

Good morning
Welcome to Torah Tuesday
Hope all of you had a good week
And you are ready to get back into Torah

If you remember
Last week we left the Israelites
At the laver
They were watching the washing
And the perfuming of their priests

Can you imagine ?
God is very interested in the way things smell
And God is also very interested
in the way we smell things

I think it's So interesting
Don't you?

And it is yet another answer to our forever question
Why study the Old Testament ?
Well
This old Jewish Bible teaches us to be nose breathers
Fascinating
God told Moses to tell the people
Use your noses
Don't breathe through your mouths

And that is what modern medicine teaches today
Be a nose breather not a mouth breather

Do you know which one you are?

A nose breather or a mouth breather?
Try to make note during the day
Check yourself from time to time
Is your mouth open all day
Because you're breathing through your mouth?
Then you should
Remind yourself to shut your mouth

Almost never a bad thing to remember
Keep your mouth shut
And breathe through your nose
That's how God designed us

Seriously
Think about it
When we use our noses to breathe
We heat
And humidify
and filter the air around us

Try this right now
Close your mouth tightly and breathe through your nose
Suck in a good deep breath

If you can't do that
you have an obstruction
Something is stuck where it shouldn't be
So you're a mouth breather
You need to see an ENT

Because mouth breathers have lots of problems
Like sleep problems

If you're not sleeping well
Check your breathing
You may need to tape your mouth shut
Before bed time
Maybe you live with someone who
Already tells you to do this
Tape your mouth shut

But I'm serious
I'm not joking
God knows that there are very few things
That we can do to improve our health as easily
As switching from mouth to nose breathing
God knows

Now you may notice that you work harder
When you breathe through your nose
It's harder to draw the air into your nose than your mouth
And that's a good thing

The nasal route adds at least 50%
More resistance to airflow
Which God knows
Is beneficial for your lungs
Your heart
And even the biochemistry of your brain

Nose breathing can actually make you smarter
So use your nose
The way God intended you to use it

As an intricate air filter

And as an extra added bonus
Your nasal passages filter out harmful inhalants

Don't you wish we had filters on our ears
How many times have you heard yourself saying
I wish I hadn't heard that

And especially we wish we had eye filters
We all have those disturbing images
We can't unsee
But now let's see if we can
Get back to Moses and noses

Torah teaches that the nose is
A navigational tool
We all know how wonderful it is to
Follow the smell of the baking bread
Right into mom's kitchen
God does too
And God tells Moses
Let the people smell the sweetness of my dwelling place
And let them follow that fragrance
To me

And we all know
the nose knows mood enhancers
There are scents
To calm us
Center us
Excite us
Like the smell of cookies baking
Very exciting

But seriously

Just think

Today we learned all this

Here in Torah

So let's all close our mouths

And suck in all that air around us

Let's smell the world God created

The world we live in

And the people who live with us

Which brings us to another verse in Torah

About washing

There are lots of verses about this

And now we know why

We should smell good for each other

God says so

And that goes for our priests too

But interesting

After their initial total body cleansing by Moses

The priests only had to wash their hands and their feet

To be considered cleansed to enter the sanctuary

Clean enough to offer sacrifices

On behalf of the people

To God

So

Washing was still an essential part of the sacrifice

And in most communities of faith

It still is

And we are still reading about the ways

God wants his dwelling constructed
What he wants it to look like
How he wants it to smell

Today we're going to learn more about
Who God wants in charge of this project
Of course Moses
But in our parsha today God hires
A general contractor
And his assistant

So 2 foremen who are particularly capable
As artisans and managers
They are people persons
And they have to be
There are a lot of workers in the camp
These 2 we read about today
are on site workers in charge
Of all the workers
So here we have one more order from God
About building his tabernacle

But for now, right now
I have a question about this
And about much of what we've been reading
Lately

And I would really like to know
Your answer to my question now

I'm asking you to be completely honest
With your answer to my question

You don't have to share your answer
But please think carefully about your response
Here's the question

What do you believe about this text?
Is any of the stuff we've been reading true?
Should we take any of this seriously?
Literally?
Did God really tell Moses to tell the people
What kind of aromatics to use in the bath water?

