

ברכון שלום רב  
The Shalom Rav Birkon



KOREN JERUSALEM



Rabbi Shalom Rosner

ברכון שלום רב  
SHALOM  
RAV  
BIRKON

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

Marc Lesnick

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## לעילוי נשמת חיים מאיר בן יהושע ז"ל

*This birkon is dedicated to the memory of my dear father z"l,  
Dr. Fred Rosner, who returned his soul to his Creator  
during the preparation of this work.*

*My father, my first rebbi, was a giant in Torah, a giant in medicine,  
and a giant in middot. He, along with my dear mother a"h,  
instilled and imbued in all of his progeny a thirst for mitzvot,  
a love for Hashem, and the desire to use every minute to the fullest.  
At the Shabbos table, he went in order, singing each and every zemer  
in the birkon. He relished the opportunity to connect with Hashem  
and his family through song, being mindful of the meaning of the  
words being chanted. The birkon is a most appropriate way  
to memorialize his dedication, commitment, and love,  
both for Hashem as well as for all those around him.*

*May his memory be a blessing  
and serve to guide us for years to come.*



*This birkon is dedicated in honor of our dear parents*

*Rabbi David & Eileen z"l Lesnick*

*Shaya z"l & Rhona Bar Chama*

*Who have served as role models  
for us and our children as individuals dedicated  
to Torah, avoda, and gemilut hasadim.*

*And to our dear children*

*Ariel & Rinat, Ori, Noam, and Shahar*

*Adena & Netanel*

*Sarit & Yonatan, Zohar, and Nili*

*Rami & Achinoam, Aviv, and Lavi*

*Amichai & Dalia*

*Each of whom continually brings us tremendous naht.*

*Tamar & Marc Lesnick*

זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקִדְשׁוֹ,  
קִרְנוּ כִּי גְבָהָה נִזְרַעַל רֵאשׁוֹ.  
עַל כֵּן יִתֵּן הָאֲדָם לְנַפְשׁוֹ,  
עֲנֵג וְגַם שְׂמֵחָה בָּהֶם לֹא לְמִשְׁחָה.  
הַשׁוֹמֵר שַׁבָּת, הֵבֵן עִם הַבַּת,  
לְאֵל יִרְצוּ כְּמִנְחָה עַל מַחְבַּת.

לזכר נשמת

## אהרן אשר זעליג בן יעקב יצחק ז"ל

אבינו וסבנו, שקולו ורוחו מילאו את ביתנו ביופיים של שירי שבת. הוא לימד אותנו לא רק את המנגינות, אלא גם את המשמעות העמוקה יותר מאחורי המילים – הקדושה והשמחה שהשבת מביאה. באמצעות הדוגמה שהוא נתן לנו, למדנו איך כוחן של זמירות שבת מחבר אותנו למסורת, לאמונה ואחד לשני. אנו מקווים כי הערך של ספר זה ישמש הוקרה הולמת לזכרו, ימשיך את מורשת השיר, האהבה והמסירות שהוא חלק איתנו בנדיבות כה רבה.

*In loving memory of our father and grandfather, **George Saks** z"l, whose voice and spirit filled our home with the beauty of zemirot on Shabbat. He taught us not only the melodies, but the deeper meaning behind the words of the zemirot – the sanctity and joy that Shabbat brings. Through his example, we learned the power of song in connecting us to tradition, to faith, and to each other. It is our hope that the merit of this book serves as a fitting tribute to his memory, continuing the legacy of song, love, and devotion he shared with us.*

משפחות סאקס



*In honor of our parents*

*Rochelle and Leo Goldberg*

*on their 60th wedding anniversary*

*and in memory of*

*Elliot Goldberg*

יצחק אייזיק בן הרב אליעזר

*Zack Meller*

יחזקאל פסח יהודה בן שלמה

*Josh, Evelyn and Phillip Goldberg*

*Adrienne and Shaun Meller*

*Rebecca and Guy Mizrachi*

*Aliza and Zoe Meller*

*In loving memory of our parents*

**חיים מאיר וחנה שרה רוזנר ז"ל**

*who made every Shabbat and Chag special and memorable for their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. They exemplified the significance of Torah and showed us the tremendous importance of family. We were very blessed to have them as our parents and role models, full of warmth, support and unconditional love, always giving and doing everything for us and always making each of us feel special.*

*They are greatly missed.*

*Mitchel and Lydia Rosner, Miriam Goldberg,  
Aviva and Michael Taragin, Shalom and Tamar Rosner  
and their families*

*In honor of our dear brother*

***Rabbi Shalom Rosner***

*who continues to be an outstanding source of Torah for Klal Yisrael.  
May you continue to spread Torah, with such knowledge, passion,  
and enthusiasm, all over the world.*

*And in honor of Tamar, who provides unlimited support  
and assistance to him and the entire community.*

*Mitchel, Lydia, Miriam, Aviva, and Michael*

*In honor and appreciation of*  
*Rabbi Shalom and Dr. Tamar Rosner*



*In honor of our parents*  
*Evie and Alden Leifer*  
*Suzanne and Avi Stokar*

*For making zemirot a staple of our Shabbat tables.*  
*And to our siblings*  
*for the cherished memories and joy of singing together.*

*ונרחיב פה ונמלאנה לשוננו לך רינה*

*Mira and Daniel Stokar*



*In memory of*  
*Drs. Stanley and Frances Minkowitz*

*Sheindy and Jerry Minkowitz*

לעילוי נשמת  
שמואל בן ישראל צבי  
זיסל בת יצחק  
ישראל בן שמעון

from the Braun Family



*With deep appreciation to Rabbi Rosner's harbatzos Torah and his continuous dedication to helping us learn all aspects of Torah.*

*May Hashem reward you and your family for helping us all grow.*

*Caroline and Morris Massel*



*In loving memory of our dear son, Eli Moshe Zimbalist, HY"D*

לזכר נשמת אליהו משה שלמה בן שמעון איתן ושרה צימבליסט, הי"ד  
שמסר את נפשו על קדושת ה' בטי' בסיוון ה'תשפ"ד  
נוכר את אהבתו לארץ ישראל, לתורת ישראל ולעם ישראל.  
היה ענו ואהוב על כולם, בעל לב זהב וידי זהב.

