

Step-by-Step Guide to a Messianic Sabbath

By Holly Eastburg at HebrewRootsMom.com

Shalom! I'm so glad you've decided to observe a traditional Messianic Sabbath evening! I hope it becomes one of your family's most-loved traditions like it has in my family.

The Sabbath is not only one of the 10 Commandments; it's a sign that we are God's people (See Ez. 20:12, 20). By keeping the Sabbath, we're not only obedient to God but also showing our faith in who He is to us through our actions, and doing so brings glory to Him.

This guide is a very basic overview of a traditional Sabbath. Every family observes the Sabbath a bit differently in their own way, so feel welcome to use this as a guide and tailor it in the way that works best for your family. Whatever you do, make sure to keep the focus on God and on keeping the day set apart for Him.

For other Sabbath resources, recipes, etc., visit HebrewRootsMom.com.

Sabbath Preparation

Friday is commonly known as Preparation Day because this is usually the time used to get everything ready so everyone can rest on the Sabbath. Cleaning, food preparation, etc., is done in advance so everyone can relax, focus on God, and spend time with family.

Here's a basic list of what you'll need for a traditional Sabbath:

- 2 candles
- Candleholders
- Wine or juice in 1 cup or in glasses for everyone
- Meal for Friday night
- Challah Bread

When Does the Sabbath Begin?

Instead of days beginning at midnight like we're used to, days on the Hebrew calendar start at sundown. So, the Sabbath is from sundown on Friday evening until Saturday evening.

Light the Candles

It's usually the woman of the house who is responsible for lighting the candles and bringing in the Sabbath. Two candles are lit to signify the two commands given as far as the Sabbath goes - to remember the Sabbath and to keep it holy.

Although not required, women traditionally cover their heads during the blessing as a symbol of humility before God. The woman covers her head with a head covering (scarf), lights the candles, and says the following blessing.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to be a light to the nations and Who gave to us Jesus our Messiah, the light of the world.

In Hebrew:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִיטֵב
אוֹר לְגוֹיִים וְנָתַן-לָנוּ אֶת יֵשׁוּעַ מְשִׁיחֵנוּ אוֹר הָעוֹלָם

Which is pronounced:

Ba-rook ah-tah a-do-nai eh-lo-hay-noo meh-lekh ha-o-lam ah-sheer ki-deh-sha-noo be-mitz-vo-tav veh-tzee-va-noo le-hee-oat or le-go-yeem ve-na-tan-la-noo et Ye-shoo-a Me-shee-che-noo or ha-o-lam.

Blessing Over the Children

There are different blessings said over boys and girls, and the Aaronic Blessing follows both. The father usually says these blessings, although anyone can bless the children.

The blessing for the boys comes from Genesis 48:20, where Jacob said, "By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!'" . The blessing over girls holds them high that they would become like some of the most remarkable women in the Bible.

Blessing over girls:

May you be like Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

In Hebrew:

יְשִׁימְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רְבֵקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה

Pronunciation:

Ye-si-mech E-lo-heem ke-Sa-rah Riv-ka Ra-chel ve-Le-ah

Blessing over boys:

May you be like Ephraim and Manasseh.

In Hebrew:

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה

Ye-seem-cha E-lo-heem k-Ef-raim v-chi-Me-na-sheh.

The Aaronic Blessing

From Numbers 6:24-26, this is the blessing God gave to Moses to have his sons bless the Israelites.

May God bless you and protect you.
May God show you favor and be gracious to you.
May God show you kindness and grant you peace.

In Hebrew:

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנְּךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Which is pronounced:

Ye-va-re-che-cha A-do-nai v-yee-sh-me-re-cha
Ya-er A-do-nai pa-nav eh-le-cha vi-chu-ne-ka
Yee-sa A-do-nai pa-nav eh-le-cha v-ya-sem le-cha sha-lom

The Eschet Chayil (Blessing over the Wife)

The Blessing over the Wife comes from Proverbs 31, verses 10-31. It's usually said by the husband and is as follows.