Do you think any of this actually happened?
Or is it just a big fairy tale?
Made up like Aesop's Fables
Just to teach us a lesson or two?

Or maybe just some of it is true
And the rest of it is made up?

But
Can you tell which is which?

We are still debating and discerning
This very question
And
Here's a response from a well known
Well liked
Liberal rabbi from Los Angeles
Rabbi David Wolpe
Who says
And I paraphrase

Almost all archaeologists
And serious modern scholars
With very few exceptions
Agree
That the way the Bible describes the Exodus
Is not the way the Exodus happened
IF the Exodus happened at all

So what do you think?
Do you think Rabbi David is correct?
Partially correct?
And as far as you are concerned
Does it even matter if this is true or not?

Well
All I can say is
It mattered to Jesus

The Exodus mattered to Jesus
Jesus affirms the Exodus
Jesus based some of his teachings on the Exodus
Read John's gospel
In chapter 6
Jesus tells his followers
Your ancestors ate the manna
During the Exodus

Jesus knows the Torah
He staked his reputation on it
His credibility
His authority

So

if this stuff is good enough for Jesus
It's good enough for me
How about for you?

Now

Let's look at our parsha for today

Chapter 31

It's a fairly benign parsha

Really rather pleasant

We'll talk about the sabbath

The day of rest

And we will rest a bit

Before it all hits the fan next week

Chapter 32

That's a tough one

So let's enjoy this chapter today

Chapter 31

Which begins

The Lord told Moses

I have singled out

A man

By the name of Bezalel

Who is the son of Hur

Of the tribe of Judah

So right off the bat God assigns

He designates

or appoints a man

To the position of general contractor

Of this building project

God goes on to tell us that
He himself has endowed Bezalel
With a divine spirit
Of skill and ability and knowledge
Of every craft

So God wants us to know
This is a talent
And talent is a gift from God
And
Torah teaches that the ability of craft making
is also considered a gift from God

So
Not just prophets and priests
Not only politicians and royalty
get special gifts
God chooses and inspires working people also
And
Even though it is not specifically stated here
It is clearly inferred that the reference to
Skilled workers include women
Women are always in the texts
We just have to look for them

Notice
Who is Bezalel's dad?
Hur
Remember him
We met him back in chapter 17
It was Hur

Along with Aaron
Moses' brother
Who each took one of Moses' arms
And held them up
In the air
For the whole time the Israelites were fighting
The Amalekites
They held up his arms because
When Hur and Aaron let Moses' arms fall by his side
The Israelites started to lose the battle
But as soon as his arms were raised again
The Israelites began to gain ground

Cool
Torah teaches we can't do all things on our own
We have to work together
That's why God gives Bezalel an assistant
Named Oholiab
Who is the son of Ahisamach
Of the tribe of Dan
And God says
I have also granted him skills
I have made him skillful
So that he and Bezalel
they might make
Everything I have commanded

And now God lists everything
And re-lists the instructions for
The tent
The coverings for the tent
The curtains

The ark for the pact
The tablets
All the furnishings
All the utensils
The lamp stands
The incense altar
The burnt offering altar
The laver
All the priests' clothing
And all the aromatics
The incense and the scented oils
Lots of things to make
So much to do

Which may be why
now in our text
We come to a full stop
And a sharp turn
Away from the tabernacle
Away from things and places
And now we turn to time

Starts in verse 12
And the Lord spoke to Moses
Speak to the Israelite people and say
Nevertheless
You shall keep my sabbaths
Nevertheless is another way of saying
Above all
No matter what
You shall keep my sabbaths
Sure you have a lot to do

But you must keep my sabbaths

Sounds like God is a humanitarian

Rest my people

No matter how much you have to do

You have to rest too

So here we read again about the sabbath

Which has been called by scholars

The best known and least understood observance

In Judaism

We will try today to understand it better

What is it?

