

## TAKING ON A NEW SOUL

### A Recipe For Young Lovers

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No idea or institution which Judaism has given the world is greater than the institution of the Sabbath. When the Bible records that God "rested" on the Sabbath, the Hebrew word which is used is also translatable "and He took on a new soul". The commandment to rest on the Sabbath was a revolutionary idea in a time when men, women, and children worked seven days a week from dawn to dusk. A day of rest for them meant a time when they could be human beings instead of beasts of burden. The commandment, incidentally, refers also to the animals which are used for work. They, too, must have a day of rest. The Sabbath, then, is a time for all creation "to take on a new soul". It is a call against excessive materialism. It is an attack on the preoccupation with the amassing of wealth as against a concern for the greater spiritual potential that resides in living creatures.

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*"May his memory be for a Blessing"*

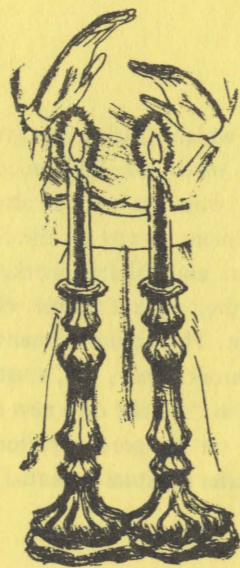
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## THE INNER AND OUTER SOUL

There are two ways to "take on a new soul", one can try to transform one's inner self, or one can try to transform one's family and society. Many movements today are preoccupied with the former. They call the individual to bring all his efforts to bear on rebuilding himself from within towards some preconceived image or ideal. Judaism has long borne witness to this kind of inner development with its teaching that "eternal life is implanted within you".

Judaism differs from the modern movements in that it doesn't stop with that teaching. It insists that the deeper measure of our inner transformation is in the deeds we perform outwardly, for our family members and for society. This is the *prophetic emphasis* of Judaism. It is concerned not only for the soul of the individual but also for the soul of society.



These twin themes are the themes of the Sabbath. They are developed through prayer and study, through personal introspection and group searching. No movement or group has a "how to" technique as fully developed as that of Judaism. The text is the Bible, and a portion of it is assigned for reading and study each week. The work goes on in the home and in the synagogue. The recommended text is "The Torah", ed. G. Plaut, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, N.Y., 1981 or "Pentateuch and Haftorahs", ed. S. H. Hertz, Soncine Press, London.

Your congregation can give you some specific guides as to how to follow these readings. They are designed to be the basis of discussion and meditation.

## SETTING THE SABBATH MOOD

The Sabbath begins with the lighting of the candles. The tradition fixes the time precisely at sun-set. This is indeed the ideal time, but other considerations may warrant a slight delay in the time of lighting. The most important thing is that the family be together at the time of the lighting. The husband must make certain to be home extra early on Friday evening. The wife must understandably wait for his arrival (or come home early herself if she works). The moment of lighting the candles is a magical moment, and the magic is worked by binding together the hearts of the members of the family in love.

For the husband and wife, this should be a moment of touching, or embracing, or kissing, a moment for the silent renewal of marriage vows. If you have argued, let the problems melt in the flame of the candles. Your love is greater than your problems. In this fashion, did our fathers use this ritual, for the husband would come home from the synagogue and sing a love song to his wife, "Ashes Chayil," from the Book of Proverbs. It would be nice for the husband to sing such a love song, but even if he doesn't, let him communicate his affection to his wife in his own way, however quietly, at the moment of candle lighting, and let her respond in her way.

When you have children, bring them into this moment of renewal. In the tradition (as in *Fiddler on the Roof*), the father drew the children near to him, held his hand on the head of each child, and blessed him. It would be nice if either (or both parents) could say the traditional blessing over the children, but it is more important that you understand this as an opportunity to let your children know that you love them. Let anger and disappointment melt away in the flame of the candles. Bring them near to you, hug them, kiss them. In this way will this moment, and incidentally this ritual, become dear to them. In the tradition, the Jewish family was united over the Sabbath candles. The regular observance of this ritual will enrich your marriage and bring joy to your life.



