

Remember the Sabbath Day **Rabbi Zev-Hayyim Feyer**

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Parshat Yitro

Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. And the seventh day is a Shabbat unto thine Eternal G*d, in which thou shalt do no work – thou, thy son and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and any visitor within thy gates. For in six days did the Eternal make the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is within them, contentedly pausing on the seventh day; thus did the Eternal bless the Sabbath Day and hallow it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

Remember the Sabbath Day. Rashi says that remembering Shabbat is a mitzvah (commandment) that we can observe each day of the week. "If you find a special object during the week," he says, "put it aside for Shabbat." Many of the early Hassidic masters would make it a point each day of the week to go to the market and seek out some item that was fine enough to be purchased explicitly for Shabbat.

Remember the Sabbath Day. In the daily morning prayer (Shaharit), we recite the Psalm of the day. Each daily Psalm is introduced formulaically, as we say, "Today is the [first, second, etc.] day of the Shabbat, on which the Levites in the Holy Temple would recite. . . ." This, too, is how we remember Shabbat throughout the week.

Remember the Sabbath Day. The Talmudic sage Rabbi Yehuda ben B'teira points out that, in virtually every known language, the days of the week have names – in English, we call them Sunday, Monday, and so forth. Only in Hebrew, he tells us, are the days merely numbered – *yom rishon* (the first day), *yom sheni* (the second day), etc. By designating the days numerically, we are reminding ourselves of their culmination, the one day to which we give a name, Shabbat. Again, we thus "remember" Shabbat every day of the week.

Remember the Sabbath Day. We do so when we recite the kiddush and light candles to welcome Shabbat on Friday night.

Remember the Sabbath Day. However we may greet one another during the week – hello, good morning, good evening, shalom – on Shabbat we virtually always greet each other with "*Gut Shabbos*" (Yiddish) or "*Shabbat Shalom*" (Hebrew). Even on weekdays, at least those toward the end of the week, we often offer each other Shabbat greetings, as an advance taste of Shabbat and, also, just in case we do not encounter each other on Shabbat, so that we will have "Shabbosed" together, at least a little bit.

To the remembering of Shabbat all the days of our lives, may we speedily be led.

Shabbat Shalom.