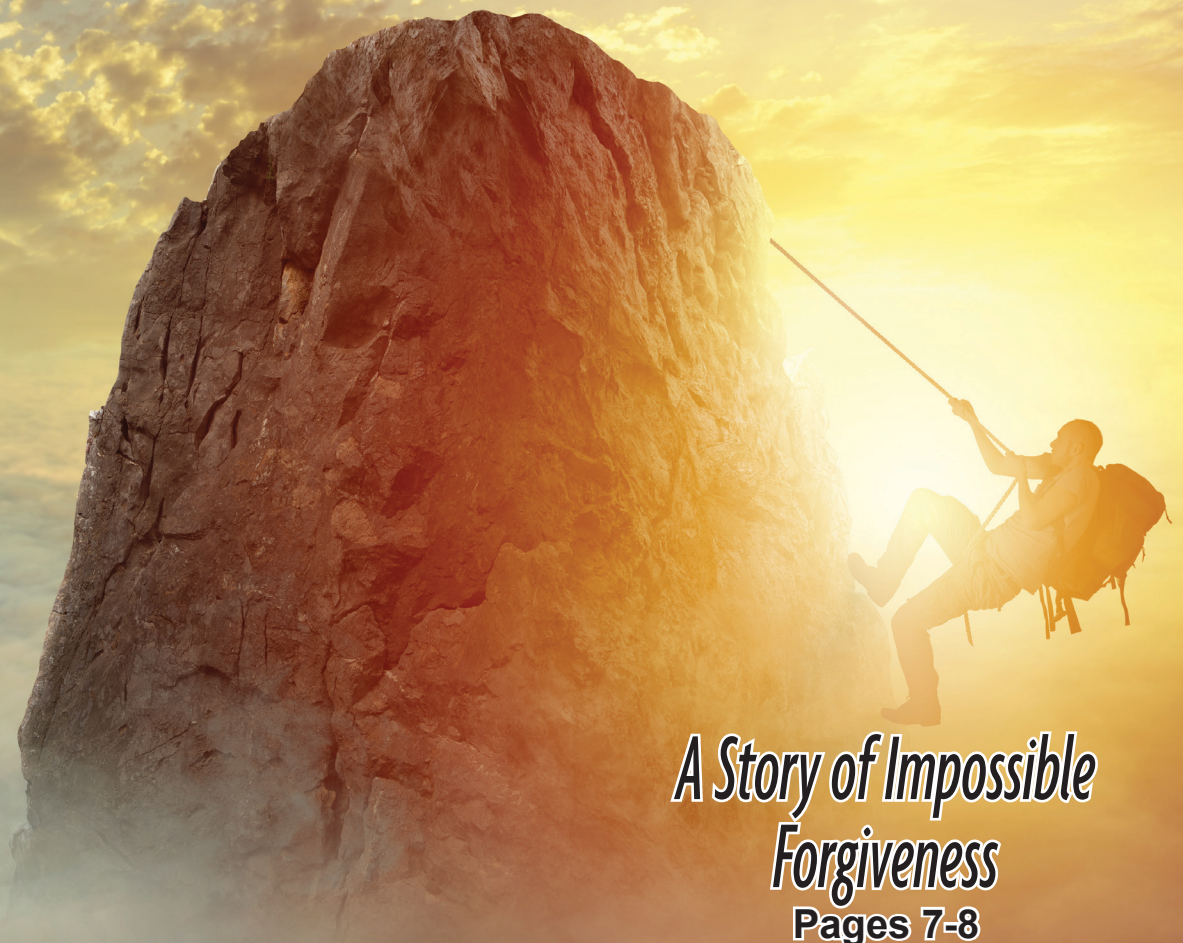


# Victory

magazine

Hidden With Christ Ministries  
May/June 2024



*A Story of Impossible  
Forgiveness*  
Pages 7-8

# IN THIS ISSUE

**3 AN IMPRESSIVE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

**4 HEADING TOWARD THE FINISH LINE**

**5 FAITH QUOTE**

**6 GOD'S HEART FOR THE POOR**

**7 A STORY OF AN IMPOSSIBLE FORGIVENESS**

**9 IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE TO FORGIVE?**

**12 SECRETS OF THE SABBATH REST**

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To demonstrate the love of God through mercy ministries and by freely teaching God's Word around the world.

