

I'VE GOT SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR YOU

by Torah.org

"I have a great gift in my storehouse!" This is what G-d told the Jewish people when He gave them the Mitzvah of Shabbos, the Commandment to rest on Saturday, the seventh day of the week — the same day G-d Himself chose as His own day of rest after the six days of creation (Talmud Beitza 16a).

"Six days of work will be done, and the seventh day should be holy (*Kodesh*) for you (Exodus 35:2)." How do we make Shabbos holy? *Kodesh* is more accurately translated as 'set aside' or 'special.' True, observing the Sabbath involves many laws, from lighting special candles before the Sabbath arrives to refraining from constructive activities. But there is a unifying theme to all these laws, which is to treat Shabbos as *Kodesh* — special.

Shammai, the famous elder of the Talmud, would search throughout the week for the best cut of meat he could find, and save it for Shabbos. If he had already made his purchase and then found an even better cut, he would consume the first one and reserve the new one for Shabbos. This way he had Shabbos on his mind the entire week (Talmud Beitza 16a).

In our day, a woman in our community told us that she has a vivid memory of her father announcing every Friday, as sunset approached, "One hour left until Shabbos... 30 minutes until Shabbos... 15 minutes until Shabbos." Every member of the family looked forward to the arrival of Shabbos with excitement.

Shabbos is indeed a special gift, which G-d gave to the Jewish Nation. Like any gift, routine can mute our original excitement. By anticipating the Shabbos all six days of the week, we train ourselves to always appreciate G-d's precious gift and truly keep it holy.