

SHABBAT

For All Nations

Jeremy Gimpel

Shabbat For All Nations

Jeremy Gimpel

Edited by Greg Upham

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This book is offered for educational and devotional purposes. It is not intended as a substitute for guidance from a qualified rabbi or halachic authority on questions of Jewish law and practice.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to and in honor of all our dear friends from the nations around the world who truly love the God of Israel, the People of Israel, the Land of Israel and the Torah of Israel.

You are all an integral part of God's plan of Redemption and an inspiration for the important work we do here at The Land of Israel Network. Thank you for your courage to stand with us during these days when standing with Israel is still a sacrifice.

Great is your reward in heaven!

Chazak v'Ematz!

זָכוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”.

—Exodus 20:8

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface

Part 1: Shabbat For All Nations.....1

Chapter 1 — Why Shabbat Matters in the Modern World.....1

Chapter 2 — The First Blessing in Creation..... 5

Chapter 3 — A Weekly Taste of the Messianic Future..... 9

Chapter 4 — Shabbat and Emunah: Faith You Can Live.....13

Chapter 5 — Shabbat at Sinai: The Ten Commandments 17

Chapter 6 — Shabbat and the Ten Commandments: A Deeper Structure 22

Chapter 7 — Why God Commanded Shabbat, Not Suggested It 27

Chapter 8 — The Blessing and Healing of Shabbat 31

Chapter 9 — Shabbat: A Prophecy for the Righteous Among the Nations..... 34

Part 2: A Practical Guide..... 39

Chapter 10 — Shabbat For All Nations – A Practical Guide..... 39

Chapter 11 — Introducing The Friday Night Shabbat Meal..... 66

Chapter 12 — Yom Shabbat: Living Inside the Day of Rest..... 82

Chapter 13 — Havdalah: The Sacred Art of Separation..... 92

Chapter 14 — Conclusion..... 96

About the Author 99

About the Organization 100

Preface

As a non-Jew, my wife and I have been on a spiritual journey for more than twenty-five years. Like many who will read this book, I was raised culturally Christian — Christian in name, not so much in practice. I had no particular interest in God or spiritual matters until college, when He began to stir one in me. I started attending church with my girlfriend, now my wife, and I remain grateful to HaShem for that season of my life. It introduced me to the Bible for the first time and to the beginning of a real relationship with God. But within a few years I had questions that my pastors, church leaders, and Christian friends could never answer satisfactorily. Without making a long story longer, those questions sent me on a journey that I suspect many of you will recognize.

Chief among them was the fourth commandment — ***remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy***. Of all the sermons I heard on the Ten Commandments, number four was always glossed over or ignored altogether. Why, I wondered? Searching for an answer led me to study Torah and the Hebrew Bible from Jewish sources: line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here and a little there. Slowly the pieces came together, and my understanding, along with my spiritual and religious practice, grew and evolved with them.

Before long I was living on a spiritual island — no man's land. Too “Jewish” now for many of my Christian friends and family, and too “Christian” to be welcomed into a Torah-observant Jewish community. But once you see truth, you cannot unsee it. So, we soldiered on, raising our five children with Torah as best we knew how with the limited access we had to real Torah learning. Baruch HaShem, that has changed for my wife and I — but it took patience and perseverance.

In 2025 I brought an idea to our team at The Land of Israel Network: that we needed to elevate Shabbat consciousness in the whole world and help hasten the final Redemption. My thesis was simple — Shabbat is not merely a “Jewish” thing but a universal institution. My beloved friend of twenty years, my rabbi, mentor, and brother from another mother, Jeremy Gimpel, graciously took up the challenge. This book is the result. Thank you, Jeremy!

To the many non-Jews whose stories resemble my own, I pray this book is a blessing — a help in your own practice and an encouragement to invite others in your circle of influence to take up the challenge of honoring the Shabbat.

And to my dear Jewish friends and to the broader Jewish community: I know that some of the ideas in this book are “un-orthodox,” per se. But the world needs you now more than ever to take up your mantle, engage and be a light to the nations.

Greg Upham
Cofounder, LOI Network

Part 1: Shabbat For All Nations

Chapter 1 — Why Shabbat Matters in the Modern World

We live in an age defined by extraordinary progress. Our devices connect us instantly with people around the world. Information is available within moments. Yet with all the advancements, humanity has never been so distracted. It seems like the more time-saving technologies we develop, the less time we have. The mind rarely rests. The heart rarely finds stillness. Work no longer ends when we leave the office. The boundaries that once shaped our days have dissolved into a constant stream of digital noise. Our attention is captured by notifications and headlines before it can be directed toward the people and values we hold dear.

With all the digital connectivity, more people feel more isolated than ever before. We may accomplish more than any generation before us, yet we struggle to feel present in our own lives.

Modern culture pushes us toward constant movement. Always doing. Instead of human beings, we should be called “human doings”. The world today encourages us to produce, advance, and accumulate without pause. To stop can feel like falling behind. But a life without rest is not a life of flourishing, it is a slow forgetting of what it means to be human.

In the opening chapters of Genesis, the Torah offers a different vision of time. After six days of creative work, the seventh day arrives not as an afterthought but as the culmination of creation itself. On that day, God rests.¹ He makes the first holiday by making the seventh day holy.² By choosing to stop, God gives meaning to everything He has made. Creation only becomes meaningful when it is no longer being used or expanded, but

¹ Genesis 2:2–3

² Ibid.

instead encountered and experienced. Time becomes cherished when it makes room for presence rather than production.

Shabbat stands as God's answer to the deepest crisis of the modern soul. It interrupts the tyranny of urgency and returns us to what is eternal. One day each week, we are invited to step back from the noise and rediscover the goodness that fills the world when we are attentive to it.

Shabbat is a return to reality as God intended it. It reminds us that we are more than the sum of our responsibilities. We are not defined only by what we do but by who we are and Whom we serve. When we cease creating, we allow God and family to be present again at the center of our lives.

Shabbat transforms shared meals into the centerpiece of the day. Around the table, families reconnect, communities deepen, and relationships are nourished. Shabbat restores the inner life that modern pressures often push aside, reminding us to cherish what is timeless rather than what is urgent.

Shabbat is God's answer to the deepest crisis of the modern soul – a weekly return to what it means to be human.

Every week, Shabbat gives the human soul room to breathe. It teaches us to notice the blessings that surround us. It restores balance and reminds us that life is not measured solely by achievement but by connection and joy.

Furthermore, Shabbat portends of a coming, future reality whom the Sages of Israel refer to as “Yom shekulo Shabbat” – the day that is entirely Shabbat.³ This is a reference to the swiftly approaching Messianic era where the whole world will experience a time of peace, calm, joy and abundance with no more war, no more sickness and no more suffering. Shabbat is a weekly rehearsal for this much anticipated state of blessing.

This book is dedicated to exploring the meaning, purpose, and promise of Shabbat for all mankind. It is an invitation to rediscover the rest God established at the dawn of time and the blessings stored within the seventh day. In a world that asks us to run faster, Shabbat calls us to slow down and walk with God.

³ The phrase “Yom shekulo Shabbat” (“a day that is entirely Shabbat”) derives from Mishnah Tamid 7:4, which describes the Sabbath psalm (Psalm 92) as “a song for the time to come, for the day that is entirely Shabbat and rest for life everlasting.” See also Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 31a; the phrase is recited in the Birkat HaMazon (Grace after Meals).

Once a week, the Creator extends His hand and asks us to return to Him, to ourselves, and to what matters most in life.

If you find value in this book and want to learn more and take the next step on this journey, I encourage you to join our global community, ***The Land of Israel Fellowship***.⁴ With Fellowship families from different countries and cultures around the world, we come together to live a guided life, centered around the Torah and a deep love for Israel.

⁴ To learn more and take the next step, visit thelandofisrael.com/fellowship-chabura.

Chapter 1 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. The author suggests that modern people have become “human doings” rather than human beings. Where in your own week do you feel most pulled toward constant doing?
2. In Genesis, the seventh day arrives not as an afterthought but as the culmination of creation. How does seeing rest as the climax of the week — rather than the absence of work — change the way you think about your own labor?
3. What “digital noise” most consistently captures your attention before it can be directed toward the people and values you hold dear? What would silencing it for one full day look like?
4. The Sages speak of “Yom shekulo Shabbat” — the day that is entirely Shabbat. How does understanding Shabbat as a weekly rehearsal for the Messianic era change its meaning for you?
5. “We are not defined only by what we do but by who we are and Whom we serve.” What would it take for you to truly live that truth one day each week?

Chapter 1 - Hebrew Terms

שַׁבָּת Shabbat — The Sabbath; the seventh day. From the Hebrew root meaning to cease — God’s answer to the deepest crisis of the modern soul.

תּוֹרָה Torah — God’s teaching and instruction. In its opening chapters, the Torah offers a radically different vision of time.

יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ שַׁבָּת Yom Shekulo Shabbat — “The day that is entirely Shabbat.” The Sages’ name for the coming Messianic era of peace, calm, joy, and abundance — for which Shabbat is a weekly rehearsal. In Christian parlance, this era is often referred to as the Millennial Reign of Messiah or the Millennial Kingdom.

Chapter 2 — The First Blessing in Creation

Shabbat is introduced to us not as a commandment, but as a feature woven into creation itself. Before the Torah was given at Sinai, the rhythm of six days of work and the seventh day of rest was written into the very fabric of existence.

Shabbat was given not to some, but to everyone — a covenant written in time itself, a universal gift to all who inhabit the earth.

Shabbat begins with creation, and therefore it begins as a gift to all who inhabit the earth. Long before there was an Israelite nation, and long before humanity divided itself into tribes and cultures, Shabbat was already there. It was given not to some, but to everyone. Shabbat is a universal institution. It is a covenant written in time itself rather than in the history of any particular people. Shabbat serves as the center of gravity—the sun—around which all other biblical rhythms orbit. While the weekly Shabbat offers rest from our technological mastery over the world, the annual festivals act as “Sabbaths of the year” where we rest our mastery over the plant and animal worlds. Furthermore, the Sabbatical year (known as the *שְׁמִטָּה* *shmitah*⁵ in Hebrew) acts as a “Sabbath in years” where the land itself is granted its own independence and rest.

At the beginning of time, holiness was applied not to a place, not to an object, not even to a person, but to time.

Scripture says:

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ, כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכֹל־
מְלָאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת. בְּרֵאשִׁית ב:ג

“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” (Genesis 2:3)

In the story of creation, the seventh day, known as Saturday⁶ in common English vernacular, the Sabbath or, as transliterated

⁵ Exodus 23:10–11; Leviticus 25:1–7; Deuteronomy 15:1–11.

⁶ The English name “Saturday” derives from the Old English Sæternesdæg, itself a translation of the Latin dies Saturni, “day of Saturn” — the Roman god of agriculture and time, after whom the planet Saturn is named. Alone among the English weekday names, it preserves a Roman deity rather than being replaced by a Germanic counterpart, as happened with Wednesday (Woden), Thursday (Thor), and Friday (Frigg). Notably, many other languages retain the Hebrew designation instead: Spanish sábado, Italian sabato, Greek Σάββατο, and Russian subбота all derive from Shabbat.

The seventh day is the only thing in all of creation that God blessed and made holy.

from Hebrew, *Shabbat*, is the only thing that God blessed and made holy. Shabbat stands apart from the rest of creation as the wellspring from which blessing flows into the world.

There is nothing in nature that points to a seven-day cycle, yet every culture in the world today recognizes a seven-day week. From China to India, Argentina to Alaska, the entire world lives by a seven-day work week. Months revolve around the moon, days and years are determined by the sun. But a seven-day work week? It's not natural. In fact, it is supernatural. The only reason to recognize a seven-day work week is because God created the world in six days and rested on Shabbat.

In Hebrew, the language of the Torah, the number seven (7) carries profound linguistic and spiritual significance. The Hebrew word for seven is *sheva* (שֶׁבַע). This word shares the exact same root letters as the word for an oath or a covenant, *shevua* (שְׁבוּעָה), as well as the word for wholeness and satisfaction, *sova* (שׂוּבָה). Therefore, in biblical thought, the number seven is not just a mathematical digit; it represents a state of covenantal completion and wholeness. It is the number that signifies an unbreakable promise between the Creator and His creation.

Furthermore, ancient Jewish wisdom teaches that the number seven represents the entirety of the physical universe infused with the Divine. The physical world exists in three dimensions, expanding in six directions: up, down, north, south, east, and west. Number seven represents the spiritual focal point in the center that anchors, sustains, and unites them all.⁷ Just as the center point gives meaning and balance to the six directions, the holy seventh day gives meaning to the six mundane days of the week.

The world celebrates the extraordinary: mountains, stars, oceans, and the miracle of life itself. Yet God chose to bless something invisible and intangible. The holiness of Shabbat is found in a pause. It is discovered when we cease doing and rediscover being. Shabbat teaches us that we are not holy because of what we produce. We are holy because we are

⁷ Sefer Yetzira 4:2–4.

created in the image of God.⁸ The greatest blessing in creation is not found in more activity but in the sacred act of stopping.

In fact, rest is not simply the absence of work; it is a positive creation in itself. An all-powerful Creator does not need to pause to catch His breath. Instead, God's rest was the final creative act that granted the universe its independence. As long as a creator is constantly tinkering and fixing, the creation is merely an extension of the creator. By stepping back and resting, God broke the strings of the marionette, allowing the world to exist independently so that a true relationship could form between the Creator and His creation.

Furthermore, when we stop on the seventh day, we are not merely taking a break from the previous six; we are elevating them. Without the seventh day, the six days of work can easily become an endless, purposeless cycle of surviving and consuming. But by pausing our labor on the seventh day to consciously commune with God, we retrospectively consecrate our six days of work. The seventh day proves that our weekly toil is not a meaningless treadmill, but a purposeful preparation for holiness.

Shabbat reminds us that creation is complete only when it includes rest. Human flourishing requires renewal. God blessed the seventh day so that humanity could live a blessed life. He made it holy so that each of us could enter holiness regularly, not through struggle but through freedom. Once a week, the blessing of creation is renewed, and we are invited to receive it.

⁸ Genesis 1:26–27.

Chapter 2 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. Shabbat appears in creation long before any commandment is given at Sinai. Why does it matter that Shabbat began as a universal gift rather than a national law?
2. The only thing God blessed and sanctified in all of creation was time — not a place, an object, or a person. What does this teach about where holiness is first found?
3. Nothing in nature points to a seven-day cycle, yet the entire world lives by a seven-day week. What do you make of this?
4. The Hebrew word for seven (sheva) shares its root with the words for oath (shevua) and wholeness (sova). How do covenant and completion deepen your understanding of the seventh day?
5. “Rest is not simply the absence of work; it is a positive creation in itself.” How does pausing on the seventh day retroactively give meaning and purpose to the six days of work?

Chapter 2 - Hebrew Terms

שֶׁבַע Sheva — Seven. In biblical thought, not just a number but a state of covenantal completion and wholeness.

שְׁבוּעָה Shevua — Oath; covenant. Sharing the root of seven — the number that signifies an unbreakable promise between the Creator and His creation.

שׁוּבָע Sova — Wholeness; satisfaction. The third word built on the root of seven, pointing to the fullness the seventh day brings.

שְׁמִטָּה Shmitah — The Sabbatical year — a “Sabbath in years” in which the land itself is granted its own independence and rest.

Chapter 3 — A Weekly Taste of the Messianic Future

Jewish tradition teaches that Shabbat is a taste of *Olam HaBa* (עוֹלָם הַבָּא), the World to Come.⁹ God created everything in six days and rested on the seventh day. In parallel, ancient Jewish wisdom teaches that the history of mankind from Adam will unfold over six thousand years and then the 7th millennium arrives as a time of peace, restoration, and healing for all nations hallmarked with the Jewish Messiah reigning on the restored throne of David from the holy city of Jerusalem.¹⁰ This idea suggests that Shabbat is not merely a remembrance of creation. It is a window into the future, a glimpse of the coming redemption. For one day each week, we are invited to experience life not as it is, but as it will be, when the world is healed and God's presence is fully revealed.

Shabbat is a weekly taste of the World to Come — one day when nothing is broken and nothing is missing.

During the week, we see the world as broken and lacking. We witness conflict, struggle, need and uncertainty. We experience moments of fear and disappointment. One day each week, when we stop working to create, we step into a world that is already complete. We taste what it would be like if the Messiah had already arrived and the world was redeemed.

For one day each week, human beings live as if the brokenness of the world has already been healed, as if peace has already embraced creation. This weekly experience reminds us that history has a destination and that the pain of the present will ultimately give way to the joy of the future.

Human labor is usually driven by necessity and lack - a need for money and a lack of security, order or comfort. During the week, we work because something is missing. On Shabbat, that striving comes to an end. As Heschel describes it, Shabbat is an

⁹ Berakhot 57b; Genesis Rabbah 17:5; Mishnah Tamid 7:4. The Talmud calls Shabbat "one-sixtieth of the World to Come," and the midrash describes it as me'ein Olam HaBa — a semblance of the World to Come. The theme is echoed weekly in the liturgy (the HaRachaman of Birkat HaMazon for Shabbat) and in the table song Mah Yedidut.

¹⁰ Sanhedrin 97a; Avodah Zarah 9a; cf. Psalm 90:4 ("a thousand years in Your sight are like a day"). Rav Kattina teaches that the world will exist for six thousand years followed by a millennium of rest, just as the seventh year is a year of release. Ramban on Genesis 2:3 develops the parallel explicitly: each day of creation alludes to a millennium of history, and the seventh day to the World to Come.

armistice in the human struggle for existence, a sanctuary in time where nothing must be conquered and nothing needs to be achieved. There is a profound inverse relationship between how we build a sanctuary in space versus a sanctuary in time. To build a physical sanctuary for God, like the biblical Tabernacle, human beings must engage in *melachah* (מְלָאכָה)—creative, transformative action. But to build a sanctuary in time, we must do the exact opposite: we must completely desist from *melachah*.¹¹ If engaging in creative labor is how we invite God into our physical space, completely disengaging from that labor is how we create the Sabbath and invite God into our time.

This sanctuary in time also serves as a portal back to the *Gan Eden* (גֶּן עֵדֶן), the Garden of Eden. While the physical gates to Eden—a sanctuary in space where humanity originally communed with God—were closed after the expulsion¹², Shabbat functions as God’s summer home in time. It provides a weekly opportunity for humanity to return to that original intimacy and presence, offering a taste of paradise within the world as it is. In stepping into Shabbat, we experience life not as a problem to be solved, but as a gift already complete. Shabbat allows us to taste the World to Come within the world as it is.

“The Sabbath is a foretaste of eternity. It is an example of the world to come.” — The Sabbath, Abraham Joshua Heschel

Shabbat gives us one day each week when nothing is broken and nothing is missing. It is the sacred pause where we stop trying to fix the world and allow ourselves to experience it as God dreams it will be. On Shabbat we practice contentment. We taste wholeness. We live, even briefly, in a world redeemed.

¹¹ Genesis 2:2–3: “And on the seventh day God finished His work (מְלָאכָתוֹ, *melachto*) which He had done, and He rested (וַיִּשְׁבּוֹת, *vayishbot*) on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created to do.” The noun *melachto* shares the root of *melachah* (מְלָאכָה), and it is this verse that the Sages take as the scriptural basis for defining the categories of labor forbidden on Shabbat — the same term used for the work of building the Tabernacle (Exodus 31:1–11; 35:30–36:1).

