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Guardian Angel

Each one of us carries a burden of sins, errors, sorrows, misfortunes; and yet, we should not be subjected to all of this, since each one of us has his own guardian angel. Why, then, does such a situation exist? The angels, of course, would never allow it, were it not our own fault. And if they allow it, it is either because we make ourselves inaccessible to angelic guidance, or because by our contrariness we destroy and repel all the angels' efforts to assist us in doing good.

First of all, we must always remember that we have a guardian angel, and we should turn to him with our mind and heart – both in the normal course of our life, and especially when our life is troubled by something. If we do not turn to him, the angel has no way of helping us. When someone walks with stopped up ears and closed eyes towards a bog or an abyss – what can you do for such a person and how can you help him? You could shout – but his ears are stopped up; you could make a sign to warn him of impending danger – but his eyes are closed. You may say: let the angel take him by the hand and stop him, or lead him out onto the right path. Well, he is probably quite ready to do just that, and he looks for your hand, in order to take it and lead you out, – but do you have such a hand? He will not be taking you by your physical hand – although that, too, can happen in special cases, – but by your spiritual hand, because he himself is a spirit. The spiritual hand is an active force, directed towards salvation and zealously attending to it. When you have such zeal in your soul, then the Lord's angel will certainly take you by this hand and lead you; otherwise – what is there for him to hold onto?



The Guardian Angel

And again you may say: let him arouse within me the desire for salvation himself. But you see, those who have such a desire – he will encourage and fortify; those who do not – he tries to encourage in all possible ways, but for the most part does so unsuccessfully, due to the great confusion prevailing in an indolent soul. Within such a soul everything is in disarray: thoughts, feelings, intentions; there is disorderly noise as though in a marketplace. To the same extent that we are subject to this lack of peace and self-discipline, it impedes the angel's influence upon us. How can the angel urge us towards good, when he does not have our attention? How can the soul hear such an urging, when it is full of noise and confusion? It is for this reason that our guardian angel's efforts remain fruitless.

Thus, if you wish to make use of angelic guidance and assistance, – tame your internal disorder, gather your attention within yourself, and stand at the gates of your heart. The Lord's angel will notice it immediately, will come up to you and will begin to instill thoughts of and a desire for salvation within you. Accede to this urging and embark upon spiritual labors – and then not only will the guardian angel take you by the hand, but he will take you up into his arms, and not only will he lead you, but he will carry you along the path to salvation. At the same time, you must respond by keeping your mind and heart inclined toward him, by retaining your zeal and remaining attentive. The angel will teach you everything: what to do, when and how, and what not to do; and whenever necessary, he will even provide external signs for your guidance.

Saint Theophanus the Recluse

