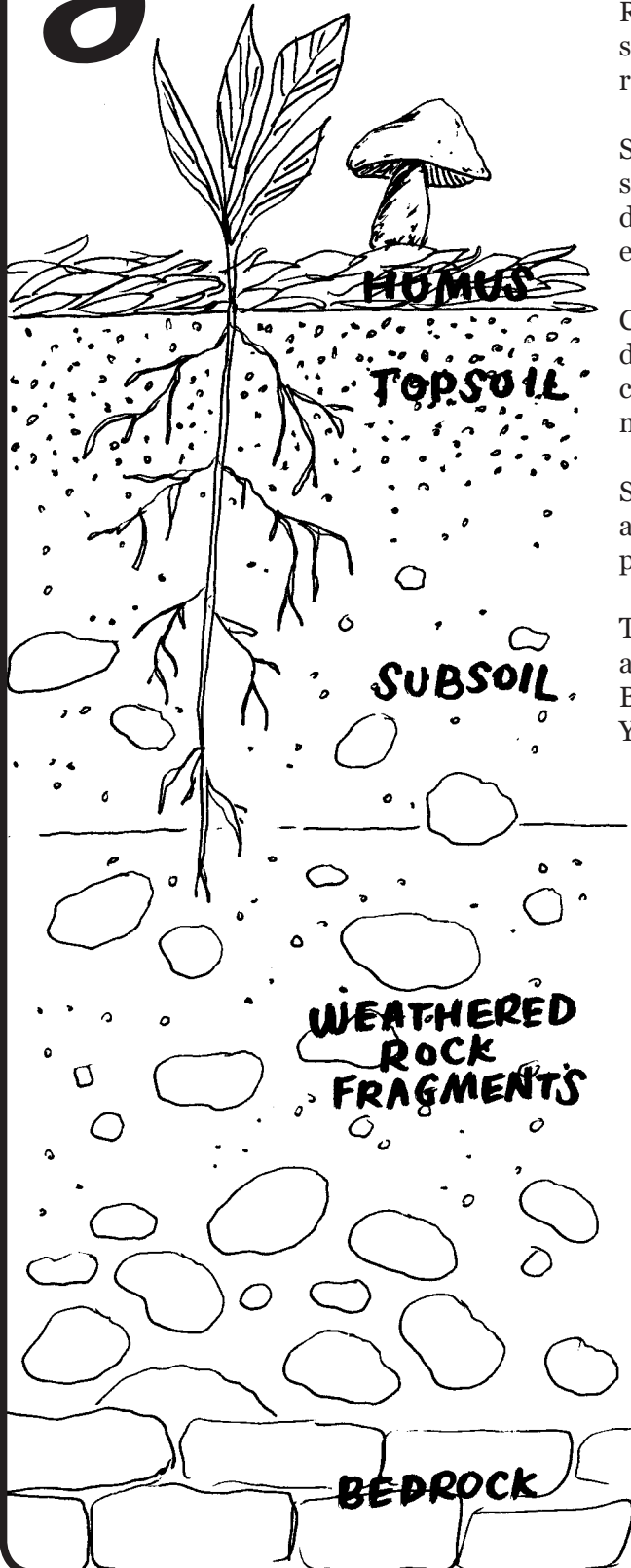


Soil



The dust of the earth, or soil, is not all the same everywhere. Some factors affecting the type of soil in an area are the climate, the parent rock, and the surrounding natural vegetation. Most soils are a mixture of various percentages of sand, silt and clay.

Rocky soil lacks nutrients, can be difficult to till, and since it is often hard-packed, water tends to run off rather than sink in.

Soil that is mostly sand is also a problem. This type of soil cannot store water—water enters quickly, but also drains quickly. It contains very few nutrients as they are easily washed away, and it lacks micro-organisms.

Clay soil sticks to your shovel and boots, it gets muddy and takes awhile to dry out, and then when it does, cracks and becomes hard. But clay also holds onto nutrients and gives roots a good firm grip.

Silty soil has particles that are a little bigger than clay and although it is more fertile, it is also quite dense with poor drainage. It is found along river valleys and deltas.

The first man was made from the dust of the earth, and a consequence of sin was that man returns to the dust. But what can be done with that dust while it is alive? You can grow a garden.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Genesis 2:7 | 17. Psalm 44:23-26 |
| 2. Isaiah 64:8 | 18. Mark 4:20 |
| 3. Psalm 100:3 | 19. Job 34:14-15 |
| 4. Psalm 139:14-16 | 20. Psalm 90:9-12 |
| 5. Psalm 39:4-5 | 21. Psalm 104:29-30 |
| 6. Psalm 103:13-16 | 22. Isaiah 17:10-11 |
| 7. 2 Corinthians 4:7-10 | 23. Isaiah 45:9-12 |
| 8. Acts 17:24-28 | 24. Jeremiah 18:4-6 |
| 9. Isaiah 51:1 | 25. Romans 9:20-21 |
| 10. Psalm 119:73 | 26. 2 Chronicles 7:14-15 |
| 11. Psalm 37:4-5 | 27. Isaiah 66:1-2 |
| 12. Isaiah 46:3-4 | 28. 1 Peter 5:6 |
| 13. Mark 4:14-17 | 29. Isaiah 57:15 |
| 14. Genesis 3:19 | 30. Matthew 23:12 |
| 15. Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 | 31. Isaiah 43:5-7 |
| 16. Ecclesiastes 12:7-8 | |

Compost



The addition of compost improves the quality of any type of soil and the nice thing about it is that it can be made right in your own backyard. All you need is the ingredients and a place to let them sit while they break down.

