

Home Ritual of Shabbat Series, Part 3

Three Meals

By Rabbi Phil Kaplan

Oneg Shabbat

אִם-תִּשִׁיב מִשְׁבֶּת רַגְלֶךָ עֲשׂוֹת חֶפְצֶיךָ בַּיּוֹם קִדְשֵׁי וְקִרְאתָ לַשַּׁבָּת עֹנֵג לְקִדּוּשׁ ה' מְכַבֵּד וְכִבְדֹתָו מִעֲשׂוֹת דְרָכֶיךָ מִמִּצְוֹת חֶפְצֶיךָ וְדַבַּר דְּבַר:

If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, From pursuing your affairs on My holy day; If you call the Sabbath “delight,” The Lord’s holy day “honored”; And if you honor it and go not your ways Nor look to your affairs, nor strike bargains—

1) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 250:1

A person should arise on Friday early to prepare for Shabbat; even if he has many servants to serve him he should find something small to do, for the honor (of Shabbat). We see this with Rav Chisda who would cut vegetables finely; Rabah and Rav Yosef, who would chop wood; Rabbi Zeira who would light the flame; And Rav Nachman, who would clean the house and replace the weekday cutlery with cutlery designated for Shabbat. We can emulate these people and one should not say: "It is unbecoming of me," for this is the honor of Shabbat. *RAMA: Additionally one should sharpen his knife to ease eating on Erev Shabbat for this honors the Shabbat and helps him eat.*

2) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 250:2

A person should have more meat, wine and treats, to the best of his ability.

3) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 118a -118b

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei: With regard to anyone who delights in the Shabbat, God gives him a boundless portion.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: One who delights in Shabbat is rescued from the oppression of exile.

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: With regard to anyone who delights in the Shabbat, God grants him his heart’s desires.

4) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 288:1-2

It is forbidden to fast until six hours on Shabbat. *Rama: and even for the purpose of learning or praying, it is forbidden [to fast].*

Some say that a person who is harmed by eating, such that it is their delight not to eat, should not eat. *Rama: And so with one who finds delight in weeping, in order that their pain will leave their heart: such a person is permitted to weep on Shabbat.*

Three Meals

5) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 117b

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: How many meals is a person obligated to eat on Shabbat? Three. Rabbi H̄idka says: Four. Rabbi Yoḥanan said: And both of them derived their opinions from one verse: "And Moses said: Eat it today, for today is Shabbat for God, today you will not find it in the field" (Exodus 16:25).

6) Rashi Shabbat 117b

Three "Today"s - the number of the three meals of Shabbat.

Lechem Mishneh

7) Tosefot on Pesachim 100b

We have the custom to spread a covering and then make kiddush....and the explanation is a remembrance of the *manna*, that it wouldn't fall on Shabbat and Yom Tov, and there would be dew above and below and the *manna* in between.

8) Tur 271

Our custom is to bring out [the challahs] before kiddush, and to spread a covering and to make kiddush. And in the Jerusalem Talmud it says so that the challah won't be embarrassed, meaning since it was first in the verse [from the Torah] and was fitting to come first in the blessings.

9) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 274:1

Every person is obligated to break bread on two [whole] loaves. One holds them both in his hands and breaks the bottom one. *RAMA: Specifically on the night of Shabbat. However on Shabbat day, or on the night of Yom Tov, we break the top one [Kol Bo; Hagahos Maimoni] and the reason is according to the Kabbalah.*

10) Mishnah Berurah on 274:1

Two loaves - as a remembrance to the *manna* as it is written, "they gathered double the amount of bread" and also on Yom Tov you need two loaves. And women are also obligated in the double portion of bread because they too were part of the miracle of the *manna*.

Salt

11) Rama on Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 167:5

It is a mitzvah to place on every table salt before one slices the bread, because the table is comparable to the altar [of the Temple] and our food is like sacrifices and it is said "with all of your offerings you must offer salt" (Leviticus 2:13) and it is a protection from punishment.

Zemirot

12) Mishnah Berurah 289:5

And then feasts - after they have eaten all they desire, there are those who sing *zemirot* and praise to God. And it is good to learn Torah slightly before eating.