

The BIBLICAL GARDEN

at
First United Methodist Church
Crockett, Texas

Provided by:
The Crockett Garden Club



BIBLICAL GARDEN

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BIBLICAL GARDEN INTRODUCTION

Plants mentioned in the Bible are the living link between us and the people of those distant times. The land which God promised to Abraham and his descendants was very fertile, and had a diverse climate, so grew about 3,500 species of plants that have been identified by modern botanists. About 139 of these plants are mentioned in the Bible, but sometimes the references are vague or have been confused in the translations that have taken place over the centuries. For example, when a grain is called “corn” in the King James translation, it is a generic name for any grain, not just one specific grain. Today, we think of corn as a specific new world plant.

You will notice that there are not 139 separate plants listed here. This is because there were often many names for the same plant; for example, there is no distinction made in the Bible between briars, thistles, thorns, brambles, and blackberries. So, one name has been entered and the variations on that name have been mentioned in this write-up. Also, undoubtedly, there were more than 139 plants that grew in the area, but not all of them were mentioned in the scriptures (for instance Rosemary plant) and we have limited our plants to the plants specifically mentioned.

Sometimes a plant in the Bible is referred to only as “tree” or “bush”. Ancient people were not interested in describing the plants that grew all around them. The biblical “Lily” and “Rose” in The Song of Solomon may be referring to a scarlet tulip or anemone. Much work has been done by botanists trying to narrow down the actual plant species being written about. The task for the Garden Club then was to find a specimen of plant species that is adapted to our soil and climate here in Houston County, Texas yet be as close to the plant from the Middle East as possible.

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- 1. APPLE** *Malus communis* Although not specifically named as producing the forbidden fruit of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil mentioned in Genesis, tradition and folklore have pictured the apple as the fruit that tempted Eve, most likely because *malus* is Latin for evil and for apple—perhaps a play on words by the people who translated the Bible into Latin. Many authorities believe the apple mentioned in Scripture is actually the apricot which was a fruit grown in the Ancient Middle East. Others think the fig is a candidate for that mysterious fruit, because it was among the first fruits cultivated by ancient people, and the Bible mentions the fig leaf as the first covering for Adam and Eve.
- 2. APRICOT** *Prunus Armeniaca* Known for beautiful and fragrant blossoms, the apple (apricot) is mentioned in Proverbs 25:11 (“apples of gold in a silver basket” may be talking about the golden apricot nested in its silvery leaves), Song of Solomon 2:3,7:8, Deut. 32:10, Psalms 17:8, etc. This fruit was used figuratively to show how precious we are to God and how sensitive He is to our needs. Apricots were common to the area during Biblical times- apples were not.
- 3. CYPRESS** *Cupressus sempervirens* A tall evergreen tree of hard and durable wood, it was suitable for building and may be the same tree as GOPHERWOOD of Genesis 6:14 which was used to build the arc. It is also named in Isaiah 44:14. Another name used is CAMEL-THORN.

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4. **WILLOW** *Salix acynophyllia* From Isaiah 44:4 we are told that “They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.” Isaiah compares the willows by the water with godly people who make quick progress in attaining spiritual wisdom. Willow branches were used by the Jews in some of their religious rites and could be boiled and taken for a natural aspirin substitute. In Job 40:22 it is written that when the people were taken captive and taunted to sing the songs of Zion they said, “By the rivers of Babylon we sat down, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hung our harps upon the willows”. The legend goes that the harps weighted down the branches so that they drooped forever after.

5. **OLIVE** *Olea europaea* Again, a tree so important that there



are many references to it in the Bible.

From Genesis 8:11 “And the dove came to him in the evening; and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off, so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.” From Exodus 27: 20 “And thou shalt command the children of Israel,

that they bring thee pure olive oil beaten for the lamp”. Jesus spent the night before his crucifixion in the garden of Gethsemane, which translated means “garden with the olive press”. (Matthew 26:36) The olive tree grows slowly and continues to bear fruit after reaching a great age. Before it dies, new branches sprout from its roots. The fruit is harvested by beating or shaking the boughs of the tree. The

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dark, ripe fruit is enjoyed fresh, or the green fruit is pickled and used as a relish. The best oil was obtained from the green olive fruit and used as fuel for lamps, as anointing oil, or for dressing wounds. Olives are also named in Judges 9:9.

