

Foreword

Sabbath rest and Sunday worship

In 1998, Pope John Paul II wrote a letter on, “Keeping the Lord’s Day Holy (*Dies Domini*). The purpose of his letter was to encourage Catholics to honor their Sunday obligation of Eucharistic celebration in memory of the resurrection of Jesus: “At Sunday Mass, Christians relive with particular intensity the experience of the Apostles on the evening of Easter when the Risen Lord appeared to them as they were gathered together” (#33).

While the Pope encouraged Christians to keep Sunday, he recognizes that Jesus and his disciples kept the Sabbath and that many of his followers observed both the Sabbath and Sunday even unto the 4th century. The Sunday memorial of the Resurrection, which began as “a spontaneous practice later became a juridically sanctioned norm”(#30), and as the “custom” grew more widespread, Sunday slowly replaced the Sabbath as the holy day for Christians.

In time, many Christians forgot that the Sabbath was God’s gift to them as well as to the Jews, a gift given to the whole of the human race in creation. Now, since Vatican II and the publication of the document *Nostra Aetate* with its emphasis on the need for Christians to pursue Jewish studies as an essential component of Christian self-understanding, a new movement to reclaim the beauty of the Sabbath has taken place. The Pope writes, “In order to grasp fully the meaning of Sunday, therefore, we must re-read the great story of creation and deepen our understanding of the theology of the ‘Sabbath’ (#8). He insists that,

The Sabbath is rooted in the depths of God’s plan. This is why, unlike many other precepts, it is set not within the context of strictly cultic stipulations but within the Decalogue, the ‘ten words’ which represent the very pillars of the moral life inscribed on the human heart. In setting this commandment within the context of the basic structure of ethics, Israel and then the Church declare that they consider it not just a matter of community religious discipline but a defining and indelible expression of our relationship with God announced and expounded by biblical revelation. This is the perspective within which Christians need to rediscover this precept today (#13).

Though the Pope does not encourage Christians to keep both the Sabbath and Sunday as two holy days, yet he recognizes that “there have always been groups within Christianity which observe both the Sabbath and Sunday as ‘two brother days’” (#23).

We, at Bat Kol Institute do that. We celebrate the Sabbath in recognition that God has sanctified the seventh day with a special blessing and made it ‘his day’ par excellence, a day to celebrate God’s covenant with humanity and to reenact the dialogue of the covenant, which is the dialogue of ‘marriage’ (#14). During our study sessions in Jerusalem, we mark the entrance into the Sabbath with a festive meal and a sharing and reflection on the Torah portion of the week. We encourage all our alumnae/alumni and friends to do the same. To help them, we post on our website a two page commentary on the Torah portion of the week.

We also celebrate Sunday, the day on which the faithful are led “to ponder and live the event of Easter” (#19). Since the Eucharistic assembly is the heart of Sunday (Chapter 3), we take advantage of our unique position in Israel to celebrate Sunday liturgies in places made holy by the footsteps of Jesus, such as, the Mount of Olives, the Tomb of the Resurrection, Tabgha, Capernaum, and Nazareth.

Sabbath observance brings religion back into the home and enhances our Sunday worship. The two days illuminate each other.

Maureena Fritz
18 March 2005

Sabbath Rest and Sunday Worship

We are entitled to both

Maureena Fritz, NDS, Ph.D.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to show that there is a place for Sabbath observance among Christians. The early Christians observed the Sabbath well into the fourth century of the Common Era. Though the Christians commemorated the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week, this did not mean for them an annulment of the Sabbath. The Sabbath and Sunday are two different days. The Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Dies Domini* (1998), which emphasizes the importance of Sunday as a day of joy in commemoration of Jesus' resurrection, notes that "there have always been groups within Christianity that observe both the Sabbath and Sunday as 'two brother days.'"¹

In this paper, I will reflect first upon the biblical injunction to observe the Sabbath, and the sages' understanding of this commandment. Then I will consider the observance of the Sabbath by Jesus and his early followers. Following this, I will point to some of the changes that occurred in various communities of the Church and the development of Sunday as a different day of the week to the Sabbath. I will conclude with suggestions on Sabbath observance.

