

SABBATH—HOW TO KEEP IT

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

The Sabbath is a 24 hour period that is holy (sanctified) or set apart expressly for Yahveh (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). It is our time with God that should not be hindered by secular meetings, doctor's appointments, business, doing the wash, mowing the lawn, working or the doing of one's own pleasure (e.g. playing tennis, watching TV or helping a neighbor move to another apartment, etc.). It's a time for relaxation and refreshment in the natural and casting all one's worries and concerns unto the Lord Yeshua, as well as learning to rest and be refreshed in Him. That's called *trust* (having faith in Him that He will deal with all our needs). Paralleling this, we cannot *work* for our salvation, and the Sabbath is *the* physical and spiritual picture of trusting and believing in Yeshua, for we are to cease from all our work on the Sabbath day, which causes us to cease from our own strivings and anxiety because we believe that He will provide for all our needs, and hence, we don't have to be anxious for things in the natural as well as the spiritual realm (i.e. our salvation). Those Christians who observe the 7th day Sabbath are declaring that the God of Israel meets their needs and that Yeshua is the Messiah. The 7th day Sabbath is God's weekly holy day.

As Friday night dark approaches I take time to adjust to God's holy time. If I can disengage from my activities about a half hour or an hour before the Sabbath I like to read the Word or listen to praise and worship music or just sit back and look upon God's creation (the sky, the trees and the birds flying, etc.). It always helps me to enter into the Sabbath. I am not always able to disengage a half hour before it and so many times I go right up to the last minute, and that's alright, but I have found it's best to disengage. I also like to read some of the places where the Sabbath or 7th day (Gen. 2:1-3, etc.) are mentioned because this helps me to focus on what the Sabbath means to God and consequently, to me.¹

One may light two oil lamps or two candles before dark,² which is the traditional number of candles due to the double portion of Manna (Ex. 16), and say the traditional Jewish blessing, but instead of saying that God *commanded* us to light the candles, which is not in Torah,³ you can say that God commanded us to *keep the Sabbath holy*, which is biblical (Ex. 20:8-11; 31:12-17, etc.).⁴ I go outside (as weather permits) and I blow the shofar, letting everyone in the neighborhood know that the 7th day Sabbath of the God of Israel is coming (and that Messiah Yeshua has come and will come again). Sabbath is definitely a theme of His return.

¹ Some cites to read about Shabat (Hebrew for Sabbath) are: Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 16:11-29; 20:8-11; 24:16; 31:12-17; 34:21; 35:1-3; Lev. 23:3; Num. 15:32-36; Dt. 5:12-15; Joshua 6:15-16; Isaiah 56:1-8; 58:13-14; Jer. 17:19-27; Neh. 13:15-22; Mt. 12:1-12; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 4:16-30; 13:10-17; John 9:1-41; Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 15:21; 16:13; 18:4; Hebrews 4:9.

² The Sabbath doesn't biblically begin until darkness on Friday night (not sunset), but one has to light any fires that he is going to light before dark because it's forbidden to light a fire on the Sabbath (Ex. 35:1-3). See [When Does The Sabbath Begin?](#)

³ Torah is Hebrew for Mosaic Law.

⁴ The traditional blessing is: Blessed are You, Lord our God, who makes us holy by His Word and has commanded us to light the Sabbath lights. I have changed it to,

Blessed are You, Papa God, who makes us holy by Your Word, Yeshua!, and has commanded us to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Then we sing ‘Shabat Shalom’⁵ and a few other songs, welcoming in the Sabbath and praising Yeshua. We read from His Word and interact, letting His Spirit lead us. Sometimes we’ll eat something, but not a large formal meal like the Orthodox because we don’t like to eat a lot in the evening. We also like listening to and singing along on praise and worship CDs, etc.

