

Secular/Humanist Shabbat Service

By Custom & Craft



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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Rabbi Sherwin Wine

There are two Jewish traditions.

The first is a religious one. It finds supernatural power, prayer and worship important. It believes in divine revelation, eternal laws and sacred rituals. It sees Nature as less interesting than the world beyond. In Jewish history it found political power and became the establishment.

The second is a secular and humanistic tradition. It prefers people, human intelligence and human dignity. It affirms reason, science and human community. It finds no need to look beyond the wonders of nature. In Jewish history it never found political power. It survived in the underground of ordinary Jewish life.

The second tradition is as important as the first.

The second tradition is our tradition.

Judaism is far more than many people allow it to be. Some people view it very narrowly, seeing only its religious side. Others perceive it broadly emphasizing its ethical outreach.

Judaism is more than theology and moral rules. It is more than parochial faith and universal sentiments. It is the living culture of a living people.

Judaism is family, love and nurturing. Judaism is memory, roots and pride. Judaism is music, dance and humor. Everything that Jewish people, throughout the ages, did and yearned to do is Judaism.

Judaism did not fall from heaven. It was not invented by a divine spokesman. It was created by the Jewish people. It was molded by Jewish experience. It was flavored by Jewish sadness and Jewish joy.

Life is an evolution, a continuous flow of transformations. And so is culture. When circumstances change, people change. When people change, their laws and customs change. A healthy people welcomes change. It understands its history. It knows its own power. It leads the past into the future.

A secular, a humanistic Jew affirms the power of people. He or she affirms the power of common sense and human reason. But above all, he or she strives for human dignity.

Human dignity is Jewish dignity.

Our past is a guide to our future. It is no sacred temple requiring reverence. It is no sacred book with immutable decrees. It is no sacred song with only one melody. It is a treasury of memories from which we can draw. It is a storehouse of wisdom from which we can borrow. It is a drama of endless creativity which we can imitate.

We are always the bridge between the past and the future. We are always the continuity between the old and the new. We do not betray the past by rejecting our roots. We do not betray the future by ignoring our needs. We pay tribute to both. We use the past to dream of our future.

INTRODUCTION

The Significance of Shabbes

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Prepared by Bennett Muraskin, Jewish Cultural School and Society

*The lengthy week is at an end,
And with it work and weekday woe,
Encircled by family and friend,
We step back from time's endless flow.
For all who toil deserve to rest,
And all who sow deserve to reap,
To benefit from all life's best,
And to partake in Shabbes peace.*

Though literally Shabbes means rest, traditionally, Shabbes is much more than a day of rest for Jews. It is a day of spiritual and cultural renewal. It is a day of experiencing family and the shared heritage of peoplehood. It is a day for Jewish learning. It is also an appreciation of freedom, for only a free person has the luxury of choosing not to work.

Naomi Prawer Kadar, Shabbes (Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring)

Shabbes reminds us that our bodies belong to us and that physical, intellectual and emotional pleasures are to be enjoyed. We need roses as well as bread. We are also reminded that our families and friends have a special place in our lives. Shabbes is a symbol of both our freedom and our humanity.

adapted from Judith Seid, We Rejoice in our Heritage: Home Rituals for Secular Jews

However, too many of us still lack this freedom. We find ourselves working long hours and weekends. We receive far less vacation time than required to maintain good mental and physical health. The next selection, written over sixty years ago, shows that we still have a long way to go to achieve the essential precondition for a fulfilling Shabbes.

The most beautiful of the Jewish holy days is the Sabbath, the holiday with social significance, when for the first time, the idea of the right to rest was proclaimed for the slave and for the worker—a right which is much more important than the world-renowned "right to work" with which so many utopians hoped to solve the problems of society. Humanity still does not have the right to rest, and will never have it, until the foundations of life are rebuilt in accordance with the principles of social justice. It should be a source of pride to Jews that the first kernels of that idea were planted in its prophetic literature. - *Chaim Zhitlovsky (1855-1943), philosopher of Jewish secularism and founder of Yiddish cultural schools in the United States*

CANDLELIGHTING

Candlelighting

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Prepared by Bennett Muraskin, Jewish Cultural School and Society

To Say Over Candles:

The lighting of the Sabbath candles is one of the most familiar customs connected to Shabbes and one that is part of our collective memory. According to tradition, candles are lit on Friday just before sunset, usually by the mother and daughters of the household, though they may be lit by any Jew. The lighting of the candles signifies the spiritual essence of the Sabbath. Candlelight flickers, spreading its light and its warmth. It envelops us in peace, *sholem bayis* (family harmony), the light of learning, and the hope for the continuity of the Jewish people. Personal wishes for health and well-being go out from our hearts to all of our loved ones.

Naomi Praver Kadar, Shabbes (Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring, 1995)

We light these candles to celebrate our coming together.

They reflect the light in our lives and the warmth we find in our extended family.

They generate a feeling of togetherness, and connect us to our Jewish history and heritage.

May our time together bring us joy and a renewed sense of commitment to our people and all humanity.