## IF YOU ARE AWAY FROM HOME

Home implies a revered place and the presence of loved ones. If you and your family are away from your house on Friday evening, but still together, the ritual of lighting the candles should go on as usual. The Sabbath mood is transportable, if you truly know how to take it with you. Don't let your absence from your house keep you from the warmth of this experience. Bring your candles and your love with you.

*Suppose you are alone on the Sabbath?* Suppose you are unable to join your loved ones in your house on this wonderful moment? Then make a covenant with your loved ones at the agreed upon time, sunset. Light your candles wherever you are while your loved ones kindle their candles at home. Think about them in prayerful, devoted thought even while they think about you in a similar mood. Let the Sabbath moment bring you together across the miles. If there cannot be physical togetherness, let there be, at least, spiritual togetherness at this time.

*Suppose you are not married and don't have children?* With whom do you light your candles? With whom do you create the Sabbath love moment? With your dearest friends, of course. With those with whom you share the faith and ideals that God placed before Israel. If you can't be with these friends either, at the very least, join the Jewish community at its Sabbath Service in the synagogue where this same mood will be celebrated in public.

*If you are truly alone, and unable to share this experience (it is by its nature a sharing experience),* then kindle the lights by yourself. Know that in tens of thousands of homes around the world you are being joined in this reaching for the ideal world of love—at that very moment. The candle lighting binds you to your family and to the Jewish community—your greater family.

Those who do not subscribe to the covenant of Israel may, of course, be present at this ceremony dedicating the Sabbath, but this is not primarily a moment for reaching out to the universal (we have other moments for that). This is a moment for reaching in to what you are at your roots. You are Abraham and Moses, Miriam and Deborah, Jeremiah and Einstein, yes, and the six million who died at Hitler's hands and the courageous Jews of modern Israel. You are unique, and this is a moment for affirming that Jewish uniqueness. Judaism provides many moments for the universalistic affirmation. The climax of every prayer service in the synagogue, the "Ahlaynu" or "Adoration" is a call to our messianic tasks and to human brotherhood. The candle ceremony, however, has other primary goals of a personal nature. Before you can love the world, you must be capable of loving those nearest to you. This is a moment for drawing near to them.

## INTRODUCTORY SABBATH RITUAL

We have spoken primarily of the candle-lighting. Actually, the candle-lighting is but one part of the traditional way in which the Sabbath is introduced. There is also a blessing over the wine and over the bread. Below are some suggested ways of performing the ceremony. We have included only the abbreviated version of the Kiddush (or wine prayer). You will find the full version on p. 93 of the Union Prayerbook or on p. 777 of "Gates of Prayer"; published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Remember, a ritual means no more or less than what you make it to mean. It is your "K'vanah", your intention, your creativity, that can make it truly profound and beautiful!

### 1. LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES (By the Mother)

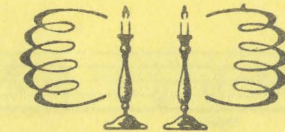
Candles are lit (usually two or more)

Mother says:

"Blessed art Thou, our God,  
Who has created the human family through love,  
and Who continues to care for us."

Bah-ruch Ah-tah Ah-do-nai Elo-hay-nu Meh-lech  
Ha-oh-lam Ah-sheh Kid'sha-nu B'mitz-vo-tav  
V'tzi'vah-nu L'had-lik Nare Shel Shah-bat.

These candles are the symbols of God's love for us,  
and the sign of the love the members of our  
family have for each other.



בְּרֹךְ אֱתָהּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ  
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת:

### 2. KIDDUSH (By the father)

Wine glasses are filled (Grape juice may be used for children)

Father holds up glass and says:

"Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who has created all things,  
including this wine. We are reminded, through this symbol,  
of all things that grow from the earth. We are reminded  
that creation never ends. We think of you, Oh Lord, and  
the possibilities for change and growth which are always  
with us, because You are always with us. This wine is a  
symbol of the miracles of nature and the miracles of  
human effort, such as the Exodus from Egypt.