On Shabat I like to spend time in prayer, much of it ‘waiting upon/being with Yeshua,’ for a word or an impression or whatever the Spirit desires to give to me or to do with me (as well as praying for others and praying in the Holy Spirit). It’s a time of strengthening. I start off by speaking in tongues for awhile, then praying for whomever I am led to pray for (sometimes using a prayer list) and when I am through, I wait upon Him, looking for Him to reorient me, impress me and/or speak to me, etc.

At 3 PM we’ll have our Sabbath worship service. We begin with a prayer to the Lord and then praise and worship Him in song. Then I’ll bring a message from the Word and after that, we’ll pray for anyone who desires prayer for healing, etc. Then we’ll end with a modified version of the Aaronic prayer (Num. 6:24-26, by substituting the name Yeshua for Yahveh). After that I open it up for questions and comments and we’ll fellowship and discuss the Word.

On Shabat I’ll also go outside just to sit and relax, or take a short walk. Of course, fellowship with like-minded believers is wonderful, but sometimes that’s not possible and what I’ve seen is that the Lord is able to do other things with the individual and/or his family for that season. If you’re in the ‘alone’ category learn to trust the Lord in that situation. You’re right where He wants you. He’s working on you in a way that He couldn’t do if you were part of a congregation.

We don’t drive on the Sabbath, not because we don’t own a car, but because it’s very stressful to drive, which is not part of God’s plan for us on Shabat. Also, if there is an accident or a flat tire, etc., one has to work, which is a sin on Sabbath. There is much peace in not driving. Another reason why we don’t drive on Shabat is because it creates fire in the engine and the kindling of fire is forbidden on Shabat.⁶ It’s also not very considerate or loving if people are driving on Shabat and honking their horns with their tires screeching from ‘near accidents’ and the pollution from the cars going into the air that we breathe. The sounds of the engines and tires take away from the physical peace of the Sabbath and only add more stress to it and us. Scripture speaks of the *land* having its Sabbath rest even in times of plowing and harvest (Ex. 34:21). This rest for the land can hardly be accomplished when people are driving about.

Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy

1. Ask Yeshua every Friday night to lead you into the holiness of His Shabat and to help you to keep it holy. Each Shabat is unique.
2. Read the Scriptures.⁷ Center your thoughts and conversations around the Word of God, Yeshua and ministry to others.
3. Rest and be at Peace. Papa God and Yeshua are Faithful. They will provide for your needs. Disengage from the stress of life and enter into His Rest. Seek the Lord’s friendship. Seek Yeshua.
4. Praise and worship the Lord in song.

⁵ Shabat is Hebrew for Sabbath.

⁶ See [Sabbath Driving](#).

⁷ For a divine Scripture reading plan see the [Scripture Reading Schedule](#).