**OUR MISSION:**

To care for orphans and abandoned children and other needy persons through practical outreaches and by producing free Bible materials and training.

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# THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OF THE DEATH OF A VISION

*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.* (John 12:24 RSV)

By Rita Langeland

If you have read the Bible cover to cover, you may have observed an interesting principle which God seems to orchestrate or allow in His people's lives, which others have termed the "Death of a Vision." God gives His servant a vision, dream, or purpose which He fully intends to bring to pass in the person's life. Then, without explanation, the individual experiences what can best be described as the total loss or "Death of the Vision."

Perhaps time, circumstances, or other people have hindered the vision from being fulfilled. The individual who was waiting for the vision to materialize knows beyond any doubt he cannot make it happen in his own strength. The vision appears utterly DEAD. Then God does what He does so powerfully – He brings a RESURRECTION.

In the book of Genesis (Chapters 37-45) we see Joseph experiencing the death of a vision. The dream of leadership God had dramatically given to him as a teenager was ripped away when he was sold by his brothers into slavery. That "Death of a Vision" hung over his life during those years in slavery and then intensified when he was falsely imprisoned. His circumstances went from bad to worse! But RESURRECTION DAY was coming. When Joseph was able to accurately interpret the dreams of Pharaoh regarding impending famine, he got an overnight promotion to 2nd in command in Egypt. He graduated from the dungeon to the palace in a single day. That was RESURRECTION DAY for Joseph and the restoration of his vision!

You can see this same principle operating in the life of Abram. God promised him he would have descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, (Genesis 15:5) and yet his wife was barren. All hope for that vision ever happening was dead. When Abram took his wife's advice to try to make the vision transpire through a scheme of their own – the result was disastrous. Yet God's mercy toward Abram and Sarai (whom He renamed Abraham and Sarah) was great. And in God's perfect timing, the promised child, Isaac, was born to them. Abraham experienced the restoration of the God-given vision. But Abraham went through a second death of the vision experience when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac on an altar on Mt. Moriah. This was the moment God dealt with Abraham's heart at the deepest level. (When the thing God promised and gives you becomes your ambition, your love, or your identity – you are in danger of facing a second death experience. God never wants what He blesses us with to become an idol that displaces Him in our hearts!) When Abraham was ready to go through with the sacrifice of Isaac, God stopped him and said, ***"Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son."*** (Genesis 22:12 NLT) That was RESURRECTION DAY for Abraham!

I am convinced that God is most interested in our heart condition when He gives us a vision. And He is willing to wait as long as it takes until our hearts can receive His vision in His way - without any fleshly ideas or earthly strategies to contaminate it. For only then, can it bear much fruit!

Thirteen years ago, Hidden with Christ Ministries purchased land in Tanzania (5.2 acres) to build an orphanage and school. One circumstance after another hindered that vision from even starting. The local government land office refused to permit us to build our desired project on that land. Every effort we made hit a brick wall until we just surrendered the whole thing to the Lord and let it go. We were even willing to donate the land to another ministry because the vision appeared to be dead.

Then in March of 2024, the Lord directed us to go back to the local government officials and ask for permission to build AGAIN. We did so and the new crop of government officials heard us out. On that same day – permission to move ahead with the project was granted. We have a long road ahead to jump all the hoops required from various government agencies including the Ministry of Education, but we know RESURRECTION DAY is coming!

Please pray with us as we pursue the plans for the TREASURES OF AFRICA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY. We believe this vision, though once dead, will bear much fruit in the nation of Tanzania and beyond!



# AN IMPRESSIVE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

A SUMMER CAMP  
FOR CURIOUS MINDS

In the world of Academia, a well-known adage that is often heard is “Publish or perish.” This is a reference to the pressure exerted upon University professors to produce scholarly works that are published in journals relating to their field of expertise. When an article is published and the authors are acknowledged, it is considered a great accomplishment. Those in the medical research sciences are especially under pressure to advance research in their chosen fields.

