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## **A Duty to Remain Connected: a Biblical Perspective of the Wisdom of the Shabbàt**

### **Abstract**

Our labour is intricately woven into our identity, extending beyond mere livelihood. It ought to facilitate personal growth, define our societal roles, and contribute to a common good within the confines of social and environmental sustainability. However, the contemporary work landscape is undergoing profound and global changes, disrupting traditional and conventional notions of work dynamics and its associated relationships. Amidst the diverse and country-specific alterations, a universal paradigm shift is reshaping nearly every sector of the economy. The pressing question emerges: how can we prevent the shift towards more flexible employment from translating into a life of perpetual instability? As job structures become more malleable and the boundaries between professional and personal life blur, the risks of self-exploitation and work-induced stress loom.

In navigating these transformations, we must discern the evolving paradigms of work and consider their social and economic repercussions. What lessons are we being prompted to internalise as the European work landscape undergoes unprecedented changes? It becomes imperative to explore these shifts and their implications for a sustainable and equitable future.

Exploring the existential insights of the Shabbàt and extracting valuable lessons from biblical wisdom, prompts us to ponder the significance of rest in fostering healthy relationships and connectivity—with ourselves, others, our work, and our shared environment. The prevalent culture of constant availability and the obligation to stay connected could benefit from a biblical perspective, particularly in grasping the essence of Shabbàt's wisdom.

### **Keywords**

Shabbàt, work, rest, connectivity, common home, creation

## 1. Introduction

The conceptual framework, if not the institutional embodiment, of the Shabbàt encapsulates multifaceted themes, encompassing repose, sanctification, admiration, acknowledgment, a holistic perspective on individual and universal existence, wholeness, holiness, and healing. This contribution is dedicated to a focused examination of the facet pertaining to connectivity within the context of the Shabbàt as delineated in the Old and New Testaments.

Our vocational pursuits are intricately interwoven into the fabric of our identity, transcending mere subsistence. Their role extends to facilitating personal development, delineating societal roles, and contributing to a collective good within the parameters of social and environmental sustainability. However, the contemporary labour landscape is undergoing profound and global transformations, disrupting conventional norms governing work dynamics and associated relationships.

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a significant shift towards remote work, with many organisations offering flexible arrangements to their employees. Hybrid work models, combining remote and in-person work, have become prevalent. This approach balances the benefits of collaboration and innovation with the flexibility of remote work. Employee well-being has become a top priority, with many organisations providing mental health support programmes, contributing to increased productivity and satisfaction. Amid pandemic challenges, organisations accelerated digital transformations, investing in technology for efficiency and resilience, positioning them well in the digital age.<sup>1</sup>

Amidst diverse alterations specific to regions, a pervasive paradigmatic shift is reshaping nearly every economic sector. The salient inquiry emerges: How can the transition towards more flexible employment be mitigated to prevent a life marked by perpetual instability? As occupational structures become more adaptable and the demarcation between professional and personal spheres becomes blurred, the perils of self-exploitation and work-induced stress become imminent.

In navigating these transformative shifts, it is imperative to discern the evolving work paradigms and consider their societal and economic implications.

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<sup>1</sup> See L. Garrad, *A Paradigm Shift in Work Culture: Are We Ready for the Consequences of Remote Work?*, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/re-thinking-employee-experience-remote-workers-part-1-lewis-garrad> (23.01.2024).

What instructive insights does the metamorphosis of the universal work landscape offer? It becomes essential to scrutinise these transformations and their potential impact on fostering a sustainable and equitable future.

The exploration of existential insights derived from the Shabbàt and the extraction of valuable lessons from biblical wisdom prompt contemplation on the pivotal role of rest in cultivating robust relationships and connectivity – with oneself, others, one’s work, and the shared environment. The prevalent culture of perpetual availability and the obligation to remain connected could derive meaningful insights from a biblical perspective, particularly in grasping the essence of Shabbàt’s wisdom.

