



Noahide Laws & Lifecycle Course



Shabbat III: Practical Conclusions



*Noahide Nations Nagid Clergy
Certification Program*

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Shabbat III: Practical Conclusions

Introduction & Review Thus Far

This is a summary of what the sources have taught us so far:

- **Sanhedrin 58b** – Cites Genesis 8:22 which prohibits all mankind from keeping Shabbat. The verse prohibits cessation from work for a 24 hour period. Prior to Sinai, the respite of Shabbat was for God alone. At Sinai, the Jews were commanded to partake in the experience of Shabbat as a sign of their unique status.
- **Rashi, Radbaz, Rav Moshe Feinstein** commenting on the **Rambam** – For the sake of this prohibition, it does not make difference as to why one rests for an entire day. Even if one sets aside an entire day only to recuperate from work, he still transgresses. The Radbaz clarifies, though, that this is only if one establishes a regular, fixed day. To take an occasional day off is permitted.
- **Midrash Rabba** – Explains that the prohibition of non-Jewish observance of Shabbat takes on special poignancy after the giving of the Torah. The Jews were commanded at Sinai to partake of the divine rest of Shabbat as a sign of their covenant. Anyone else who tries to do so is interposing between God and Israel.
- **The Patriarchs** – The patriarchs, we are taught, kept the Torah. However, both the nature of their observance and their identity as Noahides are not clear enough for us to draw any practical conclusions. Additionally, there is a principle that we do not learn *halakha*, practice, from the actions of the patriarchs.
- **Binyan Tzion** – When the verse in Genesis prohibits the observance of Shabbat (by prohibiting a cessation of labor), it is not using the Torah's definition of labor. Instead, it is using the colloquial definition of labor. From here, it would appear that a non-Jew may keep Shabbat by observing the Jewish definition of Sabbatical labor, yet may not abstain from the colloquial definition of labor. This interpretation does not seem to be

relied upon by many of the above cited authorities who imply that even the Jewish definition of labor is prohibited for non-Jews. This *Binyan Tzion* also contradicts the Midrash's understanding of the Jewish Shabbat as a unique sign between God and Israel.

Maimonides *Hilkhos Melakhim 10 : 9*

§9 *A non-Jew who delves into the Torah is obligated to die. They should only be involved in the study of their seven commandments.*

Similarly, a non-Jew who rests, even on a weekday, observing that day similarly to a Shabbat, is obligated to die. Needless to say, this is also the case if he creates a festival for himself.

In the Torah, the Hebrew word “shabbat” may refer to the Shabbat, the seventh day, or any day upon which labor is prohibited by the Torah. This would include festivals. The Radbaz quotes Rashi who writes² that any kind of rest for any reason should be prohibited. However, the Radbaz adds “This is if he establishes a day for rest; however, occasional cessation from labor is not prohibited.”

The general rule governing these matters is this: they may not originate a new religion or create/perform mitzvot for themselves based on their own reasoning. Either convert and accept all the mitzvot or uphold their commandments without adding or detracting from them.

Maimonides explains that the reason for the prohibition of Shabbat observance by non-Jews is *chiddushei dat*, originating a new religion (discussed at length in a prior lesson). *Chiddushei dat* would preclude Noahides from observing Shabbat even by refraining from the Jewish definition of labor; the 39 *melachot*.

If a gentile delves into the Torah or Shabbat, or innovates a religious practice, he is beaten, punished, and informed him that he is obligated to die for his actions. However, he is not actually executed.

¹ Many printed editions of the *Mishnah Torah*, being heavily censored, read *akum*, meaning *idolater*. However, almost all early manuscripts and critical editions read *goy*, a generic term for anyone who is not Jewish.

² Sanhedrin 58b.

HaRav HaGaon Moshe Feinstein, ztz"l

[Rabbi Moshe Feinstein](#)³ explains that *chiddushei dat* is a general prohibition against Noahides adopting Jewish practices as religious observances. However, the prohibition of observing Shabbat and the strictures on Torah study are singled out by Maimonides due to their severity.

In Conclusion

According to the *Binyan Tzion*, Noahides may not establish any 24 period as a time of rest from work. By work, he means whatever is colloquially defined as work.

According to Maimonides, Noahides may also not observe Shabbat by refraining from the Jewish definition of work (the 39 *melachos*). This would be *chiddushei dat*.

