



# MESIBOS SHEL SHABBOS

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## שמונה עשרה של שבת • AMIDAH “The Silent Prayer on Shabbos”

Three times daily we recite the Amidah, in the morning, afternoon and in the evening. This is the silent prayer at which we stand and recite 18 blessings which range from the Blessings of our fore fathers, asking G-d for life and sustenance, forgiveness, rebuilding the Temple, peace and success in life and much more.

Interestingly on Shabbos we don't recite (18) blessings rather only (7). The reason for this is because a large amount of the blessings we recite daily - are requests for our needs – “*Bakashas Tzrochor*”, and since on Shabbos we trust that G-d has provided for us everything we need, as we usher in the Shabbos, praying for our needs on this day of virtual rest would be counter intuitive. So what remains in the Amidah is (7) blessings.

However, if you look carefully you will see we do add something to our Shabbos Amidah and this of course is a 4 part series of (1) blessing which speaks about the Holy day of Shabbos.

We begin with “*Atah Kedeshtah* – you have consecrated- a prayer that reflects upon the holiness of this day. Then, we reflect upon “*Vayechulu* - how this day is the culmination of all of the days of the week of work and creationism. Then, we move on to “*Yismichu* – a prayer that reflects upon the idea that those who have Shabbos and keep it holy find great delight and happiness and “Rejoicing”. And finally, the 4<sup>th</sup> in the series is “*Ritsay* - where we turn to G-d and pray that our performance of the mitzvah of Shabbos should be deemed special and acceptable in G-ds eyes.

Paying attention to these words we find tremendous inspiration and gain an uplifted spirit on Shabbos.

Yet, here a question rises, we know that our holy Zohar teaches that “Shabbos blesses the whole week”, and if this is the case and we are not praying for the things we need, than how is that going to happen. Is it not a fundamental precept in Jewish tradition that G-d gives and blesses, but we must ask and pray, to connect the source of all blessings?

One answer to this quandary is quite simply, that what is brought about through speech during the week, through words- actions, is brought about through thoughts and faith and trust - on the Shabbos. It is this primordial idea that precedes the corporeal idea, and together produce awesome results.

Perhaps one way we see this is in the first four letters of the 4 paragraphs of this special Shabbos blessing in the Amidah. Which is: *Alef, Vov, Yud, Alef*, of the words **אתה-ויכולו-ישמחו-אלקיני** - Which, when added up equals (18). Even when we are “skipping” the blessings verbally, spiritually they are still there – blessing the whole week in turn.

**Actionable lesson:** Invite guests over at your Shabbat Table to enhance your table. Pray together - recite words of prayers - and even when they're silent, soaking up the enormous energy that is Shabbos, remember: silence is golden! – and sometimes the most precious things are found in thought and signs as opposed to speaking and actions - pay attention and you will see.