¹² Genesis 3:23–24. After the expulsion, God stationed the cherubim and the flaming, ever-turning sword east of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

This weekly glimpse of the Messianic future strengthens the soul against despair, reminding us that history is moving toward healing, not chaos. To honor Shabbat is to step into that future now.

By living one day each week as if the Messiah has already come, we train our hearts to trust that redemption is not just a promise — it is a reality already entering our lives, one Shabbat at a time. The peace we taste on Shabbat is a foretaste of the peace that God intends for all creation.

When we honor Shabbat, we join God in saying that creation is good, life is sacred, and existence is enough. Shabbat lifts our eyes from the struggles of the moment and reminds us that the story of history is moving toward light. It is to say with our lives that God's promises are true and that redemption is already unfolding.

Chapter 3 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. Ancient Jewish wisdom teaches that history will unfold over six thousand years, followed by a seventh millennium of peace and restoration. How does this parallel between the seven day week and history reshape the way you experience each Shabbat?
2. During the week, we work because something is missing. What would it feel like to live one day each week as if nothing were broken and nothing was missing?
3. Heschel calls Shabbat “an armistice in the human struggle for existence.” Which battles do you most need to lay down for one day?
4. Building a sanctuary in space requires *melachah* — creative labor — while building a sanctuary in time requires ceasing from it entirely. Why do you think the two are exact opposites?
5. The chapter describes Shabbat as a portal back to the Garden of Eden. In what ways can a day of sacred rest restore the original intimacy between humanity and God?

Chapter 3 - Hebrew Terms

עוֹלָם הַבָּא Olam HaBa — The World to Come. Jewish tradition teaches that Shabbat is a foretaste of this redeemed future. Olam Haba is also synonymous with the next heavenly world after death. This teaches us that the Final Redemption is a time when the world is restored back to the state of the Garden of Eden. One day each week Shabbat allows us to experience a world already complete.

מְלָאכָה Melachah — Creative, transformative labor. Required to build a sanctuary in space; completely set aside to build a sanctuary in time.

גַּן עֵדֶן Gan Eden — The Garden of Eden. Though its physical gates were closed, Shabbat offers a weekly return to that original intimacy and presence.

Chapter 4 — Shabbat and Emunah: Faith You Can Live

In the modern world, faith is often understood as an idea. A belief in something unseen. A private conviction held in the heart or mind. But in the Torah, faith is not primarily a concept. It is a way of living. It is a posture of the soul that is revealed through action, discipline, and trust.

This is why the Hebrew word for faith, *emunah* (אֱמוּנָה), cannot be translated fully into the English word “belief.” Belief can remain abstract. Emunah is never abstract. Emunah is faith that becomes reality through loyalty and practice.

In Hebrew, words are built on roots that carry meaning beneath the surface. When we look closely at the root of *emunah*, we uncover a definition of biblical faith that is both deeper and more demanding than mere intellectual agreement.

Emunah is comprised of several words that all direct us to the definition of Hebrew faith.

Imun (אִמּוּן) = Practice

Ne’eman (נֶאֱמָן) = Loyalty

Emun (אֱמוּן) = Trust

Consequently, the concept of Biblical faith, *emunah*, means faith practiced with loyalty and trust.

Biblical faith is therefore not only believing that God exists. It is trust expressed as loyalty through obedience.

There is perhaps no mitzvah that embodies this more clearly than Shabbat.

Shabbat is one of the greatest expressions of *emunah* because it requires us to do something profoundly unnatural. It asks us to stop. To step away from the urgent pressures of life and live for one day each week as if the world is not dependent on our constant effort.

All week long, the modern person lives under a heavy burden. We are pressured to succeed, provide, achieve, build, produce, earn, and compete. We are taught, subtly or explicitly, that if

*Emunah is not abstract belief.
It is faith made real through
loyalty — and Shabbat is
Emunah lived in time.*

we do not push forward, we will fall behind. We begin to feel that everything depends on our productivity. We begin to believe that our safety depends on our control.

Then Friday night arrives, and Shabbat makes a radical demand.

It says: stop.

Not because you have mastered worry, but because you are commanded to release it.

Shabbat is the weekly act of placing the world back into God's hands.

When we honor Shabbat, we are not merely taking a break. We are making a spiritual declaration. We are declaring that God created the world, and therefore God sustains the world. We are declaring that our livelihood does not come only from our striving, but from His blessing. We are declaring that even when we are not producing, God is still providing.

This is why Shabbat is *emunah* in its purest form.

One biblical example of this idea can be seen in God's commandment that the children of Israel refrain from gathering *manna* (מַן) on the Sabbath. As the children of Israel wandered in the barren wilderness, God miraculously provided bread from heaven each morning. It was incumbent on the children of Israel to go out each day and gather their daily bread for their basic sustenance. Except on Shabbat. There was no gathering manna on the Sabbath.¹³ Instead, they had to trust that God would provide double the manna on Friday to sustain them over Shabbat when it was prohibited to gather food. This was a weekly exercise in stopping on Shabbat and trusting God for provision versus working, toiling and laboring on Shabbat to sustain themselves. Biblical faith in action.

To this very day, we always traditionally place two loaves of bread on our Friday night Shabbat table to commemorate this weekly display of God's provision in our lives, and a reminder that He is ultimately the One who sustains us. We do not rely solely on our own efforts.

¹³ Exodus 16:4–5, 22–30.

It is easy to speak about trust in God. It is far harder to live it. Shabbat turns emunah into something tangible. It takes faith out of theory and places it into the rhythm of our week. When the sun sets and we stop working, we are practicing the belief that God can be trusted with our time, our future, and our provision.

In this way, Shabbat is not only rest. It is loyalty. To honor Shabbat is to obey the divine command even when the world insists that stopping is irresponsible.

To honor Shabbat is to say: I trust the Creator more than I trust the culture. I trust God more than I trust my own anxiety. I trust that blessing does not come from constant striving, but from aligning my life with His will.

And perhaps most importantly, Shabbat teaches that faith is not proven in the extraordinary moments of life, but in the weekly decisions that shape who we become. Once a week, we are given the opportunity to choose loyalty over fear and holiness over hustle. Every Shabbat, we let go and let God.

Emunah is faith practiced with loyalty, and Shabbat is emunah lived in time.

Chapter 4 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. The chapter argues that emunah cannot be fully translated as “belief.” What is lost when faith becomes only an idea held in the mind?
2. Shabbat asks us to live one day each week as if the world does not depend on our constant effort. Which responsibilities are hardest for you to set down?
3. The children of Israel could gather no manna on Shabbat and had to trust in Friday’s double portion. Where in your life might God be inviting you to stop and trust in His provision?
4. To this day, two loaves of bread on the Friday night table commemorate the double portion of manna. Why are physical reminders so important for sustaining faith?
5. “I trust the Creator more than I trust the culture.” What cultural message about productivity or security do you most need to resist — and how could Shabbat help you resist it?

Chapter 4 - Hebrew Terms

אֱמוּנָה Emunah — Faith. Not abstract belief, but trust in God that is active, embodied, and expressed through loyalty and practice.

אֱמוּנָה Imun — Practice. From the same root as emunah — faith is something rehearsed and lived, not merely held.

נֶאֱמָן Ne’eman — Loyal; faithful. Biblical faith is proven through loyalty — obedience to the Divine command even when the world insists that stopping is irresponsible.

אֱמוּנָה Emun — Trust. Confidence in God’s faithfulness; the settled reliance on Him that Shabbat rest expresses.

מָן Man — Manna. The bread from heaven that could not be gathered on Shabbat — a weekly exercise in stopping and trusting God for provision.

Chapter 5 — Shabbat at Sinai: The Ten Commandments

Shabbat reappears in the Book of Exodus at Sinai. At the very heart of the Ten Commandments, there its universal calling goes out to the world.

זָכוֹר אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ. שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל־
מְלֶאכֶתְךָ. וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה
אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ, עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ וּבְהֶמְתְּךָ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ. -

שמות כ: ח-י

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.” (Exodus 20:8–10)

The Ten Commandments are among the most influential moral teachings in human history. They have been translated into nearly every language, displayed in courthouses and classrooms, and embraced by cultures far beyond Israel. The gift God gave at Sinai has become the moral foundation for the world. Moses himself is honored even in the United States Capitol for shaping the ethical vision of Western civilization.

This profound connection to creation is woven directly into the language of the Ten Commandments through a stunning linguistic parallel to the Garden of Eden. In Genesis, humanity’s original mission contained four elements: God (1) took man from a mundane place, (2) placed him in a restful home, and commanded him to (3) work (la’avod, **לַעֲבֹד**) and (4) guard (u’leshomrah, **וּלְשָׁמְרָה**).¹⁴ In the Ten Commandments, this exact sequence is beautifully mirrored backward as a chiasm: (4) Guard the Sabbath (shamor, **שָׁמֹר**), (3) Work for six days (ta’avod, **תַּעֲבֹד**), (2) let everyone rest, and (1)

¹⁴ Genesis 2:15 — “The LORD God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to guard it” (וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחֵהוּ) (בְּגִן־עֵדֶן לַעֲבֹדָה וּלְשָׁמְרָה). Note that vayanichehu (“placed him”) shares the root of menuchah, rest. The Shabbat commandment mirrors the sequence in reverse: Deuteronomy 5:12–15 (Shamor; rest for all; the taking out of Egypt); cf. Exodus 20:8–11.

remember being taken from the mundane place of Egypt. This reverse-echo structurally proves that keeping Shabbat is a universal pathway back into the state of creation, literally guiding us backward through our expulsion and right back into the Garden.

With a moral standard comes moral responsibility. Many who affirm the authority of the Bible wholeheartedly affirm the Ten Commandments as binding expressions of God's will. Ask almost any believer, and they will emphatically agree that these commandments must be honored. Yet there is often a surprising lack of awareness that the fourth commandment, positioned at the center of the Decalogue, is the commandment of Shabbat.

In Exodus, the Torah uses the word *zachor* (זָכוֹר) — remember:

זָכוֹר אֶת־יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ. (שְׁמוֹת כ:ח)

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

Later, when Moses recounts the Ten Commandments, the Torah uses a different word *shamor* (שָׁמַר):

שָׁמַר אֶת־יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ (דְּבָרִים ה:יב)

"Guard the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you." (Deuteronomy 5:12)

Jewish tradition teaches that *zachor* (remember) and *shamor* (guard) were spoken simultaneously — a single Divine utterance revealing two inseparable dimensions of Shabbat.¹⁵

This book proposes that remembering expresses the universal calling of Shabbat. To "zachor" Shabbat is to acknowledge the Creator, to recognize that time itself belongs to God, and to honor the seventh day as distinct and holy. In Hebrew, *zachor* means more than mental recall; it implies recognition, acknowledgment, and honoring through action.

Just as honoring the memory of a loved one is expressed through concrete acts such as lighting a candle or marking a

¹⁵ Shevuot 20b (cf. Rosh Hashanah 27a): "Zachor and Shamor were spoken in a single utterance — what the mouth cannot speak and the ear cannot hear"; Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael, Yitro (Bachodesh 7), cited by Rashi on Exodus 20:8. The teaching is immortalized in the opening words of Lecha Dodi: שָׁמַר וְזָכוֹר בְּדִבּוּר אֶחָד ("Guard and Remember in a single utterance").

date. Remembering Shabbat is expressed by living in a way that honors its holiness.

To “shamor” the Shabbat, on the other hand, expresses Israel’s unique covenantal responsibility. It connotes to guard and protect its sanctity through the detailed practices that preserve its holiness across generations.

This duality becomes even clearer when we consider the context in which each command was given. The Ten Commandments as recounted in Exodus 20 were spoken by God Himself at Mount Sinai.

Jewish tradition teaches that God’s voice at Sinai was heard in the seventy languages of the world, corresponding to the seventy nations described in Genesis.¹⁶ Why would God speak in every language if the commandments were intended only for the Jewish people?

At Sinai, in no man’s land, Shabbat’s calling went out to all seventy nations of the world.

Moreover, the giving of the Ten Commandments, as recorded in Exodus 20, did not take place in Jerusalem, Hebron, or any other city of the Land of Israel. Instead, God chose Mount Sinai — a barren, uninhabited wilderness, belonging to no nation and claimed by no people. Sinai was, in every sense, no man’s land. This choice was deliberate. Had the commandments been given within the borders of Israel, they might have been understood as belonging exclusively to one people. The Sages teach this explicitly. The Midrash Mekhilta explains that God gave the Torah in the desert so that no nation could claim ownership over it, declaring: “Why was the Torah given in the wilderness? So that if anyone wished to accept it, they could come and accept it.” (Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishmael, Yitro).

By contrast, when Moses recounts the commandments in Deuteronomy 5, he stands on the plains of Moab, within the borders of the Promised Land, addressing only the people of Israel as they prepare to enter their inheritance. It is here that the command shifts from zachor (remember) to shamor (guard) the Sabbath. Unlike Sinai, only the Israelites heard the

¹⁶ Shabbat 88b — R' Yochanan: "Every utterance that emerged from the mouth of the Almighty split into seventy languages" (citing Psalm 68:12); Shemot Rabbah 5:9 — the voice divided into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations would hear. The seventy nations derive from the Table of Nations in Genesis 10; cf. Deuteronomy 32:8.

retelling of the Ten Commandments immediately before going in to possess the land of Canaan.

This distinction reflects two audiences and two responsibilities.

The world is called to **remember** Shabbat — to acknowledge God as Creator and sanctify time. Israel is called to **guard** Shabbat — to live its holiness through covenantal law.

As Scripture states:

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת, לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם. בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֹתָהּ הוּא לְעוֹלָם, כִּי שִׁשַּׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ, וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ. (שמות ל"א:ט"ז–י"ז)

“So the sons of Israel shall guard the Sabbath, to celebrate the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever.” (Exodus 31:16–17)

Shabbat therefore contains both a universal commandment and a national covenant. One sanctifies time by recognition. The other safeguards holiness by disciplined practice.

Sinai transformed Shabbat from a quiet truth embedded in creation into a living covenant carried through history. The Jewish people have guarded Shabbat for millennia, and through them its light has reached the world. Today, the nations are awakening to this gift.

To honor Shabbat is to honor the God who revealed Himself at Sinai. It is to affirm that God is the Author of time, that creation is good, and that rest is holy. In our generation, the righteous among the nations are invited to take their place in this commandment — to remember the Sabbath and receive the blessing woven into the fabric of creation.

Chapter 5 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. The fourth commandment sits at the very center of the Ten Commandments, yet it is often overlooked by those who affirm the rest. Why do you think Shabbat has become the forgotten commandment?
2. God gave the Ten Commandments at Sinai — no man's land — and tradition teaches His voice was heard in all seventy languages. What do these details suggest about who Shabbat is for?
3. What is the difference between remembering (zachor) and guarding (shamor) Shabbat? How does this distinction shape the different callings of Israel and the nations?
4. The language of the fourth commandment mirrors the Garden of Eden in reverse, guiding humanity back through the expulsion and into the Garden. How does this reframe Shabbat as a return rather than a pause?
5. What would it look like, practically, for you to “remember” the Sabbath day this week — to acknowledge the Creator and honor the seventh day as distinct and holy?

Chapter 5 - Hebrew Terms

זָכוֹר Zachor — Remember (Exodus 20:8). More than mental recall — recognition, acknowledgment, and honoring through action. The universal calling of Shabbat.

שָׁמֹר Shamor — Guard; observe (Deuteronomy 5:12). Israel's covenantal responsibility to protect Shabbat's sanctity through detailed practice across generations.

לַעֲבֹד La'avod — To work; to serve. Humanity's original mission in the Garden of Eden — echoed in “six days you shall labor.”

וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ U'Leshomrah — And to guard it (Genesis 2:15). Adam's charge in Eden, mirrored at Sinai in the command to guard the Sabbath.

Chapter 6 — Shabbat and the Ten Commandments: A Deeper Structure

There is a beautiful and often overlooked teaching about the Ten Commandments that sheds new light on the universal meaning of Shabbat. We usually read the Ten Commandments as ten independent moral instructions, each standing on its own. But Jewish tradition invites us to see them not merely as a list, but as a structure with a carefully balanced moral architecture.¹⁷

The Torah tells us that the commandments were engraved on two stone tablets. This detail is more than historical. It suggests that the commandments are meant to be read in relationship to one another. Rather than ten isolated imperatives, we can understand them as five corresponding pairs, each commandment on the first tablet aligned with the opposite commandment on the second.

The Two Tablets: Five Corresponding Pairs

Seen this way, each commandment on the first tablet finds an echo on the second. Faith in God expresses itself in moral behavior toward others. Belief is tested by conduct. Theology is validated by ethics.

¹⁷ Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael, Yitro, Bachodesh 8 (on Exodus 20:16), in the name of R' Chanina ben Gamliel: the Ten Commandments were written five opposite five (חמשה על לוח זה וחמשה על לוח זה), and each commandment on the first tablet corresponds to its counterpart on the second. A parallel appears in Song of Songs Rabbah 4:5.

TABLET 1: BETWEEN MAN AND GOD	PAIRS WITH	TABLET 2: BETWEEN MAN AND MAN
1. I am the LORD your God	↔	6. You shall not murder
2. You shall have no other gods	↔	7. You shall not commit adultery
3. Do not take His name in vain	↔	8. You shall not steal
4. Remember Shabbat, to keep it holy	↔	9. You shall not bear false witness
5. Honor your father and mother	↔	10. You shall not covet

The two tablets read across: five pairs, each duty to God matched by its human counterpart. This pairing invites an important question: what is the connection between each set? How does belief in God shape how we treat one another?

To illustrate how this works, let's explore the first pair. The first commandment on the first tablet states:

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים
(שמות כ:ב)

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Exodus 20:2)

This commandment is paired with the sixth commandment on the second tablet, where it is written:

לֹא תִרְצַח (שמות כ:יג)

"You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)

Now let's examine the relationship between these two commandments that comprise the first of five pairs. What does acknowledging that God is LORD have to do with not murdering someone? Let's hearken back to the book of Genesis and recall the story when God creates Adam. Adam can be understood not just as the first individual man created in that moment, but also as a euphemism for all of mankind, in that all of mankind descends from Adam.¹⁸ Adam was the final and

The Ten Commandments can be understood as Five connected pairs vs. Ten separate commands.

¹⁸ Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5 (cf. Talmud Sanhedrin 37a–38a): man was created alone (יְחִידִי) to teach that one who destroys a single soul is regarded as having destroyed an entire world, and one who saves a single soul as

most important of all God's physical creation. He was made unique from all the other living things. How so? God made Adam – mankind – in His own image.¹⁹ Therefore, if all of mankind is made in God's image, then by murdering a human you are essentially disregarding the Divine sanctity of that human life, and by extension, disavowing the fact that He is the LORD your God.

In some deep sense, to murder is an attempt to destroy the very image of God embedded within each of us. When you put it like that, it becomes even more clear why murder is morally reprehensible to God.

The second pair works the same way. The second commandment forbids having other gods or making idols, and it is paired with the seventh commandment, which forbids adultery. Spiritually speaking, idolatry is likened to adultery. To give our devotion to any other force, real or imagined, in place of God is to betray the One to whom we are bound in covenant. The prophets often described Israel's idolatry in exactly these terms: as an unfaithful spouse.²⁰

And so, each of the five pairs of commandments has a powerful relationship and truth.

