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Safety aboard ship in rough waters

Beverly Goldsmith

with audio by the author

In the 1960s, my brother and I were booked to sing each evening to the 1200 passengers aboard the SS *Flavia*, an Italian ship. As dusk fell on day four, the Pacific Ocean was tranquil. It was a beautiful balmy night. We had just finished entertaining the audience gathered in the Riviera Lounge when, without warning, the ship pitched alarmingly.

People on the dance floor began to fall and slide sideways. Seated passengers skidded across the room, crashing into other moving chairs. Tables careened and glasses shattered. Bottles pitched dangerously. Terrified passengers screamed.

Prayer—the safest anchor I could imagine.

I wrapped my arms around a solid column, closed my eyes and reached out swiftly to God in prayer—the safest anchor I could imagine at that moment.

“Dear Father, You are with us. You hold us in the palms of Your hands. We are never separated from Your powerful Love. I have nothing to be frightened of. You are here to keep us safe. I am not afraid. I am in Your care.”

Suddenly the ship lurched in the opposite direction. People, furniture and glassware were hurled to the other side of the room. More screams and cries of pain and fear.

I continued my prayers, still clutching the column. I recalled this much-loved Bible verse:

“If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

This reminded me that everyone on board was secure in our Father-Mother’s keeping. He held us tight. I vigorously affirmed that as God’s children we remain safe in His care. Divine, all-powerful Life and Love, our Protector was with us—even in the middle of a vast ocean.

I did feel calm and sheltered in God's love.

—My prayer immediately reassured me. Although the chaos continued, I did feel calm and sheltered in God’s love. Then the vessel righted itself and a ship’s officer, who spoke only a little English, unexpectedly approached me. Thrusting a microphone into my hand, he gestured urgently for me to speak to the passengers. What would I say? As I stepped forward, I realized my prayers had prepared me to speak to the crowd. I requested everyone to remain calm, to stay seated, and assured them that everything was all right.

Remarkably, people immediately became quiet. Crew members restored order to the room while medical staff checked passengers for injuries. To their surprise, no one had been seriously hurt. After a break, the band resumed playing, but people soon retired to their cabins and the rest of the night passed uneventfully.

I can turn to God instantly.

The next day we learned that the ship had been struck side-on by a freak or "rogue" wave. Many of the sailors said it was a miracle that no one had been harmed and that the ship was undamaged.

For me, our protection from harm was not miraculous. It was proof of God’s protective power. That night, in the middle of a vast ocean, I learned that when I’m faced with unexpected danger, I can turn to God instantly. I can be fearless and calm. I can be confident that wherever I am, His loving presence is with me, preserving my life and maintaining my well-being.

That voyage ended smoothly and peacefully. My brother and I sailed on seven more South Pacific cruises aboard the *Flavia*. Today, whenever I hear of tragic events involving people who sail on or live near the ocean, I remember what I learned on

that night. God is a very present help—the ultimate Protector.

Beverly Goldsmith is a contributing editor for the spiritually inspiring magazines, the Christian Science Sentinel and The Christian Science Journal.

The security of divine Love:

Science and Health:

[581:8](#)

[373:16 the Scriptures](#)

King James Bible:

[Ps 139:9,10](#)

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