To make compost you simply make a pile of ingredients such as grass clippings or green garden waste, vegetable and fruit scraps, and leaves which you add to as materials become available. The you let it sit for a whole year or so to decay into lovely crumbly food for your soil.

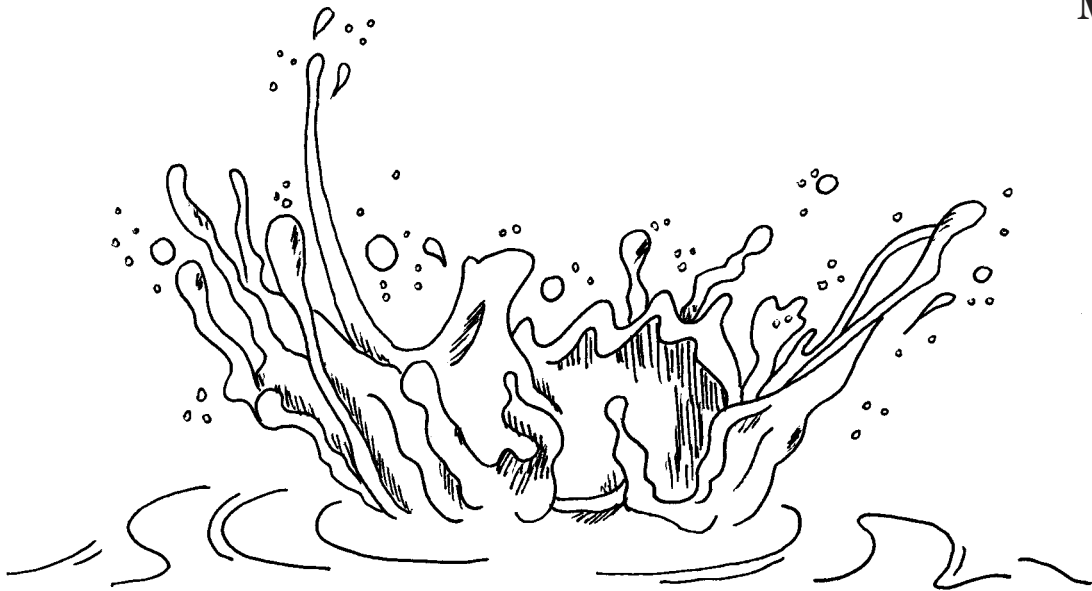
It is important not to add diseased plant materials, weeds that have gone to seed, chemicals, or animals products such as meat, dairy, fat or grease because although they will decay, they may attract animals to your compost pile and introduce disease and weeds to your garden.

Compost is all about change. It takes dead things and turns them into something that gives life.

1. Ezekiel 11:19-20
2. 2 Corinthians 5:17
3. Galatians 6:15
4. Colossians 1:21-22
5. Colossians 3:9-11
6. 2 Timothy 2:11-13
7. Ephesians 4:22-24
8. 1 Peter 1:14-16
9. Romans 13:14
10. Galatians 3:26-28

11. Romans 6:4-6
12. Philippians 2:8-9
13. Isaiah 50:6-7
14. Hebrews 5:8-9
15. Hebrews 12:1-2
16. Hebrews 12:9-10
17. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
18. Ephesians 2:14-15
19. 1 Peter 2:21-24
20. Isaiah 53:4-5

21. Romans 6:7-11
22. 1 Peter 4:1-2
23. Titus 2:12-14
24. Proverbs 15:31-33
25. 1 Corinthians 15:53-54
26. 1 Timothy 1:15-16
27. 1 John 4:9-10
28. Revelation 21:4-5



Water is an absolute necessity for all life. It is an amazing feature of Creation.

Plants need water to make the stems and leaves strong and sturdy through water pressure in its cells. When a plant does not have enough water, it wilts.

Plants need water for photosynthesis. Water travels up to a plant's leaves and combines with sunlight and carbon dioxide to form the sugar a plant needs to grow. Water also evaporates from the leaves in a process called transpiration which cools the plant. A single corn plant may transpire almost 2 L of water in a day.

Water in the spiritual garden is equated with trust and hope in God rather than man. Water is also used as a symbol of the Word which washes us clean, and quenches our thirst.

