



Sabbath Blessing: Part Four
“The Secret of Letting Go”
Deuteronomy 15:1-11

The Three Levels of Sabbath

The rhythm of the weekly sabbath: rest from work, freedom from coercion

The rhythm of the sabbatical year: fallow fields, release of debts and slaves: **Lev 25/Deut 15**

The rhythm of the jubilee year: return of ancestral properties: **Leviticus 25:8-55**

What do all three levels have in common?

Working the muscle of letting go

A counter to clutch, grasp, hold on, hoard, cling to, control

Release of Debts and the Practice of Forgiveness

Intuiting a connection

Jesus' preference for the debt metaphor for interpersonal sin

The Lord's Prayer: **Matthew 6:12 ; Luke 11:4b**

The Parable of the Ungrateful Steward: **Matthew 18:21-35**

The universal moral truth of the sacred sphere of personal being deserving respect

To steal something from a neighbor, one is obligated to return it (become indebted)

To wrong someone is to “illicitly take something” from their being, to become indebted

The nature of life in time, this action can never be erased or undone

While repentance, apology, restitution help healing, it is impossible to replace what was lost

Forgiveness (release by the injured party) is the only solution available to “close the case”

The sabbath practice of releasing material debt mirrors the debt-releasing of forgiveness

Both are acts requiring the use of the “letting go muscle”

Both are acts that lean into trusting God's control

When we forgive we imitate God's forgiveness and His “letting go” of Jesus

When we resist forgiveness, it is a form of not resting

Not forgiving is holding on and carrying forward the offense

The longer an offense is held, the heavier it becomes (with bitterness, resentment)

To forgive is to release the weight, feel the freedom of sudden lightness, enter into soul rest

Seventy times seven: a nod to sabbath?: **Matthew 18:22**