6. **FIG** *Ficus carica* The fig is the first of the fruits to be named in the Bible. Leaves were used as a covering for Adam and Eve according to Genesis 3:7, “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons”. Fig leaves are still sewn together in the East and used by as wrappings for fresh fruit sent to the markets. To the Egyptians, the fig tree represented the Tree of Life. In Isaiah 38: 21 we are told that figs were pressed and used as a poultice for infection. Mentioned numerous times in both the Old and New Testaments, the fig was a very important staple for the people of the time.



7. **POMEGRANATE** *Punica granatum* Meaning literally, “apple with grains”, the juicy fruit of the pomegranate is full of seeds and sweet pulp produced from beautiful scarlet flowers. Syrup made from the seed is known as grenadine. There are many Bible references to this highly esteemed fruit, here are but a few: The hem of Aaron’s robe was decorated with blue, purple, and red pomegranates (Exodus 28:33-34),

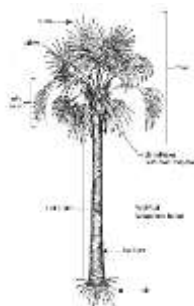


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Solomon decorated the Temple with the likenesses of the pomegranate (1Kings 7:18, 20). Cultivated in gardens since ancient times (Numbers 13: 23 and Numbers 20:5, Song of Solomon 7:12), it was used as medicine for sore throat and bronchitis.

8. **OLEANDER** *Nerium oleander* A quote in the Catholic Bible from the book of Ecclesiasticus 39:13-14 says, “Listen to me, O you holy sons, and bud like a rose growing by a stream of water; send forth fragrance like frankincense and put forth blossoms like a lily. Scatter the fragrance, and sing a hymn of praise; bless the Lord for all His works.” According to scholars, the oleander which is known as “rose of the waterbrooks” is the plant alluded to in this verse. It flourishes in warm locations and grows abundantly near streams or alongside wells and in the spring it shows masses of bloom, in red, white or pink. It is beautiful shrub, but its parts are poisonous and should be handled with care. It is also known as the ASPHODEL.

9. **DATE PALM** *Phoenix Roebelenii*
Because of the fruit and shade it provides, the date palm was very important to ancient peoples. In Psalms 92:12-14 you read, “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” For the Jews, the Palm symbolized grace and elegance, and many



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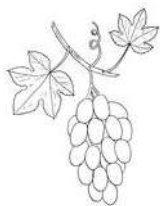
girls were named Tamar (which means Palm). An exceptionally valuable plant, it provides starch, sugar, oil, wax, and fiber for mats, paper and thread. It is also found in Song of Solomon 5:11, 7:7, and 8, and John 12:13.

10. **ONION, LEEKS, GARLIC** *Allium cepa, allium porrum, allium sativum* Mentioned in Numbers 11, “We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt.... the leeks, the onions and the garlic.” Believed to treat hypertension, angina, colds and other conditions, members of the Allium family were a favorite vegetable enjoyed by the people thousands of years ago just as we enjoy the flavor in our foods today.



11. **BLACKBERRY** *Rubus sanguineus* Called thorns, briars, or brambles in the Bible, most scholars think that blackberries with their dark purple, sweet and juicy fruit is the plant being written about. Besides the berries being used for food, the brambles were used for fuel. From Luke 6:44 “For each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.” In Matthew 13:7, we learn that the industrious farmer would destroy these plants before they seeded. Thorny shrubs were used as hedges to guard fields and vineyards. (Proverbs 15:19) ACANTHUS is considered the plant in Job 30:7. Another term for bramble is BUCKTHORN.

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12. **GRAPE** *Vitis vinifera* The first cultivated plant to be recorded in the Bible, grapevines are mentioned in Genesis 9:20, when Noah planted one. Grapes were eaten fresh or dried, and made into wine or vinegar, so that vineyards had great economic importance. Vineyards were hedged or fenced as protection from wild animals and had a tower with a guard to protect the vines from robbers. The vine was honored most highly among the plants of the world when Jesus at the last supper declared: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the Gardener” (John 15:1)

13. **ALMOND** *Amygdalus communis* The Hebrew word for almond means “awakening”, an allusion to the almond blossom, which is first to bloom in the spring. Considered one of the best fruits of the Orient, Jacob included almonds in his gifts to Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 43:11) and the decorations on the lampstands were modeled after the almond blossom (Exodus 25:33). Aaron’s rod was in almond twig (Num. 17:8). The almond also symbolized the dependability of God (Jer. 1:11-12).



