

The Prophetic Significance of the Sabbath.

Sermonette by Robert Schmid

January 1990

Well, here we are - another Sabbath!

We just had 52 of them and here comes another 52 Sabbaths in the new year of 1990.

Yes, this is the first Sabbath of the new year, and since we in the Church of God recognize this day on a weekly basis, I thought it appropriate to examine its prophetic significance.

This prophetic significance of the Sabbath, has the potential and likelihood, to greatly affect our lives in the future.

It has the potential to shake us all out of our routine of a peaceful, nice Friday evening Sabbath meal with the family. A leisurely Sabbath - you know! services, a little fellowship, hopefully time for a short prayer. You know what I mean!

It's pretty much routine! We keep the Sabbath almost subconsciously, often disrespectful.

After all, there is a Sabbath every week. Week after week, year after year.

It's easy to get careless, and forget the prophetic significance of the Sabbath day.

Let's begin examining the prophetic significance of the Sabbath day in Ex 31:12-17:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

[13] Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a SIGN between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

[14] Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

[15] Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

[16] Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

[17] It is a SIGN between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

In other words, God made a perpetual covenant with His people - US, using His Sabbaths as a SIGN, so that we may know who the true God is. God cautions us to do our work in 6 days, but not to do any work on the 7th day or risk being cut off - separated - from God's people and ultimately be put to death. So, this *Sabbath sign* is obviously very important, and because of that, Satan has and will do everything in his power to separate us from this *sign*, and thereby separate us from the true God.

And so, in Daniel the 7th Chapter verse 25 we can see that the Beast - that is Satan in the form of the Roman Empire “*shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out*’ - that is persecute the saints of the Most High – ‘*and shall think to change the times and the law.*”

Here it is prophesied that Satan will try to change the *sign* that identifies to you and me the true God. And, as we know from history, that is precisely what Satan did, when the Roman Empire in partnership with the Catholic Church, changed *God's sign* from the 7th day Sabbath, to the 1st day Sunday. This Sunday worship, in contrast to God's sign the Sabbath, is known as the “*Mark of the Beast,*” but cleverly disguised as a traditional Christian custom.

Throughout history, God's true people have suffered, and have been persecuted for not accepting the *Mark of the Beast*, and many have remained faithful to the *Sign of God*, yes even unto death.

That brings us back to today, to this Sabbath and the next 51 Sabbaths just ahead of us. What plans does Satan have for you and me to separate us from the *Sign of God*, and to cause us to accept *his Mark*? Well, to begin with Sunday keeping is already universally accepted throughout the world, and in traditional Christianity. You and I are a very small minority in the world, hanging on to the Sign of God - the Sabbath.

How difficult will it become to maintain this Sign of God in the future?

In Europe - the Beast in the form of a revived Roman Empire - is again rearing its ugly head, by proclaiming liberty, by saying peace, peace, and by offering economic prosperity for all. But at the same time, Satan is chipping away at God's sign, the Sabbath.

Let me give you an example.

We all started the new year with a new calendar.

I have here a 1990 calendar and the Sabbath is easily identifiable as Saturday the 7th day. Years ago, back home in Germany, I tried to explain the Sabbath to my relatives, and in the process I pointed to a calendar on the wall and said: here, you count and tell me which day is the seventh day of the week; - Well they did, and lo and behold the seventh day was Sunday.

Here is a typical German calendar with the week beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday. This is nothing new, and is standard in Germany, and probably throughout all of Europe, already for many years.

Here is a Holy Land Calendar from Israel, distributed in this country, with the week beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday.

What does it all mean? Well, it means that a whole generation is growing up with Sunday being the day of rest and worship, and to make it biblically more acceptable, Sunday has also become the 7th day of the week. This then is the fulfillment of biblical prophecy that Satan intends to change *times* and the *law* of God, as prophesied by God through His prophet Daniel.

But, not only has Sunday become acceptable socially and theologically, but look at it from a more practical standpoint, that of conducting business. There is nothing more frustrating to an accountant than our calendar system of 30 and 31 alternating days per month, not to mention the 28 days in February. It's simply not very good for statistical analysis. And so, there are efforts under way to change that.

I have an article here about a man, in fact a local man, who invented and is pushing a new perpetual calendar, in which each of the 12 months would have 26 business days, or 91 business days per quarter. In this calendar the week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. In fact, here is what he said as to why this is necessary: He pointed out that, (quote): “the present rule of starting the week on a Sunday, which probably has biblical roots - is illogical because Sunday is not a business day” (end quote). In other words, never mind about all of the theological superstitions, it's a practical matter, it has nothing to do with your religious freedom and convictions. It is simply a practical thing to do.

I have another beautiful German calendar here, where the weekly cycle has been done away with altogether. Sunday, as the day of rest, is simply indicated in red.

There are other proposals for so-called “World Calendars,” all with the same end-result of doing away with the seven-day cycle of the week.

So, now let's go back to our original question. What is the prophetic significance of each Sabbath God is giving us?

Well, first of all each *Sabbath is a sign* identifying the true God and God's true people. Secondly, Satan has a counterfeit sign, *Sunday keeping*, which is really not a sign, but the **Mark of the Beast**.

Thirdly, Satan through the Roman Empire, evolving again right now in Europe - in partnership with the churches of this world, will again force people to have the **Mark of the Beast**, or not be able to buy or sell as it tells us in Rev.13 .

In other words, your and my economic existence will be threatened, and our faith and loyalty to God severely tested. **That's the prophetic significance of the Sabbath.**

But God, in His mercy and through His Word the Bible, His Holy Spirit and His Church, gives us ample warning, Sabbath after Sabbath, to know about and to prepare for the inevitable tribulation ahead.

Now it's up to you and me. Let's appreciate each and every Sabbath that we can have in peace and safety and without persecution. It's a very special gift from God, a **SIGN** that will always keep us in the knowledge of the **true God**.

Happy Sabbath to all.