For purposes of this book, the most striking pair is the fourth commandment and the ninth.

Shabbat Testimony and Truth

By now, we are all familiar with what the fourth commandment says. It is paired with the ninth commandment which states:

לֹא־תִעֲנֶה בְּרֵעֲךָ עַד שָׁקֶר (שְׁמוֹת כ:טז)

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."
(Exodus 20:16)

having saved an entire world — taught, significantly, in the context of capital cases. See also Genesis 5:1–2, where the name "Adam" is given to male and female together: "He created them male and female... and called their name Adam."

¹⁹ Genesis 1:26–27. The Torah itself makes this connection between murder and the divine image explicit in Genesis 9:6: "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."

²⁰ See, for example, Hosea 2:4–15; Jeremiah 3:6–10; Ezekiel 16:15–34.

At first glance, the connection between remembering the Sabbath and not bearing false witness is far from obvious. What does Shabbat have to do with being truthful? What does sacred time have to do with bearing testimony?

But when we look more closely, the relationship is profound.

To remember Shabbat is to bear witness to creation. It is truth lived in time.

To remember Shabbat is to bear witness to creation. It is to testify, with our lives, that the world has a Creator, that time has meaning, and that existence is not accidental. Every Shabbat, by ceasing from work, we declare that the universe does not depend solely on human effort. God created the world, and God sustains it.

If this is true, then failing to remember Shabbat is not a neutral omission. It is a theological statement. When we live as though time belongs entirely to us, as though the world rests on our productivity alone, we are silently testifying to a false reality.

In this light, the pairing becomes clear. To forget Shabbat is, in a sense, to bear false witness. Not against another human being, but against God Himself.

Shabbat is truth lived in time. It is testimony enacted through rest. When we remember the Sabbath, we align our lives with the deepest truth of existence: that God is the Creator, and we are His creations.

This insight elevates Shabbat beyond ritual. It reveals Shabbat as an ethical act, a moral declaration, and a public testimony. Each week, by honoring Shabbat, we stand as witnesses to the truth of creation. Bearing witness by honoring Shabbat is a universal responsibility for both Israel and the nations.

Chapter 6 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. Reading the Ten Commandments as five corresponding pairs suggests that belief in God is tested by how we treat one another. Which pairing challenges you the most, and why?
2. Murder is morally reprehensible because every human being carries the image of God. How does the first pairing change the way you see the people around you?
3. The fourth and ninth commandments pair Shabbat with truthful testimony. In what sense is keeping Shabbat an act of bearing witness?
4. The chapter suggests that living as though the world rests on our productivity alone is “silently testifying to a false reality.” Do you agree that forgetting Shabbat makes a theological statement? Why or why not?
5. If Shabbat is “truth lived in time,” what does your current weekly schedule testify about what you believe?

Chapter 6 - Hebrew Terms

אָדָם Adam — The first man — and all mankind, which descends from him. Every human being is made in the image of God.

לֹא תִרְצַח Lo Tirtzach — “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). Paired with “I am the LORD your God” — to destroy a human life is to disregard the Divine image within it.

עֵד שֶׁקֶר Ed Sheker — False witness (Exodus 20:16). Paired with Shabbat — to forget the Sabbath is, in a sense, to bear false testimony against the Creator.

Chapter 7 — Why God Commanded Shabbat, Not Suggested It

The commandment of Shabbat begins with freedom.

At Sinai, God addressed a people who had endured generations of slavery in Egypt. Slaves do not have days of rest. Their time is owned by others. Their worth is determined by productivity. Their lives are measured only by how much work they can perform. But slavery is not merely physical bondage; fundamentally, slavery is work stripped of its transcendent, divine mission. When Adam and Chava were in Eden, they worked in a joyful, exalted partnership with God. Only after the expulsion did work become purposeless toil and a mere mechanism for survival. Shabbat cures this modern and spiritual slavery by ensuring that our work has a purpose, consecrating our six days of labor so we do not fall prey to a purely utilitarian, soul-crushing existence. By commanding rest, God was giving Israel its first experience of true freedom. It was the first time they were told: Time belongs to God, and therefore on Shabbat you are free.

The children of Israel lived in Egypt for 210 years,²¹ long enough for slavery to become deeply ingrained in their identity. By the time Moses arose to lead them out, no one alive could remember a life without bondage. Every Israelite was born into servitude, raised without the concept of personal destiny or the dignity of rest. Freedom was not only unfamiliar, it was also unimaginable. In such a reality, Shabbat could not emerge naturally. It had to be commanded. A people who had never known rest needed a law to teach them what it means to live as human beings created in the image of God.

The Torah is not merely a record of historical events. It is a guide and spiritual blueprint for the human journey in every generation. The story of Israel begins in slavery because, on

²¹ The Torah speaks of 400 years (Genesis 15:13) and 430 years (Exodus 12:40); rabbinic chronology counts these from the birth of Isaac and reckons the actual sojourn in Egypt at 210 years. See *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; Rashi on Exodus 12:40 and Genesis 15:13. The number is hinted at in Jacob's word to his sons, "go down" (יָרַד, *redu*) to Egypt (Genesis 42:2), whose numerical value is 210 (*Genesis Rabbah* 91:2; Rashi *ad loc.*).

some level, we all begin our life journey enslaved. Whether to fear, to addictions, to achievement, or to the never-ending demands of life. Human beings struggle to stop. If Shabbat were optional, it would quickly disappear. The demands of life are relentless. Work never ends. Worries multiply. Without a commandment, we would always find reasons to delay rest and postpone holiness. God commanded Shabbat because He loves us too much to leave Shabbat to chance. Ironically, it is the law that sets us free.

Choosing to honor the fourth law of the Ten Commandments, we're offered a chance to experience freedom from our slavery. True freedom is experienced not when we can do anything, but when we can choose to stop.

Although God blessed and sanctified the seventh day at creation, Scripture records no instance in which Shabbat was kept during the entire book of Genesis. This silence is striking. It teaches us something profound about human nature. Even when blessing is embedded into the rhythm of creation, without a commandment, people overlook it. The world is too enticing and work is too demanding. Human beings struggle to step away from productivity. The blessing was there from the beginning, but humanity could not access it on its own. Shabbat needed to be commanded so that the gift hidden in time could be revealed in weekly life.

The blessing was woven into creation from the beginning — but it had to be commanded before it could be lived.

The command to rest is an act of compassion from a God who understands us better than we understand ourselves. Every week, He reminds us that the weight of the world is not on our shoulders. We can stop, unplug and reconnect to what matters inside because He sustains and runs the world outside.

Shabbat shatters the illusion that everything depends on us. For anyone who has not experienced a day unplugged, it seems almost impossible to disconnect from the world an entire day, let alone once a week. Shabbat teaches faith by reminding us that creation continues even when we cease creating. It teaches humility by revealing that we are not the ones who hold the universe together. And it teaches trust that God remains the Master of all life.

Once experienced, it becomes clear that the law of Shabbat cultivates freedom rather than restricts it. It protects time from becoming devoured by urgency and anxiety. By refraining from

creative labor and the drive to produce, Shabbat restores our ability simply to be; to be present to ourselves, present to others, and present before God.

**הִרְפוּ וְדַעוּ כִּי־אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהִים אֲרוּם בַּגּוֹיִם אֲרוּם בְּאֶרֶץ (תהלים
מו:יא)**

“Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” (Psalm 46:10)

In our generation, distraction has become the greatest form of captivity. Notifications, screens, and endless scrolling fragment our attention and pull us away from the people we love most. Shabbat returns our attention to what truly matters. It offers us uninterrupted presence and the rare gift of undivided attention. Honoring Shabbat creates a weekly sanctuary where our relationships can flourish again.

Chapter 7 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. “Slaves do not have days of rest.” In what ways does modern life re-create a kind of slavery — work stripped of its transcendent, divine mission?
2. After 210 years in Egypt, freedom was unimaginable and rest had to be commanded. Why can a gift like Shabbat not simply be suggested?
3. Scripture records no instance of Shabbat being kept in the entire book of Genesis. What does this silence teach about human nature and blessing?
4. “True freedom is experienced not when we can do anything, but when we can choose to stop.” How does this definition of freedom differ from the one our culture offers?
5. Psalm 46 commands, “Cease striving and know that I am God.” What is the connection between stopping and knowing?

Chapter 7 - Hebrew Terms

מִצְרַיִם Mitzrayim — Egypt. The house of bondage where Israel served for 210 years — a life in which rest was not only unfamiliar, but unimaginable.

חַוָּה Chava — Eve. In Eden, she and Adam worked in a joyful, exalted partnership with God — before work became toil.

הָרָפוּ וַדַּעוּ Harpu U'De'u — “Cease striving and know” (Psalm 46:10). The psalmist’s command to stop and recognize that God is God.

Chapter 8 — The Blessing and Healing of Shabbat

Human beings need more than survival to live. To thrive, we need purpose, peace, and love. Yet the pressures of the modern world often overshadow these essential truths. Shabbat restores what the week can erode.

Spiritually, Shabbat is a day for returning our attention to God. It is a rebellion against a world defined by productivity, accumulation, and consumerism. The noise of the world quiets, allowing the soul to speak and the heart to listen. On Shabbat, prayer is not rushed. Reflection is encouraged. Gratitude becomes natural. God is no longer competing with the distractions of the ordinary.

Shabbat is rest from fear, from striving, from the endless message that you are not enough.

Emotionally, Shabbat brings calm. The relentless chase for achievement breeds anxiety, and in the rush, we easily lose sight of our priorities and what truly matters. Shabbat counters this with the assurance that we are valued not because of what we do but because of who we are. The day teaches us to celebrate life as it is and to find joy in the present moment.

Relationally, Shabbat strengthens the bonds that hold families and communities together. Without phones or schedules pulling us apart, we rediscover the beauty of conversation, storytelling, and shared meals. Children learn love not only through words but through attention and presence. Marriages find renewal through uninterrupted time together. Communities deepen through hospitality and friendship.

Psychologically, Shabbat offers a pattern of mindfulness that modern science is only beginning to appreciate. It interrupts stress cycles and creates resilience. It restores cognitive clarity. It reconnects the mind with meaning. Studies show that regular rest enhances creativity, empathy, and overall well-being. Shabbat is ancient wisdom perfectly suited to the needs of the modern heart.

The modern person is constantly seeking to find “a healthy work-life balance”, yet the harder we chase it, the more it eludes us. It seems like the more time saving apps and technologies we develop, the less time we have. And too often, what matters most is what gets left behind.

Shabbat is God's answer — a sacred rhythm designed for human flourishing. It restores balance not only in our schedule, but in our entire being; spiritually through connection with God, emotionally through peace and stillness, relationally through presence and love, and psychologically through clarity and renewal. Shabbat does not simply pause the chaos — it heals the parts of us that the chaos wears down. In a world frantically searching for equilibrium, Shabbat offers the ultimate balance and reminds us once a week of what a whole, meaningful life truly feels like.

Chapter 8 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. Shabbat is described as “a rebellion against a world defined by productivity, accumulation, and consumerism.” What would your weekly rebellion look like?
2. “We are valued not because of what we do but because of who we are.” Where do you feel the most pressure to earn your worth through achievement?
3. Of the four dimensions of Shabbat’s healing — spiritual, emotional, relational, and psychological — which do you need most right now, and why?
4. Modern science is only beginning to appreciate what regular rest does for creativity, empathy, and well-being. Why do you think ancient wisdom anticipated these findings?
5. The chapter observes that the harder we chase “work-life balance,” the more it eludes us. How is Shabbat’s sacred rhythm different from balance as commonly pursued?

Chapter 8 - Hebrew Terms

מְנוּחָה Menuchah — Rest. The deep tranquility of Shabbat that restores the soul, the heart, and the mind.

רְפוּאָה Refuah — Healing. Shabbat does not simply pause the chaos — it heals the parts of us that the chaos wears down.

שְׁלוֹם Shalom — Peace. Wholeness and balance across every dimension of life — spirit, emotions, relationships, and mind.

Chapter 9 — Shabbat: A Prophecy for the Righteous Among the Nations

In Genesis, at creation, Shabbat is portrayed as a universal gift. The seventh day is a blessing for all to access. When God later commanded Israel to guard Shabbat through the specific observances of Torah law, that calling became a covenantal responsibility unique to the Jewish people. Yet the spiritual blessing and meaning of Shabbat remained accessible to all who seek closeness with the Creator.

Today, many among the nations feel a stirring in their hearts to live and practice the Bible in their own lives. They feel a closeness to the Jewish people, to Israel, and an attraction to the holiness of Shabbat. They recognize that time itself can be sacred and that the rhythm God established at creation holds wisdom that modern life desperately needs. This awakening is not a coincidence. The prophets envisioned a time, toward the end of days, when the nations would turn their hearts toward God and find blessing through honoring the God of Israel.

Isaiah speaks with remarkable clarity about the role of the nations in the redemption of the world. Twice in the same chapter, the prophet promises honor and a place in God's presence to those from among the nations who choose to keep the Sabbath in recognition of the God of Israel. He declares:

אֲשֶׁרִי אֶנוֹשׁ יַעֲשֶׂה-זֹאת וּבֶן-אָדָם יִחְזִיק בָּהּ שֹׁמֵר שַׁבָּת מִחֻלָּלֹ
וְשֹׁמֵר יָדוֹ מִמַּעֲשוֹת כָּל-רָע (ישעיהו נ"ב)

"How blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who takes hold of it; who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil." (Isaiah 56:2)

Isaiah does not bless 'the Jew' but 'the man.' Shabbat is a prophetic promise for all people.

Isaiah does not say "Blessed is the Jew", but rather blessed is "the man (*enosh*, אֶנוֹשׁ)". It's a prophetic promise for all people. In the Messianic era, every believer around the world will recognize and honor that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. In fact, it appears to be the dividing line between those who will be brought to Jerusalem to celebrate in God's house, as Isaiah emphatically declares:

וּבְנֵי הַנֶּכֶד הַגִּלּוּיִם עַל־יְהוָה לְשָׁרְתוֹ וּלְאַהֲבָה אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה לִהְיוֹת
 לוֹ לְעַבְדִּים כָּל־שְׁמֵר שַׁבַּת מִחֻלּוֹ וּמִחֻזְקִים בְּבְרִיתִי: וְהִבִּיאֹתִים
 אֶל־הָהָר קֹדֶשׁי וְשִׁמְחָתִים בְּבֵית תַּפְלָתִי עוֹלֵתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם לְרָצוֹן
 עַל־מִזְבְּחִי כִּי בֵיתִי בֵּית־תַּפְלָה יִקְרָא לְכָל־הָעַמִּים (יִשְׁעִיהוּ נו:ו–ז)

“Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath and holds fast My covenant; even those I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.” (Isaiah 56:6–7)

This vision does not erase the distinction between Israel and the nations. Rather, it reveals a future in which those who revere the God of Israel and honor His sacred time will be welcomed into the very place where His presence dwells. Shabbat becomes the sign of connection, the expression of loyalty to the Creator, and the pathway through which the righteous among the nations are granted a share in God’s blessing and a place in His unfolding redemption.

Shabbat becomes a bridge that unites Israel and the righteous among the nations and separates God’s people from the rest. It allows the nations to join Israel on her mission while strengthening their own connection with God.

Isaiah promises a time will come when Jewish and non-Jewish believers are united and brought together to Jerusalem to God’s Temple. And what distinguishes those counted among the righteous? The prophet answers explicitly: they are those who keep the Sabbath without profaning it and who hold fast to God’s covenant.

The righteous among the nations are destined to turn away from the modern secular culture of the world that is self-absorbed with the hustle and bustle, digital distractions, mindless entertainment, and “keeping up with the Jones” approach to life and return to the Bible and practically live a more Biblical-Judean lifestyle. As the prophet Zechariah foretold:

**כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בַּיָּמִים הָהֵמָּה אֲשֶׁר יַחֲזִיקוּ עֲשָׂרָה אָנָשִׁים
מִכָּל לְשׁוֹנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם וְהִחֲזִיקוּ בְּכִנּוֹף אִישׁ יְהוּדִי לֵאמֹר נִלְכָּה עִמָּכֶם
כִּי שָׁמַעְנוּ אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם (זְכַרְיָה ח:כג)**

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.””
(Zechariah 8:23)

Honoring the Ten Commandments in general, and remembering the Sabbath in particular, will become the defining mark of those who choose to stand with God and walk in His ways.

The prophets foresaw a time when the holiness of Shabbat would not be confined to one nation but would become a universal recognition of God’s sovereignty. Isaiah envisions a future when all nations participate in honoring Shabbat, as it is written:

**וְהָיָה מִדִּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ וּמִדִּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יִבּוֹא כָל־בָּשָׂר
לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לִפְנֵי אֲמֹר יְהוָה (ישעיהו סו:כג)**

“And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 66:23)

What is starting now among the nations will turn into an international revival and a transformation of the human condition.

The return of Shabbat consciousness to the world signals the coming of Mashiach and the approach of redemption.

In our generation, we are witnessing some of these final prophecies come true. People from across the globe are rediscovering the beauty of Shabbat. They are setting aside technology to reconnect with family. They are studying the Torah’s teachings about appointed times and the holiness within time. They are looking to Israel not only for innovation and security but for spiritual leadership. This awakening reflects the prophetic promise that the nations will join Israel in recognizing God as Creator and King.

Shabbat becomes a sign of unity in a fractured world. It brings peace into homes, communities, and hearts. It reminds us that

*Shabbat is not Israel’s alone.
The prophets foresee all
mankind — ‘from Sabbath to
Sabbath’ — honoring it
together, the mark of a world
united under God.*

humanity is ultimately one family under the Fatherhood of God. When Shabbat is honored by Israel and the nations together, creation itself begins to heal.

The prophetic calling of Shabbat is not only to remember the past but to anticipate the future. It invites us to become active participants in redemption. Every Shabbat celebration, every moment of sacred rest, every decision to elevate time brings our world closer to the day when God's presence will be fully known and peace will reign.

Chapter 9 - Questions for Reflection and Study

1. Isaiah blesses “the man” (enosh) who keeps the Sabbath — not “the Jew.” What does this word choice reveal about Shabbat’s place in God’s plan for all people?
2. In Isaiah 56, keeping the Sabbath is the mark of the foreigners who are welcomed to God’s holy mountain. Why do you think Shabbat — of all the commandments — is the sign of joining?
3. Zechariah foresees ten men from all the nations grasping the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you.” Where do you see this prophecy beginning to stir in our generation?
4. How does honoring Shabbat allow the nations to join Israel’s mission while preserving the distinction between Israel’s covenantal calling and the nations’ own?
5. The chapter teaches that every Shabbat celebration brings the world closer to redemption. How does it change your motivation to see your weekly rest as participation in the healing of creation?

Chapter 9 - Hebrew Terms

אֱנוֹשׁ Enosh — Man; a mortal. Isaiah blesses “the man” who keeps the Sabbath — a prophetic promise for all people, not one nation.

שׁוֹמֵר שַׁבָּת Shomer Shabbat — One who keeps the Sabbath from being profaned — Isaiah’s defining mark of the righteous among the nations.

מָשִׁיחַ Mashiach — The Messiah. The return of Shabbat consciousness to the world signals his coming and the approach of redemption.

