



Shabbat Rituals for Friday Night



GATHER  DC

## What is Shabbat, Really?

Shabbat is a day of rest. But, the kind of rest Shabbat offers is not just having more time to sleep. It's about intentionally changing our mindset and pace in order to feel more rejuvenated and bring our best selves into the world.

On Shabbat, we face the fact that there is always more work to do and we will never get it all done. If we tried without a break, we'd burn out. Shabbat is the antidote we all need. It is a time to focus inward, be present, learn, eat, and be in relationship with ourselves and others. **It is a time to stop doing so we can truly be.**

So, let's set our Shabbat goals high! As you enter Shabbat this week, ask yourself, "What do I need to do to pause so I can truly replenish my body and spirit?"

**A note about the G-word:** We know that Jews hold a diverse array of opinions about God. Although "God" can mean many things, for some – metaphors of "Father", "King" or even "God" can feel alienating. So, we offer you different translations, as well as some DIY versions of blessings and reflection questions to help you make each ritual your own.





## Blessing Over Candles

We welcome Shabbat with light, a symbol of peace and greater awareness. Once you light the candles, close your eyes and take a deep breath. Be present, be calm. When you're ready, take in the light of the candles. Then recite:

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר  
קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של שבת

*Baruch a-ta A-do-nay Elo-hei-nu me-lech  
ha-o-lam a-sher ki-di-sha-nu bi-mitz-vo-  
tav vi-tzi-va-noo li-had-leek ner shel Sha-  
bat.*

Blessed are You, Source of Life, Who provides a path to holy living through the mitzvah of lighting the Shabbat candles.

*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."*  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Reflection Questions

What makes you feel most alive?  
Most replenished?

How can you bring more light into  
your life and the world this  
Shabbat?

**DIY Blessing:** This Shabbat, I'm  
ready to let go of (noun/activity)  
and to fully embrace  
(noun/activity).



Blessing Over Candles



*"Just to be is a blessing,  
just to live is holy."*

- Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel



## Blessing Over Wine/Grape Juice

### Reflection Questions

How can you cultivate joy this Shabbat?

How can you live a life of blessing?

**Note:** Jewish tradition says you can use any drink (not just wine) that is extra special for kiddush to help you mark the holy day as a time for celebration.

**Activity:** Give someone at your table a special blessing of joy and gratitude, or use the postcard at the end of this booklet to send it to someone afar.

# Kiddush

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם בורא  
פרי הגפן. ברוך אתה ה' מקדש השבת

*Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu Melech  
Ha'olam boray p'ree hagafen.*

*Baruch ata Adonai m'ka'desh  
ha'Shabbat. L'chayim!*



There was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. And the heavens and earth and all they contain were completed. On the seventh day God finished the work, stopping from all work on the seventh day. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, for on it God rested from all of the work that God had created to do. **Blessed are You, Source of Life, who creates the fruit of the vine.** Blessed are You, Source of Life, who provides us with a path to holiness through observance of mitzvot, Who lovingly and willingly made Shabbat our heritage, a reminder of the work of creation. For Shabbat is the first among the days rendered "holy," a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt. As we seek this distinct path to holiness, we embrace this sacred potential among all people, for out of love You have gifted us Your holy Shabbat. **Blessed are You, Who sanctifies Shabbat. L'Chayim!**



ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר  
קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על נטילת ידים

*Baruch ata Adonai,  
Eloheynu Melech  
Ha'olam asher kid'shanu  
b'mitz'votavitz'ivanu al  
n'ti'lat ya'dai'm.*

Blessed are You,  
Source of Life,  
Who provides a  
path to holy  
living through  
the mitzvah of  
washing our  
hands before  
our meal.

*Blessing Over Hand Washing*



## Blessing Over Hand Washing

The ritual washing involves filling up a cup with water and pouring it three times over each hand, first over the right, then left. Because the Shabbat table is a sacred space, we create an extra moment of intentionality before eating. Some remain silent until the challah is blessed.

**Activity:** Have everyone share one thing they did to prepare for this meal. Show appreciation for the fact that you made it to Shabbat.

*"I don't know who God is exactly.  
But I'll tell you this.  
I was sitting in the river named Clarion,  
on a water splashed stone  
and all afternoon I listened to the voices of the river talking.  
Whenever the water struck a stone it had something to say,  
and the water itself,  
and even the mosses trailing under the water.  
And slowly, very slowly,  
it became clear to me what they were saying.  
Said the river I am part of holiness.  
And I too, said the stone.  
And I too, whispered the moss beneath the water."*

- At the River Clarion by Mary Oliver





בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

*Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu  
Melech Ha'olam hamotzi  
lechem min ha'aretz*

Blessed are You, Source of  
Life, Who brings forth bread  
from the earth

*Blessing Over Challah*

GATHER  DC

# Blessing Over Challah

**DIY Blessing:** I'm very grateful to be eating this (adjective) bread. I hope this meal will be (adjective) and full of (noun). Bon appetit!

## Reflection Questions:

Where did this meal come from?