When we started Treasures of Africa Children’s Home in 2007, we never imagined one of our “treasures” would be acknowledged in a medical research publication for work done in the field of microbiology and immunology. But we did dream that our children would become leaders in the professions they chose and would help lead the nation of Tanzania in their generation. Today, we are seeing that dream becoming reality.

Mary Migiro – our very first “Treasure of Africa” student – has achieved another “FIRST.” She is not only our first student to pursue a Master’s Degree in a medical science but also the first to be acknowledged as a co-author of an article in a medical research publication. She assisted a professor at her University on an important research project. Their work was published on April 16, 2024, on the NIH (National Institute of Health) National Library of Medicine – National Center for Biotechnology Information website and the title of the article is:

**Polymicrobial bloodstream infections a risk factor for mortality in neonates at the national hospital, Tanzania: A case-control study**

You can access the article on this link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38625965/>

We are so grateful to all the supporters of Treasures of Africa KIDZ who have dreamed and believed with us that God is able to raise up leaders for East Africa from among the most vulnerable members of Tanzanian society. Your financial support and prayers have sustained this vision and helped bring it to pass!

Please continue to pray for Mary as she continues to pursue her Master’s Degree in Microbiology and Immunology at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences. She is in her second year and will graduate in December 2025. She is working very hard and is required to put in incredibly long hours at two different hospitals. She looked totally exhausted when we visited her in Dar Es Salaam in March. Please pray for her health and continued strength so she may finish well!

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Donations to Hidden with Christ Ministries for our TREASURES OF AFRICA KIDZ Education Fund help us pursue the vision of raising up leaders for the nation of Tanzania. Like Mary, all our students come from very challenging circumstances and the provision of education support helps takes them places they would never be able to attain without outside help. Consider becoming a regular supporter of the TOA KIDZ!

You can give on our website: [www.treasuresofafrica.org/donate](http://www.treasuresofafrica.org/donate) or donate through the VENMO app. You can find HIDDEN WITH CHRIST MINISTRIES under the CHARITIES function of the app.

# HEADING TOWARD

# THE FINISH LINE



Glory's journey toward the academic finish line hasn't been easy. But her determination and trust in God has carried her through. She is currently attending Mzumbe University in Morogoro, Tanzania. Her major is Health Management. She is scheduled to graduate with her bachelor's degree in October 2024. But there were several times along this road that it looked like she may not make it.

Glory came to live at Treasures of Africa Children's Home in 2007, as a 7-year-old. She was always a diligent student and achieved good grades. But when she moved to Advanced Secondary School and began Form Five (the equivalent of 12th grade in the USA) she struggled. This particular school was academically very strict. If a student did not meet their high expectations, they would dismiss the student from the school before their poor performance could negatively reflect on the school in the National Exams. The Headmistress had decided to dismiss Glory and she was devastated.

But after having a conference with her, Glory was given the option of repeating the school year to see if she could improve enough to move on to the final year of Advanced Secondary, known as Form Six. Glory worked hard that next year and passed well. When she moved on to Form Six, she did such an outstanding job that she ended up as the top student. When the National Exam results came out, Glory and a fellow student had tied for the top scores from their school. She was back on the academic road toward success.

Her excellent results in Advanced Secondary School enabled her to be accepted to the top rated Mzumbe University. She worked hard and made it to her final year. Then another serious challenge arose that looked like it would derail her graduation. While completing a field work assignment (internship) at the Emergency Department of Mawenzi Hospital in Moshi, Glory became very sick, weakened and lost weight. After a period of misdiagnosis, it was discovered Glory had contracted Tuberculosis while working in the hospital. Finally, she received the proper medication, and began to regain her health. Despite her lost time from school, Glory has been able to catch up and is now completing her research project.

When I asked Glory to explain her research project, she replied with the following:

***I want to share with you the reasoning behind my choice of research topic, "Knowledge and Practices of Healthcare Workers Regarding the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases."***

***With the growing burden of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, respiratory diseases, hypertension, and cardiovascular ailments, I felt compelled to delve deeper into this area. It's disheartening to witness the high percentage of people succumbing to these illnesses, and I believe that understanding the role of healthcare workers in prevention and control is crucial. Through this research, I aim to investigate the awareness and skills of healthcare workers regarding the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.***

Glory gathered data from more than 70 Hospital staff answering the questions posed by her research. Please pray for Glory as she completes her final research paper and finishes out the semester.