Violet Cherlin, Long Island Havurah for Humanistic Judaism

We rejoice in our heritage which has given us the tradition of lighting the Shabbes candles.

Ashreinu bi'yerushateinu she'masrah lonu et hatoreshet l'hadlik ner shel shabbat.

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerusheh vos hot undz gegebn di traditsiye foon ontsindn di Shabbes likht.

Judith Seid, We Rejoice on Our Heritage: Home Rituals for Secular Jews

Barukh haor baolam.

Radiant is the light in the world

Barukh haor ba'adam.

Radiant is the light of humanity.

Barukh haor bashabbat

Radiant is the light of the Sabbath.

Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine

KABBALAT SHABBAT POEMS & SONGS

Poems to Greet the Sabbath Queen: Shabat Ha'Malkah

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Russia-Israel 1873-1934

The sun over the treetops is no longer seen,
Come, let us go forth to greet the Sabbath Queen,
Behold her arrival, the holy, the blessed,
And with her angels of peace and of rest
Come near, come near, and here abide.
Come near, come near, O, Sabbath Bride!
Peace to you, O angels of peace.

We've welcomed the Sabbath with songs and with praise;
We go slowly homeward, our hearts full of grace.
The table is set and the candles give light,
At home every corner is shining and bright.
Sabbath is peace and rest.
Sabbath is peaceful and blest.
Come in peace, you angels of peace!

Ha'khamah merosh ha'ilanot nistalkah
Bo'u v'netseh likrat Shabat ha'malkah,
Hiney hi yoredet, ha'kedoshah, ha'brukhah,
Ve'imah malakhim tsvah shalom u'menukhah
Bo'i, bo'i ha'malkah,
Bo'i, bo'i ha'kalah
Shalom aleykhem malakhey ha'shalom.

Ha'khamah merosh ha'ilanot nistalkah,
Bo'u uenilaveh et shabat ha'malkah.
Tseytekh l'shalom, ha'kedoshah ha'zakah
De'i, sheshet yamim el shuveykh nikhakeh.
Ken l'shabat haba'ah
Ken l'shabat haba'ah
Tsetkhem l'shalom malakhey hashalom.

KABBALAT SHABBAT POEMS & SONGS

Welcome, Queen Sabbath

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : by ZALMAN SCHNEOUR, Russia-Israel, 1887-1959

Oh, come let us welcome sweet Sabbath the Queen!
The cobbler abandoned his awl and his thread,

The tailor's brisk needle now sleeps in its bed.
Father has bathed, washed his hair, and he says:
Sweet Sabbath is near,
Sweet Sabbath is here, Oh, come let us welcome sweet
Sabbath the Queen!

The storekeeper locked and bolted his store,
The teamster unbridled his horse at the door,
The sexton runs hither and thither and says:
The sun sets in the sky, Sweet Sabbath is nigh,
Oh come let us welcome sweet Sabbath the Queen!

The white-bearded cantor has hastened along
To welcome the Sabbath with blessing and song,
Dear mother is lighting the candles and prays:
Day of holiness and rest,
Forever be blest,
Oh come let us welcome sweet Sabbath the Queen!

Translated from the Hebrew by Harry H. Fein

KABBALAT SHABBAT POEMS & SONGS

Song of the Sabbath

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Kadia Molodowsky (1874-1975)

I quarreled with kings till the Sabbath,
I fought with the six kings
of the six days of the week.

Sunday they took away my sleep.
Monday they scattered my salt.
And on the third day, my God,
they threw out my bread: whips flashed across my face.
The fourth day they caught my dove, my flying dove, and
slaughtered it.
It was like that till Friday morning

This is my whole week,
the dove's flight dying.

At nightfall Friday
I lit four candles, and the queen of the Sabbath came to me.
Her face lit up the whole world,
and made it all a Sabbath.
My scattered salt shone in its little bowl,

and my dove, my flying dove,
clapped its wings together,
and licked its throat.

The Sabbath queen blessed my candles,
and they burned with a pure, clean flame.
The light put out the days of the week
and my quarreling with the six kings.

The greenness of the mountains
is the greenness of the Sabbath.

The silver of the lake
is the silver of the Sabbath.

The singing of the wind
is the singing of the Sabbath.

And my heart's song is an eternal Sabbath.

KABBALAT SHABBAT POEMS & SONGS

Sholom Alekhem: Two Humanist Versions

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Morris Sukenik

Shalom alekhem ohave hashabbat
Ohave shabbat shalom
Y'ridat hashemesh meviah lanu shabbat
Shabbat k'var hagia hayom

Boakhem l'shalom ohave hasholom
Ohave bnai adam
M'yisrael ad artsenu
Shalom al kol haolam

Y'vorakh bab'riut hazakuk lab'riut
M'nukhat shabbat tavi refua
Shalvat hashabbat tavi lanu briut
Laguf venefesh trufa

Ts'etkhem l'hofesh beyom simkha v'oneg
Bayom sheshovtim meavoda
Meavodatenu nishbot im yakirenu
Avot banim im kol hamishpakha

Welcome, you lovers of the Sabbath
Sabbath lovers, Shalom!
The setting of the sun brings us Sabbath,
Sabbath has already reached us here.