Chiddushei dat would also prohibit Noahides from marking Shabbat in anyway by using Jewish rituals such as lighting candles, making Kiddush, making the blessing for bread over two loaves, etc.

The conclusion of the *poskim* is, therefore, that Noahides may not observe Shabbat in anyway by refraining from work for a 24 hour period or by adopting Jewish rituals. Noahides may not either establish a regular 24 hour period of rest even for non-religious reasons.

This is also the conclusion of Rabbi Moshe Weiner in *The Divine Code*.⁴

Letter of the Law vs. Spirit of the Law

A Noahide has two options as to how to deal with the question of labor on Shabbat. He may either take the liberal approach, which follows only the strict letter of the law, or he may take a pious, conservative approach acknowledging both the spirit and letter of the law.

³ In a number of letters he discusses Noahide issues. See *Igros Moshe* OC II:25, V:18, YD I:3, I:6, II:7, II:8, III:90, IV:51:1, CM II:69.

⁴ See *The Divine Code*, 2nd ed. Pp. 64 – 74.

The Letter of the Law

The letter of the law is that a Noahide may not commemorate Shabbat by regularly refraining from work for an entire day. It does it matter if one rests from daybreak-to-daybreak or from nightfall-to-nightfall. He should not refrain from the colloquial definition of work. However, a Noahide may refrain from labor using the Jewish definition of “work,” provided that he not observe all of the Jewish prohibitions of labor. He should turn on a light, make a fire, write, or do at least one prohibited act so that his observance of Shabbat is not a complete observance. Otherwise he would transgress the prohibition of observing Shabbat.

We should keep in mind that this observance of Shabbat, however, is meaningless. Observance of Shabbat means resting from the 39 labors defined at Sinai. The purpose in a Noahide doing one prohibited labor is so that he does not run afoul of the prohibition of observing Shabbat. That means that his one-prohibited-labor invalidates the entire observance. Therefore, despite resting for a whole day, he never actually kept Shabbat anyway!

Furthermore, as we mentioned earlier, God only asked Israel to share in Shabbat. A Noahide who does so is imposing his will upon God. As we saw in earlier lessons, this is a severe issue.

Although this mode of behavior is in step with the letter of the law, it fails to acknowledge the spirit of the law. It is a liberal approach to Torah law and Noahism.

The Spirit and Letter of the Law: The Shabbat of a Pious Noahide

One who seeks to go beyond the letter of the law as a matter of piety, will refrain from any observance of Shabbat. A pious, God fearing, religious Noahide will not attempt to observe Shabbat in any way by resting. A Noahide who imitates Jewish observance of Shabbat is a less observant Noahide than one who does not observe Shabbat!

Observance vs. Acknowledgement

Until now, we have only discussed the *observance* of Shabbat. By *observance*, however, we mean refraining from labor or imitating other Jewish Shabbat obligations. However, this prohibition does not preclude Noahides having a positive, meaningful connection with Shabbat. In short, Noahides may not observe Shabbat, but they may certainly acknowledge and commemorate Shabbat. In fact, Noahides may even be required to acknowledge Shabbat, as indicated in the following Midrash:⁵

⁵ *Bereshis Rabbah 11:5.*

[The wicked Turnus Rufus]⁶ asked Rabbi Akiva: “From where can you prove to me that God wished to honor the Seventh Day?” ... Rabbi Akiva responded: “Verify it with [via necromancy,] because a spirit will ascend on any day of the week except for Shabbat – verify it with the spirit of your father!” ... Turnus Rufus checked the veracity of Rabbi Akiva’s claim with the spirit of his own father. His father’s spirit ascended on every day of the week except Shabbat. On the following Sunday, Turnus Rufus again raised his father and asked him, “father, is it possible that you became a Jew after you died, that you now observe Shabbat? Why did you ascend every day of the week, but did not ascend on Shabbat?” He [Turnus Rufus’s father] answered him, saying: “Anyone who does not willingly observe the Sabbath among the living is forced to do so among the dead!”

The *Maharṣi* explains that the spirit of Turnus Rufus’s father could not mean that non-Jews must observe Shabbat. Rather, it means that any non-Jew who denies the significance of Shabbat will be “forced to do so among the dead.” What does it mean “forced to do so among the dead?” The Midrash goes on to explain that the wicked are punished with the fires of Gehinnom (purgatory) every day of the week, but are given respite on Shabbat. One who denies the existence and significance of Shabbat, even a Non-Jew, will apparently be held accountable.

