

## Divine Providence and the Succor of the Holy Angels

*From the Wondrous Life of St. Paul the New of Latros\**  
(†15 December 956)

**O**NCE, on Holy Pascha, the Saint desired to eat fresh cheese, and reproved himself as being a glutton and slave of his belly because he hungered for the wants of the flesh. A man then appeared behind him with a loud sound in the earth, which was heard three times; the man was holding fresh cheese in his hands, and, after having given it to the Saint, he disappeared.



The Saint later revealed what had happened to his friend Demetrios, not in order to be praised, but so that the Lord might not be reviled. For, this Demetrios was telling certain brothers that holy men were no longer to be found and that the Divine spiritual gifts of old had disappeared and were nowhere apparent:

“Who, in time of need, has the Grace to be vouchsafed such providence from God that he receives food from the hand of an Angel?”

When the Saint heard this, he smiled gently and said to him:

“Beloved Demetrios, great slothfulness has given birth to such words and thoughts in you. God is assuredly the greatest protector and lover of mankind, and cares more for the human race than any father. He neither deprives nor disavows anyone in any generation, but rather protects and vouchsafes Divine gifts as a Father Who loves His children; and whatever desire is expressed by one who fears Him, so long as it is not damaging to his soul, He does not deprive him of it.”

Having said that, he revealed the miracle recounted above to the glory of God.

The holy Father also witnessed first-hand the fact that every believer has a Guardian Angel of his life, and would tell of it. He would say that at times he saw the Angel as an elder, at times as a youth, and at times as a very young child. The Saint often wandered the desert at night and saw Angels, and he was not afraid at all, nor did he shrink from thunder, lightening, or wild beasts.

One night, when it was raining hard, he entered into a cave and prayed according to his custom. A leopard came and fell down at his side. The Saint threw a rock at it and drove it out; the leopard calmly exited the cave and left without becoming enraged at him.

When asked how he did not fear to roam about at night in the desert and wild hills, the Saint would say:

“As long as the Guardian Angel of my soul protects me, I fear neither lightning, nor wild beasts, nor anything else. If, however, He abandons me because of my sins, then I will fear even the leaves of trees as they fall!” ◻

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\*Source: Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 311 (November-December 2002), p. 192. A simplified version based on the work *Βίος καὶ Πολιτεία τοῦ Ὁσίου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Παύλου τοῦ νέου τοῦ ἐν τῷ Λάτρῳ* [*The Life and Conduct of Our Holy Father Paul the New of Latros*], §§21-22, in *Der Latmos (Milet, Vol. III, No. 1)*, ed. T. Wiegand (Berlin: 1913), p. 118.