



By Rabbi Moshe Wolf
The Wrong Place , The Right Time

These days you open a newspaper, read the headlines, protests, stock market going up and down like a roller coaster.

Factories closing, city departments restructuring, changes, worries, uncertainties.

As we go through this journey, we call 'life'; we sometimes find ourselves asking "how did I end up HERE?"

Why didn't I get the promotion I worked so hard for? Why did I get transferred? Maybe I should have taken a different assignment?

Maybe If I would have chosen a different profession, my life would be less stressful and worry free?

The answer isn't always so obvious, but sometimes G-d sends us a message, that being at the wrong place, was part of His master plan.

G-d doesn't make mistakes. He puts us where we are to be, even though we might not realize it at the time. Let me share with you a story that happened to "Sara" a member of my flock, at her mom's funeral.....

Sitting in the funeral chapel, consumed by her loss, Sara didn't notice the hardness of the pew where

she sat. She was at the funeral of her dearest friend - her mother, who finally had lost her long battle with cancer. The hurt was so intense; Sara found it hard to breathe at times. Always supportive of Sara, her mother clapped loudest at her school plays, held box of tissues while listening to her first heartbreak, comforted her at their father's death, encouraged her in college, and prayed for her Sara her my entire life. When mother's illness was diagnosed, Sara's sister had a new baby and her brother had recently married his childhood sweetheart, so it fell on Sara, the 27-year-old middle child without entanglements, to take care of Mom, Sara counted

it an honor. 'What now, Lord?' Sara asked herself sitting in the funeral home. *Sara's life stretched out before her as an empty abyss. Her brother sat stoically with his face toward the casket while clutching his wife's hand.

Sara's sister sat slumped against her husband's shoulder, his arms around her as she cradled their child... All so deeply grieving, no one noticed Sara sat alone.*

*Sara's place had been with her mother, preparing her meals, helping her walk, taking her to the doctor, seeing to her medication, reading the Bible together. Now she was with the Lord. Sara's work was finished, and she was alone. Sara heard a door open and slam shut at the back of the chapel. Quick footsteps hurried along the carpeted floor....

An exasperated young man looked around briefly and then sat next to Sara. He folded his hands and placed them on his lap. His eyes were brimming with tears. He began to snuffle. 'I'm late,' he explained, though no explanation was necessary. After several eulogies, he leaned over and commented, 'Why do they keep calling Mary by the name of 'Margaret?'" Sara answered in a whisper, 'Because, that was her name, Margaret, never Mary, no one ever called her 'Mary,'".

I wondered why this person couldn't have sat on the other side of the chapel. He interrupted Sara's grieving with his tears and fidgeting. Who was this stranger anyway?

'No, that isn't correct,' he insisted, as several people glanced over at us whispering, 'Her name is Mary, Mary Furgeson.'

"That isn't who this is", Sara whispered. 'Isn't this the Unity Chapel?' he asked. 'No, the Unity Chapel is down the street.' Sara said, 'I believe you're at the wrong funeral, Sir.'

The solemnness of the occasion mixed with the realization of the man's mistake bubbled up inside Sara and came out as laughter. Sara cupped her hands over her face, hoping it would be interpreted as sobs. The creaking pew gave her away. Sharp looks from other mourners only made the situation seem more hilarious. Sara peeked at the bewildered, misguided man seated beside her. He was laughing; too, as he glanced around, deciding it was too late for an uneventful exit. Sara imagined Mother laughing. At the final 'Amen,' they darted out a door and into the parking lot. 'I do believe we'll be the talk of the town,' he smiled. He said his name was Bill and since he had missed his aunt's funeral, asked Sara out for a cup of coffee.

That afternoon began a lifelong journey for Sara with this man who attended the wrong funeral, but was in the right place. A year after their meeting, they celebrated their marriage. This time they both arrived at the right place, right time, on time...end of story.

In her time of sorrow, G-d gave Sara laughter. In place of loneliness, G-d gave her love. This past August, they celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Whenever anyone asks them how they met, Sara's husband Bill tells them, 'Her mother and my

Aunt Mary introduced us, and it's truly a match made in heaven.'

If you Love G-d, and are not ashamed of all the marvelous things he has done for you, the next time you find yourself lost, let your heart reassure you that 'this too is part of His plan. REMEMBER, G-d doesn't make mistakes. He puts us where we are to be, when we need to be there.

On behalf of your Chaplains, Father Dan Brandt, Chaplain Bob Montelongo and myself, may G-d bless you, keep you safe, and always keep you in his loving care. Amen!

For the curious: The dash in the name of G-d,

Please note: I do not spell out the name of G-d out of respect. Spelling out "THE NAME" and then throwing it in the trash, would be a desecration of "THE NAME" , so I put in the dash.

This is a religious custom I follow, and please don't be offended. Thanks for understanding.

If you would like to discuss it further, please don't hesitate to drop me a line or give me a call.

Compliments of your Police Chaplain
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