



At Living Hope you are encouraged to welcome the sabbath through a Sabbath liturgy.

By participating in Sabbath liturgy we are doing a few things:

1. We are blessing each other in our households. Throughout the last year, church has become something we engage with through a screen. This gives an opportunity to engage with church with our whole selves and gives the opportunity and permission to speak blessing over each other.
2. The Sabbath Meal is meant to welcome the Sabbath on Saturday evening. This gives an opportunity to enter into rest earlier than we normally do! We get to wake up Sunday morning having already entered into rest. It also is a new practice that shakes up our routines and helps us to refocus on what sabbath really means.
3. This practice gives us a small window into sabbath traditions that have been practices for thousands of years. The prayer that opens this sabbath meal is recited in Hebrew in many Jewish homes to this day. When I (Pastor Steve) spent time in Israel we would welcome the sabbath with the same prayers and it has been suggested that Jesus would have prayed the same prayer to introduce the Sabbath (and before meals like the Last Supper). We cannot say with complete certainty that Jesus prayed these exact words, but we can say that this prayer, like praying the Psalms, gives a window into praying some of the things that Jesus would have prayed.



FUN FACT 1

The opening of the prayer is: *"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe."* In Hebrew it sounds like this: *"Baruch atah Adonai, eloheynu, melech ha'olam."*



FUN FACT 2

Sabbath is welcomed traditionally when sun goes down. Since there was less variation in the timing for sundown in Israel than in Canada this practice worked year-round. Feel free to practice welcoming in the Sabbath at the hour you normally have your dinner.



FUN FACT 3

Normally the sabbath meal is welcomed as a family or a larger group. We have adapted the regular forms for use in smaller households as well as larger. There are typically specific prayers and roles for the mother and father. This has been replaced with roles for the various leaders in this document.

WHAT WOULD A TRADITIONAL SABBATH MEAL LOOK LIKE?

Just before the sun goes down the household gathers. The mother begins the evening with prayer: as the sun slips away she recites a special blessing and lights the Sabbath candles. Then each child receives a blessing, traditionally from the father. Next, the husband honors his wife by reading from Proverbs 31. After this, the family sings a blessing. Then the father prays the Kiddush over

the wine, and passes the cup for all to sip. The oldest child brings a bowl of water and towel to each family member for washing hands. Lastly, the father prays the Hamotzi, (the blessing of the bread) and each family member takes a piece of the loaf and eats it. Then it is time to enjoy the meal! After eating, the father says another prayer.

We will follow a similar structure.



HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?

The liturgy should take less than 10 minutes. After that, enjoy a entering into Sabbath with a meal!

SYMBOLS AND MEANINGS

WHAT WILL I NEED FOR MY SABBATH MEAL?

1. pair of white candlesticks
2. cup of wine or juice
3. bowl of water and hand towel
4. two loaves of bread
5. napkin
6. Bible
7. meal (if possible, best tableware and centerpiece of fresh flowers)

WHAT DO THE DIFFERENT CANDLES AND OTHER SYMBOLS REPRESENT?

Candles: One represents creation and the other redemption. They may also be symbolic of “remember” and “observe” Some say the candles glow for the harmony of the home. Others believe they encourage Sabbath joy. The candles are to burn throughout the evening until they go out by themselves.

Wine: The wine symbolizes life! The wine symbolizes joy! The cup is full! It is held at the base by the fingers, causing them to point upward. They represent the children of God, reaching up and longing for Him. This prayer is an inauguration, a special ceremony of introduction, a time when Sabbath and family meet.

Washing: This blessing shows gratitude to God for his sanctification of us. This prayer is a dedication of our hands and, through them, of ourselves to God.

Bread: Sabbath bread is called challah, a term meaning “portion” used in the Old Testament for new dough, which was a requirement to be presented as a “gift to the Lord” in Numbers 15. Traditionally, the mother prays for each member of the family as she kneads the mixture. Two loaves are symbolic of the double portion of manna God provided on Fridays for the children of Israel during the years they wandered in the wilderness. The challah waits for its blessing under a special covering: a cloth symbolic of the dew that preserved the manna in the desert.

SABBATH MEAL: A FAMILY LITURGY TO WELCOME THE SABBATH

“Remember to keep holy the sabbath day. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God.” Exodus 20:8-10

STEPS

1. Set up | put fresh flowers, nice tablecloth, good dinnerware on family table.

2. Three Prayers

i) the preparation prayer (Leader 1 prays just before lighting the candles):

Leader 1: Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who art the Author of peace. You who made the Sabbath, enter our home this night. Almighty God, grant us and all our loved ones rest on this Sabbath day. May the light of the candles drive out from among us the spirit of anger and the spirit of fear. Send your blessings that we may walk in the ways of your world and your light. Enter our years this night. Heavenly Father, we rejoice in your creation! It is from you that we receive every good and perfect gift. Giver of life and love, grant us your peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ii) the Creation prayer (Leader 1 prays while lighting the 1st candle):

This candle represents creation. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth light out of darkness.

iii) the Redemption Prayer (Leader 1 prays while lighting 2nd candle):

This candle represents redemption. Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world.’ Our Lord also said, ‘You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.’ As we light these candles and set them to give light to all who are in this room, light our lives with the great love of your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

3. The Blessing of one another | You are encouraged to bless the person next to you with the blessing appropriate for them below.

*For families there is the option of the parent going to each child around the table and speaking the appropriate blessing.

In Blessing the Males:

May you be like Ephraim and Manasseh

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord cause the light of his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you.

May the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.

In Blessing the Females:

May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord cause the light of his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you.

May the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.

*For households with a wife present there is the option of the honouring of the wife at this time as well.