1. Jeremiah 17:7-8

2. John 4:14

3. Revelation 22:1-2

4. Psalm 36:8-9

5. Psalm 72:6-7

6. Deuteronomy 32:1-2

7. Psalm 65:9-10

8. Hebrews 6:7-8

9. Psalm 63:1-2

10. Psalm 143:5-6

11. Jeremiah 2:11-13

12. Matthew 5:6

13. Isaiah 49:10

14. John 6:35

15. Proverbs 10:11

16. Proverbs 18:4

17. Isaiah 12:3

18. Isaiah 44:3

19. Isaiah 58:11

20. Ezekiel 47:12

21. Zechariah 14:8

22. Isaiah 48:18

23. Proverbs 11:25

24. Jeremiah 31:12

25. Psalm 1:3

26. Psalm 104:11-13

27. Isaiah 55:10-11

28. Ezekiel 34:26

29. Malachi 3:10

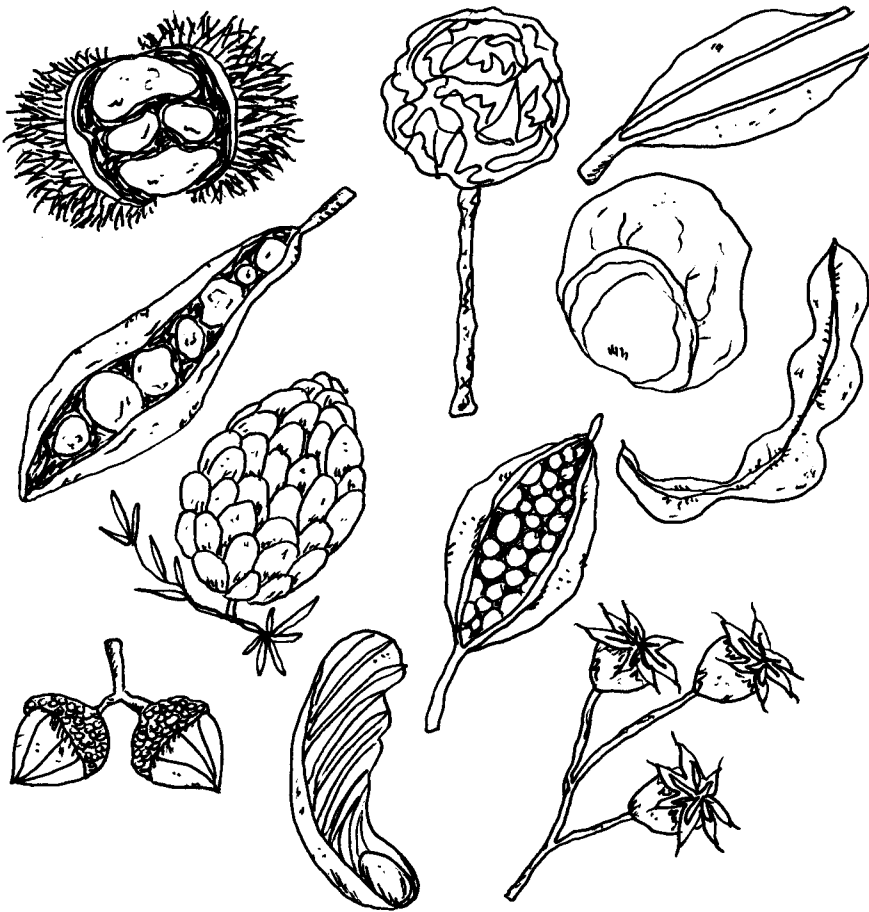
30. Deuteronomy 11:10-12

31. Isaiah 66:12

Water

Seeds

April

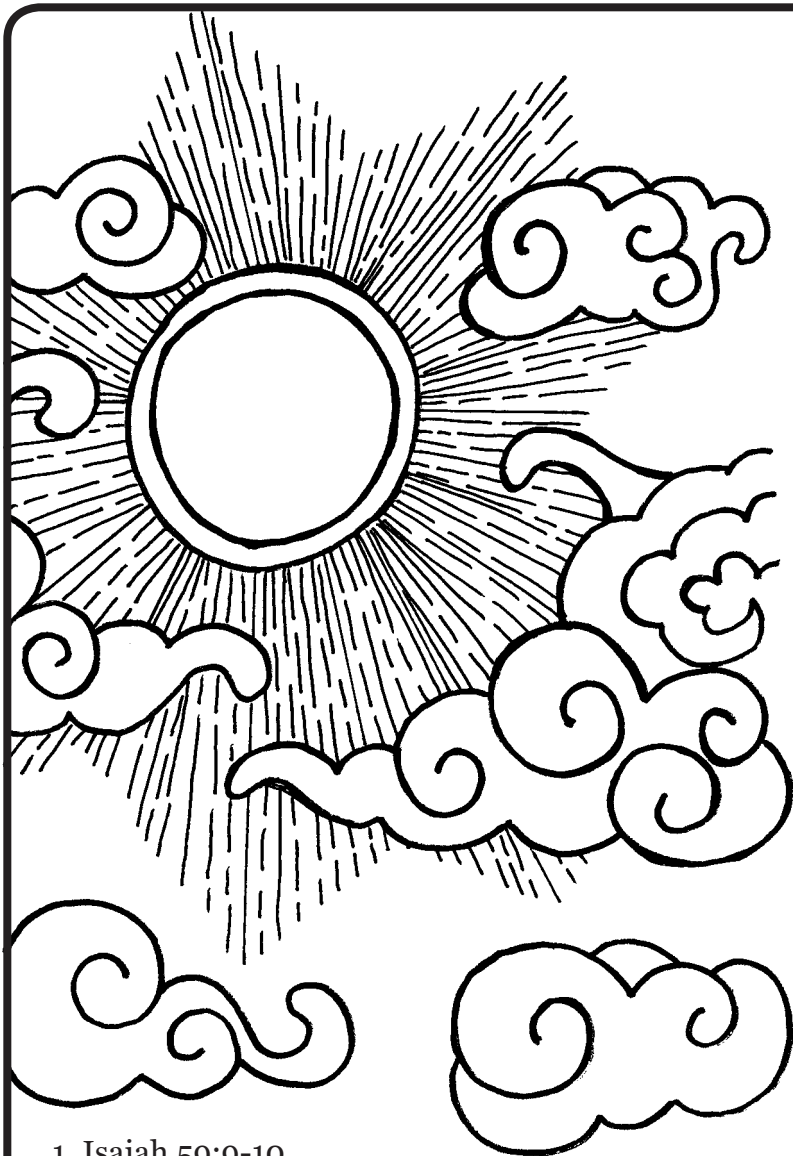


The Bible tells us that the seed is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). “Word” in the New Testament is the Greek word *logos* which is the idea of those thoughts gathered together in the mind and expressed in speech, not just the physical word itself but also the thoughts behind it. God has provided us with access to His Word in the Bible. It is these words that tell us who God is, what His character is, and what He expects from people.

By taking these words in, they are planted in the soil of our heart so that we can become like the God that we worship. This is what God says about His Word: “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

It is an amazing thing to think of ourselves as a place where thoughts grow to become who we are and what we do. We can grow our own thoughts, or we can grow the thoughts of God.

1. Deuteronomy 22:9
2. Job 4:8
3. Psalm 126:5
4. Ecclesiastes 11:4
5. Isaiah 28:24-26
6. Isaiah 32:20
7. Jeremiah 4:5
8. Hosea 2:23
9. Hosea 10:12
10. Matthew 13:3,27
11. Genesis 1:12
12. Leviticus 27:30
13. Numbers 11:7
14. Psalm 126:6
15. Isaiah 44:3
16. Jeremiah 2:21
17. Joel 1:17
18. Haggai 2:19
19. Zechariah 8:12
20. Mark 4:26-27
21. 2 Corinthians 9:10
22. Amos 9:15
23. Matthew 15:13
24. 1 Corinthians 15:36-38
25. John 12:24
26. 2 Corinthians 1:12
27. Psalm 97:10-11
28. Isaiah 65:8-9
29. Ezekiel 36:9
30. James 3:18



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|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Isaiah 59:9-10 | 17. Nehemiah 9:19 |
| 2. 2 Samuel 23:3-4 | 18. Psalm 18:28 |
| 3. Job 29:2-4 | 19. Psalm 19:8 |
