



The **US**



UK SHALOM!

13-14 May 2022 12-13 Iyar 5782



Shabbat UK Shalom from the United Synagogue!

In his farewell address, Ronald Reagan, 40th President of the United States, famously said, "All great change in America begins at the dinner table". A Jew may rephrase this slightly to read, "Great things begin at the **Shabbat** dinner table".

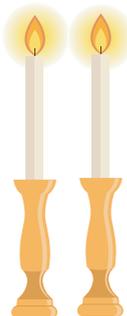
Ever since our Holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, we have no longer had the opportunity to bring offerings to God. Instead, we must bring Him into our very homes – Shabbat being an ideal time to do so.



The 25 Hours of Shabbat

Walk through Shabbat from start to finish in 15 steps

1 Lighting two Shabbat candles before Shabbat starts, to bring peace and light into the home. In olden times, candles were more expensive and many families saved their candles for Shabbat evening, enhancing their Shabbat and bringing peace and light into the home.



2 Songs of welcome, such as *Shalom Aleichem* and *Eishet Chayil*. These extol the virtues of hospitality, Shabbat and Jewish women.

3 Blessing of children, handing onto them the blessings and practices of Judaism.

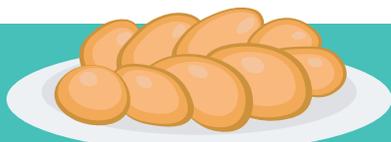
DISCUSSION QUESTION:
What do you enjoy most about Shabbat?

4 *Kiddush* and drinking wine.

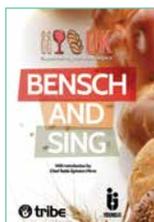


5 *Netilat Yadayim*, washing hands ritually and hygienically before bread to remind us of the Temple rituals.

6 Blessing over two loaves referred to as *lechem mishneh* (today we typically use "challah" loaves, plural "chalot") to recall the double portion of manna that the Children of Israel received on Fridays in the desert.



7 We sing *Zemirot*, table songs. As well as the uplifting tunes which enhance our experience, the words of the *Zemirot* describe themes and laws of Shabbat. Many are found in Tribe's *Bensch & Sing*, available from publications@theus.org.uk



8 We share *Divrei Torah* (thoughts on a Torah topic), often but not exclusively about the weekly Sidra. These elevate our Shabbat experience and reinforces our commitment to Jewish education.



9 When practicable, we invite guests to enhance our mutual enjoyment of Shabbat in good company since a Jewish home is a hospitable one.

10 *Birkat Hamazon*, Grace after meals, is recited after we eat bread. On Shabbat, it has special significance. *Birkat Hamazon* ensures we give thanks to God for His abundant creations, particularly for the gift of food.

11 On Shabbat we eat (at least!) **three meals** with *lechem mishneh* – Friday night, Shabbat lunch and *Seudah Shelishit*, the third Shabbat meal which takes place on Shabbat afternoon.

12 Friday night Kiddush is when we introduce themes of Shabbat and creation in particular. The theme of Shabbat lunch focuses on the covenantal relationship between God and the Jewish people. The third meal, often starting close to sunset is more contemplative as Shabbat draws to a close, focusing on the redemptive aspect of Shabbat which looks forward in time to a Messianic future of a peaceful world.

13 *Havdala*, at the end of Shabbat, is the other part of the command to “remember” Shabbat, which mandates us to mention Shabbat at its start and end each week. Wine or grape juice set the occasion (for *Havdala*, you can use a popular national drink, such as beer). A candle is lit to show, through the kindling of fire, the contrast between the Shabbat prohibition of *melacha* and the return to weekday life. The *besamim*, spices, give us a scent of Shabbat to take into the week, as we emerge spiritually refreshed to start a new week.

14 Before lighting the candle, we make a verbal declaration that Shabbat has finished. This can either be through saying the *Ma'ariv* (evening prayers) or a simple declaration, '*Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh lechal*', blessed is God who distinguishes between sacred and profane.

