

## Roots



The Ash Bore has wreaked havoc in our neighborhood, maybe you've noticed. We had to have a large tree removed recently but didn't have the stump removed due to its location. Well as luck would have it, unsurprisingly we now have a new tree coming up from the stump.

*That whole event got me to thinking. David's Psalm, in fact the very first one in the Book Of Psalms goes like this: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree (Some versions say "Firmly") planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."* David talks about this person being a tree but that is the visible part of the plant. What about the part of the plant below ground? That is essentially invisible.

In John 15:1-5, Jesus talks about how He is the "Vine", we are the "Branches" and our "Fruitfulness" is dependent on Him but He never talks about the roots that really support the whole plant. Perhaps Jesus feels that all that is self-evident.

Yet without roots no plant can survive. Roots draw nutrients from the soil to feed the plant and provide the support that allows the plant to stand straight and tall. So what entity provides food both spiritual and physical, gives strength to help us stand straight and tall and yet is invisible? If you're still contemplating, here's a hint (It's God).

Jesus told the story of the person that sowed seeds, (you've heard it a million times). Only the seeds on the path had no roots, the other three had roots but the one on the "Rocks" spent no time developing a relationship with those roots so when difficulty came, instead of relying on the "Roots", they "Went it Alone" and the relationship died. The one in the "Thorns" didn't fare much better, since they were so focused on the "World", its cares, woes and deceit that even if they did spend effort developing a relationship, it fell low on the priority list and had little impact on their life style and their potential for "Fruit Bearing". The "Good Ground" people are the ones who produce "Fruit" through their relationship with their "Roots". In order that you are not "Mislead", Jesus followed this message with another, where He described a field of "Good Ground" that had been clandestinely over seeded with "Weeds", even in that "Hostile Environment" the crop was harvested and the "Good Ground" people produced as a result of their reliance on "The Roots".

Would you choose to be like that tree planted by the stream as described by David? You will need to pray as did Paul in his letter to the Ephesians 3:16-19, *"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*

In my research for this composition I ran across an interesting piece of knowledge. The Israelites didn't have the books that we have and consequently their "Bible" was hand written on "Scrolls". Each scroll had "Handles" attached to it and these handles were called "Etz Hayim", translated that meant "Tree of Life". I suspect that the Hebrews didn't believe that the handles imparted life but that the contents of the scroll that was attached to it did. Reading and studying the "Whole Bible" will lead you to that "New Life" Jesus eluded to, but more than that bring you closer to "The Roots"

In Job which is arguably the oldest book of the Bible, (Job 14:7-9) *"For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grow old in the earth, and its stump die in the soil, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put out branches like a young plant."* Now the verses

around these verses discuss the aging process and the allotted time a person has, yet these verses say to me though, that no matter how your life transpires if you're firmly "Rooted" in God and His Word, new growth can occur at any time in your life and age shouldn't be an excuse only a definer of capability.

So, as Christians how can we emulate the plants that live all around us? First observe how plants function and learn the lessons they provide. Plants turn towards the light, Jesus said that He was "The Light of The World". Plants naturally seek the light; do we naturally seek the Son? If we are sincerely pursuing Him, it takes serious prayer and intense study of His word.

Plants have "Roots", as I pointed out roots provide the plant with the nourishment they need to live, grow and produce fruit but more than that they provide stability in storms. As Christians, if we are to live, grow and produce fruit we need to be "Rooted" in "The Triune God". Even more so, if we are to be stable in times of "Storm", "Trial", "Failure", "Sorrow" and "Sickness" our confidence in those "Roots" must be tenacious. That isn't to say we should live our lives unmindfully, rather always aware that when ever our lives take a turn, God will be at the corner to help us through it.

Plants produce "Fruit". Never the same fruit but always something that will insure the continuation of the species. If we as Christians are concerned about continuing the presence of our faith, we too need to bear fruit as John The Baptist said to the Pharisees & Sadducees and to Us in Matthew 3:7-9, *"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham." Even the Holy Spirit we claim to reside in us cannot save us if we never listen to it. Paul outlined some of the fruit we might focus on as Christians in Galatians 5:22-24, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."* This fruit will grow a bumper crop of Christianity.

Many plants have life spans longer than the human life span and some live hundreds or thousands of years. If your life were that long, you might make decisions differently regarding your environment and your stewardship of that environment. More than that you wouldn't have to study history books to see how similar actions to the ones you are performing will develop. We never see how things evolve that started over a hundred years ago, even though we have history books and the Bible we pay little attention to either and the future gets cluttered up with our bumbling. One important thing everyone can see is that fewer and fewer people are interested in Jesus and God and where have we been in the promotion of that faith.

The "Good News" is that God has provided "Salvation" for you through your faith in "The Death And Resurrection Of Jesus". What about the people that inhabit the rest of the planet, are you concerned about any of them?