The Complete Guide to Sharing Shabbat

Shabbat Day

SHABBAT UK 01-02 MARCH 2019
The Complete Guide to Sharing Shabbat

All content has been adapted from the ‘ShabbatUK Home Companion 2015’ which was adapted from “Tribe Bench and Sing 2014” including the English translation by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (taken from the Authorised Daily Prayer Book) and the commentary by Living and Learning at the United Synagogue and Rabbi Daniel Rowe. The Companion was produced and published by JAM Events.

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Special thanks to: The International Shabbos Project

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This song tells of Shabbat's unique atmosphere, unlike the other days of the week. It is believed to have been written by a man named Yisrael as the first letter of each stanza (apart from the last) spells out this name.

Yom Zeh M’chubad
mikol yamim, ki vo shavat Tzur olamim.

Sheishet yamim ta’a’se m’lachtecha, v’yom ha’shvi’i Leilohecha, Shabbat lo ta’a’seh vo m’lacha, ki chol asah sheshet yamim.

Yom Zeh M’chubad mikol yamim,
ki vo shavat Tzur olamim.

Rishon hu l’mikraei kodesh, yom Shabbaton yom Shabbat kodesh, al kein kol ish b’yeino y’kadesh al sh’tei lechem yivtz’u t’mimim.

Yom Zeh M’chubad mikol yamim,
ki vo shavat Tzur olamim.

Echol mashmanim sh’t’eih mamtakim ki Eil yitein l’chol bo d’veikim, beged lilbosh, lechem chukim basar v’dagim v’chol mat-anim.

Yom Zeh M’chubad mikol yamim,
ki vo shavat Tzur olamim.

Lo techsar kol bo v’achalta v’savata, uveirachta et Adonai Elohecha asher ahavta ki veirach’cha mikol ha-amim.

Yom Zeh M’chubad mikol yamim,
ki vo shavat Tzur olamim.
This day is honoured above all others, 
For on it He who formed worlds found rest.

For six days, do your work But the seventh day is God’s: On the Sabbath you shall do no work, For in six days He made all. This day is honoured above all others, For on it He who formed worlds found rest.

Foremost among sacred days Is this day of rest, this holy Sabbath. So let each say Kiddush over wine, And break bread over two complete loaves. This day is honoured above all others, For on it He who formed worlds found rest.

Eat choice food, drink sweet wine, For God will give to those who cleave to Him Clothes to wear, due portions of bread, Meat and fish, and all tasty foods. This day is honoured above all others, For on it He who formed worlds found rest.

On it you shall lack nothing – so eat, Be satisfied and bless The Lord, whom you love, For He has blessed you from all peoples. This day is honoured above all others, For on it He who formed worlds found rest.

The heavens declare His glory And the earth is full of His lovingkindness. See all these things His hand has made For He is the Rock, His work is perfect. This day is honoured above all others, For on it He who formed worlds found rest.
This song, usually sung on Shabbat mornings and sometimes also at Seudah Shlishit (the ‘Third Meal’ on Shabbat), is attributed to Rabbi Dunash ibn Labrat who lived in Bavel (Babylon, modern day Iraq), in the tenth century. It fits with lots of tunes so is good fun to sing.

**D’ror Yikra**

I’vein im bat, v’yintzorchem k’mo vavat, 
n’im shimchem v’lo yushbat, sh’yu v’nuchu b’yom Shabbat.

D’rosh navi v’ulami, v’ot yesha aseih imi, n’ta serek b’toch karmi, she’eih shavat b’nei ami.

D’roch purah b’toch botzrah, v’gam Bavel asher gav’rah, n’totz tzarah b’af v’evrah, sh’ma koli b’yom ekra.

Elohim tein banidbar har, hadas shitah b’rosh tidhar, v’lamazhir v’lanizhar, sh’lomim ten k’mei nahar.

Hadoch kamai, Eil kanah, b’mog leivav um’am ginah, v’narchiv peh unmal’enah, l’shoneinu l’cha rinah.

D’eih chochmah l’nafshecha, v’hi cheter l’roshecha, n’tzor mitzvat k’doshecha, sh’mor Shabbat kodshecha.

He will proclaim freedom for all his children  
And will keep you as the apple of his eye  
Pleasant is Your name and will not be destroyed  
Repose and rest on the Sabbath day  
Seek my sanctuary and my home  
Give me a sign of deliverance  
Plant a vine in my vineyard  
Look to my people, hear their laments  
Tread the wine-press in Basra  
And in Babylon that place of might  
Crush my enemies in anger and fury  
On the day when I cry, hear my voice  

Plant, Oh God, in the mountain waste  
Fir and acacia, myrtle and elm  
Give to those who teach and to those who obey  
Abundant peace, like the flow of a river  
Repel my enemies, oh zealous God  
Fill their hearts with fear and despair  
Then we shall open our mouths  
And fill our tongues with praise to You  
Know wisdom, that your soul may live  
And it shall be a diadem for your brow  
Keep the commandment of your Holy One  
Observe the Sabbath, your sacred day.
Because I guard the Sabbath, God guards me.
It is a sign for eternity between Him and me.

