

Shabbat

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These words are for a Shabbat 'service' for families to use at home together.

The Bible text is taken from The Message.

All the sections in a grey box like this are explanations or description of actions, rather than text to be read aloud.

Water

Psalm 24 says only those with clean hands and pure hearts can stand in God's holy place.

We wash our hands with water and ask Jesus to make our hearts clean.

The bowl of water is passed round. Everyone can take a turn to wash their hands in it, or they can pass it on.

As we wash our hands, we can say our own prayer either out loud or silently, or use these words:

**I wash my hands to Messiah,
the hope of glory, to serve him only.**

Bread

The two loaves or pieces of bread are held, saying:

These two loaves represent the double portion of manna the Israelites collected in the desert. As we break this bread, we remember Jesus and His body which was broken for us.

We bless you, Lord our God, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

One loaf or piece is broken, and passed around. Everyone who wants to can take and eat a piece.

Optional: Sing "We bless You, Lord our God" again.

Thank you, God, for this food and ask that Shalom, Your peace-filled completeness, will fill our hearts and our lives.

We finish by repeating this traditional Hebrew Sabbath blessing:

Shabbat Shalom!

Light

This meal marks the beginning of a special day of rest as a family together.

We stop and rest just like God rested from His work of creation.

We celebrate the freedom God has given us, just as He gave freedom to the Israelites when He set them from being slaves in Egypt.

As the candles are lit, the following is said:

I light the two Sabbath candles, to remind us of the rest and freedom God gives us.

As I light them, I welcome Shalom Bayit, peaceful harmony, into our home.

The following blessing is sung:

(leader) Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam

**(all) We bless you, Lord our God, King of the universe x2
who has given us Jesus, the light of the world.**

We bless you, Lord our God, King of the universe x2

Then the light is wafted in three increasingly large circles, representing the light of Jesus being spread into the lives of those around the table, our loved ones and the wider community.

We greet each other with this traditional Hebrew Sabbath greeting which means 'peaceful Sabbath':

Shabbat Shalom!

Affirmation

This poem from Proverbs 31 is read (usually by the husband to his wife) as an affirmation:

A good woman is hard to find
and worth far more than diamonds.

I trust you without reserve,
and never have reason to regret it.

Never spiteful, you treat me generously all your life long.

You're quick to assist anyone in need,
and you reach out to help the poor.

You don't worry about your family when it snows;
their winter clothes are all mended and ready to wear.

Your clothes are well-made and elegant,
and you always face tomorrow with a smile.

When you speak you always have something worthwhile to say,
and you always say it kindly.

You keep an eye on everyone in our household,
and keep them all busy and productive.

Your children respect you and bless you;
I join in with words of praise:

"Many women have done wonderful things,
but you've outclassed them all!"

Charm can mislead and beauty soon fades.
The woman to be admired and praised
is the woman who lives in the 'Fear-of-God'.

This poem from Psalm 127 is read:

If GOD doesn't build the house,
the builders only build shacks.
If GOD doesn't guard the city,
the night watchman might as well nap.
It's useless to rise early and go to bed late,
and work your worried fingers to the bone.
Don't you know he enjoys giving rest to those he loves?

Don't you see that children are GOD's best gift?
the fruit of the womb his generous legacy?
Like a warrior's fistful of arrows
are the children of a vigorous youth.
Oh, how blessed are you parents, with your quivers full of children!
Your enemies don't stand a chance against you;
you'll sweep them right off your doorstep.

We then sing this blessing from Numbers 6:24-26 to each other :

**God bless you and keep you;
God smile on you and gift you,
God look you full in the face
And make you prosper.**

Wine

The wine is poured, and the cup is held.

Wine is a symbol of joy and celebration. We drink this wine to celebrate all the good things we have in life and to remember Jesus.

We bless you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

Optional: Sing "We bless You, Lord our God" again.

We then pass around the wine and everyone who wants to has a sip from the cup.