, it is the disease that is most dreadful and terrible. Secondly, as it is the most dreadful and terrible disease, it is also the most painful disease. The more suddenly any person is taken away in their strength, the more painful their disease is. A person who is already weakened by sickness is easily overcome, but when someone in their full strength suddenly

dies, it inflicts a great deal of pain. Thus, when the Plague swiftly takes someone in their prime, it is a very painful disease. Thirdly, it is an isolating disease. Friends abandon the afflicted, leaving them to sit and lie all alone, becoming strangers to the presence of their own family. If someone is sick with a fever, there is some comfort in being able to call for assistance. But if someone is sick with the Plague, they sit and lie all alone; it is the loneliest of diseases. Fourthly, it is the most deadly disease, hence, of all other diseases, it is simply called Death. In the sixth chapter of Revelation, the sword and famine are mentioned in the preceding part of the chapter. But in the 8th verse, it says, "And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death." The sword is mentioned explicitly earlier in the 4th verse, "And there went out another horse, that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." In the 6th verse, there is mention of famine, "I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." Now, in the 8th verse, the Pestilence is introduced, and it is called Death, not the sword or famine, but the Plague is the one called Death. This is because, of all other diseases, it is the most deadly. Fifthly, it is the most unavoidable disease. Through the mercy of God, it may be escaped, but comparatively speaking, among all diseases, it is the most inescapable. Lastly, it is the most devastating disease; it empties houses, towns, and cities. God threatens to empty a nation like a man empties a dish, wiping it clean and turning it upside down. Thus, for a family, it is the most devastating disease of all. However, I will not dwell on this further, as it is evident that the evil, misery, and danger of a Plague are exceedingly great.

But yet in the second place, there are a generation whom God will protect and deliver in the day of a Plague. It was always so in the

most devastating judgments: when the Flood came, Noah and his household were spared; and, when Sodom was destroyed, Lot and his household were preserved and delivered. In the 6th Chapter of Isaiah, you read of a Desolation that resembles a Plague, "Then said I, Lord, How long? And he answered (at the 11th verse) until his cities be wasted and without inhabitants, and the houses be without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away: Yet," says he, at the 13th verse, "There shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten as a teil tree, and as an oak whose substance is in them, etc." Yet there is a generation whom the Lord will preserve and deliver in such a general desolation as this. But who are these? This Psalm tells us, they are such as trust in the Lord; those that trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague.

But why is there such a promise of protection entailed upon those that trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague? Well, first of all, God will be all that to us which we make Him, and build upon Him for: as in the 31st Psalm, 2nd and 3rd verses, "Be thou my rock, for thou art my rock; be thou my defence, for thou art my fortress," and in the latter end of the 2nd verse, "Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me, for thou art my rock and my fortress." Lord, be that unto me, which I build upon thee for. Thou art my rock, therefore be my rock. This is His argument. Now, by Faith and trusting in the Lord, we make God our protector, and therefore He will be a protector to those that trust in Him in time of a Plague.

Secondly, those that honour providence shall be kept by providence. Jacob, what a wonderfully great estate he attained to? He presented Esau with a present fit for a king to give; how did he acquire this great estate? There was a dispute between Laban and him, and he placed the matter in providence, and providence made him rich. Those that honour providence shall be kept by providence. Faith and

trusting in God in the time of a Plague honours providence; therefore, those who trust in God in such a day shall be kept.

Thirdly, thereby God is engaged to help and deliver. In the 37th Psalm, the last verse, "The Lord shall help them and deliver them, he shall save them because they trust in him; because they trust in him." God is engaged to help and deliver if people trust in Him. So in Isaiah 26, verse 3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Our very trust in the Lord for deliverance and protection engages God to deliver and protect.

Fourthly, when did God ever do anything great but it was based on Faith? You read of great victories in the Old Testament, and these were based on Faith. You read of great healings in the New Testament, and those were based on Faith. When did God do any great thing but it was based on Faith? Now, to be preserved and protected in the time of a Plague, when thousands fall on the right hand and on the left, it's a great matter, next to a miracle, therefore it must be based on Faith.

Again, God will honour those persons and those graces the most who honour Him the most. Of all graces, Faith honours God the most, so God will honour that the most. It's no wonder then that this protection is based on Faith and trusting in the Lord.

One thing more. There lies a blessing in store for all those who put themselves under the wing of the Lord in trusting Him. In the second chapter of Ruth, verse 12, Boaz says to Ruth, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust; under whose wings thou hast put thyself. It is Faith, and Faith alone, that puts us under the wings of God. Psalm 57, at the first verse, "Be merciful unto me, O

God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee, yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over-past." It is Faith that puts a person under the wing of God. In the 36th Psalm, verse 7, "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wing." Faith, above all other graces, puts a person under the shadow of God's wing, and there lies a blessing in store (I say) for all those who put themselves under God's wing; therefore, it's no wonder that this great promise of protection and deliverance in the time of a Plague is based on trusting in God.

But then thirdly, what Faith is this, what Trust is it that God has promised protection and deliverance to in the time of a Plague; what act of Faith is it? What Faith is it? I answer, First, there is a faith of persuasion, called Faith, whereby people are persuaded and truly believe that they shall not die or fall by the hand of the Plague. This is good; I do not find in the 91st Psalm that this protection is based on this persuasion, nor do I find this faith mentioned here.

Secondly, there is a Faith of Reliance, whereby a person relies on God for salvation; this is a justifying faith, true justifying faith; this is true Faith indeed; but I do not find in this Psalm that this promise of protection and deliverance in the time of a Plague is based on this, nor is it mentioned here.

