boys, whose existence I have almost forgotten in the anxious
shoring up of the tottering ruin, are waiting for me, gay, dressed
in holiday clothes, and looking to me marvellously attractive.
We have sat down to a splendid dinner, at a table graced with
flowers and the old Sabbath symbols: the burning candles, the
twisted loaves, the stuffed fish, and my grandfather’s silver
goblet brimming with wine. I have blessed my boys with the
ancient blessing; we have sung the pleasantly syncopated Sab-
bath table hymns. The talk has had little to do with tottering
ruins. My wife and I have caught up with our week’s conversa-
tion. The boys, knowing that the Sabbath is the occasion for
asking questions, have asked them. The Bible, the encyclope-
dia, the atlas, have piled up on the table. We talk of Judaism,
and there are the usual impossible boys’ queries about God,
which my wife and I field clumsily but as well as we can. For
me it is a retreat into restorative magic.

Saturday has passed in much the same manner. The boys
are at home in the synagogue, and they like it. They like even
more the assured presence of their parents. In the weekday
press of schooling, household chores, and work—and especially
in a play-producing time—it often happens that they see little
of us. On the Sabbath we are always there, and they know it.
They know too that I am not working, and that my wife is at
her ease. It is their day.

It is my day, too. The telephone is silent. I can think, read,
study, walk, or do nothing. It is an oasis of quiet. When night
falls, I go back to the wonderful nerve-racking Broadway game.
Often I make my best contribution of the week then and there
to the grisly literary surgery that goes on and on until opening
night. My producer one Saturday night said to me, “I don’t
envy you your religion, but I envy you your Sabbath.”

I mention this experience because I think it comes closest
to reproducing in my own life what the Sabbath must have