

Yosef-Who-Honors-Shabbat

A man known as Yosef-Who-Honors-Shabbat lived in the vicinity of a certain non-Jew, a man of great wealth. The astrologers said to this wealthy man: One called Yosef-Who-Honors-Shabbat will eat up all of your wealth. The rich man went out and sold all of his possessions, buying with the proceeds a gem which he affixed to his turban. While he was crossing a bridge the wind blew off his turban and sent it into the water where a fish swallowed the precious stone.

A fisherman caught the fish and brought it to the market just before Shabbat as the market was about to close. The fisherman lamented: Who will buy at this late hour? The merchants said: Go and bring the fish to Yosef-Who-Honors-Shabbat as he has the habit of buying things for the Sabbath—even at the last minute. He brought Yosef the fish and he bought it. Yosef cut it open and found the gem which he sold it for thirteen jars full of gold dinars.

A certain old man met Yosef and said: One who lends to Shabbat, Shabbat repays him.

(Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 119a)