But again thirdly, there is a Faith, I may call it a faith of recourse to God, whereby a person turns to God for shelter, for protection, as to their habitation; when other people run, one this way, another that way to their hiding places, in the time of a Plague; for a person then to turn to God as their hiding place and their habitation, I think this is the Faith that is referred to in this 91st Psalm; for consider the words of the Psalm: at the first verse, "He that dwelleth in the secret

place of the most High, in the hiding place of the most High; as if to say, when others run from the Plague and pestilence and seek their hiding places, he who dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, who turns to God as his hiding place and his habitation, he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, shall be protected, and so at the 9th verse, "Because thou hast made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; as if to say to us, in time of a Plague, people are running and looking for habitations and hiding places; but because thou hast made the Lord thy habitation, and have recourse to Him as your habitation, no evil shall befall thee, neither shall the plague come nigh thy dwelling: and again at the 11th verse, it is said, "He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, the ways of your calling; as if to say, in the time of a Plague, people will be very inclined to leave their station and calling and run away from the Plague and pestilence: (he says) He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, the ways of your calling and place; that is, when a person in the time of a Plague shall conscientiously maintain their station and place, and turn to God as their habitation, this is the Faith that is referred to here in this 91st Psalm, and this is the Faith to which God has promised protection.

But you may ask, is it not lawful to flee in the time of Persecution? Yes, without a doubt, it is lawful, as long as you carry God along with you as your habitation, as long as you make God your habitation still, a person may lawfully seek the preservation of their life and the lives of their family.

But stay; the Plague is called the hand of God; and can a person flee from the hand of God; consider this for an answer: The hand of God is either mediate or immediate; suppose that the Plague or pestilence

were the immediate hand of God, and nothing of nature or infection in it: yet it's lawful to flee, it's lawful to leave that place where the immediate hand of God rests. In the 16th chapter of Numbers, there was an immediate hand of God upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up; here was an immediate hand of God: yet the Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron, saying, in the 21st verse, "Separate yourselves from amongst this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment;" and at the 24th verse, "Speak unto this congregation, saying, get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram;" which was the immediate hand of God, and yet notwithstanding, they were to go away from among them upon whom the hand of God fell, though it was an immediate hand. And in the latter part of the Chapter, the same expression is used for the Plague: in the 44th verse, "They murmured, and the Lord struck them with the Plague." Well, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, in the 45th verse, "Get you up from amongst this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment:" the same that is said before, is said here concerning the Plague. So I say, although the Plague were the immediate hand of God, and there were nothing of nature or infection in it, yet it would be lawful to flee.

But secondly, the Plague or Pestilence is not solely the hand of God, as if there were no infection in it; for if there were no infection in it, if there were not something of nature in it, it could not be cured by remedies, nothing would be effective; therefore it is not solely the hand of God, as if there were nothing of infection in it; but it's called the hand of God because God's providence has a special hand in sending and ordering it. So now, Famine may be called God's hand: God sends it, as He says, "I will call for a famine upon the land," says God: Famine is sent by God, and therefore, can one flee from a Famine? Abraham, when there was a Famine in the land, went down to Abimelech: Isaac, when there was a famine in the land, went

down: and Jacob, when there was a famine in the land, went down to Egypt. And is it lawful to flee in the time of Famine, and is it not lawful to flee in the time of a Plague? Certainly, one as well as the other is lawful.

But then you may ask, if the Lord has promised protection and deliverance to those who trust in Him in the time of a Plague, can a believer possibly die from a Plague, considering that the whole Psalm is addressed to believers and promises such protection to those who trust in the Lord? Without a doubt, a believer can. Seventy thousand died in David's time; do you think there wasn't a good person among them? It's recorded that several good individuals died of the Plague; but you know what's said, "All things fall alike to good and bad." If a good person may not die from the Plague, how can all things fall alike to good and bad?

But how then is the promise fulfilled, if a believer may die from the hand of a Plague? Yes, very well: for possibly a believer may be out of his way as good Josiah was, and died, though God promised him that he should die in peace. It does not diminish the promise, for he was out of his way, and this promise of protection in the time of a Plague is made to those believers who are in God's way: "He will give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all his ways;" therefore if a believer is out of God's way and dies, it's no contradiction to this promise.

But secondly, you must understand that this promise of protection and deliverance is not made to a believer simply as a believer, but as one who acts and exercises Faith; for even if a person is a believer, if they do not act and exercise their faith, this promise will not apply to them; therefore, if a believer dies without exercising faith and trusting in God, it does not contradict the promise.

Thirdly, you must understand that this promise is made to a believer who is actively exercising faith and trust as described earlier; therefore, if a believer dies while exercising some faith, this promise is still fulfilled; for it is made to such an act of faith as described.

But then again, fourthly, you must know that this promise is not made to a believer absolutely, but in opposition to the wicked. Therefore, it is said that the Lord has promised this to a believer, that no evil should befall him, though a thousand should fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand. At the 8th verse, it is said (so Montanus, rather than only but), "with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked." As if he should say, though this or that particular believer may die of the Plague, believers, in general, shall outlive the wicked, and be the last upon the ground, and they shall see the punishment of the wicked; they shall witness this judgment sweep away the ungodly.

But then, furthermore, if I should interpret this as Augustine does in the first chapter of John concerning Christ; where it is said, "he enlightens everyone that comes into the world," that is (says Augustine) all who are enlightened are enlightened by him. As you say of a School-master in a Town, this School-master teaches all the boys in the Town; not that he teaches every individual boy in the Town, but that all who are taught, are taught by him. So says Augustine, Christ enlightens everyone that comes into the world, that is, all who are enlightened are enlightened by him. So here, the Lord promises protection and deliverance to all those who believe in the time of a Plague, that is, all who have protection and deliverance (in the time of the Plague) receive it from Him.

But to conclude this, I believe that this 91st Psalm holds forth a promise of special protection in the time of a Plague for believers.

The purpose of it is not to guarantee that every individual believer will not die; but the main point and purpose of the Psalm is to emphasize a special level of protection for believers in the time of a Plague. As the time of a Plague presents special danger, God has given a special promise, and there will be a special protection for His people during this perilous time, and that is the intended meaning of this passage.

Now, how, and by what means will God protect and deliver those who trust in Him in the time of a Plague?