Part 2: A Practical Guide

Chapter 10 — Shabbat For All Nations – A Practical Guide

10.1 Introduction:

I want to start by saying that all of this is an invitation. Nothing here is obligatory or demanded. This section of the book should be seen more like menu in a restaurant than a “To Do” list. You don’t order everything on the menu all at once. This is a collection of ancient Jewish traditions and wisdoms that we are sharing with the world to enhance their experience and connection to the holy day.

Shabbat is an experience. You can study its meaning, its depth, and the opportunities it offers, but that is like reading the musical notes rather than going to hear the philharmonic orchestra. Shabbat must be lived to be fully known.

This section of the book is a practical guide to help people enhance their Shabbat experience guided by the ancient Jewish customs of Israel. These are not laws that must be adhered to but pathways, time-tested practices that create space for a new kind of rest, connection, and rejuvenation. Consider it an invitation to step beyond theory and into practice, so that the beauty of Shabbat can move from concept to lived reality in your home and in your life.

10.2 Preparing For Shabbat

As the old cliché goes – you get out of something, what you put into it. Preparing for the Shabbat each week is a significant part of implementing a Shabbat practice in your own home. The preparation is more than just the activities of planning the best meal of the week, sending invitations to guests, shopping for groceries needed, cleaning the house and so on. Preparation for Shabbat involves a certain mental and spiritual state of mind.

As discussed in Part 1, the weekly Shabbat is a rehearsal for the coming redemption when the Temple has been rebuilt, and the

Jewish Messiah reigns and rules from the restored throne of King David in the holy city of Jerusalem. Shabbat is a microcosm of the Messianic Age when there are peace and prosperity for all people under the righteous leadership of God's anointed king.

Now imagine if you knew the Messiah was coming tomorrow and the final redemption was imminent. How would you behave? What would you change about your normal daily life and priorities? Would you spend less time “doom scrolling” on your iPhone and maybe more time praying? Perhaps you'd think about that repentance for a previous mistake that you haven't addressed? Your focus and anticipation would be heightened due to the imminent arrival of Redemption with all its implications.

Prepare for Shabbat as though redemption arrives tomorrow — because once it begins, whatever is left undone stays undone.

This is the spiritual mindset we should strive to have as we approach Shabbat each week. It is easier said than done because life will always be there to distract and impede us. But your preparation for the weekly Shabbat is a spiritual parallel to your preparation for the Messianic Age and the World to Come. When can we do mitzvot and good deeds? When can we be a blessing to others who may not be able to bless us in return? When can we take inventory of our lives and work on improving our character traits according to the values we aspire to as described in Scripture? We can only make those preparations in this life and in this present World. Because once the World to Come arrives – the Shabbat, as it were – it's too late. You are either prepared – or you are not! Whatever preparations are left undone, remain undone.

In this way, our physical and spiritual preparation each week for Shabbat is also a dress rehearsal and object lesson to teach us the eternal importance of doing good and serving God while we still have time. Because once Shabbat starts its “pencils down” as we say.

From this emerges the notion that one has not truly experienced Shabbat in its entirety unless one has experienced Friday – the day of preparation. And if you have ever been in

an observant Jewish home on Friday, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

10.3 Friday Night:

Shabbat begins Friday evening at sundown. Why sundown some may ask? Returning to the creation account in Genesis 1, we find it is written:

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהיֶי-עֶרֶב וַיְהיֶי-בֹקֶר
יוֹם אֶחָד. בְּרֵאשִׁית אֵלֶּה

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” (Genesis 1:5)

In this verse Scripture describes the first day as “there was evening and there was morning”. The second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth days of creation are all described in a similar manner. From this we learn that days are reckoned from sundown to sundown.

Friday night is the doorway into Shabbat. To honor Shabbat means to actively welcome Shabbat into your home. Although Shabbat is woven into the fabric of time, to experience the transition from the six days of creative work into the day of rest, you must make mental, psychological and spiritual space for Shabbat to enter the home.

It is the moment when the world of striving gives way to the world of being. When we consciously notice the sun setting on Friday eve, the week loosens its grip, and a different kind of presence enters the home.

Families gather not to accomplish anything, but simply to be together. For the first time all week, there is no agenda beyond presence, no goal beyond connection. The table becomes a meeting place for hearts that have been pulled in a hundred directions and are finally allowed to return.

When we make space for this transition, we can feel it: a quiet blessing settles in, a sense of peace that cannot be manufactured or scheduled. It is the rest that comes from knowing that for one sacred day, the world can wait, because it is Shabbat. Life has been gently turned off, and something deeper has been turned on.

10.4 Kabbalat Shabbat

Kabbalat Shabbat (קַבָּלַת שַׁבָּת), literally “Receiving Shabbat,” is the short and joyful service of psalms and songs that welcomes Shabbat on Friday evening as the sun is setting. In its present form it was shaped in the sixteenth century by the Kabbalists of Safed (Tzfat), in the hills of the Galilee, who would dress in white and walk out into the fields at dusk to greet Shabbat as a bride and a queen. They drew their inspiration from the Talmud, which tells that Rabbi Chanina would wrap himself in his finest garments at sunset on Friday and say, “Come, let us go out to greet Shabbat the Queen,” while Rabbi Yannai would say, “Come, O bride! Come, O bride!”²²

The service opens with Yedid Nefesh, a love song from the soul to God. It continues with six psalms (Psalms 95–99 and 29), which correspond to the six days of the workweek, and the ancient prayer Ana B’Koach. It then reaches its high point in Lecha Dodi, the beloved hymn in which we go out to greet the Shabbat bride, and concludes with Psalm 92, which Scripture itself titles “A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath Day.”

Kabbalat Shabbat is usually prayed in the synagogue just before the Friday evening service, but anyone can recite or sing it at home, whether in full or by choosing a few favorite passages. In most homes the Shabbat candles, described in the next section, are lit shortly before Kabbalat Shabbat begins. Many families simply sing Lecha Dodi together after the candles are lit, as a way of opening the door and inviting Shabbat in.

Yedid Nefesh (“Beloved of the Soul”) was written by Rabbi Elazar Azikri, one of the Kabbalists of sixteenth-century Safed. Many sing it slowly and softly as the sun goes down, letting the yearning of its words set the tone for everything that follows.

²² Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119a.

Yedid Nefesh — Beloved of the Soul

Hebrew

יְדִיד נֶפֶשׁ אַב הַרְחָמִן, מְשׁוֹחַ עֲבָדְךָ אֶל רְצוֹנְךָ, יְרוּץ עֲבָדְךָ כְּמוֹ
אֵיִל, יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל מוֹל הַדָּרְךָ, כִּי יַעֲרַב לוֹ יְדִידוּתְךָ, מִנִּפְתַּת צוּף
וְכָל טַעַם.

הַדּוּר נֶאֱחָז זִיו הָעוֹלָם, נִפְשִׁי חוֹלֵת אֲהַבְתְּךָ, אָנָּה אֵל נָא רְפֵא נָא
לָהּ, בְּהִרְאוֹת לָהּ נֶעַם זִינָה, אֲזִי תִתְחַזֵּק וְתִתְרַפֵּא, וְהִיָּתָה לָהּ שִׂמְחַת
עוֹלָם.

וְתִיקַן יְהֵמוֹ רַחֲמֶיךָ, וְחוּסָה נָא עַל בֶּן אוֹהֲבְךָ, כִּי זֶה כְּמָה נִכְסֶף
נִכְסֶפְתִּי, לְרִאוֹת בְּתַפְאֲרַת עֲזֶךָ, אֵלֶּה חֲמִדָּה לִבִּי, וְחוּסָה נָא וְאַל
תִּתְעַלֵּם.

הִגְלָה נָא וּפָרַס חֲבִיבִי עָלַי אֶת סִכַּת שְׁלֹמֹךָ, תֹּאִיר אֶרֶץ מִכְבוֹדְךָ,
נִגְלִילָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בָּךְ, מַהֵר אֲהוּב כִּי בָּא מוֹעֵד, וְחַנּוּנוֹ פִּימִי עוֹלָם.

English Transliteration

Yedid nefesh av harachaman, m'shoch avd'cha el r'tzonecha,
yarutz avd'cha k'mo ayal, yishtachaveh el mul hadarecha, ki
ye'erav lo y'didutach, minofet tzuf v'chol ta'am.

Hadur na'eh ziv ha'olam, nafshi cholat ahavatecha, ana El na
r'fa na lah, b'harot lah no'am zivecha, az titchazek v'titrapei,
v'hay'tah lah simchat olam.

Vatik yehemu rachamecha, v'chusah na al ben ohavach, ki zeh
kamah nichsof nichsafti, lir'ot b'tiferet uzach, eleh chamdah
libi, v'chusah na v'al tit'alam.

Higaleh na ufros chavivi alai et sukat sh'lomach, ta'ir eretz
mik'vodach, nagilah v'nism'chah bach, maher ahuv ki va
mo'ed, v'chonenu kimei olam.

English Translation

Beloved of my soul, merciful Father, draw Your servant to Your will. Let Your servant run like a deer to bow before Your splendor, for Your love is sweeter to him than honey from the comb or any other taste.

Glorious, beautiful Radiance of the world, my soul is sick with love for You. Please, God, heal her now by showing her the pleasantness of Your radiance. Then she will be strengthened and healed, and she will have everlasting joy.

Ancient One, let Your compassion be stirred, and please have pity on the child who loves You. For so long I have yearned to behold the glory of Your strength. These are the desires of my heart; please have pity, and do not hide Yourself.

Reveal Yourself, my Beloved, and spread over me the shelter of Your peace. Let the earth shine with Your glory; we will rejoice and be glad in You. Hurry, Beloved, for the time has come, and be gracious to us as in days of old.

Next come six psalms, one for each of the six days of the workweek. As we say them, we look back over the week that has passed and gather it up as an offering before Shabbat arrives. Psalms 95 through 99 call on all the earth and all the nations to sing to the LORD and to recognize Him as King, and Psalm 29 describes the voice of God thundering over all creation and ends with a blessing of peace.

Psalm 95 — Lechu Neranengah

Hebrew

לְכוּ נְרַנְנָה לַיהוָה, נְרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנו.
נִקְדָּמָה פָּנֵינוּ בַתּוֹדָה, בְּזִמְרוֹת נְרִיעַ לוֹ.
כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יְהוָה, וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים.
אֲשֶׁר בִּידוֹ מִתְקַרֵּי אֶרֶץ, וְתוֹעֲפוֹת הָרִים לוֹ.
אֲשֶׁר לוֹ הַיָּם וְהוּא עֹשֶׂהוּ, וַיִּבְּשֶׁת יָדָיו יָצְרוּ.
בָּאוּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנִכְרַעָה, נִבְרַכָּה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה עֲשֵׂנו.

כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנֶאֱחָזְנוּ עִם מַרְעִיתוֹ וְצֹאן יָדוֹ, הַיּוֹם אִם בְּקִלּוֹ
אֶל תִּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶּם כַּמְרִיבָה, כִּיּוֹם מָסָה בַּמִּדְבָּר. תִּשְׁמָעוּ.
אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם, בְּחֲנוּנֵי גַם רָאוּ פְעָלִי.
אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה אָקוּט בְּדוֹר, וְאָמַר עִם תַּעֲי לִבְבִּי הֵם, וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְּאָפִי, אִם יִבְאוּ אֶל מְנוּחָתִי דֶּרֶכִּי.

English Transliteration

L'chu n'ran'nah l'Adonai, nari'ah l'tzur yish'enu.
N'kad'mah fanav b'todah, biz'mirot nari'a lo.
Ki El gadol Adonai, u'melech gadol al kol elohim.
Asher b'yado mechk'rei aretz, v'to'afot harim lo.
Asher lo hayam v'hu asahu, v'yabeshet yadav yatzaru.
Bo'u nishtachaveh v'nichra'ah, nivr'chah lifnei Adonai oseinu.
Ki hu Eloheinu va'anachnu am mar'ito v'tzon yado, hayom im
b'kolo tishma'u.
Al takshu l'avchem kimrivah, k'yom masah bamidbar.
Asher nisuni avoteichem, b'chanuni gam ra'u fo'oli.
Arba'im shanah akut b'dor, va'omar am to'ei levav hem, v'hem
lo yad'u d'rachai.
Asher nishba'ti v'api, im y'vo'un el m'nuchati.

English Translation

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD; let us shout for joy to
the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before Him with thanksgiving; let us shout for joy
to Him with songs.
For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
In His hand are the depths of the earth, and the heights of the
mountains are His.
The sea is His, for He made it, and His hands formed the dry
land.
Come, let us bow down and bend the knee; let us kneel before
the LORD our Maker.

For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the flock of His hand. Today, if only you would listen to His voice!

Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on the day of Massah in the wilderness,

when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, though they had seen My work.

For forty years I was wearied by that generation, and I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known My ways."

So I swore in My anger that they would not enter My rest.

Psalm 96 — Shiru LaShem Shir Chadash

Hebrew

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל הָאָרֶץ.
 שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה בָּרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ, בְּשָׁרוּ מִיּוֹם לְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ.
 סִפְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ, בְּכָל הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו.
 כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֵלָּל מְאֹד, נוֹרָא הוּא עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים.
 כִּי כָל אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים, וַיהוָה שְׁמַיִם עָשָׂה.
 הוֹד וְהָדָר לִפְנָיו, עֹז וְתַפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ.
 הָבוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים, הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז.
 הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ, שְׂאוּ מִנְחָה וּבֹאוּ לְתַצְרוֹתָיו.
 הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהִדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ, חִילוּ מִפְּנֵיו כָּל הָאָרֶץ.
 אָמְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם יְהוָה מְלֹךְ, אֵף תִּפְּוֹן תִּבְּל בַּל תִּמּוּט, יָדִין עַמִּים
 בְּמִישְׁרֵיהֶם.
 יִשְׁמְחוּ הַשְּׁמַיִם וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ, יִרְעֵם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוּ.
 יַעֲלֹז שָׂדֵי וְכָל אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ, אֲזַי יִרְנְנוּ כָּל עֵצֵי יַעַר.
 לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כִּי בָּא, כִּי בָּא לְשַׁפֵּט הָאָרֶץ, יִשְׁפֹּט תִּבְּל בְּצִדָּקָה, וְעַמִּים
 בְּאַמּוֹנִיתוֹ.

English Transliteration

Shiru l'Adonai shir chadash, shiru l'Adonai kol ha'aretz.

Shiru l'Adonai bar'chu sh'mo, bas'ru miyom l'yom y'shu'ato.

Sap'ru vagoyim k'vodo, b'chol ha'amim nifl'otav.
Ki gadol Adonai um'hulal m'od, nora hu al kol elohim.
Ki kol elohei ha'amim elilim, v'Adonai shamayim asah.
Hod v'hadar l'fanav, oz v'tiferet b'mikdasho.
Havu l'Adonai mishp'chot amim, havu l'Adonai kavod va'oz.
Havu l'Adonai k'vod sh'mo, s'u minchah uvo'u l'chatz'rotav.
Hishtachavu l'Adonai b'hadrat kodesh, chilu mipanav kol
ha'aretz.
Imru vagoyim Adonai malach, af tikon tevel bal timot, yadin
amim b'meisharim.
Yism'chu hashamayim v'tagel ha'aretz, yir'am hayam um'lo'o.
Ya'aloz sadai v'chol asher bo, az y'ran'nu kol atzei ya'ar.
Lifnei Adonai ki va, ki va lishpot ha'aretz, yishpot tevel
b'tzedek, v'amim be'emunato.

English Translation

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim His salvation
from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all
the peoples.
For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; He is to be
revered above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made
the heavens.
Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in
His sanctuary.
Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the
LORD glory and strength.
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering
and come into His courts.
Bow down to the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble
before Him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!" The world is
firmly established; it cannot be moved. He will judge the
peoples with fairness.

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad; let the sea roar,
and all that fills it.

Let the fields exult, and everything in them; then all the trees
of the forest will sing for joy

before the LORD, for He is coming, for He is coming to judge
the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the
peoples with His faithfulness.

Psalm 97 — HaShem Malach Tagel HaAretz

Hebrew

יְהוָה מָלַךְ תִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ, יִשְׁמְחוּ אֲיִים רַבִּים.
עָנָן וְעַרְפֵּל סְבִיבָיו, צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מִכּוֹן כִּסְאוֹ.
אֵשׁ לִפְנֵי תֵלֶךְ, וּתְלַהֵט סָבִיב צָרָיו.
הֵאִירוּ בְּרָקָיו תֵּבֵל, רָאֲתָה וַתַּחַל הָאָרֶץ.
הָרִים כְּדוֹנָג נִמְסוּ מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה, מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל הָאָרֶץ.
הִגִּידוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם צֶדֶקוֹ, וְרָאוּ כָּל הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ.
יִבְשׁוּ כָּל עֲבָדֵי פֶסֶל הַמֵּתֵהֱלִים בְּאֵלִילִים, הַשֹּׁתְחוּ לוֹ כָּל אֱלֹהִים.
שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח צִיּוֹן, וַתִּגְלַנָּה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה, לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יְהוָה.
כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מֵאֵד נִעְלִיתָ עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים.
אֶהְיֶי יְהוָה שֹׁנְאוֹ רָע, שֹׁמֵר נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו, מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים יִצִּילֵם.
אֹר זָרַע לְצַדִּיק, וּלְיֹשְׁרֵי לֵב שִׁמְחָה.
שִׁמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בִּיהוָה, וְהוֹדוּ לְזִכְרֵךְ קֹדֶשׁוֹ.

English Transliteration

Adonai malach tagel ha'aretz, yism'chu iyim rabim.

Anan va'arafel s'vivav, tzedek umishpat m'chon kis'o.

Esh l'fanav telech, ut'lahet saviv tzarav.

He'iru v'rakav tevel, ra'atah vatachel ha'aretz.

Harim kadonag namasu milifnei Adonai, milifnei Adon kol
ha'aretz.

Higidu hashamayim tzidko, v'ra'u chol ha'amim k'vodo.

Yevoshu kol ovdei fesel hamit'hal'lim ba'elilim, hishtachavu lo kol elohim.

Sham'ah vatismach Tziyon, vatagelnah b'not Y'hudah, l'ma'an mishpatecha Adonai.

Ki atah Adonai elyon al kol ha'aretz, m'od na'aleita al kol elohim.

Ohavei Adonai sin'u ra, shomer nafshot chasidav, miyad r'sha'im yatzilem.

Or zaru'a latzadik, ul'yishrei lev simchah.

Simchu tzadikim b'Adonai, v'hodu l'zecher kodsho.

English Translation

The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many islands be glad.

Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.

Fire goes before Him and consumes His enemies on every side.

His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory.

Let all who serve carved images be ashamed, who boast in idols; bow down to Him, all you gods.

Zion heard and rejoiced, and the daughters of Judah were glad, because of Your judgments, O LORD.

For You, LORD, are Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.

You who love the LORD, hate evil. He guards the souls of His devoted ones; He rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, and give thanks to His holy name.