We are so thankful to all who pray for and donate toward the education of the TREASURES OF AFRICA KIDZ. They are truly becoming the young leaders of tomorrow in Tanzania!



**Glory returning from collecting data at Mawenzi Hospital for her research project**

# To Forgive...

is to set  
a prisoner free...  
and to discover  
the prisoner  
was you.

Corrie Ten Boom  
1892-1983

A prisoner of the Nazis  
during WWII for the "crime"  
of sheltering Jews during the  
German occupation  
of the Netherlands

HWCM FAITH QUOTES 2024

# God's Heart for the Poor

**A REHEMA PROJECTS STORY**

by  
**Sunday Jeremiah Joseph**  
Project Manager  
HWCM - Moshi, Tanzania



In the heart of our community lies a story of both suffering and kindness. Meet Amina, an elderly widow who has faced the harsh realities of life with grace and strength. For years, she slept on a thin mattress on a cement floor, where water flooded the room during the rainy season.

With no living children or other family to turn to, Amina relied on the generosity of a good neighbor who provided her with a place to sleep and occasional meals. Despite this kindness, her days were marked by constant struggle.

When Hidden with Christ Ministries (through Rehema Projects and its donors) brought food for Amina at Christmas, the lack of furniture in her humble room was noted. We had great concern for her health seeing she was sleeping on a thin mattress on a cold cement floor. So, it was decided that Rehema Projects would remedy the situation and provide Amina with something she had never dared to dream of - a bed of her own.

Gone are the nights spent on a bare mattress on the floor. Now, Amina rests on a comfortable bed, wrapped in new sheets and blankets, a smile adorning her face, a testament to the newfound comfort and dignity bestowed upon her through Rehema Projects. Her story is a reminder of the profound impact that a simple act of compassion – that demonstrates God's heart for the poor - can have on someone's life.

Through Rehema Projects, we can bring comfort to those like Amina who have known little of it. Together, let us continue to sow seeds of kindness and generosity, knowing that they will bear fruit in ways we may never fully comprehend.

You can donate online toward our REHEMA PROJECTS at [www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate](http://www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate) by choosing REHEMA PROJECTS from the dropdown menu.



**Amina resting on her new bed**

# A Story of AN IMPOSSIBLE FORGIVENESS

**Parental Advisory:  
Content not suitable for children**

By Faith Kaluse  
Administrator  
Hidden with Christ Ministries  
Moshi, Tanzania

Every person, when hurt by others, experiences a range of emotions, and reacts differently. Some people have the courage to forgive and move forward, and that response shapes their growth and resilience. For others, forgiveness is like a mountain before them, which keeps them stuck in one place, unable to move ahead in life.

The story you are about to read concerns a young lady from the Maasai tribe in Tanzania, whose name is Esther. Esther comes from a family of four, consisting of one boy and three girls. Her father abandoned their mother and married another woman after Esther's mother decided to enroll the daughters in school. Esther's father was a Maasai traditionalist who didn't believe in educating girls. Instead, he felt that his daughters should be prepared for an early marriage so that he could receive cows as dowry.

When Esther was in Standard Five, (fifth grade) her father found a man for her to marry and received cows from him as the bride price for the arranged marriage. He instructed Esther that when she reached Standard Seven, she should intentionally fail her exams (which would prevent her from attending Secondary School) so that she could marry the man from whom he had received cows.

Esther rejected her father's plan, insisting that she needed to continue her education. Though her father pressured her to agree, she steadfastly refused to deliberately fail her exams, in order to marry a stranger. This led to many arguments with her father. On the contrary, Esther's mother encouraged her to persevere, work hard in school, and strive to pass her Standard Seven exams so that she could continue with her Secondary School education.