For that, I shall say only this much: He will do it through the ministry of Angels, specifically through the ministry of Angels. When Angels are dispatched to cause destruction, then Angels must also be dispatched to deliver, seal, and secure. As described in the 7th chapter of the Revelation, "After these things, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that the wind would not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not harm, etc.'" When Angels are sent out to bring harm, then Angels must also be dispatched to seal, save, and protect. Now, in the time of a Plague, Angels are sent out for destruction; therefore, the Lord says here, "I will give my angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways; they shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against the stone." Have I given my Angels a mandate to destroy? I have given my angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways. Thus, people shall be preserved and delivered in the time of a Plague through the ministry of Angels. And so, you have these words explained.

Now, to apply this to ourselves: we can see what our primary task is in this day. The era we have entered is a dark one, a time of the Plague and the Pestilence. It is good for us to inquire about our duty in this situation. Oh, what is my duty in this day? Now, our duty in this day, our main duty, is to trust in the Lord. This is the duty upon which protection and deliverance in the time of a Plague are contingent. Who among us does not desire to be shielded and saved from this Plague? Oh, that I and my family may be preserved! Behold, here is your remedy to shield yourself from the Plague: Trust in the Lord, if you wish for yourself and your family to be protected in this dire time. Trust in the Lord, and urge your loved ones to trust in the Lord as well!

But what shall we do so that we may trust in the Lord in this day of the Plague? First of all, you must repent of your own sins and be sorrowful for the sins of others and for the times in which you live. When the Plague came in David's time, you know what David did; he repented, saying, "Lord, I have done foolishly; as for these sheep, what have they done? It is I, Lord, it's I." So let everyone do; this is what God expects in the time of a Plague. In the 4th chapter of Amos, the Lord says in the 10th verse, "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your camps come up to your nostrils; yet you have not returned to me, says the Lord." When God sends the pestilence, He expects that men and women should turn back to Him, repent, and return to Him. In the 9th chapter of Ezekiel, those who sigh and mourn for the abominations are marked when men go into the city with their destroying weapons. Those who sigh and mourn for the evil of the times are the marked ones. They are not marked for deliverance just because they abstain from sin; a man may be given to drunkenness and may stop his drunkenness, but that will not

bring him under the mark. Men are not brought under the mark for deliverance just because they repent of their own sins. The mark is set upon those who mourn for the sins of others. So, to trust in the Lord in this evil day, in the time of a Plague, repent of your own sins and mourn for the sins of others. How can I trust in the Lord for protection if I do not repent of my sins? If I live in any sin and do not turn from all my evil ways, how can I trust in the Lord? I cannot do it. Therefore, repent and be sorrowful for your own sins and for the sins of others.

Secondly, obtain assurance of your interest in Christ. Christ is our great High Priest who makes atonement, just as Aaron did in the time of a Plague. It is through the ministry of Angels, especially, that we are preserved in the time of a Plague. Now, our Savior Christ said to Nathaniel, "Because I saw you under the fig-tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." The Angels ascend and descend upon Christ; all the ministry of Angels is for the sake of Christ, and you are preserved and protected in the time of a plague by the ministration of Angels. So, what should you do? Get an interest in Christ, and if you doubt your interest, seek assurance; do not let that slip now. Get an interest in Christ, get assurance.

Thirdly, go to God to fulfil this promise. In Psalm 91, if you pay attention, the Lord does not only promise protection and deliverance from the Plague to those who trust in Him, but He also promises the grace to trust in Him. He promises protection on the condition that you trust in Him, and He promises you the grace to trust in Him. He says in verse 5, "Are you afraid and unable to trust in me? You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day." In verse 4, "He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His

wings, you shall trust. You shall not be afraid, etc. You shall be secure, and I will keep you from fear." The Lord who has promised protection in the time of a Plague has also promised freedom from fear and grace to trust in Him. Therefore, go to God for this grace, go to Him to fulfil this promise.

Fourthly, consider the motives you have for trusting in God in the time of a Plague. You may ask, "What arguments or motives do we have that might move us to trust in God in the time of a Plague?" There are many; allow me to share a few to help strengthen each other's faith in this crucial time.

First of all, even though the destroyer is present, there is also a man with his pen and ink-horn by his side, and that man is your friend; it is Christ. As you read in Ezekiel 9, a man went out with a pen and ink-horn by his side to mark those who sigh, mourn, and cry for the abominations that are done. Now, Christ is a friend to this man, so why should you not believe? Why should you not trust in the Lord?

Secondly, if the Lord knows those who trust in Him in the time of a plague, why should you not trust in Him? In the first chapter of Nahum, you find strong expressions of God's anger and indignation. It is said in verse 2, "God is jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies," and so on. But in verse 7, it says, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who trust in Him." Even when God is angry and furious, He distinguishes between those who trust in Him and those who do not. If a man is angry and furious, he may strike anyone in his way, not distinguishing between friends and enemies. But the Lord knows those who trust in Him, even in His anger and fury. So, why should you not trust in the Lord in the day of a Plague?

Thirdly, if the Plague and Pestilence make way for God's people, why should you not trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague? Consider what we read in Habakkuk 3:5, "Before Him went the Pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet." When was this? It was when God led His people into Canaan. God sent the Pestilence among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Perizzites to consume them and make way for His people. God can send a Pestilence into a city to make room for His people and to remove persecution. You see, there is Scripture support for this idea that "before Him went the Pestilence." So, if God can and does make room for His people by sending a Pestilence, why should you, who are the people of God, not trust in the Lord in the day of a Plague?

