

Renewal

By Joel M. Schreiber

*The ancient tree stood in the yard,
Its leaves a withered gray,
Its arms bare of flowers that had
Been there—but yesterday.*

*The winds, the storms, the wintry nights,
All pained its every hour—
It seemed to tremble in each storm,
To sigh in every shower.*

*And yet—though wracked with hurt and cold,
It seemed to knowing eyes,
That though its roots were deep in earth,
Its branches sought the skies.*

*It was a tragic sight to see—
Those limbs encased in snow,
Still reaching high toward distant sky,
Its trunk so bent—so low!*

*Through darkened storms, this prayer-like tree
Remained in prayerful pose,
As if it heard a hopeful word
In every wind that rose.*

*And there this tree unheeded stood,
Receiving not a glance,
Until one day in warm sunlight
Of spring—quite by chance—*

*I saw a sight that stirred my soul.
A scene of priceless worth,
The ancient tree had found its life
Renewed upon this earth.*

*Its arms were filled with fragrant leaves
That filled its new grown bowers,
And lingering in each fingertip,
Were myriads of flowers.*

*And thus each year, the ancient tree
Gives birth to life anew,
Although at times its hours on earth
Seemed destined to be few.*

*And many men have gathered here
To reap her wondrous flowers,
That yearly come to show how life
Endures the tragic hours.*

Joel M. Schreiber is the chairman of the Orthodox Union Publications Commission. He wrote "Renewal" over 35 years ago when his mother was about to undergo open-heart surgery.

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