

Shabbat Shuva

A ONETABLE GUIDE



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Falling between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Shabbat Shuva, the Shabbat of Return, ushers in a unique weekend, an incredible opportunity to reflect on the year that was and welcome the year to come.

The Sefat-Emet (a 19th century Hasidic rabbi from Poland) took particular care to observe Shabbat Shuva because it's the first Shabbat of the year, coming before Yom Kippur: the holiest day of the year. At OneTable, we are all about the power of Shabbat, so there's no better way to celebrate this most incredible time of the Jewish calendar.

Over the centuries, rabbis, philosophers, and poets have added to the Jewish canon of texts designed to make the most of these Days of Awe, inspiring us to return to ourselves, to take stock of our minds, bodies, and souls, to consider when and how we may have missed the mark, and to forgive others and ourselves. We hope that this guide helps you and your guests honor Shabbat Shuva with intention + give Friday night rituals an extra layer of meaning by incorporating the themes that make the High Holidays so sacred.



Light

Lighting Shabbat candles symbolizes the last act of the work week, and connects us to passages in the Torah that remind us to keep and remember Shabbat. For the first Shabbat of the year, consider how lighting these candles allows us to reconnect with this sacred practice of Shabbat and consider how you want to bring this with you through 5785.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוֵּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

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

*Blessed are You, Infinite One, ruler of the universe, who
makes us holy through commandments and commands
us to kindle the light of Shabbat.*

FROM THE PROPHET HOSEA: A CANDLELIGHT READING

שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ.
כִּי כָשַׁלְתָּ בְּעֹנֶךָ קָחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים.
וְשׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱמָרוּ אֵלָיו:
כָּל־תְּשׂא עֵוֹן וְקַח־טוֹב!

*Shuvah Yisrael ad Adonai Elohecha.
Ki chashalta ba'avonecha kichu imachem
divarim.
V'shuvu el Adonai imru alav:
Kol tisa avon v'kach tov!
Unshal'mah farim sifateinu.*

This is a night to return.
We have all transgressed, and so we return,
bringing to the Days of Awe these words:
Forgive the bad and take the good!
Accept our offering not of goods or money,
but our offering of words.



Wine

Kiddush allows us to sanctify time. As the time of Shabbat Shuva is especially holy, consider how you might make this Kiddush especially meaningful. We bless wine, we bless Shabbat, and we remember: We are partners with the Divine in the ongoing process of creation and re-creation, building a better world week after week, year after year.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַנֶּפֶן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

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

Blessed are You, Infinite One, ruler of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, Infinite One, who sanctifies Shabbat.

A KIDDUSH READING: "THIS IS REAL AND YOU ARE COMPLETELY UNPREPARED"

"Teshuvah begins with a turn, a turn away from the external world and towards the inner realm of the heart. Simply stopping [...] can suddenly leave us in confrontation with the contents of our heart. These contents are an open secret. We already know this secret. Often all that's required for us is to be still for a moment, and the heart begins to disclose itself to us of its own accord."

— Rabbi Alan Lew



Handwashing

There is a custom before High Holidays to immerse in a mikveh (ritual bath) or a living body of water like an ocean, a river, or a stream. This custom prepares us to start this year anew. Consider how hand washing at this meal is an opportunity to ritually prepare for the year to come.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִנָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם

**Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher
kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al netilat yadayim**

*Blessed are You, Infinite One, who makes us holy through
our actions and honors us as we raise up our hands.*

A HANDWASHING READING: "WAVES OF TORAH"

*"I saw the ocean unfolding.
But really it was Torah
Its pages going on forever.
And the weight of its history like the finality of its black ink.
Darkly, pulling me under.
But there in the sea of story,
I found light in the spaces between the letters
And in the blank parchment, I swear, I could hear our ancestors
breathing with me.
Parting the waters through their exhale
Extending the scroll through the letters they took in at the mouth.
I saw the Torah unfolding.
But really it was the ocean made by each of us.
Carrying the scroll through the waves of our breathing."*

— Devon Spier



Bread

We pause.

*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, the Oneness that links each step along the way.
Nothing happens in solitude.*

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

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

*Blessed are You, Infinite One, ruler of the universe,
who brings forth bread from the earth.*

A HA'MOTZI READING: "THE ONE WHO MAKES PEACE"

"blessing bread bought
from the supermarket
our blessing says, thank you God
for bringing forth bread from the earth

but this bread didn't come from the earth
it came from a store
from a factory
from flour ground
from wheat
from the earth

this bread did not sprout forth
it was created from human hands

we don't thank God for the wheat
which actually came from the earth

God did not create bread
but God knew we could

my kids ask, why do we pray for God to
make peace?
I tell them, God makes peace
like God makes bread

which is to say
we have all
the necessary ingredients

peace will not sprout forth
it will be created from human hands

thank you God, for giving us the wisdom
to turn wheat into bread

thank you God, for giving us the wisdom
to turn love into peace."

— **Rabbi Ariel Tovlev**



Gratitude

וְאָכַלְתָּ 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 peace be found this year, a whole and complete peace, a sustaining and lingering peace. And may we also be fulfilled, not only by our food, but by our family and friends, by our actions and our words.

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא מַלְכָּא דְעֵלְמָא מְרִיב דְהַאי פִּיתָא.

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

*We are blessed with compassion by You,
Infinite One, who sustains us with bread.*



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