

Ascending to Heaven?

How does one show his or her love for God? The best way is by loving others. Saul Bellow, in his collection of traditional Jewish tales, tells this story:

In a small Jewish town in Russia, there is a rabbi who disappears each Friday morning for several hours. His devoted disciples boast that during those hours their rabbi goes up to heaven and talks to God.

A stranger moves into town, and he's skeptical about all this, so he decides to check things out. He hides and watches. The rabbi gets up in the morning, says his prayers, and then dresses in peasant clothes. He grabs an axe, goes off into the woods, and cuts some firewood, which he then hauls to a shack on the outskirts of the village. There, an old woman and her sick son live. He leaves them the wood, enough for a week, and then sneaks back home.

Having observed the rabbi's actions, the newcomer stays on in the village and becomes his disciple. And whenever he hears one of the villagers say, "On Friday morning our rabbi ascends all the way to heaven," the newcomer quietly adds, "If not higher."

In the centers of Life Care and American Lifestyles, and in the work of Life Care at Home, every day our associates are showing their love for God by caring for, and loving, His children, our residents. It is a special calling, indeed, and one that gets the attention of the Creator.

--Beecher Hunter