

Tree, wood, carpenter – Jesus embraced the tree - the wooden cross for us –

As I think upon our Lord Jesus bowed under the weight of the cross he was forced to carry, and his nailing to that cross and his hanging there for many hours before being taken down I've been thinking of the relationship Jesus had with the creation he made. "Hands that flung stars into space" and also created trees and people learned to fashion wood into furniture, tools and yokes for oxen. Later at the very end of his life he himself was stretched across a tree that had been fashioned into a cross that most vicious means of torture and execution.

In the [Book of Genesis](#), the Lord God plants many beautiful trees in the Garden of Eden for the delight and sustenance of humans and also the **tree of life** is first described in 2:9 as being "in the midst of the [Garden of Eden](#)" with the [tree of the knowledge of good and evil](#). (They seem to grow closely together). After the [fall of humanity](#), when they are banished from the Garden "in case they take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" [cherubim](#) with swords are placed at the east end of the Garden to guard the way to the tree of life.

In the **Bible** outside of Genesis, the term "**tree of life**" appears in [Revelation 2:2,14,19](#). Here the tree of life is pictured in the Holy City – the New Jerusalem. These are fruitful trees which bloom again and again through every year and the leaves of the tree bring healing to the nations.

Q. Why did Jesus work as a carpenter – say not a shepherd or fisherman? (Outside of the fact that his earthly father was a carpenter and he followed in his footsteps). Speculate – is there any prophetic or spiritual interpretation to this choice?

We can see much symbolism, allegory and metaphor in Scripture. We see that trees are symbolic of people individually or nations, and wood represents humanity as a whole. Ponder these verses for example:-

Blessed is the person who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But their delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law they meditate day and night. They shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever they do shall prosper.

Psalms 1:1-3

Jesus often disputed with the Pharisees. In [Matthew 12:24-37](#) he said the following statement, comparing them to trees:

"To have good fruit you must have a healthy tree: if you have a poor tree you will have bad fruit. A tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears." [Matthew 12:33](#)

Jesus also quoted from and described his work in people's lives:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives ... To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes (wood ash!), the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;

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That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.” Isaiah 61:1, 3.

So these verses are stating that the hearers of these good tidings would become trees of righteousness. Yet it is not only trees that are symbolic of humans, but the wood made from trees represents the *nature* of humans. The Scripture states:-

Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a contentious person to kindle strife. Proverbs 26:21 (See also Jeremiah 5:14 for another example).

So we reflect that, **as a carpenter would take trees to carve wood and create a masterpiece, so Jesus the Carpenter God, would take our fallen and felled lives and as we cooperate carve great beauty.**

Also, reflect on the fact that Jesus carried the wooden cross on his back, is speaking to us of him carrying the burdens and sin of all of humanity. He was nailed to the cross **but also he embraced the wooden cross as he embraced humanity – in love. A love that would not let go of humanity.**

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: Isaiah 53:4a

He became sin – 2 Corinthians 5:21. He embraced as it were the “**tree of the knowledge of good and evil**” and subsumed all the pain, and grief of humanity but also the pain and wrath of God at sin and its consequences.

And the very tree he embraced – became the “tree of life”. From dead wood, and stump new life sprouted **for anyone who will embrace Jesus and the Cross – his death and resurrection.**

Readings: John 12: 23 – 24; John 19: 16- 27 and 28-30; Isaiah 52: 13 – 53:12.