

Torah Wellsprings

*Collected thoughts
from
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Shlita*

Tosfos Shabbos



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Torah Wellsprings - Tosfos Shabbos

Tosfos Shabbos

Someone who loves Shabbos will try to have as much of it as possible. Friday afternoon, he will usher Shabbos in early, and Motzei Shabbos, he won't begin working the moment night falls. He will bring Shabbos into the night.

This is the spirit of the Mitzvah of the Torah called *Tosafos Shabbos*, which is to add onto Shabbos at its beginning and end.

The Sidduro Shel Shabbos (1:4:11) writes that when Yidden perform *Tosafos Shabbos*, "They should add the thought...that they are showing Hashem how much they love the Shabbos, and therefore, they are adding on to the Shabbos. It states (*Shemos 16:5*), והיה ביום, 'On Friday they will prepare [for Shabbos].' והיה is an expression of joy (see *Bereishis Rabba 42:3*). This is hinting that Hakadosh Baruch Hu has immense joy when we perform *Tosafos Shabbos*."

We say in the *Mussaf* davening on Shabbos, טועמיה חיים זכו. Reb Zalman Sorotzkin *zt'l* explains that those who enjoy the taste of Shabbos (טועמיה), certainly add on to the Shabbos because they want to experience as much of the Shabbos as possible. Their reward is, חיים זכו, they will merit life in Olam HaBa. This is *middah keneged middah*: They honored the holy Shabbos and will therefore be rewarded with the Shabbos of the future (יום שכולו שבת)¹.

Regarding the twelve loaves of bread that were placed on the *Shulchan* in the Beis HaMikdash, it states (*Vayikra 24:8*), ביום השבת ביום, "on the day of Shabbos, on the

day of Shabbos, you shall arrange them." Why does it say ביום השבת twice in this *pasuk*?

Shem Eliezer (written by the rav of Biksad *zt'l*) explains that ביום hints to the weekday, and השבת is Shabbos. So, ביום השבת means we turn part of the weekday into Shabbos. It is written twice because we do this at the beginning of Shabbos and again at the end.

The next word in the *pasuk* is, יערכנו, which means "arrange." It also can be translated as להעריך, to value, to hold in high esteem. Because when one turns the weekday into Shabbos, this expresses his love and respect for the Shabbos. In return, יערכנו, the Shabbos will regard him in high esteem. And since Shabbos is the source of all blessing, Shabbos will bestow many blessings onto him.

The Biksader Rav compared this to a high-ranking official who works for the king. The king holds him in high regard, and therefore his monthly income is much higher than the payment given to a simple soldier in the king's army. Similarly, when one is respected by Shabbos, he will receive a greater reward. He earns this respect by showing his love for Shabbos through performing *Tosafos Shabbos*.

Sources for Tosfos Shabbos

There are two opinions on this matter. However, the Mishnah Berurah concludes that the Halachah is like the majority of Rishonim who maintain that *Tosafos Shabbos* is an obligation.

The primary source of this special Mitzvah is the following *Pasuk* (*Vayikra 23:32*):

1. This can be compared to the popular phrase that people say: If your guest finishes everything on his plate and asks for more, consider it a compliment because it means he enjoys your cooking. You will probably want to invite this guest again, and you will prepare this food again. Similarly, when we show that we love Shabbos by making *Tosafos Shabbos*, we are rewarded with the Shabbos of Olam HaBa.

ועניתם את נפשותיכם בתשעה לחדש "You shall fast on the 9th [of Tishrei]." Yom Kippur, we know, is on the 10th day of Tishrei. Why does the *pasuk* tell us to fast on the 9th? The Gemara (*Rosh Hashanah* 9) replies, הא כיצד מתחיל ומתענה מבעוד, "The *pasuk* instructs to begin fasting when it is still day" He should begin the fast on the 9th of Tishrei, to add a few moments onto Yom Kippur.