15 Reflecting on Shabbat rituals at home, Rabbi Lord Sacks zt”l writes in his introduction to the *Koren Birkan*, a book of prayers and songs for the Shabbat table, that, “These are simple prayers and poems, yet the truth to which they testify is large. God lives in simple things: light, wine...love...gratitude. God fills the space we create for Him, and the way to do so is by opening our hearts and minds.”



Appreciating the blessings around us

God gave human beings the ability to be like Him – able to build and create. Just as He created the world, we can make all sorts of incredible things. However, if you remember from the very first section of the Torah, *Bereshit*, God ‘worked’ for six days and on the seventh, He ‘rested’.

By rest, we do not mean to say that God became tired and needed a break. Rather, He was teaching us that instead of pushing on, constantly trying to do more, create more, we need to stop and look at everything that has already been accomplished and remind ourselves that God is in charge.

The commonly used word for work in Hebrew is ‘*avoda*’. However, there is another term – ‘*melacha*’ (plural: *melachot*) which is used specifically in regard to activities you cannot do on Shabbat and Yom Tov. The other instance it is used is in description of the activities involved in building the *Mishkan* (God’s mobile Sanctuary in the desert after the Exodus).

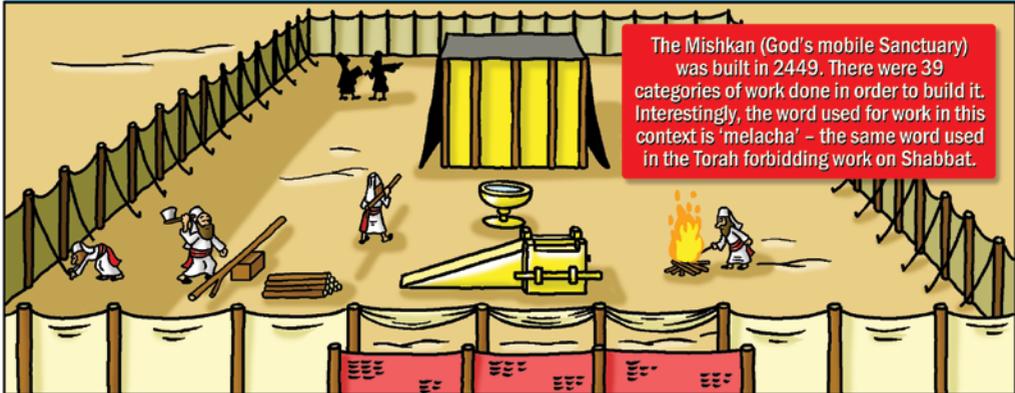
There are 39 categories of actions (*Avot Melacha*) that are forbidden on Shabbat, performed in order to complete the building of the *Mishkan*. Besides being physical acts, these activities required **creativity**.

During the week, we too carry out our various tasks such as typing, building, manufacturing – in order to ‘keep the world going’, as it were. When Shabbat comes in, we are supposed to stop developing the world and let it be as it is. Effectively, we spend the whole week preparing for Shabbat – all the cooking is done, the cleaning, even the lights are switched on! So at candlelighting, there is nothing else that needs to be done. Sounds like bliss!

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Why is there such an emphasis on physical pleasures such as wine, challah and three meals on Shabbat? Isn’t it supposed to be a spiritual day?

Join Tribe’s Dina and Dan for a journey through the 39 *melachot* of Shabbat!



The Mishkan (God's mobile Sanctuary) was built in 2449. There were 39 categories of work done in order to build it. Interestingly, the word used for work in this context is 'melacha' - the same word used in the Torah forbidding work on Shabbat.



Borer - בורר - Sorting



Tochain - טוחן - Grinding



Miraked - מרקד - Sifting

Lush - לש - Kneading



Ofeh - אופה - Baking

Koshair - קושר - Tying a knot



Matir - מתיר - Untying a knot

Melabain - מלבן - Whitening



Menafetz - מנפץ - Combing

Ko'reah - קורע - Tearing



Tofair - תופר - Sewing

Tzovayah - צובע - Dyeing



Mesarteit - משרטט - Tracing lines

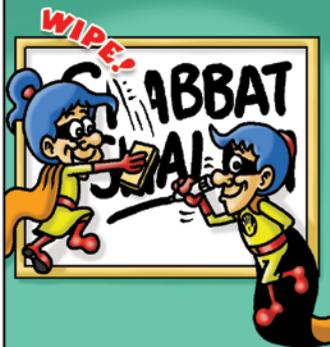


Mechateich - מוחתך - Cutting

Memacheik - ממוחק - Smoothing



Kotaiv - כותב - Writing



Mochaik - מוחק - Erasing

Boneh - בונה - Building



Soter - סותר - Demolishing

Mavir - מבעיר - Kindling a fire



Mechabeh - מכבה - Putting out a fire

SO THAT'S JUST SOME OF THE 39 MELACHOT OF SHABBAT DAN!

THANKS FOR TEACHING ME.



NOW I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO ON SHABBAT.

WE LIGHT CANDLES BEFORE SHABBAT STARTS AND MAKE KIDDUSH BEFORE DINNER.



WE MAKE A BLESSING OVER THE TWO CHALLOT, TO REMIND US OF THE MANNA BNEI YISRAEL ATE IN THE DESERT.

WE LIKE GOING TO SHUL FOR THE SPECIAL SHABBAT PRAYERS, TO HEAR THE WEEKLY TORAH READING AND FOR A YUMMY KIDDUSH!



WE LOVE HAVING GUESTS ON SHABBAT, SINGING SONGS TOGETHER AND PLAYING GAMES.



AND EVERY WEEK WE CLOSE SHABBAT WITH HAVDALLAH.

AND THEN IT'S TIME TO START A NEW WEEK AND LOOK FORWARD TO NEXT SHABBAT!



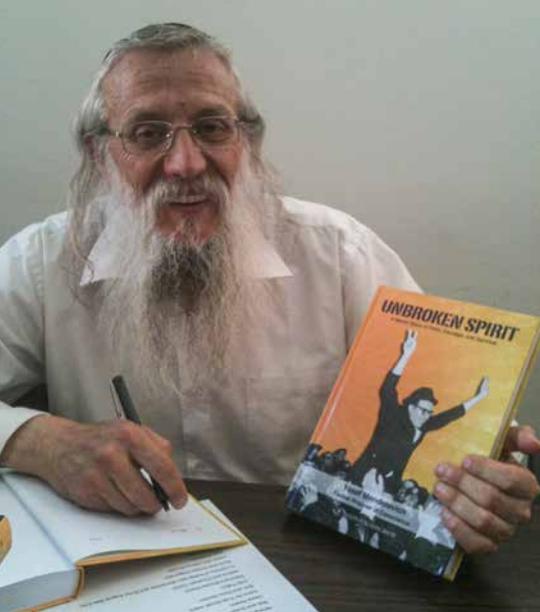
THAT'S RIGHT!