*Sara and Simmy Zimbalist & Family*



*In memory of*

*יחזקאל צבי בן משה הלוי*

*He was honored to be called a talmid of Rav Rosner.*

*Dovid & Faygie Meisels*

*Yitzchok & Tamar Meisels, Avigayil, Meira & Shmuel*

*Eitan & Devorah Rozenberg, Chava, Tehilla & Chezi*

*Yehuda, Yoni & Yaakov*



*LZ"N Avrohom Menachem ben Eliyahu Meir*

*A Holocaust survivor who loved to sing Shabbos zmiros with his family.*



*תודה רבי, שתלך מחיל אל חיל! קלמן אוסובל*



*In honor of our dear friends and neighbors, Rabbi Shalom and Dr. Tamar Rosner,  
with whom we and our children continue to share many Shabbat meals  
in each other's homes.*

*מוזמר שיר ליום השבת - טוב להודות לה' ולומר לשמך עליון*

*Wishing us all many years of continued הצלחה, ברכה, and friendship.*

*Chani and Jason Schwartz and family*

*Friends*

*Aharon Goldwasser*

*Marcelle A. Agus*

*Meir and Shandee Fuchs*

*Daniel Blender*

*Bracha and Dovid Schreiber*

*Becca and Yosef Madowicz*

*Cindy & Jonathan Sherman and Family*

*Davida & Gary Stadtmauer*

*Steven and Michelle Farbman*

לע"נ הרב אברהם אריה בן ר' יעקב הכהן  
והרב יצחק זלמן בן הרב אברהם שלמה

*Susan, Michael, Simcha Nachman,  
Elchanan Yosef & Tuvia Leib Geller*

*Eliezer Rosenblatt*

*Phyllis and Jack Rubel*

*Joel and Debbie Spier*

*Rozen family*



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# Preface

In a Jewish library, there are *sefarim* that we “learn” and *sefarim* that we “read.” *Humashim*, *mishnayot*, and Talmud are studied and learned, while *siddurim*, *Tehillim*, and *birkonim* are read and recited at various appropriate times. This is not the ideal reality, however. All *sefarim* contain material that needs to be studied, analyzed, and appreciated. The latter group’s recitation would be much more meaningful if we first put in the time for preparation and study. Imagine what our *tefilla* would look like if we had an “*iyun*” *seder* in *siddur*, preparing for our meeting with Hashem.

*Birkon Shalom Rav* is a humble contribution toward this end. The *birkon*, found on every Shabbat table, is a potentially inspirational treasure for each and every Shabbat meal. From the mitzvot of *Kiddush*, *Havdala*, and *Birkat HaMazon*, to the lifecycle events of *sheva berakhot* and *brit mila*, and of course the *Rishonim*-authored *zemirot*, our *birkon* is an overflowing reservoir of material to uplift our Shabbat experience and to edify our spiritual yearnings. In this *birkon*, commentary has been presented to peruse during the singing, or better yet, to prepare beforehand to share with all the attendees, to make the mitzva or *zemer* that much more meaningful.

I had planned to publish a *birkon* at some point in the future, but upon my father’s passing this past summer, I knew that this had to become my priority. My father’s Shabbat was filled with *ruhniyut*. He learned the *parasha* on Friday night and had a 7 a.m. *havruta* each Shabbat morning before *Shaharit*. He also sang, in order, every single *zemer* in the *birkon*. Whether he was teaching us the European tunes he learned in his youth, or joining our more modern rhythms, my father relished the singing

◀ time

time with the family, imparting to us *simha* and emotion at each meal. He and my mother *a"n* together led our family's Shabbat table for sixty-three wonderful years. May this *birkon* be an eternal testament to their commitment and devotion to Shabbat, to Hashem, and to their family.

Rabbi Shalom Rosner  
Beit Shemesh, 2025

# Introduction

Rav Shalom Rosner has a unique ability to transmit Torah from a variety of sources in a simple and concise manner. I cannot comprehend how Rav Rosner is able to give so many *shiurim* on a weekly basis on various topics, including *parasha*, *Nakh*, *dafyomi*, *Hilkhos Shabbat* (*Tzurba D'Rabbanan*), *Semikhat Haver*, and others, all while serving as Rav of a shul and as the Rosh Bet Midrash at Machon Lev.

About a year ago, Rav Rosner approached me at a *simha* we were attending and said, “You know, we really should print a *Shalom Rav birkon*.” Shortly thereafter, Rav Rosner initiated a weekly *shiur* that served as the basis for this *birkon*.

In *Parashat Vayeshev* (37:2), Rashi states:

בקש יעקב לישב בשלוח, קפץ עליו רגזו של יוסף. צדיקים מבקשים לישב בשלוח,  
אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לא דיין לצדיקים מה שמתוקן להם לעולם הבא, אלא  
שמבקשים לישב בשלוח בעולם הזה.

Yaakov wished to live in tranquility, but the troubles with Yosef suddenly came upon him. When the righteous wish to live in tranquility, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: “Is it not enough for the righteous what has been prepared for them in the World to Come, that they also wish to live in tranquility in this world?”

Yaakov lived quite a difficult life, running from Esav and dealing with the devious Lavan. Once he returns to Israel with a family, he just wants to keep a low profile and take it easy. Yet, as many commentators state

◀ see *Shalom Rav*

(see *Shalom Rav Al HaTorah, Parashat Vayeshev*), man's duty to serve the community and spread Torah never ends.

Rav Rosner has the attitude that there is constantly more to achieve. There is always so much more to learn and to teach; his job is never completed. May *HaKadosh Barukh Hu* grant Rav Rosner a long, healthy, happy, and fruitful life so that he can continue to spread Torah!

Our Shabbat meals have been enhanced by Rav Rosner's *divrei Torah* on the *parasha*, and I am excited that we will now be able to further enrich our Shabbat with *divrei Torah* on *zemiroth* and *Birkat HaMazon*. I apologize in advance to Rav Rosner and to the readers if there are any errors. They are likely my fault. I tried my best to enable the reader to hear Rav Rosner's voice while transmitting the "oral" word in a reader-friendly "written" manner.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Rav Rosner, who has had such a profound impact on my life and on the lives of each of my family members. We are all guided by his inspiring thoughts and ideas. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rav Asher Weiss, who has inspired me personally in so many ways.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my father, who is my guiding light. We share *divrei Torah* on a daily basis. Practically everything that I share with others that I did not hear from Rav Rosner and Rav Weiss comes from my father. I look up to my father, who is a businessman and yet spends hours each day learning Torah and preparing for *shiurim* that he gives in his community. May Hashem bless my dear Aba with health so that he can continue to spread Torah for many more years.

My mother passed away a little over two years ago. Each week, she would share with me her thoughts on the weekly entries in *Shalom Rav Al HaTorah*. I know she would have appreciated reading and discussing the content of this *birkon*. May she look down from above and be rewarded for having inspired me to continue to make Torah accessible to readers.

I would also like to thank Matthew Miller, Rabbi Reuven Ziegler, Aryeh Grossman, Ita Olesker, Caryn Meltz, David Silverstein, Meira Mintz, Tani Bayer and Tali Simon for their support and uncompromising efforts in ensuring that this *birkon* be presented in the most professional manner.

*Aharon, aharon haviv* – I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my *eshet hayil*, Tamar. Without her encouragement, support, and

◀ partnership

partnership, I would not have been able to achieve this feat or any other. She is a true *ezer kenegdo*, and I cherish our relationship. In addition, I want to thank each of our children, their spouses, and my grandchildren: Ariel and Rinat and their children, Ori, Noam, and Shahar; Adena and Netanel Weil; Sarit and Yonatan Kurtzman and their children, Zohar and Nili; Rami and Achinoam and their children, Aviv and Lavi; and Amichai and Dalia, with whom I discuss Rav Rosner's *divrei Torah* during our Shabbat meals together. It brings me great *nahat* when I hear them share these thoughts with others. May Hashem continue to watch over each of you and enable you to continue to positively influence others through your tremendous acts of *hesed* and through Torah.

