

REL 402 - Judaism - Sabbath

Sabbath

Dedicated Jews practice and keep the Sabbath every week, and from what I have read, it isn't depriving as many may think it is, it is actually relaxing. Saying no to electronics and other activities that are an everyday thing for me, and not to be able to go out with friends did not seem like the most exciting Friday to have, but nonetheless I decided to try this as a spiritual aid and from what I experienced, it was actually a really relaxing day.

I don't have Sabbath candles but to begin the Sabbath, I lit two regular white candles eighteen minutes after sunset. One of the activities that those who practice the Sabbath do is to talk with friends. I failed to inform many of them that I was going to practice the Sabbath and so therefore I had no communication with them and on Saturday after the Sabbath had been complete, I had many missed texted messages. However I did inform some friends of my project, those who would have tolerated no electricity. One came over to my house and we conversed. It was a peaceful experience without the constant interruptions of the world.

Not only do those who practice the Sabbath relax and talk with friends, they also do so with family. This was simple, I first had a conversation with my mother, then I proceeded to talk to my father. Next, I sat outside and watched my dogs play, which made me happy, thus I was peaceful.

I unfortunately did not read the Torah, but I did bring out the Bible and read some random passages, mainly focusing on the Old Testament. I found this process to be a time-consuming but rewarding activity. The Bible is a fascinating work of literature and is very intriguing.

I once drowned my phone and not being able to use it since it had no function was an atrocious time period because I am a close friend of the cell phone. However, knowing that my cell phone was in perfect condition and not being able to use it did make me a little restless since I use it to communicate with others, watch videos, and surf the internet, among many other countless things. However, I got through it and realized that being able not to use the cell phone at all for a day had many benefits, I could do activities without being disturbed, I could nap without randomly being awoken by the ringing of the phone and so on.

No writing is allowed and that was difficult. I like to "doodle" and actually write down any necessary planning on paper, and not being able to use my computer either did make it difficult. My hands felt deprived. There are over thirty other actions that are prohibited during the Sabbath that I did not do, although about approximately 75% of those actions I do not do anyway, such as shearing, slaughtering, sifting, harvesting, and so on.

I did not take part in any Jewish services, as I don't think Roswell has any to offer. I also did not make any meals that the Jews consume but the foods that I did eat did not contain pork. I also did recite the birkat hamazon.

For the other activities I could use to fill up the day, I played checkers with my mother and read the Bible. At nightfall on Saturday when I think I saw the three stars, I went back to doing my normal activities. Even though the whole 25-hour period was difficult because it was something that I had not done before, I enjoyed it. It is great and relaxing to be able to break free from the world, and just relax and get prepared for the next day. I believe if I were to practice the Sabbath once more, it would be easier if my whole family participated, not just me alone.