

Remember the Sabbath Day

Parsha Yitro

Maimonides Positive Commandment #155

The 155th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to make a verbal declaration when *Shabbos* enters and when it leaves. We must mention the greatness and exalted character of this day, and how it is distinct from the other days of the week which precede it and follow it. The source of this commandment is G-d's statement (exalted be He), "Remember the *Shabbos* day to sanctify it." This means that one should commemorate it through mentioning its holiness and greatness. This is the *mitzvah* of *Kiddush*. The *Mechilta* says the following: " 'Remember the *Shabbos* day to sanctify it,' — this means one should sanctify it through reciting a blessing."

The Sages said explicitly, "Remember [*Kiddush*] over wine." The Sages also said, "Sanctify it when it enters and when it leaves," [the phrase, "when it leaves"] referring to *Havdalah*, which is also part of our commandment to remember *Shabbos*.

Wine

Therefore we are commanded to perform this deed with wine, for a man's nature is greatly stirred by it, as it sustains and gives joy. And I have already told you that to the degree that a man is moved and inspired by his deed, so is he always influenced. (Sefer Hachinuch - Mitzvah 31)

Spices

Why is the blessing recited over spices on Saturday night? Because the soul is forlorn by reason of the departure of the Sabbath. Therefore, we gladden it and settle it with a pleasant fragrance. (Maimonides laws of Shabbat Ch. 29 Law 29)

Flame

We do not recite the blessing over the flame until we derive benefit from its light to the extent that one could differentiate between the coin of one country and that of another. (ibid. Law 25)