Psalm 98 — Mizmor Shiru LaHaShem

Hebrew

מִזְמוֹר, שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ כִּי נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה, הוֹשִׁיעָה לוֹ
יָמֵינוּ וְזָרַע קֹדֶשׁ.
הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ, לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גִּלָּה צְדָקָתוֹ.
זָכַר חֲסִדוֹ וְאַמּוֹנָתוֹ לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל, רָאוּ כָּל אַפְסֵי אֶרֶץ אֶת יְשׁוּעַת
אֱלֹהֵינוּ.
הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל הָאָרֶץ, פָּצְחוּ וְרָנְנוּ וְזָמְרוּ.
זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר, בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זָמְרָה.
בְּחִצְצָרוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר, הָרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוָה.
יִרְעֹם הַיָּם וּמִלְאוּ, תִּבֵּל וַיִּשְׁבִּי בָּהּ.
נִהְרֹת יִמְחָאוּ כָּף, יַחַד הָרִים יִרְנְנוּ.
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כִּי בָּא לִשְׁפֹט הָאָרֶץ, יִשְׁפֹּט תִּבֵּל בְּצֶדֶק, וְעַמִּים
בְּמִישָׁרִים.

English Transliteration

Mizmor, shiru l'Adonai shir chadash ki nifla'ot asah, hoshi'ah
lo y'mino uz'ro'a kodsho.
Hodi'a Adonai y'shu'ato, l'einei hagoyim gilah tzidkato.
Zachar chasdo ve'emunato l'veit Yisrael, ra'u chol afsei aretz et
y'shu'at Eloheinu.
Hari'u l'Adonai kol ha'aretz, pitz'chu v'ran'nu v'zameiru.
Zam'ru l'Adonai b'chinor, b'chinor v'kol zimrah.
Bachatzotz'rot v'kol shofar, hari'u lifnei hamelech Adonai.
Yir'am hayam um'lo'o, tevel v'yosh'vei vah.
N'harot yimcha'u chaf, yachad harim y'ranenu.
Lifnei Adonai ki va lishpot ha'aretz, yishpot tevel b'tzedek,
v'amim b'meisharim.

English Translation

A psalm. Sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done wonders; His right hand and His holy arm have won Him victory.

The LORD has made His salvation known; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

He has remembered His kindness and faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth; burst into song, rejoice, and sing praises.

Sing praises to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of song.

With trumpets and the sound of the shofar, shout for joy before the King, the LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and all who dwell in it.

Let the rivers clap their hands; let the mountains sing for joy together before the LORD, for He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with fairness.

Psalm 99 — HaShem Malach Yirgezu Amim

Hebrew

יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ יִרְגְּזוּ עַמִּים, יֵשֶׁב כְּרוּבִים תְּנוּט הָאָרֶץ.

יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל, וְרֵם הוּא עַל כָּל הָעַמִּים.

יִדּוּ שִׁמְךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא, קְדוֹשׁ הוּא.

וְעַז מֶלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב, אַתָּה כּוֹנֵנֶת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מִשְׁפָּט וַיִּדְקָה בִּיעֲקֹב
אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ.

רוּמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְהֵדֶם רַגְלָיו, קְדוֹשׁ הוּא.

מִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן בְּכֹהֲנָיו, וּשְׂמוּאֵל בְּקִרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ, קִרְאִים אֶל יְהוָה וְהוּא
יַעֲנֵם.

בְּעֲמוּד עָנָן יִדְבֹּר אֲלֵיהֶם, שִׁמְרוּ עֲדֹתָיו וְחֹק נֶתַן לָמוֹ.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם, אֵל נִשְׂא הָיִיתָ לָהֶם, וְנִקָּם עַל
עֲלִילוֹתָם.

רֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קְדִשׁוֹ, כִּי קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

English Transliteration

Adonai malach yirg'zu amim, yoshev k'ruvim tanut ha'aretz.

Adonai b'Tziyon gadol, v'ram hu al kol ha'amim.

Yodu shimcha gadol v'nora, kadosh hu.

V'oz melech mishpat ahev, atah konanta meisharim, mishpat
utz'dakah b'Ya'akov atah asita.

Rom'mu Adonai Eloheinu v'hishtachavu lahadom raglav,
kadosh hu.

Moshe v'Aharon b'chohanav, ush'mu'el b'kor'ei sh'mo, kor'im
el Adonai v'hu ya'anem.

B'amud anan y'daber aleihem, sham'ru edotav v'chok natan
lamo.

Adonai Eloheinu atah anitam, El nosei hayita lahem, v'nokem
al alilotam.

Rom'mu Adonai Eloheinu v'hishtachavu l'har kodsho, ki
kadosh Adonai Eloheinu.

English Translation

The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble. He is enthroned
upon the cherubim; let the earth quake.

The LORD is great in Zion, and He is exalted above all the
peoples.

Let them praise Your great and awesome name; holy is He.

The strength of the King is that He loves justice. You have
established fairness; You have brought about justice and
righteousness in Jacob.

Exalt the LORD our God and bow down at His footstool; holy
is He.

Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those
who call on His name—they called to the LORD, and He
answered them.

He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud; they kept His
testimonies and the statute He gave them.

O LORD our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, yet You held them to account for their deeds.

Exalt the LORD our God and bow down at His holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.

Psalm 29 — Mizmor LeDavid

Hebrew

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד, הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלִים, הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז.
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ, הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ.
קוֹל יְהוָה עַל הַמַּיִם, אֵל הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים, יְהוָה עַל מַיִם רַבִּים.
קוֹל יְהוָה בַּכַּת, קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהָדָר.
קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים, וַיִּשְׁבֹּר יְהוָה אֶת אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָנוֹן.
וַיַּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ עֵגֶל, לְבָנוֹן וְשִׁירֹן כְּמוֹ בֶן רֵאמִים.
קוֹל יְהוָה חֹצֵב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ.
קוֹל יְהוָה יַחִיל מִדְבָּר, יַחִיל יְהוָה מִדְבָּר קֹדֶשׁ.
קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֹל אֵילֹת וַיַּחֲשֹׁף יַעְרֹת, וַיַּהֲבִיכֵם כָּלֹ אֱמֹר כְּבוֹד.
יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב, וַיִּנָּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לַעֲוֹלָם.
יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

English Transliteration

Mizmor l'David, havu l'Adonai b'nei elim, havu l'Adonai kavod va'oz.

Havu l'Adonai k'vod sh'mo, hishtachavu l'Adonai b'hadrat kodesh.

Kol Adonai al hamayim, El hakavod hir'im, Adonai al mayim rabim.

Kol Adonai bako'ach, kol Adonai behadar.

Kol Adonai shover arazim, vay'shaber Adonai et arzei hal'vanon.

Vayarkidem k'mo egel, L'vanon v'Siryon k'mo ven r'emim.

Kol Adonai chotzev lahavot esh.

Kol Adonai yachil midbar, yachil Adonai midbar Kadesh.

Kol Adonai y'cholel ayalot vayechesof y'arot, uv'heichalo kulo omer kavod.

Adonai lamabul yashav, vayeshev Adonai melech l'olam.

Adonai oz l'amo yiten, Adonai y'varech et amo vashalom.

English Translation

A psalm of David. Ascribe to the LORD, you sons of the mighty, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bow down to the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders; the LORD is over the mighty waters.

The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes them skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the LORD strikes with flames of fire.

The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in His temple all proclaim, "Glory!"

The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood; the LORD sits enthroned as King forever.

The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace.

Ana B'Koach — We Beg You, With Strength

Ana B'Koach (אָנא בִּכּוֹחַ) is an ancient mystical prayer attributed to Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKaneh, a teacher of the Mishnaic era. It has seven lines of six words each, and the first letters of its forty-two words form a hidden forty-two-letter name of God. The closing line is traditionally said quietly.

Hebrew

אָנאַ בַּכַּח גְּדֻלַּת יְמִינְךָ, תַּתִּיר צְרוּרָה.
קַבֵּל רִנַּת עַמְּךָ, שִׁגְבָנוּ, טַהֲרֵנוּ, נוֹרָא.
נָא גִבּוֹר, דּוֹרְשֵׁי יַחֲוֹדְךָ, כְּבַבְתָּ שְׁמֶרֶם.
בָּרַכְם, טַהֲרֶם, רַחֲמֶם, צִדְקַתְךָ תָּמִיד גִּמְלֶם.
חֲסִין קָדוֹשׁ, בְּרוּב טוֹבְךָ נָהַל עֲדַתְךָ.
יַחֲדִיד גֵּאָה, לְעַמְּךָ כְּנֵה, זֹכְרֵי קִדְשֶׁתְךָ.
שׁוֹעֲתֵנוּ קַבֵּל, וּשְׁמַע צַעֲקֹתֵנוּ, יוֹדֵעַ מַעֲלָמוֹת.
בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

English Transliteration

Ana b'cho'ach g'dulat y'min'cha, tatir tz'rurah.
Kabel rinat am'cha, sag'venu, tahareinu, nora.
Na gibor, dorshei yichud'cha, k'vavat shomrem.
Bar'chem, taharem, rachamem, tzidkat'cha tamid gomlem.
Chasin kadosh, b'rov tuv'cha nahel adatecha.
Yachid ge'eh, l'am'cha p'neh, zochrei k'dushatecha.
Shav'ateinu kabel, ushma tza'akateinu, yode'a ta'alumot.
Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam va'ed.

English Translation

We beg You, with the great strength of Your right hand, set the captive free.

Accept the song of Your people; lift us up and purify us, Awesome One.

Please, Mighty One, guard like the apple of the eye those who seek Your oneness.

Bless them, purify them, have mercy on them; always reward them with Your righteousness.

Powerful and Holy One, in Your abundant goodness, lead Your congregation.

Unique and Exalted One, turn to Your people, who remember Your holiness.

Accept our plea and hear our cry, You who know all hidden things.

Blessed is the name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever.

Lecha Dodi — Come, My Beloved

Lecha Dodi (לְכָה דוֹדִי) (“Come, My Beloved”) is the heart of Kabbalat Shabbat. It was composed by Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz, another of the great Kabbalists of Safed, and the first letters of its first eight stanzas spell out his name, Shlomo HaLevi. The refrain is sung at the beginning and again after every stanza. At the final stanza, it is customary to rise and turn toward the door, or toward the west where the sun is setting, and to bow at the words “Come, O bride!” as Shabbat enters.

Hebrew

לְכָה דוֹדִי לְקִרְאָת כְּלָה, פָּנֵי שַׁבָּת נִקְבְּלָה.

שְׁמֹר וְזָכוֹר בְּדְבוּר אֶחָד, הַשְׁמִיעֵנוּ אֶל הַמִּיחָד, יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשִׁמּוֹ
אֶחָד, לְשֵׁם וּלְתַפְאֲרָת וּלְתַהֲלָה.

לְקִרְאָת שַׁבָּת לָכּוּ וְנִלְכָּה, כִּי הִיא מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה, מֵרֹאשׁ מִקְדָּם
נְסוּכָה, סוּף מַעֲשֵׂה בְּמַחְשָׁבָה תַּחֲלָה.

מִקְדָּשׁ מְלֶךְ עִיר מְלוּכָה, קוֹמִי צֵאִי מִתּוֹךְ הַהֶפְכָּה, רַב לָךְ שַׁבָּת
בְּעֶמֶק הַבְּכָא, וְהוּא יַחֲמוּל עָלֶיךָ תְּמָלָה.

הַתְּנַעֲרִי מֵעַפָּר קוֹמִי, לְבָשִׁי בְּגָדֵי תַפְאֲרָתְךָ עַמִּי, עַל יָד בֶּן יִשְׂרָאֵל
בֵּית הַלְחָמִי, קָרְבָּה אֶל נַפְשִׁי גְּאֻלָּה.

הַתְּעוֹרְרִי הַתְּעוֹרְרִי, כִּי בָּא אוֹרְךָ קוֹמִי אוֹרִי, עוֹרִי עוֹרִי שִׁיר
דְּבָרִי, כְּבוֹד יְהוָה עָלֶיךָ נִגְלָה.

לֹא תִבָּשִׁי וְלֹא תִפְלָמִי, מָה תִשְׁתַּחֲוִי וּמָה תִתְקַמִּי, בְּךָ יִחְסוּ עֲנִיִּי
עַמִּי, וְנִבְנְתָה עִיר עַל תִּלָּה.

וְהָיוּ לְמִשְׁסָּה שְׂאֵסִיד, וְרַחֲקוּ כָּל מְבַלְעִיד, יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ,
כְּמִשׁוֹשׁ חֲתָן עַל כְּלָה.

יָמִין וּשְׂמָאל תִּפְרָצִי, וְאַתְּ יְהוָה תַּעֲרִיצִי, עַל יָד אִישׁ בֶּן פְּרָצִי,
וְנִשְׁמָחָה וְנִגִּילָה.

בּוֹאִי בְּשִׁלּוֹם עֲטָרַת בַּעֲלָה, גַּם בְּשִׁמְחָה וּבְצַהֲלָה, תּוֹךְ אֲמוּנָי עַם
סִגְלָה, בּוֹאִי כְלָה, בּוֹאִי כְלָה.

English Transliteration

Refrain: L'cha dodi likrat kalah, p'nei Shabbat n'kab'lah.

Shamor v'zachor b'dibur echad, hishmi'anu El ham'yuchad,
Adonai echad ush'mo echad, l'shem ul'tiferet v'lit'hilah.

Likrat Shabbat l'chu v'nelchah, ki hi m'kor hab'rachah,
merosh mikedem n'suchah, sof ma'aseh b'machashavah
t'chilah.

Mikdash melech ir m'luchah, kumi tz'i mitoch hahafechah, rav
lach shevet b'emek habacha, v'hu yachamol alayich chemlah.

Hitna'ari me'afar kumi, livshi bigdei tifartech ami, al yad ben
Yishai beit halachmi, korvah el nafshi g'alah.

Hit'or'ri hit'or'ri, ki va orech kumi ori, uri uri shir daberi,
k'vod Adonai alayich niglah.

Lo tevoshi v'lo tikalmi, mah tishtochachi umah tehemi, bach
yechesu aniyei ami, v'nivn'tah ir al tilah.

V'hayu limshisah shosayich, v'rachaku kol m'val'ayich, yasis
alayich Elohayich, kimsos chatan al kalah.

Yamin us'mol tifrotzi, v'et Adonai ta'aritz, al yad ish ben
Partzi, v'nism'chah v'nagilah.

Bo'i v'shalom ateret ba'lah, gam b'simchah uv'tzoholah, toch
emunei am s'gulah, bo'i chalah, bo'i chalah.

English Translation

Refrain: Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride; let us
welcome the presence of Shabbat.

“Keep” and “Remember” in a single utterance the One God
caused us to hear. The LORD is One and His name is One, for
renown, for glory, and for praise.

To greet Shabbat, come, let us go, for she is the source of
blessing. From the beginning, from of old, she was ordained—
last in creation, first in thought.

Sanctuary of the King, royal city, arise and go out from the
ruins. Long enough have you dwelt in the valley of tears; He
will have great compassion on you.

Shake off the dust and arise! Put on your garments of
splendor, my people. Through the son of Jesse of Bethlehem,
draw near to my soul and redeem it.

Awake, awake! For your light has come—arise and shine.
Awake, awake, and utter a song, for the glory of the LORD is
revealed upon you.

Do not be ashamed, do not be disgraced. Why are you
downcast, why do you groan? In you the afflicted of my people
will find shelter, and the city will be rebuilt on its ancient hill.

Those who plundered you will be plundered, and all who
would devour you will be far away. Your God will rejoice over
you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

You will spread out to the right and to the left, and you will
revere the LORD. Through the man descended from Peretz,
we will rejoice and be glad.

Come in peace, crown of her husband, with joy and gladness,
among the faithful of the treasured people. Come, O bride!
Come, O bride!

With Lecha Dodi, Shabbat has been received. We now say the
psalm that Scripture itself titles “A Psalm, a Song for the
Sabbath Day.” Once it is recited, Shabbat has fully begun. It is
a song of gratitude and trust, ending with the image of the
righteous flourishing like a palm tree and a cedar of Lebanon,
still bearing fruit in old age.

Psalm 92 — Mizmor Shir LeYom HaShabbat

Hebrew

מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת.
טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה, וּלְזַמֵּר לַשִּׁמְךָ עֲלִינוּ.
לְתִגִּיד בַּבֶּקֶר חֶסֶדְךָ, וְאַמּוֹנָתְךָ בַּלֵּילוֹת.
עָלִי עֲשׂוֹר וְעָלִי גָבֹל, עָלִי הַגִּיוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר.
כִּי שִׁמְחַתְנִי יְהוָה בְּפַעֲלֶךָ, בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אֲרִנּוּ.
מִה גָדְלוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה, מֵאֵד עֲמָקוֹ מִחֲשֻׁבְתֶּיךָ.
אִישׁ בַּעַר לֹא יֵדַע, וְכֹסִיל לֹא יָבִין אֶת זֹאת.
בִּפְרוֹחַ רִשְׁעִים כָּמוֹ עֹשֵׁב וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָּל פֶּעַלִּי אֲנִי, לְהַשְׁמָדָם עֲדֵי עַד.
וְאַתָּה מָרוֹם לְעֵלָם יְהוָה.

כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ יְהוָה, כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ יֹאבְדוּ, יִתְפָּרְדּוּ כָּל פְּעָלֵי אָוֶן.
וְתָרַם כְּרָאִים קָרְנִי, בְּלִתִּי בְשֶׁמֶן רִעְוֹן.
וְתִבֵּט עֵינַי בְּשׁוּרֵי, בְּקָמִים עָלֵי מְרֻעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אֲזִנִּי.
צַדִּיק כְּתָמָר יִפְרֹחַ, כְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשָּׁגָה.
שְׁתוּלִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה, בְּתִצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ.
עוֹד יְנוּבּוֹן בְּשִׁיבָה, דְּשָׁנִים וְרַעְנָנִים יִהְיוּ.
לְהַגִּיד כִּי יֵשֶׁר יְהוָה, צוּרֵי וְלֹא עוֹלָתָהּ בּוֹ.

English Transliteration

Mizmor shir l'yom haShabbat.
Tov l'hodot l'Adonai, ul'zamer l'shimcha elyon.
L'hagid baboker chasdecha, ve'emumat'cha baleilot.
Aleis asor va'aleis navel, aleis higayon b'chinor.
Ki simachtani Adonai b'fo'olecha, b'ma'asei yadecha aranen.
Mah gadlu ma'asecha Adonai, m'od amku machsh'votecha.
Ish ba'ar lo yeda, uch'sil lo yavin et zot.
Bifro'ach r'sha'im k'mo esev vayatzitzu kol po'alei aven,
l'hishamdam adei ad.
V'atah marom l'olam Adonai.
Ki hineh oyvecha Adonai, ki hineh oyvecha yovedu, yitpar'du
kol po'alei aven.
Vatarem kir'eim karni, baloti b'shemen ra'anani.
Vatabet eini b'shurai, bakamim alai m're'im tishmanah oznai.
Tzadik katamar yifrach, k'erez bal'vanon yisgeh.
Sh'tulim b'veit Adonai, b'chatzrot Eloheinu yafrichu.
Od y'nuvun b'seivah, d'sheinim v'ra'ananim yih'yu.
L'hagid ki yashar Adonai, tzuri v'lo avlatah bo.

English Translation

A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

to declare Your kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness at night, on a ten-stringed instrument and on the lyre, with the melody of the harp.

For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your deeds; I sing for joy at the works of Your hands.

How great are Your works, O LORD! How very deep are Your thoughts!

A senseless person does not know, and a fool does not understand this: when the wicked spring up like grass and all evildoers flourish, it is only so that they may be destroyed forever.