An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.
The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.
She looks for wool and flax and works with her hands in delight.
She is like merchant ships; she brings her food from afar.
She rises also while it is still night and gives food to her household
and portions to her maidens.
She considers a field and buys it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard.
She girds herself with strength and makes her arms strong.
She senses that her gain is good; her lamp does not go out at night.
She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hands grasp the spindle.
She extends her hand to the poor, and she stretches out her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She makes coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.
She makes linen garments and sells them and supplies belts to the tradesmen.
Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she smiles at the future.
She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying
"Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all."
Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

And in Hebrew:

אִשָּׁת חַיִּיל מִי יִמָּצֵא, וְרַחֵק מִפְּנִינִים מְכָרָה.
בְּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בַּעֲלָהּ, וְשָׁלָל לֹא יִחָסֵר.
גִּמְלָתָהּ טוֹב וְלֹא רָע, כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיהָ.
דָּרָשָׁה צִמּוֹר וּפְשָׁתִים, וַתַּעַשׂ בְּחֶפְזָה כַּפִּיָּה.
הִיָּתָה כְּאֲנִיּוֹת סוֹחֵר, מִמֶּרְחֵק תָּבִיא לַחֲמָה.
וַתִּקָּם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה, וַתִּתֵּן טָרֶף לְבֵיתָהּ וְחֵק לְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ.
זָמְמָה שָׂדֶה וַתִּקְחָהּ, מִפְּרֵי כַּפִּיָּה נָטְעָה כֶּרֶם.
חָגְרָה בְּעוֹז מְתַנֶּיהָ, וַתֵּאֱמָץ זְרוּעֹתֶיהָ.
טָעַמָּה כִּי טוֹב סִחָרָה, לֹא יִכָּבֵה בְּלִילָה נֶרָה.
יָדֶיהָ שִׁלְחָה בְּכִישׁוֹר, וְכַפֵּיהָ תִּמְכּוּ פֶלֶךְ.

כָּפָה פְּרָשָׁה לְעֵנִי, וַיְדִיָּה שְׁלַחָה לְאַבְיּוֹן.
לֹא תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ מִשְׁלֵג, כִּי כָל-בֵּיתָהּ לְבֶשׂ שָׁנִים.
מִרְבֵּדִים עָשְׂתָהּ-לָהּ, שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוּשָׁהּ.
נֹדַע בְּשַׁעְרִים בַּעֲלָהּ, בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם זְקֵנֵי-אֶרֶץ.
סֹדִין עָשְׂתָה וְתַמְכֹּר, וַחֲגוּר נָתַנָּה לְכַנְעֵנִי.
עֹז וְהֶדְר לְבוּשָׁהּ, וַתִּשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן.
פִּיָּה פָתְחָה בְּחִכְמָה, וְתוֹרַת חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָהּ:
צוּפִיָּה הִלִּיכֹת בֵּיתָהּ, וְלֶחֶם עֲצָלוֹת לֹא תֹאכַל:
קָמוּ בְנֵיהָ וַיֵּאֱשָׁרוּהָ, בַּעֲלָהּ וַיְהִלְלָהּ:
רַבּוֹת בְּנוֹת עָשׂוּ חֵיִל, וְאַתְּ עָלִית עַל כָּלָנָהּ:
שִׁקֵּר הַחַן וְהַבֵּל הַיָּפִי, אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת ה' הִיא תִתְהַלָּל:
תָּנוּ לָהּ מִפְּרֵי יְדֵיהָ, וַיְהִלְלוּהָ בְּשַׁעְרִים מְעֻשִׂיָּהּ

And here's the pronunciation:

E-shet Cha-yeel mi yeem-tza, ve-ra-chok meep-nee-neem mee-ch-rah.
Ba-tach bah lev ba-a-lah, ve-sha-lal lo yech-sar. Ge-mal-at-hu tov ve-lo ra kol ye-mei
cha-ye-ha.
Dar-sha tse-mer u-feesh-teem, va-ta-as be-che-fetz ka-pe-ha.
Hay-tah ka-o-nee-yot so-cher, mee-mer-chak ta-vi lach-ma.
Va-ta-kom be-od lai-lah, Ve-tee-ten te-ref le-vey-tah ve-chok le-na-a-ro-te-ha.
Zam-mah sa-deh ve-ti-ka-che-hu, meep-ree kha-pe-ha nat-ah ka-rem.
Chag-rah ve-oz mot-ne-ha, vat-a-metz z-ro-ote-ha.
Ta-a-ma ki tov sach-rah, lo yich-be va-lay-lah ne-rah.
Ya-de-ha sheel-cha va-kee-shor, ve-kha-pe-ha tam-chu pha-lech.
Ka-pah par-sah le-ani, ve-ya-de-hah sheel-cha la-ev-yon.
Lo tee-ra le-vei-tah mee-sha-leg, ki khol bei-tah la-vush sha-neem.
Mar-va-deem as-tah lah, shesh ve-ar-ga-man le-vu-shah.
No-dah bash-ar-eem ba-lah, be-shiv-to eem zik-nei ar-etz.
Sa-deen as-tah va-teem-kor, va-cha-gor nat-nah lak-na-ani.
Oz ve-ha-dar le-vu-shah, va-tees-chak le-yom eh-cha-ron.
Pee-ha pat-cha ve-chach-mah, ve-to-rat che-sed al le-sho-nah.
Tso-fee-ya hal-ee-choth bei-ta, ve-le-chem atz-lut lo toe-chel.
Ka-mu va-ne-ha vay-ash-ru-hah, ba-a-lah vay-hal-lah.
Ra-bot ba-not a-su cha-yil, ve-at a-leet al ku-la-nah.
She-ker ha-chen ve-he-vel ha-yo-fee, ee-shah yir-at a-do-nai hi teet-ha-lal.
Te-nu lah mip-ri ya-de-ha, vee-hal-lu-ha bash-a-reem ma-a-se-ha.

