



Shabbat is observed on the seventh day of the week in fulfillment of the biblical commandment: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of Adonai your God." (Exodus 20:9–10) In accordance with the Jewish calendar, the Sabbath begins on Friday evening at sunset and ends on Saturday night with the appearance of three stars. All Jewish days begin at sunset. This is based on the wording of the Creation story in Genesis 1. At the end of the description of each day, we find the phrase: "And there was evening, and there was morning..." Since evening is mentioned first, the ancient rabbis deduced that evening is first.

While Shabbat occurs on Friday evening and Saturday, it is more than simply another day of the week. It is a special day and we invest it with specialness. Friday and Saturday come automatically, but Shabbat takes place only when we make it happen. We prepare for Shabbat by the clothes we wear, by the meals we eat, by the lighting of Sabbath candles, and by chanting the Kiddush over wine to set apart this special time.