5. Private prayer time: learn to pray for an hour or more and to just be 'in His Presence.' Seek to increase that prayer time to two and three hours. You won't regret it.
6. Things to be aware of:
 1. No cooking, baking or preparing food (Ex. 16:23) on Friday night or Saturday until after dark. Have all your food preparation done before Friday night because preparing food is a sin (Ex. 16:22-26). You can warm up food on an electric (not gas/fire) stove, but you shouldn't be making spaghetti dinners or turkeys in the oven on Shabat, etc. These things should be done before and then warmed up on Shabat, if possible. Learn to prepare for the Sabbath. Many Jewish people begin their food preparation on Thursday.
 2. No eating out in restaurants on Friday night or Saturday until after dark. It's a sin to make another work for us on Shabat (Ex. 20:8-11) and there's also the buying and selling aspect of it, which is prohibited (Neh. 13:15-22). In a land like Israel that was commanded to keep the Shabat holy, one would not be able to go to a restaurant to eat because no one would be working that day, which also speaks for buying and selling. Who would sell to you on the Sabbath? And who could you buy from on the Sabbath if they were keeping the day holy? This is the Sabbath from God's perspective, not the secular community nor most 'Sabbath keeping' Christian churches and people.
 3. No lighting of fires after the Sabbath begins on Friday night until Saturday at dark (Ex. 35:1-3). The lighting of fires on Shabat is prohibited. You can use electricity on Shabat, unlike the Orthodox Jews who see the 'spark' in the electrical outlet (when a light is turned on) as fire. God doesn't consider the turning on or off of our electrical lights in the same category as 'lighting a fire' on Shabat because no fire is actually started.
 4. No driving of cars on Friday night until Saturday after dark. I realize that in many communities one may not be able to go to their congregation if they don't drive, but we shouldn't sin in order to worship God. Use the time for home study and home worship and look to the Lord to bring neighbors into your home who can walk to it, or to bring you into their home on Shabat. Begin a home fellowship in your neighborhood.
 5. Assemble with other like-minded believers (Lev. 23:3) if you can. I know that many people beginning in Torah feel like they are stranded with no fellowship. The Lord wants to train us to worship and praise Him and to learn from His Spirit even when we're not able to assemble with others. After all, Yeshua is the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:11); He'll take care of you and teach you.
 6. Train and discipline children to not engage in 'play' or sports on Shabat. Go for strolls to the park or in the neighborhood or sit in the backyard, etc. Spend time together reading the Word and praising the Lord, being a family and resting. It's a day to regain one's physical strength from working all week, not to get more frayed out. It's also a day to re-ignited in the Lord, and to fellowship, and to be with family (if they believe like you do) and to minister to others.
 7. If we can praise the Lord and read His Word by ourselves we can surely do it with others, but if we can 'only do it with others,' we may not be strong enough to do it by ourselves. If you are alone in your walk, Yeshua will use this time alone to strengthen you so that you can find out just what you are made of. We all desire fellowship, but there are important 'Wilderness experiences,' too, that we can only learn in the Wilderness.
 8. No watching of television or listening to the secular radio or reading of a newspaper. Music should uplift the Name of Yeshua.⁸
 9. No reading of secular books on Shabat.

10. No buying or selling on Shabat.
11. No carrying of heavy burdens on Friday night or Saturday until after dark (Jer. 17:27; Neh. 1:15). This also means that we're not to help others move on this day to another home or apartment on Shabat, and of course, we shouldn't move on Shabat.
12. No sexual intimacy. We are not to do our own pleasures on the Sabbath: "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of Yahveh honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Yahveh and I will cause you to ride on the high mountains of the Land (of Israel) and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your Father. The mouth of Yahveh has spoken!" (Isaiah 58:13-14)

The Sabbath

1. The Sabbath is a full day that God has blessed (Gen. 2:1-3).
2. The Sabbath is a full day that God has made holy (Gen. 2:1-3).
3. The Sabbath is a full day that God commands us to be like Him and to enter into His rest, both physical and spiritual (Ex. 20:8-11) and to be refreshed and re-ignited in Yeshua.
4. The Sabbath is a full day that God has given to us to cease from our secular work and other secular things, and our worries and anxiety's.
5. The Sabbath is a full day that God has given to us to exalt our Messiah:
 1. To sing praises to Messiah Yeshua.
 2. To worship Messiah Yeshua.
 3. To seek Him and to find out more of Who Yeshua really is.
 4. To rededicate and consecrate our lives to Yeshua.
 5. The Sabbath was made for us:
 - a. "And Yeshua said to them, *"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."*" (Mark 2:27-28)
 6. The Sabbath is a perfect reflection of Messiah Yeshua as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.⁹
 7. The Sabbath is a full day that God has given to us for ministry to others.¹⁰

⁸ Television is not of the Lord and one should prayerfully consider ridding one's home of such an unwanted intruder who comes in with violence and sexually illicit misconduct, along with other ways of the world, in both advertisements and regular programs.

⁹ See the article, [A Picture of the Messiah of Israel](#).

¹⁰ Revised on Jan 5, 2020.