The Sabbath commandment

God blessed all the days of the week but to one day of the week, the seventh day, the Sabbath, God gave a double blessing and set the day apart as God's unique gift to the human race. While the Jews and some Christians have honored this gift throughout the ages, Christians for the most part have neglected it. Frequently one can hear well-meaning Christians say, "The Sabbath was given to the Jews. Sunday has replaced the Sabbath." Such a statement is no longer acceptable! I questioned three rabbis, one an orthodox Jew, one a conservative Jew, and the other a reform Jew, and asked each of them whether the Sabbath was given to them alone. All three agreed that the Sabbath was given to the whole of humanity. Let us then ponder anew these biblical texts on the Sabbath.

Genesis 2:1-3

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

From this text, we are presented with a paradigm of creation: six days of work and one day of rest. Within the polarity of the six and one the whole drama of creation occurs. The polarity inherent in the six and one occurs between God's *work* and *rest*, between God's *immanence* to creation and God's *transcendence* from it. Work attests to involvement, while rest guarantees separation and freedom from absorption into creation. God is not totally absorbed by the divine project nor rendered passive by divine rest. Such a dialectic of work and rest energizes both poles.

The dialectic of the six and one is enacted within the time span of a week, which is the biblical unit of reality, not the twenty-four hour day. Seven, demonstrating as it does an important dimension of wholeness, has always been a significant number both in Judaism and Christianity. For example, as a multiple of the Jubilee year (i.e., seven times seven) it points to the beginning of a new social reality. In the week, the number seven points to an intimate connection between the ordinary holiness of the everyday and the double portion of holiness attached to the Sabbath. While the thrust of the week is towards the holiness of the Sabbath, the Sabbath, in turn, renews the six days of work. Commenting on the institution of the Sabbath, Rosenzweig writes:

For this is the ultimate significance of the Sabbath: it was instituted primarily to commemorate the work of the beginning and thus forms the solid and lasting basis of the spiritual year. On the other hand, its institution was the first sign of revelation within the act of creation itself; though veiled, the revealed name of God appears in the Scriptures for the first time in the words instituting the Sabbath. So, through being at once the sign of creation and the first revelation, it is also, and even mainly, the anticipation of redemption.²

Exodus 20:8-11

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

In Genesis 2:1-3, we contemplate God in a first revelation of the divine self. In this text, which is part of the Decalogue, we are commanded to keep holy the Sabbath day as a commemoration of creation. Observance of this commandment is thus a form of *imitatio dei*.

The command is twofold. First we are to imitate God in the work week: “Six days you shall labor, and do all your work.” After the six days of work, a time to assert our creative powers, we are commanded to observe the Sabbath: “The seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work.” Work, though important, must not totally claim the creature. To stop work on the Sabbath, in response to God’s command, is a great act of surrender to God that proclaims in a radical way our belief in God’s sovereignty over our lives. To stop work, in the manner in which we are able, has the added dimension that we become renewed spiritually, physically and emotionally. Abraham Heschel describes the phenomenon in terms of a resurrection for the whole of humankind: “Every seventh day a miracle comes to pass, the resurrection of the soul, of the soul of man and of the soul of all things.”³

Exodus 31:12-17

And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Say to the people of Israel, “You shall keep my sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. You shall keep the sabbath, because it is holy for you; every one who profanes it shall be put to death; whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall be put to death. Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign for ever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

At a time when the Israelites are about to begin construction on the Tabernacle (Exodus 30:1-31:11), a work of the greatest importance because it is to be a sign to the people of Israel that God dwells in their midst, the command to keep holy the Sabbath day is repeated and emphasized. Even work of the highest significance is not to supersede Sabbath observance. The Sabbath is in itself the wedding ring, the sign of the covenant between God and the people. Through its observance the people will “know that I, the LORD, sanctify you.” Not only the Israelites will know, but so that “all nations may know,” says Rashi, the great medieval commentator.

The one who desecrates the Sabbath is to be put to death. Death may not be immediate, but death’s elements can be detected in loss of life through burnout, the waning of enthusiasm, chronic fatigue,

etc. In the event that we have not heard the first warning, the threat of death is repeated, “Whoever does any work on the Sabbath shall be put to death.” Why is it so important to keep the Sabbath? Because in itself it is an act of *imitatio dei*. Its observance renews the covenant between God and the one who observes the Sabbath. It is a sign to the whole world of the surrender of oneself to God for we know that to stop work in which we are involved can be heroic.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your manservant, or your maidservant, or your ox, or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

Written at a later date, this text is a second version of the Ten Commandments. The words are stronger. “Observe” replaces the “remember” in the Exodus texts. “...as the LORD your God commanded you” are words not found in Exodus but are rather a rhetorical amplification of them. An additional reason is given for keeping the Sabbath: “You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and outstretched arm”. Therefore, “the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.”

