

The Day Of Preparation!

Sermonette by Robert Schmid

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Good morning! Another beautiful Sabbath day.

The fact that you are here tells me that you are aware, that you are conscious that this is the Sabbath day! But what day was yesterday? Do you know?

Well, yesterday was the **preparation day** for the Sabbath.

Yes, the preparation day for the Sabbath, and as important as the Sabbath day is, unless you consciously prepared for the Sabbath you have short-changed not only yourself, but God as well.

You see, we can not keep the Sabbath properly unless we prepare for it. Now the fact that there is such a day can be seen from several scriptures. Take Mark 15:42 for example. It says: "***And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath***".

Yes, the day before the Sabbath is the Preparation Day.

Now the concept of a preparation day for the Sabbath however, is not only a New Testament teaching, but it was instituted by God right from the beginning. Turn with me to Exodus the 16. chapter. Here in chapter 16 is the story of the manna and the quail.

But before we get into that, look at the context given in the previous chapter.

In chapter 15 verse 22 we have the beginning of Israel's journey to Sinai and beginning in the later part of verse 25, God gives Israel a warning in preparation of what is to come. There - that is at Mara, THE LORD made for them a statute and an ordinance and there he proved them, saying - in verse 26 - "***If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord, your healer.***"

Now with this warning in mind, one of the very first things God teaches Israel in chapter 16 is the law not only of the Sabbath, but of the preparation day for the Sabbath. Yes, the preparation day for the Sabbath. Lets look at chapter 16 what God has to say about the day of preparation.

You all know the story. The people murmured and complained and so God promises them bread and meat. In verse 4 God through Moses tells them what He is going to do. He said: "***Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not.***" And then in verse 5 it says: "***On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.***"

Here through a miracle, God established the day of preparation.

Let's continue in verse 22: *On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers apiece; and when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23 he said to them, "this is what the LORD has commanded: 'Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay by to be kept till the morning.'"*24 *So they laid it by till the morning, as Moses bade them; and it did not become foul, and there were no worms in it. 25 Moses said, Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. 26 Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a sabbath, there will be none."* 27 *On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, and they found none. 28 And the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29 See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days; remain every man of you in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."* 30 *So the people rested on the seventh day.*

What are the lessons of this story? Well, there are many, but let me mention just a few:

First of all here is prove that the Sabbath-law was already in existence, before the law is given in Gen. 20 on Mt. Sinai.

Secondly, the law of the day of preparation is clearly given and notice God's promise in verse 5 of Ex 16. It says; *"When they prepare . . . then it will be twice as much."* In other words, if we do our part, if we prepare, God will do His part.

Third: Why a day of preparation? Answer: *"That I may prove thee, whether you will walk in my law or not."* Wow! The real purpose for the day of preparation is that God is testing us whether we diligently hearken to His voice. By the way, diligently means to do it in every detail and to do it consistently.

Fourth: The principle of preparation in it's extended context. Yes, we are to prepare for the weekly Sabbath, but we also need to prepare for the annual Sabbaths. In fact, whenever we have an important appointment, whenever we do anything, it's good to prepare for it, isn't it.

But look at this principle of a preparation day in it's larger context.

If Friday is a day of preparation for the **weekly Sabbath**, then this life - your life - is a time of preparation for the **millennial Sabbath** - God's Kingdom. Are we treating our life, every day of our life, as a perpetual preparation for God's 1000 year long Sabbath?

In two weeks, Friday will be the day of preparation for the Feast of Trumpets, a special Holy Day. What kind of preparation will we make before coming into the presence of God? Will we diligently harken to the voice of the LORD and do that which is right in His eyes, give heed to His commandments and keep all His statutes? It's important, and so I want to mention a few ways of how to prepare for the Sabbath, especially for the upcoming Holy Day season.

First of all we must be conscious of the fact that there is a day of preparation, that there is a Holy Day and that it is one of God's commandments to prepare for it. Preparation requires thought and understanding of what we are preparing for.

Secondly, we should ask ourselves: What is my attitude, towards God's Sabbaths and the day of preparation? Attitude is so important. It can make all the difference. You know we can do all of the physical things such as clean our houses and prepare all of our meals, shine our shoes and fill up the car, but if our attitude towards the day of preparation, the Sabbath and towards God is not right, all of our physical preparations will be to no avail. So, check your attitude.

Third, we ought to prepare by reading and studying and meditating on the Word of God about an upcoming Sabbath? In two weeks is the Feast of Trumpets. Now is the time to study about the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets, or is our attitude that we read about it last year or 10 years ago, and nothing else is to be learned?

Fourth, what about prayer? How does prayer fit into preparing for the Sabbath or a Holy Day?

Well, it's obviously very important, for we ought to pray for the fulfillment of what the Sabbath or a particular Holy Day pictures. In fact it can be said that if you haven't prayed for it, you haven't prepared for it.

Fifth, as I have said, two weeks from today is the Feast of Trumpets and God commands us to bring an offering - a sacrificial offering. You know what that means? It means that He is not telling us how much to give. It means that you and I must make a decision. The question is what kind of decision will we make. Will it be a last minute, thoughtless decision, or will we take time now to prepare the offering we are going to bring before God?

Four weeks from today begins the Feast of Tabernacles and we have been preparing for month now deciding were to go, were to stay, how to get there etc., etc. But has God been involved in all of our planning?

Ten years ago we missed opening services in Bonndorf, Germany because of poor planning. I know that God was not pleased! We have repented and God has forgiven. The real question is: Have we learned? Are we growing?

Well, as you can see, preparing for a Sabbath, a Holy Day, preparing for the Kingdom of God is serious business. God is testing us just as He tested Israel.

But with the warning also comes a promise. Look at it in verse 27 of Exodus 15. ***"Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there by the water."***

Springs for water and palm trees for pleasure.

12 springs of water, one for every tribe. No more shortage, plenty for everybody, just like God's Holy Spirit will someday be poured out on all mankind.

Then there are the 70 palm trees. Why 70 ? Well because 70 signifies perfect spiritual order. That will be pure pleasure to live under.

That, no doubt, is a description of the Kingdom of God, and God's promise can not and will not fail.

The question is: Do we realize and act accordingly, that this life is our God given Day of Preparation?