

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger

Proverbs 15:1 – A proverbial story

By Ted Hildebrandt using Chatgpt

Long ago, in a village called Willowbrook, there was a magical forest where the animals could speak, and a great, ancient tree named Elder Oak stood tall in the center. Elder Oak was wise and kind, and many creatures came to him for advice.

One bright morning, a little rabbit named Clover rushed to Elder Oak, her ears drooping and her nose twitching in worry.

“Elder Oak!” Clover cried. “I was hopping through the meadow when Teddy the Bear shouted at me for stepping on his blueberries! I didn’t mean to, but he was so angry, and I was scared!”

Elder Oak’s deep voice rumbled like a gentle wind. “Clover, do you know the proverb: *A soft answer turns away wrath?*”

Clover twitched her whiskers. “What does that mean?”

“It means that when someone is angry, answering them gently and kindly can calm their wrath and fury and turn anger into kindness.”

Clover’s eyes widened. “Really? But Teddy is so big and loud!”

Elder Oak chuckled softly, his leaves rustling. “Let me tell you a story, little one.”

Many seasons ago, Elder Oak explained, a fierce storm tore through the forest. Trees bent and branches snapped. In the middle of the storm, a proud young tree named Pine challenged the wind.

“Is that all you’ve got?” Pine shouted. “I’m not afraid of you!”

The wind, hearing Pine’s defiance, blew even harder, trying to knock him down until his trunk finally snapped. But nearby, a slender Willow tree simply swayed and whispered, “Blow as you will, mighty wind. I will bend to your powerful blasts.”

The wind, meaning no ill to the Willow tree, swept on its way. The Pine tree stood broken and cracked, but Willow remained peaceful and unharmed.

“The Willow’s gentle words and calm spirit turned away the wrath of the wind,” said Elder Oak.

Clover thought hard. “So... if I go back to Teddy and speak kindly, even though he was mean, maybe he won’t be angry anymore?”

“That’s right, little Clover,” said Elder Oak.

Gathering her courage, Clover hopped back to Teddy’s cave. The big bear was still grumbling, his face all scrunched up.

“I’m sorry, Tedy,” Clover said softly, her voice gentle as a breeze. “I didn’t mean to step on your blueberries. I know you worked hard to gather them.”

Teddy blinked, surprised. No one had ever answered him kindly when he was angry. His growl faded to a sigh.

“Well... I suppose accidents happen,” Teddy muttered. “I... I’m sorry I yelled. Would you like to pick some more blueberries with me?”

Clover’s face brightened. “I’d love to!”

And so, the little rabbit and the big bear spent the afternoon gathering berries and laughing together.

From that day on, Clover remembered Elder Oak’s wisdom. And whenever someone grew angry, she answered softly, like the Willow tree in the storm, turning away wrath and bringing peace.

And in the heart of Willowbrook, Elder Oak smiled, his leaves whispering the ancient proverb from the Bible: **“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1).”**