

# How is Torah Like a Tree?

”עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותומכיה מאושר.”

*“It [the Torah] is a Tree of Life for all those who grasp it, and those who support it are fortunate. (Mishlei 3:18)”*



**Roots.** They may be hidden, but the roots of a tree go deep. They are firmly implanted and anchor the tree to the ground, providing a strong foundation from which it can grow. The roots take nutrients out of the ground to foster the tree’s development. **The Torah is the foundation upon which the Jewish people govern their lives.** It attaches us to our ancestral roots and nourishes our growth as individuals and as a people.

**Trunk.** The trunk is the main body of the tree and acts as a pipeline of sustenance from the roots below up to the green treetop. Without this means of nourishment, the tree would collapse. **The trunk of Torah is its Written and Oral facets which bridge the gap between ancient Jewish heritage and a contemporary world.** These words strengthen us and allow us to receive the traditions of old, as well as authentically develop fresh insights anew.

**Branches.** The branches of a tree extend upwards into the sky. They reach towards the source of the tree’s energy, the shining sun. **Torah is the means through which we can attach ourselves to God,** our Source and the Source of all. Just as a tree has multiple branches, each slanted at a slightly different angle, but all pointed up to the heavens, there are a broad range of Torah pathways through which we can each uniquely connect to God.

**Fruit.** Trees provide us with fruit, something we can pluck off and take with us, a concrete reward after years of gradual growth. The fruit not only sustains us with vitamins and minerals, but is pleasing to the taste buds, as well. **The sweetness of a tree’s fruits, however, pales in comparison to that of the fruits of our Torah.** With each new passage explored, our souls are nourished a little more. The deep focus and great efforts required in leading a Torah life bring along an unparalleled gratification and sweet fulfillment. The Torah does not cease to provide reward for one who grabs hold of it.