| 4. Psalm 4:6 | 20. Psalm 119:130 |
| 5. Psalm 89:15-16 | 21. Proverbs 6:23 |
| 6. Proverbs 4:18-19 | 22. Isaiah 8:20 |
| 7. Isaiah 9:2 | 23. Luke 1:77-79 |
| 8. Isaiah 60:1-3 | 24. Acts 26:18 |
| 9. Micah 7:7-9 | 25. Ephesians 5:13-14 |
| 10. Numbers 6:24-26 | 26. Isaiah 42:16 |
| 11. John 1:1-4 | 27. Malachi 4:2 |
| 12. John 12:35-36 | 28. John 8:12 |
| 13. 2 Corinthians 4:6 | 29. 1 John 1:5-7 |
| 14. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6 | 30. Psalm 112:1-4 |
| 15. 1 Peter 2:9-10 | 31. Revelation 22:5 |
| 16. Exodus 13:21-22 | |

If we want to grow a garden, it needs to be where the rays of the sun can reach it. Plants use the energy from sunlight to convert water and carbon dioxide into oxygen and sugar. The sugar can be converted into chemicals required for plant growth, stored as starch until needed, and broken down to release energy.

If a plant is growing in complete darkness, it will use all of its resources growing as fast as possible to reach the sunlight, becoming yellow and weak and eventually dying. It cannot live if it stays in the darkness.

In our spiritual garden, it is clear that we have to come out of darkness, and expose ourselves to light. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Light is the revelation of God's glory: of His grace and mercy, of His love and goodness. Jesus was the manifestation of God. He said about himself: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Light, then, is also the word that provides knowledge of what is right and good and directs our path. Jesus is the Word and the Light for us as an example of righteousness.

Light

Germination

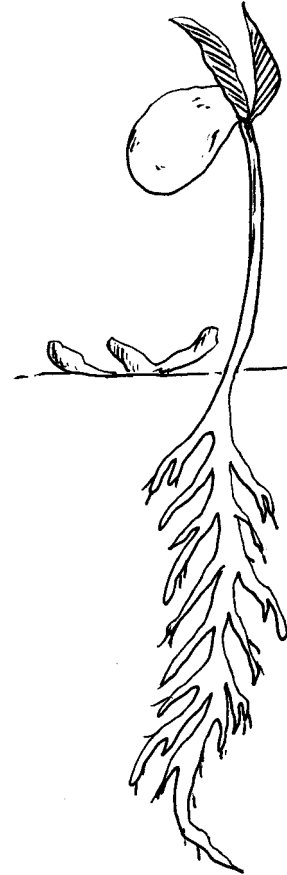
Generally, seeds need three things to germinate: water, warmth and soil to grow in. Water helps to soften the seed coat so the sprout can emerge, activate the food reserve which fuels the initial growth, and wash away any acid that helps to keep a seed dormant.

Some seeds need very particular conditions to germinate. For example, some need fire to melt the resin that seals the seed, some need drought so their seed case dries and cracks, some need a season of cold so that the freeze and thaw cycle can soften the seed case, and some need to pass through the digestion process.