Your coming be in peace, you lovers of peace,
Lovers of humankind,
From Israel to our land,
Let there be peace all over the world.

Be blessed with health, whoever is in need of health.
May Sabbath rest bring cure.
May Sabbath peace bring us health,
Body and soul a cure.

As you go out to freedom on this happy, joyous day,
On the day that we rest from work,
From our work we'll rest with our loved ones:
Parents, children, and all the mishpakha.

SHEMA

Secular Humanist Shma

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Morris Sukenik

Hear, Oh Israel,
The universe is one.
All humanity is one.

Shma Yisroel
Ha-olam echad!
Ha-enoshiut echad!

And you shall love your fellow humans
With all your heart
And all your soul,
And all your might!

These words inscribe on your heart
And on your doorposts.
Repeat them and teach them to your children
By day and by night.

Teach them to revere all life.

SHEMA

Shma: Communal Declaration of Faith

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Marcia Falk, The Book of Blessings

Hear, O Israel--The divine abounds everywhere
And dwells in everything: the many are One.

Sh'ma, yisrael--
La'elohut alfey panim,
M'lo olam sh'khinatah,
Ribuy paneha ekhad.

Loving life and its mysterious source with all our heart and all our spirit,
All our senses and strength, we take upon ourselves and into ourselves these promises:

To care for the earth and those who live upon it,
To pursue justice and peace,
To love kindness and compassion.

We will teach this to our children throughout the passage of the day--
As we dwell in our homes and as we go on our journeys,
From the time we rise until we fall asleep

And may our actions be faithful to our words
That our children's children may live to know:
Truth and kindness have embraced,
Peace and justice have kissed and are one.

KIDDUSH & MOTZI

Blessing Over Wine / Grape Juice

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Prepared by Bennett Muraskin, Jewish Cultural School and Society

In the warm glow of the candles' shine, we lift the brimming cup of wine. As Jews for centuries before, sharing Jewish life and lore. In praise of harmony and rest, ideals of justice, freedom's quest. A world of brotherhood and peace, where poverty and hate will cease. At our Shabbes celebration, we renew our dedication, To all that's Jewish/Yiddish, in this, our special Kiddish. By Naomi Praver Kadar, Shabbes, (Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring, 1995) - We rejoice in our heritage which has given us the cup of wine [grape juice] as the symbol of our happiness. We rejoice in our heritage which has given us the Sabbath, a day of rest. It is first among our holidays and a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt. Ashreinu bi'yerushateinu she'masrah lanu kos pri hogofen l'mo'adim u'l'simkha ki samakhnu b'khageinu. Ashreinu bi'yerushateinu she'masrah lanu et ha'shabbat., yom-mnukha, reisheet bamo'adeinu zekher litsi'at mitsra'im. Mir freyen zikh mit unzer yerushe vos hot undz gegeben di kos foon vayn alts simbol foon undzer gliklich-kayt, Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerusheh vos hot undz gegeben Shabbes, a tog foon minukha. Es is di vikhtikste foon undzere yom-toyvim oon dermont undz foon undzer oroysgeyn foon mitzrayhim Judith Seid, We Rejoice in Our Heritage: Home Rituals for Secular Jews - Borukh shalom baolam. We bless peace in all the world. Borukh shalom baodam. We bless peace among all people. Borukh shalom bashabbat. We bless the peace and joy of this Shabbat. Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine

KIDDUSH & MOTZI

Blessing Over Challah

by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source : Prepared by Bennett Muraskin, Jewish Cultural School and Society

In tasting bread, we remember the hungry. May there be a day when no human being suffers the pain and desolation of hunger. May the bounty we enjoy help us to bring to fruition the vision of a *besere un a shenere velt*, a better and more beautiful world.

Naomi Praver Kadar, Shabbes, (Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring, 1995)

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We rejoice in our heritage that teaches us to love our earth that gives us wheat and to honor the farmers who grow it and the workers who make it into bread.

Ashreinu b'yerushateinu she'morah lanu
le'ehuv et ha'adama, matsmikhat dagan,
u'l'khabed et ha'ikar ha'motsi lekhem min
ha'aretz v'et hapo'el hao'ofeh khalot.

Mir freyen zich mit undzer yerusheh
vos hot undz oysgelernt
az mir zoln lib hobn undzer erd vos git undz veytz,
oon dermant undz opgebn koved

di vos akern dos erd oon
kooltivirn dem veytz,
oon di arbeter vos bakn undz dos broit

Judith Seid, We Rejoice in Our Heritage: Home Rituals for Secular Jews

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B'rukhim hakhayim baolam.

Blessed be the life in the world.

B'rukhim hakhayim baadama.

Blessed be the life in the earth.

B'rukhim hamotsim lekhem minhaorets.

Blessed are those who bring forth bread from the earth.

Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine