

Who Invented the Weekend Anyway?

The meaning and practice of Shabbat

The Sabbath

The Sabbath (*Shabbos* or *Shabbat* in Hebrew) is one of the most prominent and central features of Jewish life.¹ To one who is unfamiliar with its laws and philosophy, many aspects of the observance of the Sabbath may appear illogical and even bizarre.

I once spent Shabbat at the Holiday Inn in Kowloon, Hong Kong, where I was given a room on the 11th floor of the hotel. I did not use the elevator because of the Shabbat restriction against turning electric circuits on or off (to be explained later), so instead I used the staircase designated for the staff. Wheezing and staggering up the 10th flight of stairs I encountered a waiter at the hotel, who asked me why I was not using the elevator. I replied, "Because it is the Sabbath, our day of rest." We looked at each other for a moment; he nervously smiled and sped away before I could explain how climbing 11 flights of stairs is considered "rest."

In this chapter we will try to explain the meaning of Shabbat and demonstrate the unity of its law and philosophy. The Torah emphasizes the importance of the Shabbat in numerous places. It is, in fact, the

fourth of the Ten Commandments. In Jewish tradition, we consider the Ten Commandments to be principles from which all the 613 commandments can be derived.² Since Shabbat is one of these “root commandments,” it is logical to assume that Shabbat must include within it many other commandments, ideas and principles. The idea that a human should not be a slave to the physical world, that our power comes with obligation, and that it is possible to achieve harmony in life, are all concepts that are embodied within the commandment of Shabbat, as we shall explain.

Shabbat and Creation

The Talmud points out that observance of Shabbat is testimony to belief in God, belief in Creation and belief in Divine Providence.³ The first chapter of Genesis relates the successive stages of the creation of the world. From a state of absolute nothingness, God created time, space and the entire physical world. This process of creation took six days, and on the seventh day God “rested” and created the Shabbat. Because of the centrality of our belief that God created the world from nothing and continues to be involved in its ongoing existence, it is customary to recite the section in the Torah describing this process⁴ during the synagogue services on Friday night.⁵ The verses are recited aloud, while standing, just as testimony must be given by witnesses in a Jewish court of law.⁶

The Impact of Shabbat

Shabbat also has a tremendous sociological and psychological impact on the Jewish people. No matter what is going on in the outside world, no matter how hard a person works during the week, on Shabbat everyone feels like royalty — everyone dresses in his or her best clothing, candles are lit, festive meals are eaten. No one engages in work, business is not discussed, and an atmosphere of relaxation and serenity is created. Once the usual weekday distractions are removed, we are able to devote ourselves to more spiritual pursuits. One can pray without rushing to get to work, spend extra time studying Torah and focus on personal growth and relationships.

Shabbat creates a sanctuary in time in which we are forced to suspend our normal activities and re-evaluate the importance of our daily concerns. We are offered the opportunity to turn our attention to those areas of life that are too often neglected. Shabbat is the one time that the entire family can get together without the pressure of school or work and

without the intrusion of the phone or television.⁷ A common expression, coined by the Zionist writer, Achad Ha'Am, attests, "More than the Jews kept the Shabbat, the Shabbat has kept the Jews."

What Is Work? What Is Rest?

The Torah describes Shabbat as a day of rest,⁸ or as a day when work is forbidden. Yet many of the laws seem inconsistent with this description. In order to understand Shabbat, we must understand the meaning of "work." For scientific purposes, work is defined as $W=FD$ (Work equals Force times Displacement). For taxation purposes, work is defined as an activity that produces income. Some define work as whatever one does for a living during the week. According to this definition, a comedian would not be allowed to tell a joke on Shabbat, a cantor would not be allowed to pray and someone who works in a think tank would not be allowed to think for the entire day. Others think of work as physical exertion, which means one wouldn't be allowed to walk a distance to the synagogue. Obviously none of these scenarios are consistent with the Torah's concept of Shabbat. We must examine the sources more carefully in order to understand what the Torah means by "work" with regard to Shabbat.

The Torah's Hebrew word for work that is prohibited on Shabbat is *melachah*. The verse states, "You shall do no manner of *melachah*."⁹ There is another Hebrew word for work that means toil (or labor) — *avodah*. The word *avodah* is used in the context of the slavery of the Egyptian exile.¹⁰ *Melachah*, on the other hand, is never used to refer to mere physical exertion. It is clear that what is prohibited on Shabbat is not blood, sweat and tears, but rather specific types of activities.

The Oral Tradition¹¹ lists 39 categories of *melachot* (plural of *malachah*) that are prohibited on Shabbat. Some examples of *melachot* and their definitions follow:

- ▶ Planting: anything that encourages the growth of a plant. For instance, it is prohibited to water a plant or move it into sunlight.
- ▶ Cooking: using heat to effect a change of state. This prohibits any type of boiling, frying, or baking.
- ▶ Sewing: any permanent bonding of two materials.
- ▶ Building: construction of dwellings, vessels or implements.

