



THE TABLE

A SABBATH GUIDE FOR INVITING JESUS INTO YOUR HOME

March 2020 edition

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV)

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THE SABBATH



WHAT IS SABBATH?

The Sabbath (Hebrew: shabbat) has been honored by both Jews and Gentiles for centuries as a sacred day of rest. The Sabbath is first mentioned in the creation story, in Genesis 2:1-3. On the seventh day, God ceased from all of His work of creating, and rested. God himself modeled Sabbath observance for us, and then affirmed it again by making it part of the Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The concept of seventh-day rest is prominent throughout the entire Bible. In fact, it is one of the central themes that shapes the whole story of the scriptures

Jesus himself observed Sabbath; he even referred to himself as the “Lord of the Sabbath” (Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5). The way Jesus observed the sabbath serves as a model for us. Jesus sometimes did things on the Sabbath that the religious elite of his day judged as inappropriate. He healed on the Sabbath, and he even picked and ate crops. This made the religious rulers angry with Jesus and his disciples, but it teaches us an important principle about sabbath observance: precise, legalistic observance is not the purpose of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is not meant to be a burden, but a gift!

In other words, we have liberty to be creative in order to celebrate and genuinely enjoy our time in Sabbath. We not only should feel liberty in how we observe Sabbath but should also extend that same liberty to others and not judge how they choose to observe Sabbath (Col. 2:16).

The Sabbath is not a yoke of bondage to regulate our behavior. On the other hand, it's not simply a day to “not do anything.” It is a free gift offered to us to spend a day simply enjoying the life God has given us with the people we love, and to do it all under his sovereign approval! The point is not to get a particular form right but to recognize that Jesus is ultimately our Sabbath rest and that, through Sabbath, we are able to delight in him and look forward to our future eternal Sabbath rest upon his return (Heb. 4:1-13).

You can find more resources on the Sabbath including videos, blogs, podcasts, and more from our friends at The Bible Project (www.bibleproject.com/explore/what-is-the-sabbath).

WHAT IS THE SABBATH DINNER?

A family or group of friends gathering in their homes to encounter Jesus around a sacred meal during a special, set-apart time was one of the foundational expressions of faith amongst members in the earliest forms of the Christian church. Today, it is still a life-changing practice that provides believers with a means of stepping into their God-given positions as the priests of their homes. In every respect, gathering together at the table with a small group of family and friends is as significant and powerful as any large gathering at a church building. When we gather in faith and love around the table on the Sabbath, it is much more than a simple meal – it is a supernatural demonstration (Ps. 133; Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:42-47).

Revelation 3:20 reminds us that Jesus stands at the door and knocks, he tells us that if we invite him in, he will eat with us. When we partake in communion during Sabbath, we are demonstrating the supernatural act of inviting the presence of Jesus into our homes and we recognize that he is literally present with us in the meal. Sabbath communion is also a prophetic anticipation of the return of King Jesus when he will establish his eternal kingdom and we will partake with him in the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19).

Throughout the centuries, in times of persecution and pestilence or when Christians were unable to gather in large congregations, the practice of breaking bread and engaging Scripture in homes is what has allowed God's people to endure any hardship. Sabbath typically begins with a communion dinner at sundown Friday evening and concludes sundown Saturday evening every week. The Sabbath meal normally involves bringing your family and/or friends to the table for a common meal that follows sharing in communion. However, if you are single or simply traveling and not around your family, you are welcomed to partake of the meal alone in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Some families who participate in Sabbath invite their friends over to welcome others into their practice of Sabbath celebration. Others even invite their friends and family who don't know Jesus or have questions about Christianity to participate as they encounter the presence of God in the loving environment of people who care about them. After the communion portion of the meal, participants will simply eat together as they've welcomed the presence of Christ into their home.

SABBATH DINNER ELEMENTS

(All items can be found at major supermarkets)

> Candle

In a shabbat meal, the candle represents Jesus as the light of the world. When you light the candle, you are recognizing that He is the light of the world and inviting His presence into your home. In a traditional Jewish shabbat meal, two candles are used. However, you can also just use one or you can even use a candelabra of three candles to symbolize the Holy Trinity.

> Grape juice

The juice represents the blood of Jesus.

> Bread or crackers

Jewish shabbat dinners use either challah (a braided egg bread) or matzah (a large, unleavened cracker), though any bread will do. The bread or cracker in this meal represents the body of Jesus.

> Cup for communion

Depending on the situation, a single cup or many cups can be used.

SABBATH MEAL

1. Prayer of Welcome & Lighting of Candles

2. Reading of the Scripture

3. Communion

4. Prayer of Blessing & Affirmation

5. Dinner



1. PRAYER OF WELCOME & LIGHTING OF CANDLES

The leader(s) or other chosen person lights the candles as a demonstration to welcome the presence of Jesus into the home. The table prays the Lord's Prayer together.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:9-13)

Declaration from leader(s):

Almighty God, we welcome your presence into our home and we thank you for this day of rest. We thank you that you have set apart this day to meet with us. By your Word, you have sanctified and commanded us to be a light to our world. And above all we thank you for Jesus, our Messiah, the light of the world.

Response from table:

"Jesus, we thank you." Or "Amen"

2. READING THE SCRIPTURES

Each person around the table is encouraged to read one of the following scriptures:

GENESIS 2:3

So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

DEUTERONOMY 5:15

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

MARK 2:27

And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.

HEBREWS 4:3, 9-10

For we who have believed enter that rest. . .

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So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

ISAIAH 66:22-23

For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord.

3. COMMUNION

Jesus' Body (the bread): the leader(s) lifts the bread and prays:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth. We thank you, Lord Jesus, for your body that was given for us and given unto us so that we can be whole.

After this declaration, the bread may be served and everyone may eat the bread.

Jesus' Blood (the juice): the leader(s) lifts the cup and prays:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe, who brings forth the fruit from the vine. We thank you, Lord Jesus, for your blood of the covenant which was poured out for the removal of all sin.

Response from table:

“Jesus, we thank you.” Or “Amen”

After this declaration, everyone may drink the cup.

4. PRAYER OF BLESSING & AFFIRMATION

Prayer of Blessing from the Leader (Leader(s) lays hands upon and prays a blessing over the group.)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

Return of Blessing from the Table (Those who were blessed place their hands on the leader(s) and pray aloud)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

5. DINNER

After the blessings have been prayed, you may proceed to dinner. You may also wish to close in a personal prayer of thanks or pray a closing prayer such as:

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and forever will be. Amen.

THE TABLE



**Sabbath begins at sundown on Friday and ends at sundown on
Saturday**

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