And why do many still observe the sabbath today?

First

God tells them why they must observe the sabbath

God says

The sabbath is the sign

Between me and you

Throughout the ages

That you may know

That I the Lord have consecrated you

So the sabbath according to God

Is a sign of the covenant

It's not the first sign or the first covenant

That God has given us

Remember that was the rainbow?

The sign of the covenant with Noah

God promises he'll never destroy creation again

Good to know

And who can forget circumcision?
The sign of the covenant God makes with Abraham?
God promises land
The promised land
And that's where the Israelites are headed
When God gives this sign
The sabbath
to Moses and all the people at Sinai

And God continues
You should keep the sabbath
For it is holy for you

And here's another really good reason to obey this rule
God says it in the very next verse

Anyone who profanes the sabbath
Shall be put to death

There's a really good reason to keep the sabbath
That's pretty darn clear
And just so you know
The rabbis say that when God says
you
He means you

All the people of the world
Past present and future
Not just the Israelites
Not just the Jews

Rather all the people
For all time
Must keep God's sabbath
Makes sense

Because I believe that
God also means that He has made
All the people in the world holy
He has consecrated us all
From the moment of creation
We are all consecrated
For all time
Not just the Israelites
Not just the Jews
God wants all the people to keep the sabbath
Because we are all holy to God

Interesting
And I think more than a little sad
There are some commentators
Mostly these are Christian commentators who say
This rule is not for you
Not for us
Christians

Christians are above the law
Which means if you are a Christian
you are not bound by this law
Or any of the laws God gave at Sinai
They are Jewish laws
and you're not Jewish

Now
Not all Christians believe this
But many do
Christians are above the law

What do you believe?
Of course we all know the sabbath observance
is one of the big ten
Either commandment number three or four
Depending on how you count the big 10

And now God mentions it again
The sabbath
And trust me
God mentions it again later
And again
The sabbath matters to God
And it
Doesn't matter if you're Jewish or Christian
Or Muslim
You are a child of God
And Gods loves all the children in the world
How do I know?

The Bible tells me so
And right here in the Bible it says
God says to Moses

6 days
May work be done
But on the 7th day

There shall be a sabbath
Holy to the Lord
And whoever does work on it
Shall be put to death
Now
Is God strict about this or God is exaggerating?
We'll see

God continues
The people
Shall keep the sabbath throughout the ages
As a covenant for all time
And it shall be a sign for all time
Between me and the people

For 6 days the Lord made the heaven and the earth
And on the 7th day
He ceased from work
And was refreshed

And then God was finished speaking to Moses
On Mount Sinai
About time
Right?
He's very chatty

And when God finished speaking
He gave Moses the tablets of the pact
The 2 stone tablets
Inscribed with the finger of God
Extraordinary

The tablets are handwritten
By God
And
Rabbis say when God finished talking to Moses
He gave him the tablets
And the Torah
To give to the people
And not just those people who were camped
At the foot of Sinai
God gave the tablets and the Torah
To all people for all time

God wants us to know that these laws
Are perpetual
And unchangeable
Obligations that are written in stone
By God's finger

The gospel writer Luke talks about God's finger
In chapter 11 of his gospel
Jesus tells the disciples that he casts out demons
By the finger of God
He assures the disciples that he has more power
In his little finger than any man armed to the teeth
And Jesus says
He gets that power from his father

And now in our parsha
God gives us some of that power
The power of the sabbath
Shabbat
This is not the first time we hear of this power

And it won't be the last

The sabbath is mentioned at least 172 times in the Bible

Also in the Koran

So

We are going to take some time today

To talk about the sabbath

Shabbat

So much more to this than

The sabbath is a day of rest

The sabbath is a day of joy

And goodness

So be sure

There's more to the sabbath than rest

There's candles and prayers and blessings

Blessings over your children

That's my favorite part

Blessing your children

And telling your children how much you love them

And how much God loves them

That is a part of the sabbath

My favorite part

The sabbath is also about making the day

Holy

Giving the sabbath the sense of the sacred

That's the joy

Yes there are prayers on the sabbath

But we pray everyday

And yes there is a special sabbath dinner

But we eat dinner everyday
But on the sabbath
The everyday becomes holy
There's the joy

We are aware that there are those of us
Who observe the sabbath on different days
So
Is the sabbath meant to be observed on
Friday or Saturday or Sunday?

