



Carnegie Shul Chatter

March 12, 2020



Light Candles 7:07pm

Shabbat Services 9:20 am

Remember the Sabbath

The Ten Commandments tell us, "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."

This week's parshah, Ki Tisa, even says, "You shall keep

Come and Pray

And so the coronavirus situation has worsened and Americans are urged to avoid crowds. Travel restrictions are growing, and for many the fear factor is increasing.

New Rochelle, New York, is now part of a "containment zone" after a Jewish man there was infected with the virus and, not knowing that he was infected, traveled to New York City, where many others became infected.

Israel has put a travel restriction in place that requires anyone coming into the country to quarantine in a private home for 14 days upon arrival.

The Purim service we attended in Florida this week had noticeably fewer people attending than in past years.

Our Sabbath services are still being held, and we still need our members to attend to help make a minyan.

And let us all pray, whether in Shul or at home, that this virus will soon be contained and that further illness and suffering will soon come to an end.

the Sabbath, for it is holy to you; anyone who profanes it shall be put to death. For whoever does any work on that day shall be cut off from his people.”

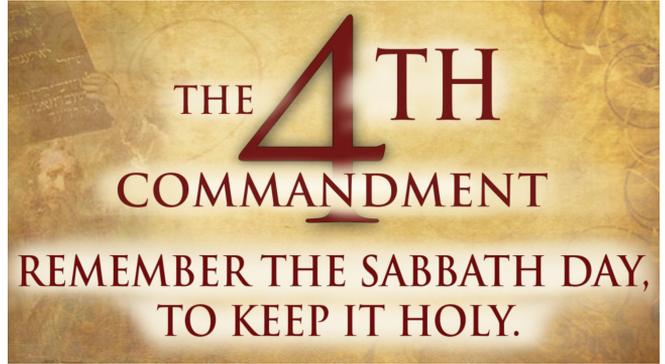
Below is an excerpt from an article from *ou.org* that has an in-depth explanation of the importance of the Sabbath and why this severe penalty was included.

Why the Sabbath?

There is a miracle in Shabbos.

Even if you have never felt it yourself, it is there. It is one of the most important ingredients of Jewish survival.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Jew has survived two thousand years of persecution and humiliation largely because he had the Sabbath. It was one factor that not only made him survive, but kept him alive, both spiritually and morally.



Without the Sabbath, the Jew would have vanished. It has been said that as much as the Jew has kept Shabbos, so has Shabbos kept the Jew.

As long as Judaism exists as a vibrant, vital force, the Sabbath is its most outstanding ritual practice.

In order to understand this, you would have to experience a true traditional Shabbos. You would see a change take place, almost like magic. Take the poorest Jew, the most wretched person, and the Sabbath transforms him, as if by a miracle into a man of dignity and pride. He might be a beggar all week long, but on this one day, he is a true king.

There are hundreds of thousands of Jews who keep the Sabbath, with the number growing every year. To understand what Shabbos means, you must live it with them.

I remember once spending Shabbos with a poor working man in Williamsburg. He was a simple but pious man who did not have very much in the way of worldly goods. Seeing his cramped, dreary apartment, you might have pitied him, but at his Shabbos table, he sat like a king.

He made a remark that has remained with me all these years. “I pity people who don’t keep Shabbos. I really pity them. They don’t know what they are missing. They have no idea at all.”

There is a Sabbath prayer that reads. “Rejoice in your kingdom, you who keep the Sabbath.” The miracle of Shabbos is the kingdom of every Jew.

There is a miracle in the Sabbath.

Let us look into it more deeply.

The Primary Ritual

Two of the major parts of Judaism are the ethical and the ritual.

We can all understand the importance of the ethical laws of Judaism. None of us have any difficulty comprehending why the Torah tells us not to kill and steal, or why we must not shame or hurt another person.

On the other hand, Judaism contains many ritual laws, rules that strengthen man's relationship with G-d. These include the holidays, the Kashrus laws, and such things as Tallis, Tefillin and the Mezuzah. It is, in large part, these rituals that separate Judaism from all other ethical systems.

Among the many rituals of Judaism, we find one prime ritual that stands above the rest.

That is Shabbos - the Jewish Sabbath.

More than Rosh HaShanah, more than Yom Kippur, more than keeping Kosher or attending services, the Sabbath is the one ritual that marks the Jew.

It is the only ritual mentioned in the Ten Commandments.

Think about it for a moment. Of all the many rituals of Judaism, only one is mentioned in the Ten Commandments.

Many people claim that, to be a "good Jew", one need only observe the Ten Commandments. But if you do not keep the Sabbath, then you are only keeping nine of them.

