



## A Guide for the Shabbat Table Animator

A booklet to learn how to welcome Shabbat into your home,  
and to enrich and make meaningful the Shabbat experience.

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## The Shalom Aleichem Shabbat Program

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To set the mood for Shabbat, consider discussion the following adage:

All life should be a pilgrimage to the seventh day --- Heschel

## **Tzedakah:**

Before lighting the Shabbat candles we collect our loose change and put it in the Tzedakah box which should be placed near the Shabbat candelabrum.

You can recite a meditation “Here I am ready to give some Tzedakah to fulfill the mitzvah of “Love your neighbor as you love yourself, I am G-d”

Jewish ethics teaches it is better to give one thousand gold pieces to one thousand people on one thousand different occasions— rather than a thousand gold pieces to a worthy person.

Remember that in our culture, money represents a life giving symbol, a sacred immortality, death defying symbol; and giving it buys one additional life. Money becomes a food package. There is much power and the possibilities are endless with what we can do with Tzedakah.

The mitzvah is to make others feel like they matter to you and the world. How do you make others feel like they matter?

A passage from the Talmud states that one who gives charity in secret is greater than Moses.

Finally—the Jewish nation is characterized by being a merciful people, modesty and performing acts of loving kindness.

## **Nerot – Lighting Shabbat Candles**

Lighting the candles symbolizes hope—represents movement from darkness to light.

Let the glow of the flame calm us in the presence of Shabbat.

Shekhina – we invite G-d's presence when our home is imbued with peace

We light the candles first—then recite the blessing.

Blessing for Lighting the Candles:

Ba-rukh ata Adonai  
Elo-hei-nu me-lekh ha-olam  
Asher ki-d'shanu b'mitz-votav v'tzi-vanu  
L'ha-d'lik ner shel Shabbat

When all work is brought to a standstill, the candles are lit.  
Just as creation began with the word “Let there be light”  
So does the celebration of creation begin with the kindling of lights

Candle lighting symbolically represents movement from darkness to light – and hope. You reenact Hashem’s opening act of creation and you provide warmth in your home. It sets the day apart – and invites Shekhina: Hashem’s maternal presence to be your honored guest at your table.

Lighting the Shabbat candles transforms the ordinary weekday to a warm, peaceful holy time at home.

We light two candles placed on or near the dinner table to give light for the meal. Some homes light a candle for each member.

How many candles?

One Candle: The Talmud says one candle is sufficient for just enough light (oil—not wax) because people could not afford expensive fuel for light.

Two Candles: For additional meaning—the Ashkenazim say two candles represent the two parallel formulation of the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment given at Mount Sinai:

Zachor – to remember

Shamor – observe the Shabbat

Also—the two candles represent the male and female aspects of the Divine (husband and wife)

Seven Candles: The Sephardim have a custom of lighting 7 candles for the 7 days of the week.

Many Candles: Some families light one candle for every child in the family or for every member of the family.

Choose a candle that can burn for at least 3 hours—or the length of the dinner so it provides light and joy and peace. Put the candles away from wind so they don’t blow out. If they are blown out—you aren’t obligated to relight them because you already fulfilled the commandment.

Cover your eyes when you say Nerot blessings. You can motion with their hands, 3 times to symbolically you are gathering in the spirit of Shabbat before making the blessing.

Tradition says you light the candles 18 minutes before sunset.

## **Tekhinot – Personal Prayers at Candle Lighting**

After candle lighting women add a personal prayer while their eyes are closed.

Tekhinot are prayers and meditations; a custom of the Ashkenazi in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The content included family matters, health, pregnancy and birth.

On page 34 are Tekhinot of various forms to consider reading.

