

T.F.S.
Three, five, and seven
3 5 7
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“Sincerity and truth are the basis of every virtue.” Confucius

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“No human race is superior; no religious faith is inferior. All collective judgments are wrong. Only racists make them.” Elie Wiesel

“The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. On the seventh day God finished his work which he had been doing, and He ceased on the seventh day from all the work He had done. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation which He had done.” Genesis 2:1-3ⁱ

I get many question sent to me about Freemasonry, and one that surfaces from time to time has to do with the 2^o, and the part of the Middle Chamber lecture about the Sabbath. It is interesting to 'hone-in' on just one part of a degree and explore it, and some information related to it. The benefits of doing this are personal enlightenment. Speculative Masons enjoy learning about the allegories within our degrees, and learning more about our early operative brethren. There is a description of the Sabbath near the beginning of the Middle Chamber Lecture, which we all know so well; here is the dialog, it will be very familiar to you: *“In 6 days God created the heavens and the earth, and rested upon the 7th day. The 7th therefore our ancient Brethren consecrated as a day of rest from their labors, thereby enjoying frequent opportunities to contemplate the glorious works of the creation, and to adore their great Creator.”ⁱⁱ*

The story of the Creation, and the creation of the Sabbath, is recounted in the Torah, (Genesis 2:2-3) the message from Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Creation of the Universe one day each week. Rabbi Pliskin comments on this: *“In the beginning of Creation, the world was lacking ‘menuchah’ – a total day of rest. Shabbos, the seventh of the week, was created to contemplate the Creation.” “By resting on this day, we make a statement acknowledging the Creator’s creation.”ⁱⁱⁱ*

The Sabbath is the only ‘season’ of worship that is in the Decalogue, (the ten commandments,^{iv}) and it stands first in the listing of ‘feasts’ found in Leviticus 23; Verse 3 lists the Sabbath as the first feast, which like the other feasts are called a ‘holy convocation.’^v Christian commentary regarding the creation of the Sabbath as told in Genesis 2:1-3 says; *“God mercifully provided the Sabbath as a day of rest for his people – a day to set aside the normal duties of the workweek and spend time resting and worshipping.”^{vi}* Jewish commentary for the same scripture regarding the creation and the Sabbath says; *“Heaven and earth ‘were finished’ and God too ‘finished’ His work. Both in Hebrew and in English the word can have dual meanings.” “He ceased is related to the Sabbath. If creation ceased ‘on’ the seventh day, was this not as least in part, another day of creating? This question was argued much by the ancients.”^{vii}*

The names of the days of the week have come from various sources over the centuries, and the number of days in our week, over the centuries, has also changed. This points out why some theologians will say that the Sabbath has nothing to do with any particular day of the week. Other theologians, and Bible students, say ‘the Sabbath is a very certain definite thing.’ It is a state of mind that a person can enter or acquire when he goes into the silence to contemplate the glorious works of the creation and to adore the Great Architect of the Universe.

Different religions observe the Sabbath on varying days of the week. As good and true men Masons do not debate or quarrel over different religious traditions. “The Sabbath can be enjoyed at any hour,” and indeed on any day.^{viii} When it comes to the Sabbath being on a seventh day it

has been found over the centuries that 'one day of rest in seven is the right proportion.' "During the French Revolution when a ten-day period was substituted for the week, one day's rest in ten was found insufficient."^x This points out that the observance of every seventh day as a day of rest; a Sabbath, whereby people have the opportunity to contemplate the creation and the Creator is a wonderful way to aid in their happiness. The quotation from Genesis 2:1-3 above points out in concise words a law that has been a guide for thousands of years, and which still helps the faithful of the Judeo / Christian religions hold their religious observances.

Freemasonry is the 'Handmaiden' of each and every religion we Freemasons individually observe. As I have maintained over the years there is so much to study in the ritual, the symbols, and the allegories, of Freemasonry that if a Mason were to begin to study, He most likely will begin to love the pursuit of knowledge and truth, (Freemasons are seekers of truth,) that can be found in the lessons of Freemasonry and the truth and lessons within the Great Light of Masonry, as well as in the Volumes of Sacred Law of the various religions of the world.

This article is based on one small part of the Middle Chamber Lecture; *"In six days God created the heavens and the earth, and rested upon the seventh day. The seventh, therefore, our ancient brethren consecrated as a day of rest from their labors, thereby enjoying frequent opportunities to contemplate the glorious works of the creation, and to adore their great Creator;"*^x

"The true Sabbath is not the observance of an outer day; the outer is but the symbol. The true Sabbath is that state of mind in which we rest from outer thought and doings and give ourselves up to the meditation or to the study of things spiritual; it is when we enter into the stillness of our inner consciousness, think about God and His law, and commune with Him."^{xi}

Words to live by: Try to treat with equal love all the people with whom you have relations. Thus the abyss between 'myself' and 'yourself' will be filled in, which is the goal of all religious worship." Sri Anandamayi Ma – Bengali spiritual teacher.



From volumes of Sacred Law:

" And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto the LORD." Leviticus 25:1-2 Tanakh

"And he said unto them, the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:" Matthew 2:27 New Testament

"And for their covenant, We raised over them the Mount and (on the other occasion) We said: "Enter the gate prostrating (or bowing) with humility;" and We commanded them: "Transgress not (by doing worldly works on) the Sabbath (Saturday)." And We took from them a firm covenant." Qur'an 004:154 Hilali-Khan translations

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to <http://www.lodgebuilder.org> and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to masonicmonday@gmail.com the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 01/18/09 is: **According to Brother Albert Pike; what is the seventh Great Truth in Masonry?**

"Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." President and Brother George Washington

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“Ultimately, America's answer to the intolerant man is diversity, the very diversity which our heritage of religious freedom has inspired.” Robert F. Kennedy

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TFS & Masonic Matters can also be read on Ed's Face Book page; just search for Ed Halpaus on Face Book.

With “Brotherly Love”,
Ed Halpaus
Grand Lodge Education Officer

**Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:
It's good for him, it's good for you, and it's good for Freemasonry!**

ⁱ Torah; by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations - JPS Translation 1981 edition

ⁱⁱ The biblical reference to the Sabbath is first found in Genesis 2:2-3

ⁱⁱⁱ Serenity, by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin: Chapter 32, Shabbos; The Day of Serenity.

^{iv} The Decalogue can be read in Deuteronomy 5: 1-21

^v Masonic Concordance of the Holy Bible – Sabbath

^{vi} Life Application Study Bible – Mark 2:27 study notes.

^{vii} The Torah; A modern Commentary, by Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut

^{viii} Metaphysical Bible Dictionary; Charles Fillmore Reference Library

^{ix} Ibid

^x Masonic Manual of Minnesota – on a part of the Middle Chamber lecture that is not esoteric.

^{xi} Metaphysical Bible Dictionary; Charles Fillmore Reference Libray