The Honoring of the Wife (the father holds hands with his wife and quotes from Proverbs 31, or another suitable passage in praise of her):

“An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and bless her; her husband also, and he praises her saying ‘Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all.’ A woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.”

4. Family Sings Grace (this is to the tune of the doxology)

Be present at our table, Lord.

Be here and everywhere adored.

Abide with us, and grant that we

May feast in Paradise with thee. Amen.

5. The Prayer of Celebration (a leader prays before the handwashing)

Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has instructed us through your commandments, sanctified us through the waters of baptism, and purified us through the shedding of Jesus’ blood on the cross.

After the prayer one of the household members (traditionally the oldest child) brings a basin of water and a towel to each family member, who then rinse and dry hands.

6. The Prayer of Thanksgiving (a leader prays over the sabbath bread)

Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

After the prayer each family member takes a piece of the loaf and eats it. After the last person has had a bite of the bread, begin to dig in on the rest of the fixings!

7. Enjoy the meal!

8. The Grace after the meal (a leader prays)

Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who provides the fruit of the earth for our use. Teach us to remember that it is not by bread alone that we live. Grant us evermore to feed on Him who is the true bread from heaven, even Jesus Christ our Lord. O God, our heavenly Father, look with favour upon the homes of your people. Defend them against evil and supply all their needs according to the riches of your wonderful grace. Make them sanctuaries of peace, love and joy. Help us to follow you every step of our daily lives. May we always abide under the safe shadows of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A. OPTIONAL PRACTICE FOR SABBATH DAY

Optional: What is needed for Sabbath Saturday (Havdalah):

1. pair of white candles twisted together
2. small jar or box containing fragrant spices (cloves, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cardamom, etc)
3. small glass placed in a little bowl
4. wine

As the sun begins to go down on Sabbath afternoon, the family gathers around the table again. The meal is a simple one, something that can be prepared and served easily. After that, watch for the first three stars in the evening sky, which means Sabbath is coming to a close. In the twilight, the mother leads a prayer that is a farewell to the day.

This ceremony of Havdalah, which means separation, concludes the Sabbath and introduces the new week. The candles are twisted together for the service, linking symbolically the candles of creation and redemption from the Friday night Sabbath table. They are lighted and held by one of the children. Another child holds the spice box, called the *bessamen*. A small glass is placed in a little bowl. Wine is poured into the glass until it overflows as a visual sign of the fullness and completion of the week. As the wine spills, Sabbath departs. The father leads the family in a benediction filled with thanksgiving to God. The twisted candle is then extinguished by dipping its flames in the spilled wine. The spice box is passed from person to person, signifying the fragrance of life which has just been experienced in the Sabbath.

As the Sabbath departs, its sweet scent lingers. The fragrance of His death and resurrection will carry us through the pressures of life until “I will come again, and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:3).

This weekly observance represents the cycle of all history, and Christ stands at the center.

B. SOME GREAT SABBATH QUOTES

The Sabbath, Heschel

According to some the word “Sabbath” is a name of the Holy One. The primary awareness, then, is one of our being within the Sabbath rather than of the Sabbath being within us. We may not know whether our understanding is correct, or whether our sentiments are noble, but the air of the Sabbath surrounds us like spring which spreads over the land without our aid or notice. It is a day on which hours do not oust one another; a discipline that is a reminder of adjacency to eternity. (p15-21)

Labor is a blessing endowed with divine dignity. Toil is the misery of man. Out of the days through which we fight and from whose ugliness we ache, we look to the Sabbath as our homeland, as our source and destination. We reclaim our authentic state, and partake of a blessedness in which we are what we are. We stand still and embrace the presence of an eternal moment. And we may then feel startled at the vanity of being so distressed. (p28-30)

In its beginning and end, the Decalogue deals with the liberty of man. The first Word, “I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out...” reminds him that his outer liberty was given to him by God. Of all the Ten Commandments, only one is proclaimed twice: the last one. “Thou shalt not covet ... thou shalt not covet.” This speaks of inner liberty of man. We know that our covetous passions cannot be vanquished by decree. The tenth commandment would, therefore, be practically futile — were it not for the one regarding the Sabbath, which is an epitome of all other commandments. Do not covet anything belonging to Thy neighbor; I have given thee something that belongs to Me. What is that something? A day. (p89-90)

DWIGHT PRYOR

“Cease work” and “enter rest” are not the same thing.

We stop because it is time to stop. Not because we are finished with our work. If we wait until we are finished we will never stop. The pressures of this world are berserk. Our lives are absurd. Sabbath exposes and dissolves our artificial urgencies and we surrender the labor of our hands. Our work is never done. Sabbath liberates us from the need to be finished.

Absurd: from 16th century root meaning “out of tune” or “deaf”

The noise of our lives makes us deaf to the voice of God. We are unable to hear the affirming voice of our loving Father: “Well done, my good and faithful one.” We search everywhere, frantically needing affirmation. God speaks affirmingly over us but we are deaf to his voice; our lives are absurd.

Obey: from Middle English root meaning “hear” or “to listen”

We stop, and we stop now. God says it is time to stop, and we listen. We surrender to his will, and we enter into His rest. The Sabbath is a pilgrimage from absurdity to obedience. From deafness to hearing.

MARTH ZIMMERMAN

Come in peace, crown of God,
Come with joy and cheerfulness,
Amidst Thy faithful, precious people ...
Come, Beloved, meet the Bride.

Spread Thou over us Thy shelter of peace,
Direct us aright with Thine good counsel ...
Save us for Thy name’s sake.

From Celebrating Biblical Feasts

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT SHABBAT AND MORE PRACTICES?

Check out the very well laid out: Onetable Shabbat Dinner guide:

<https://onetable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ULTIMATE-SHABBAT-GUIDE.pdf>