The servant “as well as you” has an equal right to Sabbath rest. The Sabbath proclaims equality among all. Endowing all with the ability to say “No” to any form of coercion, the Sabbath is a sanctuary in time that forms a new consciousness of the dignity and freedom of each individual. It is the *Magna Carta* of the liberation of all human beings from the tyranny of other human beings.

The word “work” appears constantly in all of these texts. The Bible gives no definition of work. The *Mishna*, compiled and edited at the beginning of the third century, a collection of Jewish law and ethics, ranking second to the Hebrew Bible, lists thirty-nine categories of activities regarded as forbidden work. But rules regarding these categories do not apply when a person’s life is in danger. It is a duty incumbent upon all to do whatever is necessary to save a life. All Sabbath laws are suspended in matters of serious illness or in any situation in which a person’s life is at stake. A physician who is called upon to render emergency treatment may do all that is necessary to save a life without regard to Sabbath restrictions.⁴

Isaiah 58:13-14

If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

After all the strict commandments to keep holy the Sabbath day, here is the great reward: we shall know delight in the Lord. We will ride high. Our burdens will be less heavy. We will reap the rewards of our rich heritage.

Jesus and the Sabbath

From the New Testament we learn that Jesus was Jewish. He was born of a Jewish woman, of the race of David and the people of Israel. He was brought up Jewish. He was circumcised according to the Law. He spoke and acted like a Jew. His mode of preaching and teaching was Jewish. Many of his

parables and sayings can be found in Jewish tradition. His first disciples were Jews, as were the Apostles and the first martyrs. Yet Jesus has often been portrayed as being at enmity with his own people, even that he abolished the Sabbath. Did he, in fact, abolish the Sabbath or was he faithful to Sabbath observance?

Did Jesus observe the Sabbath?

Several references in the Gospels indicate that Jesus was an observant Jew who observed the Sabbath. In Mark, Jesus arrives on time for the Sabbath: “and they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught” (1:21). Luke emphasizes that it was the custom of Jesus to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath: “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the Sabbath day” (4:16). And Matthew, knowing the laws surrounding travel on the Sabbath, has Jesus saying, “Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath” (24:20).

Did Jesus annul the Sabbath?

Those who think that Jesus annulled the Sabbath do not know the Jewish milieu in which Jesus lived. One Sabbath day, Jesus walked through the grain fields with his disciples, “and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees said to him, ‘Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?’” (Mk 2:23-24). Jesus answered:

Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him; how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him? (Mk 2:25-26).

Jesus does not make up new laws, or change the Law, but rather, by using arguments from within his Jewish Tradition, he shows that the Law motivates him. Jesus concludes his argument with what must have been a favorite saying, “The Sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). A Jewish source reads, “The Sabbath is given unto you, not you unto the Sabbath” (Mekilta to Exodus 31:13). In Maccabees, a similar principle governs an analogous situation: “But the Lord did not choose the nation for the sake of the holy place, but the place for the sake of the nation” (2 Maccabees 5:19).

The controversy over the Sabbath

To understand the controversies over the Sabbath, two facts should be kept in mind. First, the Talmud (Sotah 22b) lists seven different categories of Pharisees, ranging from the righteous to the hypocritical. Second, recall that the controversy over the Sabbath in the Gospels was not over questions of life and death but rather over the degree of healing that was permitted, areas in which the rabbis differed. Mark recounts that Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and a man with a withered hand stood before him. To a group of Pharisees who were waiting to see if Jesus would cure the man, Jesus said, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” (Mk 3:3). But they were silent, for they knew that it was permitted to save a life on the Sabbath. In fact, the rabbis severely criticized anyone who delayed helping a dangerously sick person for every delay could be a matter of life or death.⁵

It is true to say that most scholars agree that Jesus observed the Sabbath, as did his disciples and early followers. To the end of his life on earth Jesus remained a faithful Jew.

The Sabbath, the early Christians, and Sunday⁶

No mention is made in the New Testament that the Sabbath was replaced by Sunday. Jesus’ followers continued to observe the Sabbath even after his death. Paul himself did not advocate the abolition of the Sabbath but continued to worship in the synagogue on the Sabbath as “was his custom” (Acts 17:2).