One thing that all seeds do need to germinate is some degree of warmth. What came to me as I thought about how warmth is reflected in a spiritual garden was enthusiasm, desire, exertion, passion, love.

This does seem to be somewhat supported by Scripture. There has to be love for God before His character can grow in us. "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deuteronomy 6:5). If that love grows cold, there is not much chance it will have a good effect on us. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Matthew 24:12,13).

So, to add warmth to the soil in your heart, and allow for the germination of the seeds of the word, you need to add a little enthusiasm like David had: "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psalm 84:2).



1. Psalm 119:1-3
2. Psalm 119:4-6
3. Psalm 119:7-8
4. Psalm 119:9-11
5. Psalm 119:12-14
6. Psalm 119:15-16
7. Psalm 119:17-19
8. Psalm 119:20-22
9. Psalm 119:23-24
10. Psalm 119:25-27

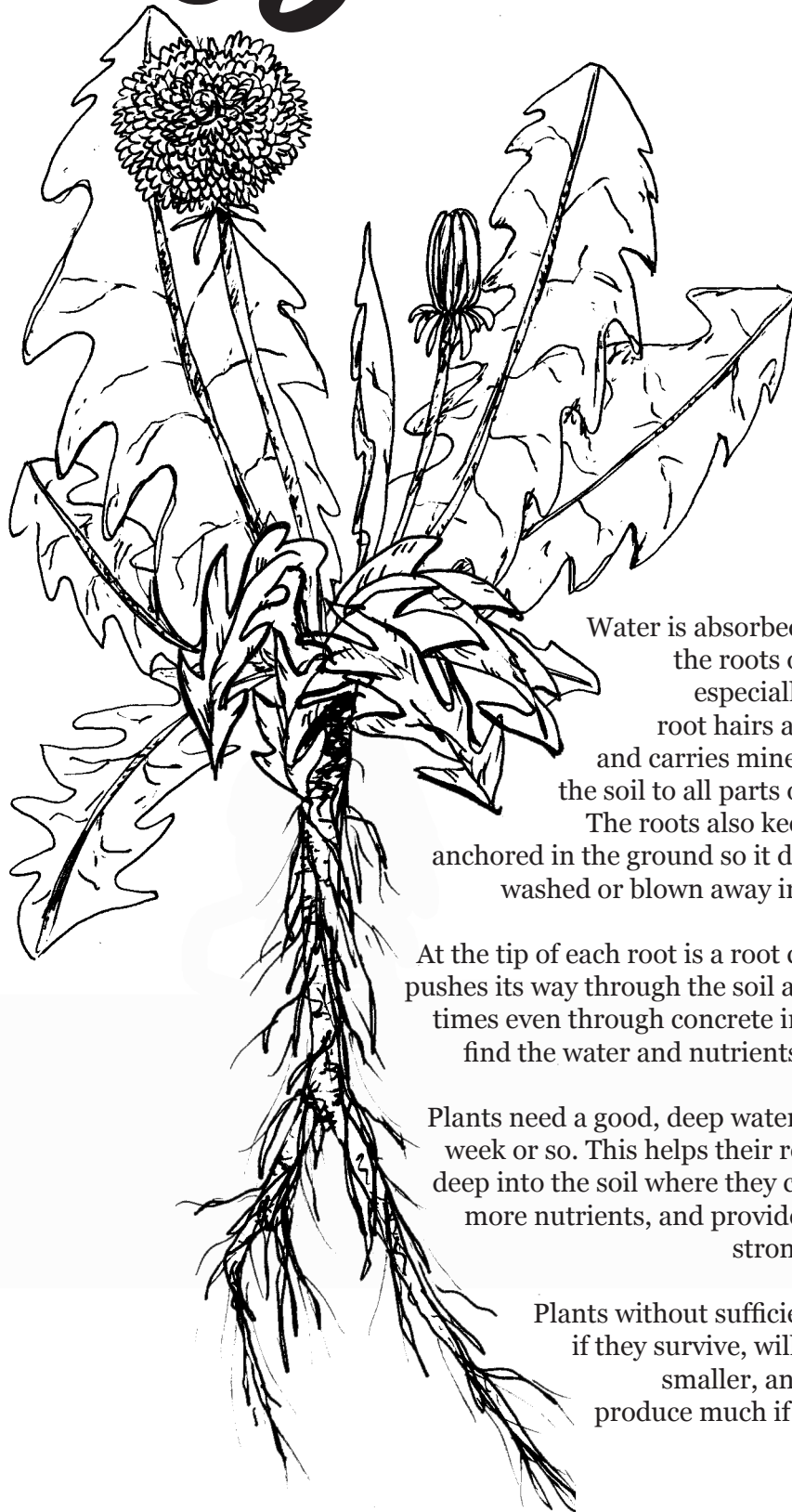
11. Psalm 119:28-30
12. Psalm 119:31-32
13. Psalm 119:33-35
14. Psalm 119:36-38
15. Psalm 119:39-40
16. Psalm 119:41-43
17. Psalm 119:44-46
18. Psalm 119:47-48
19. Psalm 119:49-51
20. Psalm 119:52-54

21. Psalm 119:55-56
22. Psalm 119:57-59
23. Psalm 119:60-62
24. Psalm 119:63-64
25. Psalm 119:65-67
26. Psalm 119:68-70
27. Psalm 119:71-72
28. Psalm 119:73-75
29. Psalm 119:76-78
30. Psalm 119:79-80

