

Hidden Mysteries the Sabbath Reveals About Our Heavenly Home

This week as I began my Friday morning, I was, as I am every week, aware of all that I desired to accomplish before the sunset and I entered the seventh day and began to observe and celebrate Shabbat (Sabbath), my day of rest. Let me begin by being transparent about the truth that Friday used to be my least favorite day of the week. It was filled with angst and guilt as I looked at my list of “to do’s” and knew at the start I would never be able to finish all of them. Knowing at the outset of my day that I was going to fail affected my entire day. With each item that didn’t work or fit perfectly into my neatly arranged plan for the day, I would become more agitated and build up more guilt as time passed. I know that while I was running around to complete my list, my wife was rushing around attempting to complete her list. She was cleaning, preparing our home, which included getting the children prepared—a feat that all parents know takes more than a 24-hour period of time, and planning and preparing Shabbat dinner (which often included guests). This swirl of effort to complete my work before Shabbat went on for years and, as it did, I realized that although I was not working during the Shabbat, I also was not resting spiritually because I was so fatigued from my efforts to prepare for Shabbat that I was rarely able to enjoy the Shabbat.

All of this changed after I read a very familiar verse of Scripture, which almost everyone knows. It is found in Genesis 2:2-3:

“On the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy,

because on it He had rested from all His work which He had created and made.”

One version uses the words “created for the purpose of preparing” at the end of verse 3. God created the six days for us to prepare to enter into a day that He made when He completed His work. In other words, we as humans created by G-D cannot sanctify the Sabbath day. We can only enter into the sacred space of time, which G-D sanctified for us.

In the book of Mark, Yeshua was being questioned about the Sabbath observance of His disciples because they were eating freshly picked grain on the Sabbath. As part of His teaching and correcting those who accused His disciples, He made the statement found in Mark 2:27:

“Then He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”

Here we find Yeshua reiterating the idea that Shabbat was made for man. Shabbat is not something a man or woman can make. It is a completed work of G-D, completed and sanctified by Him for us. While we are commanded to remember the Sabbath and to observe the Sabbath, our efforts cannot make the Sabbath. In our observance, we enter into the Sabbath by resting from our work for a day, then after Sabbath return to our work.

This understanding was life changing for my family. I realized that although I needed to prepare for the Shabbat, I wasn't preparing by working to make sure everything in my world was perfect and it wasn't by my wife's efforts to have the perfect home and meal to serve. The preparation was for entry into a space of time prepared by G-D for us, all of us.

In a real way, preparing for Shabbat is the same as preparing for the Olam Haba (World to Come), or Heaven. It isn't about our getting our lives perfectly ordered by our own abilities and powers. It is through preparation of our hearts for the work of sanctification that G-D has done.

In other words, we could replace the word “saved” with the concept of Shabbat in Ephesians 2:8:

“For by grace we have Shabbat through faith this is not of ourselves it is a gift of God.”

Shabbat was meant to be a rehearsal of the world to come, a time of entering into the sacred space prepared by G-D for us. We cannot make Shabbat better by our efforts or labor. Our preparation is not to prepare Shabbat – it is to prepare for Shabbat, which was made for us. {eo}

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