The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE was a decisive moment that weakened the influence of the Jerusalem church, which adhered to the basic precepts of Judaism. As the number of Gentiles increased in the Church, and as the Church became more Hellenized, it progressively lost touch with its Jewish roots and defined itself “over against” Judaism. The sin of supersessionism, a doctrine that sees the covenant of God with the Jewish people as broken and the Church replacing it as the new people of God, is evident in the *Epistle of Barnabas*.⁷

But they lost it (the covenant) completely in the following manner, after Moses already had received it, for the Scripture says, and Moses was on the mountain fasting for forty days and forty nights, and he received the covenant from the Lord, stone tablets inscribed by the finger of the Lord’s hand. But when they turned to idols, they lost it.⁸

This epistle not only declares the brokenness of the covenant of God with the Jewish people but announces its fulfillment in Jesus (Barn.14:5). Jewish practices are undermined including Sabbath observance. Sunday, the eighth day, which commemorates the resurrection (Barn.15:1-9), replaces the Sabbath.⁹

The anti-Judaism in the *Epistle of Barnabas* was not widespread and hence the abandonment of Sabbath observance was a gradual occurrence that varied in different localities in the West and the East. For another three to four hundred years, some type of both Sabbath and Sunday observance existed among the Christians.

Both Hellenistic Egypt and the rest of the Hellenistic Christian East practiced the observance of both the Sabbath and Sunday in the fourth century and as late as the fifth century.¹⁰ A canon attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria, the most important episcopal delegate from Egypt to the Council of Nicaea in 325, speaks of the necessity of observing both the Sabbath and Sunday.¹¹ Timotheus, Bishop of Alexandria in 381, forbids sexual relations on the Sabbath and the Lord’s Day because on these days the spiritual sacrifice of the Eucharist is offered to the Lord.¹² Epiphanius of Salamis (in Cyprus) places the Sabbath alongside Sunday as a day of Christian gathering.¹³ Pseudo-Ignatius (Fourth Century) writes, “After keeping the Sabbath, let every lover of Christ celebrate the festival of the Lord’s Day, the day of resurrection, the royal day, the most excellent of all days.”¹⁴ In the Apostolic Constitutions, a collection of ecclesiastical law dating from 350-80 C.E., we read:

Let the slaves work five days; but on the Sabbath and the Lord’s Day let them have leisure to go to Church for instruction in piety. We have said that the Sabbath is on account of Creation, and the Lord’s Day of resurrection.¹⁵

This is strong evidence that the Sabbath as well as Sunday were important but different days for the early Christians. The Sabbath is not absorbed into the Sunday.

It is still too often assumed that the observance of the Christian Sunday is a continuation on a different day of the Jewish Sabbath... but the main ideas underlying the two observances were from the first quite different. Sunday was in the primitive Christian view only the prescribed day for corporate worship, by the proclamation of the Lord’s revelation and the Lord’s death till He come... there was no attempt whatever in the first three centuries to base the observance of Sunday on the fourth commandment... Christians showed no hesitation at all about treating Sunday as an ordinary working day like their neighbors, once they had attended the *synaxis* and Eucharist at the *ecclesia*.¹⁶

Historical developments hastened the replacement of Sabbath by Sunday. Not least of these was the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. After that date Jerusalem lost its centrality in church government. Ecclesiastical authority passed over to Caesarea and thence to Rome, which became powerful from the fourth and fifth centuries, particularly with the accession of Pelagius to the papacy. When in March 321, a decree of Constantine proscribed work on Sunday, the first such edict to be enacted, the movement toward replacement of Sabbath with Sunday was further strengthened.

After this time, Sabbath observance diminished further and its observance was even condemned by certain conciliar decrees. Increasingly, the Church lost touch with its Jewish roots and the anti-Judaism found in the early writings of the Fathers developed into a vicious anti-Semitism that was partly responsible for the *Shoah*.

A new paradigm

Since the *Shoah*, the Church has taken steps to mend the breach between herself and the Jewish people. In the document *Nostra Aetate*, the Church condemned all forms of anti-Semitism and racism. It redefined its relationship with Judaism not ‘over against’ the Jewish faith, but rather in ‘complementarity’ with it, emphasizing the origins of the Church in Judaism, the Jewish identities of Jesus, Mary and the Apostles, and the Church’s ongoing nourishment “from that good olive tree,” the Jewish tradition, on to which the Church has been grafted. In Mainz, in a dramatic statement before a Jewish audience, Pope John Paul II proclaimed that God’s covenant with the Jewish people has never been revoked and that the Jews “remain most dear to God for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues.”¹⁷

It is in the light of this new relationship of the Church with the Jewish people that we have undertaken this discussion of the Sabbath and Sunday. We have discussed three different moments:

Sabbath observance: Jesus and his disciples observed the Sabbath.