But You, LORD, are exalted forever.

For behold, Your enemies, O LORD—for behold, Your enemies will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.

But You have raised my strength like that of a wild ox; I am anointed with fresh oil.

My eyes have seen the downfall of those who watch me; my ears have heard of the evildoers who rise against me.

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree; they will grow tall like a cedar in Lebanon.

Planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God.

They will still bear fruit in old age; they will stay fresh and green, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no injustice in Him.

Whether you pray the full service or simply sing *Lecha Dodi* with your family around the table, Kabbalat Shabbat turns the arrival of Shabbat from something that merely happens to us into something we go out to meet. Like the Kabbalists of Safed walking into the fields at sunset, we set aside the week, open the door, and welcome Shabbat as an honored guest.

10.5 Shabbat Candles

If Friday night is the doorway into Shabbat, Shabbat candles are the key. It is the first opportunity to gather the family

around together and welcome Shabbat into the home. With the lighting of the candles, we mark the end of the workweek and the arrival of Shabbat. Before any words are spoken, before the meal is served, the candles create a peaceful atmosphere in the home that announces that this time is different.

Shabbat is a family-centered day, and it is no accident that the wife and mother of the home take center stage at this moment. The tradition entrusts her with welcoming the Light of Shabbat into the household because she embodies the heart of the home itself. Just as light gently pushes away darkness, her act of lighting the candles brings warmth and peace into the space where family life unfolds.

We do not create Shabbat; we welcome it — the candles are lit to receive, not to achieve.

The candles mark more than the end of the workweek; they mark a shift in consciousness. With their glow, urgency fades and peace settles in. After all the Friday preparations, the woman of the home gently recites the blessing over the Shabbat candles and the light reminds us that Shabbat is not entered through effort or achievement, but through receiving. We do not create Shabbat; we welcome it.

There is also a profound symbolism in the light itself. Fire transforms darkness without noise or force. In the same way, Shabbat transforms the home quietly, from within. The candles teach that holiness does not overwhelm life; it softens it. Their steady flame invites calm, reflection, and presence. Children sense it immediately. The atmosphere changes. Something sacred has arrived.

In many homes, the blessing recited over the candles is a moment of personal prayer.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו
להדליק נר של שבת

English Transliteration

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher
kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

English Translation

Blessed are you Hashem our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His mitzvot and commanded us to light the candles of the Sabbath.

She covers her eyes and chooses, for one day, to see only the blessing in front of her.

There's a custom that when the wife and mother of the home says the blessing over the candles that she covers her eyes with both hands. My wife Tehila taught me that when she does that she says in her heart something like, "There's so much to do, so many problems that exist... right now I'm not going to look at those. I'm going into Shabbat and I'm only going to see the blessing of what's around me and in front of me right now."

Sparkling a match, kindling a flame while lighting the candles is the last creative act of the week. It is a pause before the rush of the week dissolves completely, a chance to ask for peace in the home, protection for loved ones, and gratitude for the gift of life. In this way, the candles do not merely welcome Shabbat into the house; they welcome God into the most intimate spaces of family life.

My family usually sings this song together right after my wife Tehila lights the candles. It encapsulates our deepest hopes for the family we are building together and allows the family to welcome Shabbat together.

*Grant me the merit
to raise children and children's children,
wise and understanding,
lovers of the Lord,
those who fear God,
people of truth,
holy offspring,
clinging to the Lord.*

*And may their light illuminate the world
with Torah and good deeds
and with every form of sacred service of the Creator.*

The feeling I get after Tehila lights the Shabbat candles and together with my children we finish singing the song that welcomes Shabbat is like no other. Finally... Shabbat.

The light of Shabbat must be kindled intentionally. Peace does not appear on its own. Holiness must be invited. When we

pause, gather, and light the candles together, we create a weekly sanctuary in time where the soul can rest and relationships can be renewed. With Shabbat candles we initiate Shabbat in the home. Shabbat begins not with words or laws, but with light — and in that light, we as a home welcome the peace and blessing of Shabbat.

10.6 Living Unplugged

Shabbat offers a weekly opportunity to unplug from the internet, from our phones, and from the array of screens that compete for our attention. In my view, this may be the most transformative practice in this book. If going unplugged every Shabbat becomes a habit, its impact is life changing.

Although Shabbat has been observed for thousands of years, in many ways our generation can appreciate its blessing more than ever before. Studies show that many people feel as though they have an unhealthy relationship with their phone and other devices.

The American Psychological Association's annual Stress in America survey has repeatedly found that over two-thirds of adults report that their phone use causes stress and anxiety. A significant number describe feeling unable to disconnect, even when they want to. Many feel pressure to respond quickly to texts, emails, and social media notifications.

The Pew Research Center reported that 46% of U.S. adults say they are “almost constantly” online. No break. Ever. Shabbat is the opportunity to finally go offline and unplug regularly.

A commandment given so long ago at Sinai that addresses so directly one of the biggest struggles of modern people stands as living testimony to the divine and transcendent wisdom of the Torah and the Ten Commandments in particular.

One of the most powerful and life-changing aspects of Shabbat can be the decision to unplug from electronics and screens. No notifications. No emails. No messages demanding immediate response. For one day each week, the constant pull of urgency is released, and life is restored to its natural state.

Disconnecting from your phone one day a week on Shabbat is profoundly beneficial for mental and emotional health. Constant connectivity trains the mind to live in a state of

alertness, reacting endlessly to notifications, messages, and news, which quietly fuels anxiety and mental fatigue. Shabbat interrupts this cycle. When the phone is turned off, the nervous system finally has permission to rest. Thoughts slow down, stress hormones decrease, and a sense of inner calm begins to return. Without the pressure to respond or keep up, the mind regains clarity and focus.

What modern psychology calls a 'digital detox,' Shabbat has offered for millennia.

What modern psychology now calls a “digital detox,” Shabbat has offered for millennia: a weekly restoration of the human soul, reminding us that we are not meant to be constantly available to everyone, but to be truly available to people closest to us.

Modern technology has quietly trained us to live in a perpetual state of interruption. Our attention is fragmented, our thoughts are scattered, and even our moments of rest are filled with noise. We may be physically present with our loved ones, yet mentally tethered to distant conversations, breaking news, and endless demands. The result is a life lived everywhere and nowhere at once.

Shabbat offers a different way of being. By disconnecting from global connectivity, we rediscover local intimacy. When screens go dark, faces come into focus. Conversations deepen. Silence becomes comfortable. Laughter returns without distraction. Children feel truly seen. Relationships are no longer competing with devices for attention.

The absence of electronics also restores our inner world. Without constant alerts, the nervous system relaxes. Anxiety loosens its grip. Time slows. We are no longer reacting; we are present. Shabbat teaches us that not everything urgent is important, and the things that are most important in life require no urgency at all.

This weekly digital fast is not an escape from life, but a return to it. It reminds us that we were created for connection, not constant consumption. By setting aside our screens, we make space for God, for family, and for ourselves. What begins as a discipline quickly becomes a delight.

For many, unplugging from electronics becomes the single most impactful Shabbat practice. It reshapes relationships, restores a peace of mind, and reorients priorities. Once experienced, it becomes difficult to imagine Shabbat any other

way. In stepping away from the noise of the world, we discover the quiet blessing that has been waiting for us all along.

Chapter 11 — Introducing The Friday Night Shabbat Meal

In many ways, the Friday night meal is the diamond in the crown of Shabbat evening. As a weekly practice, it creates family togetherness like nothing else. It is the ultimate family builder. There are no distractions pulling us away, no errands to run, no appointments waiting. It is a prepared feast, not rushed or improvised, but anticipated and cherished. The table itself becomes a place of arrival.

The power of the Friday night meal lies not only in what is served, but in what is set aside. Phones are gone. The week's urgency has ended. No one is multitasking. Everyone is present. In a world where shared meals have become increasingly rare, Shabbat restores the table to its rightful place as the heart of family life.

Around the Shabbat table, the blessings of the Bible come to life.

In our world it is a rare and precious sight, especially on Friday night. But during the Shabbat meal one can witness the blessings of the Bible come to life. Around the Shabbat table, King David's vision of a blessed life described in the Psalms becomes a lived reality. Shabbat creates the space where his words are fulfilled:

אֲשֶׁתְּךָ כִּגְפֶן פְּרִיָה בְּיִתְּךָ,
בְּנֶיךָ כִּשְׁתֵּלֵי זֵיתִים סְבִיב לְשֻׁלְחָנְךָ.
הִנֵּה כִּי־כֵן יִבְרַךְ גִּבּוֹר יְרֵא ה'
— תהלים קכ"ח:ג

“Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, your children like olive plants around your table. Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.” — Psalm 128:3–4

When practiced week after week, the Shabbat meal teaches families how to be together in harmony. There is a world of difference between occasional or yearly gatherings and a weekly family feast. Consistency is key. It creates a different family culture, and over time these shared meals quietly build the cohesion, trust, and rhythm that hold a family together.

As the food nourishes the body, the atmosphere nourishes the soul. It demonstrates how to celebrate without consuming and

how to connect without distraction. Conversation flows differently when there is nowhere else to be and nothing else to check. Stories are told. Laughter rises. Children feel the security of being fully seen. Adults rediscover the joy of unhurried presence. Although you can see parts of Shabbat as a break from life; the Shabbat meal is a window into life as it was meant to be lived.

11.1 Welcoming the Sabbath Angels

The Friday night meal is surrounded by gentle rituals that bring order, intention, and meaning to the evening. These customs are not meant to complicate Shabbat, but to slow us down and guide us into its spirit. One of the most beloved of these is the singing of Shalom Aleichem.

Before the meal begins, families stand together and sing a song welcoming the angels of peace. Jewish tradition teaches that we are accompanied by different spiritual forces during the week and on Shabbat. As Shabbat enters, the angels of the weekday depart, and the angels of Shabbat arrive to accompany us through this sacred time.

The Talmud (Tractate Shabbat) shares a striking tradition that two angels—one kind and one harsh—accompany a person home on Friday night to inspect the house. They look to see if the candles are lit, the table is set, and the home is prepared for rest. If it is, the kind angel declares that the next Shabbat should be just as beautiful, and the harsh angel is forced to say ‘Amen.’ If the home is unprepared, the reverse happens.²³ While this might sound like a terrifying judgment of our chores, it actually carries a profound spiritual truth. The angels are not inspecting our housekeeping; they are inspecting whether our work during the week was purposeful. They are checking to see if we successfully used the mundane labor of the past six days to set up a dedicated space and time to be with God.

²³ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 119b. Rabbi Yose bar Yehuda teaches that two ministering angels accompany a person home from the synagogue on Shabbat eve, one good and one evil; seeing the lamp lit, the table set, and the couch made, the good angel says, “May it be so on another Shabbat as well,” and the evil angel is compelled to answer “Amen” — and if the home is not prepared, the evil angel offers the opposite wish and the good angel must answer “Amen.” This passage is the basis for the Friday-night hymn Shalom Aleichem, which welcomes the *malachei ha-shareit* (ministering angels).

Whether understood literally or metaphorically, the angels of Shabbat represent the forces of harmony, blessing, and serenity that accompany this day. By singing *Shalom Aleichem*, we say goodbye to the energy of striving and welcome the energy of rest.

On Shabbat the cherubim who once guarded Eden are welcomed as guests — the sword that barred the way becomes a blessing.

Remarkably, these angels of Shabbat can also be understood as the very same cherubim stationed at the Garden of Eden, who were placed there with fiery swords to guard the way back to the Tree of Life after humanity was expelled. Under this interpretation, singing *Shalom Aleichem* represents a “changing of the guard”. When we welcome the angels in peace, we are effectively telling them to put down their swords because, by keeping Shabbat, we are stepping back into our original Edenic mission of guarding and serving God’s world. Ushering the angels out at the end of the song is not rude, but rather a powerful acknowledgment that humanity is no longer cursed, but once again blessed.

As the family sings together welcoming the Shabbat angels, we acknowledge that this day carries a unique spiritual presence, distinct from the other six days of the week. Just singing together creates an atmosphere that is absolutely unique to Shabbat. It gathers everyone into a shared moment of peace and unity. Children sense that something special is happening and together, the family steps into the anticipation of the Shabbat family meal.

Shalom Aleichem — שלום עליכם

Hebrew

שְׁלוֹם עָלֵיכֶם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרָת, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלָךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים,
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

בּוֹאֲכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלָךְ מַלְכֵי
הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

בְּרִכּוֹנֵי לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלָךְ מַלְכֵי
הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

צֵאתְכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלָךְ מַלְכֵי
הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

English Transliteration

Shalom aleichem malachei ha-shareit, malachei elyon, mi-Melech malchei ha-melachim, ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu.

Bo'achem l'shalom malachei ha-shalom, malachei elyon, mi-Melech malchei ha-melachim, ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu.

Barchuni l'shalom malachei ha-shalom, malachei elyon, mi-Melech malchei ha-melachim, ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu.

Tzeitchem l'shalom malachei ha-shalom, malachei elyon, mi-Melech malchei ha-melachim, ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu.

English Translation

Peace be upon you, ministering angels, angels of the Most High, from the King, King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Come in peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High, from the King, King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Bless me with peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High, from the King, King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Go in peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High, from the King, King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

11.2 - Blessing the Children

This is one of the most beautiful, meaningful, and transformative practices of Friday night. Before we sit down to delight in the Shabbat meal, we bless our children. Before food is tasted, before conversation begins, blessing becomes the center of the evening.

For me personally, this is the most meaningful moment every Friday night. Tehila and I bless each of our children separately, each in our own way. There is something profoundly right about it. A father and a mother place their hands on their child and speaking words of blessing feels as ancient and authentic as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob themselves.

My father blessed me every Friday night, and his father blessed him and when I bless my children, it's as if time is sewn together and generations touch. A parent's love is spoken aloud and made tangible for the children to hear and experience.

Beyond any personal blessing, the tradition is to recite the Aaronic blessing over our children. The same blessings the priests in Jerusalem would bless the nation of Israel as they entered the courtyard of the Temple. In this way, the father and mother are the priests, the spiritual leaders, of the family tasked with the same mission as the priests of Israel - to bless and to teach their children.

This has been the custom of the Jewish people for as long as anyone can remember. And perhaps this is the quiet secret behind the enduring blessing of Israel. People often ask why the Jewish people are so resilient, so rooted, so strong across generations. The answer may be simpler than we imagine. The people of Israel are blessed because they have been blessed — week after week — by their fathers and their mothers.

Shabbat is a gift to families in many ways, but for the parent-child relationship, there is nothing I know of that is more powerful or more restorative. Every family experience tension. Words are spoken during the week that we wish we could take back. Patience wears thin. Love can feel strained. Friday night arrives and offers an opportunity for a sincere reset. No matter what happens during the week, a parent and child have a chance to begin again. The child hears, perhaps more clearly than at any other time, that they are cherished, and that their parents' deepest wish is that their beloved child be blessed.

Every week the blessing tells a child: you are loved, you are wanted, you are blessed.

The weekly blessing plants a quiet certainty within the child that says, “I am loved. I am wanted. I am blessed.” Over time, these weekly moments do something extraordinary. They form souls that know their worth and hearts that know where they belong. In blessing our children every Shabbat, we are not only shaping their present. We are helping to shape their future. We are passing on faith, love, and belonging from one generation to the next.

Birkat HaBanim — בִּרְכַּת הַבָּנִים

Blessing for Sons:

Hebrew

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים בְּאִפְרַיִם וּבְמִנְשֶׁה.

English Transliteration

Yesimcha Elohim k'Ephraim v'chi-Menasheh.

English Translation

May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh.

Blessing for Daughters:

Hebrew

יְשִׁימְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׁרָה, רִבְקָה, רָחֵל וְלֵאָה.

English Transliteration

Yesimech Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Leah.

English Translation

May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

The Priestly Blessing (For All Children):

Hebrew

יְבָרֶכֶךָ ה' וַיְשַׁמְרֶכָּה.
יָאֵר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶנֶךָ.
יֵשָׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיָּשֶׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם.

English Transliteration

Yevarechecha Adonai v'yishmerecha.
Ya'er Adonai panav eilecha vichuneka.
Yisa Adonai panav eilecha v'yasem lecha shalom.

English Translation

May the LORD bless you and guard you.
May the LORD shine His face upon you and be gracious to you.
May the LORD lift up His face toward you and grant you peace.
(Numbers 6:24-26)

11.3 Eshet Chayil - A Love Song for the Wife and Mother of the Home

There is one more powerful and ancient custom a family does around the table before the family feast. Before the Shabbat meal begins, there is a time dedicated to gratitude. We sing *Eshet Chayil* — Woman of Valor — a song of praise drawn from the Book of Proverbs, chapter 31. It is a moment set aside to honor the wife and mother of the home, the one who has prepared the meal, readied the house, and quietly carried the weight of the home during the week.

In Jewish tradition, the woman of the home is not simply a participant in the home; she is the heart of the home itself. Every week, she creates the environment in which Shabbat can be received. Long before the candles are lit and the table is set, in some ways every day of the week, she has been preparing space — physical, emotional, and spiritual — so that peace can enter. Eshet Chayil gives voice to what is too often assumed, taken for granted and too rarely spoken.

The strength of a home is not in its walls but in the woman who sustains it — and Shabbat says so out loud, every week.

Just as ancient Jewish tradition calls parents to bless their children each Friday night, it also calls the husband to lead the family in honoring his wife, the mother of the home. In the same way that blessing the children renews the bond between parent and child, singing Eshet Chayil renews the bond between husband and wife, restoring appreciation, closeness, and love.

For the husband it's a moment to sing a love song to his wife. To publicly express his appreciation, not only for what his wife has done, but for who she is. He acknowledges her strength, her wisdom, her devotion, and her unseen labor. In a busy life where effort often goes unnoticed, Shabbat gives us the opportunity to express true gratitude.

For the children, this song becomes a lesson in honor. They see their mother valued, praised, and respected. They learn to say, "Thank you." They learn that love is expressed through recognition, and that the heart of the home deserves reverence. Over time, this weekly ritual shapes how children understand marriage, partnership, and respect.

Eshet Chayil is a reminder that the strength of the home rests not in walls or possessions, but in the character and love of the

woman who sustains it. Inspired by the words of King Solomon, the song lifts her role out of the ordinary and places it in the realm of the sacred.

Week after week, this moment quietly repairs what the busyness of life can strain. Appreciation softens tension. Honor rebuilds closeness. Gratitude restores joy. Through Eshet Chayil, Shabbat becomes not only a day of rest, but a weekly act of healing — where love is spoken aloud, and the foundation of the family is strengthened once again.

11.4 Kiddush — Sanctifying the Day

The next stage before the meal is a family blessing, the *Kiddush*, led by the father of the home. Kiddush is the blessing recited over wine at the Shabbat table before everyone begins to eat. It is the moment when Shabbat is formally sanctified in the home. With a cup of wine (or grape juice) raised, we recite the Torah passages that proclaim that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, declaring this day as distinct and elevated above all others.

*Kiddush means sanctification
— but it also means invitation:
we welcome God to our table.*

The word *kiddush* (קִדּוּשׁ) means sanctification, but according to Rashi's commentary it also carries a deeper implication: invitation. In the book of Exodus, when the people of Israel prepared themselves for the revelation at Mount Sinai, Rashi explains that they were invited to the mountain.²⁴ Sanctification, then, is not separation alone; it is an invitation. In this spirit, Kiddush becomes the act through which we invite God into our home and to our Shabbat table.

