

Shabbat: Thought and Practice

Text from Friday night Kiddush

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי. וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צְבָאָם וַיְכַל
אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל
מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ. כִּי בּוֹ
שָׁבַת מִכָּל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בָּנוּ. וְשָׁבַת
קִדְּשׁוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הַנְּחִילָנוּ זְכוֹרוֹן לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית. כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה
לְמִקְרָאֵי קִדְּשׁ זֵכֶר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם. כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֵרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל
הָעַמִּים וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשָׁתָּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הַנְּחִילָתָנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' מְקַדְּשׁ הַשָּׁבַת

The sixth day: And the Heavens and the Earth and all they contained were completed, and on the seventh day God desisted from all the work that he had done. And God rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, for on that day he rested from all the work which he had done in creating the world. (Genesis/Bereishit 2:1-3)

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, **who has sanctified us with his commandments and favored us (Revelation)**, and given us in love and favor his holy Shabbat as an inheritance, as a **remembrance of the act of Creation**. For this day is the beginning of all holy days, a **remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt (Redemption)**. For you have chosen us and you have blessed us from among all the nations. And you have bequeathed us your holy Shabbat in love and favor. Blessed are you, Lord, who sanctifies Shabbat.

Franz Rosenzweig (1886 - 1929), Germany

Quotes from *Franz Rosenzweig: his life and thought presented by Nahum Glatzer*, 309 - 316.

So, through being at once the sign of creation and the first revelation, it is also, and even mainly, the anticipation of redemption. For what is redemption if not the concord between revelation and creation? And what is the first ineluctable premise for such concord, save man's rest after he has done the work of this earth!

Shabbat practices:-

- Kabbalat shabbat and Maariv - welcoming in shabbat in shul
- Kiddush - wine and bread at home
- Shabbat morning - prayer
- Shabbat morning - Torah reading
- Shabbat speech
- (Shabbat afternoon - 3rd meal)
- Havdalah

Erev Shabbat

On the Sabbath in contrast to weekdays - the great prayer of benedictions, repeated thrice daily, is enriched by inserts of poetry which convert the simple repetition into an organised and rounded whole. The addition to the prayer on the eve of the Sabbath refers to the institution of the sabbath in the creation of the world. Here the words that concluded the story of creation occur and heaven and the earth were finished. On returning from the service in the House of Prayer, this is repeated in the home, by the holy light of the candles, before - in the blessing over bread and wine as the divine gifts of the earth - the divine nature of what is earthly is attested in the flow of the sabbath lights and the entire day thus consecrated as a festival commemorating creation. For bread and wine are the most perfect works of man, works that cannot be surpassed. They cannot, however, be compared to his other works in which his inventive mind artfully combines the gifts of nature, and in the act of combining goes itself on to greater and greater artfulness bread and wine are nothing but the ennobled gifts of earth; one of the basis of all the strength of life, the other of all its joy. Both were perfected in the youth of the world and of the people thereon, and neither can ever grow old. Every mouthful of bread and every sip of wine tastes just as wonderful as the first we ever savored, and certainly no less wonderful than in time

immemorial they tasted to those who for the first harvested the grain for bread and gathered the fruits of the vine.

Shabbat morning

While the eve of the Sabbath is primarily a festival in honor of creation, the morning celebrates Revelation. Here the poetic insert in the great prayer of benediction proclaims the joy of Moses at God's gift of the Sabbath. And the joy of the great receiver of Revelation, to whom God spoke face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend, and to whom he gave greater recognition than to any later prophet of Israel, is followed, in the order of the day with the reading of the weekly portion to the congregation by its representatives. On the eve of the Sabbath, expression is given to the knowledge that the earth is a creation; in the morning we find utterance of the people's awareness of being elect through the gift of Torah which signifies that eternal life has been planted in their midst.

Torah reading

In the circle of weekly portions which, in the course of one year, cover all of the Torah, the spiritual year is paced out, and the paces of this course are the Sabbaths. By and large, every Sabbath is just like any other, but the difference in the portions from the Scriptures distinguishes each from each, and this difference shows that they are not final in themselves but only parts of a higher order, of the year. For only in the year do the differentiating elements of the individual parts again fuse into a whole. The Sabbath lends reality to the year. This reality must be recreated week by week. One might say that the spiritual year knows only what is dealt with in this portion, but it becomes a year because every week is nothing but a fleeting moment. It is only in the sequence of Sabbaths that the year rounds to a garland.

Speech

... Six days he has uttered the many useful and useless things the workday demanded of him, but on the seventh he obeys the command of the prophet: he lets his tongue rest from the talk of everyday, and learns to be silent, to *listen*.

Havdalah

The sabbath itself is not merely a festival, but also just another day in the week, and very much so. It does not stand out in the year like the actual festivals, even though the structure of the year is based upon it; it stands out in the week. And so it merges with the week again. When the congregation enters the House of God it acclaims the Sabbath with joy, as the bridegroom does the bride, but later the Sabbath vanishes into

quotidian life like a dream. The smallest circuit set for man, the workday week, begins again. A child holds the light that an older man lit while, with closed eyes, he drinks a cup of wine, waking from the dream of perfection spun by the festival of the seventh day. A way must be found from the sanctuary back into the workaday world. The year, all of life, is built upon the shift from the holy to the profane, from the seventh to the first day, from perfection to outset, from old age to early youth. The sabbath is the dream of perfection, but it is only a dream. Only in its being both does it become the cornerstone of life; only as the festival of perfection does it become the constant renewal of creation.