Did you ever wonder why this is still in question?
Why do most of us here today
Have a Sunday sabbath?

Well probably because here
We have the Anglo-American sabbath
Which was developed in England and Scotland
And this sabbath came here
To the shores of America
with the Puritans
Those pesky picky Puritans
Still causing controversies
You know them
It's our way or the highway

But they're not the only ones who are particular about this
Friday Saturday Sunday observance
Lots of controversy about this
Still

In the late 19th early 20th centuries

German and American rabbis tried
To move the Shabbat observance for Jews
From Saturday to Sunday
Kind of made sense
This country is mostly Christian
So
Move to Sunday so we can all observe
The same day of rest the same sabbath

When Rabbi Stein, German
When he heard about this
He said
If we move the sabbath from Saturday
To Sunday
We will bury Judaism on Friday evening
To permit it to be resurrected on Sunday morning
As another religion

Clearly other rabbis agreed with him
And so it remains
Saturday for Jews
Sunday for most Christians
And for Muslims
Friday

Some say the Muslim sabbath is observed on Friday
In Arabic it is known as Jumu'ah
Which means congregation
And it is said that the best day for congregating
Is not Saturday and not Sunday
It's Friday
That is the day Muslims gather at the mosque

For prayers
A time set aside to rest together
And pray
But do not think that Allah needs to rest
Yes it is true that Allah created the universe
And everything in the universe
But Allah does not get tired
Allah never needs to rest
He's Allah
And
The rabbis say the same thing
when it comes to God needing a rest
Rabbis say look closer
Sabbath is not about God taking it easy

The sabbath has always been in here
In God's word
In the Bible
It's been here since the beginning
Beirsheit
From the very beginning of creation itself

For 6 days God creates
And on the 7th
God ceases to create
God stops and God rests from creating
That's the sabbath day
But
God does not rest because he is exhausted
God does not get exhausted
Neither does Allah say believers

And here we have yet another answer to our forever question
Why study the Old Testament?

Torah teaches that the sabbath is not about rest
Rather
The sabbath is about not creating
And especially the sabbath is about
Remembering

We need to remember
Never forget
There is a God
Who created the universe
Who created us
And gave us the ability to create
And this God also gave us the sabbath
1 day of 7
From evening to evening
So that we can acknowledge creation

On that day
We should greet each other with
Shabbat shalom
May your day be filled with peace
And joy
So that you may be refreshed

Sounds so simple and sensible
But this is the Bible
Not always simple
Not always sensible
And we know there's always more

Which brings me to an academic specialty
Men and women who specifically study scripture
To learn about work
What does the Bible say about work?
Those scholars who explore this question
Are called work theologians
They study work in the word
And
That's what God is doing in our sabbath parsha today
God is giving us a theology of work
God is telling us
What he wants us to do
How he wants us to do it
And he is giving us the perfect role model
Himself
In these verses we read that
We do what God wants us to do
By becoming more like God
He ceased creating for a day
So we should cease too
We should stop working for a day

Here's a thought
God reveals himself to us in these passages
God's character is revealed to us
In his work

That's why we read scripture
To learn about the works of God
This is especially true in this book
The Book of Exodus

Which opens with work
And we will soon learn
The Book of Exodus closes with work

At the beginning of Exodus
We read about the Israelites working for Pharaoh
Building for Pharaoh
And at the end of the book
We will read about the Israelites
Working on finishing the tabernacle
The Building for God
It's all about the work

So listen to this
Torah teaches that God didn't free us from work
God freed us to work
To work for him

