



## Details of Sabbath observant

### Taste of the "World to Come"

The Midrash says: When the Jewish people were gathered at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, God told them that Heaven would be their reward for keeping the commandments. The Jews asked God, "How do we know that Heaven is so great? How about a free sample to see if it's worthwhile?" (Apparently, Jews have always been astute businessmen.)

God wasn't upset. He knew that Heaven is where we experience the pure and unadulterated pleasure of the infinite God. So He said, "No problem. I'll send you a sample. Sabbath."

Thus the Sages say: Sabbath is "a taste of Heaven on Earth." If Heaven is pure spirituality, then Sabbath is a taste of that experience.

"God created the world in six days and on Sabbath He rested" What a bad translation! On Sabbath, God gave the world a soul. On Sabbath God created the world of souls, of depth, of tasting that which is most real. Sabbath is the Name of God

Sabbath Shalom: There are some moments when I have to feel perfect, complete. Six days a week I work like a dog and can't have that feeling. On Sabbath I receive a divinely inspired feeling of serenity, peacefulness, completeness -- Sabbath Shalom -- because of its holiness one feels perfection. This day will give you the strength to 'fix' yourself during the week. You will know what to 'fix' because you will have just experienced a period of time when you had a complete soul.

Sabbath is back in Paradise. Paradise is a place where everything is good, everything is beautiful. Paradise is a place where suddenly it's clear to me that I can fix all my mistakes. And even more so, everything I thought was a mistake, every street I thought was the wrong street was really the only way to get there.

Sabbath has two faces. There is keeping the Sabbath holy, the thirty-nine laws of Sabbath, the withdrawing from the world, a non-power kind of like. But then there is the bliss of Sabbath, the inside of Sabbath, which is a gift from Heaven. The bliss of Sabbath is even deeper than Paradise. It's a secret between God and me, between me and the people I love so much. Sabbath is peace because peace is secrets, secrets of the depths, of the deepest depths. Secrets are the deepest God revelation. A true Sabbath person is someone who walks the streets of the world and every human being he sees, he shares a secret with. But with those he loves it's the secret of all secrets.

On Sabbath we say, "*Sabbath hi milzok, refuah krovah livoh.*" Sabbath is the deepest healing in the world. Our holy rabbis teach us that a doctor can only heal a foot or hand; they cannot replace it with a new one. But Sabbath, on a spiritual level, gives us back our hands and feet. Not only this, Sabbath gives us new minds, new eyes and new ears, How awesome! Sabbath is the strongest vitamin because its nutrients are those which can heal the soul. On Sabbath, new energy is coming down from Heaven. But the energy and its spiritual nutrients refuses to be received in dirty vessels. There are many ways we can do the cleansing and purification on our own. But for those of us who can't do even that, so for one second before Sabbath purity and holiness also descend into the world. Happy are those who can receive it and fill their heart with it.

Sabbath is different from all other holidays. The Talmud explains that if there were no Jews in the world, there would be no Jewish holidays. But Sabbath will always exist, even if there be no Jew to observe it, because on Sabbath something happens to the world, God opens the gates, and something so holy comes from heaven down to us, and all we have to do is pick it up.

The Zohar HaQodesh asks, how did Noah have the strength to resist a world that was rotten to the core? When everyone around him seemed perverted and crazy, Noah and his family held out alone, right? Where did he get the strength from? Well, the name "Noah" is the same as the Hebrew word for "rest". The Zohar HaQodesh says that Noah wanted to serve God,

Noah wanted to keep Sabbath Since nobody else picked up the power that came down from heaven, Noah and his family could take it all! And that's how he had the strength to resist the world. He had the power of the world in his bones.

So, every Sabbath, imagine if you would pick up from the world the power of heaven. Imagine how much strength you would get, how much holiness you could put in your bones.

According to the great Kabbalists, water was never created; it always was just there. In the Book of Genesis it never says that God created water. Water has the power of "Beyond Creation", the power to wash you clean and make everything grow. Our rabbis teach us that in order to really feel the blessing of Sabbath you have first to immerse in the *mikveh* a ritual pool.

