SHABBAT UNPACKED

Session 1

OLAMI MENTORSHIP

Welcome to Shabbat Unpacked, a program of Olami Mentorship, where together you will unpack Jewish concepts and practice.

We are thrilled that you have decided to take advantage of this opportunity, and we are confident that the two of you will find meaning and purpose as you take the time to deepen your understanding and appreciation of the gift of Shabbat.

The Talmud (Shabbos 10b) teaches us that as the fledgling Jewish nation left Egypt the Almighty approached Moshe (Moses) and said:

> "I HAVE A VALUABLE PRESENT SITTING IN MY TREASURE HOUSE THAT I WANT TO "GIFT" TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE, THAT GIFT IS CALLED SHABBAT."

To those that appreciate and understand the beauty of Shabbat there can be no greater gift in the world than the Shabbat experience:

- **Shabbat is the opportunity to transition from day to day living to a more mindful and focused life.**
- **Shabbat brings us closer to our loved ones, ourselves, and ultimately to our Maker.**
- **Shabbat is an oasis in the storm of a society that never rests.**
- **Shabbat is a time to be real, a time for growth, a time to rejuvenate, a time to thrive.**

And while we are sure that you have experienced many of the wonderful aspects of Shabbat, the totality of the Almighty's gift of Shabbat can only be fully appreciated and felt when one "owns" the Shabbat experience by studying and understanding its depth and breadth.

INTRODUCTION

This program will attempt to help you begin to unpack the gift of Shabbat and enable you to truly taste its majesty and magic.

Considering a more substantial commitment to learning and living Shabbat may seem daunting. The Shabbat experience does entail certain lifestyle changes and a real commitment to making it work; even so it is one of those things in life where you have to be “in it to win it.”

In the words of a mentee who was contemplating embracing Shabbat: “When I first attempted to really observe Shabbat, I could not imagine Shabbat observance as a real way of life. Now having observed Shabbat for some time, I cannot imagine how I ever made it through life without Shabbat!”

It is our hope and prayer that you find this exploration meaningful, enjoyable and uplifting!

SHABBAT SHALOM!
THE OLAMI MENTORSHIP TEAM

OLAMI MENTORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

WE WILL COVER:

1. An introduction and overview of the essence of Shabbat
2. A focus on the things that we “do” to prepare for, honor, commemorate and feel the holiness of Shabbat
3. A taste of a number of the Shabbat practices that assist us in guarding the sanctity of Shabbat
4. A practical overview of the do’s, dont’s and nuances that one can expect to experience in a Shabbat observant home
5. How to make your own Shabbat: A Primer

Session 1:
CREATION AND CONNECTION

Let's get the creative Shabbat juices flowing!

Please share with one another a unique Shabbat experience that you were a part of. Perhaps it was amusing... hopefully inspiring... maybe it was shocking... was it out of this world?... really anything goes!
Each Jew has a unique and special connection to Shabbat. As our lives evolve our connection to Shabbat changes and takes on different meanings. Prior to jumping into the What, How & Whys of Shabbat, please take a few moments to discuss what Shabbat means to you.

A SIGN OF LOVE

A gold wedding band! Hopefully, it's much more than just a small round piece of precious metal. A wedding band is a sign of love, of commitment, of an everlasting relationship... Similarly, the Almighty calls Shabbat, an אות; a sign of love. Shabbat represents an everlasting bond and an eternal commitment between us and the Creator.

What follows is that Shabbat is a very big deal. Accordingly the concepts, ideas, laws and details of Shabbat are vast and deep. In an effort to take a deep dive into Shabbat, and at the same time keep it real, we will attempt to divide this program into concise yet meaningful components.

THE WHAT

Shabbat is highlighted in the ten commandments as follows:

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
(שמות כ: ח, Exodus 20:8)

Commemorate the Shabbat day to keep it holy.

Or... The things that we **do** to feel Shabbat ie. Shabbat meals, dressing up...

שמור את יום השבת לקדשו.
(דברים ה: יב, Deuteronomy 5:12)

Protect the Shabbat day to keep it holy.

Or... The actions that we **don't** do to ensure the appropriate Shabbat mood and experience.

THE WHY

The Torah provides **two reasons** for Shabbat observance:

כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ... וינח ביום השביעי.
(שמות כ: יא, Exodus 20:11)

For the Almighty made the world in six days and rested on the seventh.

This reason is to remind us that the Almighty **created the world** in six days and abstained from creation on the seventh.

יום תחילה למקראי קודש זכר ליציאת מצרים.
(קידוש יום ששי, Friday night kiddush text)

Shabbat is the first of all holy days, a reminder of the exodus from Egypt.

This reason is to remind us that the Almighty **continues to run the world** as evidenced by the many blatant miracles during the exodus from Egypt.

לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ובהמתך.

(שמות כ: י, Exodus 20:10)

Do not perform any creative work, you, your son and daughter, your employees, your animals...

Just as the Almighty created the world in six days and abstained from creative acts on the seventh, we too follow this pattern in our lives. There are 39 categories of **creative work that we abstain** from on Shabbat. (We will address these in the coming sessions.)

ושמרו בני־ישראל את־השבת לעשות את־השבת לדורותם ברית עולם.

(שמות לא:טז, Exodus 31:16)

The Jewish people shall observe the Shabbat to make the Shabbat an eternal covenant for generations.

Doing things that **deepen the bond** between the Almighty and the Jewish people.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER:

It is very empowering to consider that each and every one of us is a world of our own. To create and sustain our own little world, the Almighty implanted deep within our essence a small piece of Himself.

For six days each and every week, we work on creating, sustaining, and improving our own world, but just as the Almighty did, we cease creation on the seventh day – Shabbat.

Shabbat is so much more than merely a cessation from creation. Shabbat is essentially a weekly reality check. For on each Shabbat we pause to reflect on our purpose of existence and the reason that the Almighty invested in us.

Shabbat assures that we are well connected to our true essence and it highlights our connection with the Almighty Himself.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

1. Do you feel like a "creator"?
2. Can you identify with the piece of the Almighty that is within you?
3. What is your unique place in existence and what impact are you making on the world around you?

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