Expecting the Worst

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This amazing story from our FM station manager in the city of Eldoret, Kenya, Africa, confirms the powerful intervention of God's angels in the lives of those who heed His voice.

I recently met an evangelist from Africa who shared his story with me. I am going to refer to him as Pastor Philip Moussa for security reasons. As an evangelist, Philip's duties took him to a neighboring country where large numbers of Muslims live peacefully ... most of the time. Since this is a place where the presence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been very small, Philip began to pray for a good harvest.

The local church leaders rented a room in a major city and prepared the hall for the meetings. It was, however, mandatory to secure permission from the authorities for a gathering such as this. But since this was a religious festival month, the devout community leaders usually grant special favors as part of their devotion and goodwill. Therefore, the Adventists had no problems obtaining permission.

Well into the meetings, the truth about God's love for all human beings began penetrating the hearts of the listeners, and people started making decisions for
Jesus! As word spread, it didn't sit well with the some of the leaders in the community. Secretly, they developed a plan to get rid of this "intruder" who was leading people away from their ancestral faith. They were all in agreement: "He deserves to die."

As the time approached to kill Philip, the spouse of a minister from another denomination was given a dream in which she was instructed to let Pastor Moussa know that the next night he was to be killed. The dream was so impressive that she told the Adventist church leaders so Philip could escape.

But escaping was not easy. There was only one outgoing flight per week, and the border crossing was too far away, with too many checkpoints to negotiate. He chose to stay and continue the meetings.

News began to spread around town of the wicked plot to kill the pastor. Armed with knives and swords, the death squad was poised to carry out the orders of the senior community leader.

As the devilish night arrived, Philip was in a back room of the meeting hall praying in preparation for the service. Suddenly, a group of heavily armed men stormed into the tiny room looking for the preacher. Philip was sitting in a chair by a small table. It was too late -there was nothing to do but pray for God's protection.

Brandishing their blades of death, they frantically searched the room, looking everywhere. All the while, they passed over Philip, never seeing, or touching him. Philip recalls, "I was tempted to call out to the men, but a very heavy hand pressed on my chest like a huge brick, to the point where I could not utter a single word; I could hardly breathe!"

Finally, frustrated and angry, the men left the room dumbfounded.

After some time, Philip came to the podium and preached his heart out, sharing the joy of Jesus as our personal Savior. More than 70 listeners had already accepted Christ and were preparing for baptism. This news enraged the community leaders. They had to get rid of this enemy of their ancestral traditions.

During the service, the mercenaries took their seats among the congregation, waiting for their orders to attack. Just as the meeting was ending, a gentleman stood up and spoke, saying, "What this man has said is true, and he deserves no harm."

Later, Pastor Philip told me he had never seen this man at the meetings, and no one in the community remembers seeing him at any time before. After that night, he was never seen again!

The congregation was expecting the worst.

Apparently, someone had notified the police, who sent a squadron of officers to evaluate the situation. When they arrived and saw the armed men, they returned to the police station, not wanting to go against these local influential leaders.
Moments later, the police captain came to the meeting hall himself. The police captain, standing at the front door, signaled the pastor to walk toward him. There was only one way out for the pastor, and that meant walking the full length of the building to reach the street.

Would Philip obey the captain, knowing that he would be passing right next to the waiting killers? He had no other choice.

The congregation sat breathless as Philip calmly began walking down the aisle toward the front door. Like a pack of wolves, the enemy lurched forward to grab him. But every time one of the men attempted to seize Philip, he fell to the floor powerless -- they never touched him!

*Psalms 34:7 reminds us:*
*"The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them."*

Reaching the front door unharmed, the captain shoved Philip into the patrol car and rushed him to the police station. There, he discovered his permit had been revoked, and he was detained until further notice. Shortly thereafter, the president of the mission field was also taken into custody.

Both he and Philip spent more than a week in jail before being released.

That evening, shortly after the almost-violent incident, a crowd gathered outside the police station, wanting to see the preacher who had escaped miraculously from his would-be killers. Among them was an elderly gentleman in tears. The police asked Philip if he knew why this man was crying, and Philip answered, "No idea." The captain then told him that it was this very leader who had been in charge of Philip's death squad, and now his own life was in danger for failing to carry out the plot.

The work in this country is facing serious challenges but, as this story testifies, God is actively reaching out to those who are responding to His love for them despite restrictions and roadblocks!

*Adventist World Radio* is broadcasting daily in at least two of the major languages spoken in this region. Because of your gifts, countless numbers of people are discovering the hope found in Jesus Christ- the very hope that is quietly and secretly entering into their homes and into their hearts.

Please pray for those living under oppressive circumstances because of their faith, and for those *AWR* listeners who continue to find hope in Jesus every day through the *Voice of Hope*. I know you have experienced the thrill of partnering with our Lord for the salvation of souls.

Thank you for your prayers and faithful support. Many, whom you may never meet on Earth, will be in the kingdom because of your generosity.
There is no doubt that your gift will win souls for God's soon-coming kingdom.

In His service,

Dowell Chow  
AWR President