The Lights of Sabbath: The lights that our Mother Sarah lit were burning from Friday to Friday. When I kindle a light in the week, anyone can blow it out. However, Friday night, the lighting of the candles is performed with such spiritual strength, that their glow lasts from Friday to Friday. According to our logic, the light of Sabbath, God's light, is so infinitely powerful what can the candle add? But this is one of the fixings of Eve's eating of the tree of Knowledge. Because it isn't true that the candle is insignificant.

According to the Tree of Life every candle makes the light more infinite and more deep. God's light is like a Picasso, it is so beyond beautiful that it can't reach inside my soul. But a painting of my own sweetest daughter has the light of the little candle of Sabbath that really tears my heart apart. Sabbath comes and Sabbath is everywhere. You can't walk out on Sabbath But this is only on the Outside. Kabbalos Sabbath, we are making ourselves into vessels to receive Sabbath into the deepest most Inside depths of our soul.

Friday night is the fixing of jealousy. Jealousy comes from thinking that someone can take your place or your portion. In the deepest depths it's my own emptiness, my own incapability to retain what God is giving me. But Friday night, when my heart becomes so full, so overflowing full, like the wine from the *Kiddush*, jealousy is wiped out from my heart, and hopefully, eventually, from the heart of mankind.

The feast of Friday night is the ultimate fixing of the Tree of Knowledge. We are basically transforming it into the Tree of Life. The Holy Ba'al Shem says that whoever is up Friday night celebrating Sabbath will not leave this world without completing the fixing which he came down in this form. Sabbath morning is the fixing of grabbing. Because what God gives me I don't have to steal and I don't even have to take; it's given to me. A slave takes, a king receives.

The third meal of Sabbath is the fixing of self-esteem, of honor, of giving up hope. The third meal is like the World to Come, when the world will be filled with God's glory, with the glory of every human being, when the honor of a child is enough to fill the whole universe with the deepest of God's honor. *Shalos Seudos*, the Third Meal before you say good-bye to Sabbath, is the deepest of all. It's when you say good-bye to the One you love that it's clear to you how much He means to you, Our holy rabbis teach us that all day Sabbath is just Sabbath The Third Meal is Sabbath and Yom Kippur. It's a must for everyone to spend the last hour of Sabbath in the deepest emotion.

After saying good-bye to Sabbath, we make ourselves a little concert and partake in the Feast of King David who lives forever. The Feast of King David gives us the strength to keep Sabbath alive until the next Sabbath comes. Sabbath is the deepest healing in the world.

Friday night is the time of seeing, of discovering the unbelievable beauty and sweetness of the world of the Torah, of people, and above all, those I love the most. Sabbath morning is a time of tasting. It's even deeper than seeing. Most people love each other. But tasting each other's soul, each other's depths -- that is Sabbath morning. The third meal, and, finally, *Havdalah*, is smelling, inhaling the fragrance, the beauty which is beyond seeing and tasting, the kind of depth which only my soul can fathom. Happy are those who walk the streets of the world with the fragrance of Sabbath

Sabbath invites all those who know, who experienced so much sweetness, so much holiness in life, but it's clear to them this cannot be all God wants to give them. Isn't God infinite? Isn't life infinite? Sabbath is the name of God. Will you accept the invitation of Sabbath?

## **A PRACTICAL WAY TO START**

If Sabbath seems like a daunting undertaking, remember that in Judaism it's not "all or nothing." Even one moment of consciously refraining from doing work on Sabbath is a powerful opportunity to get in touch with yourself and God.

How to start? Have your friends over for Friday night dinner. Light the candles, make Kiddush, sing some songs, and share words of Torah. (You can discuss the "Portion of the Week," or pick a topic like "Free Will" or "The Afterlife.") But make one rule: No outside entertainment. No radio, no television, no telephone, no internet. Try it for a few hours, and increase the amount of time as you feel more comfortable.

Finally, here's an exercise that can really get you in the mood. At sundown this Friday, take a minute and do the following: Clench your fists tight for 60 seconds. Then let go.