One day when she was in Standard Seven (seventh grade), Esther's mother left her and her siblings with their father as she went to visit their older sister, who was married in another village. After her mother left, Esther's father left the house and went to the home he shared with his other wife. That night, the man to whom her father had arranged a marriage, came to Esther's house with his three friends. He caught Esther by force, holding her down with the help of his friends, and raped her in front of her siblings. It was a trauma that was horrifying for both Esther and her siblings.

Instead of the matter being dealt with by police, Esther's father and other Maasai traditional leaders concluded the matter in a meeting without involving government officials. The whole situation had been her father's arrangement to ensure that Esther would not pursue further education and be forced to marry the man from whom he received the dowry. But Esther refused to agree to the marriage. She was 14 years old at the time.

This traumatic experience made Esther swear to never forgive her father and the man who raped her. Esther became pregnant from the rape, but she didn't know it for some time. She only became aware of her pregnancy when the baby started moving. However, Esther did not allow the pregnancy to hinder her from continuing her education. She managed to complete her Standard Seven exams, keeping the pregnancy hidden, and just a day later, she gave birth to a baby boy. Despite her condition, she successfully passed her exams, and she was selected to join a government Secondary School.

Esther commenced Secondary school while her mother took care of the baby. Her mother consistently encouraged her to focus on her education. After four long years, Esther graduated from Secondary School with excellent results.

Despite her academic achievement, Esther was deeply troubled every time she saw her father and the man who raped her. Unforgiveness was like a mountain standing immovable in front of Esther. Though she had accepted Jesus into her heart, forgiving her father and those who wronged her seemed impossible. Each time she encountered them, waves of anger would consume her, leaving her trembling with resentment. The desire for retribution burned within her. She harbored a longing to inflict upon them the same pain she had endured. She found herself continually swearing never to forgive them.

Her Pastor, Zablon Laizer, had shared the disturbing story of Esther's trauma with Rita Langeland at the Hidden with Christ Ministries office in Moshi. Rita encouraged Pastor Zablon to bring Esther to the office so she could be prayed with and counseled. She was also interested to see if HWCM could assist Esther in attending college, as that was her dream.

I was asked to meet with Esther, as I had previously helped another young Maasai woman from Pastor Zablon's church in a similar way. I talked with Esther about forgiveness, explaining how holding onto unforgiveness places us in a cage, while those who have hurt us continue to live happily, unconcerned with our pain.

When we refuse to forgive, we are the ones who suffer, not them. We imprison ourselves, not them. Those who have wronged us enjoy their freedom without regard for our feelings. Thus, forgiveness is ultimately for us, not for those who have caused us harm. After our discussion, Esther was ready to forgive her father and the men who hurt her. We prayed together, and she cried intensely.

After our prayer, she confided in me that she felt a weight had been lifted from her shoulders. She said, "I feel like the burden has been lifted from me," and I witnessed the transformation on her face as she began to smile. She was radiant.

This experience brought to mind the words of Corrie Ten Boom: "To forgive is to set a prisoner free... and to discover that the prisoner was you."


Esther's dream is to study social work in college with the hope of helping other girls in the Maasai community who have experienced similar traumas. She wants to help them walk in freedom and have the courage to pursue their dreams. Please pray for her and for HWCM as we seek to assist Esther in pursuing her goals.

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Editor's Note: Hidden with Christ Ministries has taken some initial steps to help prepare Esther for college. She needed tutoring in English as her command of the language was insufficient for college level study. We brought her to Moshi, settled her in our TOA Transition House for college-aged girls and arranged for her to go through a 3-month course with one-on-one training in English. Next, we plan to enroll her in a computer literacy course as she has zero experience with computers and will be required to use them in college. If the Lord puts it in your heart, please consider donating to our TOA KIDZ Education Fund to help us with the expenses necessary to prepare Esther for college and to eventually enroll her in a college program. Go to our website: [www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate](http://www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate) and on the donate page's dropdown menu choose **TREASURES OF AFRICA KIDZ EDUCATION FUND**. OR we have a brand-new option - You can now donate easily through the mobile app - **VENMO**. Look for Hidden with Christ Ministries under "Charities" or enter our username - @HWCMIn and experience an easy way to give!



