



WELCOMING THE SABBATH

The Biblical Day of Rest

Historical Version

With historical quotes from early Gentile
Christian worship

Friday Evening

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קבלת
שבת
עם
השבת

WELCOMING THE SABBATH

The Sabbath (*Shabbat*) is the Biblical day of rest celebrated by Jesus (*Yeshua*) and his disciples (Luke 4:16, 23:56). It is a beautiful picture of the eternal Sabbath rest available to both Jewish and Gentile believers by faith in him (Heb. 4:9). Although observing the weekly Sabbath is not a requirement for Gentiles (Acts 15:10, Rom. 14:5), welcoming the Sabbath can be a wonderful way to learn more about what the Sabbath is, and to enter more fully into the eternal Sabbath found in Yeshua.

The following is a short Messianic (Christian) version of the traditional Jewish observance. In this version, passages have been included from early Gentile Christian worship while it was still strongly influenced by Jewish Sabbath observance. The parts of Mother and Father may be read by others if necessary. The readings in {} are optional additions.

Preparation

*Bread (two unsliced loaves or rolls) on a Plate covered by a Napkin or Cloth
Grape Juice (or Wine mixed with Water) and Kiddush Cup and/or Wineglasses*

Two Candles

Mama's Veil (a cloth to cover her head during the candle lighting)

Bible

Dress up in nice clothes

Set table

Light the candles about twenty minutes before sunset on Friday

The rest of the service can follow any time that evening before the evening meal

Lighting the Shabbat Candles

Mother

(Places the veil on her head. Then stands and says:) Lord of the Universe, I pray that you would pour out an abundance of life on me and my family, and that you would bless us with prosperity through your tender care. Cause your Holy Spirit to dwell among us, Father of mercy, and continue to show loving kindness to me and my loved ones. Make me worthy to {raise my children to} walk in the ways of the righteous before you, devoted to your word and to good deeds. Keep us far from all shame, sorrow, and distress; and put the peace, the light, and the joy of Messiah in our home. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. Amen.

(Additional prayers may be added. Lights candles. Then, with eyes closed or hands blocking the light of the candles, says:) Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has set us apart by your commandments. Blessed are you, Lord, who has enlightened us by revealing the incorruptible light; through your Son, Messiah Jesus, our Lord. *(Apostolic Tradition 26.24)*

Welcoming the Sabbath Service

Father

(Read Psalm 92 and Psalm 93.)

(Reads out loud:) Let us bless the Lord, who is worthy to be blessed.

All

Blessed is the Lord, who is worthy to be blessed forever and ever. Greatness and exaltation with glory are due to him.

Father

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who by your word causes the evenings to grow dark, and with wisdom opens the gates of the heavens, who with understanding makes the

times pass and the seasons change, and arranges the stars in their watches in the firmament, according to your will. We, therefore, having finished the length of a day and having come to the beginning of the night, and having been satisfied with the light of the day which you created for our satisfaction, and since we now lack not by your grace a light for the evening, we bless you and we glorify you. (*Apost. Trad. 26.25*) Blessed are you, Lord, who brings the evening darkness.

In the Law of Moses, God commanded the Jewish people to observe the weekly Sabbath: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you will labor and do all your work, and the seventh day is a Sabbath for the LORD your God; *in it* you will not do any work.... For 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” (*Exodus 20:8-11*).

{“And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, for in it he rested from all his work that God had created” (*Genesis 2:2-3*).}

{“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, *from* doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, and honor it; from doing your *own* ways, from finding your *own* pleasure and speaking *your own* word, then you will take delight in the LORD and I will make you ride on the high places of the earth and I will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (*Isaiah 58:13-14*).}

In the New Testament, God commands us to observe his Sabbath always: “Therefore, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered *God’s* rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from his. Therefore let us do our best to enter that rest, lest anyone fall into the same pattern of disobedience” (*Hebrews 4:9-11*).

{“The Sabbath came into being because of man, and not man because of the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath” (*Mark 2:27-28*).}

We welcome this Sabbath as a reminder of the eternal Sabbath rest we have in Messiah—ceasing from our own works and taking delight in the Lord.

All

(*Greet each other by saying:*) Sabbath peace. (*In Hebrew: “Shabbat Shalom!”*)

Sabbath Song(s)

(*Any appropriate songs may be sung.*)

Blessing of the Children—Father and Mother

(*Father and Mother lay both hands on each son’s head in turn and say:*) May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh, and the apostles of Messiah.

(*Father and Mother lay hands on each daughter:*) May God make you like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, and all the faithful women who serve the Messiah.

(*Each time either of the above is said, they add:*) “The LORD bless you and keep you, the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you, the LORD lift up his countenance on you and give you peace” (*Numbers 6:24-26*).

Blessing of the Mother

(*Father reads Proverbs 31:10-31.*)

Blessing Over the Cup—Father

(*Pours juice into the cups, then holds up his cup and says:*) Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine; who has made known to us the Holy Vine of David, through Jesus, your Son. (*Didache 9.2*) Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has set us apart by your commandments, and has given us your Holy Sabbath as a memorial of the Creation. Blessed are you, Lord, who makes us—and who makes the Sabbath—holy.

All

Amen. *(All pick up their cups and drink.)*

(All read together:) “The earth is the LORD’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers. Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in his Holy Place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation” *(Psalm 24:1-5)*.

Blessing Over the Bread—Father

(Uncovers the bread. Then holds up the plate of bread and says:) Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth. Blessed are you, Lord our God, for the life and knowledge you have made known to us through Jesus your Son. To you be the glory forever. As this broken bread was scattered on the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus the Messiah forever. *(Didache 9.3,4)*

All

Amen. *(All eat a piece of bread.)*

Sabbath Song(s)

Meal

Thanks After the Meal—Father

We give thanks to you, holy Father, for your holy Name which you made to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which you made known to us through Jesus your Son. To you be the glory forever. You, Lord Almighty, did create all things for your Name’s sake, and did give food and drink to all men for their enjoyment, that they might give thanks to you. But you have blessed us even more, with spiritual food and drink and eternal light through your Son. Above all things we give thanks to you because you are the Mighty One. To you be the glory forever. Remember, Lord, your Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in your love, and gather it together in its holiness from the four winds to your kingdom which you have prepared for it. For yours is the power and the glory forever. Let grace come and let this world pass away. Hosannah to the God of David! If any man is holy, let him come! If any man is not, let him repent. Maranatha! *(Didache 10.2-6)*

All

Maranatha! Amen.

Sabbath Song(s)