I would also like to thank all my friends and shul buddies, as well as Rav Rosner "junkies" with whom we share Torah and who have encouraged me to continue to print Rav Rosner's *shiurim*. I hope that all who use this *birkon* enjoy the content, internalize it, and share it with others. May the singing of *zemirot* be more meaningful, and may its words reach the heavens!

Marc Lesnick  
Beit Shemesh, 2025



# ברכון שלום רב

BIRKON SHALOM RAV





ליל שבת

SHABBAT EVENING

# Candle Lighting

*On Erev Shabbat that is not a Yom Tov, cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles, and say:*

**בְּרוּךְ** Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has made us holy through His commandments, and has commanded us to light the Sabbath light.

Essentially, whose home court is the location? When we enter the *Mikdash*, we are guests in God's home and act accordingly. We are more respectful of the location. We take off our shoes, and we do not use it as a shortcut. In contrast, when we are in shul, it is our home court and God is the guest, so standards are a bit lower. We can wear shoes, yet we respect the *kedusha* of the location and do not allow people to use our property as a shortcut.

The Rav explains that the relationship between the *Beit HaMikdash* and a *Beit HaKenesset* in *space* is parallel to the relationship between Yom Tov and Shabbat in *time*. On Yom Tov we are obligated to perform *aliya leregel*. We leave our homes and journey to the *Beit HaMikdash*, which is considered God's domain. Therefore, we dress in fancier garments and are in a greater state of happiness, excited to be a guest in God's palace. We do not have a *Kabbalat Yom Tov* prayer, welcoming the Yom Tov, since conceptually, we are going to Him. On Shabbat, in contrast, God comes to us, to our home, and the standards are therefore lowered. Appropriate, but not the most expensive clothing, suffices. We have *Kabbalat Shabbat*, since we are welcoming in the Shabbat Queen. It is our responsibility to create the proper atmosphere in our homes on Shabbat and Yom Tov to merit to be in the intense presence of the *Shekhina*.

## HADLAKAT NEIROT SHABBAT

### WHY TWO SHABBAT CANDLES?

The Rambam in *Hilkhot Shabbat* (5:1) discusses the importance of lighting candles on Friday night:

ולוקח שמן ומדליק את הנר שזה בכלל עונג שבת, אפילו אין לו מה יאכל שואל על הפתחים.

One takes oil and lights a candle, as this is part of *oneg Shabbat*; even if one does not have anything to eat, he should borrow money for wicks.

Yet, later in *Hilkhot Shabbat* (30:5), the Rambam writes:

צריך 

## הדלקת נרות

On *ערב שבת* that is not a *יום טוב*, cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles, and say:

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

### SHABBAT: HASHEM VISITS WITH US

In a *yahrzeit shiur*,<sup>1</sup> Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik asked the following three questions with respect to the comparison of Shabbat and Yom Tov:

1. Why is it that on Erev Yom Tov there is no *Kabbalat Yom Tov* prayer, similar to what we recite as *Kabbalat Shabbat* on Erev Shabbat? Why do we not recite *Lekhu Neranena* or *Lekha Dodi* on Erev Yom Tov?
2. In *Massekhet Moed Katan* 23b, *Tosafot* asks why it is that a *mo'ed* breaks the customs of *aveilut* (mourning), while Shabbat does not. *Tosafot* explains that only on Yom Tov is there *simha*, while on Shabbat there is *oneg*. *Aveilut* can coexist with *oneg*, but not with *simha*. But that just begs the question: Why is there no *simha* on Shabbat?
3. The *Hagahot Maimoniyot* (*Hilkhot Yom Tov*, ch. 6) states that on Yom Tov one should wear special clothes that are even nicer than what one adorns on Shabbat. Why is that so?

To answer these questions, the Rav draws upon an analogy from another area of Halakha. In *Massekhet Megilla* (28), the Gemara declares that a desolate shul retains its *kedusha* (sanctity), comparable to the *Beit HaMikdash*. After all, shul is referred to as a *mikdash me'at* (a small temple). There are numerous halakhic parallels between a shul and the *Mikdash*. Thus, for example, one cannot use a shul or the *Mikdash* as a shortcut or treat either of them in a disgraceful way. Yet, there are also distinctions between them. One cannot wear shoes or a money belt in the *Mikdash*, but in a shul one is permitted to wear shoes and carry a wallet. Why the distinction?

The Gemara in *Berakhot* (62b) tells us in the name of Rava: *Ki beito* – A shul is like one's home. That is why a shortcut is not allowed (as you would not allow neighbors to use your living room as a shortcut), while shoes may be worn (as they would be worn in one's home). The Rav expands this idea, explaining that both a shul and the *Mikdash* are places where we meet God intensely; the only distinction is who is the host and who is the guest.

<sup>1</sup> Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, *Shiurim LeZekher Avi Mori*.

On Erev Yom Tov, say the following blessing and then light the candles from an existing flame. If also Shabbat, cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles and say the following blessing, adding the words in parentheses.

**בְּרַךְ** Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has made us holy through His commandments, and has commanded us to light (the Sabbath light and) the festival light.

*The blessing “Sheheheyanu” (“Who has given life”) is said on Yom Tov evenings, except on the last two evenings of Pesah. (In Israel, it is not said on the last evening of Pesah.)*

**בְּרַךְ** Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and brought us to this time.

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and Yom Kippur candles.<sup>2</sup> The *berakha* is always “*lehadlik ner*” in the singular, as the *ikkar* (primary) mitzva is to light a single candle, although the custom is to light more than one candle.

The *Shulhan Arukh* (263:1) writes in *Hilkhot Shabbat* that there is a custom to light two candles, symbolizing *shamor* and *zakhor*, the two terms used in connection with Shabbat in the first and second *luhot*. *Shamor* represents the prohibitions, and *zakhor* reflects the positive commandments with respect to Shabbat. This is based on a *gemara* (Shabbat 33b), which recounts the story of R. Shimon Bar Yohai and his son: After spending an extensive period in a cave, they leave the cave and see a man walking with two bundles of myrtle branches (*hadassim*) on Erev Shabbat. They ask why he needs the two bundles, and he responds, “This is for Shabbat - one is for *shamor* and the other for *zakhor*.” Although Rav Shimon Bar Yohai and his son had been in a cave for several years in an intense way with unadulterated pure *kedusha*, they learned a lesson from this anonymous man - that one can infuse *kedusha* into every aspect on one’s life, especially at the Shabbat table.

### שְׂהֵהֵיָנוּ – SHEHEHEYANU

The *Shulhan Arukh* does not mention that women should recite *birkat Sheheheyanu* when lighting Yom Tov candles. Rav Yaakov Emden (*She’eilot Yaavetz* 103, quoted in *Mishna Berurah* 263:23) prefers to have the *berakha* of

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2 The *berakha* recited on Yom Kippur candles is one of seven *berakhot* recited once a year in Eretz Yisrael: (1) *Lehadlik ner shel Yom HaKippurim*; (2) *Al biur hametz*; (3) *Nahem*; (4) *Birkat ha’ılanot*; (5) *Al akhilat matza*; (6) *Al akhilat maror*; and (7) *Asher ge’alanu*.