Fourthly, if there is mercy with the Lord in the time of a Plague, if God is ready to be entreated, to receive atonement, and to show mercy to His people, then why should you not trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague? Look at the story from David's time and see how ready God was to show mercy in the day of a Plague. First of all, God told David where the Temple should be built on that ground, which He had never revealed before. Secondly, look into the story, and you will notice the abatement of God's judgment. Initially, seven years of famine were threatened, but there were two abatements. In 1 Chronicles 21:12, God gave David the choice of either three years of famine. In 2 Samuel 24:13, it was seven years of famine. Why? Because God abated it. There is even a more significant abatement when it comes to the Pestilence. God gave David three choices: seven years of famine, three months of fleeing from his enemies, or three days of Pestilence. It is noted in 2 Samuel 24:15, "So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed." How long was that? Three days? No, there was an abatement. How is this proved? By two reasons, as Peter Martyr pointed out: first, it is said, "The Lord repented Him of the evil." Second, in verse 16,

"When the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented Him." If the three days had ended, the angel would not have stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem. This shows that the three days were not over, indicating an abatement. I mention this to illustrate God's willingness to relent and show mercy in the time of a Plague.

Thirdly, you may observe in this story that when the Plague reached Jerusalem, the most populous place, it stayed there. In verse 16, it says, "And when the Angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented Him of the evil." When it reached the most populous place, where it was most likely to spread, it stopped. This shows the readiness of God to show mercy.

But fourthly, if you examine this story closely, you'll notice that the Lord repented and commanded the Pestilence to stop before David repented. I admit that there was some repentance on David's part before this. However, David's full confession and repentance came later. In 1 Chronicles 21:17, David said to God, "Is it not I who have commanded the people to be numbered? Even I, it is I who have sinned and done evil indeed; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray You, O Lord my God, be on me and on my father's house, but not on this people, that they should be plagued." David saw the Angel of the Lord with a drawn sword in his hand, and then he spoke. But if you look earlier in the story, you'll find that the Lord had already shown mercy and given David a choice. In 2 Samuel 24:16, it says, "And when the Angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented Him of the evil and said to the Angel who destroyed the people, 'It is enough, stay now Your hand.' And the Angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." David's confession and plea followed this act of God's mercy. It's as if the Lord, with His loving kindness,

preempted David's repentance; before David's full repentance emerged, the Lord had already ordered the Plague to be stopped. If you closely examine this story, you can see how ready the Lord is to show mercy and be entreated by His people in the time of a Plague.

But fifthly, if this promise in Psalm 91, which is essentially a promise for the time of a Plague, is full, certain, and reliable, capable of dispelling all our fears and objections, then why should we not trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague? Take a close look at the Psalm, and you'll see that the words are spoken in a way that can address all your fears and objections.

You might say, "The destroying Angels are now abroad, the arrows of the Almighty are around us." In response, it says, "He will give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways; they shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone."

You might argue, "But hundreds are falling on every side, and thousands may quickly follow." In reply, it reassures, "Yet it shall not come near you; no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling," in verses 7 and 10.

You may say, "Oh, but this Plague is like a Lion and an Adder, a young Lion and a Dragon." Nevertheless, it asserts, "You shall tread upon the lion and the adder; the young lion and the dragon you shall trample under your feet," in verse 13.

Will you say, "Oh, but suppose the Plague should come; all my friends would leave me, I shall be left all alone, and what shall become of me then?" Well, in verse 15, it assures, "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble," specifically referring to the Plague. I share Molerus' view that the entire Psalm relates to the Plague.

Will you say, "Oh, but I cannot believe this, there is no likelihood that I should escape in a general Plague." Note what it says in the last verse, "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation." It shall be My salvation; you shall not be saved by second causes. Also, in verse 3, it states, "Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, from the noisome pestilence." Do not doubt it, surely He shall deliver you. The words of this Psalm are so expressed as to alleviate and address all our objections and fears. Therefore, why should we not trust in the Lord in the time of a Plague?

But you may wonder, how shall this work of faith and trusting in the Lord be carried out? I will say no more about it, but just two or three things from this Psalm. It must be carried out with love for God, knowledge of His name, and prayer. In verse 14, it states, "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him." As you must believe and trust in God, so you must set your love on God. Additionally, it says, "I will set him on high because he has known My name." "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him." So, there are three things: Love for God, knowledge of His name, and prayer. Your faith and trust in such a day must go hand in hand with these three elements. Some claim to believe and trust in God but do not set their love upon Him. Others say they love Him but do not know His name, the means by which God is distinguished and worshipped. Some claim to know God's name but do not pray. To carry out your faith and trust in the Lord as you should, it must be accompanied by Love for God, Knowledge of His Name, and Prayer.

Secondly, continue in your Christian journey; do not deviate from your path. "He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways." In all your ways, including the ways of your vocation, make sure you are not found straying from your path. Ensure that the Plague does not find you wandering.

Lastly, go to God and tell the Lord that you trust in Him and make Him your habitation. "He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Say to the Lord, "I make You my habitation, I trust in You. You are my refuge and my fortress; in You, I trust."

FINIS.

The 91st Psalm, verses 11 and 12:

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, etc. Having already discussed this Psalm, I won't spend much time showing you how these words relate to the previous ones. They are introduced with "For," providing an explanation and reason for what was previously stated. In the earlier part of the Psalm, you read about the protection and deliverance of the Saints from the Plague and pestilence. In verse 10, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Why? "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," etc. So, here, you still have the promise of protection during the Plague and pestilence, along with the means God will employ to protect and deliver. The condition of this promise is stated in these words: "keep thee in all thy ways." This means that, even in the face of the danger of the Plague and pestilence, if we are found in our paths, God's angels under His command will be our protection. "He shall give his angels charge over thee," etc. In these words, you can see God's special and extraordinary care and providence over His people during the Plague

and pestilence, managed by the hands of Angels. God will give specific instructions to the angels for the safety of His people during this time.

To clarify this argument, three aspects need to be considered. First, God has exceptional care and providence for His children. Second, this care and providence are executed by the hands of Angels. Third, this care and providence will be especially activated during the Plague and pestilence.

