

August 29, 2020

TERROR IN THE DARK

“Get down, get down!” people screamed amid the turmoil inside a 42-passenger commercial bus on October 16, 2017.

Unable to get a reasonably priced airline ticket, Alana and Gabriel Miranda had opted to spend the night traveling on a comfortable bus for a 12-hour night trip from Sao Paulo to Brasilia, Brazil’s capital city. Now, awakened by screams, they realized that the bus was swaying wildly while crossing a remote area and traveling at a very high speed.

Then they heard gun shots: “Bang! Bang! Bang!” Broken glass spread all around them. Two rows in front of them they saw the driver bending over, trying to escape the bullets aimed at him from the car ahead. At the same time, in a risky decision, he was trying to overtake and maybe hit the car. He knew that if he stopped the bus, besides taking all their valuables the well-armed robbers would possibly harm the passengers.

If we escape the shooting, we might still die from an accident, thought Alana. She instinctively closed her hand when something hot fell on it, only realizing later that it was a bullet! Finally, they arrived at a police station, and the robbers gave up. Miraculously, all the

passengers were safe, except for a person who had been shot in his arm. Fortunately, he wasn’t seriously injured. Because they were seated only two rows behind the driver, Gabriel and Alana wondered how they escaped the bullets!

“How can we give a Thank Offering to God next Sabbath?” Alana and Gabriel asked Alana’s father, an Adventist pastor. “It should be in addition to our Promise [regular, percentage-based offering],” they said, still grateful for and amazed by God’s great deliverance! “You can mark “Thank Offering” on your envelope!” said the pastor. “And while placing it in the basket, you can worship Him by saying a short prayer of gratitude,” he added. Alana and Gabriel remembered that it is only “through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed.... They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22, 23).

APPEAL: Is there any reason for you to be grateful today? You also can recognize His gracious acts on your behalf by worshipping Him with an offering!

PRAYER: Dear Lord, please accept our worship this morning. Amen.



35