Furthermore, Noahide acknowledgement of Shabbat goes back to the beginning of creation. There is a fascinating *midrash*⁸ about Adam, Kayin, and the composition of Psalm 92:

Adam met Kayin and asked of him: “What happened? What was your judgment?”

Kayin replied: “I repented and it was mitigated”

Adam began slapping his own face and cried out: “Such is the power of repentance – and I didn’t know it!” Adam immediately arose and declared: Mizmor shir le-yom ha-Shabbat, a Psalm, a song for the Shabbos...

Psalm 92, recited by Adam for Shabbat, only mentions Shabbat in its opening. It then goes on to praise God’s deeds and creations, curiously contrasting the permanence of His deeds with the temporary follies of the wicked, and then concludes with the praises of the righteous man.

⁶ The brutal Roman governor of Israel in the times of the Mishnah.

⁷ Rav Zeev Wolf Einhorn d.1862 – major expounder on the Midrash.

⁸ *Bereshis Rabbah* 22.

What is the connection between the ideas of *teshuvah*, repentance, the temporary prospering of the wicked, and the Shabbos?

Speaking with Kayin, Adam realized the power of repentance and marveled at its greatness. *Teshuvah* is the great creation for which Adam praises God. God is also praised for His incredible kindness: He does not execute judgment immediately. Rather, He waits, allowing transgressors time to either do *teshuvah* or lose themselves further. Alternatively, Adam also realized that this world is the place of finite recompense. Here a person is rewarded for the minority of his deeds. Therefore, the wicked are often rewarded for their few mitzvos, while the righteous are often punished for their few *aveiros*, sins.

But what does this all have to do with Shabbos? When God rested on Shabbos, he beheld the goodness of His creation – he saw that it was well suited for its purpose. So too, Adam, in his revelation, suddenly understood the greatness of God’s world and the incredible potential that it offered.

In that revelation, he saw the “big plan” – he understood the nature of reward and punishment, the fate of the wicked, and the ultimate reward of the righteous. He understood his purpose and how the world was designed for it.

Rashi understands this Psalm as, primarily, an acknowledgement of the World to Come, the ultimate Shabbos.

We see that Adam’s relationship to Shabbat was not one of rest. It was a relationship of epiphany, a day of awakening and realization. **This is the Noahide relationship to Shabbat.**

It is therefore appropriate to base the Noahide acknowledgement of Shabbat on Psalm 92 and Adam’s epiphany. In this way, Noahides are following in the way of Adam, to whom the Noahide laws were commanded.

Shabbat Prayer and Service in the Home

As with all of the liturgies brought in this course, they are based on the traditional Jewish prayers, yet adapted as needed for Noabide use. These prayer services are by no means the final or definitive forms of these prayers. Instead, these services are intended as a starting point for growth and development.

Lighting Candles

The principle of chiddushei dat prohibits Noabides from imitating any mitzvos which were commanded to the Jewish⁹ people unless those mitzvos have a logical, practical, real-world benefit (i.e. the mitzvos of charity, honoring one's parents, etc.)¹⁰ It also prohibits Noabides from inventing or deriving new religious obligations. Nevertheless, Noabides, like Jews, may innovate customs to positively enhance their religious engagement and experience. Innovation of customs is subject to two rules: 1) the custom can in no way resemble a mitzvah commanded to Jews, and 2) Noabides must know that the custom is neither desired by God nor may even please God; rather, the custom is an entirely human innovation made for our own purposes.

Lighting candles on Friday night is a specifically Jewish mitzvah, and therefore many not be practiced by Noabides. However, if Noabides wish to light candles for some other reason – to enhance the meal or beautify the home for the seventh day – then it is certainly permitted. More so, if Noabides wish to light seven candles in commemoration of the Noabide laws, and as an expression of their desire that they illuminate the world, it would even be praiseworthy. However, this must be done in a manner that in no way resemble the Jewish lighting. We suggest lighting seven candles, held in a seven branch candelabrum, after nightfall on Friday night. This custom is uniquely Noabide because it is an action that a Jew may never perform under any circumstances. This is for two reasons: 1) Jews are specifically prohibited from using, making, or owning any items that resemble the utensils of the temple – this includes owning, making, or lighting a seven-branched candelabrum, and 2) Jews are prohibited from lighting candles after sunset on Fridays. Noabides, however, are permitted to make, use, and own utensils that resemble temple implements. Therefore, only they may light a seven-branched candelabrum. Noabides are also permitted to kindle fire after sunset on Fridays. Furthermore, lighting a seven-branched candelabrum is a positive expression of Noabide faith: seven candles for seven mitzvos.

