

Invocation

Three generations back
My family had only

To light a candle
And the world parted

Today, Friday afternoon,
I disconnect the clocks and phone,

When night fills my house
With passages,

I begin saving my life.

-- *Marcia Falk*

Cleansing

Washing our hands recalls the sacredness of the body and prepares us to create and enter sacred space. Rinse the week away. Rinse your fears away. Rinse the negative energy away.

Creating Sacred Space

Like generations before us, we will light two candles to signify the change from regular time and space to sacred time and space. The candles symbolize many things. The light of a candle symbolizes the spark of the divine that resides in all of us. The candles represent the Shekinah, Divine Presence, and the Ein Sof – the eternal source. The candles above all represent a link with all who have come before and all who will come after.

Light candles (right then left)

Now as the blessing is said we cover our eyes with our hands, and then three times we draw the energy of the candles to us before we open our eyes. Three times we draw the energy to us and then reach out again, creating a circle of sacred space, a sacred temple of souls.

Traditional Hebrew Blessing or Alternatives said first, then English below.

May our hearts be lifted and our spirits refreshed as we light the Sabbath candles.

Let us bless the Source of Life

As we bless the Source of Life so are we blessed. – Group Response
As we bless the Source of Life so may we be blessed.¹

Together we say, "The Divine abounds everywhere and dwells in everything. The Many are One."²

¹ Marcia Falk; *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival*; Beacon Press; 1999

² Ibid

Blessing of Elements

As tonight is a festive occasion, we will acknowledge and honor the elements with song and poems.

Water:

We honor the water of life -- the mysterious unknown, the primordial beginnings of life, the blood that runs through our veins, the rain that feeds our crops, the water that quenches our thirst.

Let the rain kiss you.
Let the rain beat upon your head with silver
liquid drops.
Let the rain sing you a lullaby.

The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.
The rain makes running pools in the gutter.
The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at
night—

And I love the rain.
--Langston Hughes

Air:

We honor the air, the breath of life -- the name YHVH, the sound of breath, the sound of an infant's first cry, the sound of ecstasy, the sound of love, the sound of creation.

Windrush down the timber cutes
between the mountain's knees --
a hiss of distant breathing,
a shouting in the trees,
a recklessness of branches,
a wilderness a-sway,
when suddenly

a silence
takes your breath away.
--Barbara Kuntz Loots

Fire

We honor the fire, the spark of the Divine within us -- guiding light, fires of creativity, heat of passion, hearth-fire of the home.

An emerald is as green as grass,
A ruby red as blood;
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;
A flint lies in the mud
A diamond is a brilliant stone,
To catch the world's desires;
An opal holds the fiery spark;
But a flint holds fire.
-- Christina Rossetti

Earth:

We honor the earth, from which we begin and end. We walk firmly forward with the earth under our feet.

Enter this deserted house

But please walk softly as you do.
Frogs dwell here and crickets too.

Ain't no ceiling, only blue
Jays dwell here and sunbeams too.

Floors are flowers -- take a few.
Ferns grow here and daisies too.

Woosh, swoosh -- too-whit, too-woo,
Bats dwell here and hoot owls too.

Ha-ha-ha, hee-hee, hoo-hoooo,
Gnomes dwell here and goblins too.

And my child, I thought you knew
I dwell here . . . and so do you.
--Shel Silverstein

Restoring Shekinah

Let us restore Shekinah to her place in Israel and the world, and let us infuse all places with her presence. Welcome her with "Shabbat Shalom"

Let us greet the bride, friends.

Let us welcome the Sabbath!

"Shabbat Shalom!"

Let us greet the Sabbath

For She is the source of blessing!

"Shabbat Shalom!"

Rise and shine your light

Shekinah's radiance is revealed in you!

"Shabbat Shalom!"

In joy and rejoicing,

Welcome bride, Welcome!

"Shabbat Shalom!"

Now we begin the dance. As we dance, we restore the Shekinah by connecting the Divine energy within each of us. Let that spark grow to the center of the circle and mix with the energy of all the other people in this circle. As you dance, remember with joy those who have passed before us. Invite the memory of loved ones who have passed on, to join you in joy. Take the spark of them that resides in your memories and add it to your own, connecting past present and future. Let the energy blend and grow, and create the living Presence, Shekinah.

Feel the joy of movement,

The joy of song,

The joy of dance,

The joy of love,

The joy of peace,

The joy of Sabbath.

Join hands and begin dance! When the circle can no longer hold together, let it break apart with everyone shouting "Modeh/Modah Ani!"

Blessing Divine in Each Other

All join hands

Each of us has a name given by the source of life and given by our parents

Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile and given by what we wear

Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given by our walls

Each of us has a name given by the stars and given by our neighbors

Each of us has a name given by our sins and given by our longing

Each of us has a name given by our enemies and given by our love

Each of us has a name given by our celebrations and given by our work

Each of us has a name given by the seasons and given by our blindness

Each of us has a name given by the sea and given by our death³

Let us greet the Shekinah, the Presence of the Divine, in each other.

(Becoming "Secret Handshake" - place right hand on heart, and left hand on heart of partner)

XXX I honor and cherish the Divine in you. XXX I honor and cherish the Divine in you. (Goes around circle)

³ Marcia Falk; The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival; Beacon Press; 1999

Kiddush

Our celebration soon comes to a close. We now enjoy and share sweet wine and bread.

Blessing over Wine *(Hebrew prayers first)*

Let us bless the Source of Life
That ripens fruit on vine
As we hallow the seventh day –
The Sabbath day –
In remembrance of creation

Blessed be. *All drink.*

Blessing of Bread *(Hebrew prayers first)*

Let us bless the Source of Life
That brings for bread from the earth.

Blessed be. *All Eat.*

Closing

The Sabbath remains with us until sundown tomorrow. Over this time she will grow and mature from Maiden Bride, to Mother, to Crone, and back again to the dark, unknowable void. We carry this sacred space with us through time. Four 24 hours, no matter where we are, we live in sacred time – and so all places and things are sacred.

I have for each of you a gift, to help you release the Shekinah so the cycle may begin again. At sundown tomorrow, open these and smell the sweet spices. Let it refresh and remind you as you release the Sabbath.

Let us join hands and breath together once more.

May the blessings of peace and kindness,
Graciousness, goodness, and compassion
Flow among us
And all the communities of Israel,
All peoples of the world

We say together, "As we bless the Source of Life, so are we blessed."

May this Sabbath bring you peace and restoration.

Blessed Be.