14. **PAPYRUS** *Cyperus papyrus* From Exodus 1:22 and Exodus 2:1-3 “Then Pharaoh commanded all of his people to throw the newborn Hebrew boys into the Nile River----Moses’ mother made a small boat from papyrus reeds, water-proofed it with tar, put the baby in it and laid it among the reeds along the river’s edge”. Papyrus was one of a number

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of reeds and rushes to grow along the river, but was especially valued in the making of baskets, mats and paper.

15. **WALNUT** *Juglans regia* Universally cultivated in the East, this is most likely the nut tree referred to in The Song of Solomon 6:11.
16. **PINE** *Pinus taeda* (Loblolly) The pines that grew in the region where the Bible was written (stone pine) were not the same species as those that grow here, but we are using the Loblolly as a representative specimen. Pines are referenced in Isaiah 41:19 and 60:13. Biblical scholars are not in agreement on the identity of the many evergreens mentioned the Bible and think that ash, fir, cypress, cedar or juniper were used interchangeably with the term pine.
17. **OAK** *Quercus nigra* (Water oak) Again, the oaks that grow here are not the same species that grow in the Middle East, but we will use the Water Oak as a representative specimen. Mentioned in Genesis 35:8, Isaiah 6, and Joshua 24:26, the oak tree was an important historical landmark because the trees were large, long-lived and had strong wood used in shipbuilding. Bible Scholars think that the Hebrew writers may have used oak, elm, and the terebinth tree interchangeably.
18. **MYRTLE** *Myrtus communis* Named in Isaiah 41:19 and 55:13, Zechariah 1:8, 10 and 11, and Esther 2:7, it is an evergreen tree with dark glossy leaves and white flowers

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used for perfume and seasoning for food. It had religious significance for the Hebrews, and was a symbol of peace and joy. Queen Esther's Hebrew name meant myrtle.

19. **SYCAMORE** *Platanus occidentalis* Sycamores were trees of the plains (1 Kings 10:27) and could not tolerate colder climates (Psalms 78:47). Also known as the PLANE Tree this tree is mentioned in Genesis 30:37, Ezekiel 31:8 and Ecclesiasticus 24:14. The sycamore fig was the tree which Zacchaeus was supposed to have climbed to gain a better view of Jesus (Luke 19:4) and is not the same as the sycamore or plane tree. Some scholars think that the Plane tree could be translated Chestnut or Viburnum.

20. **ALOE** *Aloe vera* Succulent plants with thick, sword-like leaves which contain the aloin that was used as a medicine and when mixed with myrrh was used to purify the bodies of the departed (John 19:39).

21. **COTTON** *Gossypium herbaceum* From Esther 1:5-6 we read "And when these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in Susa, the capital, both great and small, a banquet lasting for 7 days in the court of the garden of the king's palace. There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings ..." Also, Jesus promised his people that the worthy shall be clothed in white raiment (presumed to mean cotton garments, presumed to be more of a luxury item).



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22. **MINT** *Mentha longifolia* Jesus said “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites-for you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others”, from Matthew 23:23. The Jews served mint with their meat dishes, especially at the spring Feast of the Pascal Lamb. Mint was scattered on the floors of their synagogues, so that the perfume oozed out at each step. People were expected to tithe 1/10 of their mint crop to the temple. Mint was also used to treat dyspepsia, headaches, and rheumatism.



23. **DILL** *Anethum graveolens* see above quotation as well as Exodus 30:34. It was used in medicine and for cooking.

24. **CUMIN** *Cuminum cyminum* Isaiah 28:27 as well as Matthew 23:23, mentioned above.

Cumin is native to the eastern Mediterranean lands and was used to flavor foods and in medicine for treating asthma, dermatitis and dysentery.



25. **CUCUMBER** *Cucumis sativus* The cucumber was one of the fruits growing from a vine, which the Israelites longed for after leaving Egypt. (Numbers 11:5). In Isaiah 1:8, he writes that the daughter of Zion is left as a “lodge in a garden of cucumbers”. Cucumbers were thought to be good for acne, burns and herpes.

