



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

'Oneg' refers to more than just nosh after dinner on Shabbat evening. It's an actual mitzvah!

We have discussed how the biblical obligations of Shabbat stem from 'shamor vezachor'-- observing and remembering Shabbat (which cover the negative and positive mitzvot, respectively). Rambam tells us that the prophets also instituted 'kavod veoneg' (honoring and enjoying Shabbat). We see this in Isaiah 58:13, וקראת לשבת עונג ולקדוש ה' מכובד, "And you shall call the Sabbath 'A **delight**, sanctified unto God and **honored**'". From this verse, Rambam rules that 'oneg Shabbat' is rabbinically required. But there are those who disagree with him and say 'oneg' is even biblically required (see Mishneh Berurah Orach Chayim Shabbat 242:1). But biblical or rabbinic, 'oneg Shabbat' is still essential to how we observe the day.

So then practically, how do we keep 'oneg Shabbat'?

The primary way we observe 'oneg Shabbat' is through our meals-- but it is certainly not limited to them! The Mishneh Berurah teaches that 'oneg' is about eating food we love-- that gives us pleasure. For most people, this means meat, fish, and wine, which is why the halacha codifies the practice of eating them on Shabbat. But the obligation is really not about these specific foods, but about foods **you** enjoy: בכל מקום ומקום לפי מנהגו יענגוהו במאכלים ומשקים: החשובים להם עונג, "Every place does according to its custom of what is enjoyable-- in eating and drinking things that are desirable to them" (MB Orach Chayim Shabbat 242:1). So if you love sushi, or ice cream, or kale, make sure to enjoy them on Shabbat!

But the principle of 'oneg Shabbat' applies far beyond food-- to enjoying time with loved ones and even to taking naps. The Rema explains that someone

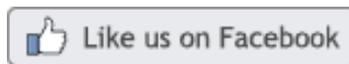
who is used to taking an afternoon nap should do so on Shabbat, כי עונג הוא לו, "because it is oneg for him" (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim Shabbat 290:1).

Stay tuned for next time when we will explore how far 'oneg' goes...For example, what if a person wants to fast on Shabbat? Or cry on Shabbat? Does the desire to do something make it fall under 'oneg'?

I love feedback!
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