The final words of the *pasuk* are, מערב עד, ערב תשבתו שבתכם. From these words the Gemara derives that just as we add some moments at the beginning of Yom Kippur, so too, we must add onto the end of Yom Kippur. The words ערב תשבתו שבתכם teach us that Shabbos and Yom Tov are also included in this obligation.

Therefore, *Shulchan Aruch* (261:2) rules, שצריך להוסיף מחול על הקודש, "One must add from the weekday onto Shabbos." *Shulchan Aruch* writes (*ibid.* 293:1), מאחרין תפלת ערבית כדי להוסיף מחול, על הקודש, "We daven *maariv* later [on *Motzei Shabbos*], to extend the Shabbos into the weekday."

ונוהגים לומר והוא רחום וברכו באריכות נעם כדי להוסיף, מחול על הקודש, "The custom [on *Motzei Shabbos*] is to recite והוא רחום and ברכו in a long, sweet tune, to add some moments onto the Shabbos." Although this adds only a few seconds to the Shabbos, it is also considered *Tosafos Shabbos*.

The Shaarei Teshuvah (*ibid.*) writes in the name of the Chida: "One who draws out ברוך ה' המברך on *Motzei Shabbos* will be saved from damage throughout the week. The Chida also writes that he saw in the holy writings of Reb Chaim Vital, in the name of Rav Hai Gaon, z'l, that there is a קבלה דמוסי, a proven *segulah*, that if one draws out ברוך ה' המברך on *Motzei Shabbos*, he will succeed in all of his endeavors."

We learn from the above the incredible blessings one earns for *Tosafos Shabbos*, and even for just a short moment of *Tosafos Shabbos*. For that, he earns protection and success in all his endeavors!

Another reason for *Tosafos Shabbos* is to protect us from transgressing the Shabbos itself, *chalilah*.

The *Mishnah Berurah* (261:19) explains the halachic angle of *Tosafos Shabbos*: "If a person does *melachah* during this time, he won't be transgressing a *lav* (prohibition) and won't be punished with *kares*. However, he is transgressing a מצוות עשה מן התורה, a positive commandment of the Torah, to turn a bit of the weekday into Shabbos."

There are other sources in the Torah for *Tosafos Shabbos*. One is (*Shemos* 31:16) ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת, "Bnei Yisroel kept the Shabbos to make the Shabbos." The Or HaChaim asks about the expression, לעשות את השבת, "to make the Shabbos." How does one make Shabbos? Hashem makes Shabbos, not us!

In one explanation, the Or HaChaim answers, "The [minutes and hours] that one adds from the weekdays to Shabbos, Hashem agrees and calls it Shabbos. So, this person *made Shabbos* - literally. Bnei Yisroel turns a part of Friday afternoon and part of *Motzei Shabbos* - which are weekdays - into Shabbos."²

Remarkably, a human being has this ability. The holy Shabbos belongs to Hashem. How can we create it? But the Torah says that every Yid can. He can turn the weekday into Shabbos.

Chazal (*Shabbos* 118:) say, אלמלי משמרין ישראל, שתי שבתות מיד נגאלין, "If all Yidden keep two Shabbosim, they will be redeemed,

2. Yet another source for *Tosafos Shabbos* is (*Yeshayah* 58:13) וקראת לשבת עונג. The Zohar says that this alludes to the mitzvah of *Tosafos Shabbos*, but the Zohar doesn't elaborate. Rebbe Yitzchak Vorker z'l explains that it is because it states, וקראת, to call out to Shabbos. One calls to his friend when he is at a distant from him. If he is nearby, there is no reason to call him. Therefore, וקראת לשבת עונג, to call the Shabbos, hints to *Tosafos Shabbos*. (שש"ק ח"א תכ"ה).

immediately." The Yeitav Panim (*Shabbos HaGadol* 2) says שתי שבתות, "two Shabbosim" are referring to the very same Shabbos. Because Shabbos has two parts: the Shabbos that Hashem makes and the Shabbos that Klal Yisroel creates (through *Tosafos Shabbos*). When Yidden keep both aspects of Shabbos (שתי שבתות), Moshiach will come.

