

# LIKE A TREE



In the winter, a tree has lost its leaves, its branches are bare, and the tree almost seems to be sleeping. In fact, the tree is in its winter sleep in order to survive the storms of the cold period.

The sap, the very life of the tree, has gone far underground into the roots of the tree below the freezing line to preserve the tree during the cold, wintry months.



Throughout the winter storms, weak or rotten parts of the tree break off. This allows the tree to keep its sap going to the healthy parts of the tree so that it can stay strong. The old, rotten branches are blown away to make room for new branches.

When spring comes and the ground and weather warm up, the sap begins to flow back up from the roots below.

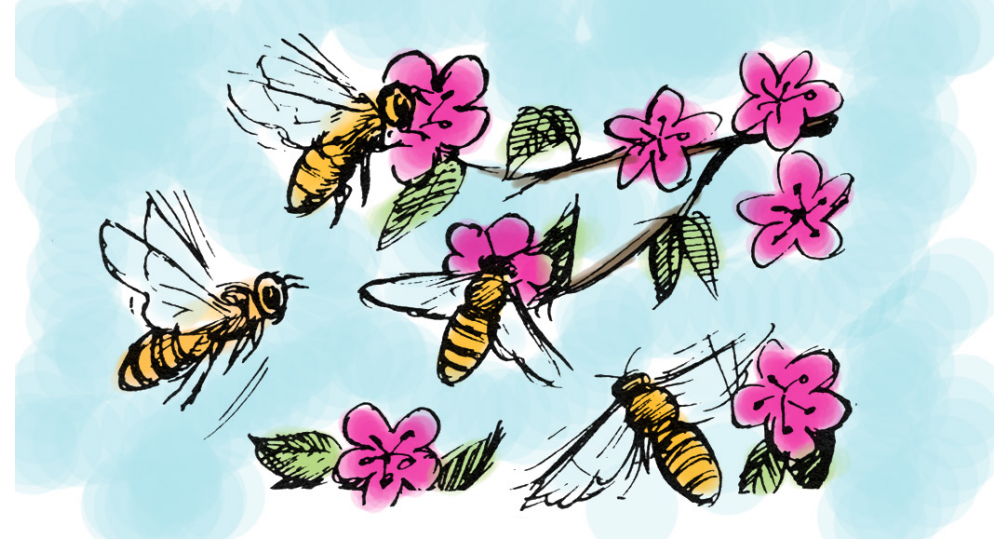






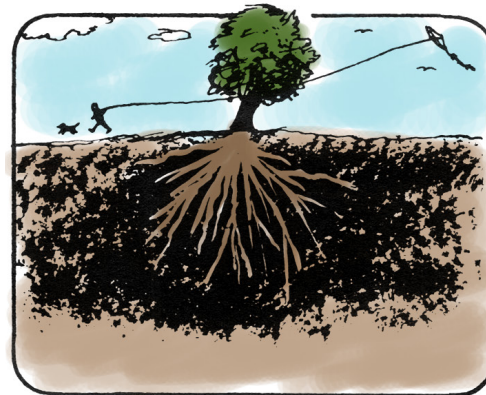
With the warmth, the sap flows more freely throughout the tree, bringing life to the branches once again. Even if there is nothing left but what looks like a dead stump, it can suddenly begin to sprout.

The sap pushes the new leaves and flowers up and out into the light and fresh air where they can produce more leaves, blossoms, fruit, and branches to beautify the tree and to bear more fruit for another harvest.



The bees—particularly with some trees—help to pollinate the blossoms, helping them to produce fruit.

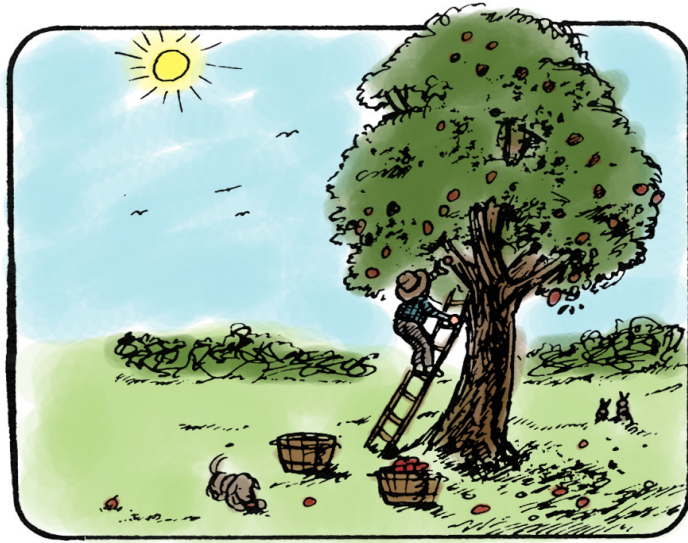
The tree has to stand on good, fertile ground, be watered properly, and nourished from the nutrients in the soil which it drinks and soaks up through its great underground root system.



The underground root system goes out in all directions, sometimes for great distances and some very deep in the ground to seek water and nourishment for the tree.

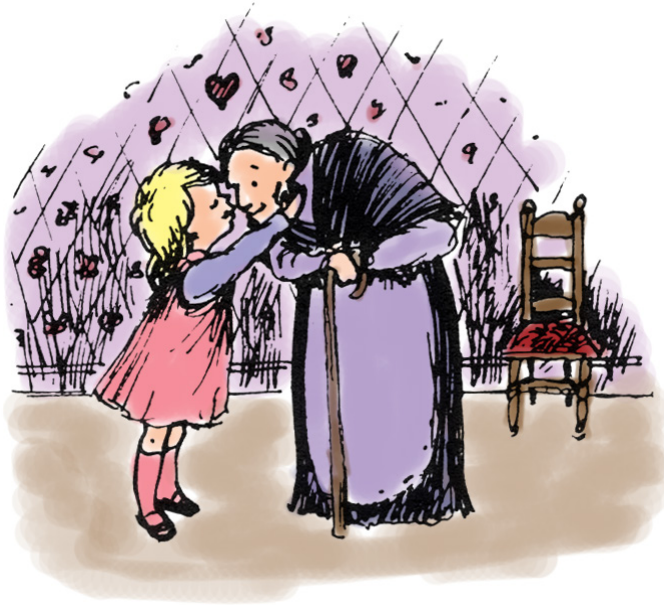


Jesus told His disciples that He was like a tree and those who believe in Him are like the branches.<sup>1</sup> When God's Word and God's Spirit flow through, we are strong and able to bear fruit.



<sup>1</sup> See John 15:1-8.

We bear fruit in our lives by living a life that is an example of God's love and spirit in us. When our actions are kind and generous, we are reflecting God's goodness in us. We are letting the light of God's Word guide us to be more like Jesus.



No matter how small we are, God's spirit can be a part of us and help us to bear fruit in our lives and be a blessing to others. Our spirits grow stronger when we spend time with Jesus, reading God's Word, and thinking on Jesus.



We can be like a tree growing strong and healthy. When we let God's Spirit and love be a part of who we are, our lives will be ones that make God and others happy.

"Happy are those who reject the advice of evil people, who do not follow the example of sinners or join those who have no use for God. Instead, they find joy in obeying the Law of the Lord, and they study it day and night. They are like trees that grow beside a stream, that bear fruit at the right time, and whose leaves do not dry up. They succeed in everything they do" (Psalm 1:1-3 GNT).

