



By Rabbi Moshe Wolf

"So Don't Stop Dancing.."

As the year draws to an end we take a moment to reflect. There have been good times; there have been some trying moments. Times we laughed, times we cried, times we just stood back and tried to make sense of it all. And then comes the moments of us standing back trying to figure out, what is meant by "time for change" change, change. The bottom line, the year is almost over and thank G-d we made it, there are many we know who did not. So we say thank You L-rd for the year gone by and pray the coming year be a year filled with blessings for joy, happiness, good health and prosperity. And most of all "Don't Stop Dancing"...as we learn from the following story...

Not too long ago a friend of the family, Jill, a writer by profession, had "one of those days." Jill was under immense pressure from a looming magazine deadline. In addition, she had company arriving in a couple days for the Holidays, the toilet was clogged and the house was a mess, this was only the beginning.

As Jill began to run her errands, she started at the bank, where the teller "in training" who was processing her deposit had to start the transaction over three times. After that, Jill swung by the supermarket to pick up a few things, finding that checkout lines were serpentine. By the time she got home, her errands somewhat complete, Jill was frazzled and sweaty and in a hurry to get something on the table for dinner.

Deciding on Campbell's Cream of Mushroom Soup, she grabbed a can opener, cranked open the can, then remembered that she had forgotten to buy milk at the store which she needed to dilute the soup. Nix the soup idea. Setting the can aside, she contemplated plan B, which was leftover baked beans. Jill grabbed the Tupperware container from the fridge, popped the seal, took a look and groaned. Jill's husband, Jeff, isn't a picky eater, but even he won't eat baked beans that look like THAT. Really frustrated now, she decided on a menu that promised to be as foolproof as it is nutrition-free: hot dogs and potato chips.

Retrieving a brand new bag of chips from the cupboard, Jill grabbed the cellophane and gave a hearty pull. The bag didn't open. She tried again, nothing happened. Taking a deep breath, Jill doubled her muscle, and gave the bag a hearty wrestle. With a loud pop, the cellophane suddenly gave way, ripping the bag wide open, from top to bottom. Chips flew sky high. She was left holding the bag, it was empty, and it was the final straw. Jill let out a blood curdling scream. "I can't take it anymore!!!"

Her husband, Jeff, heard her unorthodox cry for help. Within seconds, he was standing in the doorway to the kitchen, surveying the damage; an opened can of soup, melting groceries, moldy baked beans, and one quivering wife standing ankle deep in potato chips. Jeff did the most helpful thing he could think of at the moment. He took a flying leap, landing flat-footed in the pile of chips. And then he began to stomp and dance and twirl, grinding those chips into the kitchen linoleum in the process! Jill stared and fumed. Pretty soon she was working to stifle a smile. Eventually she had to laugh.

And finally, Jill decided to join him. She too took a leap onto the chips. And then she danced. Now, Jill will be the first to admit that her husband's response wasn't the one she was looking for. But the truth of the matter is, it was exactly what she needed. Jill didn't need a cleanup crew as much as she needed an attitude adjustment, and the laughter from that rather funky moment provided just that..... End of story.

Now I have a question for you, and it's simply this: Has G-d ever stomped on your chips? I know that in my life, there have been plenty of times when I've gotten myself into frustrating situations and I've cried out for help, all the while hoping G-d would show up with a celestial broom and clean up the mess I've made of things.

What often happens instead is that G-d dances on our chips, answering our prayer's in a completely different manner than we had expected, but in the manner that is best for us after all. Sometimes we can see right away that G-d's response was the best one after all. Sometimes we have to wait weeks or months before we begin to understand how and why G-d answered a particular prayer the way He did. There are even some situations that, years later, we are still trying to understand. We figure that G-d will fill us in sooner or later, either this side of Heaven or beyond.

Sometimes we sulk, sometimes we dance. We're working on doing more of the latter than the former. I guess the older we get the more we realize that He really does know what He's doing. He loves us and we can trust Him. Even when the chips are down - **SO DON'T STOP DANCING...** and if you need a shoulder to lean on or an ear to listen, don't hesitate to give us a call, we'll help you dance.

On behalf of your Chaplains, Fr. Dan Brandt, Robert Montelongo, myself, a very blessed Holiday season and a very Happy New Year to you and your loved ones.

May G-d bless you keep you safe and always keep you in His loving care. Amen

Compliments of your Police Chaplain

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