⁹ See Maimonides, *Hilchos Melakhim* 10:9 – 10; *Igros Moshe* OC II:25, V:18, YD I:3, I:6, II:7, II:8, III:90, IV:51:1, and CM II:69.

¹⁰ *Sefer Sheva Mitzvos HaShem* I:1:3.

The Seven Candles, held in a seven-branched candelabrum, are lit after nightfall. They may either be lit before prayers or after prayers at the evening meal. We suggest that they be lit by either the man or woman of the household on behalf of the entire home.

Once the candles are burning, the one who kindled them recites:

May it be Your will, Lord, Our God, that the light of Your commandments will shine forth, illuminating the entire world. May all peoples see the light and truth of your eternal Kingship, O Creator, and bind their souls to Your teaching and to Your service.

My God, favor me and my household. Grant us long life and we shall serve You. Remember us for goodness, blessing, salvation, and compassion. Bless our household and illuminate Your presence upon us.

May it be your will, O Lord, our God, that we merit to raise wise, upright, and understanding children. May they love and fear You, may they walk in truth, and may they illuminate the world with righteous deeds. Hear our prayers and turn your countenance to us; O Lord, shine your countenance upon us.

Friday Night Prayers

Introductory Psalm

Psalm 92

The Leader recites aloud the sections in bold text.

A Psalm, a Song, for the Sabbath day: It good to thank the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High. To declare Your loving kindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness in the nights, with an lyre and psaltery, with harp and song. For You, O Lord, have made me glad through Your deeds. I will exult in the works of Your hands! How great are Your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep; A boor cannot know and a fool cannot understand: when the wicked spring like grass and the workers of iniquity flourish, it is so that they may be destroyed forever. But You, O Lord, are eternally exalted. Indeed, Your enemies, O Lord, your enemies shall perish.. All evildoers shall be scattered. But my horn you will raise up like the horn of the wild-ox; I am anointed with fresh oil! My eyes have seen those that lie in wait for me; my ears have heard when the wicked have arisen against me. **The righteous shall flourish like a date-palm; they shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish in the courtyards of our God. They**

will bear fruit in old age and remain strong and fresh, declaring that the Lord is upright, My Rock, in whom there is no injustice.

Introductory Nighttime Psalm & Verses¹¹

A Song of Ascents: Behold, bless The Lord, all you servants of the Lord who stand in the House of the Lord in the nights. Lift your hands in the Sanctuary and bless the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion, the Maker of heaven and earth.¹²

In perfect peace I will lie down and sleep; for You, O Lord, will set me apart and secure my dwelling.¹³ At dawn, the Lord will command His kindness; at night His resting place is with me – a prayer to the God of my life!¹⁴ The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; their might in a time of distress. The Lord helps them and enables their escape; He enables their escape from the wicked and will save them, for they have taken refuge in Him.¹⁵

Sanctification¹⁶

The Sanctification is omitted by one praying alone.

Leader: May His great name be ever exalted and sanctified (**Cong.:** Amen!) in the world that He created according to His will. May His kingship reign in our lifetimes and in our days, swiftly and soon, and we say: Amen!

Cong.: Amen! May His great Name be blessed forever and ever!

Leader: May His great name be blessed forever and ever. Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded is the name of the Holy One,

¹¹ Inclusion of these Psalm verses is adapted from *Nusach Sfard*, the Chassidic rite version of the *siddur*.

¹² Psalm 134.

¹³ Ibid. 4:9.

¹⁴ Ibid. 42:9.

¹⁵ Ibid. 37:39-40.

¹⁶ Adapted from the *Chatzji Kaddish*.

Blessed is He (**Cong.:** Blessed is He!) exceedingly beyond any blessing and song or praise and consolation that may be uttered in the world, and we say: Amen (**Cong.:** Amen!)

Call to Prayer¹⁷

The Call to Prayer is omitted by one praying alone.

Leader: Blessed is The Lord, the Blessed One!

Cong.: Blessed is The Lord, the Blessed One, for all eternity!

Leader: Blessed is The Lord, the Blessed One, for all eternity!

