



"My Special Teacher"

October 2026

Recently I was up to visit some of our members who were in the Emergency Room, as their vehicle was struck on their way to a call. They had the right of way with their emergency lights on and siren blaring.

And the offending vehicle driven by a DUI. Thank G-d all our members were "treated and released", banged up but okay. And they all said the same message, "Rabbi, life can change in an instant, please tell the troops to be careful out there". Isn't that the truth, sometimes no matter how careful we are things happen. The expression rings true "there, but for the grace of G-d, go I".

It reminded me of the story "My Special Teacher"...

I had a very special teacher in high school many years ago whose wife died suddenly of a heart attack. About a week after her death, he shared some of his insight with a classroom of students.

As the late afternoon sunlight came streaming in through the classroom windows and the class was nearly over, he moved a few things aside on the edge of his desk and sat down there. With a gentle look of reflection on his face, he paused and said, "Class is over, I would like to share with all of you, a thought that is unrelated to class, but which I feel is very important.

Each of us is put here on earth to learn, share, love, appreciate and give of ourselves. None of us knows when this fantastic experience will end. It can be taken away at any moment. Perhaps this is the powers way of telling us that we must make the most out of every single day."

His eyes, beginning to water, he went on, "So I would like you all to make me a promise. From now on, on your way to school, or on your way home, find something beautiful to notice. It doesn't have to be something you see, it could be a scent - perhaps of freshly baked bread wafting out of someone's house, or it could be the sound of the breeze slightly rustling the leaves in the trees, or the way the morning light catches one autumn leaf as it falls gently to the ground. Please look for these things, and cherish them.

For, although it may sound trite to some, these things are the "stuff" of life. The little things we are put here on earth to enjoy. The things we often take for granted. We must make it important to notice them, for at any time...it can all be taken away."

The class was completely quiet. We all picked up our books and filed out of the room silently.

That afternoon, I noticed more things on my way home from school than I had that whole semester.

Every once in a while, I think of that teacher and remember what an impression he made on all of us, and I try to appreciate all of those things that sometimes we all overlook.

Take notice of something special you see on your lunch hour today. Go barefoot. Or walk on the beach at sunset. Stop off on the way home tonight to get a double dip ice cream cone. Tell your family and friends how much they mean to you. For as we get older, it is not the things we did that we often regret, but the things we didn't do.

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

Please let me share with you some excerpts from attendees of a lecture that I attended recently titled " The Best Sermons in Life, Are Lived, Not Preached"

1. Today, I interviewed my grandmother for part of a research paper I'm working on for my Psychology class. When I asked her to define success in her own words, she said, "Success is when you look back at your life and the memories make you smile."
2. Today, I asked my mentor - a very successful business man in his 70s- what his top 3 tips are for success. He smiled and said, "Read something no one else is reading, think something no one else is thinking, and do something no one else is doing."
3. Today, after a 72-hour shift at the fire house, a woman ran up to me at the grocery store and gave me a hug. When I tensed up, she realized I didn't recognize her. She let go with tears of joy in her eyes and the most sincere smile and said, "On 9-11-2001, you carried me out of the World Trade Center."
4. Today at 7 AM, I woke up feeling ill, but decided I needed the money, so I went into work. At 3 PM I got laid off. On my drive home I got a flat tire. When I went into the trunk for the spare, it was flat too. A man in a BMW pulled over, gave me a ride, we chatted, and then he offered me a job. I start tomorrow.... G-d sure works in ways I'll never understand
5. Today, as my father, three brothers, and two sisters stood around my mother's hospital bed, my mother uttered her last coherent words before she died. She simply said, "I feel so loved right now. We should have gotten together like this more often."
6. Today, I kissed my dad on the forehead as he passed away in a small hospital bed. About 5 seconds after he passed, I realized it was the first time I had given him a kiss since I was a little boy.....So if you're lucky and your Mom or Dad are still around, give them a hug and tell them how much you love them.
7. Today, in the cutest voice, my 8-year-old daughter asked me to start recycling. I chuckled and asked, "Why?" She replied, "So you can help me save the planet." I chuckled again and asked, "And why do you want to save the planet?" Because that's where I keep all my stuff," she said.

8. Today, a boy in a wheelchair saw me desperately struggling on crutches with my broken leg and offered to carry my backpack and books for me. He helped me all the way across campus to my class and as he was leaving, he said, "I hope you feel better soon.".... Never pass up an opportunity to help someone carry their burden.

9. Remember we can all make a difference in the world that we live just by sharing a kindness. "Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared."

Last but not least Remember "Moshe Wolf's Rule in life", find something every day of life to make you laugh, even if you have to look in the mirror! lol.....

Before we close some humor from the "Moshe Files"

"The Man In The Pit"

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out...

A subjective person came along and said, "I feel for you down there."

An objective person walked by and said, "It's logical that someone would fall down there."

A Pharisee said, "Only bad people fall into pits."

A mathematician calculated how deep the pit was.

A news reporter wanted the exclusive story on the pit.

An IRS agent asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.

A self-pitying person said, "You haven't seen anything until you've seen my pit."

A fire-and-brimstone preacher said, "You sinner, deserve your pit."

A Scientist observed, "The pit is just in your mind."

A psychologist noted, "Your mother and father are to blame for your being in that pit."

A self-esteem therapist said, "Believe in yourself and you can get out of that pit."

An optimist said, "Things could be worse."

A pessimist claimed, "Things will get worse."

A Chaplain, seeing the struggling man, took him by the hand and lifted him out of the pit. (That's what I'm talking about) ...LOL

The Moral of the story: when a friend needs your help, save the speeches for later. Roll up your sleeves, and give him a hand, a hug or a kind word. You will both feel better!

SPECIAL NOTE, PLEASE: Our very own Directing Chaplain, Fr. Dan Brandt, is convalescing and recovering from some serious ankle surgery. If you get a chance, please give him a call / text 773-550-2369 or e-mail: dan.brandt@chicagopolice.org, let him know he is in your thoughts and prayers, it would be MOST appreciated.

On behalf of ALL the Chaplains, wishing you and your loved ones a healthy and blessed end of summer. May G-d bless you, keep you safe and always keep you in His loving care. AMEN.

Should you need an ear to listen, a shoulder to lean on, or perhaps have some good humor to share, (I know you have a good joke or good story to share) please do not hesitate to drop us a line or give us a call.

All our contact information is on our Police Chaplain's website: www.chicagopcm.org.

Look us up for current and upcoming information.

Compliments of your Police Chaplain, Rabbi Moshe Wolf, E-mail: moshewolf@hotmail.com

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