Two noted Jewish philosophers¹² describe the common principles underlying these divergent activities. In all cases, the activities improve the usefulness of the object on which they are performed.¹³ This improvement demonstrates human mastery of the world through the constructive

use of our intelligence.¹⁴ *Melachah*, then, does not denote physical effort, but rather creative activity.

Who Is the Real Master?

In order to understand the importance of abstaining from the above activities we must look at the sources of these prohibitions. The Torah describes the observance of Shabbat as *imitatio dei*, the imitation of God, Who “rested” (so to speak) after six days of creating the world, as we mentioned above. The Torah states:

*Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it. Six days shall you toil and accomplish all your work. But the seventh day is Sabbath to God, your God; you shall not do any work — you, your son, your daughter, your slave, your maidservant, your animal and your convert within your gates — for in six days God made the heavens and the earth, the seas and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, God blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.*¹⁵

We are commanded to rest on the Shabbat as testimony to the idea that the world is God’s creation and belongs to Him. When we refrain from our own acts of creativity, acts that show our mastery of the world, we acknowledge that we are not the true masters of the world. (Consider a simple analogy: Rockefeller Plaza, once owned by the Rockefeller family, is open to pedestrian traffic virtually all the time. The law requires that the plaza be closed at least one day a year to show that it is privately owned; otherwise the area would revert to public ownership. Similarly, we make a similar statement about God’s ownership of the world through our observance of Shabbat.)

During the week, if a fly annoys us, we kill it; if a flower looks attractive, we pluck it; if we want to eat something, we cook it. However, on Shabbat we do not kill, pluck, cook or otherwise effect changes in the world. It is a day when every element of the world is recognized as being a creation of God, when we consciously acknowledge that He is the proprietor of the universe and we exist only by His will. Observing Shabbat helps to combat the view that the world is the possession and slave of the human race.

Fire: Power with Responsibility

The prohibition against igniting fire is a good example of this idea. Without fire, no science or technology would be possible.¹⁶ The development of metal tools and glass, the production of chemical reaction,

semiconductors, plastic, refined petroleum and the computer all require the ability to harness the forces of nature, especially fire. The Sages of the Talmud state that the human being was first inspired to make a fire on the first Saturday night of creation, immediately after Shabbat.¹⁷ Why specifically *after* Shabbat? Because fire, inasmuch as it is a means to achieve almost all acts of mastery and creativity,¹⁸ is a symbol of the power of the human being. We are the only creature able to light, control and use fire.¹⁹ Shabbat, however, teaches the human that he is not the ultimate master of the world, rather, that he too is a creation of God — and hence must act with responsibility. That is why fire was given to humans only after the lesson of responsibility was learned on Shabbat. This is why we say a blessing over a newly lit flame during a ritual called *Havdalah* at the conclusion of the Shabbat: fire is symbolic of the difference between Shabbat and the weekdays.²⁰

To return to my oxygen-deprived encounter in the stairwell in Hong Kong — while climbing 11 flights of stairs is certainly hard work, it is hardly an example of human mastery over creation. Most animals could accomplish this task faster and with less exertion than the average human. Pressing a button, however, which closes an electric circuit that starts electron flow through the wires, operates a system of motors, computerized switches, weight sensors and lights in the elevator, is a wonderful example of the human mastery of the forces of creation (as surely as laying brick upon brick) and is therefore prohibited on Shabbat.²¹

Taking the Jew Out of Egypt, Taking Egypt Out of the Jew

The centrality of Shabbat also derives from its function as a reminder of our release from slavery in Egypt. The Torah states:

*Safeguard the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as...your God, commanded you... And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and... your God, has taken you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm; therefore God, your God, has commanded you to make the Sabbath day.*²²

Although the Exodus occurred 3,500 years ago, it is the ultimate example of God's involvement in history. It teaches us that He did not create the world and then abandon it to blind chance.²³ Rather, God has a plan and purpose in creation and takes an active role in world events.

The Egyptian Exile is a metaphor for any enslavement — be it physical or spiritual.²⁴ By ceasing our work, we show that we are not enslaved

by the physical world. When a person is incapable of refraining from work, then he is indeed a slave. If he cannot walk past the computer without checking his e-mail, even though it's 3 o'clock in the morning, he is a slave. If he cannot go a day without checking the Dow-Jones, Nikkei or Nasdaq, he is a slave. Slaves used to wear some symbol of their slavery, to show that they were "at work" 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They still do, only now the symbols are pagers, cellular phones and palm-top computers. By prohibiting our involvement with these things for 24 hours, Shabbat prevents us from becoming slaves to the material world and its development.