Acceptance of God's Kingship¹⁸

All aloud: Almighty God, we accept upon ourselves Your sovereign kingship and mastery:

All continue individually:

You alone are our God,
You alone are our King,
You alone are omnipotent, and
You alone are eternal.

You alone are our creator,
You alone are our savior.
You alone do we worship, and to
You alone do we give thanks.

As it is written in Your holy Torah: “You shall know this day and take unto your heart that God alone is God; in the heavens above and upon the earth below – there is none other!”¹⁹ And, “You shall love your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your means,”²⁰ and to “Fear God, your God, and serve Him, and to vow in His name only.”²¹

¹⁷ Adapted from *Borchu*.

¹⁸ In Jewish prayer, this purpose is accomplished by recitation of the *Shema*.

¹⁹ Deut. 4:39.

²⁰ Deut. 6:5.

²¹ Deut. 6:13.

Leader: The Lord shall reign for all eternity!²²

Cong: The Lord shall reign for all eternity!

Lay Us Down to Sleep...²³

All continue with the following prayer.

The Leader recites the concluding verses, in bold text, aloud.

Lay us down to sleep, Lord, Our God, in peace. Raise us erect, our King, to Life. Spread over us the shelter of your peace, set us right with good counsel from before You, and save us for Your Name's sake. Shield us and save us for Your Name's sake. Shield us, remove from us foe, plague, sword, famine, and woe; remove spiritual adversaries from before us and from behind us. **Shelter us in the shadow of your wings for you are God, who protects and rescues, and because you are God, King, who is merciful and compassionate. Safeguard our going and coming – for life and for peace, from now and to all eternity. Blessed are You, O Lord, the great protector. (Cong: Amen)**

The Silent Prayer²⁴

Having praised God and accepted His kingship, we now offer our personal requests. This prayer should be said quietly, but not silently.²⁵ Just as one should stand when making requests before a king, so too should he stand when beseeching the King of Kings.

For Wisdom²⁶

You graciously endow man with wisdom and teach insight to a frail mortal. Endow me graciously from Your knowledge, understanding, and insight. Blessed are you, O Lord, the Giver of wisdom.

²² Exodus 15:18.

²³ Adapted from the *Hashkivenu* prayer.

²⁴ Adapted from the *Amidah*, the silent prayer that forms the core of the *siddur*.

²⁵ See *Igros Moshe* OC II: 25 that Noahides should verbalize their prayers. Purely mental prayer, even by Jews, is used only in extenuating circumstances.

²⁶ From the fourth blessing of the *Amidah*.

*For Return*²⁷

Return me, my father, to your commandments. Bring me near, my King, to Your service; return me to you in perfect repentance. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who desires repentance.

*For Forgiveness*²⁸

Forgive me, my Father, for I have erred. Pardon me, my King, for I have willfully transgressed - for it is You Who grants forgiveness and pardon. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who pardons abundantly.

*For Healing*²⁹

Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed. Save us and we shall be saved - for You are our praise. Bring complete recovery for all of our ailments, **[this is an appropriate place to insert a specific prayer for one who is sick: *May it be your will, Lord, my God, that you speedily send a complete recovery, both spiritual and physical, from heaven to _____,*]** for You are God, King, the faithful and compassionate Healer. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who heals the sick.

*For Sustenance & Livelihood*³⁰

Bless for us for good, O Lord, our God, this year and all its produce. Give blessing upon the face of the earth, and satisfy us from your bounty. For me, O Lord, provide me and all who depend upon me our allotment of bread; in contentment but not in pain, in honor and not in disgrace, for life and for peace, and from the flow of blessing and success. Make me not needful of other people's largesse, and fulfill in me the verse: "You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing,"³¹ and "Cast your burden upon the Lord and he will support you."³² Blessed are You, O Lord, Who sustains the world.

²⁷ Adapted from the fifth blessing of the *Amidah*.

²⁸ Adapted from the sixth blessing of the *Amidah*.

²⁹ Adapted from the fifth blessing of the *Amidah*.

³⁰ Adapted from the ninth blessing of the *Amidah* and incorporating the text of a traditional prayer for sustenance.

³¹ Psalms 145:16.

³² Ibid. 55:23.

