



LORAS COLLEGE™

HOW RELIGIOUS FAITH AND PRACTICE HELPS SOME FIND GREATER PURPOSE

JEWISH THEOLOGIAN ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL CONSIDERS THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE SABBATH HOLY

“A Palace in Time: He who wants to enter the holiness of the day must first lay down the profanity of clattering commerce, of being yoked to toil. He must go away from the screech of dissident days, from the nervousness and fury of acquisitiveness and the betrayal in embezzling his own life. He must say farewell to manual work and learn to understand that the world already has been created and will survive without the help of man. Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth; on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul. The world has our hands, but our soul belongs to Someone Else. Six days a week we seek to dominate the world, on the seventh day we try to dominate the self. . . . [The] Sabbath as a day of rest, as a day of abstaining from toil, is not for the purpose of recovering one’s lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labor. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life. Man is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing [human] efficiency. . . . The Sabbath is not for the sake of weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living.”



Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath, Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Ferrar Strauss and Giroux: 1951; repr. Boston: Shambala, 2003), 2-3

MUSLIM THINKER ALI SHARIATI REFLECTS ON THE MEANING OF THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA FOR MUSLIMS CALLED “HAJJ”

“Hajj unravels the skein of your being in which you have lost the thread of self. This closed circuit will open with a revolutionary intention. It will become a horizon. It will move on a straight course—migration towards eternity, towards another, towards ‘Him.’

A migration from the house of ‘self’ to the house of God! To the house of the people! And you, whoever you may be, who are you? You have been a human being. You have been a child of Adam. But history, life and the anti-human social system has metamorphosed you. It has alienated you from your ‘self,’ from your primordial nature. It has made you a stranger. . . .



This means you are a perpetual becoming, an infinite movement. God is not your resting place. Rather, God is your destination, a destination which will always remain a destination. God is not the final point in the course of your journey. Your journey, your eternal journey, is upon a road, a path which has no endpoint. . . . In this movement of yours in the world of being and in your own being, God is: eternal journeying and migration. Orientation, not place of stay.”

Ali Shariati, *Hajj, Reflections on Its Rituals*, trans. Laleh Bakhtiar (Institute of Traditional Psychology, 1992), 53, 55.

POPE FRANCIS SPEAKS ABOUT FINDING FAITH IN THE SACRAMENTAL COMMUNITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

“The Church, like every family, passes on to her children the whole store of her memories. But how does this come about in a way that nothing is lost, but rather everything in the patrimony of faith comes to be more deeply understood? It is through the apostolic Tradition preserved in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit that we enjoy a living contact with the foundational memory. What was handed down by the apostles — as the Second Vatican Council states — ‘comprises everything that serves to make the people of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith. In this way the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes.’



“Faith, in fact, needs a setting in which it can be witnessed to and communicated, a means which is suitable and proportionate to what is communicated. For transmitting a purely doctrinal content, an idea might suffice, or perhaps a book, or the repetition of a spoken message. But what is communicated in the Church, what is handed down in her living Tradition, is the new light born of an encounter with the true God, a light which touches us at the core of our being and engages our minds, wills and emotions, opening us to relationships lived in communion. There is a special means for passing down this fullness, a means capable of engaging the entire person, body and spirit, interior life and relationships with others. It is the sacraments, celebrated in the Church’s liturgy. The sacraments communicate an incarnate memory, linked to the times and places of our lives, linked to all our senses; in them the whole person is engaged as a member of a living subject and part of a network of communitarian relationships. While the sacraments are indeed sacraments of faith, it can also be said that faith itself possesses a sacramental structure. The awakening of faith is linked to the dawning of a new sacramental sense in our lives as human beings and as Christians, in which visible and material realities are seen to point beyond themselves to the mystery of the eternal.”

Pope Francis, *Encyclical letter Lumen Fidei*, 2013