

# Protected by Angels

The Rev. Dr. John Gibson Paton (1824 – 1907) followed God’s will from his homeland of Scotland to serve as a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands of the South Pacific.

Constantly under the threat of death, Paton preached faithfully to the islanders, raised his family there, and was responsible for securing great support for world missions at home in his native land. He took seriously the Great Commission of Christ to make disciples of all nations.

And God honored his work.

Evangelist Billy Graham, in his book *Angels*, tells of one dramatic incident in which the Lord intervened to protect Paton and his family.

Hostile natives surrounded Paton’s mission headquarters one night, intent on burning the family out and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed all during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came, they were amazed to see that, unaccountably, the attackers had left.

A year later, the chief of the native tribe was converted to faith in Christ. Paton, remembering what had happened, asked the chief what kept him and his men from burning down the house and killing them.

The chief replied in surprise, “Who were all those men you had with you there?”

The missionary answered, “There were no men there; just my wife and I.”

The chief argued that they had seen many men standing guard – hundreds of men in shining garments with drawn swords in their hands. They seemed to circle the mission station so that the natives were afraid to attack, he related.

Only then did Paton realize that God had sent His angels to safeguard them. The chief agreed that there was no other explanation.

As believers, we have the promise of God of His protection. That is a great assurance as we launch into a new year with unknown roads to travel.

*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10 NKJV).*

– Beecher Hunter