Sheheheyanu 

On *ערב יום טוב*, say the following blessing and then light the candles from an existing flame.  
 If also *שבת*, cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles and say the following blessing, adding the words in parentheses.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
 אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו  
 וַיְצַונו לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שָׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשָׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

The blessing *שְׁהַחֲיוּנוּ* is said on *יום טוב* evenings, except on the last two evenings of *פסח*. (In *ארץ ישראל*, it is not said on the last evening of *פסח*.)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
 שְׁהַחֲיוּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ, וְהַגִּיעֵנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה.

צריך לתקן ביתו מבעוד יום מפני כבוד השבת. ויהיה נר דלוק ושולחן ערוך לאכול ומטה מוצעת שכל אלו לכבוד שבת הן.

*One should prepare his home for Shabbat. A candle should be lit, the table set, and bed made, as all of these preparations are for kavod Shabbat.*

In chapter 5, the Rambam relates candle lighting to *oneg Shabbat*, while in chapter 30 he links candle lighting to *kavod Shabbat*. Which is it?

The Brisker Rav (*Grah al HaShas* 11) explains, based on an idea expressed by the Vilna Gaon (*Orah Hayim* 529:1), that *kavod* relates to actions that we perform *prior* to the commencement of Shabbat, such as taking a shower, cooking, setting the table, etc., and that is the context of the Rambam's statement in chapter 30. Actions that we perform or engage in *during* Shabbat, such as singing, eating, or resting, are forms of *oneg Shabbat*.

Lighting candles has a duality and is considered both *kavod* and *oneg*. When one celebrates a special occasion and desires to create a certain mood, one lights candles on the table out of respect for the event. This is a form of *kavod Shabbat*. At the same time, entering a room and seeing the candles and enjoying the ambiance is a form of *oneg Shabbat*. Candle lighting is a unique mitzva that encompasses both *kavod* and *oneg Shabbat*. The candles help set the mood and provide one with enjoyment from their light. May we always be able to “enlighten” the manner in which we prepare (*kavod*) and experience (*oneg*) each Shabbat.

#### THE NUMBER OF CANDLES

There is a mitzva to light not only Shabbat candles but also Yom Tov candles

*On Erev Yom Kippur, cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles, and say (on Shabbat add the words in parentheses):*

**בְּרוּךְ** Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has made us holy through His commandments, and has commanded us to light (the Sabbath light and) the light of the Day of Atonement.

**בְּרוּךְ** Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and brought us to this time.

*Some add:*

**יְהוָה** May it be Your will, LORD our God and God of our ancestors, that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our days, and grant us our share in Your Torah. And may we serve You there in reverence, as *Mal. 3* in the days of old and as in former years.

*Prayer after candle lighting (add the words in parentheses as appropriate):*

**יְהוָה** May it be Your will, LORD my God and God of my forebears, that You give me grace – me (and my husband/and my father/and my mother/and my sons and my daughters) and all those close to me, and give us and all Israel good and long lives. And remember us with a memory that brings goodness and blessing; come to us with compassion and bless us with great blessings. Build our homes until they are complete, and allow Your Presence to live among us. And may I merit to raise children and grandchildren, each one wise and understanding, loving the LORD and in awe of God, people of truth, holy children, who will cling on to the LORD and light up the world with Torah and with good actions, and with all the kinds of work that serve the Creator. Please, hear my pleading at this time, by the merit of Sarah and Rebecca, Rachel and Leah our mothers, and light our candle that it should never go out, and light up Your face, so that we shall be saved, Amen.

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*Sheheheyanu* when lighting candles for centuries. There is an emotional attachment to this mitzva, so we should encourage women to continue to recite *Sheheheyanu* when lighting candles for Yom Tov.

On *cover the eyes with the hands after lighting the candles, and say (on שבת add the words in parentheses)*:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו  
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שָׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשָׁל) יוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
שֶׁהֲחַיְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ, וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְן הַזֶּה.

Some add:

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שִׁיבְנֶה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ  
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ, וְשֵׁם נֶעֱבָדְךָ בִּירְאָה בְּיָמֵינוּ  
מִלֵּאכֵיג עוֹלָם וּכְשֵׁנִים קְדָמְנִיּוֹת. וְעַרְבָה לִיהוָה מִנַּחַת יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם בְּיָמֵינוּ  
עוֹלָם וּכְשֵׁנִים קְדָמְנִיּוֹת:

Prayer after candle lighting (add the words in parentheses as appropriate):

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי, שֶׁתְּחַוֶּנּוּ אוֹתִי (וְאֵת אִישִׁי/  
וְאֵת אָבִי/ וְאֵת אִמִּי/ וְאֵת בְּנֵי וְאֵת בָּנוֹתַי) וְאֵת כָּל קְרוֹבַי, וְתֵתֵן לָנוּ וּלְכָל  
יִשְׂרָאֵל חַיִּים טוֹבִים וְאַרְפִּים, וְתַזְכְּרֵנוּ בְּזִכְרוֹן טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה, וְתַפְקְדֵנוּ  
בְּפִקְדַת יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים, וְתַבְּרַכְנוּ בְּרָכוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת, וְתִשְׁלַם בְּתֵינוּ וְתִשְׁכַּן  
שְׁכִינְתְּךָ בֵּינֵינוּ. וּזְכֵנִי לְגִדּוֹל בָּנִים וּבְנֵי בָנִים חַכְמִים וְנְבוֹנִים, אוֹהֲבֵי יְהוָה  
יְרֵאֵי אֱלֹהִים, אֲנִישֵׁי אִמָּת זֶרַע קָדֵשׁ, בִּיהוּדָה דְּבָקִים וּמְאִירִים אֵת הָעוֹלָם  
בְּתוֹרָה וּבְמַעֲשֵׂים טוֹבִים וּבְכָל מְלָאכַת עֲבוּדַת הַבּוֹרָא. אָנָּה שְׂמַע אֵת  
תְּחִנָּתִי בְּעֵת הַזֹּאת בְּזִכְרוֹת שְׁרָה וּרְבֵקָה וְרַחֵל וְלֵאָה אֲמוֹתֵינוּ, וְהָאֵר נֶרְנוּ  
שָׁלָא יִכְבֶּה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וְהָאֵר פְּנִיךָ וְנִשְׁשָׁעָה. אָמֵן.

*Sheheheyanu* recited later in the night, because when one lights candles it is not yet Yom Tov. The *Tzitz Eliezer* (14:53) defends the practice and declares that women have been following this custom of including the blessing of

## Blessing the Children

*On the evenings of Shabbat and Yom Tov, many have the custom to bless their children.*

*To sons, say:*

יְשׁוּבָהּ! May God make you  
like Ephraim and Manasseh.

Gen. 48

*To daughters, say:*

יְשׁוּבָהּ! May God make you  
like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

יְבָרַכְךָ! May the LORD bless you and protect you.  
May the LORD make His face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.  
May the LORD turn His face toward you  
and grant you peace.

Num. 6

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any adverse repercussions by switching his hands and providing the younger of the brothers with the greater blessing. We bless our children that they should be able to establish the relationship that existed between Efraim and Menashe, so they can avoid sibling rivalry and live in peace and harmony together. Witnessing one's children respect each other brings the greatest *nahat* and joy to a parent.