The Kiddush

The Kiddush reminds us why we're doing what we're doing. It incorporates verses from Genesis that discuss the Sabbath, as well as a blessing over the wine and thanking God for choosing and sanctifying the nation of Israel. It's traditionally said by the man of the house.

The one saying the Kiddush holds the cup of wine up while reciting the Kiddush. After the Kiddush is said, each of the participants can either take a drink from a single kiddush cup or their own wine/juice glasses.

And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day. And the heavens and the earth and all their hosts were completed. And God finished by the Seventh Day His work which He had done, and He rested on the Seventh Day from all His work which He had done. And God blessed the Seventh Day and made it holy, for on it He rested from all His work which God created to function.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine. (Response: Amen)

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has hallowed us with His commandments, has desired us, and has given us, in love and goodwill, His holy Shabbat as a heritage, in remembrance of the work of Creation; the first of the holy festivals, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. For You have chosen us and sanctified us from among all the nations, and with love and goodwill given us Your holy Shabbat as a heritage. Blessed are You Lord, who hallows the Shabbat. (Response: Amen)

In Hebrew:

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר
יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי. וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צְבָאָם
וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
מְכַל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ. כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכַל מְלַאכְתּוֹ
אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בָּנוּ
וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשׁוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָנוּ זְכוּרֹן לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית. כִּי הוּא

יום תחלה למקראי קדש זכר ליציאת מצרים. כי בנו בחרת ואותנו
קדשת מכל העמים ושבת קדשך באהבה וברצון הנחלתנו
ברוך אתה יהוה מקדש השבת

Which is pronounced:

Va-ye-hee erev, va-ye-hee voker. Yom Ha-shishi. Va-ye-chulu hasha-mayim vi-ha-aretz vi-kole
tzi-va-am. Va-yichal Elohim ba-yom hashe-vi'i milach-to asher asa. Va-yish-bat ba-yom hashe-
vi'I mi-kole milach-to asher asa. Va-ye-varech Elohim es yom hashe-vi'i va-yi-kadesh oto. Kee
voe sha-vat mi-kole milach-toe asher bara Elohim la-a-sot.

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam,
bo-rei pe-ri ha-ga-fen. (Response: "Amen")

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam, asher ki-di-sha-nu be-mitz-votav vi-ratza
vanu, vi-Shab-bat kod-sho be-a-ha-va uv-ra-tzon hin-chi-la-nu, zi-ka-ron le-ma-a-seh ve-re-
sheet. Ki hu yom ti-chi-la le-mik-ra-ay ko-desh, zay-cher li-tzi-as mitz-rayim. Ki va-nu va-char-
ta ve-o-ta-nu ki-dash-ta mi-kol ha-a-mim. Vi-shab-bat kod-shi-cha bi-a-ha-va uv-ra-tzon hin-
chal-ta-nu. Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, mi-ka-desh ha-shab-bat. (Response: "Amen")

The Hamotzi

The Hamotzi is the blessing over the bread. We usually sing it together, and one person holds the challah, plate and all, up while we sing. After the Hamotzi, the bread is set down to be eaten later. It's often eaten by tearing pieces off and dipping them in the wine or juice.

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

In Hebrew, it's:

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Pronounced:

Ba-rook ah-tah a-do-nai eh-lo-hay-noo meh-lekh ha-o-lam ha-mo-tzi le-chem meen ha-aretz.

Sabbath Meal

After that, enjoy your meal together and have a restful Sabbath! As the common Sabbath greeting goes, wishing a peaceful Sabbath, Shabbat Shalom!