Sabbath and Sunday observance: The early Church observed the Sabbath as a day of rest according to the biblical injunction, and Sunday, known as the Lord’s day, was a day of corporate worship to proclaim the Lord’s revelation and the Lord’s death until he comes.

Sunday: The first extant Christian work claiming that the Sabbath had been transferred to Sunday is the commentary on Psalm 92 by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea. However, Eusebius may not have had the Jewish Sabbath in mind in his transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday, because he does not refer to the commandment of the Sabbath in the Decalogue.

The new focus of the Church, in continuity ‘with’ rather than ‘over against’ the Jewish people, means that *fulfillment* does not mean abrogation of the Law but rather *continuity* with it. Given the example of Jesus’ observance of the Sabbath, and the diversity of opinions in the early Church, as well as the fact that Christians celebrated the Sabbath well into the fourth century, a strong rationale is given for observing the Sabbath as a day of rest, and Sunday, as the day to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus.

Keep holy the Sabbath day

Stop Work

The first requirement and the predominant feature of the Sabbath is cessation from labor and all business activity. But what is work? While the Mishna (Shabbat 7:2) defines the main thirty-nine categories of work forbidden to a Jew on the Sabbath, I found that I needed to find a definition that worked for me. In Josef Pieper’s book on leisure,¹⁸ I discovered that definition. “Work” is what I do “in order to.” If I study Torah in order to prepare a lecture for the following Monday, I am working! But if I study Torah for the sake of Torah, I am not working. If I knit in order to send a pair of socks to my friend, I am working, but if I knit because knitting is a joy, it is not work. An act that is done for itself fosters a capacity in one to be present and attentive.

The Isaiah text quoted above points to the great rewards bestowed on those who cease work on the Sabbath: “You shall take delight in the LORD...I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth, I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

What a strong invitation not only to stop work but to rid our minds of any preoccupation with our weekday professions. At first this will be difficult but practice will show us the way. We will discover that the day of rest enhances the workweek with a new kind of enthusiasm.

In the event that we must work, the work should be kept to a minimum. Should it happen that we are in one of the helping professions, such as nursing, which requires us to work on the Sabbath, we can still keep the Sabbath in its minimum requirements, which is to *remember* it: “Remember the Sabbath day” (Exodus 20:8). To ensure that we keep this minimum, we should place a symbol before us, which will act as a reminder, such as a white tablecloth on the table.

Light Sabbath lights

Candlelight adds to the spirit of peace and tranquillity. Candles should be lit before the Sabbath begins on Friday night, at sundown. Lighting them at sundown, a fixed time, ensures that we enter into the Sabbath on God’s time, not ours. Both the Jewish and Christian liturgical years begin with the evening before the festival.

Wear festive clothes and eat festive meals

Four things have been enjoined regarding the Sabbath: two on biblical authority, and two on the authority of the sages and clearly expressed by the Prophets. The Torah says: *Remember* (Exodus 20:8) and *Observe* (Deut 5:12); the prophets speak of *honor* and *delight*, as it is written: “Call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable” (Isaiah 58:13).

What is meant by honor? “We honor the Sabbath by wearing clean clothes. One must not wear weekday apparel on the Sabbath...One should spread the Sabbath table to welcome the Sabbath... so too, one should set the table at the end of Sabbath ... in order to honor the Sabbath both at its entrance and departure.”¹⁹

What is meant by delight? “The sages explained this by declaring that one should prepare rich food and fragrant beverages for the Sabbath as much as one can afford. The more one spends for the Sabbath and the more one prepares tasty food, the more praise one deserves.”²⁰

Sabbath Table Talk

Bat Kol Institute staff and alumni write and publish a two page Torah (Scripture) commentary on the Bat Kol website (www.batkol.info), at the beginning of each week. These commentaries are meant to help make of our Sabbath table an altar where God is worshipped and God’s word is heard. A sample Sabbath Table Liturgy outline can be found on this website.