Shabbat teaches us that human beings should not be engaged exclusively in the struggle for survival. We are designed for much more than merely propagating the species.²⁵ We remind ourselves of what our real goals should be on Shabbat when we reorder our priorities to allow for Torah study,²⁶ for enjoying our family,²⁷ and allotting time for other spiritual²⁸ and physical pleasures.²⁹

Sanctifying Shabbat

Aside from the prohibition against work on Shabbat, there are "positive" commandments to engage in, activities designed to make us aware of the ideas behind Shabbat. What does the Torah mean when it states "Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it"?³⁰

The Oral Tradition tells us that this is the commandment to verbally sanctify the Shabbat³¹ over a cup of wine.³² This practice is known as *Kiddush*, when one holds a cup of wine and recites a paragraph from the Bible about Shabbat, then a blessing over wine, and finally a blessing about Shabbat.³³ In a family setting, it is usually the father who says *Kiddush*, although any Jewish adult can do so. He drinks the wine and distributes



Reciting Kiddush over wine using a silver goblet

some to everyone at the table. The purpose of this practice is to reinforce in our minds the origin and lessons of Shabbat, and to do so in a state of happiness enhanced by the wine.³⁴

The prayers that sanctify the Shabbat are very different from the weekday prayers. Supplications are not made for physical matters; no prayers of repentance are recited.³⁵

The focus is on appreciating the gift of Shabbat.

Shabbat is also sanctified with increased Torah study. The weekly portion of the Torah, as well as a reading from the Prophets, are publicly read in the synagogue.³⁶ Classes are given on Torah topics, and people of all ages get together to study Torah with each other.³⁷

Creating the Palace

Jewish law recognizes that physical environment has a powerful impact on a person's psychological state. Therefore, we go to great effort to create a special atmosphere in the home on Shabbat. On Friday, we honor the upcoming Shabbat by cleaning the house,³⁸ and grooming ourselves.³⁹ We prepare special clothing⁴⁰ and set the table for a formal dinner.⁴¹ We usher in the Shabbat by lighting candles,⁴² which enhance the enjoyment of the meal,⁴³ and we do our best to create a festive atmosphere appropriate for the visit of a royal guest. Before the advent of electric lights, the candles also prevented stumbling around in the dark.⁴⁴

Even a person who is unfamiliar with Shabbat and with its philosophy cannot help but be drawn into the beautiful, dignified and enjoyable atmosphere that comes from adherence to these Jewish laws.

In 1815 an American sailor, Captain James Riley, was shipwrecked near the coast of Morocco. Members of the Jewish community there invited the captain to spend Shabbat with them. He was surprised by the sumptuousness of the Shabbat feast and presumed that he had stumbled upon a community of noblemen. He describes the Shabbat meal in detail:

... their [the Jews'] principal and standing Sunday [Sabbath] dinner, is called skanah or s'hina: it is made of [chick] peas baked in an oven for nearly twenty-four hours, with a quantity of Beeves [oxen's] marrow-bones broken to pieces over them; it is a very luscious and fattening dish, and by no means a bad one: this, with a few vegetables, and sometimes a plumpudding, a good bread, and Jews' brandy distilled from figs and aniseed, and bittered with wormwood, makes up the rest of the repast of the Jews who call themselves rich.⁴⁵

Shabbat of Peace

People greet each other on Shabbat wishing one another "*Shabbat Shalom*"⁴⁶ meaning, "a peaceful Shabbat." The Yiddish term "*Gut Shabbos*," or "Good Shabbos," is more commonly used in some communities. The

Sages state that Shabbat is a time associated with peace in the home,⁴⁷ and peace in the world.⁴⁸

How does Shabbat create peace? The Hebrew word for peace, *shalom*, is related to the word *shalem*,⁴⁹ which means whole or complete. The reason for this is that peace is a state in which things that were separated are united, and things that were at odds are now in a state of harmony. During much of the week, we live in a state of tension and lack of harmony, produced by three main areas of conflict:

- ▶ Between the human being and the rest of the natural world — because of our need to battle natural forces in order to survive, as well as our often unnecessary interference in and destruction of nature.⁵⁰
- ▶ Between one person and another in society — because of the struggle for survival, and competition in the pursuit of a livelihood.⁵¹
- ▶ Between body and soul — because the needs of the body and soul are different, and often are at odds with each other.⁵² Fulfillment of physical desires without any other considerations rarely advances one's intellectual and spiritual growth.

Observance of Shabbat enables us to transcend these areas of tension and create a harmonious and peaceful state of being. By refraining from acts of mastering and molding the world, we eliminate the tension between man and nature. We do not engage in commerce, talk about business, or even think about monetary matters on Shabbat. The Shabbat is the only day of the week that we are not in competition with anyone or anything. Finally, by combining the physical pleasures of Shabbat with its spiritual pleasures, and by engaging in pursuits of the mind and soul in a relaxed, dignified atmosphere, we create a situation where both the body and the soul rejoice together.

