

THE LESSON FROM THE GRANDFATHER OAK

by Judy Gast

The day that they took down the grandfather oak in the tree row up by the barn was a sad day. I knew that it had to be taken down, but I watered my eyeballs several times. Susie, my neighbor up behind the barn, called to explain what was going on. I told her that when I saw a white-haired man there on the hill, I thought that perhaps the prospect of the barn coming down made Bruce's hair turn white. NOT! Bruce was not home that day. Then David Maxwell called to explain the event. The men gathered round were tree removal experts and they talked like it as they moved around and looked the situation over. I came in for my camera and was able to take the last frame in the camera of the mighty oak with one "tree feller" high in the branches. He had on a yellow jacket and a rope around him with the other end tied around a branch. I took that last picture and headed for another roll of film to load and aim and snap. The story was not over. YET!!

As the men conferred and appraised where the next cut should be made, I released a few tears to go down my face and watched for opportunities to catch the whole story. Limb by limb the man cut and a limb snapped and fell. Seldom a pause before the "tree feller" was repositioned and another limb came down like a sculptor at work grooming the tree for the final cut down near the ground to take the trunk down in a safe area and according to the plan. There must be a name or term for those final cuts that I am not familiar with, but that tree came down exactly where I thought they wanted it to land. What was then exposed within that trunk was so revelatory!!!! It has caused me to really think. The whole inside was rotted and like a coarse powder!! And Space. I thought how that is just like our heavenly Father. He has a plan and He knows the decay and rot in our heart and just when to expose that heart condition. Then we should repent and surrender our heart and life to Him who gave His to pay for our sins that He would cast behind Him and never remember. I guess He even cast them into the deepest seas. And no one can pluck us from His hand. That is serious thinking. We belong to Him eternally.

It is amazing that that tree was still standing and that it had not come down on one of our homes or one of us. It came down according to the Father's plan. I thank Him for His protection and plans. He is sovereign. I hope that I never forget that. It was His mercy that kept it standing through storms and rains. He worked a sad day for good.