**Radiant Esther - after experiencing the freedom that comes with extending forgiveness**



# IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE TO FORGIVE?

BY PASTOR GEOFFREY KIOKO SIMON  
NAIROBI, KENYA

If you live in this world, you will encounter offenses. People and events can offend or hurt us directly or circumstantially. Worse still, we could hurt ourselves by our actions, perspectives, wrong beliefs, or choices. Other times we can find ourselves standing on the platforms of consequences that may be generational, national, racial, tribal, corporate, or even religious that were not of our own making, or a result of our choices.

Our forefathers, former leaders, spouses, religious leaders, managers, to mention but just a few, could have made choices that put us in unfavorable situations without even a forethought. These situations could set us up to take offense or feel like we are chained forever in a prison of victimhood. Many feel doomed to live for the rest of their lives with the root of anger, bitterness and unforgiveness. If there is so much offense happening daily, then it goes without saying that forgiveness must be a daily choice for most (if not all) of us. Finally, it is important to recognize that not only are we easily offended but we also easily offend others, even if it is unintentional.

***For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*** (James 3:2 KJV)

But is forgiveness really possible? To answer this question, it is important to look at the applicational dynamics of the Lord's prayer.

***And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven (left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have given up resentment against) our debtors. And lead (bring) us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. For if you forgive people their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.*** (Matthew 6:12-15 Amplified Classic Bible)

God extends forgiveness to us, and we receive His forgiveness when we extend the same to others. The following nuggets of wisdom on this subject of forgiveness may shed some light in our hearts and influence positive choices as far as forgiveness is concerned.

Forgiveness is the giving up of a better or different yesterday (definition by the Grief Recovery Institute)

Forgiveness is setting the captive free only to realize you were the captive (Corrie Ten Boom)

Unforgiveness is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die.

It is one thing to say you have forgiven to whitewash yourself before men, it is another thing to forgive from the wells of your heart.

Forgiveness is not a feeling but a choice. If you wait for your feelings to direct you in this area, you will never be able to forgive.

The person you choose not to forgive is by no means your captive/prisoner. You have the power to only release yourself from your own prison.

While it may be impossible to forget, it is possible to forgive.

You know you have placed yourself on the path to forgiveness when you stop expecting evil to befall the offender and start remembering what happened to you with less or no pain.

You are 100% responsible, not for what happened, but for how you reacted. The sooner you get in charge of your reaction the sooner you can start to move forward towards forgiveness.

It is a fact that your feelings are valid. It is a fact that they change and can be changed.

Forgiveness is not necessarily reconciliation. In some cases, detangling from a relationship allows your heart to forgive without necessarily going back to abuse.

When God asks us to do anything however difficult, it is not because He wants to torture us, but He intends to help us in accomplishing it. It is possible to ask and receive help to forgive from God today.

Yes – it really is possible to forgive!

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Editor's Note: Geoffrey Kioko Simon is a founding Trustee of Hidden with Christ Ministries in Tanzania. He has worked side by side with HWCM Executive Director Rita Langeland for over 20 years. He is an anointed minister of the Gospel, founder of WORD IN SEASON MINISTRIES and a professional Business Consultant with his own company in Nairobi, Kenya. He also consults for the Kenyan government on security matters.



**Geoffrey Kioko Simon**



**REST**  
provides fine-tuning  
for hearing  
God's messages  
*amidst the static of life.*

SHELLY MILLER  
IN  
RHYTHMS OF REST:  
FINDING THE SPIRIT OF SABBATH IN A BUSY WORLD



# Secrets OF THE SABBATH REST

by  
Rita Langeland

Jesus had a way of making religious people angry. One of His favorite methods was to heal people on the Sabbath day. This made the Jewish religious leaders so enraged they plotted to have him killed. (Mark 3:1-6) They considered "healing people" to be "work" that was prohibited on the Sabbath by the Law of Moses. But Jesus was trying to teach an important lesson about the Sabbath and about God's heart for people to those who thought they were experts in the Old Testament scriptures.

The Jewish traditions regarding the Sabbath had become so burdensome to the people that Jesus had to clarify God's attitude about it by saying, "**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.**" (Mark 2:27) This flew in the face of the teachings of the Jewish religious leaders of that era. They had added to the fourth commandment, a long list of rules that if violated, meant the rule-breaker was in jeopardy of being stoned to death. And they were vigilant to openly shame any violators!