Or, in other words, *Tosafos Shabbos* is *mesugal* for bringing the *Geulah*.

Why?

The Yeitav Panim explains:

When we make *Tosafos Shabbos* we are bringing Shabbos in before its set time. Hashem acts with us *middah keneged middah*. Just as we bring in Shabbos before its time, Hashem will also bring us the Shabbos of the future – יום שכולו שבת, the era of Moshiach – before its set time.

Benefits of Tosfos Shabbos

Chazal (*Kiddushin* 39:) teach us, שכר מצוה בהאי עולם ליכא, "The reward for keeping the mitzvos is not received in this world."

But there are exceptions to this rule. Some good deeds are rewarded in this world, too. One example is *Tosafos Shabbos*.

The Yeitav Panim writes that the rule שכר מצוה בהאי עולם ליכא, applies when one performs only the minimum requirement of the Mitzvah. When one goes beyond the bare obligation, like when one keeps *Tosafos Shabbos*, he is rewarded in this world, too.

One can merit בני חיי ומזוני, children, health, and longevity, *parnassah*, and more from keeping *Tosafos Shabbos*.³

בני, Children

The Arizal would instruct those who didn't have children to keep *Tosafos Shabbos* at its beginning and end and to teach others to do the same, because doing so is *mesugal* for bearing children (*Segulas Yisroel, Banim*).

Shulchan Aruch (256) discusses the bringing in of Shabbos early as a precaution against *chillul Shabbos*. "The minhag in the holy Jewish communities is that about a half-hour or an hour before Shabbos, the ש"ץ announces that everyone should prepare for Shabbos... This should be done everywhere."

The Mishnah Berurah explains, "This is a precaution so that people won't come to *chillul Shabbos*. In large communities where it is insufficient for one person to announce the approach of Shabbos, it is proper that volunteers should circulate in the streets of the city to urge people to close their shops and go home to light their Shabbos *lecht*. Today, many cities have people doing this; fortunate is their portion, for they are making the Jewish nation righteous before their father in heaven. Those who continually do this Mitzvah will merit children *gedolei Yisroel*."

Why will they merit children *gedolei Yisroel*? The Shaar HaTzion (from the Mishnah Berurah) explains, "The Gemara (*Shabbos* 23:) says, הזהיר בנר הזוין לו בנים תלמידי חכמים, "Those who are cautious with the *mitzvos* of נר (such as to light Shabbos *lecht*) will bear children *talmidei chachamim*." A person earns this reward even when he, alone, is careful with this Mitzvah. Certainly, when he is מוזהר הרבים by encouraging others to light Shabbos *lecht* and to keep Shabbos properly, he will merit children *talmidei chachamim*. Chazal tells us that when Elkanah was עולה לרגל (went up to the Beis HaMikdash for the Yom Tov) he would encourage others to do the same. Hakadosh Baruch Hu told him,

3. The reward is without limit. Chazal (*Shabbos* 118.) say, כל המענג את השבת נותנים לו נחלה בלי מצרים, "Whoever honors and enjoys the Shabbos, will be rewarded without boundaries." The Ben Yehoyada says the Gemara is referring to the reward of keeping *Tosafos Shabbos*. Shabbos has a גבול, boundary – when it begins and when it ends. When one adds onto Shabbos, and increases its boundaries, his reward will be *midah kneged midah* – נחלה בלי מצרים, boundless and unlimited.

'Your intention is לזכות את ישראל, to increase the merits of the Jewish nation. I will give you a son who is מזכה את ישראל, who will increase the merits of the Jewish nation.' And he bore Shmuel Hanavi."

So, we see that by bringing in Shabbos early, and especially by encouraging others to do so, one merits children *talmidei chachamim*.

A distraught father once came to the Pnei Menachem *zt'l* and told him that his son went off the *derech*, *r'l*. The Pnei Menachem replied, "My father, the Imrei Emes, *zt'l*, would say that *Tosafos Shabbos* is *mesugal* for all types of *Yeshuos*. Therefore, I recommend that you, your wife, and your children keep *Tosafos Shabbos*, and during that time, you should recite *Tehillim*. You will see wonders."

The man says that it took just a few weeks, and his son returned home and did *teshuvah sheleimah*.

One of the harsh *gezeiros* that the Yidden in exile endured was the Cantonists decree, where young Jewish children were forcibly drafted into the Czarist army and, as a result, were estranged from Yiddishkeit.

A committee of Lithuanian Rabbanim sent a letter to Rebbe Mordechai of Lechovitz *zt'l* regarding the Cantonists decree. The messenger who delivered the letter was Reb Meir of Mir, a student of Rebbe Mordechai of Lechovitz *zt'l*. When Reb Meir arrived, the Lechovitzer was pacing in his room, saying *Tehillim* from the *Tehillim* he inherited from Rebbe Shlomo Karliner *zt'l*. After some time, the Lechovitzer said to Reb Meir, "Tell the rabbanim that if the Lithuanian Yidden accept Shabbos two hours earlier, I take it upon myself to annul all harsh decrees" (*Toras Avos* p.281).

An older *bachur* from America traveling to his *yeshiva* in Eretz Yisroel added a stopover in London because he wanted to daven at the *kever* of Reb Shalom of Shatz *zt'l*, who is buried there. Reb Shalom promised that he would help those who come to his grave on Friday and accept upon

themselves a good *kabbalah*. If they are sincere about their *kabbalah*, he promised, he would help them attain a *yeshuah*.

As this *bachur* stood at the *kever* of Reb Shalom of Shatz, early Friday morning, he made a *kabbalah* that he will bring in Shabbos a half-hour early.

Wanting to get to Eretz Yisroel for Shabbos, he quickly took a taxi straight to the airport. He arrived at his apartment late in the afternoon. It was a half-hour before Shabbos when he took out his *beketcha* from the suitcase. He was dismayed when he realized that a tube of toothpaste had burst in his suitcase, and his *beketcha* was dirtied with white streaks.

He didn't wash his *beketcha*; it was a half-hour to Shabbos, and due to his *kabbalah*, it was already Shabbos for him. Embarrassed to go to his regular *Minyan*, he davened all three Shabbos *tefillos* in an old-age-home nearby. People didn't know him there, and he felt less embarrassed.

An elderly resident of the nursing home greeted him, and they spoke a bit together. The *bachur* told him about his new *kabbalah* and that he couldn't clean his jacket, so he was davening in a place where people didn't know him. The older man was impressed by this *bachur's* conviction and tried to help the *bachur* find a *shidduch*. Tuesday of that same week, the *bachur* was engaged to the granddaughter of this old man. This story demonstrates that *Tosafos Shabbos* is *mesugal* for all *yeshuos*, *nachas* from children, and *shidduchim*, too.

ח"י, Life

Shulchan Aruch (256) requires people to finish their work early on *erev Shabbos*, so they don't end up working on Shabbos, *chalilah*. The *Pri Megadim* adds that we should be even more cautious during the winter when Shabbos arrives early. He concludes, המוסיף מחול על הקודש מוסיפין לו חיים, "Whoever adds from the weekday onto Shabbos, will live a longer life." *Tosafos Shabbos* is *mesugal* for longevity.

We can explain it like this:

Adam and Chavah ate from the Tree of Knowledge on Friday afternoon. The Midrash states that if Adam and Chavah would have waited for Shabbos, they would be permitted to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Their sin was they ate from the tree too early, on Friday afternoon. For this *aveirah*, the concept of death was introduced in the world. The Imrei Emes zt'l says, when we keep *Tosafos Shabbos*, we turn Friday afternoon into Shabbos. This means that, in retrospect, when Adam and Chavah ate from the Tree of Knowledge, it was already Shabbos. They ate the fruit at a time of day, which is now Shabbos. Consequently, *Tosafos Shabbos* atones for their sin. Now, since their sin brought death to the world and *Tosafos Shabbos* is a rectification of their sin, its observance adds life.

Reb Simchah Kaplan zt'l (rav of Tzfas) says that when he was young, he learned in Mir (Poland), and he ate and slept in the home of a kind and elderly couple who had only one son. Once, early Friday morning, the husband was getting ready to go to the marketplace, and his wife told him, "Don't forget. It's Friday. Come back early." She said this several times, and Reb Simchah Kaplan wondered why she was so anxious about it.

Later that day, around noon, Reb Simchah returned from yeshiva and found his hostess standing at the window, waiting for her husband to return. Reb Simchah Kaplan said, "There's still plenty of time until Shabbos. Why are you so worried?"

She replied, "It's a story, and since you asked, I will tell you. As you know, we have only one son. He was born twelve years after our *chasunah*. We were so happy when he was born, but then came a new worry. The child wasn't healthy. The best doctor of Krakow (we lived in Krakow at the time) examined our child and told us that he was suffering from a serious heart ailment, a condition he was unable to treat. He recommended that we travel to Vilna, where there was a heart

specialist – the top in the field – because it was a very severe case.

"We took our son to Vilna, but even this great specialist said that he couldn't help us. 'There is no known cure for this condition,' he said."

"Before returning to Krakow, we made a stop in Radin so that we could speak to the Chofetz Chaim. The Chofetz Chaim was old and frail at the time, but Baruch Hashem, after making some *hishtadlus*, we were permitted to speak with the Chofetz Chaim. We told him about our child's illness and the doctors' prognosis. He replied, 'Why did you come to me? I can't be מושיע מתים.'

We broke down and cried.

"The Chofetz Chaim's grandson was in the room at that time, and he pleaded with the Chofetz Chaim, 'This is their only son; he was born after twelve years of waiting. And now the child's life is in danger. We can't send them away empty-handed.'

"The Chofetz Chaim asked us, 'Are you ready to be *mekabel* to keep *Tosafos Shabbos*?'"

"We replied that we would do so. The Chofetz Chaim said, 'Bring Shabbos in early, when it is still well before Shabbos, and you will see *yeshuos*.' As we were riding home, the child began feeling better. By the time we came home, our son was completely well.

"We showed our son to the doctor. The doctor was an irreligious Yid and was shocked by the miracle the Chofetz Chaim performed. He gave us money and asked us to return to the doctor in Vilna to show him the miracle that occurred to our son. We traveled to Vilna – we wanted to make certain that our child was completely out of danger. When the doctor saw the child, he said, 'This can't be the child you brought me before! That child was beyond hope.'

"We told the doctor about the Chofetz Chaim's *brachah* and promise. The doctor said, 'There isn't a doctor in the world that

could cure your son. The Chofetz Chaim performed a miracle, יש מאין.¹¹

After telling this story, she said to Reb Simchah Kaplan, "Now, I am sure you understand why I am anxious that my husband comes home early."

מוזני, Parnassah

Tosafos Shabbos is also *mesugal* for *parnassah*.

Rebbe Mordechai Lechovitzer says, "*Baalebatim* complain that they don't have enough *parnassah*. If they listened to me, they would keep *Tosafos Shabbos*, and then they would lack nothing."

Reb Mendel of Rimanov *zt'l* said that this is alluded to in the Gemara (*Shabbos* 118.): עשה שבתך חול ואל תצטרך לבריית עשה שבתך חול, bring your Shabbos into the weekdays through *Tosafos Shabbos*, ואל תצטרך לבריית, and you will never need assistance from others.

Rebbe Noach of Lechovitz *zt'l* (*Divrei Shmuel, Likutim* 6) explained the pasuk (Bereishis 49:20) מאשר שמנה לחמו והוא יתן מעדני מלך:

אשר are the letters before שבת. So אשר alludes to *Tosafos Shabbos*, the moments before שבת. The pasuk says מאשר, from *Tosafos Shabbos*, שמנה לחמו, one earns *parnassah*. והוא, from Shabbos itself, יתן מעדני מלך, one receives spirituality, *ruchniyos*, the King's pleasures. Because Shabbos is מקור הברכות, the root of all blessings. Shabbos extends spiritual blessings, and the merit of *Tosafos Shabbos* provides material and worldly salvation.

The *Tola'as Yaakov* (*Sod HaShabbos* 6) explains that when one keeps *Tosafos Shabbos*, he is broadening the boundaries of *kedushah*, for he is turning the weekday into Shabbos. Heaven will therefore treat him in the same way (*midah kneged midah*) and broaden his *parnassah*.

Be Ready for Shabbos Early

According to the Rambam, *Tosafos Shabbos* isn't an obligation. Nevertheless, even according to the Rambam, it is ideal to be ready for Shabbos early. It is an honor for Shabbos when one is prepared for Shabbos before Shabbos arrives.

As the Rambam (*Hilchos Shabbos* 30:2) writes, איזהו כבוד, זה שאמרו חכמים שמצוה על אדם לרחוץ פניו ידיו ורגליו בחמין בערב שבת מפני כבוד השבת ומתעטף בציצית ויושב בכבוד ראש מיחל להקבלת פני השבת כמו שהוא יוצא לקראת המלך, וחכמים הראשונים היו מקבצין תלמידיהן בערב שבת ומתעטפים ואומרים בואו ונצא לקראת שבת המלך, "How does one honor the Shabbos? The Chachamim taught: On *erev Shabbos* it is a Mitzvah to wash one's face, hands, and feet with hot water, to honor the Shabbos. And then one should wrap himself in a talis and sit with devotion (כבוד ראש) as he awaits the Shabbos... The early Chachamim would gather their students on *erev Shabbos*, wrap themselves, and say, 'Let's go out to greet the king – the Shabbos.'"

Similarly, *Shulchan Aruch* (262) states, "[*Erev Shabbos*] set the table, make the beds, and get the home ready, so everything will be in order when he comes home from shul... One should attempt to wear nice clothing, and to be happy when Shabbos arrives, like someone who goes out to greet a king or to greet a bride and groom."

Rachmei Ha'Av (*Shabbos*) writes, "One must be very careful to be a שומר שבת. This means to wait⁴ for Shabbos to arrive; it shouldn't be that Shabbos waits for him. Most important, storeowners should practice *zrizus* and close their stores early. When it is close to Shabbos, the *yetzer hara* sends many customers to their stores. Some customers will say that they need to buy items important for Shabbos, such as Shabbos *lecht*. Don't pay attention to their pleas. They are messengers of the *yetzer hara*. I heard a wonderful story about a wealthy Yid called Reb Isser'l. He had a

4. One of the translations of שומר is to wait and to aspire (see Bereishis 37:11)

large store that sold precious silks. Every *Erev Shabbos*, at *chatzos*, midday, he closed the store. Once, the *Samech Mem* (the *yetzer hara*) tested Reb Isser'l and sent a high-ranking official to his store. The official gathered precious rolls of silk. Before he had a chance to measure the rolls to know the length of each roll, it turned *chatzos*. The wealthy Isser'l told him that it was time to close the store. The official pleaded and begged Isser'l to sell him the material, but he refused. He closed the store and lost out on a very lucrative sale. Hashem rewarded Reb Isser'l for this and gave him a holy son, the Rema, מאורן של ישראל, who is a brilliant light for Bnei Yisroel to this day."

