

Faith, of course, is more than an intellectual belief in God. It is closeness with God to such a degree that His loving and watchful care may be experienced in time of sorrow and crisis or danger. To call such care a coincidence is to deny an obvious reality.

small woman great faith

By Robert J. Morgan (from his book, *On This Day*, as related by Carol M. Simpson)

Dick and Margaret Hillis were two committed Christians who found themselves caught in China during the Japanese invasion of the Second World War. The couple lived with their two small children in the inland town of Shenkiu.

The village was tense with fear, for every day brought terrifying reports of the Japanese advance. At the worst possible time, Dick developed appendicitis, and he knew his life depended on making the long journey by rickshaw to the hospital. On January 15, 1941, with deep foreboding, Margaret watched him leave.

Soon the Chinese colonel came with news: The enemy was near and the townspeople were advised to evacuate. Margaret shivered, knowing that one-year-old Johnny and two-month-old Margaret Anne would never survive as refugees. So she chose to stay put. Early the next morning she tore the page from the wall calendar and read the new day's Scripture. It was Psalm 56:3: "When I am afraid, I put my trust in You."

The town emptied during the day, and the next morning Margaret arose, feeling abandoned. The new verse on the calendar was Psalm 9:10: "And those who know Your name put their trust in You, for You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You."

The next morning she arose to distant sounds of gunfire and worried about food for her children. The calendar verse was Genesis 50:21: "I will nourish you and

your little ones." An old woman suddenly popped in with a pail of steaming goat's milk, and another straggler arrived with a basket of eggs.

Through the day, sounds of warfare grew louder, and during the night Margaret prayed for deliverance. The next morning she tore the page from the calendar to read Psalm 56:9: "When I cry unto You, then shall my enemies turn back."

The battle was looming closer, and Margaret didn't go to bed that night. Invasion seemed imminent. But the next morning, all was quiet. Suddenly, villagers began returning to their homes, and the colonel knocked on her door. For some reason, he told her, the Japanese had withdrawn their troops. No one could understand it, but the danger had passed. They were safe.

Margaret glanced at her wall calendar and felt she had been reading the handwriting of God. God had been with them each and every day. Margaret's faith in God had been more powerful than her fear of the enemy, and God had not let her down.



When you come right down to it, what is coincidence? Can it be an act of God? Faith, of course, would agree.