### **Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin: First to Live as Jews in Exile**

Another approach as to why we bless our children to emulate Efraim and Menashe is suggested by Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin, the author of *Oznayim LaTorah*.

Just moments before the *berakha*, Yaakov asks, “Who are these children?” What did Yaakov mean? He saw in the future that their descendants wouldn't be perfect, so he asked, “Do they deserve *berakhot*?” Yosef answered, “Hashem gave them to me.” Then Yaakov agreed to bless them.

Why did Yaakov's attitude change? *Hazal* tell us that at that moment, Yaakov wanted to reveal when the redemption would come. He saw clearly

before 



## ברכת הבנים

*On Shabbat and on Friday night, many have the custom to bless their children.*

*To sons, say:*

בראשית מח

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה:

*To daughters, say:*

יְשִׁימְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רַחֵל וְלֵאָה.

במדבר ו

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:  
יְאֵר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְיַחַנְךָ:  
יִשְׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְיִשֶּׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

### BLESSING OUR CHILDREN

It is customary to bless one's children each Friday night with *Birkat Kohanim* (the blessing the *kohanim* are charged to convey to *Am Yisrael*), with an introductory phrase of “*Yesimkha E-lohim keEfraim ukeMenashe – Hashem should make you like Efraim and Menashe.*” Why do we bless our children to be like Efraim and Menashe? Aren't there greater *tzaddikim*, such as Avraham, Yitzhak, and Yaakov, or Moshe Rabbeinu, whom we would prefer our children emulate? What is so unique about Efraim and Menashe that we want our children to be modeled after their character traits?

We will offer three explanations.

#### *Bnei Yissakhar: No Sibling Rivalry*

In *Igra DeKalla*, the Bnei Yissakhar's commentary on the Torah, he suggests that Efraim and Menashe were the first siblings in history that we know of who do not exhibit sibling rivalry. Until then, we witness many sets of brothers who engaged in disputes, including Kayin and Hevel, Yitzhak and Yishmael, Yaakov and Esav, and Yosef and his brothers. We bless our children to be like Efraim and Menashe with respect to the aspect of brotherly love. Yaakov was aware of their special relationship, and he therefore did not fear

***Yam Simha: No Generation Gap***

The *Yam Simha*<sup>3</sup> suggests yet another explanation as to why we bless our children to emulate Efraim and Menashe. He infers an answer from a previous *pasuk*, where Yaakov says:

אפרים ומנשה כראובן ושמעון יהיו לי.

Efraim and Menashe shall be mine like Reuven and Shimon. (*Bereshit* 48:5)

We know the reality that every generation experiences a spiritual decline from the previous generation, what we call *yeridat hadorot*. Every generation that is further from the source, further from *maamad Har Sinai*, drops a spiritual notch. Yet, Yaakov saw that Menashe and Efraim didn't fall spiritually. Instead they jumped in their spiritual level – they were just like his own sons.

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 105b) states:

בכל אדם מתקנא חוץ מבנו ותלמידו.

A person is jealous of everyone in the world other than his son and his *talmid*.

A father thinks, *If only my son would outdo what I do!* Therefore, every Friday night, when a father gives this *berakha* to his child, his hope is: “Outshine me. Don't contribute to *yeridat hadorot*. Be greater than me!” That is why we bless our sons to be like Menashe and Efraim specifically. They were two people who didn't experience *yeridat hadorot* and were on par with their father.<sup>4</sup>

A similar idea is expressed by Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik.<sup>5</sup> He cites a *gemara* (Kiddushin 30a) that states:

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי כל המלמד בן בנו תורה מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו קיבלה מהר סיני.

3 Rabbi Yisrael Moshe Fried, *Yam Simha* (1997), 143.

4 In a similar vein, Yaakov learned with Yosef's children, and in a way, Yaakov was stating that when one learns Torah, it transcends any generational gap. Imagine entering a time machine and landing in a different era. If a Jew were to meet Rashi or the Rambam, a most interesting discussion about Torah would ensue. When one shares Torah, there is no generation gap. To Yaakov, this is what Efraim and Menashe symbolized, and that is the blessing we wish to convey to our children.

5 *Harerei Kedem*, vol. 2 (Israel: 2004), sec. 122, p. 356.

before him the whole future of *Klal Yisrael*, the tragedies, the physical and the spiritual destruction. He saw every detail: pogroms, crusades, assimilation, and the freedom that has led to spiritual deprivation.

When Yaakov saw all that, he said, “Who are these people I see in the future who will sometimes willingly throw off the yoke of Torah?” But then Yosef said, “These are the children that Hashem gave me,” and Yaakov saw children who were able to withstand the pressures of Egypt. He saw grandchildren who learned Torah. Even though Yaakov foresaw the corruption of the future, he gave *berakhot* – specifically blessing his descendants to be like these children, who managed to withstand the corruption and depravity of the society around them.

Efraim and Menashe were enslaved along with the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. They didn’t exclude themselves by claiming to be Egyptian. They accepted upon themselves the yoke of exile, as part of all their Jewish brethren. Yaakov saw where they were coming from and that they had managed to succeed spiritually despite that. Therefore, he blessed his descendants to be like them, to be able to survive in an unfriendly environment, in an environment that went against everything they believed in.

We choose to bless our children to emulate Menashe and Efraim, people who were able to remain strong and committed to Judaism irrespective of the adverse culture and environment in which they were surrounded. This is the *berakha* that every parent wants to convey – that their children should not be influenced by the negative values of the society around them, no matter which country they live in.

Rabbi Sorotzkin points out that the secret of Menashe and Efraim’s success boils down to the education their father provided for them. The *pasuk* says:

ויברכם ביום ההוא לאמור בך יברך ישראל לאמר ישמך אלהים כאפרים וכמנשה.

So he blessed them on that day, saying, “Through you, Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you like Efraim and like Menashe.’” (*Bereshit* 48:20)

When Yaakov said “*bekha*” (“through you”), he was talking to Yosef. Says Rabbi Sorotzkin, the greatest measure of a person is what type of *hinukh* he provides to his children. Whether his education succeeds or not is beyond his control. We can only do our best, and the rest is *siyata dishmaya*. Yet, we have to do our utmost to ensure that our children are being given the best education possible.

Many people sing each of the four verses of the following song three times:

**שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם** Welcome, ministering angels, angels of the Most High,  
from the Supreme King of kings,  
the Holy One, blessed be He.

Enter in peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High,  
from the Supreme King of kings,  
the Holy One, blessed be He.

they should carry the torch into the next generation, passing on the fire of Har Sinai. It's really a *tefilla* when we give this *berakha*, a *tefilla* of the father that he should be *zokhe* to pass on the torch of tradition.<sup>6</sup>

### שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם – SHALOM ALEIKHEM

The Gemara tells us in Shabbat (119b):

תניא ר' יוסי בר יהודה אומר שני מלאכי השרת מלווין לו לאדם בע"ש מבית הכנסת לביתו אחד טוב ואחד רע, וכשבא לביתו ומצא נר דלוק ושלחן ערוך ומטתו מוצעת, מלאך טוב אומר יהי רצון שתהא לשבת אחרת כך ומלאך רע עונה אמן בעל כרחו, ואם לאו, מלאך רע אומר יהי רצון שתהא לשבת אחרת כך ומלאך טוב עונה אמן בעל כרחו.

