



WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

Women's League Shabbat 2014/5774

READING

Family Is Family (Whatever its Make-Up)

This is an old Jewish folk tale.

There were two brothers who were farmers. One lived with his wife and children on one side of a hill, and the other, unmarried, lived in a small hut on the other side of the hill.

One year the brothers had an especially good harvest. The married brother looked over his fields and thought to himself:

“God has been so good to me. I have a wife and children, and more crops than I need. I am so much better off than my brother, who lives all alone. Tonight, while my brother sleeps, I will carry some of my sheaves to his field. When he finds them tomorrow he’ll never suspect that they came from me.”

On the other side of the hill, the unmarried brother looked at his harvest and thought to himself:

“God has been kind to me. But I wish He had been as good to my brother. His needs are so much greater than mine. He must feed his wife and children, yet I have as much fruit and grain as he does. Tonight, while my brother and his family sleep, I will place some of my sheaves in his field. Tomorrow, when he finds them, he will never know that I have less and he has more.”

So both brothers waited patiently until midnight. Then each loaded his grain on his shoulders and walked toward the top of the hill. Exactly at midnight, they met on another at the hilltop. Realizing that each had thought only of helping the other, they embraced.

Family is family.