## **Welcoming the Angels of Peace: Shalom Aleichem**

We invite and welcome guests with Shalom Alechem. We open our hearts, embrace our guests and imagine the Divine presence in the form of a pair of Angels for whom the song Shalom Alechem was composed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### **We sing Oseh Shalom: A Song for Peace in Israel and the Whole World**

Oseh Shalom Bimromav  
hu ya'aseh Shalom  
aleinu, v'al kol Yisrael  
v'imru Amen

### **We recite Rabbi Nachman's Prayer for Shalom**

"May G-d instruct the divine angels to guard you on whatever paths you take" Psalm 91:11

"May Adonai guard your coming and going, now and forever" Psalm 121:8

### **We sing Shalom Aleichem**

Shalom Aleikhem  
Malakhei ha-sha-reit  
Malakhei elyon,  
Mi-melekh, malkhei ham'lakhim  
Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu

Bo-a-khem l'Shalom  
Malakhei ha-Shalom  
Malakhei elyon,  
Mi-melekh, malkhei ham'lakhim  
Ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu

Barkhui l'Shalom  
Malakhei ha-Shalom  
Malakhei elyon,  
Mi-melekh, malkhei ham'lakhim  
Ha-Kadosh Barikh Hu

Tzeit-khem l'Shalom  
Malakhei ha-Shalom  
Malakhei elyon,  
Mi-melekh, malkhei ham'lakhim  
Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu

## **Birkat Banim: Blessing Our Children and One Another**

Place your hands on the head of the child and recite the blessings:

For a boy or man of any age: Y'sim kha Elohim  
K' Ephraim v-khi-Menashe

For a girl or woman of any age: Y'shi-meikh Elohim  
K'Sarah, Rivka, Rachel v'Leah

For all: May Adonai bless you and guard you.  
May Adonai's face shine on you and be gracious unto you.  
May Adonai's face smile at you and grant you peace.

In Hebrew: Y'va-re-kh'kha Adonai v-yish-m'rekha  
Ya-er Adonai panav ei-lekha  
vi-khun-e-ka  
Yisa Adonai panav ei-lekha  
v-yasem lekha Shalom

## **Eishet Hayil: Praising a Strong Woman**

This custom was adapted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century mystical tradition of Safed. It was directed to the Divine feminine presence called the Shekhina. Here—we respect the woman of the home.

A tribute to women—and the woman of the home who sets the tone for love.

We also honor Song of Songs—Renewing Our Love:

I am committed to my beloved and my beloved is committed to me.

Ani l'dodi v'dodi li. (from the song of songs 6:3 Solomon's song of song)

You can also add one of the most beautiful Biblical verses of marital commitment by the prophet Hosea:

I will be engaged to you forever  
I will engage you by living the qualities of justice and equity  
By a life of kindness and mercy  
I will engage you by a life of faithfulness  
And then you will know G-d

## **Kiddush – Sanctifying the Day of Shabbat Over Wine**

We pour wine in a cup for each person at the table. We stand – and some may sit if necessary—and we lift the cup of wine recite the Kiddush which symbolically declares this day holy and we celebrate G-d's partnership with humanity.

The Kiddush also symbolizes G-d's creation of the world- and resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day; the exodus from Egypt as slaves; and how we couldn't rest when we wanted to; and now we can.

### **Kiddush**

Yom Ha-shishi  
Va-y'khulu Ha-shamayim v'ha- aretz  
V'khol tz'va-am  
Va-y'khal Elohim ba-yom ha-sh'vi i  
M'lakhto asher asah  
Va-yish-bot ba-yom ha-sh'vi i  
mi-kol m'lakhto asher asah  
va-y'vareikh Elohim et yom ha-sh'vi i  
va-y'kadeish oto  
ki vo shavat mi-kol m'lakhto  
asher bara Elohim la'asot

Baruch ata Adonai  
Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam  
Borei p'ri ha-gafen

Barukh ata Adonia  
Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam  
asher ki-d'shanu b'mitz-votav  
v'ratzah vanu  
v'shabbat kod'sho  
b'ahavah u-v'ratzon  
hin-khi-lanu  
zikaron l'ma'asei v'rei-sheet  
Ki hu yom t'khilah  
l'mikra-ei kodesh  
zekher litzi-at mitzrayim  
Ki vanu va-kharta

v'otanu kidashta  
mikol ha-amim  
v'shabbat kodsh'kha  
b'ahavah u-v'ratzon  
hin-khal-tanu  
Barukh ata Adonia  
m'Kadesh ha-Shabbat

### **Tradition says:**

We let the cup overflow a little onto the plate because it is a sign of gratitude for abundant blessings

Some people pour a little water into the wine; Kabbalists say this custom signifies a balance between justice (wine) and mercy (water)

Kiddush symbolically marks the conclusion of the six days of work and beginning of the Shabbat. Hashem looked back at all he accomplished in one week and said "It is very good."

All Professions are Equal

All forms of labor should be appreciated as we sum up our creativity during the week. Intellectual pursuits are not necessarily to be given greater honor.

The Rabbis of the Talmud said:

I am a creature of G-d and my fellows are also creatures of G-d  
My work is in the city and others in the field  
I rise early to go to my work and others rise early to theirs  
As they do not deign to do my work, I do not deign to do theirs

### **A Reflection by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook:**

Creation is Constantly Becoming, Evolving, Ascending

Recall that Judaism is a faith of action and our G-d is a G-d of action who performed miracles.

An epiphany (a personal revelation) enables you to sense Creation not as something completed, but as constantly becoming, evolving, ascending. This transports you from a place where there is nothing new to a place where there is nothing old, where everything renews itself, where heaven and earth rejoice as at the moment of Creation.

### **The Week in Review**

One custom is to share recent accomplishments, experiences or any goals/projects anyone has set for themselves in the coming weeks; and what they are excited about.

## **Netilat Yedaim and Motzi: Handwashing and Blessing Over the Bread**

The pouring of water over our hands has an important symbolic meaning. Our hands are tools for manipulating the world. In Hebrew—hand is “yad” is the chief image for Divine work: G-d’s hand in history. Yad also means memorial and with our hands we leave our mark on the world. Our hands are critical instruments for life. We sanctify our creative hands by pouring water over them. In Genesis—the world emerges from water and immersing our hands in water signifies a process of rebirth.

The purpose of ritual washing of hands is religious—it endows the meal with spirituality.

Some homes wash hands ritually with a cup, pouring water over each hand over a sink and using a towel. Another ritual is to fill a pitcher with water, and wash your hands over a large bowl and reciting the prayer after washing of the hands.

### **Prayer (Netilat Yedaim)**

Ba-rukh ata Adonai  
Elo-hei-nu me-lekh ha-olam  
Asher ki-d’shanu  
B’mitz-votav v’tzi-vanu  
Al n’tilat yadayim

After the Netilat Yedaim—we recite the Motzi (blessing over the bread)

You hold the loaves of bread (Hallah) and recite:

Ba-rukh ata Adonai  
Elo-hei-nu me-lekh ha-olam  
Ha-motzi lekhem min ha-aretz

Everyone takes a piece of Hallah and dips it in salt or honey.

## **We Now Enjoy a Wonderful Meal for Shabbat**

D’var Torah: Shabbat Table Talk

Shabbat Table Talk may include the following:

The most significant events of the week; something positive someone achieved in the last week such as at work or mitzvah they did; how one spent their leisure time lately; an interesting book you read recently; a vacation you took and now can share where you were and what you enjoyed about it; how you are adding significance and meaning to your life.

### **Birkat Hamazon (Blessing After the Meal)**

Gratitude for nourishment. Praying after the meal is a mitzvah and the Birkat Hamazon is also colloquially called “Benching.” Any time we eat bread we are required to recite the Birkat Hamazon.

Judaism encourages us to enjoy Hashem’s creation and appreciate food. The food somehow tastes better when we appreciate it and the after taste of our satisfaction grows when “we sing about our supper”