This order is essential. Before the family partakes in the meal, before conversation and celebration begin, God is welcomed first. Kiddush gathers the family together, but it does so by anchoring that togetherness in faith. Our bond is not built only on shared food or shared space, but on a shared awareness that God is present among us.

Through Kiddush, the meal is elevated from physical enjoyment to a spiritual encounter. Wine, which gladdens the heart, becomes a vessel for holiness. What might otherwise be just another family dinner during the week is transformed into

²⁴ Rashi on Exodus 19:10, explaining “sanctify them” (קִדְּשֵׁם) as “invite them” (קָרַבָּם).

something entirely different. This is not an ordinary time. This is Shabbat.

Within the words of the Kiddush prayer itself, we can already hear Shabbat's invitation to the world. The blessing we recite weaves together two defining moments in human history. We declare that Shabbat is a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, and a uniquely Jewish experience of redemption, covenant, and national birth. Yet in the very same breath, we proclaim that Shabbat is also a remembrance of the Creation of the world — an event that belongs to all humanity.

In this way, Kiddush holds together the universal and the particular. The Exodus speaks to Israel's distinct story, while Creation speaks to the shared origin of all people. Every Friday night, as the cup of wine is raised, Shabbat quietly announces that this day is both Israel's sacred inheritance and a gift intended for the entire world.

Although Shabbat exists as a reality embedded in creation, we are entrusted with the responsibility to sanctify it in our lives. God created holiness in time, and we respond by recognizing it, creating space for it in our lives and welcoming it. Kiddush expresses this partnership.

When the Kiddush is recited, the home becomes a sanctuary, the table becomes an altar, and the family becomes aware that they are not alone. Shabbat is not only honored or observed; it is welcomed. And in that welcome, we invite the presence of God to rest gently among us.

The full text of the Friday night Kiddush follows. It is recited over a raised cup of wine or grape juice, standing, with the family gathered around the table.

Vayechulu — The Testimony of Creation *(Genesis 2:1–3)*

Hebrew

יום הששי. ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם. ויכל אלהים ביום
השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה, וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו
אשר עשה. ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי ויקדש אתו, כי בו
שבת מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלהים לעשות.

English Transliteration

Yom hashishi. Vayechulu hashamayim v'ha'aretz v'chol tz'va'am. Vayechal Elohim bayom hashvi'i m'lachto asher asah, vayishbot bayom hashvi'i mikol m'lachto asher asah. Vay'varech Elohim et yom hashvi'i vay'kadesh oto, ki vo shavat mikol m'lachto asher bara Elohim la'asot.

English Translation

The sixth day. And the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their host. And on the seventh day God finished the work that He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all the work that He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, for on it He rested from all His work which God created to do.

The Blessing Over the Wine

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

The Sanctification of the Day²⁵

²⁵ Disclaimer: Under current Jewish law there is some question about whether it is appropriate for a non-Jew to recite the traditional Kiddush prayer given that this prayer is describing the covenantal relationship that Israel has with the Shabbat. If you are a non-Jew, prayerfully consider whether you should modify this prayer accordingly.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה
בָּנוּ, וְשַׁבַּת קִדְּשׁוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָנוּ, זִכְרוֹן לַמַּעֲשֵׂה
בְּרֵאשִׁית. כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה לְמִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ, זֵכֶר לִיציאת מצרים.
כִּי בָנוּ בְּתִרְתָּ וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְשַׁבַּת קִדְּשָׁךְ בְּאַהֲבָה
וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחַלְתָּנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu
b'mitzvotav v'ratzah vanu, v'Shabbat kodsho b'ahavah
uv'ratzon hinchilanu, zikaron l'ma'aseh v'reishit. Ki hu yom
t'chilah l'mikra'ei kodesh, zecheh litziat Mitzrayim. Ki vanu
vacharta v'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim, v'Shabbat kodsh'cha
b'ahavah uv'ratzon hinchaltanu. Baruch atah Adonai, m'kadesh
haShabbat.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments and favored us, and in love and favor gave us His holy Shabbat as an inheritance, a remembrance of the work of creation. For it is the first among the holy convocations, a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. For You chose us and sanctified us from among all the nations, and in love and favor gave us Your holy Shabbat as an inheritance. Blessed are You, Lord, Who sanctifies the Shabbat.

11.6 - Hamotzi - Breaking Challah Bread Together

Now it's time to eat. The Shabbat meal begins with the family quite literally breaking bread together. Before we taste the food, before the conversation unfolds, we pause and lift the challah and recite HaMotzi — the blessing over bread: “Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

All week we exert our mastery over the world. On Shabbat, we defer to the Master of the world.

There is something beautifully peculiar about this blessing. God does not “bring forth bread from the earth”. Human hands make the Challah. Bread is the result of a long and intricate process: wheat must grow, be harvested, ground into flour, mixed, kneaded, and baked. It is one of the most human of foods. Bread-making is the ultimate expression of human mastery over the plant world. In many ways, it mimics God’s own creation of humanity. We harvest and grind the wheat, turning it into lifeless dust, but then we mix it with water to form a clay-like dough. By adding yeast, we literally breathe life back into it—just as God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed the breath of life into him. Through this process, we act as creators, exerting the power of life and death over the plant world. But on Shabbat, we pull back.

And yet, when we recite the blessing over the bread, we declare that despite all our effort, it is God alone in who we must ultimately rely upon, as it is written:

**כִּי לֹא עַל-הַלֶּחֶם לִבְדּוֹ יִחְיֶה הָאָדָם, כִּי עַל-כָּל-מוֹצֵא פִי-יִהְיֶה
יְהוָה
הָאָדָם. דְּבָרִים ח:ג**

*“...man shall not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.”
(Deuteronomy 8:3)*

The blessing sets the tone for the entire meal we’re about to enjoy. It trains us to see beneath the surface of our labor and recognize the Divine generosity that sustains us all. This is the spiritual genius of HaMotzi. We acknowledge that even when we work, even when we create, we are partnering with God.

Traditionally, two loaves of challah are placed on the table. They recall the double portion of manna that fell from heaven before Shabbat in the wilderness, sustaining the Israelites so they would not need to gather food on the sacred day.²⁶ Every Shabbat, both consciously and subconsciously, we are carried back to our earliest Shabbats as a people, in the wilderness, journeying from Egypt toward the Land of Israel.

Challah itself is a primary symbol of Shabbat. It is not ordinary bread. Often home made by the mother of the home, it is

²⁶ Exodus 16:22–30.

usually braided, beautiful, and prepared especially for this day. Its very presence announces that this meal is different. It is a Shabbat feast and celebration.

The two loaves placed on the table carry an additional underlying message that resonates throughout the meal: abundance. They remind us that for this meal, for this Shabbat, and for this moment, nothing is lacking. We have what we need and more. Everything is exactly as it should be.

After reciting the Kiddush and completing a ceremonial handwashing, the Father of the home will uncover the challah, raise it and recite the following blessing.

Birkat HaMotzi — בִּרְכַּת הַמּוֹצִיא

Hebrew

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמּוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Upon completing the blessing, the Father will take a piece of challah for himself and everyone at the table, sprinkle them with a pinch of salt and then partake.

11.7 - Tips and Guidance For The Shabbat Meal

Shabbat meals are arguably the best opportunity for the family to talk together, listen to each other and bond. The following tips can help make the Shabbat meal into a more meaningful and enjoyable experience that nourishes both body and soul.

Welcoming Guests

Hospitality is at the heart of Shabbat. When guests are present, take a moment before the meal truly begins to welcome them warmly. Invite each guest to share their name and go around the table with an inviting question. Some examples are; What is something that made you smile this week? What is one thing you're grateful for right now? Pick any question and go around the table. This simple practice breaks the ice, creates immediate belonging, and sets a tone of openness. Our father Abraham teaches us that no one should feel like a stranger at our table.

Sharing Torah at the Table

Torah spoken at the table becomes Torah lived — these practices ask for presence, not perfection.

Shabbat meals have long been a place for Torah conversation. This does not need to be a lecture or a test of knowledge. A simple idea learned throughout the week is enough. (Parents need to prepare this part of the meal). Even a single question from the weekly Parasha is enough to spark reflection and conversation. Ask something open and inviting. If young children are present, make the questions and discussion age appropriate and fun for them. Encourage them to engage. Some even have the tradition of sharing candy or sweets with small children if they listen and participate in the Torah discussion as a way of reinforcing the idea that God's word is always sweet.

Torah shared at the table becomes Torah lived. It connects ancient wisdom to the present moment in a natural and relational way. Starting the Shabbat meal with a focus around Torah sets a tone and undoubtedly the conversation throughout the evening will go in countless directions but having an anchor in Torah is the best way to ensure the conversation is as elevated and purposeful as possible.

Highlights of the Week

A beautiful benefit of Shabbat is it offers an ability to reflect on the week past. One of the most powerful practices is inviting everyone at the table to share a highlight from their week. Children and adults alike are given a voice. This simple act cultivates gratitude, attentiveness, and joy. It allows family members to truly hear one another and discover moments that might otherwise be missed. Over time, this practice teaches us

to look for goodness throughout the week, knowing it will be shared and celebrated on Shabbat.

These elements do not require perfection or planning. They require practice and presence. In a world that rushes through meals and multitasks through conversations, the goal of the Shabbat table is to create a weekly anchor where people feel seen, heard, and valued.

11.8. The Torah Portion of the Week

The Torah portion of the week, known in Hebrew as Parashat HaShavua, is the section of the Torah that Jews around the world read and study each week. It's read out loud in public in synagogues around the world every Shabbat morning in services. In recent years, millions of non-Jewish believers from all around the world, have entered the cycle and started learning the Torah Portion together with the Jewish People every week.

Imagine that. One word given every week through the Jewish People and open to everyone who wants to join.

The Torah—the Five Books of Moses—is divided into approximately fifty-four portions, allowing the entire Torah to be completed over the course of a year. Every Shabbat, Jewish communities read the same portion, creating a shared cycle of learning that unites believers across different countries, cultures, and generations.

Each week the same portion is read in every synagogue on earth — one word, given through Israel, open to anyone who joins.

The practice has ancient origins. The Torah itself records that Moses publicly taught God's laws to the people²⁷, and later Jewish tradition established a regular cycle of Torah reading in the synagogue. By the time of the Second Temple period, public Torah reading had become a central feature of Jewish communal life. Over centuries, the annual cycle became standardized, so that the Jewish people would collectively revisit the entire Torah year after year.

Parashat HaShavua serves a purpose far beyond simply reading a text. It provides a framework for ongoing study, reflection, and discussion. Each week offers new themes, moral lessons, historical narratives, laws, and spiritual insights. Rabbis, teachers, and families often use the weekly portion as a starting

²⁷ Exodus 24:3–7; Deuteronomy 31:9–13.

point for exploring questions about faith, ethics, leadership, human nature, and the relationship between God and humanity.

The importance of Parashat HaShavua lies in its ability to connect people not only to the Torah, but also to one another. Every week, millions of people engage with the same words that have been studied for thousands of years. This shared journey through the Torah creates a sense of continuity with the past, connection to the present Jewish community, and responsibility to pass these teachings on to future generations.

In this way, the weekly Torah portion is a living word that comes down every week to everyone who is attuned. The message remarkably has the power to speak to us individually, as a nation and as world. Rabbi Nachman of Breslov says that answers to questions we ask God in prayer often come to us through the Torah we learn and the Torah portion often serves as a vehicle of nothing less than divine communication.²⁸

²⁸ Cf. Likutey Moharan I, 2:6; I, 8:7 — Torah strengthens and renews prayer, and prayer strengthens and renews Torah study; the Torah a person learns joins with his prayers to illuminate them.

Chapter 12 — Yom Shabbat: Living Inside the Day of Rest

I want to start this chapter with a word to anyone who is ‘new’ to Shabbat or never celebrated Shabbat before. Start with Friday evening. Start slow. You don’t have to go all in, all at once. You can even try out Shabbat for an just hour Friday evening. Then try two and then three. This chapter is written for people who want to get the most out of the entire day, but don’t let the chapter overwhelm you.

Now, onto Yom Shabbat -

If Friday night is the grand entrance into Shabbat, the day of Shabbat itself is where we get to live inside it. The candles have burned down, the Friday night meal has become a warm memory, and we wake on Saturday morning to something rare in the modern world: a full day with nothing we must produce, nothing we must buy, and nowhere we must rush to be.

Friday night is the doorway into Shabbat. The day itself is the sanctuary in time we get to live in.

In Hebrew, this part of Shabbat is called Yom Shabbat — the day of Shabbat. Many people who begin keeping Shabbat quickly fall in love with Friday night. The candles, the blessings, the challah and the meal give the evening a clear and beautiful structure. But when they wake up on Saturday morning, they are not always sure what to do with themselves. Without the familiar rhythm of work and errands, the hours can feel strangely empty at first.

That emptiness is not a problem to be solved. It is a gift waiting to be filled. The prophet Isaiah describes how the day is meant to feel:

אַמִּתְּשִׁיב מִשְׁבֶּת רַגְלְךָ עֲשׂוֹת חֶפְצֶךָ בְּיוֹם קָדְשִׁי, וְקָרָאתָ לַשַּׁבָּת
עֹנֶג לְקָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה מְכַבֵּד. יִשְׁעִיהוּ נָחִיג

“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable...” (Isaiah 58:13)

The Hebrew word Isaiah uses is *oneg* (עֹנֶג) — delight, pleasure, joy. Shabbat is not meant to be a day of grim restriction, spent sitting quietly and waiting for it to end. It is meant to be the best day of the week. This chapter offers a picture of how the day of Shabbat can be filled — not with busyness, but with the things

that matter most: , family, Torah, prayer, play, rest, and a festive midday meal crowned with the Kiddush of the day.

12.1 A Day of Prayer

In Jewish communities around the world, Shabbat morning begins in the synagogue. The morning service, Shacharit, is longer and more festive than on weekdays, with additional psalms and songs that celebrate creation and the Creator. At its center is the public reading of the weekly Torah portion described in the previous chapter, followed by a reading from the Prophets known as the Haftarah. An additional service called Musaf, meaning “addition,” recalls the extra offering that was brought in the Holy Temple on Shabbat. Later in the afternoon, the community gathers once more for the afternoon prayer, Mincha.

There is something remarkable about the way prayer changes on Shabbat. On a weekday, the central prayer of Judaism, the Amidah, contains thirteen blessings of request for wisdom, healing, forgiveness, provision and redemption. On Shabbat, those requests are set aside. In their place is a single blessing celebrating the holiness of the day. The Sages understood that on Shabbat we are meant to experience the world as complete. We do not come before God with a list of what we lack. We come to thank Him for what we have.

On Shabbat, prayer shifts from asking to thanking.

For many among the nations, there may not be a synagogue or congregation nearby, and that is perfectly fine. Shabbat morning prayer can take place in your living room, around your table, or on a quiet walk. Some families gather for a short time of prayer after breakfast. Others set aside time alone in the early morning before the house wakes up. The Book of Psalms is a natural place to begin, and there is one psalm in particular that was written for this very day:

**מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת. טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה, וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלִינוּ.
תְּהִלִּים צב:א-ב**

*“A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath day. It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High.”
(Psalm 92:1–2)*

Read the psalm slowly, out loud if possible. Give thanks for the blessings of the past week. Prayer on Shabbat does not need to be long or polished. It only needs to be sincere.

12.2 More Time for Family

During the week, many families live like ships passing in the night. Parents work, children have school and activities, and meals are often eaten on the run. Even when we are under the same roof, we are rarely fully present with one another. Shabbat changes that. For one full day, there is no commute, no meetings, no errands and no screens competing for attention. What remains is time — unhurried, uninterrupted time with the people we love most.

Shabbat gives families the one thing the modern week steals from them: time with nowhere else to be.

Use it intentionally. Take a long Shabbat walk together through the neighborhood or a nearby park. Sit on the porch and talk. Read a book aloud with the children. Visit grandparents, neighbors or friends. Spend a few minutes alone with each child and let them lead the conversation. Husbands and wives can reconnect without the logistics of the week crowding in. Some of the most meaningful conversations in a family's life happen on a lazy Shabbat afternoon simply because, for once, nobody is in a hurry. Catch up on sleep with a regenerative nap on Shabbat afternoon.

Shabbat is also a wonderful day for hospitality. Just as we welcome guests on Friday night, the Shabbat day meal and afternoon are a natural time to invite friends, neighbors, or someone who may be alone. A home that is open on Shabbat becomes a place of blessing not only for the family inside it, but for everyone who walks through its doors.

12.3 A Day for Torah and Study

Jewish tradition teaches that Shabbat was given above all as a time to engage with the word of God.²⁹ During the week, most people struggle to find more than a few minutes for serious study. On Shabbat, there are hours.

The weekly Torah portion is the natural place to start. If a single idea from the portion was shared at the Friday night table, Shabbat afternoon is the time to read the entire portion, along

²⁹ Jerusalem Talmud, Shabbat 15:3.

with its Haftarah from the Prophets. Read it slowly. Read it with a good commentary. Notice the questions that arise, the verses that stop you, and the ideas you want to carry into the week ahead.

Shabbat afternoon is also a wonderful time to explore other parts of Scripture like the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Prophets, or whatever portion of the Bible you are studying. Many Jewish communities have the custom of studying Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of the Fathers, on Shabbat afternoons during the summer months between Passover and the High Holidays. Its short, practical teachings on character, humility and wisdom are ideal for family discussion. Others use the time to read books of faith, history or inspiration that they never seem to find time for during the week.

Study on Shabbat is not homework. It is a conversation with God and with one another.

One of the oldest and most effective ways to study is with a partner. In Jewish tradition this is called *chavruta* (חֲבֵרִיתָא), from the Hebrew word *chaver* (חֵבֵר), for friend. Two people read a text together, ask questions, challenge one another and sharpen each other's understanding. As King Solomon wrote, "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). A husband and wife, a parent and child, or two friends can become study partners on Shabbat, and the relationship is strengthened along with the learning.

For children, keep it playful. Retell the story of the Torah portion together, act it out, or turn it into a quiz with small prizes. When learning on Shabbat is joyful, children grow up associating the Torah with the happiest day of the week.

12.4 A Great Game Day for Kids

Ask children from Shabbat-observing homes what they love about Shabbat, and many will tell you it's the games. Without screens and schedules, Shabbat afternoon becomes a wide-open space for play. Board games come out of the closet. Card games and puzzles cover the living room table. Building blocks become cities. Children run outside to the park, play tag and hide-and-seek, and invent games of their own.

Parents get to play too. Shabbat is one of the few times in the week when a parent can sit on the floor for an hour with a child

If children remember Shabbat as the best day of the week, you have given them something no lecture ever could.

and give them their complete attention. Those hours are remembered long after the specific games are forgotten.

A few ideas to make Shabbat a game day your children look forward to:

A Shabbat game shelf. Keep a special collection of board games, puzzles and toys that come out only on Shabbat. Their novelty makes the day feel special and gives children something to anticipate all week.

Games of the mind. Riddles, trivia, memory games, twenty questions and charades require no equipment and work for every age. Trivia based on the weekly Torah portion combines play with learning.

Outdoor time. Weather permitting, Shabbat afternoon is perfect for the park, the backyard or a long family walk.