It is forbidden to seek to do regular things,
Discussing only of what is necessary,
not words of business, not even words of politics.
I study the Torah, and G-d makes me wise.

On [Shabbat], I always find myself and my soul,
Behold, for the first generation he gave it’s holiness
From the miraculous giving of bread, the double loaves, on Friday
Thus on every Friday he doubles my portion.

It is written in God’s Torah, a portion to his priests
For the table, the show bread is on it for him,
Therefore, to make a fast on [Shabbat] is forbidden
in accordance with his sages.
Only on the day of atonement do I fast.

He who labors on [Shabbat], destroy him to his end.
Therefore I wash my heart like the covenant,
And I pray to God, Night and Morning,
The Additional and also the Afternoon prayer, he answers me.

The lyrics of Ki Eshmera Shabbat - ‘As I keep Shabbat’ - were written by poet and author Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) from Toledo, Spain. The song speaks of the importance of keeping Shabbat as it is an alliance between God and those who observe the religious rulings - ‘when I keep the Sabbath, God keeps me’.

Ki Eshmera Shabbat,
El Yishmereini, ot he l’olmei ad beino uveini.

Asur m’tzo cheifehtz, ‘ahsot drakhim,
gam mildabeir bo, divrei tz’rachim,
divrei s’chorah af divrei m’lakhim,
Ehgeh b’torat E-l utchakmeini.

Bo ehmtzah tamid, nefesh l’nafshi,
Hinei l’dor rishon, natan qdoshi,
mofeit b’teit lechem, mishneh bashishi,
Kakhah bakhol shishi yakhpih mzoni.

Hu yom m’khubad hu, yom ta’anugim,
lechem v’yayin tov, basar v’dagim,
hamitab’lim bo, achor nsogim,
ki yom simachat, hu utsamcheini.

Municode b’chodesho shemayim,
lechem vini tov beshir retzeh,
hesemteyim bo, ha semcha mishayim,
ki yom shemachat, aha retshimim.

Musaf v’gam min’cha, hu ya’aneini.

Ki Eshmera Shabbat,
El Yishmereini, ot he l’olmei ad beino uveini.

Asur m’tzo cheifehtz, ‘ahsot drakhim,
gam mildabeir bo, divrei tz’rachim,
divrei s’chorah af divrei m’lakhim,
Ehgeh b’torat E-l utchakmeini.
Acheinu

This paragraph is usually read on Mondays and Thursdays when the Torah Scroll (Sefer Torah) is bound at the end of the Torah reading during the Shacharit (morning) service. It’s a plea to God to alleviate the suffering of Jews all over the world and to bring redemption to His people. It is also sung on other occasions as a prayer in its own right.

As for our brothers of the whole house of Israel who are in distress or captivity, on sea or land, may the All-present have compassion on them and lead them from distress to relief, from darkness to light, and from oppression to freedom, now, swiftly and soon – and let us say, Amen.

Nachamu

The prophet Isaiah foresaw the Jewish exile but prophesied that it will end with redemption. In the darkest moments of Jewish history, these words served as an inspiration and a song of hope.

“Console, console My people,” says your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her.
The first line of the Shema is the most important religious declaration a Jew makes. It testifies to our belief in God’s existence and oneness. We say it every day at Shacharit & Maariv (morning and evening prayers) and when we go to sleep. It’s written on the parchment inside every mezuzah and pair of tefillin.

**Shema**

Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.

Listen, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

This song speaks of the strength of the Jewish people when united as one and of how wonderful it is to be a ‘nation of friends’.

**Hinei mah-tov**

umah-na-im, shevet achim gam yachad.

How good and pleasant it is when colleagues dwell together in unity!

This moving song was compiled by Rabbi Eliezer Azkiri in the 16th century. It tells of the desire to worship God with all one’s heart by building a sanctuary for God to dwell within us.

**Bilvavi**

mishkan evneh l’hadar Kvodo, Ulmishkan mizbei’ach asim
l’kamei hodo. Ulner tamid ekach li et aish ha-akeidah,
Ul’korban akriv lo et nafshi, Et nafshi ha-y’chidah.

In my heart a sanctuary I shall build, To the splendor of His honour, And in the sanctuary an altar I shall place, To the rays of His glory. And for an Eternal Flame I shall take for myself. The fire of the Akeidah And for an offering I shall dedicate to Him My soul, my one and only soul.
A prayer for Jewish continuity, taken from the traditional 'mother's prayer' after lighting candles

Ve’zakeini

Ve’zakeini

A song of faith taken from the hagadah of Pesach. God will ensure the Jewish people survive attempts to destroy us.