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26. **MULBERRY** *Morus nigra* From Luke 17:6 we learn that Jesus used the mulberry tree as an illustration when teaching about faith. It is also mentioned in 2 Samuel 5:23-24 and 1 chronicles 14:14-15. Consumed as a food and as a cure for sore throat.
27. **MUSTARD** *Brassica nigra* Matthew 13:31 “The kingdom of heaven is likened to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs”. And in Luke 17:6 followers are urged to have faith the size of a mustard seed. Mustard seeds were used as flavorings, as medicine for arthritis, bronchitis, and cancer.
28. **LENTILS** *Lens esculenta* Lentils were threshed like wheat and boiled into a reddish-brown pottage. This was the dish which Esau purchased with his birthright in Genesis 25:34 and also mentioned in 2 Samuel 17:28. Lentils could also be an ingredient in bread, as in Ezekiel 4:9. It was used as a treatment for fetal alcohol syndrome.
29. **BARLEY** *Hordeum vulgare* Tolerating poorer soil than wheat and ripening sooner, barley is a grain cultivated since early times, but was considered a food for slaves, the very poor, and livestock, thus held in low esteem as a grain. Appearing in the Bible in Exodus 9:31, Numbers 5:15, 1 Kings 4:28, Judges 7:13 and John 6:5, 13.

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30. **BEANS** -- may refer to Fava Bean *Vicia faba* in 2 Samuel 17, or Chickpeas *Cicer arietinum* in Isaiah 30:24. Both were used for food and as medicine to treat cancer.

31. **MILLET** *Panicum miliaceum* An annual grain-producing grass whose seeds are used for bread or eaten raw, especially by the poor. Millet is referred to in several different ways in Ezekiel 27:17. It was also used to treat infections.

32. **WHEAT** *Triticum aestivum* Genesis 41:22-23,49, Gen 47:24,



Mentioned numerous times in the Bible, wheat was the most important cereal grain cultivated. It was usually broadcast and then trodden into the soil by oxen. (Isaiah 32:20. The well-to-do citizens used it for bread (Exodus 29.32), ate it parched (Leviticus 234:14, Ruth2:14), given in ceremonial offerings (Leviticus 2:1 and 24:5-7),

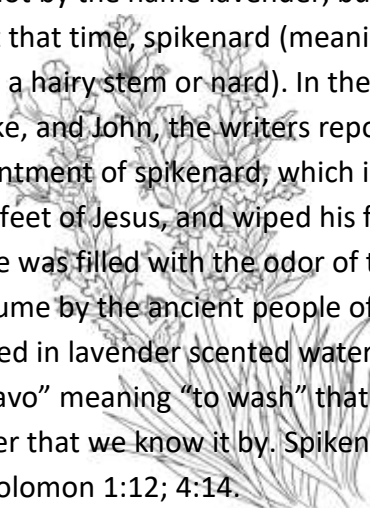
and was an article of commerce (Ezekiel 27:17 and Acts 27:38). Jesus compared His death to a grain of wheat which must die to produce fruit (John 12:24). Wheat was used to treat sunstroke, tuberculosis and other ailments. The Bible often refers to wheat as “corn” which was a term used by translators for any grain. True corn is a New World plant and would not be found in the Middle East thousands of years ago. Also 32 TARES (also called DARNEL, THISTLES, or just WEEDS) refers to a sleep inducing poisonous grass resembling wheat, but with smaller seeds. TARES were usually left in the fields until harvest time, then separated from the wheat during winnowing. Jesus used tares growing with wheat as a parable to illustrate evil in the world in Matt. 13:25-30,36-40.

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33. **FLAX** *Linum usitatissimum* Proverbs 31:13 tells us that an industrious wife that uses her time to spin flax for making linen cloth. When mature, the entire flax plant was pulled and placed in water to separate the fibers from the stems and then laid on housetops to dry (Joshua 2:6) before being spun into fiber and woven into cloth. It was also used to make wicks for oil lamps (Isaiah 42:3). The flax seeds were also eaten to ease inflammation and in cardiopathy.



