



Kabbalat Shabbat -

Come, My Beloved

לְכֵה דוּדִי נִצַּא הַשָּׂדֶה נָלִינָה בְּכַפְרִים:

Come, my beloved, Let us go into the open; Let us lodge among the henna shrubs. - Song of Solomon 7:12

Kabbalat Shabbat, the “Receiving of Shabbat,” is a mystical ritual designed to welcome Shabbat. Developed during the 16th century by Kabbalists, it centers on the theme that Shabbat is the “Bride of Israel” who descends (as the Shechinah glory) upon the Jewish people. It was thought that the welcoming of shabbat in this way would make Shabbat observance more meaningful and personal.



The hymn *Lekha Dodi*, “Come, My Beloved,” is a main feature of the Kabbalat Shabbat ritual. Other rituals include the custom of going into the fields on Friday at sunset to welcome the “Sabbath Bride” as the sun descends. The Kabbalat Shabbat participants would then “escort” the Sabbath Bride (or the Shechinah - God’s Indwelling Presence) back to the synagogue for the ma’ariv (evening) service.

Rituals for Kabbalat Shabbat

The Kabbalat Shabbat Service at synagogue is often made part of the Friday evening service to welcome the Sabbath. This service is held between the candle-lighting ceremony and the Shabbat meal. Kabbalat Shabbat includes the recital of six nature Psalms (Psalms 24, 95-99), corresponding in number to the six days of the creation, and the special psalm of the Sabbath (Psalm 29). The song *Lekhah Dodi* is often sung to welcome the in the Sabbath as a groom welcomes his bride:

לְכֵה דוּדִי

L'chah dodi likrat kalah,
p'nei Shabbat n'kab'lah.

Shamor v'zachor b'dibur echad,
Hish'mi-anu El ham'yuchad,
Adonai echad, ush'mo echad,
L'sheim ul'tif'eret v'lit'hilah.

לְכֵה דוּדִי לְקִנְיָת כְּלָה.
פְּנֵי שַׁבַּת וְקַבְּלָה.

שְׁמוֹר וְזָכוֹר בְּדַבּוּר אֶחָד.
הִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ אֵל הַמְּיֻחָד.
יְיָ אֶחָד. וְשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.
לְשֵׁם וּלְתִפְאֵרֶת וּלְתִהְלָה.



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| Lik'rat Shabbat l'chu v'neil'chah, | לְקַרְאֵת שַׁבָּת לְכוּ וְנִלְכֶה. |
| Ki hi m'kor hab'rachah, | כִּי הִיא מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה. |
| Meirosh mikedem n'suchah, | מֵרֵאשׁ מִקְדָּם וְנִסּוּכָה. |
| Sof ma-aseh b'machashavah t'chilah. | סוֹף מַעֲשֵׂה בְּמַחְשָׁבָה תִּחְלֶה. |

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| Hitor'ri, hitor'ri, | הִתְעוֹרְרִי הִתְעוֹרְרִי. |
| Ki va oreich! Kumi ori | כִּי בָּא אֲרִיךְ! קוּמִי אֲרִי. |
| Uri uri, shir dabeiri; | עוּרִי עוּרִי שִׁיר דְּבַרִּי. |
| K'vod Adonai alayich nig'lah | כְּבוֹד יְיָ עָלֶיךָ נִגְלָה. |

All rise and face the entrance to welcome the Sabbath Bride

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| Bo-i v'shalom, ateret ba'lah; | בּוֹאִי בְּשָׁלוֹם עֲטֹרַת בַּעֲלָהּ. |
| Gam b'simchah uv'tzoholah | גַּם בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְצִהֻלָּה. |
| Toch emunei am s'gulah, | תּוֹךְ אֲמוּנֵי עַם סְגֻלָּה. |
| Bo-i chalah! Bo-i chalah! | בּוֹאִי כְּלָה! בּוֹאִי כְּלָה! |

*My beloved, come to greet the bride; let us receive the Sabbath.
 The only God caused us to hear “keep” and “remember” in one utterance; the Eternal is
 One and God’s name is One, for honor and glory and praise.
 Come, let us go to greet the Sabbath, which is the source of blessing. From its opening it
 is pouring as from the beginning; the end of Creation
 from the beginning of thought.
 Wake up! Wake up! For your light has come! Rise up my light! Awake! Awake! Sing! The
 Eternal’s glory is revealed to you!
 Enter in peace, O Crown of Your husband; enter in joy and exultation. Come, O Bride!
 Come, O Bride! To the faithful people of the treasured nation.*

Note: Some Jewish communities also chant the Song of Songs before the evening service, a love poem/analogy between God and Israel.