Shabbat and the Fourth Commandment

“Zakhor et yom haShabbat leqaddesho… ” Remember the day of Shabbat to sanctify it. This is the fourth of the Ten Commandments: our duty to remember the day of Shabbat and to consecrate it as a special day. How do we perform this important Mitsva, remembering and sanctifying the Shabbat?

By reciting the Qiddush. In the Qiddush we remind ourselves the foundation of Shabbat: this is the day that God celebrates the completion of the Creation process. When saying the Qiddush we are giving testimony that our planet and life in our planet are not here by a cosmic chance. It was God Almighty the One who created the world and the One who created us, intelligent life (intelligence, can only come from intelligence!).
Meam Loez explains that there are other ways in which we perform this Mitsva of remembering Shabbat.
1. We remember Shabbat in the Tefilot (prayers) that we say on Shabbat. For example, in Birkat haMazon, we add “retse vehahalitsenu” a text in which we mention the importance of Shabbat and we ask God to help us and allow us to live this day with joy, pleasure and peace.
2. Adding (=sanctifying) some extra time at the beginning and at the end of Shabbat. We should receive Shabbat before Shabbat officially begins (sunset) and we should end Shabbat after it officially ends (when three medium stars are visible).
3. Reciting the Habdalah, and declaring officially that Shabbat has ended. By acknowledging the difference between Shabbat and the rest of the week, we proclaim the holiness of Shabbat.

Shabbat Shalom!

Candle lighting in NYC: 6:02
Shabbat ends in NYC: 7:01

7 questions from our Parasha.

Each one of these seven questions is meant to be read before the Aliya starts. The answer should be found in the plain Biblical text. These simple questions should encourage us to follow the Tora reading paying more attention to its content.

1st Aliya

HASHEM tells Abram that He will do six things for him if he

follows His commandments. What are those six things? (Are they six or seven?)

2nd Aliya

Abraham tells Sara to say that she is his sister, so the Egyptians won't kill him. What went unexpectedly wrong in Abraham's plan?

3rd Aliya

Why were Lot and Abram unable to live together after they came back from Egypt?

4th Aliya

Where did the war described in this Aliya take place? Why did Abram engage himself in this war?

5th Aliya

What is the King of Sedom asking and offering Abram? Did Abram accept his offer? Why?

6th Aliya

What are the borders of the land that HASHEM as promised to Abraham?

7th Aliya

How old was Abraham and how old was Ishmael when they were circumcised?