Glory as a marker of God’s identity, the Shabbàt’s genesis, connectivity in Genesis and Exodus, broken connectivity, and the Son of Man as the Lord of the Shabbàt constitute pivotal themes. The comprehensive content of Scripture serves as an incontrovertible foundation, affirming that the Shabbàt does not advocate a culture characterised by incessant labour availability. Rather, it underscores an obligation to sustain connectivity across multiple dimensions: with oneself, the divine, fellow individuals, within spatial and temporal realms, and indeed, with the entirety of the natural world. This elucidates the biblical standpoint on the sagacity inherent in observing the Shabbàt – a day of repose following the creation of the world’s magnificence.

## 2. *Glory*

It is evident, from the word *go*, that the Shabbàt has fundamentally to do with God’s identity. It is the day of acknowledgement of God’s glory in his creation and sharing, evinced in the six exclamations of “God saw that it was good”<sup>2</sup> (*wayyàr’elôhîm kî-thôb* in Genesis 1:4.10.12.18.21.25) and the culminating: “behold it was very good” (*w<sup>e</sup>hinnèh-thôb m<sup>e</sup>’ôd* in Genesis 1:31).

The Hebrew lemma for glory is *kabòd*, a cognate noun from the verb *kabèd*, with the basic meaning of “to weigh”.<sup>3</sup> The more weight is attributed to a person’s words, actions, attitudes, character, and talents, the more praise and glory

<sup>2</sup> If not otherwise stated, quotations from Scripture are taken from *The Revised Standard Version*.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. Dohmen, P. Stenmans, M. Weinfeld discuss the meanings of קָבַד [*kābèd*] and קְבוֹד [*kābòd*], in: G.J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, H.J. Fabry (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 7, Grand Rapids, MI 1995, Eerdmans, pp. 13–38.

are heaped upon that person. Their glory is proportional to their weight. Similarly, in the New Testament, the Greek noun for glory, *dóksa*,<sup>4</sup> derives from the fundamental verb *dokein*: “to think, to form an opinion”. The higher the opinion enjoyed by a person, the more praise and glory are attributed to them. Basically, this means that glory is the perceived identity that occasions the praise attributed to that person. Creation is the celebration itself of God’s glory since his splendour transpires through his creation.

### 3. The Creation of *Shabbàt*

How does this relate to the wisdom of the *Shabbàt*? According to the creation account in Genesis 1 from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE,<sup>5</sup> YHWH created and consecrated the *Shabbàt* on the seventh day. God’s glory in creation and his sharing with humankind what YHWH himself could create forms a formidable link.

It was only about human beings that God proposed: “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness” (Genesis 1:26), and the author commented: “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (v.27). This image and likeness are partly seen in the following action and command of God: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). Male and female were to continue doing, “in his likeness and image”, what God himself had begun. God’s glory and identity is further enhanced by humankind’s sharing in the same glory and identity that were transferred to and communicated with humanity. If God shared his glory and identity in creation, not only in what he brought into existence, but also in sharing that creative glory and identity with humanity, then he could indeed: “see everything that he had made and it was very good [*thòb m’òd*]” (v.31).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion of δόξα [*dóksa*] and cognates, see: G. Kittel, δοκέω [*dokéō*] *et al*, in: G. Kittel (ed.), G.W. Bromiley (trans.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, Grand Rapids, MI 1964, Eerdmans, pp. 232–255.

<sup>5</sup> See J. Neusner (ed.), *Sabbath*, in: *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period (450 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.)*, Peabody, MA 1996: Hendrickson, pp. 538–539.

<sup>6</sup> *thòb m’òd*: there are no degrees of comparison in adjectives in Hebrew, so, *thòb m’òd* would mean ‘perfect’.