Who grew it? Who sold it? Who prepared it?

How can we ensure the earth can continue to provide nourishment for us all?

*"There will be days when we feel fully risen and expansive and up to facing life's most difficult challenges, and we will gaze at our lovely fat challahs with pride. There will also be days when we may feel deeply deflated and incapable, and the slightly lop-sided challahs cooling on the counter may be more reflective of that state of mind. Through all the risings and the fallings, through the knowledge that we are good enough to nurture, exactly as we are, will help us appreciate the yield of our efforts and recognize the loveliness in all its imperfection."*

– Rochie Pinson, Rising: The Book of Challah





GATHER  DC

*Brich rachamana malka d'alma marei d'hai pita.*  
We are blessed to have this feeling of fullness.  
We are grateful to the Source of Life, the earth  
and all those who till and tend it.

*Prayer for Giving Thanks*

GATHER  DC

## Reflection Questions

What does it mean to be full?

Who can you thank for this meal and experience?

**DIY Blessing:** I'm so grateful for this (adjective) meal. I am full and nourished, which makes me feel (adjective). May everyone get to feel this way each and every day.

*"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend."*

-Melody Beattie



GATHER  DC

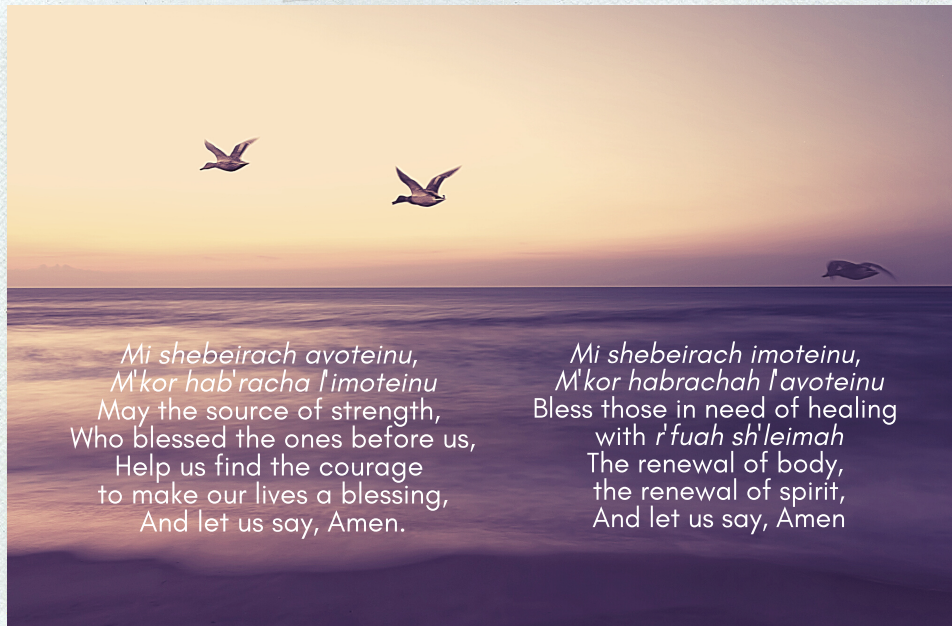
## Prayer for Physical + Spiritual Healing

The prayer for healing called the "*Mi Sheberach*" is used in Jewish communities to connect us to those in need of physical and emotional healing, even during times of joy.

You can recite or sing this version while keeping in mind or saying out loud the people you want to dedicate this blessing to.

**Activity:** Set aside a moment to talk about loved ones who can use extra support in this time. What is your hope for them?





*Mi shebeirach avoteinu,  
M'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu*  
May the source of strength,  
Who blessed the ones before us,  
Help us find the courage  
to make our lives a blessing,  
And let us say, Amen.

*Mi shebeirach imoteinu,  
M'kor habrachah l'avoteinu*  
Bless those in need of healing  
with *r'fuah sh'leimah*  
The renewal of body,  
the renewal of spirit,  
And let us say, Amen

*Prayer for Physical + Spiritual Healing*  
by Debbie Friedman



GATHER  DC

## *Shabbat Dinner Convo Prompts*

- What's the story of your name?
- What's most off or on brand about you?
- What are you or do you want to be an expert in?
- Share what you'd do as part of an ideal free day.
- Do you ever have recurring dreams?
- What's the most adventurous, craziest, or spontaneous thing you've ever done?
- What made you smile recently?
- What's one major life goal you'd like to fulfill?
- What's on your travel bucket list?
- If you could have any skill, talent, or super power, what would it be and why?
- Name something kind someone did for you or you did for yourself this week.
- If you could invite any 3 people to a Shabbat dinner, who would you invite and why?

# *Shabbat Intention*

Use this space to write down your intention for Shabbat. What words, phrases, feelings, hopes, wishes, or gratitude do you want to cultivate this Shabbat?





GATHER  DC



L'CHAYIM.

*Shabbat  
Blessings  
from Afar*

Just wanted to send you a little note of  
gratitude to add some joy to your week.



GATHER  DC

*Shabbat Shalom!*

---

---

---