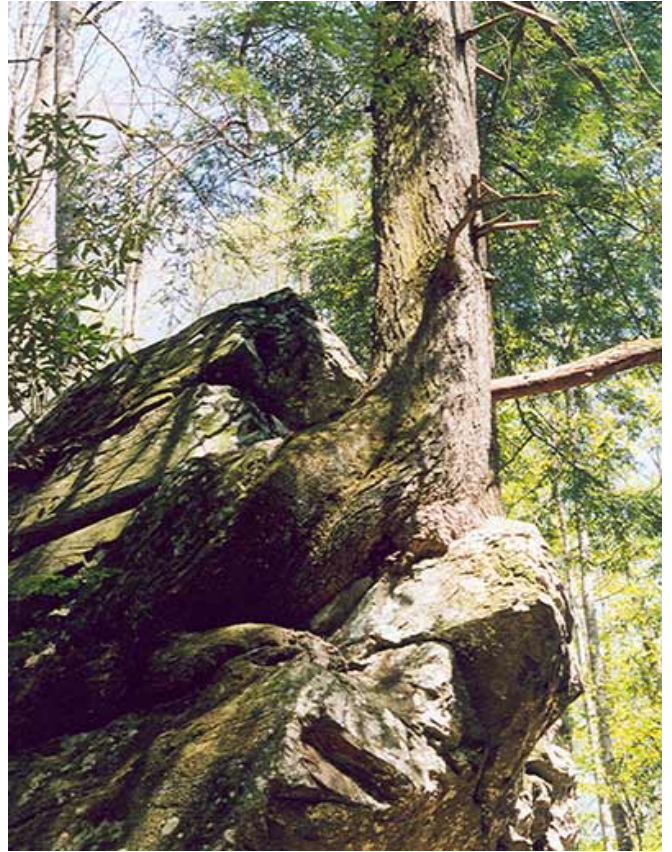


"The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit." Proverbs 12:12 KJV

Any good gardener knows the roots of a plant spread outward as far as the branches. The roots feed the plant nourishment carried by water and the light generates the energy needed for the leaves to convert what is gathered by the roots into food. Roots serve another function as well. They anchor the tree so that it may withstand the forces of nature; wind and cold. If roots find no water in the soil, nourishment cannot be gathered. A tree rooted in the cleft of a solid rock will withstand many a storm. Most likely, it will be apart from weeds and other plants that would impede its upward growth. It will stand alone, but it will stand secure. Believers may stand alone, but they will stand secure in the troubles and trials that plague our earthly sojourn if we stay in God's Word and keep its Truth locked in our hearts. *"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. Faith cometh by...the Word of God. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love;*



may grow up into him in all things." Christ is the Rock that was cleft for "whosoever will come." The water from the rock in the Wilderness of Sin nourished two million plus Israelites in the desert. *"He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers."* Unlike ordinary stone, there is water and nourishment in the believer's Rock. *"Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my Rock and my Salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved."* Men do not build fortresses on the plains. They find solitary isolated lofty solid rock on which to build or they bury themselves under a mountain. Though we may not allude to them as such, all jewels are precious "stones." Gold is found in the solid rock. In these analogies we see all that Christ is to the believer. He is at once security, foundation, nourishment, energy, and wealth. We may exclaim with the Shunamite maiden, *"I am His and He is mine!"* The rock does not need the tree; the tree needs the rock.

Rock rooted tree before the blast,
May sometimes bend, but ever last,
Its roots run deep to hold it fast,
And it stands still when storms are past. ~CGP

It is vital a plant's roots anchor it into something firm and solid. If you've ever pulled weeds, you know that for whatever mighty root system they may employ, if anchored in soft soil, they come out easily. If the rock were not cleft, the root would find no anchor. May our plea be the hymn writer's plea, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me: let me hide myself in Thee!" Is your life securely anchored to the "Rock of Salvation?"

"The LORD liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and exalted be the God of the Rock of my Salvation." 2 Samuel 22:47 KJV