It was only after all the separation and embellishment actions that resulted in perfection, that God could rest.<sup>7</sup> His glory was completely sealed not in the creation actions themselves, but in wrapping that glory in a day of rest, in creating the Shabbàt. Admiration and acknowledgment of creative works can only occur through pausing and reflecting on their glory within a specific moment in time. God himself did so: he rested and could see that: “it was all so very good” (Genesis 1:31). “So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation” (Genesis 2:3). God could bless and sanctify the Shabbàt because on it he rested [*kî bô shābàt*] from all the work he had done! God sanctifies the Shabbàt by resting! Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel notes it is exclusive of the Shabbàt that: “God blessed the seventh day and made it holy [*way<sup>e</sup> qaddēsh*] (Genesis 2:3). There is no reference in the record of creation to any object in space that would be endowed with the quality of holiness, *qādōsh*.”<sup>8</sup>

The glory/identity of God finds its zenith precisely in the Shabbàt, the Day of Rest—the day of admiration of all that is *thôb m<sup>e</sup> ôd*, very good, not primarily and exclusively in the six days of creation. God’s sharing and communicating his creative powers with humankind lead to the contemplation of the Day of Rest, the Shabbàt.

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Discussing John 5:17 (“My Father is still working, and I am working also”) in view of Genesis 2:2–23, A.J. Droge, *Sabbath Work/Sabbath Rest: Genesis, Thomas, John*, “History of Religions” 47 (2007) 2/3, pp. 128–130, states that: “the ‘Sabbath rest’ has not yet occurred because creation itself remains unfinished and incomplete” and “What first appears, then, as a violation of the Sabbath in John 5 turns out to be a demonstration that the Johannine hero must continue to work on the seventh day because the true rest for creation has not yet been achieved.”

<sup>7</sup> The first three days were spent in four actions of separation of light from darkness (Genesis 1:3–5 – First Day); the waters of the heavenly realm from those below the heavens (Genesis 1:7), and of the waters of the seas from the dry land (Genesis 1:9–10 – Second Day); and plants from trees (Genesis 1:11 – Third Day). During the second set of three days four works of embellishment ensued: the lights in the skies: the sun, the moon and the stars (Genesis 1:14–19 – the Fourth Day); swarms of living creatures in the waters and birds above the earth across the dome of the sky (Genesis 1:20–22 – the Fifth Day), and animals on the land (Genesis 1:25), and the human beings (Genesis 1:26–31 – the Sixth Day). The Shabbàt was created on the day following the second set of three days of four embellishment actions by the Creator.

<sup>8</sup> *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*, New York, 1951, Farrar, Straus, Giroux, p. 9. For a detailed discussion of the origin of the Shabbàt, see T.W. Martin, *Sabbath*, in: R.L. Brawley (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Ethics*, vol. 2, Oxford, 2014, Oxford University Press, pp. 233–237.

Heschel observes that: “This is a radical departure from accustomed religious thinking. The mythical mind would expect that, after heaven and earth have been established, God would create a holy place—a holy mountain or a holy spring—whereupon a sanctuary is to be established. Yet it seems as if to the Bible it is holiness in time, the Shabbàt, which comes first.”<sup>9</sup> God does not bless and sanctify the days he himself had made by creating a culture of permanent availability, of continuous work, but by resting, by creating the Shabbàt!

#### 4. Connectivity in Genesis and in Exodus

The second creation account from around the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE in Genesis 2:7–8 within the pericope of 2:4–25, gives us a more detailed and anthropomorphic description of the creation of the *’ādām*, humankind.<sup>10</sup> “The Lord God formed the *’ādām* from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the *’ādām* became a living being” (v.7). The author writes: “*wayyizer YHWH ’elōhīm ’et-hā’ādām*”. But the verb *yāzār* is the potter’s verb (Isaiah 45:9; 64:8; Jeremiah 18:4.6), who fashions, forms, each of his items individually, not in a mould! However, in order that the *’ādām* God had created *’āphār min-hā’adāmāh*, from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7),<sup>11</sup> could become a living being, God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Genesis 2:7). God connects in an eminent way with *’ādām*, first by fashioning him individually, and then by sharing his own *nishmāt ḥayyīm*, his own living breath (Genesis 2:7), where the Hebrew lemma *n<sup>e</sup>shāmāh* is equivalent to *néphesh*, breath, spirit.<sup>12</sup> God connects with humanity through his own life that transforms humankind into God’s own likeness and image. God’s connectivity begins in creation but does not stop with his Shabbàt.