At this point, the question must be forming in your mind, "But why? What is so special about the Sabbath? Why does it merit a place in the Ten Commandments? Why is it so important?"

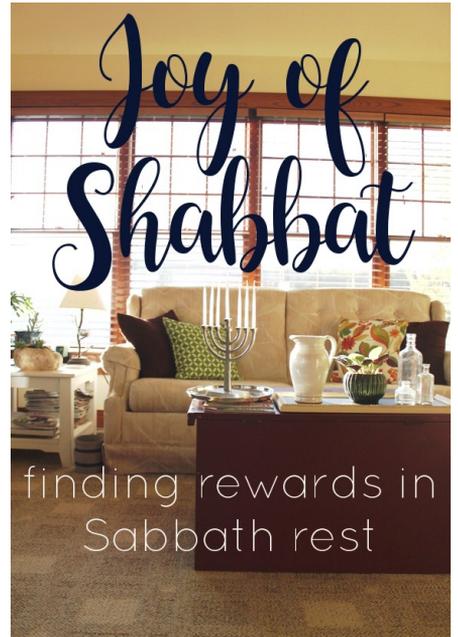
The question becomes even stronger when we realize that, in ancient times, when Jews administered their own system of Justice, when capital punishment was administered, violating the Sabbath was a major crime, punishable, in extreme circumstances, by death.

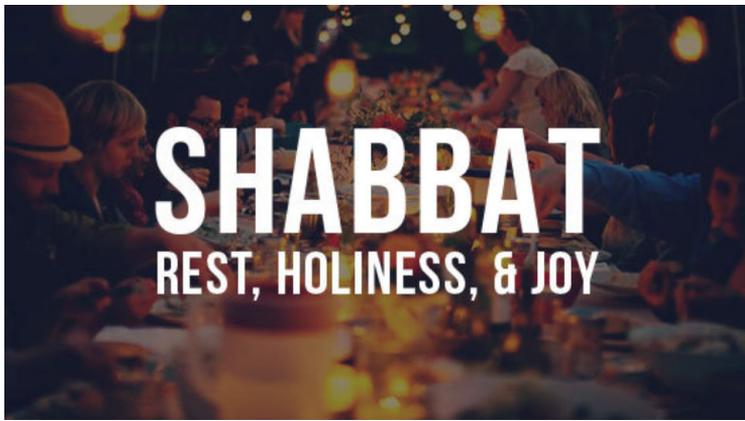
The Torah openly states (Ex. 31:14), "You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you; any one who profanes it shall be put to death. For whoever does any work on that day shall be cut off from his people."

Put to death ... Cut off from his people ... Very strong terms indeed. But why?

In Torah law, we find that the penalty for violating the Sabbath was to be stoned to death, the worst possible form of execution. The Sabbath violator was put in the same category as the person who betrays his faith and his people.

Jewish law treats one who does not keep the Sabbath as one who abandons Judaism for another religion.





The Talmud flatly states, “Breaking the Sabbath is like worshipping idols.”

In many respects, one who willingly and flagrantly does not keep the Sabbath is no longer considered part of the Jewish community.

But why should this be so?

One way of understanding it can be grasped by studying those authorities who take a more lenient

view. They write that in modern times, one may extend to a Sabbath violator the privileges of being a Jew, for a very interesting reason. They state that no one would violate the Sabbath if he truly understood its meaning. Therefore, unless we have contrary evidence, we assume that a person violating the Sabbath is doing so out of ignorance, and therefore we treat him with sympathy and understanding rather than harshness.

All this highlights one point: The Sabbath is the most important institution of Judaism. It is the primary ritual, the very touchstone of our faith.

Not only is the Sabbath the only ritual appearing in the Ten Commandments, but it is also repeated more often in the Torah than any other commandment.

Our great prophets hardly ever mentioned any ritual. Their task was to admonish Israel with regard to faith and morality. But still, they placed a great emphasis on the Sabbath.

Throughout the Talmud, the Midrash, and the other great classical Jewish writings, we find that the Sabbath has a most central place in Jewish thought.

Classical Judaism does not recognize such divisions as Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. There were basically only two kinds of Jews, The Sabbath Observer (Shomer Shabbos), and the Sabbath Violator (MeChallel Shabbos).

There is absolutely no question that the Sabbath plays a most central role in Judaism. But we are still left with our original questions.

- *How does the Shabbos create such an atmosphere?*
- *Why is it so important?*
- *What makes it so central to Judaism?*
- *Why is a person who violates the Sabbath counted as an apostate?*
- *What is the real meaning of the Shabbos?*

To read the entire article go to <http://ou.org.s3.amazonaws.com/publications/kaplan/shabbat/why.htm>.

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