

By the Grace of G-d
4th of Elul, 5734
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. Chase Chene Peerce
370 Beechmont Drive
New Rochelle, N.Y.

Blessing and Greeting:

I am in receipt of your letter of Aug. 14. Needless to say, I am very sorry that my previous letter has caused you some anguish, which, of course was not intended nor anticipated. I therefore hasten to reply to your letter in order to clarify my intent and, hopefully, to dispel your anxiety.

By way of preface, you must not think that I take personal offense if the suggestions which I convey in writing or orally are not followed. Certainly, in your case, there was no thought in my mind that if my suggestions were not accepted there would be cause for apprehension, etc. It is only that when I am asked for advice and the like, I offer it as I see it, to the best of my knowledge, in the best interests of the inquirer, and in the case of your husband and yourself - in the best interests also of those in your environment.

Now to your letter and my previous one, to which it refers. I am certain that your husband can accomplish a great deal in his field, and that he can accomplish it in a way that will be beneficial to the cause of Yiddishkeit, which will be a source of blessing to yourselves and many others, as indicated above. The more the activities are in harmony with G-d's directives - and Shabbos observance is one of the most important ones, not only as a basic Mitzvah of the Torah, but also of the Ten Commandments - the wider are opened the channels to receive G-d's blessings.

In the present instance there is a further benefit in that generally when there is a proposition to appear in a show or entertainment, and, in the nature of things, such propositions may have both positive and negative aspects - the question of Shabbos and Yom Tov observance can serve as a test of its desirability. For if it has to be declined on this ground, it is an indication that it is not desirable also on other grounds, including the material aspect.

The above may seem like a mystical approach to material things. But on deeper reflection it can be seen that the mystical approach is also a practical one. Moreover, in recent years we have seen that ^{where} certain celebrities ~~who~~ insisted on Shabbos observance, their religious convictions were respected. To cite some instances: The American Grand Master of Chess, Samuel Reshevsky, participating in a tournament in Moscow,

refused to play on Shabbos, and the game was postponed for after Shabbos. And although religion is not at a 'premium' in that country, it only raised his prestige. It was also beneficial to him from a practical viewpoint, for it gave him an opportunity to rest an extra day in between games, which, needless to say, are rather strenuous.

The world chess champion, B. Fisher, who is a Jew, though he professes to be a follower of the Seventh Day Adventists, also refused to play on Shabbos, even though he forfeited the game, but it did not hurt his chances to win the crown.

A further example from the world of business. A personal friend of mine participated in an International Fair in Moscow some 4 or 5 years ago. He notified the authorities that he could do no business on Shabbos, and a special session was arranged for him on Sunday. It turned out highly satisfactory for him, even business-wise, quite unintentionally and unexpectedly.

You write that you hesitated to show my letter to your husband, not knowing if he would follow my suggestion, etc. But I do not see why you should be apprehensive, since, as I explained above, it is not connected with any stricture on my part. It is only free advice which, I believe, is for his benefit also materially, in addition to the spiritual aspects. But if he is not ready yet to accept it, I ~~trust~~ *trust in certain* we will remain good friends as before.

firmly
May I add that apparently I give your husband more credit than you, for I believe that he is capable of forgoing the material gain and personal satisfaction of appearing in a show if he will be convinced that there is a worthwhile cause to warrant it. At any rate, my suggestion was based on the assumption that it would come - as you express it in regard to yourself and also your husband, "from within, on a voluntary basis," being certain that your husband already has it "within" him, and only needs to bring out to the surface in actual deed.

Be it as it may, I trust that the present letter will not cause you a "difficult week," G-d forbid, and I am looking forward to good tidings. Especially as we have now entered the month of Elul, which is an auspicious month for Jews in all their affairs.

At this time, in accordance with the centuries old Jewish custom to wish one another a Happy New Year from the beginning of Elul, I extend to you and your husband and all yours prayerful wishes for a Kesivo vaChasimo Toivo for a good and sweet year.

With blessing, *M. Schwartz*

P.S. I leave it to your discretion if and when to show this letter to your husband, and you have my fullest consent to do so now or later.