Even today's Orthodox Jews continue to observe the Sabbath using modernized versions of those same rules revised by their Rabbinical leaders. The Orthodox Union (USA) has published a document to help observant Jews avoid breaking the Sabbath. It is entitled "The Thirty-Nine Categories of Sabbath Work Prohibited by Law" and can be found on their website.

That list explains that actions such as boiling water, driving a car, tearing a piece of toilet paper, or swatting a fly (among many others) constitute a violation of the Sabbath law prohibiting work. That is an example of extreme legalistic thinking and a complete lack of understanding of the spirit of the 4th commandment. Jesus rebuked the religious scholars of His day for exalting their traditions over God's word when He asked them, "**And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God?**" (Matthew 15:3 NLT)

There is no doubt that the Sabbath's original meaning has been muddled by the religious traditions of men. But the Sabbath has also become a subject almost ignored by much of the modern Christian church. God intended the Sabbath rest to be a blessing for people and not a religious burden. Let's consider God's original intent when He introduced the concept of Sabbath.

In Genesis we find the account of God finishing His work of creation and choosing to rest on the seventh day. This was an example that preceded the eventual command for people to do as God did – and rest on the seventh day.

**By 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 sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.** (Genesis 2:2-3 NASB)

The concept of a Sabbath rest for God's people was introduced in the Book of Exodus. Imagine how astonishing this idea must have seemed to the Israelites who had worked seven days a week as slaves in Egypt. Now they

were told to only work six days and rest on the seventh, setting it apart as holy to the Lord. Here is the text of the 4th commandment:

**Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. For six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; on it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male slave or your female slave, or your cattle, or your resident who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; for that reason, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**  
(Exodus 20:8-11 NASB)

### **Commanded to Rest?**

Why would God COMMAND people to take a day of rest? I believe the answer to that question is multi-faceted. But one facet begins with the simple fact that God created man and He knows what human beings need. Rest is something that is a physical need of the human body to maintain good health. But rest also helps maintain our mental health as well. It is very hard to think clearly, make good decisions, or remain emotionally steady when you are constantly exhausted. When Jesus said, "**The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath,**" He was saying that God instituted the Sabbath to be a blessing and help to mankind.

People who do not rest on a regular basis open themselves up to physical illness from the continuous stress of non-stop work and family responsibilities. Without consistent rest, your immune system will be weakened thus making you susceptible to sickness. (If you wonder why you are sick all the time with every cold and flu that passes through town – consider whether you are violating God's design for you to have a Sabbath rest!) Observing a Sabbath rest day will be a blessing to both your physical and mental health. This is one of the secrets you will discover when you embrace God's gift of Sabbath rest.

### **My Own Story**

Early in our ministry I did not have this understanding that God wanted His people to rest. In fact, I was quite sure it was my duty to work seven days a week to serve God. My husband was equally certain that God wanted us to have a day of rest. At that time, we had just recently founded a church in California and worked hard to take care of our fledgling congregation.

I remember the specific day when I realized I needed to find out if the Sabbath was still something God intended for New Testament believers. My husband and young teenage son got up and told me they were going to the beach. I was incensed – telling my husband, "How can you go to the beach when we have so many things we need to do?" He insisted, "This is our day to rest, and you need to rest also." I refused, quite smugly certain that was not what I should be doing. As they left the house, I felt miserable. I finally cried out to God to show me whether my husband was right about the Sabbath being more than just an Old Testament commandment that didn't apply to the New Testament church. The Lord made it abundantly clear to me with Jesus' own words in Mark 2:27 – "**The Sabbath was made for man...**"

Though I became convinced by the scriptures that the Sabbath rest was God's will, I quickly found out that it would take faith and grace to obey! It would be impossible to rest if I could not surrender the "to do list" in my mind to the Lord. It took faith to stop worrying about not accomplishing everything that I felt was so vital and time sensitive. This may have been the hardest part of embracing the Sabbath rest for me. I had to learn that I could trust God to take care of those things. Surrender became a weekly exercise for me every time the Sabbath rolled around!

