

## Topic Page: [Sabbath](#)

Definition: **Sabbath** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Seventh day of the week, set aside as a sacred day of rest. For Jews, the Sabbath runs from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. Christians set aside Sunday for their Sabbath.

### Summary Article: **Sabbath**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

The seventh day of the week, commanded by God in the Old Testament as a sacred day of rest after his creation of the world; in Judaism, from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday; in Christianity, Sunday (or, in some sects, Saturday). Keeping the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments.

Some Christians regard Sunday as the first day of the week but celebrate it as the Sabbath because it was said to be the day of the Resurrection of Jesus.

The Jewish Sabbath reminds Jews of God's creation of the world, and also their slavery in Egypt, as it emphasizes that the choice to rest is a mark of freedom. Work is forbidden on the Sabbath day, unless the saving of life is involved. The Mishnah lists 39 melachot, or forbidden activities; cooking, carrying goods, and driving on the Sabbath are all prohibited under its laws. Housework is completed and the meals made for the Sabbath period early on Friday, to ensure a period of complete rest.

Just before sunset on the Sabbath, a service is held in synagogue in which hymns are sung to celebrate God as the creator of a beautiful world; one hymn welcomes the Sabbath as a lovely bride. The services held over the Sabbath always end with the congregants wishing each other 'Shabbat shalom', a peaceful Sabbath.

After sunset, each family gathers at home. The mother of the household lights two candles symbolizing joy and peace, and says a blessing for the Sabbath. The father will then make kiddush by blessing wine, to celebrate the joyful arrival of the Sabbath; and two challahs (plaited loaves) representing the double portion of manna that God provided on Fridays when the Hebrews were in the desert. They symbolize the bodily and spiritual food provided by God. Salt may be sprinkled on the bread in remembrance of the Temple sacrifices, no longer made since its destruction. The father blesses the children and then, reciting Proverbs 31:10–31, praises the worth of his wife. The wine and bread are then shared among the family. Following the evening meal, grace is said and songs of praise and happiness are sung.

The main service at the synagogue is on Saturday morning. It follows the same form every Sabbath, and everyone will have a prayer book with the Hebrew of the service and a translation in their own language on the opposite page. The service opens with a reading of the Psalms and then the Shema and the Amidah prayers are recited. The Amidah is said silently while facing the ark, which houses the Sefer Torahs (Torah scrolls).

The ark is opened and everyone stands, out of respect. One of the scrolls is carried round the synagogue while a joyful hymn is sung. It is followed by a procession of the people who are helping to officiate the service. All the congregants face the scroll as it is taken round, and either bow as it passes or touch it with the fringes of their tallits, and then kiss the fringes as a sign of deep respect.

The scroll is carefully undressed of its decorations, and seven male congregants are called up to read a

portion of the Torah, or hold the scroll while it is being read. A new sidra, or portion, is read each Sabbath, so that the whole Torah is read over the year. At the end of the reading, an eighth person will read a separate portion from the prophets (the haftarah). It is considered an honour to take part in the readings.

After the Torah has been read, prayers will be said in the national language for the nation, its leader, and all Israel, and for any congregants for whom prayers would be supportive, such as the sick or bereaved. The rabbi will give a sermon, sometimes relating to the portion of Torah just read. The cantor, or chazan, will say the Amidah, the Kaddish, and the Aleynu ('it is upon us'), which tells Jews of their obligation to respond to God. The service always ends with the hymn 'Adon olam'.

In the afternoon, there is a shorter synagogue service, or some Jews may study and discuss the Torah, or visit friends and family. After sunset, when the Sabbath has ended, the Havdallah ('division') service is held both in the synagogue and at home, marking the end of the Sabbath.

### **APA**

Chicago

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Sabbath. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/sabbath>

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## Chicago

"Sabbath." In *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon. Helicon, 2018. <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/sabbath>

## Harvard

Sabbath. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. [Online]. Abington: Helicon. Available from: <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/sabbath> [Accessed 18 November 2019].

## MLA

"Sabbath." *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon, 2018. *Credo Reference*, <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/sabbath>. Accessed 18 Nov. 2019.