34. **LAVENDER** *Lavendula angustifolia* Lavender is mentioned in the Bible, not by the name lavender, but rather by the name used at that time, spikenard (meaning many spikes growing from a hairy stem or nard). In the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, the writers report, that Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, which is very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. It was used for perfume by the ancient people of the area and Romans bathed in lavender scented water. It was from the Latin word “lavo” meaning “to wash” that the herb got the name lavender that we know it by. Spikenard is also found in the Song of Solomon 1:12; 4:14.



35. **LOTUS or WATER LILY** *Nelumbo nucifer* or *Lilium nouchali* Ancient people did not always distinguish between these two plants. From 1 Kings 7:19, 22, 26 “the capitals that were upon the top of the pillars were of lily work ----and the

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brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies". The lily mentioned here is the one that floats on the surface of lakes and pools. Because of its beauty, the plant is a great favorite in the water gardens. In Nubia, the natives still use the seeds as a grain to make bread, in Egypt the people eat both the seeds & the rootstocks.

36. **IRIS** *Iris giaganticaerulea* From Ecclesiasticus 50:6,8 "Like



the morning star among the clouds, like the moon when it is full, like roses in the days of the first fruits, like lilies by a spring of water, like a green sheet on Lebanon on a summer day...". This lily "by a spring of water" is known today as an iris. In the autumn they

were lifted and dried in the shade, many of them to be placed into linen chests to add perfume. The women also threaded small pieces on long lined yarns to be hung among garments in the household. "Iris" comes from the Greek word for rainbow.

37. **GOURDS** *Cucurbita sp.* and MELONS *Citrullus*

lanatus A fast-growing plant that flourished in the region, some of which are poisonous.



Decorations used on the Temple, called ornamental buds, are thought to be a type of wild gourd (1 Kings 6:18). One of Elisha's servants put the fruit of one type of gourd into a pot of stew (2 Kings 4:39) and it is identified in Jonah 4:6-10 as the plant under which Jonah found shade until a worm came in and caused it to wither. The people also enjoyed edible

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MELONS, lamenting in Numbers 11 “...We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons....” Gourds, Melons, and Cucumbers are all members of the *Cucurbitaceae* family. Gourds were used medicinally for Cancer, constipation, worms and neuralgia while watermelon was thought to help dyspepsia, fever, and prostatitis.

38. **BAY LAUREL** *Laurus nobilis* In Psalms 37 David says....”I



have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree...” alluding to the fact that this tree that could grow up to 60 feet in height. Parts of the tree were used to treat diabetes, dyspepsia, earache and other pains and its leaves were used as seasoning just as they are today.

39. **REEDS** *Pharagmites communis* or CANES *Arundinaria donax* or *Arundinaria gigantea* or SWEET CANE *Saccharum officinarum* also called CALAMUS Reeds and canes were names of plants used interchangeably in the Bible. Found in Exodus 30:23, Ezekiel 27: 19, Song of Songs 4:14, Isaiah 43:24, and Jeremiah 6:20, sweet-smelling cane was burned in sacrifices. Reeds and rushes grew from 3 to 20 feet and were used for weaving making fishing poles, musical instruments. Reeds were a symbol of weakness. Jesus refers to them as shaking in the wind in Matthew 11:17 and a reed was placed in Jesus’ hand as He was mocked by Roman soldiers in Matthew 27:29. There are many examples of of this class of plants that include gigantic hollow-stemmed grasses which

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grew along river banks such as bulrush, pole cane, and others. Sweet Cane is mentioned in Isaiah 43: 23,24 ---“You have not bought me sweet cane with money----“. The three great prophets of Israel allude to sweet cane as a delicacy highly prized by the Jews.

40. **CHICKPEAS OR GARBANZOS** *Cicer arietinum* Having been cultivated for at least 7, 500 years, these beans were among the highly nutritious foods that people in the Middle East commonly ate and are believed to be part of the recipe known as “Ezekiel’s bread” found in Ezekiel 4:9. The prophet told the people to prepare this bread during the siege of Jerusalem, “During the first 390 days eat bread make of flour mixed from wheat, barley, beans, lentils, and spelt. Ration this out to yourself at the rate of 8 ounces at a time, one meal a day. Use one quart of water a day, don’t use more than that. Each day take flour from the barrel and prepare it as you would barley cakes, bake it over a fire using cow dung.” Besides being a wonderful source of protein, packed full of vitamin C, iron and fiber, these beans help lower LDL, keep blood sugar levels stable and reduce blood pressure.
41. **WORMWOOD** *Artemesia absinthium* Wormwood was used symbolically to refer to any calamity or bitter experience because it had a bitter taste and a strong aroma. An intoxicating, yet poisonous drink could be made from this plant and we have substituted one of its cousins, *Artemesia abrotanum* for our specimen plant. Wormwood was used to