Regarding the first point, it is evident and clear in the words, requiring no further explanation. God does not simply provide for His people in general; there is a unique and extraordinary care and providence that God has for His people. If you pay attention to the words, He does not say that God will provide for His people in general, but rather, there is a distinct and special care and providence that God has for His people. He does not just say that God will give a general command, but that He will give a charge, which is a strict and specific command. When you want a servant to perform a task with utmost certainty and diligence, you give them a charge. You do not merely tell them what to do but charge them to do it. Similarly, God says to the Angels, "My servants or children, now that they are in the Plague and Pestilence, O my Angels, I charge you not to leave their houses; I charge you not to depart from their bedside." It is a charge. "He shall give his angels charge."

Secondly, He does not just, and will not just, charge one Angel but His Angels, signifying multiple Angels to better guard and protect His people. "He shall give his angels charge."

Thirdly, "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; to keep thee." Not just a general charge over the whole Church of God, but over every individual member of the Church of God. "He will give

his angels charge over thee, to keep thee." This demonstrates His extraordinary care.

Moreover, He will give His angels charge to keep thee in all thy ways. Not in some of thy ways, but in all thy ways. Just as God's providence is particular concerning our persons, it is universal concerning our paths. "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

But is this all? No, they shall bear you up in their hands, just as every servant desires and loves to lift the young heir or the young master into his arms. So do the Angels. It is indeed significant that the Lord promises to encamp His Angels around those who fear Him. But here's more: the Angels won't just encamp and guard you, but they'll be like nurses, lifting you up in their hands. But why? So that you don't stumble and hurt yourself by dashing your foot against a stone. When children start to walk, they are prone to falling and getting many bumps, tripping over every little stone. Now, there are many stumbling blocks in our path, and we are very prone to fall and fail. However, God's goodness and providence are such that He has provided His Angels to be our protectors, not only against our formidable enemies but also against our weaknesses and vulnerabilities, ensuring that we don't get harmed, that we don't stumble against even the smallest stone. Oh, how tender the Lord is towards us! In other Scriptures, you know the Lord is said to keep His people as the apple of His eye. What is more cherished than the apple of one's eye? And when does the Lord keep His people as the apple of His eye? It is when they are at their lowest and in the worst condition. In Deuteronomy 32:10, it says, "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." When the Israelites came out of Egypt and journeyed through the howling

wilderness, the Lord kept them as the apple of His eye. If you look at Zechariah 2, you'll see that He did the same when they returned from Babylon. In verse 6, it says, "Ho, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the North, deliver yourself, O Zion, that dwells with the daughter of Babylon." Some people remained behind, so attached to their homes in Babylon that they refused to leave. Some of the worst among them stayed behind. Concerning them, in verse 8, it says, "For he that touches you, touches the apple of his eye." These were sinful, poor, and unworthy people who would not go home when they had the chance, who would not leave Babylon when they had the opportunity. Yet, see how tender the Lord was towards them. But I need not go further than the text itself. The Lord has declared that He will give His Angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways, so that you don't dash your foot against a stone. Thus, you can see the extraordinary care and providence of God over His servants and children. That's the first point.

Secondly, this care and providence of His are executed by the hands of Angels. The Angels are the ones specifically entrusted with the protection of the Saints. Don't misunderstand; it's not as if the Lord withdraws His own protection. Even if the Angels are our protectors, we couldn't be content with the protection of Angels if God were to withdraw His presence and protection. Look at Exodus 33, where the Lord, through Moses, tells the people that He would send an Angel before them: "I will send an Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way." What happened then? When the people heard this unfavorable news, they mourned, and no one put on their ornaments. Why was this news considered unfavorable? Because, even though their enemies would be driven out before them, and God would honor them with an Angel leading

the way, they did not have the Lord Himself leading them. Therefore, the mere presence of Angels without the Lord Himself could not satisfy a gracious soul. Therefore, God Himself is our great protector. Nevertheless, the Angels are said to be sent forth. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth? Who sends them forth? The One to whom they belong. Whose are they? In Hebrews 1, they are referred to as the angels of God. The text states that they are His angels, belonging to Him. Indeed, in Matthew 18, they are called the angels of the saints: "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven." Their angels and yet His angels, theirs for their benefit, as they are sent forth for the good of the elect. However, they are His angels in terms of authority, serving as His ministers and servants. Therefore, while God is the ultimate protector of His people, He has entrusted the protection of the Saints to a great extent to the Angels.

But why does God employ angels to protect His people? He is capable of doing it alone. Is it not dishonorable to God to use them for the protection of His people? No, it is for the honor of God. The more honorable the servants or instruments a King or Prince uses to protect his people, the more honorable that King or Prince is considered. Now, the angels are honorable creatures; they are frequently referred to as God's. "You have made him a little lower than the angels," in the Hebrew, it is "a little lower than the gods." "Worship him, all you gods," in the Hebrew, "all you angels." But why are the angels called upon for this special work of protecting the Saints, when God has various creatures He could use for this purpose? Why are the angels specifically chosen for this task?

They are the most suitable beings in the world for this role, both in terms of themselves and in relation to the Saints. They are most

suitable in terms of themselves, firstly because they are extraordinarily strong and powerful. Who could be more suitable to care for the well-being of the Saints and people of God than those who are strong and powerful? It is said in Psalm 103 that the angels excel in strength: "Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength" (verse 20). They are referred to as "powers" in the Host of God, and in Psalm 68, it says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." They are the chariots and horsemen in the Host of God. One angel, as you know, destroyed 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army in one night. Just as one constable can scare away twenty thieves, so one good angel, invested with God's authority, can dispel a thousand evil angels, or demons. They are an exceedingly strong and potent people.

Secondly, they are highly knowledgeable and wise. Who is better suited to manage the affairs and concerns of the Saints and people of God, and to protect and defend them, than a knowledgeable and understanding people? Such are the angels. The devils may be called knowledgeable, but the good angels are referred to as intelligencers. Remember what Joab said to David: "You are for wisdom as an angel of God." Our Savior even said, "No man knows the day and time, not even the angels in heaven," suggesting that the angels in heaven are acquainted with every secret and knowledgeable about every hidden thing. They are an exceedingly knowledgeable and wise people.

