

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, as it has in mine.

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 provides a very basic overview of a traditional Sabbath. Every family observes the Sabbath a bit differently, so feel welcome to use this as a guide and tailor it to work 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 to prepare everything 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 an essential 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

The woman of the house is usually responsible for lighting the candles and bringing in the Sabbath. Two candles are lit to signify the two commands given regarding the Sabbath – to remember it 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

Different blessings are 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 כְּסָרָה רִבְקָה 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 וַיַּחֲנֶךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֶּׂם 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. Interestingly enough, this blessing is also said over women who are not married. This blessing is to show appreciation for wives and all women for all they do to hold homes and communities together! The husband usually says it, and it 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 חַיִּל מִי יִמָּצָא, וְרַחֵק מִפְּנִינִים מְכָרָה.
 בְּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בַּעֲלָהּ, וְשָׁלָל לֹא יִחְסֹר.
 גִּמְלָתָהּ טוֹב וְלֹא רָע, כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיהָ.
 דָּרָשָׁה צֶמֶר וּפְשֻׁתִים, וַתַּעַשׂ בַּחֲפֶז כַּפִּיָּה.
 הִתְיַתָּה כְּאֲנִיּוֹת סוֹחֵר, מִמְּרַחֵק תָּבִיא לַחֲמָה.
 וַתִּקֶּם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה, וַתִּתֵּן טָרֶף לְבֵיתָהּ וְחֵק לְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ.
 זָמְמָה שָׂדֶה וַתִּקְחָהּ, מִפְּרֵי כַפִּיָּה נִטְעָה כָּרֶם.
 חָגְרָה בְּעוֹז מְתַנֶּיֶה, וַתֵּאֱמֶץ זְרוּעֹתֶיהָ.
 טָעַמָּה כִּי טוֹב סִחְרָה, לֹא יִכְבֶּה בַלְיָלָה נְרָה.
 יָדֶיהָ שִׁלְחָה בְּכִישׁוֹר, וְכַפִּיָּה תִמְכּוּ פֶלֶךְ.
 כִּפְתָה פְּרָשָׁה לְעֵנִי, וַיְדִיָּה שִׁלְחָה לְאֲבִיוֹן.
 לֹא תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ מִשָּׁלֵג, כִּי כָל-בֵּיתָהּ לְבָשׁ שָׁנִים.
 מִרְבֵּדִים עָשְׂתָה-לָּהּ, שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוּשָׁה.

נוֹדַע בְּשַׁעְרֵי בְּעֵלָה, בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ עִם זְקַנֵי-אֶרֶץ.
 סֹדִין עֲשֵׂתָה וְתִמְכֹר, וְחִגּוֹר נָתַנָּה לְכַנְעֲנֵי
 עוֹז וְהִדָּר לְבוֹשָׁה, וְתִשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן
 פִּיָּה פְתַחְהָ בְּחֻכְמָה, וְתוֹרַת חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָה
 צוֹפִיָּה תְּלִיכוֹת בֵּיתָהּ, וְלֶחֶם עֲצָלוֹת לֹא תֹאכַל
 קָמוּ בְנֵיהָ וַיֵּאֱשָׁרוּהָ, בְּעֵלָה וַיְהִלְלָהּ
 רַבּוֹת בְּנוֹת עָשׂוּ חֵיל, וְאֵת עֲלִית עַל כְּלָנָה
 שָׁקַר הַחַן וְהַבֵּל הַיָּפִי, אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת ה' הִיא תִתְהַלָּל
 תָּנוּ לָהּ מִפְּרֵי יָדֶיהָ, וַיְהִלְלוּהָ בְּשַׁעְרֵי מַעֲשֵׂיהָ

And here's the pronunciation:

E-shet Cha-yeel mi yeem-tza, ve-ra-chok meep-nee-neem mee-chah.
 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-chot 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. The man of the house traditionally says it.

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:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

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!