

“The Flight Home”  
Matthew 15:10-28  
August 14, 2005  
By Rebecca Enney

Elizabeth is at the airport in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Africa with her whole family. It is a sad time because they are all saying goodbye to each other after spending the summer together. Martin and Elizabeth have had the best adventures. She will miss Martin and his country when she is back in Pennsylvania.

But leave she must. It is time for her and her mother and father to board the plane. One last hug goodbye. Then Elizabeth and her mommy and daddy had to take off all their shoes at the security check point. After they got all their shoes back on, they turned and waved goodbye one more time. In about 5 minutes they would be in the air, flying home.

Elizabeth got all settled in her seat next to the window and looked out for one long last look. And she closed her eyes and fell asleep. It was the kind of sleep that wasn't really sleep. It was like closing your eyes and going someplace by yourself inside, so she could be alone and think about her experiences this summer.

After some time, she opened her eyes. There was some loud talking and the flight attendant was asking people to be patient. “What’s happening? Why are we still on the ground?” Elizabeth asked her daddy.

Elizabeth’s daddy put his finger to his mouth and said “Listen.” So Elizabeth listened. She heard some of the passengers saying “This isn’t fair that some woman can hold up the whole flight!” Others said “We are paying customers! Get this airplane off the ground. Forget the woman and the baby!”

Elizabeth gave her daddy an alarmed look!

Then the captain came out to help settle the problem. It was Captain Hale, Margaret’s brother! Again, passengers said “We paid good money for our tickets! We deserve to fly now!”

Captain Hale looked at the woman with the baby. She begged him “Please, my family sold everything to purchase my ticket. I did not know that I needed to buy a ticket for my baby also. I will carry him in my arms. He is sick and I am taking him to a hospital in New York. Please sir, let us on this flight. My baby’s life depends on it.”



And Captain Hale said “I’m sorry Ma’m, but the rules state that even babies need to have a paid seat on the flight.”

The woman said “I know that sometimes there is an empty seat. And the ladies just put their pocketbooks on the empty seat. Surely my son is as worthy of a seat as a woman’s pocketbook.”

Captain Hale knew that indeed, this flight DOES have one empty seat. Now, Captain Hale is a young pilot. He only graduated from flight school out in Seattle, Washington a few years ago. And he knows about all the rules and regulations. And he knows that he may get in trouble for breaking the rules and regulations.

But Captain Hale ALSO knows that this woman’s baby IS as worthy of a seat as a woman’s pocket book. Captain Hale and Mr. Mawakasunga exchanged a look. Captain Hale made his decision. It may be one that he will regret when his superiors talk with him later, but he knew it would be a good and kind deed.

“Madam, you are welcome on this flight. We wish the best for you and your son. Flight Attendants, prepare for takeoff!” Some of the passengers on the airplane started to applaud. Elizabeth looked at her daddy, and they too, clapped their hands to welcome the woman and her baby.

In Isaiah 56:1 the Lord says “Maintain justice, and do what is right.” Sometimes, the just and right deed requires us to make an exception to the rules. Jesus taught us that in this morning’s lesson.

THE END