In conclusion, in this paper I have demonstrated that there is a place for Sabbath observance among Christians that will also enhance our welcome of Sunday, the Christian day of worship. At sundown on Saturday night, as Christians bid farewell to the Sabbath, they also bid welcome to Sunday, the day of joy in the resurrection of Jesus. The blessing *that closes the Sabbath* is also a blessing that welcomes the Lord’s Day. It is a blessing that is *kodesh lekodesh*, from holiness to holiness. While our observance of Sabbath is a foretaste of eternity in time, Sunday worship is a significant witness to the life and the hope we have received in Christ. In our observance of Sabbath and our worship on the Lord’s Day, we pray and hope for the day when all humankind will be one, for that day when the Lord will be one and God’s name will be one (Zech 14:9).

Note from Maureen Fritz: This article is a revision of an article of mine that was published in THE WAY SUPPLEMENT 2000/97, under the title, “Sabbath Rest and Sunday Worship: we are entitled to both.”

NOTES

¹ Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II, *Dies Domini: On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1998), p.31.

² Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. from the Second Edition (1930) by W. W. Hallo (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p 314.

³ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1951). p 83.

⁴ Hayim H. Donin, *To be a Jew: A guide to Jewish Observance in Contemporary Life* (Basic Books, a Division of Harper Collins Publishers. 1971), p 96.

⁵ Solomon Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (Schocken Books, 1961), p 152.

⁶ I am grateful to Marianne Dacy NDS., PhD, University of Sydney, Australia, for so generously sharing with me the results of her research into early Christianity and rabbinic Judaism although I alone am responsible for what I have written.

⁷ While this epistle is attributed to the apostle Barnabas it is more likely to be a document written by a Christian of Alexandria who wrote at some time between 70 and 150. Its Greek text was first discovered entire in the Codex Sinaiticus. It contains a strong attack on Judaism. See *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Third Edition (1997), ed E. A. Livingstone. p 159.

⁸ *Barnabas* 4:6c-7 from *Barnabas and the Didache*, trans Robert A. Kraft (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1965), Vol 3 of *The Apostolic Fathers: a new translation and commentary*, ed Robert M. Grant.

⁹ Justin Martyr, who speaks of the eighth day in connection with circumcision, says this day does not cease to be called the first. See *Dialogue with Trypho* 41:4. See also Enoch 33:2. Later in the third century Cyprian speaks of the eighth day, calling it the day after the Sabbath, the day of resurrection when the Lord gives spiritual circumcision. See Cyprian, *Epistula* 64:4. In the fourth century, Ambrose developed the thought of Cyprian, calling the eighth the day of the perfect circumcision that is passed down to all humankind. See Ambrose, *Epistula* 31(44) *ad Orontianum*. In his commentary on the Psalms Ambrose introduced other biblical witnesses for the number eight. See *Commentary on the Psalms* 43. 62. See also Hosea 3:1-2 and Micah 5:4-5. Athanasius, in the fourth century, called seven a symbol of the Old Testament and eight a symbol of the New Testament. See in *De Sabbatix et Circumcisione* 1 and 4. Augustine has the same thought. See *City of God* XVI:26.

¹⁰ See Robert A. Kraft, "Some notes on Sabbath observance in early Christianity." *St Andrew's University Seminar Studies* 3 (1965). pp 18-33.

¹¹ See Canon 92, as translated from the Arabic text, *Canons of Alexandria: the one hundred and seven Canons in the Arabic translation from the Coptic version of the Greek*, by Michael Bishop of Tinnis, of the eleventh century, ed and trans., W. Riedel and W. E. Crum (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1973), reprint of the London edition of 1904, p 59.

¹² *Responsa Canonica* PG 33: 1305.

¹³ The *Panarion* of Epiphanius of Salamis, trans Frank Williams (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987). Nag Hammadi Series xxxv. ed Martin Krause, James M. Robinson and Frederick Wisse.

¹⁴ Pseudo-Ignatius. *Magnesians* 9:3-4, ed Funk-Diekam. See Robert Kraft "Some notes," p 23.

¹⁵ *Apostolic Constitutions* viii. 33. 2. See *The Apostolic Constitutions*, ed., James Donaldson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1870), Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol viii.

¹⁶ Gregory Dix, *The shape of the Liturgy* (2nd edition Adams and Charles Black. 1975), p 336.

¹⁷ The "covenant which has never been revoked" was explicitly emphasized by Pope John Paul II in the presence of official Jewish representatives in Mainz in 1980 and was quoted in the *Vatican Notes* of 1985.

¹⁸ Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* (New York: Mentor-Omega Books, 1963).

¹⁹ Philip Birnbaum (ed), *Maimonides Mishneh Torah* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., c. 1964, 1967), p 74.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p 75.