The Levys Chill Out

Preparations for the Shabbat begin on Thursday at the Levy home with the laundering of clothes for Shabbat.⁵³ One of the first items on the “to-do” list is determining how many people will be in the Levy house for Shabbat. The Levys have four children, about average for a religious family, but they do not know how many guests there will be. Their oldest son, Shlomo, is studying at a yeshivah in a different city, but he is able to come home for Shabbat from time to time. The other children, Tova, Eli and Esther, often invite friends for a meal or just to play afterward. It is common to have other families over for a Shabbat meal, to invite students who are in dormitories away from their homes, or guests

who are visiting from out of town.⁵⁴ As it happens, the synagogue's hospitality committee has asked the Levys to host a young man from a nearby college. Once the numbers are known, the shopping begins. Food has to be purchased for two festive meat meals and one dairy meal, as well as treats for the children.⁵⁵

Mrs. Levy generally does most of the cooking on Thursday night; however, she prepares dough for the special braided loaves of bread called challah in the afternoon, so that the younger children can participate. They enjoy punching and pounding the dough, and making their own miniloaves. The preparations themselves are a fulfillment of the Biblical commandment to remember the Shabbat.⁵⁶

On Fridays, all the Levy children have special classes at school about the weekly Torah reading, called Parshat Hashavuah. In kindergarten, Esther hears stories about the Torah portion and learns lesson relevant to her life that is derived from that week's section. She often learns a short song that is related to the parshah, which she sings at the Shabbat table. The older children study the Hebrew text with commentaries and also prepare, with the help of their teacher, short oral explanations known as divrei Torah about a subject in the parshah. They will present these during family discussion at the meals. Most schools also send home a review sheet, so that the parents can review with their children the Torah studies that they learned that week in school. Parents also study the weekly portion.⁵⁷

The Levys prepare all food for the Shabbat meals before Shabbat begins, since cooking is one of the forbidden creative labors. They place the dishes on a warming tray that will keep the evening and lunch meals hot.⁵⁸ An electric urn is filled with water for hot drinks on Shabbat, and the electric lights are set on a timer so that they will go on and off automatically at the desired times. (It should be remembered that the prohibition on using electricity on Shabbat is not meant to make life difficult or to deprive anyone of the benefits of electricity. It is perfectly acceptable, and totally within the spirit of Shabbat, to have the benefits of electricity through pre-set timers. The idea is that the specific prohibited malachah is not performed.)

Tova and Eli set the table with a special tablecloth, a tray and decorative cover for the challah, glasses for the Kiddush wine and a silver goblet for Kiddush.⁵⁹ All preparations must be finished by about 20 minutes before sunset, which is when Shabbat begins.⁶⁰ Of course, this rule makes Friday the most rushed day of the week, enhancing the contrast with the calm and slow pace of Shabbat.

Mrs. Levy lights the Shabbat candles, covers her eyes and recites a blessing: "Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, and has commanded us to kindle the light of the Sabbath."⁶¹ As is the custom of Jewish women

for generations, she takes the opportunity to use this moment of sanctity to pray for the well-being of loved ones as well as for the sick or needy. According to Jewish law, at least two candles must be lit, each corresponding to a different aspect of Shabbat as expressed in the two Torah verses “Remember the Sabbath day,” and “Guard the Sabbath day.”⁶² It is the custom in the Levy family, as in many others, to light one candle for each member of the family,⁶³ — two parents and four children, making a total of six candles.

After candle lighting, Mr. Levy and the children walk to the synagogue for Friday-night prayers, called Kabbalat Shabbat. The service lasts about 45 minutes and includes the song Lecha Dodi, a poem written in the 16th century by a Kabbalist of the holy city of Safed in the Land of Israel.⁶⁴ For the younger children, this is the highlight of the service, aside from getting candy from the synagogue “candy man.” (An unofficial feature of many synagogues is an elderly man who gives out candy to the children in exchange for a handshake and sometimes the correct answer to a question about the parshah. In the worst-case scenario, the sweet is accompanied by a pinch on the cheek from the candy man.)

After the service, they return home and welcome the Shabbat with the song Shalom Aleichem, which describes “angels of peace” coming into the house and blessing the family.⁶⁵

Next they sing Chapter 31 of Proverbs, which praises the “woman of valor.” This poem describes the virtues of the Jewish wife and mother, but at a deeper level is an allegory for the relationship between the Jewish people and the Torah.⁶⁶ The parents then bless the children in age order, after which Mr. Levy says Kiddush. He holds a full cup of wine or grape juice, recites the blessing for Shabbat and the blessing over the wine.⁶⁷

After everyone has sipped a little wine, they all wash their hands in preparation for eating the meal. The Sages instituted the practice of washing before eating bread, not solely out of concern for personal hygiene. It is also intended to cultivate an awareness of purity and sanctity in our eating habits.⁶⁸ Everyone is silent until Mr. Levy says the blessing⁶⁹ over two challahs (challot, in Hebrew), which commemorate the double portion of manna that fell in the desert on Fridays for the Children of Israel after the Exodus.⁷⁰ He distributes pieces to everyone.

Since the Levy family is of European (Ashkenazic) origin, a typical Friday-night menu includes gefilte fish,⁷¹ chicken soup, roast chicken, potato kugel,⁷² fresh salad, fruit and cake. During the meal, they sing Shabbat songs (Zemirot), talk about the Torah reading of the week, and listen to the children’s divrei Torah (insights on the weekly Torah reading taught to them in school). Their conversation

also includes topics of general interest, but business matters and plans for the workweek are avoided.⁷³ (Despite its high spiritual value, baseball is not considered a particularly appropriate topic either.)