*For Redemption of the World*³⁵

Hasten the day of the ultimate redemption, the day upon which it is written “God will be King over the entire earth – on that day God will be One and His Name will be One;”³⁴ “For then I will turn the nations to pure language, so that all will call upon the name of God to serve Him with one purpose;”³⁵ and “They will not harm or destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with knowledge of God as the water covering the Sea bed.”³⁶ Blessed are You, O Lord, Who brings redemption.

*For Acceptance of Prayer*³⁷

Hear our voice, O Lord, our God, and accept with compassion and pity our prayer. For you are the God who hears prayer and supplications. Do not turn us away from you empty-handed [this is an appropriate place to insert personal prayers for all of one’s needs] for you hear the prayer of all peoples. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who hears prayer.

Giving Thanks

*It is praiseworthy to bow at “I gratefully thank you...,” straightening at “Lord.”*³⁸

I gratefully thank You, for it is You who are Lord, my God, the Rock of my life. I will thank You and relate Your praise for my life, which is committed to Your power, and for my soul, which is entrusted to you, and for Your miracles and wonders that are with us every season, evening, morning, and afternoon. You are The Beneficent One - for Your compassion is never exhausted. You are The Compassionate One – for Your kindness is without end. For all these things, may Your Name be blessed and exalted, my King, forever and ever. Every living thing will gratefully thank you and praise Your Name sincerely, O God of salvation and help. Blessed are You, O Lord, for “The Beneficent One” is Your name and to You alone is it fitting to give thanks.

³³ This blessing does not have a single corollary in the *Amidah*. It is adapted from the themes and purposes of the seventh, eleventh to fifteenth, and seventeenth blessings of the *Amidah*.

³⁴ Zecharia 14:9.

³⁵ Zephania 3:9.

³⁶ Isaiah 11:9.

³⁷ Adapted from the sixteenth blessing of the *Amidah*.

³⁸ Talmud, *Berachos* 34a. Though the Talmud praises a person for bowing here, it chastises one for bowing in other sections of prayer. Doing so is considered “over-indulgent” in praising God. While God’s praise is certainly without end, it is not healthy to over-use certain expressions of that praise. See *Berachos* 33b and *Megilla* 18a.

*For Peace*³⁹

Establish peace, goodness, blessing, favor, kindness, and compassion upon us and upon all peoples of the world. May it be good in Your eyes to bless us in every season and in every moment with Your peace. Blessed are you, O Lord, who makes peace.

Concluding Supplication

My God, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceit. To those who would curse me, let my soul be silent; let my soul be like dust to all. Open my heart to your will so that my soul will pursue it. As for all those plan evil against me, quickly nullify their counsel, frustrate their designs. Act for Your Name's sake, act for Your right-hand's sake, act for Your sanctity's sake. Let Your right hand save and respond to me.

May the expressions of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart find favor before you, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

One takes three steps back at this point, as if taking leave of a king.

Bow to the left and say: He who makes peace in His heights,

Bow to the right and say: May He Make peace upon us,

Bow forward and say: And upon the entire world.

One straightens and concludes: And we say: Amen.

Remain in place for a moment, and then take three steps forward.

The silent prayer is concluded.

Declaring the Seventh Day & the Completion of Creation

*When the majority of those present have completed their silent prayer,
all recite the following aloud with the Leader:*

“The heavens, earth, and all their legions were finished. On the Seventh Day, God completed all of the work he had done, and He abstained on the Seventh Day from all the labor that He had done. God blessed the Seventh Day and sanctified it, for on it He abstained from all the work of creation which he had completed.”

³⁹ Adapted from the nineteenth and final blessing of the *Amidah*. It is fair to ask why a request for peace is placed after the thanksgiving prayer; after all, the conventional formula of prayer is praise, then requests, and then thanks. There are a number of explanations. See Responsa of the *Maharam MiRuttenburg* 38; *Tur* and commentaries at OC 128; The general idea is that the concluding three prayers (for *Acceptance of Prayer*, *Thanks*, and *Peace*), taken together, constitute a formula of “leave-taking” that concludes the personal prayer with God.

We Bend Our Knees...

*One should bend the knees at We bend our knees,
bow at the words ...bow down... , and straighten up at ...King of kings...*

The Leader recites passages in bold text aloud.

We bend our knee, bow down, and give thanks, before the King of kings, the Holy One blessed is He, Who stretches forth the heavens and founded the earth, Whose honored abode is in the heavens above, and Whose powerful presence is in the most exalted heights. He is our God; there is none else. True is our king, and there is nothing besides Him, as it is written in His Torah: “Know this day and take to your heart that the Lord is God; in the heaven above and on the earth below - there is none other.”