Now this idea of working for God
Can be tricky for some communities of faith
Like mine
Martin Luther writes and warns about a theology
Of works righteousness
Luther is clear about this
We can't work our way into God's good graces
Because God's good graces are free
Always freely given
To all

However
God does give us a to do list
To keep the kingdom tidy

And working the way he designed it to work
And that to do list is
Here
In the Holy Scriptures

And the first 2 things on the list
Listed in order of importance is
Love God
And second love each other
Love each and every one of God's children

And in order to do this the way we are created to do this
We need a day
To recharge and refresh
We all do
So
Jews and Christians and Muslims
Have set aside that day
Not the same day
But the same intention
To follow God
And stop
For 1 day out of 7

Cease working for religious reasons
And that
Works for Jews Christians and Muslims
But what about the nones and the dones
In our world?
Does the idea of a sabbath day
Work for nones and dones?

You know the nones not the n u n s
These are the n o n e s

the ones when asked to check the box
That best describes their religious affiliation
Are you Jewish Christian Muslim
They check NONE of the above

And then there are the dones
Who will tell you in no uncertain terms
I am done with religion
I was a good person
A religious person
And it didn't matter
God deserted me
So now I'm done with God
And done with religion

We all know many nones and dones
And Be assured
so does God
And God loves them
And God expects us to love them too

Now it may surprise you to learn
That there is another kind of sabbath
Something called a secular sabbat
A call for a weekly spiritual rest
By the nones and dones
And they want us to know that there's
Nothing religious about it

Often we can see that there's not much
Spiritual about a secular sabbath either

It's Almost like a spa day
A time for me day
I work hard all week
I deserve a me day
A time to be good to myself
I deserve it

Interesting these are sometimes the people
Who call religious sabbath keepers
Old timers
And that's
Fair enough I suppose

Because I call the secular sabbath keepers
Me timers
And we can find me timers in our communities
You know them
Even when they don't speak
We can hear them say
Everything is about me

Do you ever think the me timers are growing
In population and influence even
In our communities of faith?

We shorten worship services
So me timers can have more time
With themselves

We change the words and the music
For the me timers
We try to attract the other me timers to our places
Of worship
And that is a good thing
Because me timers need to spend some time
In a community that spends more time
Loving God and worshipping God

And that's why it is so important
That in the synagogue and the church and the mosque
We old timers continue to teach the me timers
It's not about you
It's not about what you do when you worship
It's all about what God does

Same for the sabbath
We will see that over and over explained
In scripture

Now it may make you happy to learn
That there are scientific studies about the sabbath
That actually conclude
God was right
Don't you love it?
The scientists could have just read the scriptures

But here is a study by the US Institute on Aging
That concludes that a religious sabbath keeper
Can add up to 10 years to his or her life
And that religious sabbath keeper enjoys
Better mental health and better physical health

Than the secular sabbath keeper

So spending time in a place of worship
With God
Can be beneficial to your health
What a shock
Right?

But we must admit
Giving one day a week to sabbath keeping
Does appear to be counter cultural
In our modern American culture
We are a busy people

Well this was true for the ancients too
Actually throughout history
People scoffed at the Jews
Made fun of them
For keeping the sabbath

The Greeks and especially the Romans
Said the Jews were lazy
They just didn't want to work

Or they were superstitious
They were wasting 1/7th of their lives
By keeping the sabbath

Do you think that this attitude
Could still be around?
Could still be found among members of our
Own faith communities?

Do you think that's why there has been
Recently among some church members
A push to shorten worship services
So worshippers can get out of church
And get on with life?

Are you comfortable with that?
Are you comfortable with your sabbath observance?