After Bircat Hamazon (Grace After Meals) Esther and Eli go to bed, if they haven't already collapsed on chairs or the couch, as is often the case, especially on late Friday nights in the summer. Esther, in particular, loves to fall asleep on the couch as the sweet sound of the family singing Zemirot fills the room. The older children and parents read, study Torah or play quiet games, a welcome change from the incessant beeps and buzzing of electronic games heard throughout the rest of the week.

On Shabbat morning, there is no formal breakfast. Most of the older Levys have coffee or juice,⁷⁴ and the younger children have a Danish or some cereal before going to synagogue for the morning service. The prayers last about two and a half hours and include the reading aloud of the weekly portion from the Torah scroll.

Shabbat lunch, the main meal of the day, is very similar to Friday night, including Kiddush, washing the hands, blessing on the two challot, singing and discussion of the weekly Torah portion. The menu varies somewhat, but most often includes some form of cholent, a Shabbat dish found in almost every Jewish community, though known by different names — cholent, hamin, orisa, or schalet. The ingredients also vary widely: For Jews of European origin, the cholent is a stew typically made of beans, potatoes, meat, barley, onions and dumplings; in Morocco it consists of cracked wheat, beef, garlic and spices, and in Calcutta it is a chicken and rice curry. The common feature of all versions of cholent is its purpose. Cooking is prohibited on Shabbat, but the commandment to enjoy and honor Shabbat includes eating delicious foods. In order to fulfill both of these directives, Jews all over the world invented dishes that could be cooked prior to Shabbat, placed on a covered fire on Friday afternoon and simmer unattended all night until served hot at lunchtime.⁷⁵

This week, the Levys' Shabbat guest has never tasted cholent before. When he asks about its origin, Mr. Levy explains that cholent is a protest food! A Jewish sect known as the Karaites⁷⁶ flourished in the eighth century, creating a serious schism by their rejection of the Oral Tradition. Reading the Torah verses literally, they believed that it was forbidden to have a fire in the house on Shabbat. They would sit in the dark and eat only cold food. Eating cholent was one way in which the mainstream Jewish community distanced itself from the Karaites and declared its belief in the Oral Tradition as the word of God given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Pulling out a Hebrew reference

book from a nearby bookshelf, Mr. Levy quotes a great sage of the 13th century who wrote the following about cholent:

And some say that it is an enactment of the Sages to enjoy the Shabbat with hamin [hot foods], and anyone who does not eat hamin requires investigation [is suspected of being a Karaite]:...[One who] prepares and cooks, and keeps the food warm, to enjoy the Shabbat by eating hamin — he is a believer and will merit seeing the dawning of the Messianic morning.⁷⁷

Impressed, everyone takes another helping. After lunch, Mr. and Mrs. Levy and their children engage in a variety of activities: reading, studying Torah, playing games, going for walks or to the park, visiting friends or attending Torah classes. They all enjoy this opportunity to spend time together without constantly thinking about their long lists of things they “must do” on a normal weekday.

Late in the afternoon, Mr. Levy and the boys return to the synagogue for the brief Minchah service, followed by the third Shabbat meal, called Shalosh Seudot.⁷⁸ This meal, consisting of light vegetarian or dairy dishes, can be eaten at home, though the synagogue often provides it. It is accompanied by inspirational songs that are of a more meditative nature than those of the other meals.

After nightfall and the recitation of the evening prayers, Maariv, the Levys gather at home to hear Havdalah, the sanctification of Shabbat at its conclusion.⁷⁹ The word Havdalah means separation: This ceremony marks the end of the holy Shabbat and beginning of the mundane workweek. The children bring to the table a silver cup, a special candle made of several wicks twisted together and a decorative box containing fragrant spices. Mr. Levy fills the cup to overflowing, symbolizing the blessings of Shabbat overflowing into the week. He recites the Havdalah blessings, and everyone smells the spices and raises their hands to the flame to enjoy its light.⁸⁰ The children take turns from week to week holding the candle for Havdalah. (They consider it a major milestone in life when they are old enough to hold the candle.) The



A Havdalah set consisting of a cup, spice box, special multiwicked candle and candle holder.

Levys then wish each other and their guest "Shavua Tov" — "a good week."

Since one may not prepare on Shabbat for the weekday, the majority of the clean-up from the meals happens immediately after Shabbat. After cleaning up from the day's meals and activities, the family enjoys a light meal called Melaveh Malkah, which means to "accompany the queen."⁸¹ This meal is eaten as a way of "seeing out" the Shabbat Queen and easing into the weekday gradually.