Friends and neighbors. Invite other families over for an afternoon of play. Children love Shabbat even more when it is shared with friends.

12.5 Unplug and Relax

We have already seen in Chapter 10 how transformative it can be to unplug from phones and screens for one day each week. The day of Shabbat is where that decision bears its sweetest fruit. Friday night passes quickly in a flurry of blessings, songs and food. It is on Shabbat day, in the long, quiet hours, that the mind truly begins to slow down.

The Torah tells us that on the seventh day God rested (Genesis 2:2). The great commentator Rashi asks a striking question: if God had already finished His work in six days, what was created on the seventh? His answer is that the world was still lacking one thing — rest. When Shabbat came, rest came into the world.³⁰ Rest, in other words, is not merely the absence of work. It is a creation in its own right. A positive state of peace, completeness and contentment that the Hebrew language calls *menuchah*.

³⁰ Rashi on Genesis 2:2.

Rest is not the absence of work. It is a creation of its own, born on the seventh day.

Isaiah's description of Shabbat includes refraining not only from our usual activities, but also from "speaking our own words" (Isaiah 58:13). The Sages understood this to mean that our very conversation on Shabbat should be different from weekday talk.³¹ Try to set aside discussions about work, money, bills and the problems of the week ahead. They will all still be there on Sunday. For now, let your mind rest along with your body.

The key to a restful Shabbat day is preparation. When the cooking, cleaning and shopping are finished before sundown on Friday, there is nothing left to do on Shabbat except enjoy it. Read a good book. Sit outside and watch the sky. Linger over a cup of tea. And yes, take a nap. There is a playful Jewish saying that the word Shabbat itself (שַׁבָּת) is an acronym for Sheinah B'Shabbat Ta'anug — "sleep on Shabbat is a delight." For many tired parents, it may be the most welcome tradition of all.

12.6 The Shabbat Day Meal and Kiddush Rabbah

The high point of the Shabbat day is the festive midday meal, often simply called Shabbat lunch. It usually takes place after morning prayers, around noon, and in many homes it is the most relaxed and leisurely meal of the entire week. Jewish tradition holds that Shabbat should be honored with three festive meals — Friday night, Shabbat day, and a lighter third meal in the late afternoon. The Sages derived this from the words Moses spoke to the Israelites about the manna in the wilderness, in which the word "today" appears three times: "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field" (Exodus 16:25).³²

Because traditional Jewish practice does not permit cooking on Shabbat, the midday meal has inspired its own beloved dishes with foods that are prepared before Shabbat and kept warm overnight. The most famous is *cholent*, known among Sephardic Jews as *hamin*, traditionally a hearty stew of meat, potatoes, beans and grains that simmers slowly from Friday afternoon until Shabbat lunch. Its aroma fills the house on Shabbat morning. A slow cooker set before sundown on Friday

³¹ Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 113a.

³² Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 117b.

The special foods and their aromas on Shabbat create lasting memories for families. And brings a tangible meaning to the verse, “O taste and see that the Lord is good..” (Psalms 34:8)

makes this tradition easy for any family to adopt. Many tables are also filled with salads, dips and kugel, all prepared in advance.

The order of the Shabbat day meal is similar to Friday night, with a few differences. The meal begins with Kiddush, recited over a cup of wine or grape juice. Everyone then washes their hands, and the head of the home recites HaMotzi over two loaves of challah, just as on Friday night (see 11.6). The meal follows, filled with conversation, Shabbat songs known as *zemirot* (זְמִירוֹת), and words of Torah, and concludes with the prayer Birkat HaMazon (בִּרְכַּת הַמָּזוֹן), Grace After Meals, thanking HaShem for providing us food and nourishment.

Kiddush Rabbah — The “Great” Kiddush

The Kiddush recited at the Shabbat day meal is known as Kiddush Rabbah (קִדּוּשׁ רַבָּא), meaning “the Great Kiddush.” The name carries a gentle irony, because the daytime Kiddush is actually much shorter and simpler than the Friday night Kiddush.

Friday night’s Kiddush sanctifies Shabbat as it enters. The daytime Kiddush honors the day itself and sets apart the midday meal as a holy feast. Over the centuries, it became customary to precede the blessing over wine with verses from the Torah about Shabbat. Many recite the passage known as *V’shamru* (Exodus 31:16–17), followed by the fourth of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8–11). It is a beautiful opportunity to declare at your own table the very words God spoke at Sinai. The head of the home lifts the cup of wine and recites the following:

V’shamru — The Everlasting Sign (Exodus 31:16–17)

Hebrew

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם. יֵינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֹתָהּ הִיא לְעוֹלָם, כִּי שִׁשְׁתַּיִם יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ.

English Transliteration

V'shamru v'nei Yisrael et haShabbat, la'asot et haShabbat l'dorotam b'rit olam. Beini u'vein b'nei Yisrael ot hi l'olam, ki sheshet yamim asah Adonai et hashamayim v'et ha'aretz, u'vayom hashvi'i shavat vayinafash.

English Translation

The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

Zachor — Remember the Sabbath Day (Exodus 20:8–11)

Hebrew

זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ. שִׁשִּׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וַעֲשִׂיתָ כָּל מְלֹאכֶתֶךָ. וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כָּל מְלֹאכָה, אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ, עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וּבְהֵמְתֶךָ, וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ. כִּי שִׁשִּׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, אֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּם, וַיָּנַח בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי. עַל כֵּן בֵּרַךְ ה' אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ.

English Transliteration

Zachor et yom haShabbat l'kadsho. Sheshet yamim ta'avod v'asita kol m'lachtecha. V'yom hashvi'i Shabbat l'Adonai Elohecha, lo ta'aseh chol m'lachah, atah uvincha uvitecha, avd'cha va'amat'cha uv'hemtecha, v'gercha asher bisharecha. Ki sheshet yamim asah Adonai et hashamayim v'et ha'aretz, et hayam v'et kol asher bam, vayanach bayom hashvi'i. Al ken berach Adonai et yom haShabbat vay'kadsheihu.

English Translation

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work — you, your

son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, or the stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Notice that the commandment includes “the stranger who is within your gates.” From the very beginning, the rest of Shabbat reached beyond just the Jewish people to everyone who dwelt among them. A hint of the invitation this book extends to all nations.

The Blessing Over the Wine

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Everyone responds “Amen,” and the one who made Kiddush drinks from the cup and shares it with those at the table. Then the family washes hands, recites HaMotzi over the challah, and sits down to enjoy the meal.

As the Day Draws to a Close

After lunch, the afternoon stretches out for rest, study, play and visiting. As the sun begins to set, many families gather for the third meal, *Seudah Shlishit* (שְׁלִישִׁית) — a lighter, quieter meal often accompanied by soulful songs and words of Torah. There is a sweet melancholy to these final hours. The day that seemed so long in the morning has passed too quickly, and we find ourselves wishing we could hold on to it a little longer. And then, as three stars appear in the night sky, it is time to bid Shabbat farewell with the beautiful ceremony of Havdalah.

Chapter 12 - Hebrew Terms

יום שבת Yom Shabbat — The day of Shabbat — the daylight hours of Saturday, from morning prayers through the afternoon, set apart for prayer, family, study, play and rest.

עונג Oneg — Delight, pleasure, joy. Isaiah calls on us to “call the Sabbath a delight” (Isaiah 58:13) — Shabbat is meant to be the best day of the week.

חברותא Chavruta — A study partner, from the Aramaic and Hebrew word for friend. Two people learning a text together, asking questions and sharpening each other’s understanding — a beautiful way to study on Shabbat.

חבר Chaver — Friend; a companion or comrade. The root of chavruta, since a study partner is, above all, a friend with whom one learns.

זמירות Zemirot — Songs. The joyful table songs sung at Shabbat meals, filling the table with melody between courses and alongside words of Torah.

קדושא רבא Kiddush Rabbah — “The Great Kiddush.” The Kiddush recited over wine before the Shabbat day meal, honoring the day itself and setting apart the midday meal as a holy feast.

סעודה שלישית Seudah Shlishit — “The third meal.” A lighter, quieter meal eaten in the late afternoon of Shabbat, often accompanied by soulful songs and words of Torah, as the day draws to a close.

Chapter 13 — Havdalah: The Sacred Art of Separation

As the sun sets on Saturday evening and three stars appear in the night sky, Shabbat officially comes to a close. But just as we do not abruptly start Shabbat, we do not abruptly leave it; instead, we transition out of this sacred time through a beautiful, multi-sensory ceremony called *Havdalah* (הַבְּדִלָּה), which translates to “separation” or “distinction” in Hebrew.

Creation began by drawing distinctions — Havdalah teaches us to leave holy time deliberately, not abruptly.

The Torah teaches that God created the world by making distinctions—first between light and darkness, then between water and land, and ultimately, between regular time and holy time. Havdalah is the moment we rehearse these divisions, marking the boundary where the spiritual reality of Shabbat meets the material reality of the upcoming week. The greatest tool we have for appreciating anything is the ability to differentiate; by contrasting the holy with the ordinary, we refine our ability to discern and appreciate the rare and unique qualities of life, recognizing that true wisdom lies in the ability to see these differences.

Jewish mystical tradition teaches that during Shabbat, we are gifted an “added soul” that allows us to experience the transcendent peace of the day, but this extra soul departs from us when Shabbat ends.³³ Because leaving the heightened spiritual state of Shabbat can be jarring, the Havdalah ceremony engages all five of our physical senses—feeling the cup, smelling the spices, seeing the flame, hearing the blessings, and tasting the wine—to comfort us and carry the sweetness of Shabbat into the new week.

The ceremony consists of four core blessings:

1. The Blessing Over the Wine

The ceremony begins with a cup of kosher wine or grape juice, which is customarily filled until it overflows its rim. This overflowing cup is deeply symbolic; it represents our wish that

³³ Beitzah 16a (Reish Lakish: an additional soul is given to a person on the eve of Shabbat and withdrawn at its conclusion); see Rashi ad loc. On the Havdalah spices as consolation for the departure of the neshamah yeteirah, see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 297:1.

the joy and overflowing blessings we experienced on Shabbat will spill over into the six days of work ahead of us.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

2. The Blessing Over the Spices

Next, we lift a container of fragrant spices—often cloves, cinnamon, or sweet-smelling herbs and fruit. We inhale the sweet scent deeply in order to uplift, comfort, and revive our spirits from the shock and sadness of losing our “extra soul” as Shabbat departs.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי בְשָׁמִים

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei minei v'samim.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates varieties of spices.

3. The Blessing Over the Fire

We then recite a blessing over a special braided candle with multiple wicks. Because the blessing praises God who “creates the lights of fire” in the plural, we use a braided candle to merge multiple wicks into a single, bright, torch-like flame. This braiding carries a deep message: as we enter the week, our lives may feel like disparate, unraveling strands pulled in many

directions, but through the peace of Shabbat, those strands are woven back together into a strong, unified whole.

Traditionally there are two separate Shabbat candles. In Havdalah, the tradition is to have one fire with at least two wicks. The idea here is that we entered Shabbat after a week of living in a world of separation. Over Shabbat we've experienced a little of the Oneness of creation, and we enter into the week with that new consciousness represented by those two wicks, those two Shabbat candles, that are melded into one flame.

According to the Midrash, Adam and Eve first discovered fire at the close of the very first Shabbat; by striking two stones together in the darkness, they performed humanity's first creative act of the new week.³⁴ During this blessing, it is customary to hold our hands up to the flame and gaze at the reflection of the light on our fingernails. Looking at our hands creates a stark visual boundary between the lit side of our fingers and the shadowed palm, allowing us to physically observe the distinction between light and dark, wisdom and confusion, and the seen world versus the hidden world of God's presence.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. בּוֹרֵא מְאֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei m'orei ha'esh.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the lights of the fire.

4. The Blessing of Separation

Finally, we recite the concluding blessing of separation, thanking God for imbuing our lives with the sacred rhythm of

³⁴ See Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 54a; Bereishit Rabbah 11:2. In these accounts God grants Adam the insight to strike two stones together after the first Shabbat, producing the first fire.

time and establishing the boundary between the holy and the mundane.

Hebrew

ברוך אתה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין
אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמֵי
הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

English Transliteration

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, hamavdil bein
kodesh l'chol, bein or l'choshech, bein Yisrael la'amim, bein
yom hashvi'i l'sheshet y'mei hama'aseh. Baruch atah Adonai,
hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol.

English Translation

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who
distinguishes between the sacred and the secular, between light
and dark, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh
day and the six days of labor. Blessed are You, Lord, Who
distinguishes between the sacred and the secular.

At the ritual's conclusion, the leader sips the wine, and the
braided candle is then extinguished directly into the remaining
wine, signifying that the flame was lit solely for the honor of this
mitzvah. The room lights are turned back on, and the family
sings Eliyahu HaNavi (Elijah the Prophet)—a song expressing
the hope that he will arrive to herald the ultimate Messianic
redemption. Finally, everyone joyfully turns to one another and
wishes each other “Shavua Tov”—a good week.

Chapter 14 — Conclusion

As we approach this time in history, something unprecedented is unfolding. Never before have the people of Israel invited the nations to walk alongside them in honoring Shabbat. These are not ordinary times. We are living within the fulfillment of ancient Biblical prophecies, watching history bend toward its long-awaited redemption.

I am witnessing a movement growing around the world. I am the Founder of The Land of Israel Fellowship, a global community of families from around the world who gather weekly from around the world to learn Torah together, to connect to the Land of Israel, to build meaningful relationships, and to grow spiritually as individuals and as a movement.

The Land of Israel Fellowship is the inspiration behind this book.

Like the Fellowship, this Book is an invitation to people from all nations- to join Israel, to align your lives with the Bible and to live in the timeless rhythm God established at creation itself. Six days of creation and the seventh day rest.

If there is one idea that has run like a thread through every chapter of this book, it is this: Shabbat is not merely a pause from life. It is a return to life. It is the Creator's invitation to a distracted world to remember what is real, what is holy, and what is worth building a life around.

Shabbat begins in creation, before there was a nation, before there was a covenant, before there was even a command. The seventh day is the only thing in all of creation that God blessed and sanctified. Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote an exquisite book called "The Sabbath" and there he called Shabbat 'a sanctuary in time'. This book adds that it is a sanctuary open to everyone from every nationality and background to enter and enjoy.

The prophets saw a time when this Shabbat consciousness would spread beyond Israel to the nations. Not as a replacement of Israel's covenant, but as a joining. A bridge. A shared recognition that God is Creator and that His time is holy. Isaiah speaks of the foreigner who clings to God and honors His Sabbath, and he promises joy in God's house of prayer for all

nations. Zechariah envisions the day when the nations will grasp the corner of a Judean garment and say, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” These are not poetic metaphors meant to remain on a page in a book resting on a shelf. They are a vision of history moving toward unity of all mankind, a brotherhood and sisterhood under the Fatherhood of God. In a world increasingly fractured, Shabbat becomes a sign of belonging. A weekly act of alignment with heaven.

A blessing can exist in the world and still be missed — which is why Shabbat was commanded, not merely offered.

The Torah teaches something sobering about human nature. Blessing can exist in the world and still be missed. Holiness can be offered and still be ignored. That is why Shabbat was commanded at Sinai. The gift needed a guardian. The blessing needed a pathway. The human heart needed a weekly reminder that freedom is not the ability to do anything, but the ability to stop. To cease. To release the illusion that everything depends on us. To live one day each week as though the world is held by God, because it is.

Shabbat is more than a theological concept. It is a lived testimony. When a home lights candles, the world changes inside that room. When screens go dark, faces come into focus. When Kiddush is recited, the table becomes an altar of gratitude. When bread is lifted and blessed, we remember that even our most human labor is sustained by Divine generosity. When children are blessed, a future is built. When a husband sings gratitude to his wife, love is restored. When a family breaks bread together and speaks words of Torah, it is not only a meal. It is a small sanctuary in time where the soul can breathe again.

So, the invitation of this book is simple and practical. Do not let Shabbat remain only an idea you admire. Let it become an experience you enter. Choose one Shabbat. Prepare for it. Light the candles. Put away the devices Friday night. Gather your family. Bless your children. Sing gratitude. Enjoy the time God has set aside for you. And then, for a day, live as if the world is already redeemed. Because soon it will be.

And if you are ready, make a commitment that is both challenging and attainable: honor three Shabbats in a row. Not perfectly. Not with pressure. But with sincerity. Give Shabbat a chance to work on you. Give it time to reshape your inner world. Many people try Shabbat once and find it meaningful. But when

Shabbat becomes a rhythm, it becomes transformational. After three Shabbats, you will not only have tasted rest. You will have begun to build a different life.

This is the weekly revolution of sacred time. What is the meaning of revolution? It is when you revolve all the way around back to the beginning. The Land of Israel is the beginning. Shabbat is a revolution of peace. A revolution of presence. A revolution that begins in one home, around one table, with one candle's flame pushing back the darkness.

May the God who blessed the seventh day and made it holy bless you with the courage to stop, the wisdom to delight, and the faith to receive. May your home experience the sanctuary in time. May your table be surrounded by love. May your children grow into light. May your marriage be renewed through gratitude. May your week be healed through Shabbat. And may the taste of redemption you experience each seventh day hasten the day when the entire world will become what Shabbat already is: a dwelling place for peace, for holiness, and for God.

And if you feel that stirring in your heart, you are not alone. Join us in The Land of Israel Fellowship, and become part of a growing family, our global community of people learning to walk with God through His Word, His Land, and His sacred times. The journey is not meant to be walked alone. Please, join us!

Chazak V'Ematz!



About the Author

Rabbi Jeremy Gimpel is a teacher, author, musician, and one of Israel's most recognizable English-language media personalities. Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, he moved to Israel as a young man, served in the IDF's Givati infantry brigade, and continues to serve as a

sergeant major in the reserves.

He is a co-founder of The Land of Israel Network, the English-language broadcast network based in Judea, and the host of Israel Inspired, whose teachings have reached listeners in more than 120 countries. His work has been featured on international news outlets including Fox News, BBC, and CNN, and he lectures widely throughout Israel and abroad.

In 2018 he and his family, together with several other families, founded the Arugot Farm and Educational Center in the Judean mountains — an organic farm, vineyard, and retreat center built in the wilderness where King David once composed his psalms. What began as barren hillside has become a destination for people from around the world who come to learn, to pray, and to work the land.

Rabbi Gimpel lives at Arugot Farm with his wife, Tehila, and their children.

About the Organization

The Land of Israel Network was founded by Rabbi Ari Abramowitz and Rabbi Jeremy Gimpel to bring the light of Torah to the nations, strengthen the Jewish people, support the flourishing of the Land of Israel, and build a global community devoted to God's promises — all from the heart of Judea.

What began as two friends with a microphone has grown into Israel's leading English-language podcast network, with teachers, journalists, educators, and storytellers broadcasting Torah, Zionism, and the beauty of the Land to hundreds of thousands of listeners worldwide. Alongside the podcasts, the Network produces documentaries, music, tours, and educational programming from the Judean mountains.

At its center is [The Land of Israel Fellowship](#), a virtual community of families from more than thirty countries who gather to study, to celebrate the festivals and the weekly Shabbat, and to align their lives with the God of Israel, the People of Israel, the Land of Israel, and the Torah of Israel.

This book grew out of that community and is offered back to it. If the pages you have just read stirred something in you, do not walk the road alone.

Learn more, listen, and join us at thelandofisrael.com.