



MARAN THE CHOFETZ CHAIM ZY" A:

"TUCHTEREL (MY DAUGHTER): ACCEPT UPON YOURSELF TO GREET THE SHABBOS QUEEN EARLY."

I ASKED: "WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF 'GREETING THE SHABBOS EARLY'?"

THE CHOFETZ CHAIM REPLIED:

"BY CHATZOS ON FRIDAY, THE TABLECLOTH SHOULD BE SPREAD AND THE CANDLESTICKS PREPARED ON THE TABLE, AND FROM THE TIME OF CANDLE-LIGHTING NO MELACHA SHOULD BE DONE, COME WHAT MAY!!!"

Rav Moshe Bernstein, Shlita, our life history and you'll understand." from Bnei Brak, relates the following

Story:

"I had the opportunity to meet with Hagaon Rav Simcha Kaplan ztz"l, Rav and Av Beis Din in Tzefas. Rav Simcha said to me, "Come listen to this astounding story which I heard at the time I learned at the Mirrer Yeshiva in Chutz La'aretz.

During the time I learned at the Yeshiva, I stayed with a family who lived in Mir. They had one son, an only child, called Berela.

One Friday, as I prepared to leave the house in the morning, I noticed my host preparing to leave for the local business market. This local market was a central market for all the neighboring villages. On his way out I heard his wife remind him once or twice, "Today is erev Shabbos. Come home early." I saw nothing unusual with this reminder.

I went to yeshiva to learn and returned to my hosts in the afternoon, after mincha. My hostess was looking out the window and seemed very stressed. I was worried about what may have occurred, and I heard her say to herself nervously: "It's almost Shabbos. .. It's almost Shabbos. .."

I asked her, wondering, "The day is long and there are quite a few hours left to Shabbos... Why are you so nervous?" Upon hearing my concern, my hostess replied: "Come, I'll explain to you some of

"My husband and I were married many years without children. Bèezras Hashem, after many years of pain, we were blessed with a baby boy. However, he did not develop normally, and we suffered a lot as he grew. We took him to the local doctor who diagnosed a heart defect, which naturally worried us further. He was unable to help us and suggested that we take our son to a specialist in Vilna, whom he hoped could help us.

The first time we visited the doctor in Vilna, he did not clarify much about our son's situation. During the second visit, however, the doctor turned to us, declaring with certainty, "This child will not live for more than a few more years. It's a pity to waste your money for nothing. Go home and make peace with the situation.

We let the doctor completely shattered. We had no idea where to turn after hearing such final, hopeless words. We reached our place of lodging with great difficulty, where I, the mother, broke down in wrenching, bitter sobs. I refused to be comforted. When our host heard of our plight, he suggested, "You're on the road now, anyway. Why don't you stop at Radin on your way home? The great tzaddik, the Chofetz Chaim lives there. He will surely help you if you ask."

A ray of hope was kindled in our hearts. We traveled to Radin and quickly

made our way to the home of the Chofetz Chaim. Imagine our dismay upon hearing that no one was allowed entry into the Chofetz Chaim's home due to his greatly weakened condition. We stood there in shock, unable to move from our places. What were we to do?!

As we stood there, bewildered, we suddenly noticed the husband of a granddaughter of the Chofetz Chaim, a young avreich, who until recently had learned at the Mirrer Yeshiva and had lived in our home. Here, before our eyes was "Cast your bread unto the waters, with the passage of time, you shall find it." What siyata dishmaya! He immediately brought us in to see his grandfather. The gaon was sitting in his room holding a navi Ezra.

We told our story and the most recent development with our son. The Chofetz Chaim answered: "What can I do for you? I don't have any money, how else can I help you?" I broke down in bitter sobs, tears pouring from my eyes. The young man who had ushered us inside, said to his grandfather, "But Zaida, it is an only child!!" The Chofetz Chaim spoke to me in a soft, loving manner.

"Tuchterel... (my daughter)... Accept upon yourself that you will greet the Shabbos queen early." I asked, "What does it mean to greet the Shabbos early?" The Chofetz Chaim replied: "By chatzos on Friday, the tablecloth should be spread and the candlesticks prepared on the table, and from the time of candle-lighting no melacha should be done, come what may!!!"

These words left the mouth of the holy tzaddik and penetrated my being. A firm resolution planted itself in my heart that 'I would follow his words exactly. I knew that even had I been told to fast for two years straight with no reprieve, I would have gladly followed the Chofetz Chaim's instructions.

As soon as we arrived home in Mir, there was a noticeable change in our son. He slowly began to eat more and to

develop as most healthy boys his age. When we visited the doctor who had initially sent us to Vilna, he could not believe his eyes. Unable to make sense of what he saw, he offered us a sum of money so that we could travel to Vilna again and consult with the specialist about our child, to ensure there would be no cruel disappointment.

The specialist in Vilna examined our son and declared emphatically: "Are you trying to mock me? This is definitely not the same child which I examined one month ago!"

"We have only one son. If only we had more..."

"Have you been to Vienna?" (Vienna housed an international medical center.)

"We haven't been to Vienna."

"Where have you been?! What have you done?!!!"

"We went to the Chofetz Chaim who told us what to do."

The doctor understood. "We doctors are able to fix that which already exists. We try to heal a heart defect. But the Chofetz Chaim can create "yesh meayin", something out of nothing at all. Now I can tell you. Your son's heart was completely eaten away. It was "ayin" (did not exist)?"