Bah-ruch Ah-tah Ah-do-nai Elo-hay-nu Meh-lech  
Ha-oh-lam Boh-ray P'ri Ha-gah-fen.

Drink the wine.



בְּרֹךְ אֱתָהּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן:



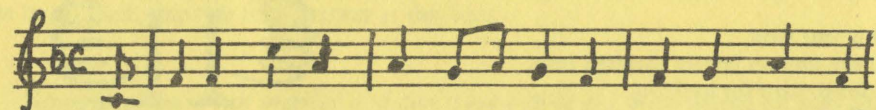
### 3. BLESSING OVER BREAD (All together)

"We give thanks to Him Who created the seed from which this bread is made. Let us be planters of seeds in the soil and in the human heart. As we eat, let us think of those who are less fortunate than ourselves, and let us determine to help them.

Bah-ruch Ah-tah Ah-do-nai Elo-hay-nu Me-lech  
Ha-oh-lam Ha-motzi Leh-chem Min Ha-ah-retz.



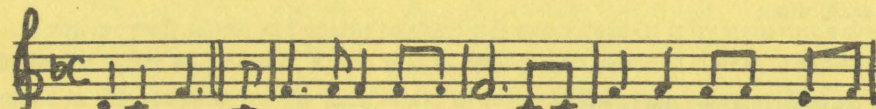
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם.  
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:



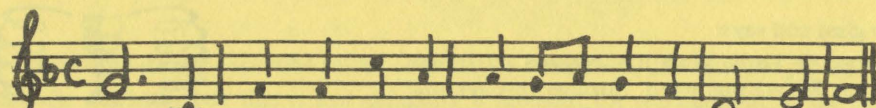
HA - MO-TZI LE-CHEM MIN HA - A-RETZ WE GIVE THANKS TO



GOD FOR BREAD OUR VOICES JOIN IN SONG TO-GETHER AS OUR PRAYERS



HUM-BLY SAID BA-RUCH A-TAH A-DO-NAI E-LO-HE-NU ME-LECH HA-O



LAM HA - MO-TZI LE-CHEM MIN HA - A-RETZ A — MEYH.

### BLESSING YOUR CHILD

In the tradition, the father placed his hand on the head of his daughter and said:

*May you be as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah.*

He might then add today any personal thoughts he wishes.

In the tradition, the father placed his hand on the head of his son and said:

*May you be like Ephrayim and Manasseh (the sons of Joseph).\**

He then adds his personal thoughts.

The traditional blessing is usually added at the end:

May God bless you and keep you  
May God turn his face to you and be gracious to you  
May God cause his light to shine upon you  
And grant you inner peace and well-being.

\*Music for the above is found in the "Fiddler on the Roof" sound track or sheet music. But you may want to substitute your own words for the above. *Each person has his own style.* The important thing is to embrace your child and let him know that you love him/her. Mother, as well as father, can participate in this part of the Sabbath moment.

### SABBATH SONGS

The Sabbath meal is a festive occasion. Each family might prepare its own song-sheet to sing the Jewish songs they like. For example, Hine Ma Tov, below, (How Good It Is For Brothers To Dwell Happily Together), or Shabbat Shalom, or Shalom Aleychem, or Ba-shanah Ha-bah or Jerusalem of Gold. These songs are available in good songbooks like, "The Jewish Center Songster", National Jewish Welfare Board, 145 East 32nd St., New York, N.Y.

### FINAL BLESSING AFTER MEAL

Bah-ruch Ah-tah Ah-do-nai  
Ha-zahn Et Ha-kol

Thanks be to you Oh Lord, who feeds all living things.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי. הוֹן אֲתֵּיכֶל:

יי עוֹ לַעֲמוֹ יִתֵּן. יי יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:



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