Therefore, we place our hope in You, Lord our God, that we may soon behold your mighty splendor; to banish idolatry from the earth. False gods will be utterly cut off; to perfect the world through the Almighty’s sovereignty. All humanity shall call in Your Name, returning the wicked of the world unto you. Then all the inhabitants of the world will recognize and know that to you every knee should bend and to Your Name every tongue should pledge. Before You, Lord our God, they will bow and prostrate themselves, and render honor unto the glory of Your Name; they will all accept upon themselves the yoke of Your kingship so that You may reign over them, soon, forever and ever. For the kingdom is Yours and You will reign in all eternity, as it is written in Your Torah: “The Lord will reign forever and ever.” And it is said: **“The Lord will be King over the entire world – on that day the Lord will be One and His Name will be One.”**

Seasonal Addition: Psalm 27

*To be recited in the morning and at sunset (or at night), daily, from the 1st of Elul to the 21st of Tishrei.
Leader reads the concluding verses aloud.*

Of David: the Lord is my light⁴⁰ and my salvation.⁴¹ Of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I dread? When evil-doers – my

⁴⁰ The Midrash understands this as a reference to Rosh HaShanah.

⁴¹ The salvation mentioned here is the atonement of the holiday season. For Jews it refers to the atonement of Yom Kippur, for Noahides the atonement of Sukkot.

tormentors and opponents⁴² – draw near to devour my flesh, it is they who stumble and fall. Though an army may besiege me, my heart will not fear. Should warfare arise against me, in this alone I shall trust.⁴³ I have asked one thing of the Lord, only this have I sought: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the pleasantness of the Lord, and to meditate within his sanctuary.⁴⁴ On the day of evil He will hide me within His shelter. He will conceal me in the innermost shelter of his tent. He will lift me up upon a rock. And now he will raise my head above my foes who surround me. I will slaughter in his tent joyous offerings. I will sing and make music to the Lord. O Lord, hear my voice when I call! Favor me and answer me! For your sake has my heart spoken to me: “Seek his presence!” O God, I seek your presence! Do not conceal your countenance from me! Do not repel your servant in anger! You have been my help. Do not forsake me; do not abandon me, O God of my salvation! Though my father and mother have abandoned me,⁴⁵ The Lord shall gather me in. Teach me your way, O Lord, and on account of my watchful foes⁴⁶ set me upon a straight path. Do not give me over to their wishes for they have set against me false witnesses who breathe violence. **Had I not believed⁴⁷ that I would see the**

⁴² The evil-doers and opponents mentioned in this psalm are primarily internal. They are the devices of the *yetzer ha-ra*, the evil inclination. They are also the memories and emotions associated with one’s past misdeeds. These memories often torment a person and hamper their ability to return to God. This will be discussed more in a future lesson.

⁴³ *Rashi* and *Radak* explain that this refers to the opening line “The Lord is my light and my salvation,” which is the process of Rosh HaShanah and subsequent atonement. One must trust in this process. Once a person has returned to God and reestablished a positive relationship with Him, God will protect and shelter him. Alternatively, *Ibn Ezra* explains that this phrase refers to the next sentence: *I have asked one thing of the Lord, only this have I sought: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life...* One should trust in God because he (the penitent) ultimately desires spiritual success and not the vain achievements of this world.

⁴⁴ The *Malbim* writes that, despite the many desires and needs a person may have, the desire to know his creator is the ultimate, all inclusive desire of the soul.

⁴⁵ *Sforno* explains that once a person becomes an adult he must find his own way in the world. He can no longer rely upon his parents to make choices for him. He must choose his values and make his own decisions. Although his parents are no longer his guiding voice, God is always there. God is eternally our Father and guide.

⁴⁶ The Hebrew here is a little difficult to translate. The word for “Watchful foes” is related to the word for “staring” or “gazing.” In the context of our verse, it refers to those who stare maliciously. The psalm is asking God to frustrate the wishes of those who maliciously watch and mock one who wishes to come back to God. See *Radak*.

⁴⁷ *Rashi* explains: Were it not for my faith in God, my enemies would have destroyed me and I would have never merited achieving closeness to Him.

goodness of the Lord in the land of life!⁴⁸ Hope to the Lord! Be strong and He will give you courage⁴⁹ – and hope to the Lord!