R. Yosei bar Yehuda says: Two ministering angels accompany a person on Shabbat evening from the shul to his home, one good angel and one evil angel. And when he reaches his home and finds a candle lit and a table set and his bed made, the good angel says: "May it be Your will that it shall be like this for another Shabbat." And the evil angel answers against his will: "Amen." And if the person's home is not prepared for Shabbat in that manner, the evil angel says: "May it be Your will that it shall be so for another Shabbat," and the good angel answers against his will: "Amen."

Two angels accompany a person home on Shabbat evening to evaluate whether or not the household has prepared for Shabbat. This reflects that we each need to make sure that we prepare for the special meeting with Hashem on

<sup>6</sup> See *Reflections of the Rav*, vol. 2 (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1989), 17, where Rav Soloveitchik provides an emotional description of his experience of feeling the *baalei mesora* entering the room while he is studying Torah.

Many people sing each of the four verses of the following song three times:

שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם מִלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, מִלְאֲכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן  
מִמְלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

בּוֹאֲכֶם לְשֵׁלוֹם מִלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מִלְאֲכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן  
מִמְלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

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R. Yehoshua ben Levi says: “Anyone who teaches Torah to his grandson is treated by the Torah as having received it from Mount Sinai.

The Rambam (*Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 1:2) adds that there is a special merit of learning Torah with a grandchild, and it is greater in some ways than learning with a child.

The problem, notes Rav Soloveitchik, is that the Rambam also says that if you have a choice between your son and grandson for *talmud Torah*, your son comes first. If you only have enough money to pay for a *melamed* for either your son or your grandson, your son’s education is your primary obligation, which seems to mean the opposite of the previous words of the Rambam.

Which is it, then? We can find our answer based on a Ramban, says Rav Soloveitchik. The Ramban in *Sefer HaMitzvot* (addition to negative commandment 2), counts a separate negative mitzva that the Rambam doesn’t count: the mitzva to never forget the experience of Mount Sinai.

There are two elements of Torah that we have to transmit to the next generation. The first is *talmud Torah*, which is actual information in the form of Halakha, Mishna, Gemara – the whole breadth of Torah. The second is the Har Sinai element, which is *emunat haTorah*, the development of our tradition, our Jewish identity, and our passion for Torah.

When it comes to the first type, says Rav Soloveitchik, a son takes precedence over a grandson, whereas when it comes to passing on the torch to the next generation, the continuity of the Jewish People, it is considered a greater accomplishment to pass it on to someone two generations down.

Maybe this is why we bless our children to be like Efraim and Menashe. Yaakov was the first person to have such a relationship with his grandchildren, in which a grandfather learned Torah with his grandsons. We’re giving the *berakha* to our children that not only should they learn Torah from us, but

Bless me with peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High,  
from the Supreme King of kings,  
the Holy One, blessed be He.

Go in peace, angels of peace, angels of the Most High,  
from the Supreme King of kings,  
the Holy One, blessed be He.

---

maximize this special time and exclusive opportunity to enhance our connection to our Creator each Shabbat.

It is told that the late Lubavitcher Rebbe never slept on Shabbat. He expressed that on Shabbat he felt as if he was on a shopping spree. If one were to be granted a certain amount of time in a store to gather as many items as possible for free, he would not take a break. He would utilize every second to be able to maximize the opportunity. Shabbat was like a spiritual shopping spree for the Rebbe. He would appreciate and cherish each moment and did not desire to waste it on sleep.

מלאכי השלום, מלאכי השרת – MALAKHEI HASHARET, MALAKHEI HASHALOM

In the opening paragraph of *Shalom Aleikhem*, we refer to the angels as *malakhei hasharet* (servicing angels), while in the following stanzas we refer to the angels as *malakhei hashalom* (angels of peace). Why does the term used to refer to the angels change from *malakhei hasharet* to *malakhei hashalom*?

The Sar Shalom of Belz (cited in Rav Biderman's *birkon*) offers an explanation based on Avraham's encounter with the angels. The *pesukim* at the beginning of *Parashat Vayera* depicting the angels' visit to Avraham read as follows: First the angels are perceived as being above Avraham (*nitzavim alav*). Avraham then moves toward them (*vayaratz likratam*) to greet them. He is then equal to them. Avraham has food prepared for them and provides it to them, and he is then referred to as *omed aleihem* – he is above them. When the *malakhim* enter our home, they are *malakhei hasharet*; they are the servants of God and are above us. Once the angels witness how we prepare and honor the Shabbat, we are raised to their level and are perceived as servants of God as well. Now the angels are referred to as *malakhei hashalom*, since their being subservient to Hashem is no longer exclusive to them, after they see how we honor Shabbat. They are at peace (*shalom*) with us because each of us is a servant of *HaKadosh Barukh Hu*.

בְּרַכּוֹנֵי לְשָׁלוֹם מְלֵאכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מְלֵאכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן  
מִמְלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

צֵאתְכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מְלֵאכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מְלֵאכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן  
מִמְלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

Shabbat. The Gemara (Kiddushin 41) discusses that it is better for an individual to perform a mitzva by himself rather than via a messenger: *Mitzva bo yoter mibeshluho*. The Gemara applies this principle to two mitzvot: marriage and Shabbat preparations. The *Shulhan Arukh* (*Orah Hayim* 272) also discusses that a person should engage in preparations for Shabbat himself. Let us not think that personal, physical exertion in Shabbat preparations are beneath us. The more we are physically involved, the more honor we are demonstrating.

צֵאתְכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם – TZETKHEM LESHALOM

### *Bidding Farewell to the Angels*

In *Shalom Aleikhem*, we welcome the angels into our home. The last paragraph seems somewhat puzzling, however. We recite “*tzetkhem leshalom*”; we bid them farewell. Wouldn’t we want the angels to remain with us? Why are we so quick to usher them out of our homes on Friday night?

The Beit Yaakov (Rav Yaakov Emden) writes in his siddur that we do not know how our meal will turn out – we may be embarrassed to have the angels remain with us. This explanation is not too confidence-building.

The Shaarei Teshuva (*Shulhan Arukh* 272) cites the Hida, who suggests that we do not know exactly when the angels will leave. It is not that we are asking them to leave now. The angels are welcome to remain with us; we just want to be sure to respectfully bid them farewell, so we do so formally now.

Rav Avraham Schorr (*HaLeKet VeHalibuv*), citing the Shem MiShmuel (*Vayigash*), offers an insightful explanation. Shabbat is considered a special time of unification (*yihud*) of *Am Yisrael* and Hashem. Just like a *hatan and kalla* (bride and groom) need to be alone to consummate their marriage, so too *Am Yisrael* and Hashem need to enter the “*yihud* room” – the twenty-five hours of Shabbat. It is a special time that we have with Hashem, and even the angels cannot be present, so we politely bid them farewell. We should

בִּי מְלֹאכֵי He will command His angels about you, Ps. 91  
 to guard you in all your ways.

May the LORD guard your going out and your return, Ps. 121  
 from now and for all time.

