



"The Fern and the Bamboo"

September 2015

You wake up in the morning, turn on the news, or open a newspaper, and the expression of "same news different day" jumps into your mind. Bombings overseas, acts of terrorism wherever you turn, innocent people getting hurt for no reason. Then you look at our own backyard, people getting killed, daily acts of violence against innocent people and it seems that life is one big struggle. I was stopped the other day on the street by one of our members, and was asked "Rabbi, give me an explanation as to why there is so much hurt and pain out there"? I responded, "I don't have an answer as to why all the pain, but thanks to each and every one of my brothers and sisters in blue, for going out every day and making a difference. Thanks to you for being G-d's presence out in the street, providing comfort where there is pain, and peace and justice where needed. Our city could NOT survive without you and for THAT we are MOST grateful. It reminded me of the story of "the Fern and the Bamboo".....

One day Johnny decided to quit...to quit his job, his relationship, his spirituality...

He wanted to quit his life. He went to the woods to have one last talk with G-d.

"G-d", he said. "Can you give me one good reason not to quit?"

His answer surprised Johnny. "Look around", G-d said. "Do you see the fern and the bamboo?"

"Yes", Johnny replied. And G-d continued "When I planted the fern and the bamboo seeds, I took very good care of them. I gave them light. I gave them water. The fern quickly grew from the earth. Its brilliant green covered the floor. Yet nothing came from the bamboo seed. But I did not quit on the bamboo. In the second year the fern grew more vibrant and plentiful. And again, nothing came from the bamboo seed. But I did not quit on the bamboo. In year three there was still nothing from the bamboo seed.

But I would not quit. The same in year four. Then in the fifth year, a tiny sprout emerged from the earth. Compared to the fern, it was seemingly small and insignificant. But just six months later, the bamboo rose to over 100 feet tall. It had spent the five years growing roots.

Those roots made it strong and gave it what it needed to survive. I would not give any of my creations a challenge it could not handle. "Did you know, my child, that all this time you have been struggling, you have actually been growing roots?"

I would not quit on the bamboo. I will never quit on you. "Don't compare yourself to others." He said. "The bamboo had a different purpose than the fern. Yet they both

make the forest beautiful. "Your time will come", G-d said to Johnny.

"You will rise high." "How high should I rise?" Johnny asked. "How high will the bamboo rise?" He asked in return. "As high as it can?" Johnny questioned. "Yes." the Lord said, "Give Me glory by rising as high as you can." Johnny left the forest, realizing that G-d will never give up on him.

AND HE WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON YOU! Never regret a day in your life. Good days give you happiness; bad days give you experiences; both are essential to life. Serenity isn't freedom from the storm, but peace within the storm. End of parable.

.....Some thoughts to ponder that will give you a chuckle.....

"An old farmers input on life".....

- * Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- * Words that soak into your ears are whispered...not yelled.
- * Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.
- * Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
- * It doesn't take a very big person to carry a grudge and don't let those that aggravate you, live rent free in your brain.
- * You cannot unsay a cruel word.
- * Every path has a few puddles, expect to get wet every so often.
- * When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- * The best sermons are lived, not preached.
- * Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
- * Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- * Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- * Live a good, honorable life, then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
- * Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin you none.
- * Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a Rain dance, part of life is learning how to run in between the drops.

- * If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- * Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.
- * The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every morning.
- * Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of what comes from bad judgment.
- * Letting the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.
- * If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some Influence, try ordering somebody else's dog around.
- * Live simply, loves generously, are deeply.
- * Speak kindly, leave the rest to G-d.

May G-d bless you, keep you safe, and always in His loving care. If I can be of assistance or if you have some good humor to share, please don't hesitate to drop us a line.

A special shout to all members of my flock of the Jewish faith, "Shana Tova" a Happy Blessed New Year to you and your families. May the coming year be one of your best one's yet.

Compliments of your Chaplain

Rabbi Moshe Wolf, 773-463-4780 or e-mail: moshewolf@hotmail.com