The 39 Melachot of Shabbat

- Zoreah - זורע - Sowing
Choresch - חורש - Plowing
Kotzair - קוצר - Reaping
Me'amere - מעמר - Gathering
Dush - דש - Threshing
Zoreh - זורה - Winnowing
Borer - בורר - Sorting/Selecting/Separating
Tochain - טוחן - Grinding
Miraked - מרקד - Sifting
Lush - לש - Kneading
Ofeh/ (Bishul) - אופה - Baking/Cooking
Gozez - גוזז - Shearing
Melabain - מלבן - Whitening/Bleaching
Menafetz - מנפץ - Disentangling/Combing
Tzovayah - צובע - Dyeing
Toveh - טוה - Spinning on a spinning wheel
Maisach - מסך - Stretching threads onto a loom
Oseh beit batai neirin - עושה בית בתי נירין - Preparing to weave on a loom
Oraig - אורג - Weaving on a loom
Potzai'ah - פוצע - Separating/removing threads
Koshair - קושר - Tying knots
Matir - מתיר - untying a knot
Tofair - תופר - Sewing
Ko'reah - קורע - Tearing
Tzud - צד - Trapping
Shochet - שוחט - Slaughtering
Mafshit - מפשיט - Skinning
Me'abaid - מעבד - Salting/Tanning
Mesarteit - משרטט - Tracing lines
Memacheik - ממחק - Smoothing/Scraping
Mechateich - מחתך - Cutting
Kotaiv - כתב - Writing
Mochaik - מוחק - Erasing two or more letters
Boneh - בונה - Building
Soter - סותר - Demolishing
Mechabeh - מכבה - Extinguishing
Mavir - מבעיר - Kindling
Makeh b'patish - מכה בפטיש - Striking the final blow (finishing an object)
Hotza'ah - מוציא מרשות לרשות - Transferring from domain to domain outside an eruv

HERE IS THE FULL LIST OF 39
MELACHOT. CAN YOU THINK OF ANY
OTHER EXAMPLES OF THESE THAT WE
HAVEN'T GIVEN?

SHABBAT SHALOM!



The power of Shabbat

The grim reality of life in the Soviet Union included the persecution and imprisonment of Jews for practising their religion or wanting to move to Israel. Known as 'refuseniks', these Jews were led by a small cadre of brave leaders in the Soviet Union and supported by many idealistic Jews and non-Jews in the West who campaigned on their behalf.

In 1970, a group of young refuseniks hatched a plan to divert an internal Soviet flight to Finland in a desperate attempt to get to Israel. Betrayed by an informer, they were foiled at the last moment and sentenced to long prison sentences in inhuman conditions. One of these Jews was Yosef Mendelevich, today Rabbi Yosef Mendelevich, who finally arrived in Israel in 1981.

Rabbi Mendelevich describes his first Friday afternoon in prison, as Shabbat drew close:

"I asked the guards to bring me a mop and bucket of water so I could clean up the mess in my cell, in honour of the holy Sabbath day. While

I was scrubbing the walls, I felt something sharp. There was a nail in the wall. Yanking it out, I used it to scratch out the outlines of two Sabbath candles on the stark cement. Remembering the blessing from a postcard which an underground friend had received from Israel, I closed my eyes in concentration and recited the blessing out loud. When I opened my eyes, I saw two flames flickering from the wicks I had drawn! How happy I was! Swirling around, I began to dance and sing, 'David, Melech Yisrael, chai, chai, vekayam! Am Yisrael chai! Am Yisrael chai!' In my ecstasy, it felt as if King David was dancing with me in the cell. As darkness enveloped the prison outside the tiny cell window by the ceiling, the Sabbath lights glowing from my drawing on the wall ignited a great flame in my heart. 'Am Yisrael Chai!'"

Rabbi Mendelevich also tells of an exchange between himself and Natan Sharansky, another famous refusenik who arrived in Israel in 1986, whilst both were incarcerated. He kept on asking the nurse for strong medication, and Sharansky was worried for his friend's health. He kept asking the nurse for medication, and Sharansky was worried for his friend's health. The truth – Rabbi Mendelevich was taking a sip of the medication, which contained alcohol, for kiddush!

Throughout his entire time in the Gulag, Rabbi Mendelevich kept Shabbat, not just by refraining from *melacha* (work) but, quite remarkably, also by finding the contentment and positivity that Shabbat brings. Rabbi Lord Sacks zt"l calls Shabbat, "the greatest tutorial in liberty ever devised". Even in solitary confinement, where there was no 'work', or *melacha* to be done in order to break Shabbat, nor the proper materials with which to complete Shabbat rituals such as candle lighting and kiddush, Rabbi Mendelevich managed to find a way to tap into the holiness of the day. Relinquishing control of the world surrounding; a moment of serenity in the darkest of chaos.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

If you found yourself in solitary confinement, what would you do to remember and honour Shabbat?