Roots

July

1. Psalm 119:81-83
2. Psalm 119:84-86
3. Psalm 119:87-88
4. Psalm 119:89-91
5. Psalm 119:92-94
6. Psalm 119:95-96
7. Psalm 119:97-99
8. Psalm 119:100-102
9. Psalm 119:103-104
10. Psalm 119:105-107
11. Psalm 119:108-110
12. Psalm 119:111-112
13. Psalm 119:113-115
14. Psalm 119:116-118
15. Psalm 119:119-120
16. Psalm 119:121-123
17. Psalm 119:124-126
18. Psalm 119:127-128
19. Psalm 119:129-131
20. Psalm 119:132-134
21. Psalm 119:135-136
22. Psalm 119:137-139
23. Psalm 119:140-142
24. Psalm 119:143-144
25. Psalm 119:145-148
26. Psalm 119:149-152
27. Psalm 119:153-156
28. Psalm 119:157-160
29. Psalm 119:161-164
30. Psalm 119:165-168
31. Psalm 119:169-176



Water is absorbed through the roots of a plant, especially the fine root hairs at the tips, and carries minerals from the soil to all parts of a plant.

The roots also keep a plant anchored in the ground so it doesn't get washed or blown away in a storm.

At the tip of each root is a root cap which pushes its way through the soil and sometimes even through concrete in order to find the water and nutrients it needs.

Plants need a good, deep watering every week or so. This helps their roots grow deep into the soil where they can access more nutrients, and provides a good, strong anchor.

Plants without sufficient water, if they survive, will be much smaller, and will not produce much if any fruit.

Weeds

August

It really is amazing how quickly weeds can take over a garden if it is not cared for. Weeds can often germinate more quickly, and grow to the point of producing seeds much more rapidly than the seeds we have carefully planted. The best way to deal with weeds is to pull them out by the roots while they are still small.

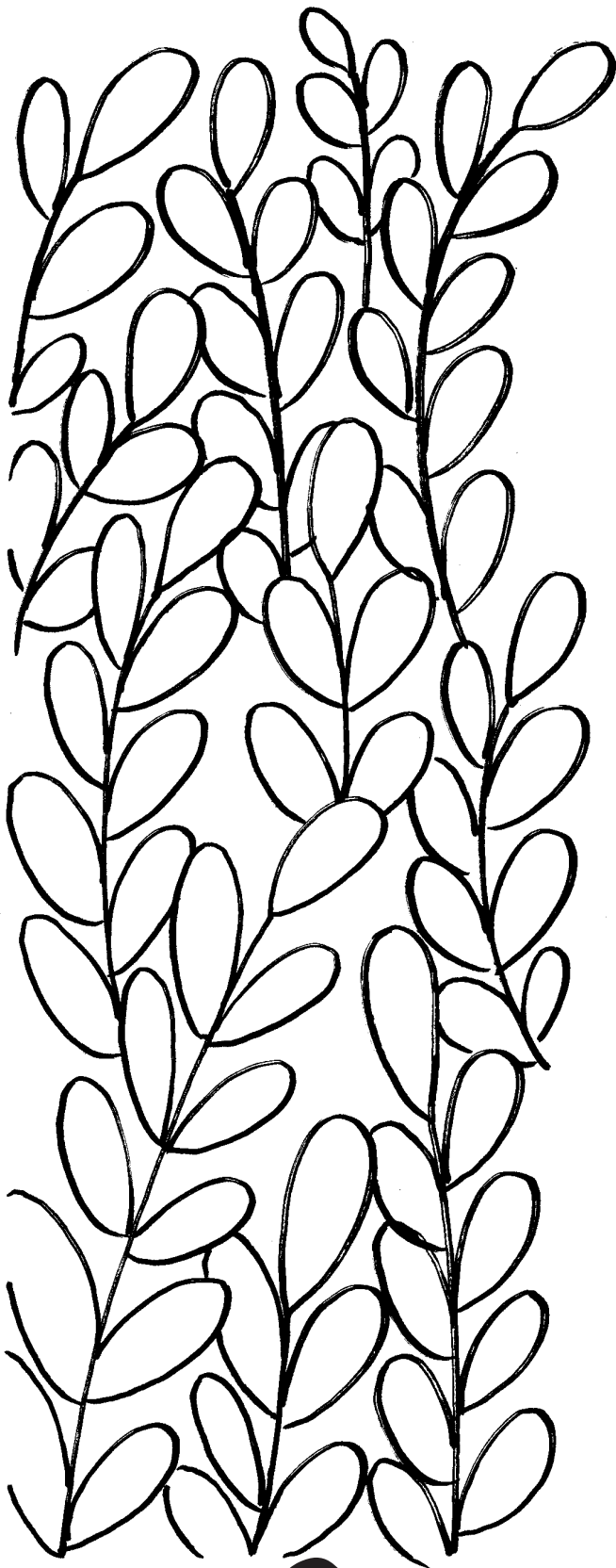
This is a truth we have to learn about ourselves. Our soil will always be growing something. No matter how often or well we weed, weeds will keep popping up. And this is so for everyone.

The gardens of our hearts must be weeded regularly. This requires time to examine ourselves and recognize what weeds we need to deal with. However a very good way to deal with weeds is to add layers of mulch around your plants using grass clippings or weed-free hay or straw.

