

Thoughts on Shabbat Halachah:

(A “work” in progress. Originally taught as a workshop during Sukkot 2008, Camp Kate Portman, Granite, OK)

Sabbath requirements:

1. Sabbath is set-apart from all other days. (Bereshiyt/Genesis 2:3, etc.)
2. Sabbath is for rest. (Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:3; Shemot/Exodus 16:21-20 and 34:21)
3. Remember the Sabbath and keep it set-apart (Shemot/Exodus 20:8).
4. Sabbath is for a “miqra qodesh” or “set apart gathering” of believers (Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:3)
5. The Torah is to be read throughout the world on Shabbat (Acts 15:21)

Sabbath prohibitions.

No work is to be done on Sabbath. How does Scripture define "work"? Elohim rested from creative activity on Shabbat (Bereshiyt/Genesis. 2:1-3). The word “*melakhah*” is translated as craftsmanship, workmanship or artisanry in Shemot/Exodus 31:3 and refers to the work of the skilled craftsmen building the Tabernacle. In Shemot/Exodus 31:14-15, the same word is used, simply translated as work:

Shemot/Exodus 31: 3 (HRV) And I have filled him with the Spirit of Elohim: in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.

Shemot/Exodus 31:14-15 (HRV) 14 You shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it is Set-Apart unto you; every one that profanes it shall surely be put to death. For whosoever does any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest; Set-Apart to YHWH: whosoever does any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

1. Thus, whatever “work” would be involved in making the Tabernacle are among those not normally permitted on Shabbat.
2. Baking and boiling/cooking of food is to be done before Sabbath (Shemot/Exodus 16:23)

Shemot/Exodus 16:23 (CJB) He told them, "This is what *ADONAI* has said: 'Tomorrow is a holy *Shabbat* for *ADONAI*. Bake what you want to bake; boil what you want to boil; and whatever is left over, set aside and keep for the morning.'"

3. Kindling a fire in your dwellings on the Sabbath is out. (Shemot/Exodus 35:3)

Shemot/Exodus 35:3 (ISR) “Do not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings (*moshavot*) on the Sabbath day.”

4. Carrying a burden or load is out:

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17:21-22 21 (HRV) Thus says YHWH: Take heed for the sake of your souls, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Yerushalayim. 22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day; neither do you any work, but Set-apart you, the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

5. Buying or selling is out:

Nehemiah 10:31 (NASB) As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego *the crops* the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

Amos 8:5 (NASB) saying, "When will the new moon be over, So that we may sell grain, And the sabbath, that we may open the wheat *market*, To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, And to cheat with dishonest scales,

6. Causing others to work is out:

- * Your children
- * Any servant/employee who would serve you (this includes any stranger who would serve you)
- * Any animal you own.
- * Any visitor in your home.

(Shemot/Exodus 20:8-10; 23:12; Devarim/Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

Shemot/Exodus 20:8-10 (HRV) 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Set-Apart. 9 Six days shall you labor and do all your work, 10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath unto YHWH your Elohim. In it, you shall not do any manner of work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates.

Shemot/Exodus 23:12 (ISR) “Six days you are to do your work, and on the seventh day you rest, in order that your ox and your donkey might rest, and the son of your female servant and the sojourner be refreshed.”

Devarim/Deuteronomy 5:12-14 (HRV) 12 Observe the Sabbath Day, to keep it Set-Apart, as YHWH your Elohim commanded you. 13 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work, 14 But the seventh day is a Sabbath unto YHWH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any manner of work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your ass, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you.

It is easy to apply this to going out to eat, but how far does this go in today's world of electricity for refrigerators or ?? By having our refrigerators running does this cause employees of the power companies to "work"?

7. Doing your own pleasure/doing your own ways/speaking your own words is out. This prophetic passage seems restrictive and deserves further study:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:13-14 (HRV) 13 If you turn away your foot because of the Sabbath, from pursuing your business on My Set-Apart day, and call the Sabbath a delight, and the Set-Apart of YHWH honorable, and shall honor it, not doing your wonted ways, nor pursuing your business, nor speaking thereof, 14 Then shall you delight yourself in YHWH, and I will make you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and I will feed you with the heritage of Ya'akov your father: for the mouth of YHWH has spoken it.

When May the Shabbat be loosed? (or what is of greater weight than Shabbat?)

1. In matters of "chesed" (mercy/kindness/love) the Shabbat is loosed. Chesed is of greater weight than sacrifice, and sacrifice is of greater weight than Sabbath -- thus Chesed is of greater weight than Sabbath.

2. The sacrifices are of greater weight than Shabbat (Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:37-38; Matthew 12:5):

Vayiqra/Leviticus 23: 37-38 (ISR) 37 These are the appointed seasons of YHWH, which you shall proclaim to be Set-Apart convocations, to bring an offering made by fire unto YHWH: a burnt-offering, and a meal-offering, a sacrifice, and drink-offerings; each on its own day, 38 Beside the Sabbaths of YHWH, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill-offerings, which you give unto YHWH.

Matthew 12:5-7 (ISR) "Or did you not read in the Torah that on the Sabbath the priests in the Set-apart Place profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" 6 "But I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the Set-apart Place. 7 "And if you had known what this means, 'I desire compassion and not offering,' you would not have condemned the blameless.

Chesed is of greater weight than sacrifice, and the Messiah is actually quoting the Prophet Hoshea/Hosea:

Hoshea/Hosea 6:6 (ISR) "For I delight in kindness (*chesed*) and not slaughtering, and in the knowledge of Elohim more than burnt offerings."

3. Making clay in the process of healing and healing itself (Yochanon/John 9) are permitted on Sabbath as acts of *chesed*. Even reaping from a field is permitted if it is required in the course of doing good deeds on Sabbath (Matthew 12):

4. Good deeds are permitted on Sabbath: (Matthew 12:11-12/Luke 6:9/Mark 2:28)

5. Care for the well-being of animals is permitted: (Luke 13:15)

6. Animals that fall into pits or other life threatening situations are to be helped out of their distress (Matthew 12:11-12/Luke 14:1-6)

(This is contrary to the Essene Sabbath halakhah, which would not pull an ox out of a ditch or throw a ladder to a drowning man on Sabbath).

7. Males are to be circumcised (Yochanon/John 7:21-24).

8. Healing is not commanded, but it seems to have equal or greater weight than “good deeds,” so it is permitted on Shabbat (Matthew 12:11-12; Luke 13:10-17; Luke 14:1-6; Yochanon/John 7:21-24; Yochanon 5:1-17; Yochanon 9)

9. “Knowledge (Da’at) of Elohim” is of greater weight than burnt offerings (Hosea 6:6). The Temple Service, of which burnt (or elevation offerings) are a part, has greater weight than Sabbath (Matthew 12:5), thus “Knowledge of Elohim” is of greater weight than Shabbat. Activities such as carrying your backpack filled with Bibles to Bible study or worship service and driving your car to the Bible study or worship service or “sacred assembly” are permitted on Shabbat in the pursuit of “the knowledge of Elohim.”