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treat cough, fever and intestinal worms and also used as a moth repellent. In scripture –Jeremiah 9: 13-15 “And the LORD says: because they have forsaken my law that I set before them...but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after other gods, therefore I am feeding this people with wormwood and giving them poisonous water to drink”. Other references to wormwood are in Revelation 8:11, Deuteronomy 29:18, Proverbs 5:4, and Amos 5:7.

42. **GALL** *Papaver somniferum* -- the opium poppy (A bitter, poisonous herb, we have substituted the poppy seed poppy) Gall is used figuratively to mean a bitter punishment in Jer. 8:14, 9:15, 23:15 and Acts 8:23. In Matthew 27 “...they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted it, he would not drink”. Used to treat pain, cough, and cancer.
43. **RUE** *Ruta graveolens* In Luke 11:42 Jesus chastised the temple priests for being so into making the people tithe the rue and forgetting more important matters. It was used as a food flavoring and antiseptic and in small doses to treat colic, dyspepsia, epilepsy, and other ailments, but can be poisonous in large amounts.
44. **CORIANDER** *Coriandrum sativum* Numbers 11 “...And the manna was as coriander seed...” reminds us that coriander was used to flavor food. It was also used for dyspepsia, halitosis, rheumatism, and toothache. Today it is also called cilantro.

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45. **HYSSOP** *Origanum syranicum* Known as marjoram today, hyssop is a relative of the mint family. It was used for ritual cleansing in Leviticus 14:4, 49, and sprinkling of blood in the tabernacle in Exodus 12:22, cultivated on terraced walls in 1 Kings 4:33, and used in purification ceremonies in Leviticus 14:4,6, 51:7. It was also used at the crucifixion to relieve Jesus' thirst according to John 19:29.
46. **CITRUS** known as GOODLY TREES *Citrus medica*, or *Citrus latifolia* or *Citrus limon* Used in the Feast of Booths, the Bible says "And you shall take on the first day, the fruit of goodly trees" Leviticus 23: 40. Members of the lemon/ lime family were used to treat bronchitis, lumbago and seasickness. Sometimes referred to as Citron.
47. **THORN TREE** *Ziziphus spina-christi* Also known as the Jujube tree, this is believed to be the tree producing the crown of thorns which was placed on Christ's head to mock him as mentioned in Mark 15:15. Another use of the term is found in Matthew 7," ...Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" This plant was used for treating arthritis, cancer, and toothaches.
48. **ACACIA** *Acacia wrighti* There are at least 450 varieties of this plant of the Legume Family found in Africa. In the Bible one variety, *Acacia seyal* Del., was known as the Shittah tree (producing Shittim wood), and another variety was given the name Setim, also producing wood. The wood is light, hard

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and close-grained in an orange-brown hue and reputed to be incorruptible. From fragrant clusters of yellow blossoms come long seed pods used for food, in tanning, as a cure for rabies, burned to make charcoal and the gum was use in the mummifying process by the Egyptians. It is thought that this was the Burning Bush of Exodus 3 “The Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush”, and in Exodus 26: 15, “ And you shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood”. This plant is also mentioned in Exodus 37:17, Isaiah 41, and Deuteronomy 10 and may be the Crown of Thorns plant whose branches were woven into the crown Christ wore. An interesting symbiotic relationship occurs between a type of ant and this tree. The ants eat the sap that oozes from the tips and in turn they protect the tree by attacking herbivores and some beetles that like to eat the leaves and seeds.