Perhaps this is a bit like the covering for sin that God offers each of us through His Son and finding a balance between the focus of picking out all the weeds, and thankfulness for the Gospel recognizing that we will not ever be truly weed-free in this existence.



1. Ephesians 6:14-16
2. 1 John 4:4-5
3. Hebrews 11:25-26
4. 1 Peter 2:11-12
5. 1 Timothy 6:10-11
6. Psalms 73:21-24
7. Hebrews 4:15-16
8. Romans 6:12-14
9. Isaiah 30:1
10. Proverbs 10:19-21
11. Psalm 32:5
12. Psalm 39:1
13. Psalm 4:4-5
14. Romans 6:6-8
15. Romans 7:19-21
16. 1 Corinthians 15:56-58
17. Revelation 2:7
18. Revelation 2:11
19. Revelation 2:17
20. Revelation 2:26-27
21. Revelation 3:5
22. Revelation 3:12
23. Revelation 3:21
24. Jeremiah 17:9-10
25. Ephesians 2:1-3
26. 1 John 2:15-17
27. Exodus 20:20
28. Galatians 5:16-18
29. Galatians 5:19-21
30. Ephesians 4:1-3
31. 1 John 1:9



The hardest thing about a garden is the waiting. One has to wait for the right time to plant, for the seeds to sprout, for the rain to fall, for them to grow, for them to flower, and finally for them to produce fruit, and if anything fatal happens during this process, then one has to start again.

The other hard thing about gardening is that although we can do our best to provide the best environment for our plants to thrive, we cannot make them grow—that is a process that is completely out of our hands.

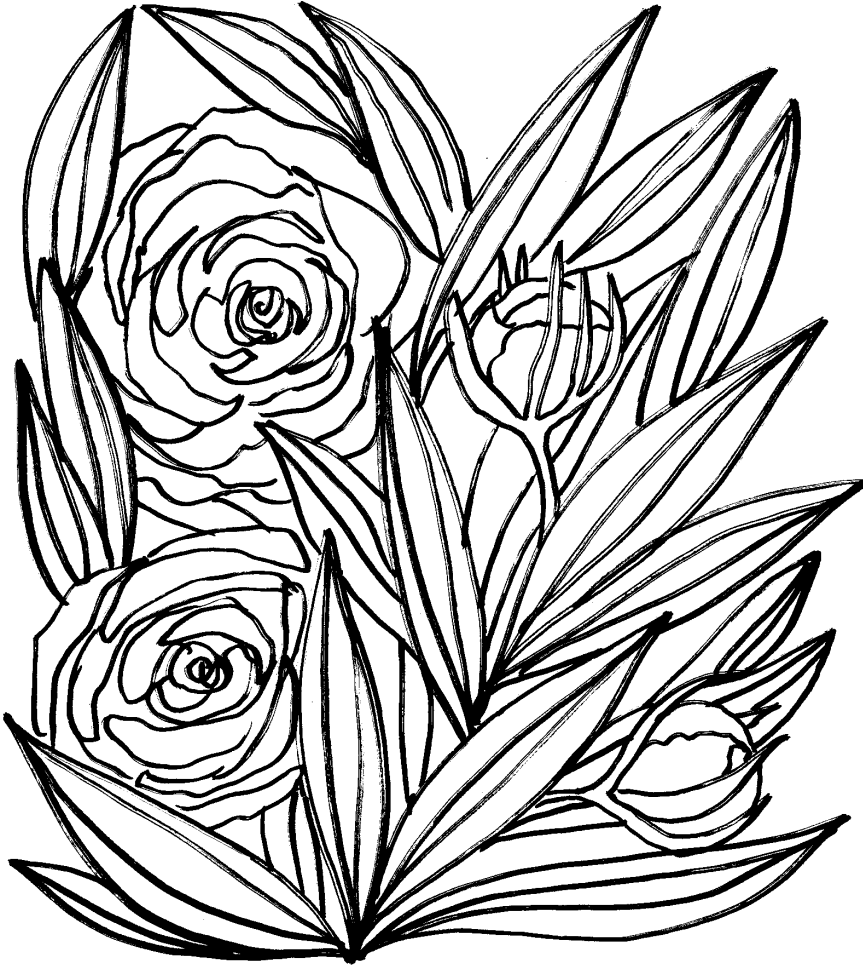
Farmers have tried to accelerate growth by using chemical fertilizers, genetically modifying seeds, and using herbicides to lessen the competition for resources. What we have learned through experience, however, is that this damages soil and restricts diversity. Focusing instead on managing the soil well, practicing good crop rotation, and even just going back to smaller plots is much more environmentally friendly and successful.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. John 15:1 | 16. Psalm 92:12-14 |
| 2. John 15:2 | 17. 1 Peter 2:1-3 |
| 3. John 15:3-4 | 18. Psalm 37:3-5 |
| 4. John 15:5 | 19. Psalm 37:6-7 |
| 5. John 15:6 | 20. Isaiah 26:8-9 |
| 6. John 15:7 | 21. Psalm 130:5-6 |
| 7. John 15:8 | 22. Galatians 5:5-6 |
| 8. John 15:9 | 23. Luke 8:15 |
| 9. John 15:10 | 24. James 5:7-8 |
| 10. John 15:11 | 25. Hebrews 10:35-36 |
| 11. John 15:12-13 | 26. Romans 5:3-5 |
| 12. John 15:14 | 27. Romans 15:4 |
| 13. John 15:15 | 28. Colossians 2:6-7 |
| 14. John 15:16 | 29. Jeremiah 17:7-8 |
| 15. John 15:17-18 | 30. Lamentations 3:24-26 |

Growth

Flowers

October



In order to produce the fruit, there must first be flowers. Flowers are usually beautiful and fragrant and produce sweet nectar so that pollinating insects are attracted to them, although some only require the wind.