My hostess turned to me, "Nu," she said. "Now you understand why I am so nervous that my husband still hasn't returned?..." she concluded to Rav Kaplan.

And you, daughter of Yisrael, are you able to greet the Shabbos queen early, according to the description of the Sabba Kadisha? And you, dear husband, will you enable this to happen in your home, following the words of the Chofetz Chaim?

(Heard from Harav Hagaon Rav Moshe Bernstein Shlita who heard it from Hagaon Rav Simcha Kaplan ztz"l shortly before his passing)

(Meir Einei Yisroel II p. 558)



MARAN HAGAON RABBI MOSHE SHMUEL SHAPIRO ZTZ"l:

"LIKRAS SHABBOS LECHU VENELCHA KEE HEE MEKOR HABRACHA"

"COME LET US GO TO GREET THE SHABBOS FOR SHE IS THE SOURCE OF BRACHA"

IF YOU GO TO GREET THE SHABBOS, BY ACCEPTING THE SHABBOS A HALF HOUR BEFORE CANDLE LIGHTING TIME, THEN YOU WILL SEE HOW SHABBOS IS THE SOURCE OF BRACHA"

Some true stories of greeting Shabbos early, with Rav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro ztz"kl:

tz"l and had accepted upon himself, together With his family to be mekabel Shabbos a half hour early.

1.

An avreich came to Rav Moshe Shmuel ztz"l and explained his situation.

Although he learned in an upstanding, choshev kollel, there were many disturbances there to his learning. He had an important reason why he was unable to insult the rosh kollel and leave. The solution, he believed would be to get a position of "Ram" in another yeshiva, but that was unavailable and highly unlikely to occur.

Rav Moshe Shmuel ztz"l advised him that he and his family should accept Shabbos a half hour before candle lighting, and then he would be zoche to mekor habracha, and his desire would be fulfilled. This occurred during the month of Teves. Right before the month of Nissan a new yeshiva gedola opened in his neighborhood. This avreich was offered the position of Ram in the yeshiva (which he holds till today).

A while after the avreich began in his new position, he asked the rosh yeshiva. (who did not know him at all until he became Ram in his yeshiva!) at which point he decided to open the yeshiva. It was then that he discovered that the decision to open the yeshiva was made on the very day that he had been with Rav Moshe Shmuel

2.

An important businessman from a city in Eretz Yisroel saw that his business was failing and he felt helpless to stop the downward spiral. He sought the advice of Rav Moshe Shmuel ztz"l who advised him - and his family - to accept Shabbos a half hour before the time. Today, a few years after this episode, this businessman related to us that, with the help of Hashem, since then, he has seen double bracha in his business, he supports his entire family - avreichiin who sit and learn - and they all heed Rav Moshe Shmuel's advice to be mekabel Shabbos early, for she is the source of bracha.

An early kabbolas Shabbos may be in its entirety, including not eating and davening mincha beforehand, or it may be avoidance of melacha, with the option still of eating food and davening mincha. In any case, candles should not be lit before plag hamincha.

3.

A devoted talmid of Rav Moshe Shmuel's came to see him with his daughter who was in the parsha of shidduchim for a few years

and still had not found her bashert. This was during the month of Shvat and Rav Moshe Shmuel gave her a bracha that she would be engaged by Pesach. The girl said it was hard for her to wait and she asked for a bracha to be engaged by Purim. Rav Moshe Shmuel tz"l answered, "If you want to get engaged by Purim, then you should be mekabel Shabbos a half hour before the time." They followed this advice and the girl got engaged within two weeks.

with no respirator! She gained her strength slowly over Shabbos and returned home healthy a few days later. The mother-in-law related that on erev Shabbos many women called her of their own initiative to say that they had accepted upon themselves to be mekabel Shabbos a half hour early as a zchus for her daughter. The young husband then informed his mother-in-law that the respirator had been detached exactly a half hour before candle lighting.

4.

A man who was rch"l not well and his situation was seriously deteriorating. His friends were deeply pained and approached Rav Moshe Shmuel tz"l who told them that they should all be mekabel Shabbos early as a zchus for their friend. They did as told and b'chasdei Hashem, their friend recovered.

Recently, a young woman who had pneumonia suddenly deteriorated quickly until her life was in danger. She was hospitalized in the intensive care unit at Tel Hashomer hospital and was put on a respirator. On Friday, erev Shabbos, her husband asked the staff when she would be taken off the respirator. The nurses smiled at the 'temimus' of this young man and explained that in that section of the hospital, one doesn't go off the respirator so quickly. The husband went down to daven mincha, kabalos Shabbos and maariv at the hospital shul and returned - to find his wife breathing on her own

5.

Members of a large community in America arrived together in Eretz Yisroel and visited Rav Moshe Shmuel tz"l. They wanted to know in which area they should strengthen themselves, being that there were a number of situations in their community which needed chasdei Hashem. Here too Rav Moshe Shmuel tz"l advised them to be mekabel Shabbos a half hour before the time. The group followed his direction and saw bracha in all their issues.

6.

A wealthy man from chutz laaretz who supported many mosdos of Torah was involved in a big, complicated lawsuit. A representative from Yeshivas Be'er Yaakov approached the man who told him in detail about his court case. The representative quickly called Rav Moshe Shmuel tz"l who advised him to accept Shabbos early. To the wealthy man's amazement, the whole case turned around in his favor.



כי היא מקור הברכה