

Sabbath in Late Fall
Ruth Haley Barton

For everything there is a season...

Sometimes on the Sabbath

all you can do is

settle into the soft body of yourself
and listen to what it says.

Listen to

the exhaustion that is deeper than tired-ness
the hunger that is for more than food
the thirst that is for more than drink
the longing for comfort that is more than physical.

On the Sabbath

body and soul reach out for time of a different sort

time that is full of space rather than activity.
time to watch the burning bush in your own back yard...
the movement of the wind among bare branches...
the last leaf that clings to the branch before its final letting go.

Letting go is hard,

letting go of that which no longer works
that which no longer brings joy and meaning
that which is no longer full of life.

It seems cruel

That something that used to be so beautiful

should fall to the ground
sinking into the earthy mud along with everything else that is dying,
no longer recognizable for what it used to be.

It seems cruel but it is the way of things.

One generation gives its life for the next.

One season slips away so another can come.

One crop of fruit falls from the tree so that more can be borne.

One wave recedes while another gathers strength to crash upon the shore.

It seems cruel

but it is the rhythm of things

And rhythm has its own beauty.

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Ruth Haley Barton is co-founder of the Transforming Center. A spiritual director, teacher and retreat leader, she is the author of spiritual formation books and resources including *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*, *Sacred Rhythms*, and *Longing for More* (all InterVarsity Press).

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