

7. A BATTLE EVERYDAY IN MY GARDEN.

Where do you turn for protection when you see danger coming at you? King David wrote in Psalm 7, "My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart". God does not protect everyone from everything. But he does act as a shield for those whose lives seek to honour him.

Most days in my garden I witness a life and death battle. I know when it is happening because dozens of small birds noisily twitter, having assembled in the branches of my large trees. I used to wonder what they were saying, but I now believe I know.

Looking up into the sky over the trees, I can see African Black Kites gliding in circles, sharp eyes searching everywhere for their supper. I reckon these smaller birds - a sparrow is only a quarter size of a kite - are warning each other. They say things like: "Stay in the shelter of the tree". "Why take risks?" "Flying out will expose you to great danger". "A skilful hunter is up above". "Don't trust yourself". "Your best protection is in these branches".

God has never promised to give Christians a trouble-free life. We are to expect trouble while we remain in this world. But he does offer a twofold protection.

First, being upright and holy in all of our life's daily business will mean no true accusations can ever be brought against us. Second, God has placed himself as a shield between us and every enemy. All who would harm us must have his permission first.