*Some say:*

רְבוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים Master of all worlds, LORD of all souls, LORD of peace, mighty, blessed and great King, King who speaks peace, King who is glorious, enduring and pure, King who gives life to worlds, King who is good and does good, King alone and unique, great King who robes Himself in compassion, King who reigns over all kings, who is exalted and supports those who fall, King who is Author of creation, who redeems and rescues, who is radiant and ruddy, King who is holy, high and exalted, King who hears prayer, King whose way is just: I thank You, LORD my God and God of my ancestors, for all the loving-kindness You have done and will do for me, and all the members of my household and all my fellow creatures. Blessed are Your angels, holy and pure, who do Your will. LORD of peace, King to whom peace belongs, bless me with peace, and grant me and the members of my household, and all Your people the house of Israel, a good and peaceful life. King exalted over all the heavenly array, who formed me and who formed creation, I entreat Your radiant presence, that You find me and all the members of my household worthy of grace and good favor in Your eyes and the eyes of all people and all who see us, that we may serve You. May we be worthy to receive Sabbaths amidst great joy, wealth and honor, and few sins. May You remove from me and all the members of my household and all Your people the house of Israel all sickness and disease, all poverty, hardship and destitution. Grant us a virtuous desire to serve You in truth, awe and love. May we find honor in Your eyes and the eyes of all who see us, for You are the King of honor: to You it belongs, to You it accords. Please, King who reigns over all kings, command Your angels, ministering angels who minister to the Most High, to act compassionately toward me when they enter my house on our holy day, for I have lit my lights, spread my couch and changed my clothes in honor of the Sabbath; I have come to Your House to lay my pleas before You that You remove my sighs; I have testified that in six days You created all things, and said it a second time, and will testify to it a third time over my cup, in joy, as You commanded me to remember it, delighting in the extra soul You have given me. On it [the Sabbath] I shall rest as You have commanded me, thereby to serve You. So too I will declare Your greatness in joyful song, for I have set the LORD before me, that You may have compassion upon me in my exile, redeeming me and awakening my heart to Your love. Then I will keep Your commands and statutes without sadness, praying correctly as is right and fitting. Angels of peace, come in peace and bless me with peace; declare blessed the table I have prepared, and go in peace, now and forever. Amen, Selah.



פִּי מְלֹאכֵי וְצִוְה־לֶךְ, לְשִׁמְרֶךָ בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ:  
 יהוה יִשְׁמְרֶ־צִאתְךָ וּבֹאֶיךָ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:

תהלים צא

תהלים קכא

Some say:

רבון כל העולמים, אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַשָּׁלוֹם. מֶלֶךְ אָבִיר, מֶלֶךְ בְּרוּךְ, מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל, מֶלֶךְ דּוֹבֵר שְׁלוֹם, מֶלֶךְ הַדּוֹר, מֶלֶךְ וְתִיקָה, מֶלֶךְ נָךְ, מֶלֶךְ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים, מֶלֶךְ טוֹב וּמְטִיב, מֶלֶךְ יַחִיד וּמִיחָד, מֶלֶךְ כְּבִיר, מֶלֶךְ לוֹבֵשׁ רַחֲמִים, מֶלֶךְ מְלִכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, מֶלֶךְ נִשְׁגָב, מֶלֶךְ סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, מֶלֶךְ עֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית, מֶלֶךְ פּוֹדֶה וּמְצִיל, מֶלֶךְ צַח וְאֵדָם, מֶלֶךְ קְדוֹשׁ, מֶלֶךְ רֵם וְנִשְׂאָה, מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה, מֶלֶךְ תַּמִּים דְּרָבּוּ. מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי, עַל כָּל הַחֲסָד אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי וְאֲשֶׁר אָתָּה עָתִיד לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּי וְעַם כָּל בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי וְעַם כָּל בְּרִיּוֹתֶיךָ, בְּנֵי בְרִיתִי. וּבְרוּכִים הֵם מְלֹאכֵיךָ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים שְׁעוֹשִׂים רְצוֹנְךָ. אֲדוֹן הַשָּׁלוֹם, מֶלֶךְ שֶׁהַשָּׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ, בְּרַכְנִי בַשָּׁלוֹם, וּתְפַקֵּד אוֹתִי וְאֵת כָּל בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי וְכָל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לַחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלַשָּׁלוֹם. מֶלֶךְ עֹלִיז וְעַל כָּל צָבָא מְרוֹם, יוֹצֵרנוּ, יוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית, אֲחֻלָּה פָּנֶיךָ הַמְּאִירִים, שְׁתַּנְּבֵה אוֹתִי וְאֵת כָּל בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי לְמִצְאָה חַן וְשִׂכָּל טוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל בְּנֵי אָדָם וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל רוֹאִינוּ לְעַבְדְּתֶךָ. וְזַכְּנוּ לְקַבֵּל שְׁבֻתוֹת מִתּוֹךְ רַב שְׂמֵחָה וּמִתּוֹךְ עֵשֶׂר וְכַבּוֹד וּמִתּוֹךְ מַעוֹט עוֹנוֹת. וְהִסֵּר מִמֶּנִּי וּמִכָּל בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי וּמִכָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל מִינֵי חָלִי וְכָל מִינֵי מַדּוּהַ וְכָל מִינֵי דְלוּת וְעֵנִיּוֹת וְאֲבִיוֹנוּת. וְתֵן בְּנֵי יוֹצֵר טוֹב לְעַבְדְּךָ בְּאֵמֶת וּבִירוּאָה וּבְאֵהֳבָה. וְנִהְיֶה מְכַבְּדִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל רוֹאִינוּ, כִּי אָתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד, כִּי לֶךְ נֶאֱדָה, כִּי לֶךְ יֵאָדָה. אָנָּה, מֶלֶךְ מְלִכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, צִוְה לְמְלֹאכֵיךָ, מְלֹאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, מְשֻׁרְתֵי עֹלִיז, שִׁיפְקִדוּנִי בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרַכּוּנֵי בְּבוֹאֵם לְבֵיתִי בְּיוֹם קְדֻשְׁנוּ, כִּי הִדְלַקְתִּי נְרוֹתֵי וְהִצַּעְתִּי מִטְּתִי וְהִחַלְפַתִּי שְׁמֹלְתִי לְכַבּוֹד יוֹם הַשְּׁבֻת וּבְאֵתִי לְבֵיתְךָ לְהַפִּיל תְּחִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ, שְׁתַּעֲבִיר אֲנַחְתִּי, וְאֵעִיד אֲשֶׁר בְּרַאתָ בְּשֵׁשֶׁה יָמִים כָּל הַיְצוּר, וְאֲשַׁנֶּה וְאֲשַׁלֵּשׁ עוֹד לְהַעֲדִיד עַל כּוֹסֵי בֵּיתְךָ שְׂמֵחָתִי, כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֵנִי לִזְכּוֹר וּלְהַתְעַנֵּג בֵּיתְךָ נִשְׁמַתִּי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּ בִּי. בּוֹ אֲשַׁבֵּת כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֵנִי לְשִׁרְתְּךָ, וְכֵן אֶגִּיד גְּדֻלַּתְךָ בְּרַנָּה, וְשׁוֹיִתִּי יְהוָה לְקִרְאָתִי שְׁתַּרְחֲמֵנִי עוֹד בְּגִלוּתִי לְגֵאֲלִנִי לְעוֹרֹר לְבִי לְאַהֲבַתְךָ. וְאִז אֲשַׁמֵּר פְּקוּדֶיךָ וְחֻקֶּיךָ בְּלִי עֶצֶב, וְאֲתַפְּלֵל בְּדַת פְּרָאוֹי וְכִנְבוֹן. מְלֹאכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, בּוֹאֵכִם לְשָׁלוֹם, בְּרַכּוּנֵי לְשָׁלוֹם, וְאִמְרוּ בְרוּךְ לְשַׁלְּחֵנִי הָעֶרֶךְ, וְצִאתְכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם, אֲמֵן סֵלָה.