This sharing in God’s own life is brought up a notch in Exodus 31:12–17. Israel is to keep the Shabbàt as a covenant between it and God. Verse 17 describes the

<sup>9</sup> Heschel, *The Sabbath*, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> See J. Neusner, *Sabbath*, pp. 538–539.

<sup>11</sup> Note the play on words in *’ādām* and *hā’adāmāh*.

<sup>12</sup> H. Lamberty-Zielinski, נִשְׁמַת [n<sup>e</sup>shāmāh], in: G.J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, H.J. Fabry (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 10, Grand Rapids, MI 1999, Eerdmans, p. 67.

Shabbàt within a covenantal commandment in terms of 'ādām's creation: "It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed". The wisdom of God in creating everything as *thôb m'òd*, after fashioning each individual in a unique manner and sharing with them his own breath, so that they became living beings, is further established by God resting after the last of his creation work, humankind. He rested, so that he could be refreshed, *wayyinnāphàsh*—the root verb for *nephesh*—after connecting his own living being with humankind!

God rests in order to connect again with himself, since while creating humankind, he was continually sharing his living breath with humanity, to the point, as it were, of exhausting himself. Now, on the Shabbàt, in an extremely anthropomorphic depiction by the author, he has to reconnect with himself and replenish his own breath. In this regard, Shabbàt is perceived as a perpetual covenant and a sign (*b'erit 'òlām* in v.16 and *'òt* in v.17), and covenants, even if unilateral, are essentially connective of two parts, God and Israel in this case.

The Genesis description gives the occasion for which God created the Shabbàt and the reason for hallowing it: Shabbàt is a day of rest for God, for humankind and for animals and a symbol of connectivity. On its part, Exodus 20:8–11 presents Shabbàt as one way of imitating God by resting and giving rest: "you shall not do any work: you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns" (v.11). Shabbàt is one unique way of creation connecting with God by imitating him in his rest.

## 5. Broken Connectivity

Due to sin, the initial connection between humanity and their God-given likeness was severed. This disconnect became so profound that Adam and Eve felt shame and avoidance in encountering God (Genesis 3:7–11). In response to this state of affairs, the Apostle Paul introduces Christ Jesus as the sole means of restoring humanity to the profound state of the *thôb m'òd* described in Genesis 1:31. In Ephesians 1:9–10 Paul writes: "He has made known to us the mystery of his will (*thélēma*) [of making everything so good again], according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness (*plērōma*) of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things

on earth”<sup>13</sup> Christ Jesus, according to Paul, is the one who connects all creation back to God in its fundamental categories of time and space. Rabbi Heschel was right when he wrote that Shabbàt is “a time in space” and “a sanctuary in time.”<sup>14</sup>

## 6. The Son of Man – Lord of the Shabbàt

During his incarnate earthly life, Jesus—in whom the *plêrôma* of God’s *thêlêma* was brought again to its original state—dealt with the Shabbàt in a unique manner.<sup>15</sup> Not only did he uphold the Shabbàt, but he taught his fellow Jews the right significance of this hallowed day. However, one must bear well in mind that under certain circumstances, individuals who were engaged in special service to the Lord, could ignore prohibitions against work on the Shabbàt and receive no censure. “Have you not read in the law that on the Shabbàt the priests in the temple break the Shabbàt and yet are guiltless?” (Matthew 12:5).<sup>16</sup> By referring to Leviticus and Numbers in the Toràh, Jesus is anchoring his actions by considering himself as God’s agent of eschatological foreshadowing. He considers himself (“The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath”, Matthew 12:8) as the precursor of the age to come, when God would act to bring his people to complete rest again. Thus, Jesus’ Shabbàt actions are best understood in light of the eschatological emphasis that the Shabbàt, received as representing the time when God would decisively act to fulfil the hopes of his people, as well as in light of the Shabbàt, as a special day of blessings for God’s people. These blessings can, summarily, be grouped as his presence, his freedom from bondage in light of the exodus, and Israel’s sanctification.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> “Heaven” and “earth” form a *merismus*, where the parts stand for the whole: heaven and earth, and everything in between.

<sup>14</sup> Heschel, *The Sabbath*, p. xiii.

