Welcoming Shabbat

22nd of Tebet, 5771

Every day, my father in law, who lives in Ashdod, Israel, would go to the market and come home with some delicious fruit or treat—declaring that he bought it in honor of Shabbat.

This is the attitude with which we are supposed to welcome the Shabbat queen.Preparing ourselves to welcome Shabbat, every day of the week!

Shabbat is not simply the seventh day of creation, Shabbat is the purpose of Creation. It is not the end of the week, it is the goal of the week. As such, our preparations for it start way before it begins. Every single member of the family should personally help in some way prepare for Shabbat, from the father to the young children.

Before Shabbat arrives one should be bathed and dressed in special clothing, even if one is at home with no guests. The house should be cleaned, as if very important guests were coming. The food should be ready, the table set with Shabbat finery. All items forbidden on Shabbat—known as Muktzeh—should be put away. It is important to check the pockets of the clothes you will use (especially coats!) to make sure there is no money, cell phones, I-Pods or other Muktzeh in it.