Song: Master of the World⁵⁰

Master of the universe, who reigned before any form was created,
At the time when His will brought all into being, then as King was His Name
proclaimed.

After all will cease to be, He, the Awesome One, will reign alone.

It is He Who was, He Who is, and He Who shall remain, in splendor.

He is One, there is no second to compare to Him, to call His equal.

Without beginning and without end, He is the power and the dominion.

He is my God, my living Redeemer, the rock of my pain in times of distress.

He is my banner, my refuge, the portion in my cup on the day that I call.

When I sleep, I entrust my spirit into His hand – and I shall awaken!

With my spirit my body shall remain – For God is with me, I shall not fear.

The Evening Meal

Blessing of the Children

The father (and/ or Mother) places their hands upon the child's head and says:

May The Lord guide you and shepherd You to walk in His ways, to be counted among
the Righteous of the Nations. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He shine
His face upon you and be gracious to you. May he shine His face upon you, and grant
you peace.

⁴⁸ Meaning the World to Come. See *Brachos* 4a.

⁴⁹ Strength in faith is the ultimate source of all courage.

⁵⁰ Translation of *Adon Olam*, a famous liturgical poem found in the *siddur* and recited before morning prayers. *Adon Olam* was written in the 11th century by the great Spanish poet Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol.

Song: In Praise of One's Wife

The husband and children then sing Woman of Valor (Proverbs 31:10-31).

Who can find a woman of valor?
Her worth is more precious than pearls.
His heart trusts in her
and lacks no treasure.
She does him good, never bad,
all the days of her life.
She seeks out wool and linen,
and her hands work willingly.
She is like a merchant's ship,
bringing her food from afar.
She rises while it is yet nighttime,
and gives food to her household,
the daily fare of her maidens.
She envisions a field and acquires it;
from the fruit of her handiwork
she plants a vineyard.
She girds herself with strength,
and invigorates her arms.
She tastes and sees that her business is good,
and her lamp never goes out at night.
She sets her hands to the distaff;
and her fingers work the spindle.
She spreads out her palm to the poor;
her hands are stretched out to the needy.
She fears not snow for her household,
for her whole house is dressed in
scarlet.
She makes covers for herself;
her clothing is linen and purple [wool].
Her husband is prominent in the gates,
as he sits among the elders of the land.
She makes cloth and sells it,
and delivers a belt to the merchant.
She is clothed in strength and splendor;
she looks to the future cheerfully.
She opens her mouth in wisdom,
and kindly teaching is on her tongue.

She oversees the activities of her household,
and never eats the bread of idleness.
Her children rise to declare her happy,
her husband praises her.
Many daughters have done well,
but you surpassed them all.
Grace is false, beauty is fleeting,
it is for her fear of God that a woman is to be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands,
and her works shall praise her in the gates.

Blessing on Bread

The Blessing on bread is made by the leader on 1 loaf⁵¹ on behalf of all present.

Leader: Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the Earth (**Guests: Amen!**)

*The loaf is then cut and distributed.
One should refrain from speaking from after answering “Amen” until having partaken of the bread.*

The meal is a time for joyous song and words of Torah.

Concluding the Meal

Psalm 67⁵²

For the Conductor upon the *Neginos*, a Psalm, a song: May God favor us and bless us, may He illuminate His countenance with us, *Selah*. To make known Your way upon the earth, among all the nations Your salvation. Then peoples will acknowledge You, O God, the peoples will acknowledge You – all of them.

⁵¹ One should make the blessing on two loaves, for this is unique to the Jewish observance of Shabbat.

⁵² The Jewish practice is to recite Psalm 126 before concluding the meal. This psalm expresses the hope for redemption of the Jewish people. Psalm 67, however, is more appropriate for Noahides because it refers to the entire world and its peoples coming to know God. It also refers to God as the source of all blessing, food, and produce.

Nations will be glad and sing for Joy, because you will judge the peoples fairly and guide with fairness the nations on the earth, Selah! Then peoples will acknowledge you, O God, the peoples will acknowledge You – all of them! The earth will then have yielded its produce, may God, our God, bless us, May God bless us, and may all the ends of the earth fear him!

At the conclusion of the meal, the following blessing is recited either by all together, each person to him or herself, or by the leader on behalf of all present, who respond “Amen.”

**Blessed is the God of the universe of
Whose bounty we have eaten.**