<sup>15</sup> T.W. Martin, *Sabbath*, pp. 235–236. See also S. Westerholm, C.A. Evans, *Sabbath*, in: C.A. Evans, S.E. Porter (eds.), *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, Downers Grove, IL 2000, InterVarsity, pp. 1031–1035.

<sup>16</sup> See Leviticus 24:8 for the changing of shewbread on the Shabbàt, and Numbers 28:9–10 for the doubling of the burnt offering on the Shabbàt). See also, R.H. Gundry, *Matthew. A Commentary on his Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*, second edition, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, Eerdmans, pp. 223–224.

<sup>17</sup> See M.H. Burer, *Jesus, Sabbath Actions, and Divine Sabbath Work*, in: *Divine Sabbath Work*, Pennsylvania, 2012, Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 108–109.



### 6.1. Eighteen Years of Disconnection

It was on a Shabbàt day (see Luke 13:10–17), when Jesus was teaching in one of the Jewish synagogues and healed a woman who was cripplingly bent over and unable to stand up straight for eighteen years. Her physical disability definitely separated her in a significant manner from connecting with others: probably other persons had to come very close to her in order for her to recognise them. Her crippling condition restricted her world to the patch of ground that she could only see by looking down. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said: “Woman, you are set free from your ailment” (Luke 13:12). And he laid his hands on her. Immediately she stood up straight and began praising God (v.13). The healing Jesus brought to her, not only took away the lack of connectivity with other people she suffered from previously, but also immediately connected her with God in her praising him for her healing.

Not so the leader of the synagogue: he became indignant because Jesus had cured on the Shabbàt, and also because the crowd kept coming to Jesus to be healed even on the Hallowed Day. He expressed his indignation at this blatant breaking of the Shabbàt rules by exclaiming: “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day” (v.14). Jesus availed himself of this opportunity to explain the true meaning of the Shabbàt: not just desisting from work but especially connecting with God, with other persons and with the whole of nature. Shabbàt is the time and space symbol of the eschatological *thôb m<sup>e</sup> òd* towards which God wishes to lead the whole of his creation so that all creation can praise and glorify him in an always more complete manner. Hence, one day in seven, all human hierarchies are suspended and everyone—master, employer, employee and even animals—is free to celebrate their uniqueness in an egalitarian framework.

Jesus proffers the quotidian example of work done on the Shabbàt, so that animals can be refreshed by being taken to water troughs to drink. Healing, in all its forms—animals by drinking, people by being physically and emotionally healed—brings out the whole true meaning of the Shabbàt. God rested when everything he had created was *thôb m<sup>e</sup> òd*. Both Luke, the narrator (v.16), and Jesus, in his response to the synagogue leader (v.18), established a connection between the woman and her previous eighteen years of suffering. According to Jesus, this suffering was a consequence of Satan’s influence, which had kept her bound until he brought her freedom. His mission of restoring all creation to the original *thôb m<sup>e</sup> òd* was translated into making it—humanity, in the first place—whole again.

## 6.2. Connectivity with Downtrodden Humanity

Finally, but most importantly, Jesus enters the synagogue of Nazareth on a Shabbàt, and reads from the book of Isaiah: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed...” (61:1–3).

However, Jesus shows that Isaiah was not meant to stop definitively with the writing or reading of the prophecy. He sits down and links his mission of re-connecting downtrodden humanity with God and making it whole again, thus enabling it to give fuller glory to God, with that of the anointed messiah in Isaiah 61:1–3, which he had just read (see Luke 4:18–19).

## 7. Paul, the Pharisaic Jew and Shabbàt

Paul, the staunch Pharisaic Jew, never missed an occasion to use Shabbàt synagogal gatherings<sup>18</sup> to foster connections with fellow Jews, by giving them words of encouragement after the Scripture readings. During the Pisidian Antioch gathering in Acts 13:14–43, at the invitation of the synagogue leaders themselves, Paul and Barnabas exhorted the Jews in a *haggadic* retelling of the saving history of Israel from slavery in Egypt to Jesus’ saving death, resurrection and glorification.