Thirdly, they are exceptionally active and quick in their duties. Who is more suitable to defend and protect the Saints and people of God than those who are active, expedient, and quick in their actions? Such are the angels. In the book of Ezekiel, it is written that each angel had four wings, which signifies their great activity and quickness in accomplishing their tasks.

Lastly, they are a people of great faithfulness, both to God and humanity. In Psalm 103, it is said that they are ready to do God's will and not only ready but also obedient in fulfilling His commands: "Bless the Lord, all you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His commandments, heeding the voice of His word." They are faithful and trustworthy. Who could be more suitable to attend and oversee the well-being of the Saints and people of God than those who are faithful?

Thirdly, they are an exceedingly faithful people, and they are also very loving towards the Saints and children of God. They must be loving, for how can they serve as nurses without love? They are indeed loving towards the Saints. When the Angel spoke to John, he said, "I am your fellow servant; don't give divine worship to me, I am your fellow servant." Fellow servants show love to one another, and the Angels are fellow servants with the Saints. If the Saints and people of God are considered members of Christ, and Christ is their head, so it is that Christ is also the Lord of Angels. He is the Lord of Angels, and they follow Him. In the first chapter of Zechariah, verse 8, we read about a man riding upon a red horse who stood among the myrtle trees in the bottom. These myrtle trees represent Saints in a low condition. The man riding the red horse is Christ, and He stood among the myrtle trees. Behind Him, there were red horses, speckled, and white. The angel who talked with Zechariah explained that these were the angels whom the Lord had sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth. These are the Angels that stand behind Christ, the followers of Christ. They are His followers, and the closer the union between individuals, the stronger the love. Love takes the nature of the union. If the union is natural, the love will be natural. If the union is civil or political, the love will be civil or political. If the union is spiritual or ecclesiastical, the love will be spiritual or ecclesiastical, surpassing the natural. The union between the Angels

and the Saints is a Church union. The Apostle in Hebrews 12:22 states, "You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn." Thus, they belong to the same Church, the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, and they must indeed be exceedingly loving towards the Saints and people of God. Therefore, they are the most fitting people for the role, above all others, to be employed under God for the protection of the Saints, suitable in regard to themselves.

Secondly, they are the most fitting for this role in regard to the Saints. Who could be more suitable for the task of protecting the Saints under God than those who are in some respects above and in some respects beneath the Saints? If a nurse is superior to the child, she may despise it; if the child is entirely superior to the nurse, the nurse cannot control it. Now, the Angels are both superior and inferior to the Saints in different respects. They are superior to the Saints in terms of their nature, but in some respects, they are inferior. The second person of the Trinity did not assume the nature of the Angels as He did with the Saints. He did not take on the nature of Angels, but He took on the seed of Abraham. In this respect, the Saints are above the Angels. The Saints are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, a garment that has never adorned an Angel's back; here the Saints surpass the Angels. The Saints and people of God are members of Christ, elevating them above the Angels. Christ is the Lord of Angels, but we do not read that the Angels are members of Christ. Thus, in some respects, the Angels are below the Saints, and in some respects, they are above. This makes them even more suitable for this role. Consider how it is with an ordinary individual dining at a nobleman's table. He sits at the table with the nobleman and the nobleman's servants wait upon him. The servants may be better individuals than he is, but because he is seated at the

nobleman's table, these servants attend to him as they would to their master. In the same manner, the Saints and people of God are members of Christ, sharing communion with Him and seated at His table. Therefore, His followers, the Angels, attend to the Saints and people of God. This is why the Angels are specially called to this work of protecting the Saints and people of God.

Now, why are the Angels specifically called to this work of protection during times of Plague and pestilence? Why does the Lord issue a special charge to His Angels to have particular care for His people during such times?

Firstly, that time is a time of the greatest danger. When should the nurse attend to the child if not during the greatest danger? It is precisely during the time of the greatest danger that the angels come to assist God's people. In the 32nd chapter of Genesis, we read about the angels meeting Jacob in verse 1: "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's host." They met him during this time because he had previously received a vision with a promise on his way out from his country, where he saw angels ascending and descending. Now, this promise was fulfilled upon his return. Why then? Because he was in the greatest danger, caught between Laban and Esau. Although he had already passed Laban's territory, he was now about to encounter an old and provoked enemy, the wicked Esau. Jacob was greatly afraid and prayed, saying, "Lord, deliver me from the hand of my brother." It was precisely during this great danger that the angels arrived, and Jacob named the place Mahanaim. The same expression is used in the 6th chapter of the Song of Solomon concerning the Jews returning to their own country in verse 13: "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee." What will they see in the Shulamite (the Jews returning)? As if it were the

company of Mahanaim. It is the same word used here. Perhaps this is to signify that God will send a host of angels to guard the Jews into their country, just as He sent a host of angels to guard their father Jacob into his country. I bring this up to demonstrate that when the Saints and people of God are in the greatest danger, that's when the angels come to assist them. Now, the time of sickness and plague is indeed a time of great danger.

Secondly, observe that when all visible means and aids fail, it is a suitable time for invisible help to intervene. The help of the angel is invisible, with his hands under his wings; you cannot see his assistance. When all visible means and aids fail, that's when God's invisible help arrives, and that's when the angels come into play. It's a fitting time for the angels.

Thirdly, consider that when the destroying angel is active, it is an appropriate time for the protecting angel to step in and take action. During the time of the Plague and pestilence, the destroying angel is on the move. However, a question arises: are the destroying angel and the protecting angel different entities or the same? I will address this in two or three positions.

First, even though the same angel may both destroy and spare, as in the case of David, it seems that the destroying angel and the protecting angel may be distinct. In Revelation 7, four angels came out to bring harm, while another came out to save. In Ezekiel 9, six men came out with their weapons of slaughter, and another came out to mark.

The second position is that, while the destroying and protecting angels may seem distinct, God sometimes employs an evil angel to afflict and destroy good people, and sometimes uses a good angel to afflict bad people. Sometimes, God employs a good angel to afflict

and destroy wicked individuals, as seen in the case of Sodom, where good angels destroyed the city. Conversely, God occasionally employs evil angels to afflict (and if I may use the word, destroy) good people, as in the case of Job, who was afflicted and had his children killed by Satan.

