The Field of Sibling Love

There a brother and a sister, Apple Farmers, who tilled the field they had inherited from their father. The younger brother was unmarried and lived alone at one end of the field; the older sister lived with her husband and four children at the other end. The siblings loved each other dearly. Together they plowed, planted, and harvested their apples and shared equally the Fruits of their labor.

One night during the harvest, the younger brother lay down to sleep, but his thoughts were troubled. "Here I am," he said to himself, "all alone, with no wife and no children. I don't need to feed or clothe anyone else. But my sister has the responsibility of a family. Is it right that we share our harvest equally? After all, she needs so much more than I do."

At midnight he arose and took an armful of apples from his crop, carried them to his sisters storehouse, and left them there. Then he hurried home for more.

That same night the older sister also could not sleep. She was thinking about her younger brother. "Here I am," she thought, "surrounded by my family. When I grow old, my children will take care of me. But what will happen to my brother in his old age? Who will take care of him? His needs are so much greater than mine. It isn't Fair to divide the crop equally." So she arose and took an armload of apples to her brother's storehouse and left them there. Then she hurried home for more.

Each of them, upon returning to their storehouse, was shocked to find just as many apples as had been there before they had taken some away. Wondering how that could be possible, each of them filled their basket with yet another load of apples and journeyed back across the field. And so it continued all night long, with the brother and sister each giving to the other but neither noticing the other in the darkness.

The first rays of the sun appeared on the horizon. Only then, while crossing the field on the way to the other's storehouse, did the brother and sister finally see each other in the shadows. Suddenly they understood. They dropped their baskets of apples and embraced, weeping with gratitude and happiness.

According to the rabbis of old, God saw this act of love between the brother and sister and blessed the place where they met that dawn. And when in the course of time King Solomon set out to build God's Temple, from which peace and justice were to flow, God instructed him to build it in that field, on the very spot where the two siblings had embraced.