

## RABBI'S MESSAGE

### Right Place – Right Time

Have you ever experienced something in which you said to yourself: “I was meant to be right here, at this moment?” Perhaps it was seeing a rainbow, or a soaring eagle, or a beautiful sunset or a full moon or a scampering deer that you might have missed if you didn’t take a few seconds to pause. Or...perhaps it was a moment that affected your life or the life of another. Maybe you accepted someone’s business card without thinking, and needed to contact that person for something in the future. Maybe, an accidental connection resulted in an opportunity that you never expected, like a new job or even meeting the person with whom you fell in love. Or maybe, it was something that you opened your heart to, with little effort, but found it made a major difference.

I had this conversation with a group recently, and was amazed by some of the stories I heard. One person (who happened to be a nurse) spoke about parking her car and going into her apartment. As she got to the stairs near the parking garage, she saw a young child standing by a car. The child was just standing there, alone, and since it was light out, didn’t think much about it. But as she started up the stairs, she thought, “Maybe I should just see if she’s okay.” She went back to ask the child, who wordlessly led her to a spot between two parked cars. There was a woman, lying on the ground, passed out. It turns out that the woman on the ground was the child’s mother, who had fainted unexpectedly, and the child was frozen, not knowing what to do. The nurse was able to resuscitate her, call for help, and potentially saved the woman’s life.

Another, less dramatic story, came from someone who saw a young adult neighbor sitting alone on a bench. She waved “hello,” but the person who was seated didn’t respond. Instead of continuing on her way, the first person said, “Hi. Do you want to talk, or would you rather be left alone?” She was invited to sit down, and the person, who was previously just a casual acquaintance, shared some struggles she was having. The first person was quite a bit older, and had gone through many of the challenges her neighbor was describing. At the end of the conversation, the younger woman felt better having been able to talk with someone, and the older woman felt enthused that she was able to be helpful.

In our modern world, we often seem more concerned about protecting another’s privacy than about being helpful. You might be able to make a difference with just a smile, or a word or two that says, “I care.” The Torah teaches, “Don’t stand idle while your neighbor bleeds.” (Leviticus 19:6) Sometimes the needs of our neighbors can be helped by a simple kindness that took very little effort on your part. We can all make a difference. Maybe you can also think of when someone else’s kindness made a difference for you.

L’shalom,

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