



FRIENDSGIVING

A ONETABLE SHABBAT GUIDE

In the Torah when our matriarch Leah gave birth to her son Judah, she was so thankful that she named him with gratitude in mind, saying “I am thankful to God.” Not only does the name Judah (*Yeduha*) mean thankful, but it is the same name that Jews have called ourselves for thousands of years—*Yehudim* or “the thankful ones.” Therefore, no matter practice or level of observance, to call oneself a Jew is to be counted amongst a people devoted to the act of giving thanks. While it is core to our identity every day, our gratitude is particularly auspicious here in the U.S. during Thanksgiving.

American Thanksgiving has its origin in the faith practices of Puritan New England, where strict Calvinist doctrine sanctioned only the Sabbath, fast days, and thanksgivings as religious holidays (holy days). To the Puritans, a true “thanksgiving” was a day of prayer and piety. Auspicious events, such as the sudden ending of war, drought, or pestilence, might inspire a thanksgiving proclamation. *It was like having an extra Sabbath during the week.*

While in the United States we have an annual refrain of gratitude, in Jewish tradition, we have a weekly opportunity: Shabbat.





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

THE FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING IS
NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY

We gratefully acknowledge the Native Peoples on whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today.

– The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian

We are grateful for the bounty we enjoy today,
the abundant variety of foods this earth provides.

We acknowledge those who cooked this meal, [name the cooks!]
and set this beautiful table.

We acknowledge those who planted and harvested this food,
many of whom are immigrants.

We send them blessings for safety and freedom.

– Hila Ratzabi

from *This Land Belongs to No One: Thanksgiving Prayer Honoring our
Ancestors and Native Peoples' Land*

***View this map to learn about the native land, territories,
and languages at your address.***

LIGHT

Lighting Shabbat candles symbolizes the last act of the work week, and connects us to passages in the Torah, the Hebrew Bible, that remind us to keep and remember Shabbat.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed is the One who makes us holy through commandments and commands us to kindle the light of Shabbat.



We Are Grateful: A Candlelight Meditation on Thanksgiving

Gratitude, the state of living in gratuity, means we know we've received something. We have been given a great deal: food, health, life, vocation. Regardless of the quality of these gifts, they are gifts all the same. Yet God, Creator, Source, we also remember those who have lost: First Nations peoples who lived in what we call America, Who in partnership gave to their visitors But in their generosity lost dearly at Thanksgiving. Their name, Wampanoag, means People of the First Light. Help us in our act of Thanksgiving to remember them, And those to whom we owe apologies and attentiveness. May we cherish family, life, and light today. May we see the gifts in our lives, and celebrate them. Deepen our thoughts. Sweeten our words. Expand our understanding of the world as it is, And our dedication to creating the world that may yet be.

– Adapted from *O God, We Are Grateful* by Casey Tygrett



A BLESSING FOR EACH OTHER

In Jewish tradition, celebrations often begin with blessing those present, a reminder that while Shabbat holds space for us to feel blessed, we are also empowered to bless others. We invite you to turn to another guest and offer one of the blessings below, or share why you are grateful for each person at the table.

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
יְאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנֶּךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

*Y'varechicha Adonai v'yishmirecha
Ya'eir Adonai panav eilecha vichuneka
Yisa Adonai panav eilecha v'yasem l'cha shalom*

May you be blessed and protected
May you know favor and grace
May you give and receive kindness and peace

A Traditional Scottish Blessing

May the blessing of light be on you —
light without and light within.
May the blessing of the rain be on you —
may it beat upon your spirit and wash it fair and clean.
And may the blessing of the earth be on you —
soft under your feet as you pass along the roads,
soft under your body as you end your day.



WINE

Kiddush allows us to sanctify time. We bless wine, we bless Shabbat and we remember that we are partners with God in the ongoing process of creation. Together we engage in the work of building a better world— week after week, year after year.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'gafen.
Baruch Atah Adonai m'kadesh ha'Shabbat.*

Blessed is the One who creates the fruit of the vine.
Blessed is the One who sanctifies Shabbat.



Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. It turns problems into gifts, failures into successes, the unexpected into perfect timing, and mistakes into important events.

It can turn an existence into a real life, and disconnected situations into important and beneficial lessons. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

– Melody Beattie
from The Thanksgiving Reader



BREAD

For a moment we remember that food isn't a given, it's a gift. Blessing the bread we eat is about the interconnectedness of community that links each step along the way.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz.

Blessed is the One who brings forth bread from the earth.



Thanksgiving Prayer

Great Spirit
I thank you today
I thank you for Mother Earth
I thank you for Grandmother Moon
I thank you for Grandfather Sun
I thank you for the four directions:
the east, the south, the west, the north
I thank you for all my relations:
the winged nation
creeping and crawling nation
the four-legged nation
the green and growing nation
and all things living in the water
Honoring the clans:
the deer, the bear, the wolf, the turtle, the snipe
Great Spirit
I thank you today

— Dr. Frank Waabu O'Brien
Aquidneck (Rhode Island) Indian Council



GRATITUDE

AT THE END OF THE MEAL

וְאַכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ.

V'achalta v'savata u'varachta.

When you have eaten and are satisfied, bless. — Deuteronomy 8:10

It's a remarkable thing that Jewish tradition seeks to inspire us to be present before we eat, and all the more so that we are then directed to acknowledge our gratitude *after* we eat, not for the food itself, but for the incredible feeling of being full.

At this time of year, perhaps more than any other, the notion of being sated is powerful. What does it mean to truly be fulfilled? In Hebrew, the root of the word for fulfillment — to be whole, to be complete — is shalom, the same as the word for peace.

May we find peace, a whole and complete peace. May we be fulfilled, not only by our food, but by our family and friends, by our actions and our words.



בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא מַלְכָּא דְעֵלְמָא מְרִיחַ דְהַאי פִּיתָא.

Brich rachamana malka d'alma marei d'hai pita.

We are blessed with compassion by the One who sustains us with bread.