Let's look at how God presents the sabbath
In our parsha today

Right before God reminds us of the 4th commandment
He re-listed all the things that needed to be done
To complete the building of his dwelling place
The mishkan
The tabernacle
It was from this list that the rabbis compiled a list
Of 39 activities connected to tabernacle building
And from this list of 39
The rules and regulations of the sabbath were formulated
Very specific

And some people think this is what the sabbath is
For Jews
A long specific detailed list of all the things
You may not do on the sabbath

You can't drive and you can't cook and
you can't tear toilet paper off the roll
And you can't carry anything

So much more you can't do

And there is a shorter list
But also a very important list
Of all the things you must do on the sabbath

You must bathe
And you must make your dwelling clean and sweet smelling
You must pray
In synagogue
And you must ignore the whole world for one day
If you want to do shabbat the way God commanded

Not so fast say the rabbis
And that includes the Rabbi Jesus Christ too
Not so fast

The rabbis teach that life
Comes first
Life is God's greatest gift of creation

You may have heard that you can't help someone on sabbath
If someone is in danger
You can't carry him or her to safety
You can't prepare or fix or repair
Something in order to save someone
That's not true
That's not Torah

Torah teaches
God created life before he gave us the sabbath
And it has always been true in Torah

That the life of an individual comes before the
Rules of the sabbath
Jesus himself said that
The sabbath was made for humans
Not the other way around
That is the Torah
Someone's health and safety always takes precedence

So what exactly has the sabbath been
For some faith communities?

For some observant Jews the sabbath would happen
This way
At about 3:00 on a Friday afternoon
You would get ready to leave work
So you could be home in plenty of time
For a sabbath

If you worked at home
You worked hard today, Friday
Getting ready for the sabbath

Almost
Like you would work if you had a guest
Coming to spend the weekend in your home
Preparing for the sabbath
Is like preparing for a guest

You would clean the entire house
Change all the beds with clean sheets
Do all the dirty laundry
Thoroughly clean all the bathrooms

Make sure pre torn toilet paper was in all those bathrooms

You would make sure that all your children
Were bathed and your husband and you too
Freshly bathed
And dressed nicely in your sabbath clothes
Dressed up
Dressed differently for this day about to begin
And remember the day begins at sundown
Not morning
The Bible says so

And there was evening and then there was morning
Can it be any clearer than that?
But back at home

Shabbat prep
Big job
You will have set the table with the nice table cloth
And candles
And
The good dishes and nice wine glasses
And flowers
There would be wine and bread on the table
Challah bread
This is the good stuff
Sweet and eggy
Not hard and bland like matzah
And
You will have precooked and pre prepared
The Shabbat dinner
Multi course meal

Maybe you made
Gefilte fish
Chicken soup
A slow cooked stew
or meat and vegetables
For the main course and of course

A delicious desert
Shabbat is sweet
So you should eat a sweet dessert

And all this is commanded by God

There are actually 2 inter related commandments
Of Shabbat
The first is zakhor
Hebrew it means remember
Very important

Remember
God made heaven and earth
Remember you were a slave
And remember God freed you
And gave you a sabbath day
So Shabbat is not about restrictions
Shabbat is about freedoms

The second command implied in the 4th commandment
Is shamor
Hebrew for observe or do
Do
The things God wants you to do

To do shabbat
That's why there are 2 Shabbat candles on the table
Both reminders
One to remember and one to observe

Usually the woman of the house lights the candle
Just before sunset
Then supper
And blessings and prayers
And singing
Shalom Aleichem
Great song

Sung to welcome the angels to Shabbat dinner
Another song is sung
Said to be written by King Solomon
Eishet Chayil
Which is a beautiful tribute to women
You can read the words of the song in Proverbs 31
Eishet Chayil
It means Woman of Valor
It's lovely
The husband tells his wife how much he loves her
How important she is to him

After the singing
And before eating
Everyone gets up from the table
and washes their hands
And then back to the table for challah
You take a piece dip it in salt
Chat

Laugh
Eat dinner
With more chatting and laughing
No controversial subjects allowed at the table

It's Shabbat
A day of joy
One 24 hour period
Set aside for families and friends
And God
Can you imagine?
An entire day

Some communities of faith
Mine included
Have challenges getting families
To church for one hour
Forget 24
So
In order to make Jesus more palatable
And more interesting to families
Some worship communities have decided
To give worshippers
Less Jesus worship
So they can
Make it easier for some people
To get to Publix
Or to get to brunch before the rush

And just so you know
I did not create those points of discussion
About why we should shorten services

Those are actual comments from actual church leaders
Religious professionals
The Plan to gain members is to
Give them less Jesus
Less time together
Can you imagine?

