

What is Shabbat?

Shabbat is a holiday that takes place every week, 52 times a year. From sunset on Friday until darkness falls on Saturday night, we take a break from our weekly schedules and chores to remember the story of Creation. According to *Bereshit*, the first chapter of the *Torah*, God created the entire world in six days, and on the seventh day God rested. God looked upon all of the creations and saw that they were GOOD. So too, we take the time on Shabbat to reflect and express gratitude for our world, for all those we love, and for the privilege of being part of the Jewish People.



Traditions

- **Candles** – We light two candles symbolizing the two-fold commandment of remembering Shabbat and keeping it holy. It is traditional to light the wicks and quickly close our eyes before reciting the blessing. Only after we officially welcome Shabbat with the words do we open our eyes and enjoy the beautiful light.
- **Wine** – We sanctify Shabbat as we do every holiday, with wine. The word *kiddush* means “holiness”. Drinking wine, or grape juice, usually from a special silver cup, sets the day apart from the rest of the week and represents joy.
- **Challah** – This festive bread is made with eggs and usually braided. We say the blessing, *hamotzi*, over two loaves of *challah* at our Shabbat table to remember the double portion of *manna* that God gave to the Children of Israel before Shabbat when they wandered in the desert after leaving Egypt.
- **Blessing our Children** – Many families practice the custom of blessing their children on Shabbat evening with a special text from the *Torah* that the high priests used in ancient times to bless the Children of Israel.

Blessings

Over the candles

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו, וצונו להדליק נר של שבת.

Baruch ata adonai, eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe, who has made us holy with *mitzvot* and commanded us to light Shabbat candles.

Over the wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

Baruch ata adonai, eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei pree hagafen.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Over the bread

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

Baruch ata adonai, eloheinu melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

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

Over the children

For sons: May God make you like Ephraim and Menasseh.
For daughters: May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

For sons and daughters: May God bless you and protect you. May God's presence shine on you and be good to you. May God reach out to you tenderly and give you peace.

