

Small Excerpts From **Abraham Heschel**, The Sabbath

(Please understand use of “man” reflects the times of this work published in 1951)

“Judaism is a religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time. Unlike the space-minded man to whom time is unvaried, iterative, homogeneous, to whom all hours are alike, qualityless, empty shells, the Bible senses the diversified character of time. There are no two hours alike. Every hour is unique and the only one given at the moment, exclusive and endlessly precious. Judaism teaches us to be attached to holiness in time, to be attached to sacred events, to learn how to consecrate sanctuaries that emerge from the magnificent stream of a year. The Sabbaths are our great cathedrals...”

“The sanctity of time came first, the sanctity of man came second, and the sanctity of space came last.”

“To set apart one day a week for freedom, a day on which we would not use the instruments which have been so easily turned into weapons of destruction, a day for being with ourselves, a day of detachment from the vulgar, of independence of external obligations, a day on which we stop worshipping the idols of technical civilization, a day on which we use no money, a day of armistice in the economic struggle with our fellow men and the forces of nature – is there any institution that holds out greater hope for man’s progress than the Sabbath?...In regard to external gifts, to outward possessions, there is only one proper attitude – to have them and to be able to do without them...The seventh day is the armistice in man’s cruel struggle for existence...The seventh day is the exodus from tension, the liberation of man from his own muddiness...”

“...we look to the Sabbath as our homeland...reclaim our authentic state...(gaze) at spectral glimpses of eternity...”