For others, fear of not having enough money to pay the bills keeps them working seven days a week. Fear is a tool the devil uses to keep people in bondage. If you work seven days a week you will eventually not be able to work at all. Physical or mental breakdown will rob you of your ability to earn a living. So don't allow the lie, "I have to work seven days a week to make ends meet!" drive you to a physical breakdown. Just like tithing – taking a Sabbath rest each week – takes faith. The ancient Israelites worried about the same issues we do today and had to be told, **...even during plowing time and harvest you shall rest.** (Exodus 34:21) Many farmers will tell you they can NEVER take a day off during harvest or planting season. Yet God told the Israelites they had to rest even then. That requires faith!

You must trust that God will provide for you as you obey His word even if it seems like obeying will put you in a worse financial condition. God will honor you for honoring His word (about the Sabbath or tithing!) and make a way where there seems to be no way. But you must take the first step of obedience and then God will move on your behalf. An inability to take time off from work reveals what you really believe about God and about yourself. It says you can't trust God to provide for you and that you believe you are the sustainer of your own life.

## Practical Steps

Different religious groups debate which day of the week should be honored as the Sabbath. Some say it should be Saturday like the Jewish tradition, and others say Sunday. If you review the scriptures mentioned above, you will observe no specific day of the week is stated. Instead, we are commanded: **For six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God...** Also – the naming of the days of the week wasn't done until centuries later and the Romans named them after their false gods. For example, Saturday was named for their god Saturn. So, I don't believe the day of the week is the issue in the mind of God. The issue is working six days – and resting and honoring the Lord on the seventh day. People's work schedules vary and your "seventh day" may be different than mine. For example, a pastor's Sabbath day should NOT be Sunday – as that is probably his busiest day of the week!

Regarding what is allowable or not on the Sabbath day, let's consider the meaning of the word. W.E. Vines Expository Dictionary tells us that the Hebrew word which was transliterated into the word "Sabbath" has the meaning "cease, or to desist." Another Bible scholar explains the meaning of "Sabbath" to be a "cessation of activity related to work." If you apply this meaning to your day of rest, it will help clarify what would be acceptable to the Lord for your Sabbath activities. Should you fold the laundry? Shop for groceries? Wash your car? Answer work emails? Mow your lawn? Probably not – sounds like work to me! The key to success is planning ahead, and preparing meals, etc. the day before, so you are FREE TO REST and spend time with the Lord on your Sabbath day.

What are we to do on the Sabbath besides rest? Prayer, worship, reading the Word, speaking with others about the Lord are activities the Apostle Paul engaged in on the Sabbath as we can read in the Book of Acts. Then we see Jesus healing people on the Sabbath and proclaiming in Matthew 12:12, **"So Then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."** All these things keep our focus on the Lord and fulfill the command to **"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,"** setting it apart for God. (Exodus 20:8)

## Spiritual Secrets of the Sabbath Rest


Not only does the Sabbath provide the physical blessings of rest and renewal, but there are also tremendous spiritual blessings promised to the person who will call the Sabbath a "delight."

***If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath, and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.*** (Isaiah 58:13-14 NIV)

The promise of the spiritual blessing of "finding your joy in the Lord" if you consider the Sabbath day a delight is a weighty one. Many people seek the Lord out of religious obligation but few experience the joy God has for them in personal fellowship with Him. This is a precious promise of spiritual blessing that cannot be overstated. If you have longed for a closer relationship with God, this is a secret to experiencing that desire of your heart!

Additionally, this passage of scripture includes a promise of promotion and victory in your life (***I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land...***) as well as increase and blessing (***and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob***).

God clearly desires that the Sabbath day be a day of blessing and spiritual renewal for His people. I encourage you to embrace the gift of the Sabbath rest day. As you honor the Lord you will experience the secrets of the Sabbath rest – both spiritual and physical blessings which God longs to pour out on your life!



**YOUR FAITHFUL LOVE  
IS PRICELESS, GOD!**  
*Humanity finds refuge*  
**IN THE SHADOW  
OF YOUR WINGS.**

**Psalm 36:7**  
**Common English Bible**