אִשְׁת־חַיִל A woman of strength, who can find?

Prov. 31

Her worth is far beyond pearls.

Her husband's heart trusts in her,  
and he has no lack of gain.

She brings him good, not harm,  
all the days of her life.

She seeks wool and linen,  
and works with willing hands.

She is like a ship laden with merchandise,  
bringing her food from afar.

She rises while it is still night,  
providing food for her household, portions for her  
maids.

She considers a field and buys it;  
from her earnings she plants a vineyard.

She girds herself with strength,  
and braces her arms for her tasks.

She sees that her business goes well;  
her lamp does not go out at night.

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The Rambam in *Hilkhot Ishut* (15:19) describes the way in which a man is obligated to respect his wife:

וכן צו חכמים שיהיה אדם מכבד את אשתו יותר מגופו ואוהבה כגופו. ואם יש לו  
ממון מרבה בטובתה כפי ממונו. ולא יטיל עליה אימה יתרה. ויהיה דבורו עמה בנחת.  
ולא יהיה עצב ולא רגון:

Similarly, our Sages commanded that a man honor his wife more than his own person and love her as he loves his own person. If he has financial resources, he should offer her benefits in accordance with his resources. He should not cast a superfluous measure of fear over her. He should talk with her gently, being neither sad nor angry.

A husband should honor his wife with gifts and love her as he loves himself. In *Mikhtav MiEliyahu* (vol. 1), Rav Dessler explains that the root of all love

begins 

משלי לא

אֶשֶׁת־חַיִל מִי יִמְצָא  
וְדַחַק מִפְּנֵינִים מְכַרָּה:  
בָּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בַּעֲלָהּ  
וְשָׁלַל לֹא יִחְסֹר:  
גָּמְלָתָהּ טוֹב וְלֹא־דָע  
כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיהָ:  
דְּרָשָׁה צֶמֶר וּפְשָׁתִים  
וְתַעֲשֶׂשׁ בַּחֲפֶץ כַּפֵּיהָ:  
הֵיטָה כְּאֲנִיּוֹת סוֹחֵר  
מִמְדַּחַק תִּבְיֵא לַחֲמָה:  
וְתִקֶּם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה  
וְתִתֵּן טָרֶף לְבֵיתָהּ, וְחַק לְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ:  
זִמְמָה שָׂדֵה וְתִקְחָהּ  
מִפְּרֵי כַּפֵּיהָ נֹטֵעַ כֶּרֶם:  
חֲגָרָה בְּעוֹז מְתַנֶּה  
וְתִאֲמַן זְרוּעֹתֶיהָ:  
טָעַמָּה כִּי־טוֹב סָחָרָה  
לֹא־יִכָּבֵד בַּלַּיִל נָרָה:

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אשת חיל – ESHET HAYIL

*Appreciating Our Wives*

Shlomo HaMelekh authored the famous *Eshet Hayil* prayer, which appears in the last chapter of *Mishlei* (31). Each line starts with another letter of the *alef-bet*, in alphabetical order, and is sung as an expression of gratitude to the mother of the home for taking care of the household all week and especially for undertaking all the preparations for Shabbat.

She holds the distaff in her hand,  
     and grasps the spindle with her palms.  
 She reaches out her palm to the poor,  
     and extends her hand to the needy.  
 She has no fear for her family when it snows,  
     for all her household is clothed in crimson wool.  
 She makes elegant coverings;  
     her clothing is fine linen and purple wool.  
 Her husband is well known in the gates,  
     where he sits with the elders of the land.  
 She makes linen garments and sells them,  
     and supplies merchants with sashes.  
 She is clothed with strength and dignity;  
     she can laugh at the days to come.  
 She opens her mouth with wisdom,  
     and the law of kindness is on her tongue.  
 She watches over the ways of her household,  
     and never eats the bread of idleness.  
 Her children rise and call her happy;  
     her husband also praises her:  
 “Many women have excelled,  
     but you surpass them all.”  
 Charm is deceptive and beauty vain:  
     it is the God-fearing woman who deserves praise.  
 Give her the reward she has earned;  
     let her deeds bring her praise in the gates.

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begins with giving. The more one gives, the more one loves. The more one invests in a relationship, the stronger it becomes. As we usher in the Shabbat, we immediately express our gratitude to our spouse, to set the tone of love, affection, and *shalom bayit* that should permeate the home throughout Shabbat.



יְדִיָּה שְׁלַחַה בְּיָשׁוּר  
 וְכַפֵּיהָ תִּמְכּוּ פֶלֶךְ:  
 כִּפְּהָ פָּרְשָׁה לְעַנִּי  
 וְיָדֶיהָ שְׁלַחַה לְאַבְיוֹן:  
 לֹא־תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ מִשָּׁלֵג  
 כִּי כָל־בֵּיתָהּ לְבֶשׂ שָׁנִים:  
 מִרְבָּדִים עָשְׂתָה־לָּהּ  
 שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוּשָׁה:  
 נֹדַע בְּשַׁעְרִים בַּעֲלָהּ  
 בְּשִׁבְתָּו עַס־זְקֵנֵי־אֶרֶץ:  
 סָדִין עָשְׂתָה וְתִמְכֹּד  
 וְחֲגֹזֵר נָתַנָּה לְפַנְעָנִי:  
 עֲזֹז־וְהִדְר לְבוּשָׁה  
 וְתִשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן:  
 פִּיהָ פִּתְחָה בְּחִכְמָה  
 וְתוֹרַת־חֶסֶד עַל־לְשׁוֹנָה:  
 צוֹפִיָּה הִלְיָכוֹת בֵּיתָהּ  
 וְלֶחֶם עֲצָלוֹת לֹא תֹאכַל:  
 קָמוּ בְנֵיהָ וַיֹּאשְׁרוּהָ  
 בַּעֲלָהּ וַיַּהֲלִלָהּ:  
 רַבּוֹת בְּנוֹת עִשׂוּ חֵיל  
 וְאַתְּ עָלִית עַל־כָּל־נָה:  
 שִׁקְדַת הַחֵן וְהַבֵּל הַיָּפִי  
 אִשָּׁה יְרֵאת־יהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל:  
 תִּנְגֹּלָהּ מִפְּרֵי יָדֶיהָ  
 וַיַּהֲלִלוּהָ בְּשַׁעְרִים מֵעֲשִׂיָּה: