

Good Shabbos Everyone. Every week Jews around the world celebrate the gift of Shabbos with uplifting prayer, sumptuous meals, song, inspiring words of Torah and rest. The more a Jew separates himself from weekday activities, weekday thought and weekday speech on Shabbos, the more he will feel the special happiness of the Holy Day.

One of the primary ways we differentiate Shabbos from the rest of the days of the week is by not going to our jobs on Shabbos. This idea is mentioned in this week's parsha, as Moshe tells the Bnai Yisroel regarding the manna (the food that fell from heaven) - "Six days shall you gather it, but the seventh day is a Shabbos..." (Shemos 16:26) Manna was the sustenance of the Jewish people in the wilderness. Thus, Manna symbolizes making a living; just as we call money "dough" or "bread" in the colloquial.

Moshe was instructing the people not to pursue their livelihoods on Shabbos. Thus, a Jew can relax on Shabbos and not worry about money he could be making. Because, Hashem provides a double portion of income during the week to cover Shabbos also. As the verse teaches us, "See, Hashem has given you the Shabbos, that is why He gives you on the sixth day a two-day portion of bread." (Shemos 16:29) The following true story illustrates two Jewish families' commitment to not working on Shabbos.

Over the years Moshe had labored as a carpenter, as a textile factory employee, and subsequently as an assembly line worker at the local bottling company. That is the way it was in New York City in the early 1900's in America, which was supposed to be the land of golden opportunity. Many Jews succumbed to their need for money and desecrated the sacred Shabbos by working on that holy day. But Moshe was included among those few whose unwavering faith could not be broken. He had arrived two years earlier with a commitment to never violate the Shabbos and he was determined to adhere to that hallowed pledge.

Though he could not read English well, his minimal comprehension of the language confirmed his worst fears. Their eviction would take effect the first of the month. Moshe immediately arranged a meeting with Mr. Wells, the landlord of his apartment building, and pleaded for a one-month extension.

Mr. Wells, a compassionate man nonetheless, would not bend. "I'm sorry, Goldman, but the bills got to be paid." After Moshe made a desperate plea, he and Mr. Wells negotiated a compromise, buying the Goldman family some additional time. They were allowed to remain in the building, although they would have to leave their apartment and move into the dark, damp cellar. Their new apartment was actually the building's coal room; thick black soot permeated the entire room and with it their meager belongings. Soot was everywhere, on everything, always.

One day, Mark Bookman, a local Jewish businessman and philanthropist, was driving through Moshe's neighborhood and glanced out of his car window to see an unusual sight — two black boys wearing yarmulkas. Impossible, he thought.

Mr. Bookman instructed his driver to pull over to the side of the road as he called aside the two "black" boys to inquire about their origin. Upon closer examination he discovered that they were two fair colored young Jewish boys who were covered in black soot. "What happened to you?" Mr. Bookman inquired.

The young boys described their heartbreaking living conditions, the grimy coal room, and their resulting bizarre appearance. "Would you boys be able to show me where you live?" Mr. Bookman requested. And before he could offer them a ride, the anxious boys eagerly scampered down the street.

The chauffeured car pulled up in front of the apartment building. Mr. Bookman got out of the

car, followed the energetic boys down the staircase into the filthy cellar and waited patiently by the doorway to their "apartment." "Mommy, we have a guest," the boys shouted.

Overcome with compassion, Mr. Bookman removed his checkbook, put pen to paper and wrote out a check for \$5,000, an enormous sum of money — sufficient income to support an entire family for more than a year. Mrs. Goldman, moved beyond words, silently accepted the much-needed funds as

Mr. Bookman excused himself and hastily departed. She could hardly believe her good fortune. Her exhausted husband would be thrilled with this incredible sequence of events. She had thought that the Hashem had answered her prayers.

Later that day, Moshe arrived home, crushed by the burden of another futile job interview. How much more could he take? He glanced at his wife and noticed that she seemed to be in an unusually joyful mood. He then stared down in amazement at the check that lay before him. "Where did this come from?" he asked incredulously. "Earlier this afternoon some goodhearted person unexpectedly walked in and presented us with it," she replied, sensing skepticism in her husband's tone of voice.

"Well, we can't accept it." Moshe quietly declared. "Why not? Mr. Bookman gave it wholeheartedly!" Ettel his wife pleaded, | the frustration mounting in her voice. "Ettel, I know who Mark Bookman is. The man is a mechallel Shabbos (Shabbos Desecrator) We have not sacrificed for the last two years to observe Shabbos only to be rescued financially by one who desecrates the Shabbos!"

Early the next morning Reb Moshe paid a visit to Bookman's sweater factory. After some informal introductions, Reb Moshe plainly announced that although he was extremely grateful, he could not accept the money.

Bookman sincerely wanted to help and couldn't figure out what was troubling Goldman. "It is not about pride. It is about the Shabbos. We refuse to take money from someone who doesn't close his factory on Shabbos. Really, Mr. Bookman, I'm sorry, but It is not up for negotiation." Moshe Goldman abruptly turned and walked out the door.

That night a subdued Mark Bookman entered his home. His wife immediately recognized that something serious was troubling her husband and tried to get him to talk about it, as she had never seen him so distraught. "I can't believe he turned it down," Mark declared as he proceeded to relay the entire episode to his wife. With tears brimming in his eyes, Mark remembered how much he and his wife had once treasured the Shabbos. Then, one week, when business was very slow and they were short on money and they left the store open "just this one time" on Shabbos. One thing led to another and eventually, they had lost all of their Judaism.

The next week, Mr. Bookman paid a visit to Moshe. "Come in, the door's open," called Moshe as he skimmed through the classified section in the rear of the coal room. Mark Bookman entered the room wearing a broad smile. "Hello, Reb Moshe. I just wanted to bring this by." Mark placed a check on the table and turned to walk away. "I thought I already told you that..."

"Last week," Mark interrupted, "when you returned the check, I thought deeply about what you had said and it stirred memories that had been trapped inside of me for the past ten years. You see, my wife and I were also once Shomer Shabbos. This past week, an hour before sunset, we entered the factory and proudly announced that the factory would be closed until Sunday morning. When I arrived home on Friday afternoon and watched my wife light the Shabbos candles for the first time in ten years, I felt as if I had returned home from a long, lonely journey. "Moshe, thank you for bringing me home!" (Touched by a Story, p. 101 R. Yechiel Spiro)

Let us be inspired by this story to take advantage of the holy Shabbos by resting on this wonderful day. **Good Shabbos Everyone.**