In his youth, Reb Hirsh Riminover *zt'l* worked as a gofer for a tailor, delivering the finished clothing to customers' homes. Sometimes, on *Erev Shabbos*, he delivered clothes to the house of a simple family. He was always impressed by the Shabbos atmosphere that permeated in that home, so early on Friday afternoon. The home was prepared for Shabbos by midday, the table was set,⁵ and the head of the family would be sitting at the table, studying the *parashah* (*maavir sidrah*). When Reb Hirsh Riminover would leave this home, he would daven, "May I also merit marrying into a family that Shabbos is felt there so powerfully." Hashem heard Reb Hirsh Riminover's *tefillah*, and he eventually married a daughter of this family.

The Ridvaz *zt'l*, the rav of Slotzk, became very ill. In his dream, he saw the heavenly court judging him, determining whether he will stay alive or not. The Ridvaz pleaded before the court, "How can you take me? I'm so young, and I did not yet finish what I can accomplish in life. I began a commentary on Yerushalmi, and I didn't finish it yet!" The court responded that someone else could complete the commentary.

The Ridvaz further argued, "I support many widows and orphans. Who will feed them if I die?"

The court replied, "Some *baalei tzedakah* will take your place. You can stay up here in heaven."

The Ridvaz said, "Thursday night, the table of our home is already covered with a white tablecloth *l'kovod Shabbos*, and my wife and I bring in Shabbos early."

The court replied, "In this merit, you will live many more years." He woke up feeling much better. He recovered, completed his commentary on the Yerushalmi, and moved to Tzfas, to serve as the rav.

The Gemara (*Kesubos* 103:) teaches:

"If a person dies in the midst of laughter, it is a good sign (as it shows that he will be going to Olam HaBa - the place of happiness), but if he dies amidst crying, it is a bad sign (as it shows he is going to Gehinom, a place of crying). If his face is turned upwards, it is a good sign (because it means he will go to heaven). If his face is turned downwards, it is a bad sign (as it indicates he will go down to Gehinom). If he dies facing people, it is a good sign, if he faces the wall, it is a bad sign."

Then the Gemara states the following: "If he dies on *Erev Shabbos*, it is a good sign (as it is a sign that he will immediately go to the place of rest and tranquility in Olam HaBa). If he is *niftar* on *Motzei Shabbos*, it is a bad sign."

The Toldos (end of *sefer*, and Baal Shem Tov *al haTorah Bereishis* 79) writes, "My teacher (the Baal Shem Tov *zt'l*) asks is it in the hands of man to choose to die on *Erev Shabbos*?"

"The Baal Shem Tov explains that the Gemara is teaching a great lesson. A person should *ימות בערב שבת*, act as though he is dead on *Erev Shabbos*. He should abandon all work, as though he is dead so that he can

5. The Ateres Tzvi of Zidichov *zt'l* said that having the table covered on Friday, from midday, is mesugal for shalom bayis.

prepare for Shabbos. If he does so, he will be saved from חיבוט הקבר, beatings of the grave.

There are always many things to take care of. There are work, chores, and family obligations, but if you get carried away with these matters, you won't properly greet the Shabbos. Shabbos requires preparation.

For example Tzaddikim taught that it is good to sleep on *Erev Shabbos*, so you will be able to daven well and greet the Shabbos with joy. Being *maavir sidrah* on Friday also helps one welcome the Shabbos in the right

spirit. Perhaps you can also cook or bake something tasty for Shabbos in the kitchen. If you are the head of the family, it would be good for you to prepare the *parashah*, perhaps prepare a few inspirational stories, so you will have what to speak about during the meal. The problem is, who has time for all this? But if you pretend you are dead on *Erev Shabbos*, you can dedicate your time towards preparing for Shabbos. This is a good sign for you. If you do so, after your *petirah*, you will go straight to Gan Eden, and you won't be punished with חיבוט הקבר, beatings of the grave.