However, thirdly, even though angels may be employed in both roles, the destroyer and the protector, it is certain that all protection of the Saints falls into the hands and care of the good angels. As the Scripture says, "He shall give his angels charge over thee," emphasizing the possession of good angels for this task in contrast to devils and evil angels who did not remain with God but left Him during their apostasy. Therefore, the responsibility for the protection of the Saints lies entirely with the good angels. But, as I mentioned, when the destroying angel is active, it is a fitting time for the protecting angel to be active as well. During the time of the Plague and pestilence, the destroying angel is active, so it is especially crucial for the good angels to be at work for the protection of the Saints.

Fourthly, the time of the Plague is a period when the Saints and people of God may lack outward provisions. Good people may be confined and face starvation due to a lack of food during the Plague. It is the task of the good angels to provide food and sustenance for God's people at times. In 1 Kings 19:5, it is said of Elijah that while he lay asleep under a juniper tree, an angel touched him and said, "Arise and eat." He found a cake baked on coals and a jar of water near his head. He ate and drank, and then lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time and told him to eat again because the journey was too great for him.

Fifthly, the time of the Plague and pestilence is a time of scarcity, where many of God's people are forced to seek provisions desperately. They may have to flee, run, or search for new places to live, not knowing which way to turn. It is the work of a good angel to go before them, directing and guiding their way. In Genesis 24:7, Abraham instructed his servant, saying, "He shall send his angels before thee." It is the task of a good angel to order, direct, and guide the people of God on their way.

Lastly, the time of the Plague and pestilence is when people need physicians and surgeons to treat their illnesses. A good angel can sometimes fulfill this role. In John 5:4, it is mentioned, "For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water. Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." This demonstrates the work of an angel in preparing a remedy.

You may ask, "But aren't these instances extraordinary? How does this relate to me during this time of the Plague and sickness?" You might consider these events extraordinary, but their ministry continues.

Indeed, the Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge. We have seen how God was the God of Jacob and His refuge. In Hebrews 1:7, it is said, "And of the angels, he saith, who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Notice the use of the present tense, "who maketh," implying that it is an ongoing action. If you examine the Old Testament and compare the Cherubim in the tabernacle with those in the Temple, you will find that there were only two Cherubim in the tabernacle and four in the Temple. This suggests that their protection will be expanded rather than diminished. In the Gospel of John 1:51, Jesus tells Nathaniel, "Verily,

verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." This promise is true in the Gospel era, and the more you understand and see the Gospel's mystery revealed, the more this mystery will be unveiled to you. So, when you read the Commandments that say, "Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt do no murder," do you believe that the "Thou" applies to you? Of course, you do. Therefore, if you are concerned about the "Thou" in the Commandment, you should also believe that the "Thee" in the Promise applies to you. The "Thee" of the Promise is as certain for you as the "Thou" of the Commandment. I hope those who are afflicted and troubled in conscience would ponder this one thing: if you are concerned with the "Thou" of the Commandment, you are equally concerned with the "Thee" of the Promise. That concludes the doctrine. The Lord has a special care and providence over His people, especially during the Plague and pestilence, and this care is managed by the hands of angels. God will give specific instructions to the angels for the safety of His people during the Plague and pestilence.

Now, I turn to the Application.

If these things are true, firstly, the dignity of the Saints, even on earth, is great, though they may be despised by the world. They are accompanied by angels, and angels serve as their attendants. Isn't it an honor to have such attendants? Earthly dignitaries consider it an honor to have a retinue of well-dressed individuals following them, adorned with reds, ribbons, gold, and silver lace. Oh, how beggarly are the attendants of this world compared to the glorious angels who attend the Saints! It is as Paul said: "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours." Paul, Apollos, and Cephas were ministers, and ministers are called angels, angels of the

Churches. Not only are these angels attendants to the Saints, but heavenly angels also serve as their attendants. What dignity and honor this confers! Who would dare to despise any of the Saints or people of God, no matter how humble they may be? As you can see, our Saviour said in Matthew 18:10, "Take heed that you 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 which is in heaven." That's the first point.

Secondly, if these things are true, then surely the highest enjoyment and the humblest tasks commanded can coexist. What task could be humbler than attending to a person with a plague sore? This is what the angels do, and at the same time, they enjoy the highest privilege as they always behold the face of my Father. Therefore, our highest enjoyments and the humblest tasks commanded can indeed coexist. You may say, "I would not go to my job; it's a lowly and mean occupation, and I won't experience God in it." But know this: you can experience God in the humblest of jobs. The highest enjoyment and the humblest task commanded can coexist; that's the second point.

Thirdly, if these things are true, the security and safety of the Saints are significant. Are they not in safe hands when they are in the care of angels, and not just one angel but many angels? If that's not enough, the angels bear them up in their arms, and if that's not enough, God Himself carries them as He did in days of old. God watches over them; His ear is attentive to their cries. Christ's left hand supports their heads, and His right hand embraces them, all while the angels attend to them. Oh, the safety and security of the Saints and people of God, even in the worst of times, during plagues and pestilence.

Fourthly, if these things are true, consider how good and gracious the Lord is to you, the Saints and people of God. How good and gracious the Lord is to you! David said in Psalm 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Immediately following these words, he adds, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good." Here, you can truly taste and see the goodness of the Lord in the ministry of angels, in how the angels nurture and carry you. The more you delve into this, the more you will recognize how good and gracious the Lord is. In Psalm 8, when David contemplated the surrounding creation, he marveled, "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" He acknowledged that God had made man "a little lower than the angels, for a time," and had placed all creatures under his dominion. He began the Psalm with the words, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" and ended it with the same words. Truly, this is a wondrous thing; here, you can witness how gracious and good the Lord is to you.