Vehi She’amda,

Vehi She’amda,

And this (Hashem’s blessings and the Torah) is what kept our fathers and what keeps us surviving. For, not only one arose and tried to destroy us, rather in every generation they try to destroy us, and Hashem saves us from their hands.
This statement of belief in the coming of Mashiach, the Messiah, is the twelfth of Rambam’s Thirteen Principles of Faith. Rambam (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides) was a great Spanish-born Rabbi and legal codifier who lived in the twelfth century and wrote many important works about Jewish law, philosophy and belief. The song ‘Yigdal’ which is said at the start of the Shacharit service and sung at the end of the service on Friday nights, is a summary of these thirteen principles.

**Ani Ma’amín**

באמונה שלמה, בביאת המשיח, ואף על פי שיתמה, עמי כל יום שוייתו, אני מאמין באמונה שלמה, בביאת המשיח, ואף על פי שיתמה, עמי כל יום שוייתו.

I believe with total faith In the coming of the Mashiach. And even though he may delay, I will wait for him every day.

These are the first two lines of a song that some people recite before L’cha Dodi during Kabbalat Shabbat (the ‘Welcoming of Shabbat’ service) on Friday nights. We think it was written by Rabbi Nechunya ben haKanah, one of the great Rabbis of the first and second centuries C.E. As we sing to usher in Shabbat, we ask God to help us absorb the holiness of the day.

**Ana b’choach**

ברמל ימיין תמרות: כל רוח עמק
שברון טהרנו נורה.

Please, by the power of Your great right hand, set the captive nation free. Accept Your people’s prayer. Strengthen us, purify us, You who are revered.
‘Hamalach Hagoel’ was Yaacov’s (Jacob’s) prayer for his children and grandchildren (in Bereishit / Genesis chapter 48) asking God to protect them. Today we still sing this beautiful verse to newborn babies, to the children when they are called to the bimah for the Torah reading on Simchat Torah and every night before going to sleep.

Taken from the psalm for Shabbat (Psalm 92), this verse tells us how much God loves our prayers and praise. It alludes to our thanks every morning that we live to see another day and our gratitude in the evenings for God’s faith in us. He helps us every day of our lives.

It is good to thank the Lord and sing psalms to Your name, Most High – to tell of Your lovingkindness in the morning and Your faithfulness at night.
Taken from the daily Amidah, the prayer for Jerusalem speaks of our yearning for its full rebuilding, our return there and the manifestation of God’s presence within.

**V’liYerushalayim**

_to Jerusalem, Your city, may You return in compassion, and may You dwell in it as You promised. May You rebuild it rapidly in our days as an everlasting structure._

**Im-eshkacheich**

_to Jerusalem, if I forget you, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth. If I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy._

These verses come from Psalm 137, lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem. They are recited at the end of a Jewish wedding because even at happy times, we must never forget that without a fully rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, Jewish life cannot be entirely joyful.
Read when the Torah Scroll (Sefer Torah) is returned to the Holy Ark in Shul, this beautiful song from the book of Proverbs describes how Torah is the ‘Tree of Life’ and brings us joy. It ends with the longing for return to the days of the Temple when we were closer to God.

Eitz Chayyim Hi

It is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and those who uphold it are happy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. Turn us back, O Lord, to You, and we will return. Renew our days as of old.

Kol Ha-Olam Kulo

This famous teaching was said by the great 18th Century Chasidic sage, Rabbi Nachman of Breslov. The haunting power of this song teaches us that, although the world represents challenges, we must try not to fear them, but to proceed with God’s help.

The whole world is a very narrow bridge, but the important thing is not to fear at all.
This beautiful song describes God in terms of His awesome cosmic power and His incredible ability to care for us. We think it was written in the eleventh century by Rabbi Solomon ibn Gabirol, who was a Spanish Jewish poet. This poem has become a declaration of faith and is sung in Shul/Synagogue at the end of services on Shabbat and Yom Tov mornings. It is also said at the start of Sacharit (morning prayers) and, in some communities, at the end of Friday night prayers.

**Adon olam**

Lord of the universe, who reigned
When by His will all things were made
And when all things shall cease to be
He was, He is,
He is One, there is none else,
Without beginning, without end,
He is my God; my Redeemer lives.
My banner and my safe retreat,
Into His hand, my soul I place,
God is with me, I shall not fear;

before the birth of any thing
then was His name proclaimed King.
He alone will reign in awe.
and He shall be glorious for evermore.
alone, unique, beyond compare;
His might and His rule are everywhere.
He is the Rock on whom I rely –
my cup, my portion when I cry.
when I awake and when I sleep.
body and soul from harm will He keep.
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