Supplemental Material

The Categories of Prohibited Shabbat Work

Following is a list of the major categories of forbidden activities on the Shabbat. What is interesting is that the basic prohibition extends to include derivative actions, given below as examples. It is important to keep in mind that they all share the common quality of creative activity in which the usefulness of an object is improved (as explained above in the section "What Is Work? What Is Rest?") The list is based on the Mishnah in Tractate *Shabbat*, Chapter 7:

1. Sowing: Anything that promotes the growth of a plant — for example, irrigation, pruning, or moving a potted plant into the sunlight.
2. Plowing: Improving soil for agricultural purposes, either by making furrows, softening the soil, or putting fertilizer on the soil.
3. Harvesting: Removing a product from its place of growth — for example, plucking a flower, picking a fruit, or pulling a branch or leaf off a tree.
4. Making sheaves: Gathering agricultural produce from its place of growth into bundles or containers — for example, collecting fallen fruit around a tree into a basket.
5. Threshing: Extracting a food from its husk — for example, squeezing fruit to extract its juice, or milking an animal.
6. Winnowing: Separating "food" from "husks" using the wind —for example, letting the wind blow away chaff while leaving the kernels of grain.
7. Selecting: Removing "waste" from "food." "Waste" is defined as that which is not wanted, and "food" is defined as that which is wanted —

for example, removing rotten grapes from a bunch or taking out the peanuts that are not wanted from a mixture of nuts. Removing the grapes that are edible in order to eat them right away is, however, permitted.

8. Grinding: Making large particles into small particles by grinding or chopping — for example, finely chopping an onion or using a pepper mill.
9. Sifting: Separating fine and coarse particles using a sieve or filter.
10. Kneading: Combining separate solid particles into one mass using a liquid — for example, making dough.
11. Baking: Using heat to effect a change of state in any substance — for example, frying, boiling or grilling foods, melting wax, heating up metal to a molten state.
12. Shearing: Removing fur or hair from a live animal. This includes cutting human hair or pulling it out.
13. Washing: Laundering or any cleaning of absorbent materials.
14. Combing: Separating tangled fibers.
15. Dyeing: Permanent coloring of materials that are usually dyed.
16. Spinning: Twisting of individual fibers into one thread.
17. Setting up a loom.
18. Threading the loom.
19. Weaving — such as basket weaving.
20. Unraveling woven threads.
21. Tying: tying a permanent or craftsman's knot — for example, macramé.
22. Untying one of the aforementioned knots.
23. Sewing: any permanent bonding of two materials — including gluing or taping.
24. Tearing: tearing permanently bonded materials for a constructive purpose.
25. Hunting: capturing or trapping of any animal — for example, trapping a fly.
26. Slaughtering: killing or wounding any living creature — for example, killing a fly, stepping on ants.
27. Flaying: stripping skin off a carcass.

28. Salting: preserving or hardening a substance using chemicals — for example, pickling foods.
29. Tanning: softening and preparing leather — for example, rubbing leather conditioner into a baseball glove.
30. Scraping: smoothing out a surface by scraping.
31. Cutting: cutting materials to a specific size or shape — for example, whittling.
32. Writing: writing, drawing or marking.
33. Erasing in order to write.
34. Building: construction of dwellings or implements — for example, mounting a door on its hinges, putting together a tool.
35. Demolishing in order to build.
36. Extinguishing: putting out or otherwise diminishing a fire for a positive purpose — for example, making charcoal.
37. Burning: igniting or otherwise increasing a fire.
38. Finishing touches: finishing off or touching up an object — for example, removing stitches that seal the pockets of new clothing.
39. Carrying: carrying any item from private to public property and vice versa or carrying in the public domain.⁸²

Kiddush for Shabbat Evening

The following prayer is taken from
The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz, p. 361.
It begins with excerpts from the Bible.

(Recite silently)

And there was evening and there was morning,

(Full voice) the sixth day. Thus the heavens and earth were finished, and all their array. On the seventh day God completed His work which He had done. God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it He abstained from all His work which God created to make.

Blessed are You, Hashem,⁸³ our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

(All present respond "Amen.")

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, took pleasure in us, and with love and favor gave us His holy Sabbath as a heritage, a remembrance of creation. For that day is the prologue to the holy festivals, a memorial to the Exodus from Egypt. For us did You choose and us did You sanctify from all the

nations. And Your holy Sabbath, with love and favor did You give us as a heritage. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who sanctifies the Sabbath.

(All present respond "Amen.")

Kiddush for Shabbat Morning

The following prayer is taken from

The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz, p. 493.

It begins with excerpts from the Bible.

And the Children of Israel observed the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath for their generations an eternal Covenant. Between Me and the Children of Israel, it is a sign forever, that in six days did Hashem make the heaven and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it. Six days shall you work and accomplish all your work. But the seventh day is Sabbath to Hashem, your God; you shall not do any work — you, your son, your daughter, your slave, your maidservant, your animal and your convert within your gates — for in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth, the seas and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day.

Therefore, Hashem blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

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

(All present respond "Amen.")

