

YLJC Judaism 101

SHABBAT

Study pack


GW 19.07.18



55/100

Marc Chagall

THE SHABBAT BRIDE

Come, my friend, to greet the bride, to welcome in this Shabbat eve. “Observe!” – “Remember!” – one command. God made us hear a single phrase, for God is One, and known as One, in fame, in glory and in praise. Come in peace and come in joy: God, your husband; you, God’s bride. Among the faithful chosen people, come, my bride; come, my bride.

L’chah Dodi

THE SEVENTH DAY

And the Heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day, God finished the work of creation, and God rested (וַיִּשְׁבֹּת) on the seventh day from all that God had created. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it, because on that day God rested from all the work which God, in creating, had made.

Genesis 2:1-3

Remember the day of Shabbat, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labour, and do all your work. But the seventh day is Shabbat, for the Eternal One your God. On it, you shall not do any manner of work: not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor the stranger that is within your gates. For in six days God made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that is in them, and God rested on the seventh day.

Therefore, God blessed Shabbat, and hallowed it.

Exodus 20:7-10

REWARDS

If, because of Shabbat, you turn away your foot from pursuing your business on My holy day, and call Shabbat a delight, and the holiness of the Eternal One honourable, and honour Shabbat, not sinning and not pursuing or speaking of business, then you shall delight yourself in the Eternal One. I will take you to ride on the high places of the earth, and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your ancestor, for the mouth of God has spoken it.

Isaiah 58:13-14

39 CATEGORIES OF WORK

Sowing	Combing	Skinning
Ploughing	Dyeing	Tanning
Reaping	Spinning	Smoothing
Binding sheaves	Stretching threads	Ruling lines
Threshing	Making loops	Cutting
Winnowing	Weaving threads	Writing
Selecting	Separating threads	Erasing
Grinding	Tying a knot	Building
Sifting	Untying a knot	Breaking down
Kneading	Sewing	Lighting a fire
Baking	Tearing	Extinguishing a fire
Shearing wool	Trapping	Striking a final hammer
Cleaning	Slaughtering	Carrying outdoors

CONSEQUENCES

And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on Shabbat. And they that found him brought him before Moses and Aaron and the rest of the congregation. And they imprisoned him, because it had not yet been declared what should be done with him.

And God said to Moses, “The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation should stone him with stones outside the camp.” And the congregation took him outside the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died, as God had commanded Moses.

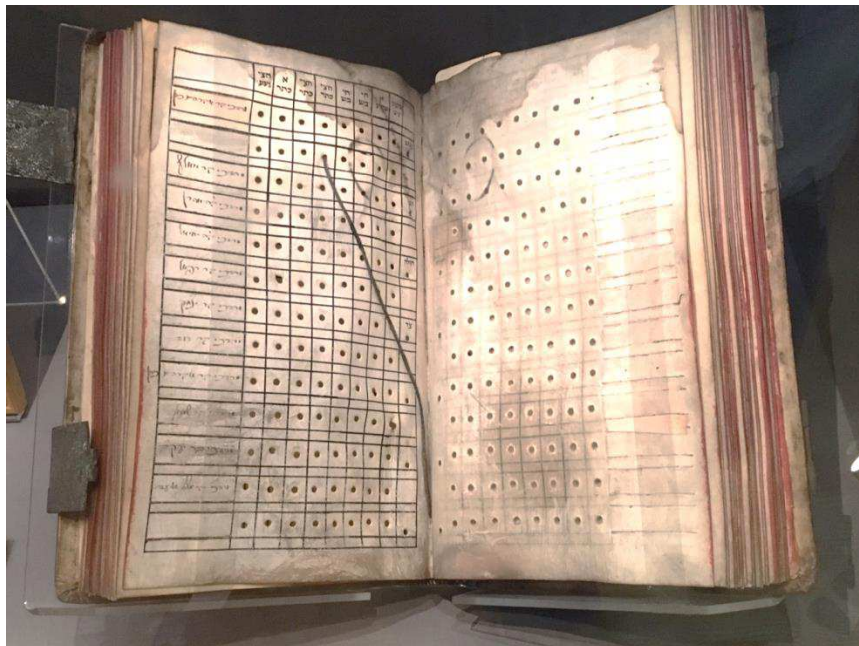
[The next verse begins the second paragraph of the Shema.]