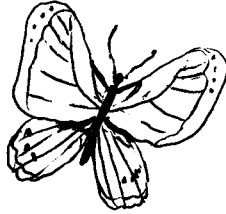
A lot of a plants energy goes into making flowers, but most flowers do not last long. They fade quickly once their purpose is fulfilled.

I think flowers are a bit like the sacrifices we make to serve others and do the will of God – our will given up to produce the character of God within us and make us holy. When we do God’s will, it is the glory of man, and it creates “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God” (Philippians 4:18).

1. Psalm 103:13-16
2. Job 14:1-2
3. Isaiah 40:6-8
4. 1 Peter 1:24-25
5. James 1:9-11
6. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14
7. 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20
8. 1 Peter 1:6-7
9. Psalm 89:15-17
10. Psalm 30:11-12
11. Psalm 3:2-3
12. Hosea 4:6-7
13. Isaiah 62:2-3
14. Isaiah 43:6-7
15. Luke 12:27-28
16. John 8:54-56
17. John 5:43-44
18. John 12:42-43
19. 2 Peter 1:3-4
20. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18
21. 1 Peter 5:4-5
22. 1 Peter 5:10-11
23. 1 Corinthians 2:6-8
24. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44
25. Psalm 19:9-11
26. Exodus 28:2-3
27. Proverbs 20:28-29
28. Psalm 8:4-5
29. 2 Peter 1:5-8
30. Romans 9:22-24
31. Micah 6:8

Pollinate

November



Most flowering plants need to be pollinated before they will produce seeds. Pollination occurs when pollen is transferred from the stamens to the stigma of flowers. Some flowers can self-pollinate, others require cross-pollination from another plant of the same species.

Although there are plants that can do it on their own, plants that are cross-pollinated are stronger, more diverse, and produce better seed quality. Pollination can occur with the help of wind or water, but mostly it happens with the help of animals.

I think this is a reminder of how important it is to do things within a community. We need each other.

1. Leviticus 25:17-19
2. Psalm 133:1-3
3. Exodus 17:11-12
4. Romans 12:4-5
5. Romans 12:10-13
6. Acts 2:44-45
7. 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13
8. Galatians 5:13-14
9. 2 Corinthians 8:13-15
10. Romans 15:5-7
11. John 13:14-15
12. John 13:34-35
13. Romans 14:13
14. Hebrews 10:24-25
15. Galatians 6:1-2
16. James 5:16
17. 1 Peter 4:8-10
18. 1 Corinthians 12:26-27
19. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10
20. 1 John 1:6-7
21. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11
22. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
23. 1 Peter 1:22-23
24. Hebrews 13:16-17
25. 1 John 4:11-12
26. Colossians 3:12-13
27. Ephesians 4:2-3
28. Ephesians 4:31-32
29. Colossians 3:16-17
30. Hebrews 3:12-14

As I am writing this, my garden plants are producing fruit, but not all of them. A watermelon plant in my greenhouse that I didn't water is very small and although it has a few flowers, they are too late and it will not have a chance to produce fruit. A tomato plant that I did not weed is hard to find and has only a few small tomatoes on it. A couple plants withered and died from disease. Some were eaten by a porcupine that got into my garden. However, many have produced more than we could eat ourselves and so we have been able to share.

The harvest is a time of celebration. It was never meant to be an individual celebration, but one that celebrated the abundant return that God provides from the earth—a blessing for all.

In the same way, the fruit of the word or spirit is not only an individual blessing. It is also a realization of the Divine purpose—to bear fruit, to increase, and to fill the earth with the glory of God.

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|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Proverbs 11:30 | 11. Deuteronomy 24:19-21 | 21. Ephesians 5:8-10 |
| 2. Galatians 6:7-9 | 12. Matthew 13:30 | 22. Galatians 5:22-24 |
| 3. James 3:17-18 | 13. Proverbs 3:9-10 | 23. 2 Peter 3:13-14 |
| 4. 2 Corinthians 9:9-11 | 14. 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 | 24. Isaiah 32:16-17 |
| 5. Isaiah 58:6-8 | 15. 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 | 25. Proverbs 21:21 |
| 6. Hebrews 13:15-16 | 16. Leviticus 19:9-10 | 26. Proverbs 11:18-19 |
| 7. Philippians 1:9-11 | 17. Proverbs 20:4 | 27. Philippians 3:9-11 |
| 8. Romans 6:21-22 | 18. 1 John 3:17 | 28. Psalm 85:9-11 |
| 9. Isaiah 61:10-11 | 19. Hosea 10:12-13 | 29. Isaiah 51:7-8 |
| 10. Psalm 126:5-6 | 20. Hebrews 12:10-11 | 30. Numbers 14:21 |
| | | 31. Revelation 19:7-8 |