The effect was that many Jews remained connected with the Saviour, returning the following Shabbàt to hear Paul’s teachings about Jesus once again (Acts 13:42–44). Additionally, numerous Gentiles were converted (vv.46–48; see also Acts 9:20; 18:4).

In Acts 16, a similar incident occurred at Philippi. Paul and Barnabas, through their discernment and message, connected with Lydia, a businesswoman dealing in purple cloth. She, along with her household and other God-fearers, embraced faith as a result of their encounter (Acts 16:13–15).

Paul’s teachings and references to the Shabbàt in his letters, particularly in Colossians 2:14–17, Galatians 4:8–10, and Romans 14:5 provide a more complete perspective of the Apostle on the Shabbàt. Upon analysis of the texts one would better understand whether Paul considered the Old Testament Shabbàt binding, especially for Gentile Christians.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Synagōgè* means a gathering together, implying even physical connectivity.

<sup>19</sup> See J.D.G. Dunn, *Ethics in Practice*, in: *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, London – New York, 1998, T&T Clark, pp. 670–712, especially, pp. 681–682.

Colossians 2:14–17 begins by highlighting the limited explicit mentions of the Shabbàt in Paul’s writings, with Colossians 2:16 being the primary reference. It notes the historical consensus that Paul may have viewed the Old Testament Shabbàt as no longer binding, especially for Gentiles. Paul continues to delve into the Colossian heresy, emphasising its syncretistic nature, combining Hellenistic and Jewish elements in both theological and practical aspects.<sup>20</sup>

In Colossians 2:14–17, Paul’s focus is not on abolishing the Shabbàt but on rejecting false teachings that distorted its observance. The *cheirógraphon*, “hand-written document”, nailed to the cross is interpreted as the record of sins, not the Mosaic law or the Shabbàt itself. Paul emphasises the completeness of God’s forgiveness through Christ, removing the evidence of sins, and disarming accusers.<sup>21</sup>

Moving on to Romans 14:5, Paul addresses the notion of the Shabbàt directly. It seems that Paul’s argument suggests a conflict over days in Romans, pertaining to fast days rather than feast days. The present author is against interpreting the passage as a dismissal of Shabbàt observance, emphasising that Paul encourages mutual tolerance in non-essential matters.<sup>22</sup>

In Galatians, a marked absence of explicit references to the Shabbàt is noted but it is to be acknowledged that in Galatians 4:10, the observance of days is mentioned. The discussion here centres on the motivations behind the Galatians’ observance of sacred times, suggesting superstitious beliefs in astral influences. Paul’s opposition is seen as directed at the perversion of these practices rather than their intrinsic validity.<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, Paul’s writings do not unequivocally repudiate the Shabbàt. Paul’s focus is rather on rejecting false teachings, distorted observances, and the misuse of religious practices for salvation. While Paul rejects legalistic adherence to the law for salvation, he upholds it as a moral standard for Christian conduct. These texts seem to clarify Paul’s nuanced stance on the Shabbàt, and in turn dispel misunderstandings about his teachings concerning the Shabbàt.

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<sup>20</sup> See M.Y. MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, Sacra Pagina Series 17, Collegeville, MN, 2000, Michael Glazier – Liturgical Press, pp. 96–126, especially, pp. 102–111.

<sup>21</sup> See MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, pp. 102–111.

<sup>22</sup> See B. Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina Series 6, Collegeville, MN, 1995, Michael Glazier – Liturgical Press, pp. 403–433, especially, pp. 403–412.

<sup>23</sup> F.J. Matera, *Galatians*, Sacra Pagina Series 9, Collegeville, MN, 1992, Michael Glazier – Liturgical Press, pp. 148–158, especially, pp. 152–153.

## 8. Conclusion

The comprehensive content of Scripture serves as an incontrovertible foundation, establishing that the Shabbàt does not advocate a culture characterised by perpetual labour availability. Rather, it underscores an obligation to maintain connectivity with oneself, with the divine, with fellow individuals, within the spatial and temporal dimensions, and indeed, with the entirety of nature. This elucidates the biblical standpoint on the sagacity inherent in observing the Shabbàt, a day of repose following the creation of the world's magnificence.

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