Numbers 15:32-36/7

Our Rabbis taught: The man who gathered the sticks was Zelophechad. Because the Torah says, “And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man...” whilst elsewhere it is said, “Our father Zelophechad died in the wilderness for his own sin.” Just as in the later case it is Zelophechad, so here too Zelophechad is meant: this is Rabbi Akiva’s view.

But Rabbi Judah ben-Bathyra said to him, “Akiva! In either case you have done wrong: if you are right, the Torah shielded Zelophechad by not naming him, whereas you have revealed him; and if you are not right, you cast a stigma upon a righteous man.”

bShabbat 96b



HOW FAR DOES ENFORCED REST GO?

She'eilah: Is it appropriate for members of the synagogue committee to meet before or after a Shabbat morning service to discuss matters of fundraising?

Teshuvah: The Talmud records a general agreement that matters of charity, as well as synagogue affairs, may be discussed on Shabbat. But we must look at the circumstances which led to this permissive attitude. The only day of rest in most previous generations was Shabbat. This was the only day on which it was possible for individuals to gather together to discuss communal affairs. That is not our case, as virtually the entire society rests on both Saturday and Sunday, and the vast majority restricts itself to forty working hours per week. This means that there is ample time during the week for business discussions of all kinds. The necessity of holding such a meeting on Shabbat has been eliminated.

American Reform responsum, 1990

She'eilah: The congregational Gift Corner provides Jewish books, candles and candlesticks, Channukah menorahs; in other words, it serves a religious purpose. Should this fact not justify keeping the Gift Corner open on Friday night? It is only on Friday night that large numbers of people coming for the Sabbath service can conveniently make use of the Gift Corner.

Teshuvah: This question would evoke a complete and immediate negative from an Orthodox rabbi. There cannot possibly be any way of justifying by traditional law any of the processes involved in keeping the Gift Corner open after sundown on Friday evening. It is unnecessary to enumerate the various prohibited actions that would be involved, such as writing down orders, receiving money, giving change, and carrying purchased objects home from the synagogue. Thus, the question is so simple in Orthodoxy that it would not even be asked. But in a Reform congregation the question is no longer simple. So perhaps the Gift Corner could be kept open on Shabbat, but a clear distinction should be made between its management then and its management on other days of the week: there should be no exchange of money, but people may come in to select what they want, and arrange delivery and payment later. This distinction between the Gift Corner's procedure on Shabbat and on weekdays would rather tend to strengthen the consciousness of Shabbat in the lives of our people. It would serve to remind them of Shabbat traditions and perhaps influence them to do less purchasing in general on the Sabbath, whenever such self-restraint is practical.

American Reform responsum, 1960

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Imagine a Jew who won't drive to the shops on Shabbat, but will drive to a museum. For them, spending money on Shabbat is not the issue as much as it is how one spends money. The joy of Shabbat lies in the fact that they don't respond to the pressure of running errands. They are approaching Shabbat as a day of freedom from necessity.

Now imagine another Jew. This Jew walks away from the computer, and then picks up a paintbrush on Shabbat afternoon to create a work of art. When other Jews believe Shabbat ought to mean avoiding the creative process, how can the painter claim to be observing Shabbat? Well, what activities might liberate contemporary people whose days are filled with text messages, appointments and errands? Painting might be just the antidote for that lifestyle.

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

TIME AND RELATIVE DIMENSION IN SPACE

Shabbat is entirely independent of the month and unrelated to the moon. Its date is not determined by any event in nature, such as the new moon, but by the act of creation. Thus the essence of Shabbat is completely detached from the world of space. The meaning of Shabbat is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on Shabbat we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

WHOSE SHABBAT IS IT ANYWAY?

It can be said, without exaggeration, that more than the Jewish people have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jewish people.

Ahad Ha'am

Jesus said, "Shabbat was made for humankind, not humankind for Shabbat."

Mark 2:27

ערבית
EVENING

STRUCTURE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

שחרית
MORNING