For Further Reading

- ▶ “On the Concept of Sabbath Work,” Dr. Azriel Rosenfield, *Proceedings of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists*, Vol. 1 (1966)
- ▶ “On the Use of Electrical Equipment on Shabbat and Yom Tov,” Dr. Leo Levi, *Proceedings of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists*, Vol. 1 (1966)
- ▶ *Shabbat: Day of Eternity* by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan (OU/NCSY, 1983)
- ▶ *Shemirath Shabbath* (English edition) by Rabbi Yehoshua Neuwirth (Feldheim, 1989)
- ▶ *The Magic of Shabbos* by Rabbi Mordechai Rhine (Judaica Press, 1998)
- ▶ *The Sabbath* by Rabbi Isadore Grunfield (Feldheim, 1959)
- ▶ *The Radiance of Shabbos* by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen (ArtScroll/Mesorah, 1986)
- ▶ *The Sanctity of Shabbos* by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen (ArtScroll/Mesorah, 1988)
- ▶ *The Shabbos Kitchen* by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen (ArtScroll/Mesorah, 1991)
- ▶ *The Shabbos Home* by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen (ArtScroll/Mesorah, 1992)
- ▶ *Muktzeh* by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen (ArtScroll/Mesorah, 1999)

NOTES

References to books of the Talmud refer to the Babylonian Talmud unless otherwise noted.

1. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Shabbat 30:15.
2. Zohar, *Parshat Yitro* 55b; *Kitvei HaRamban*, vol. II, p. 521, “*Taryag mitzvot hayotzot me’aseret hadibrot*,” Mossad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1986.
3. *Chullin* 5a, Rashi ad loc. “*Eilah luv*.”
4. Genesis 2:1-4.
5. *Code of Jewish Law*, *Orach Chaim*, 268:7, *Mishnah Berurah* 19; *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, p. 346.
6. *Ibid.* *Code of Jewish Law*.
7. *Kuzari* 3:10.
8. Exodus 23:12; Deuteronomy 5:14.
9. Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:14; Exodus 31 and 35; Leviticus 19, 26.
10. Exodus 1:13,14.
11. *Mishnah Shabbat* 7:2. See Appendix I.
12. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch and Dayan I. Grunfield.
13. Dayan I. Grunfield, *The Shabbos*, Feldheim Publishers, NY, 1959, p. 19.
14. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb*, II Edoth, Chap. 21, para. 144.
15. Exodus 20:8-11.

16. Michael Denton, *Nature's Destiny*, The Free Press, NY, 1998, p. 242.
17. *Pesachim* 54a; *Genesis Rabbah* 11:2, 12:6; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:4; *Midrash Ruth* 8:3; *Code of Jewish Law*, Orach Chaim, 298:1, *Mishnah Berurah* 1.
18. Exodus 35:3, Sforno ad loc.; *Philo*, On the Life of Moses II, para. 219.
19. Ibid. Denton, p. 243.
20. *Genesis Rabbah* 11:2, 12:6; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:4; *Midrash Ruth* 8:3; *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, Ashkenaz, pp. 618-621.
21. Rabbi Isaiah Karelitz, *Chazon Ish*, Orach Chaim, 50:9, "od yesh."
22. Deuteronomy 5:12-15.
23. Nachmanides, Commentary on Exodus 13:16.
24. Maharal, *Gevurot Hashem*, Chaps. 41-42.
25. *Mishnah Kiddushin* 4:14; Talmud *Sanhedrin* 99b; Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, *Path of the Just*, chap. 1.
26. *Tanna Dvei Eliyahu Rabbah* 1; *Yalkut Shimoni*, Vayakhel 408; *Pesikta Rabati* 23.
27. *Yalkut Shimoni*, Psalms 488; Rabbi Yoel Schwartz, *Shabbat Hamalkah*, pp. 55-58.
28. *Beitzah* 16a, Meiri ad loc.; Rabbi Yehudah Halevy, *Kuzari* 3:2-4.
29. *Code of Jewish Law*, Orach Chaim, 242:1, 280:1, 289:1.
30. Exodus 20:8.
31. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Shabbat 29:1.
32. *Mechilta Yitro*, Parshah 7; *Pesachim* 106a.
33. See Appendix II for the complete text of *Kiddush*.
34. *Sefer Hachinuch*, Mitzvah 26.
35. *Code of Jewish Law*, Orach Chaim, 602:1.
36. Ibid. 282:1, 284:1.
37. Ibid. 290:2, Ramah.
38. Ibid. 250, *Mishnah Berurah* 3; ibid. 262:1. Because of the Shabbat laws, all preparations must be completed before Shabbat begins.
39. Ibid. *Code of Jewish Law*, 260:1.
40. *Shabbat* 113a; *Code of Jewish Law*, ibid. 262:2, *Mishnah Berurah* 5.
41. *Code of Jewish Law*, 262:1, Rama ad loc.; *Mishnah Berurah* 4.
42. *Shabbat* 25b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Shabbat 5:1.
43. Ibid. Maimonides.
44. *Shabbat* 23b.
45. *Narrative of the Loss of the American Brig Commerce wrecked on the Western coast of Africa in the month of August 1815 with ... observations historical, geographical & C.* (Published by the Author), Captain James Riley, 1817. Quoted in John Cooper, *Eat and Be Satisfied*, Jason Aronson Inc., 1993, p. 105.
46. Rabbi Chaim Ibn Attar, *Ohr Hachaim* on Leviticus 19:3, "ule-derech zeh"; *Code of Jewish Law*, Orach Chaim, 307, *Be'er Heitev* 2.
47. *Shabbat* 25b.
48. *Zohar*, Numbers 3, p. 176b.
49. *Kiddushin* 66b; *Keritut* 5b; Maharal, *Netivot Olam*, Netiv Hashalom, Chap. 1.
50. Genesis 1:28 "vekiyshuha."
51. Rashi, Genesis 3:5; *Midrash Rabbah*, Genesis 19:4; *Midrash Rabbah*, Leviticus 9:9; Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, 3:30.
52. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, *The Way of God*, 4:2.
53. *Code of Jewish Law*, Orach Chaim, 242:1, *Mishnah Berurah* 5. There is an ancient decree of Ezra the Scribe (circa 400 B.C.E.) to do laundry for Shabbat on Thursday so as to leave Friday free for other preparations.
54. Lawrence Keleman, *Permission to Receive*, Targum/Feldheim, 1996, pp. 148-157.
55. Ibid. *Code of Jewish Law*, 250:2.
56. Ibid. 250.
57. Ibid. 285:1-6.
58. Ibid. 253:1-2, *Biur Halachah*, "vena-hagu lehakel."
59. Ibid. 262:1.
60. Ibid. 261:2; *Mishnah Berurah* 22.

61. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz*, pp. 296-297.
62. *Ibid.* 263:1, Ramah.
63. *Responsa Mishneh Halachot* 7:35.
64. Rabbi Shlomoh Alkabetz, see *Siddur Otzar Hatefillot*, Iyun Tefillah on *Lecha Dodi*.
65. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz*, pp. 354-355.
66. See Eitz Yosef in *Siddur Otzar Hatefillot*. However, Rabbi Yaacov Emden, in *Siddur Beit Ya'acov*, says that it refers to the *Shechinah*, the Divine Presence; See also commentary of Gaon of Vilna on Proverbs 31.
67. Appendix II.
68. *Chullin* 106a; *Tosafot* ad loc., “*mitzvah lishmoa*.”
69. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz*, pp. 224-225.
70. *Shabbat* 117b; *Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 274:1-2; 289:1.
71. *Gefilte fish* is made of boneless minced fish, onions and spices boiled in a vegetable broth.
72. Potato *kugel* is a baked loaf of grated potatoes, onions, eggs and spices.
73. *Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 307:1.
74. *Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 89:3-4, *Mishnah Berurah* ad loc. 22.
75. For a complete history of *cholent* and other Jewish foods, see John Cooper, *Eat and Be Satisfied*, Jason Aronson Inc., 1993, p. 101.
76. A sect founded by Anan ben David, in 763 C.E. The Aramaic name *Karaim* is related to the word for verse, since they were literalists who rejected anything but what they thought was the literal meaning of the verse.
77. Rabbeinu Zerachiah Halevy, *Hamaor Hakatan*, Tractate *Shabbat*, Chap. 3, p. 16b (*Dapei HaRif*).
78. *Shabbat* 117b; *Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 291:1.
79. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of *Shabbat* 29:1.
80. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Ashkenaz*, pp. 618-620.
81. *Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 300:1.
82. According to Biblical law, one may not carry in a place defined as public property (*Shabbat* 97b). However, many authorities maintain that most neighborhoods are not classic public property, either because the streets are not wide enough, there are not enough people passing through (*Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 345:7, *Biur Halachah* ad loc.) or because the buildings and fences form barriers around the city, thus making it an enclosed, “private property” (Chazon Ish, *Orach Chaim/Moed*, 43:7).

Rabbinic law decrees that one may not carry in these areas anyway, because they are so similar to public property. However, Rabbinic law does allow one to carry in areas if a minimum fence is erected around the area, consisting of upright poles with wire or rope stretched between them — this is called a *tzurat hapetach*, or an *eruv* (*Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim*, 362). Because the legal requirements are complex, an *eruv* should be constructed only by a competent authority.

In addition, the supervising rabbi takes some food (usually a box of matzah), and makes everyone in town a partner in the food, hence uniting the community as one family in one property — this is called an *eruv chatzerot* (*ibid.* 387).

This is why you will sometimes see Orthodox Jews carrying on the Sabbath: They have an *eruv* around their community (*Responsa Chatam Sofer, Orach Chaim*, 99: Tashbetz 2:37). To avoid error, it is important for each member of the community to know the boundaries of the *eruv*; and there must be a means of informing everyone should the *eruv* be broken, thereby invalidating it until it is fixed.

83. When reciting the *Kiddush*, even in English, one should say *Ado-noi* instead of *Hashem*.