



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דובער זוגתו מרת אסתר לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גרינבלאט

What Is Shabbos For?

Reb Betzalel was a big Chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and was often on the road traveling to collect *maamad*.

On more than one occasion he was heard musing out loud, "What do the simple villagers do on a long winter Friday night?" The villagers were mostly illiterate when it came to learning so what was there really to do when they could not be out in the farm working the land?

One cold, short winter Friday he finally had the opportunity to find out, or so he thought...

On one of his journeys to collect *maamad*, he was forced to stay over in a small town for Shabbos and was hosted by the only Jewish villager who lived on the outskirts of the forest.

The table was set with challah as they greeted Shabbos by lighting candles. When the sky turned dark, the host told Reb Betzalel that he should daven Kabbalas Shabbos now because the candles won't

be burning for too much longer.

Kiddush was made over challos that were largely burnt and questionable if considered 'whole' according to Shulchan Aruch. The food was promptly brought out. They ate, and said *birchas hamazon* just as the candles flickered and went out.

The host showed Reb Betzalel where he could sleep for the night and off he went to bed.

Without light and with not much else to do, Reb Betzalel sat deep in thought as the silence of the house surrounded him. Suddenly the quiet was broken by the sounds of conversation coming from the bedroom.

He could hear the villager and his wife discussing their cows and what care they each needed. "She is having a baby soon," he heard them say. "We need to make sure she has what she needs. She is a good cow and will give good milk."

The conversation ended and silence returned.

A few hours later, he once again heard them talking. This time it was about making sure the ducks are nice and fat for Purim.

Some time later there was another discussion about animals, farming and their livelihood in the village.

The next morning they all arose and had some coffee with milk.

Davening was not extraordinary in any way. About an hour after he started, the villager was finished and Reb Betzalel was also ready for *kiddush*.

The challos for the Shabbos day *seudah* were in no better shape then the night before. The meal consisted of a cholent that was taken out of the oven. When the meal and *bentching* had concluded, the villager went back for a nap.

Mincha and the third Shabbos meal continued in the same simple fashion as the rest of Shabbos.

When Shabbos ended, they davened Maariv, made

havdalah and lit the oven to have something warm for *melava malka*.

After Shacharis the next morning, Reb Betzalel told his driver to prepare the horse and carriage so they could continue on their journey.

The villager accompanied them to see them off. As they were about to part ways, he turned to Reb Betzalel and with a discernible hint of rebuke in his tone he said, "Now you know what a simple villager does on a long Friday night..."

His message was clear: "Don't disparage the Jewish people who are all pure and holy!"

It was clear that this villager was a member of the hidden *tzaddikim* who craved a life of isolation so they could serve Hashem without any interference and disturbance.

Reb Betzalel got the message and was pained by this his whole life; a lesson well learned. ①

(Adapted from *Likkutei Sippurim*—Perlow, #443)