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### Dragonflies

It has been a hot a dry summer, yet this spring was quite wet due to the abundant snowfall. Wetlands, streams, and puddles were bursting in abundance. As a result, we experienced an epic insect hatch. Most notably the nuisances of gnats and the vicious mercenary hordes of mosquitoes. This made it nearly impossible to be outdoors in the cool hours of the day without the sensation of being eaten alive! Gardening became an even more robust challenge facing down both insect and weed. The curse of the soil and the curse of the sky which came about as a result of our fall in the original garden.

One late spring day I acknowledged the necessity for myself to face aerial nuisances and the airborne mercenaries lest the weeds colonized my newly emerged seedlings. While working in the back garden where these annoyance inflicting insects tend to be the worst, I noticed that they were not as bad as usual. The gnats were minimal and the mosquitoes few. I was pleasantly surprised. Once I realized this fact it took me just a few seconds to figure out why. It wasn't because I had put on insect repellent. It was not windy. With the sound of a zoom past my ear I realized that the insects that surrounded me were not of the irritating type they were of the protecting and disposing type. Dragonflies!

I was not able to count the number of dragonflies that hovered like Blackhawk helicopters around me. I'd estimate between twelve and eighteen of them. They were creating quite the hummm with their wings and they would dash back and forth at times getting quite close to my face and ears. I realized that the gnats and mosquitoes I was attracting the dragonflies were hunting and eating. This had the effect of dissipating what normally would

have been an unbearable cloud of voracious insects. As it was that day the carnivorous little insects were becoming carnivorous fodder for the dashing dragonflies.

I must admit, it took some getting used to standing and working in that bubble of dragonflies. Their dashing and darting at times made me want to react as if to a mosquito or gnat. It took a great sense of my own self-consciousness to truly receive what was happening. This was biological warfare at its best and because of it I was able to garden mulch longer than usual. As time went by, I got used to the dashing, darting, and hovering of these helicopter-like insects. In fact, I even began to relish the sounds they were making as they would clear the gnats away from my ears, no doubt devouring some of them.

I found in this the fulfillment of the word of our Lord “Do not worry, Not even a sparrow falls without your heavenly father knowing: You are worth more than many sparrows” and “Look at the lilies of the field they neither spin nor sew yet in their splendor they are more elegant than Solomon, If the Lord so clothes the grass of the fields and it is thrown into the oven tomorrow how much more will he care for you?” Most certainly this was an experience of God’s natural world caring for me in that gardening moment.

There is more here than just the natural care but in this event a revelation of God’s spiritual care for us. When Nathanael was shocked by Jesus’ foreknowledge of him under the fig tree Jesus responds “You will see even greater things, the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” This episode of the Guardian Dragonflies reminds us that God desires his angels to descend and ascend on us for our safety and wellbeing. We have come to know these angels as the Guardian angels. They protect us here on earth from evil, temptation, and sin. While in heaven they carry our prayers to God the Father (Matthew 18:10B) the truly

magnificent thing about angels is unlike dragonflies who can only exist in time and space: namely one place, the Guardian angels can both hover over us dashing about to remove evil and simultaneously gaze on the face of the Father in heaven! I am not sure if I will ever experience an evening in the garden with the dragonflies again, yet one thing I have come to know through their presence that evening is a deeper sense of the power of the guardian angels to both protect us and gaze on the face of the Father for us in heaven.