Fifthly, if these things are true, we owe an infinite debt of gratitude to Jesus Christ. It is through Him that the Angels serve as your attendants in this time of the Plague and sickness. He is the ladder that Jacob saw, and Christ Himself explains that ladder: "You shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." All the ministry of angels is through Christ. Here, you have more than Adam had in his state of innocence. When Adam fell, Cherubims were placed to guard the tree of life and Paradise, but there is no mention that he had angels to minister to him before the fall. However, now, through Jesus Christ, we have the ministry of angels. We are reconciled to all the angels, and they are brought in to be our attendants. Blessed be God for Christ! Why should we not say, "I love thee dearly, O Lord my Saviour, by whom I

am made a partaker of this infinite privilege of the ministry of angels."

Sixthly, if these things are true, what a vast difference exists between the godly and the wicked, even in the time of the Plague. Your great desire during this time of sickness is that God would distinguish between the two. Whatever outward distinctions there may be, one distinction is clear: the Saints and people of God have angels to attend upon them, while the wicked do not. The corn and the weeds are cut down by the same scythe and the same stroke, but the corn and the weeds are distinguished. Two men, one godly and one wicked, fall sick with the Plague at the same time. The wicked man has little or no one to attend to him when his friends abandon him; perhaps only a guard at the door. No angels attend him. But the good man, when all his friends have left, then come the angels to comfort him, attend him, and he can console himself, saying, "Though my friends have left me, the Lord's angels are here to look after me and comfort me." What a vast difference there is between the two! Who would not choose to be godly? Who would not come to Christ for this very reason?

Seventhly, if these things are true, why should we not trust in the Lord in this time of great mortality, this sickly period, this time of the Plague and Pestilence? What, shall the Angels be your attendants (especially now), and yet you hesitate to trust in God? You have such a promise as this, and yet you doubt? The Lord Himself is your protector and has charged His Angels with you for such a time, and still, you hesitate to trust in the Lord? It is said of Alexander that when he was in great danger and was about to fight his enemies the next day, he slept soundly the night before. When asked why, he replied, "Parmenion is awake," referring to a great and faithful Captain of his. The Angels are called watchmen; they watch and are

faithful. Therefore, you can be secure, calm, and at rest. Trust in the Lord during this time forever.

Eighthly, if these things are true, why should we not be willing to perform any commanded work, even if it seems far beneath us? Do you not think that attending to a sick person with a plague sore is work that is far beneath angels? Yet, angels do it because it is commanded, even though it is far beneath them. So, even if a task seems much beneath you, if it is commanded, why should you not be willing to do it? You might say, "That person is far beneath me; I won't stoop to help them. They are beneath me." But the angels stoop to serve you, and the work they do for you is far beneath them. Why should we not follow the example of our attendants? This is angelic obedience. The angels do many kind things for you without expecting thanks. Sometimes you are delivered, and you don't know how. Here is a hand under a wing; the ministry of angels is the cause of it. But the work they do for you is far beneath them. Therefore, why should we not be willing to perform any commanded work, even if it seems far beneath us?

Ninthly, if these things are true, what kind of men and women should we be in all our conduct? Consider that your attendants are holy, yet you are unholy. The Apostle says, "Let the women be covered, because of the Angels." So, I say, let us conduct ourselves with holiness because of the Angels, who are always around us. If you are in the company of a serious person, you would not be frivolous or shallow as you might be with others. If a person has a servant who is grave and sober, they would not act frivolous and vain. Behold the grave and holy attendants who are with you, and yet you giggle, act frivolous, and behave vainly. What kind of men and women should we be in all our conduct?

But tenthly and lastly, to conclude; if these things are so, why should we not always be found in that way by which we may come within the compass of this protection? In the 34th Psalm, it is put upon fearing God: "They shall pitch their tents round about them that fear Him." In this Psalm, it is placed most upon trusting in God. In this 91st Psalm, in this verse, it is based on being in our way; "They shall bear you up in their hands. He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways, in all your ways." Your ways are God's ways; your way is the path commanded by God. If you are out of God's way, you are out of your own way. If you are in your way, the Angels shall keep you even in the time of a Plague and bear you up in their hands so that you don't dash your foot against a stone. However, if you are out of your way, I cannot ensure your safety.

When Balaam went on the devil's errand, an Angel met him and frightened his donkey, causing the donkey to run his foot against the wall, dashing his foot against it. The promise is that "you shall not dash your foot against a stone," but he was out of his way. Instead of Angels to protect him, he had a Whale to devour him. I acknowledge that, through the free grace and mercy of God, the belly of destruction became a chamber of preservation for him, but he was out of his way. Instead of an Angel to keep him from dashing his foot, his whole body was thrown overboard. Solomon says, "As a bird from her nest, so is a man out of his place." As long as a bird is in her nest, she is safe from the hawk, the birding piece, the nets, and traps. But when the bird leaves her nest, she is exposed to many dangers. Similarly, as long as a man is in his way, in his place, and in his calling, he is safe and under protection. But when a man is out of his way, he is exposed to all danger. So, be in your way, and then you can assure yourselves of divine protection managed by the hands of Angels. Who would not always strive to be in the way that God has

appointed for them? Why should we not always consider and ask ourselves, "Am I in my way?"

Old Mr. Dod, being on the water and moving from one boat to another, slipped between them, and the first words he uttered were, "Am I in my way?" We should always be asking ourselves, "Am I in my way?" If I am idling away my time, am I in my way? Oh, my soul, am I in my way? If I am in my calling today without morning prayer and reading the Scriptures, am I in my way? Oh, my soul, am I in my way? If I am in frivolous company where I receive no good but harm, am I in my way? Always consider this: am I in my way? You may expect the Lord's protection and the attendance of Angels if you are in your way, but not otherwise. Now, as you desire the protection of the Almighty and the attendance of Angels, especially in this time of danger, sickness, Plague, and Pestilence, let us all strive daily to ensure that we are found in our way, the path the Lord has set for us. What I say to you, I say to myself and to all: wait on the Lord and keep His way.

FINIS.

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