Now this issue
Is being addressed
Not
Only in Christian communities
Not only in Muslim communities
Jews are also discussing this kind of plan

Some modern rabbis have presented an idea
A way to get more young people in services
A way to get people more observant
This idea is called
A half Shabbat
And it seems to especially appeal to
Teenagers and younger adults
Who can not go an entire day without
Texting or surfing the internet
That activity is not permitted on Shabbat
You put your devices away for the day

And a half shabbat
Also appeals to those who make mistakes
And who break the rules during the sabbath

Not each and every rule
But one or 2 rules

And maybe more
They make mistakes
They do what they're not supposed to do
Text
Make a phone call
Check their email
But their hearts are in the right place
Well
The Rabbis say to them
Don't focus on what you have not done correctly
Concentrate on what you do correctly
What you do with love and with kindness
And good intentions

Torah teaches that
Performing a positive mitzvah
Doing good
Is more important than observing
A prohibitive mitzvah
Doing good means more to God
Than not doing something bad
Does that make sense?

Good
Because the sabbath should make sense
It's so good

Now let's look at how the sabbath ends

When 3 stars can be seen in the night sky
It is the time for havdalah
It's Hebrew for separation or division

Time to end Shabbat
Time for more blessings
Over spices and wine and candles

These blessings speak
Of the separation between the sacred and the secular
Between the sabbath rest
And the rest of the days of the week

It is a bitter sweet brief ceremony
Of wine, fragrance and candlelight

A small box of spices is passed around the table
Each person smells the spices
And stores those sweet scents so they can remember
The sweet smell of Shabbat

And there is
A final blessing with the wine
And interesting
The cup of wine is called
The cup of salvation
I love that

And then the candles of Shabbat are blown out
Until next week
This is the end of the sabbath day

How do Christians begin and end the sabbath day?
The Day of the Lord?
What were the customs in your home?

Does the Christian sabbath begin on Saturday night
And end on Sunday night?

Where are your sabbath instructions written?

Do you think it matters?

Well sadly, I think
There are some Christian commentators who say
We do not care about this

On purpose they say this
Because they insist
We don't want to become like them
Those others
We don't want to be one of the petty
Pharisees
Legalistic Jews
Vipers
Jesus warned us about them

Well
Certainly Matthew warned us
Matthew the gospel writer tells these stories
Of the controversy of the sabbath in his community

But to be clear
Jesus kept the sabbath
Jesus was a Jew
And like a good Jew
Jesus kept the sabbath

How about you?

When does your sabbath day begin and end?

Well for me

Shabbat starts when I wake up Sunday morning

I tell Lucy

Gut Shabbos Lucy

And

I go to church

I worship

And for the rest of the day

I rest

I read and eat and take walks with Lucy

Lucy gets a special treat

We call it her shabbos bone

She loves it

And then

It all ends when I wake up Monday morning

And I tell Lucy

Ok old girl

Back to the old grind

But that's me

What does Jesus tell you to do

Or not do on your sabbath?

Where do you get your information about this?

Did you know

Many Jews

And some Christians

Believe that angels come to visit and to do

Shabbat with you and with your family
I love the idea of inviting all the angels in my life
To be with me on the sabbath
To spend the day with me and Lucy in peace

And then
When Shabbat is over for us
I wish all those angels shalom aleichem
Peace be upon you until we are together again
Next week

And that's what I wish for you
Peace
Until we meet next week
Shalom aleichem

We will need that peace
Because
Next week we read chapter 32
Not an easy read
Very violent
But together we will find our way
Through the word of God
With the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit
Now Peter and Aiden and I wish you
Shalom Aleichem