49. **BOXWOOD** *Buxus sempervirens* A tree of very hard wood and glossy leaves, which will grow to a height of about 15 feet. The box tree was used since Roman times for wood engravings and musical instruments and was well suited to beautify the Temple (Isaiah 60:13) Isaiah symbolically use the box tree to remind the Hebrews of God’s perpetual presence. ...“I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together.” Isaiah 41:19
50. **GRASS** (various species) In 1 Peter 1:24 “For all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass

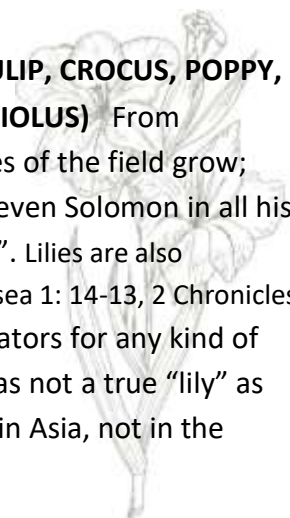
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withers and its flowers fall away”. Other references to grass are in Psalm 103:15, Isaiah 40:6 and 51:12, and Matthew 6:30

51. **RYE (FITCHES, SPELT)** *Vicia erviia* Exodus 9:32, Ezekiel 4:9, Isaiah 28:25 This is a grain that was used in making bread of a poorer quality than that made from wheat. Sown later than wheat, it thrived in poor soil and adverse conditions and was eaten by the poor.

52. **LILIES OF THE FIELD (ANEMONE, TULIP, CROCUS, POPPY, NARCISSUS, RANUNCULUS, IRIS, GLADIOLUS)** From Matthew 6:28-34 “See the how the lilies of the field grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, but even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these”. Lilies are also mentioned in Luke 12:27, 1 Kings 7:26, Hosea 1: 14-13, 2 Chronicles 4:2-5. Lily was the name given by translators for any kind of flower that grew wild in fields, but it was not a true “lily” as we know it today, because those grew in Asia, not in the Middle East.

53. **BRIERS** *Acanthus spinosus* Sometimes called Bears Breeches, Acanthus plants are common in the Holy Land and mentioned in Proverbs 24:31, Matthew 13:7, Psalms 58:9 and others. Industrious farmers would destroy the plants before he seeded his field - some of these thorny plants were used as fuel for ovens. Thorns, thistles, briers, brambles were general terms used in the Bible for any spiny plant and were not necessarily used to refer to any specific plant.



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54. **SALVIA OR SAGE** *Salvia officinalis OR palaestinae OR judaica OR fruticosa* with over 900 varieties of Salvia worldwide, it is not surprising that there are many varieties growing in the land of Israel. Although not mentioned by name in the Bible, the description in Exodus 25:31-38 "...and it will have three branches coming out from each side" and in Exodus 37:17-18 of the design of the menorah , "The base and the shaft of the lampstand were made of hammered work; its cups, its calyxes, and its petals were of one piece with it three branches...out of the other" has lead scholars to believe that Salvia/Sage was the model for this iconic form.
55. **FIR** *Juniperus chinensis* This tree is mentioned several times in scripture as a "fir" tree or a "heath" tree, but botanists think the juniper was the tree that fits the description. This is also thought to be the BROOM. The Israelites valued the timber of this tree for building the Temple, ship building, and making musical instruments, and is used symbolically to describe the blessings of God for His people. Second Chronicles 2 "...Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and alnum trees, out of Lebanon". Also mentioned in 1 Kings 6:15, Ezekiel 27: 5 and Isiah 41:19.
56. **AMARANTH** *Amaranthaceae sp.* A large family of plants containing weeds, garden plants including Amaranth & Celosia. You will not find this plant mentioned specifically in the St. James English translation, but is found in the original Greek translation because in Greek, Amaranth means

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“unfading”. Therefore, Amaranth was used symbolically in 1 Peter 1:4 and 5:4 where the inheritance of the faithful is described as unfading like Amaranth.

57. **ARUM or COCKLE** (several different families) According to the Greek text, there are several fetid arums, goose-weeds, stink weeds, henbanes, and mandrakes in Palestine that are given the general term Arum or Cockle. In Isaiah 5:2-4 these are translated into the term “wild grapes”, not stinking plants, but the term still means any harmful plant.
58. **VIRBURNUM** *Viburnum tinus* This is believed to be the PLANE TREE of Isaiah 60:13 “I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane, and the pine, to beautify the place of my sanctuary”.
59. **BITTER HERBS** Bitter Herbs, with their sharp-tasting leaves, are often mentioned in the Bible. These digestive aids were probably very necessary for good intestinal bacteria and health. Scholars think that many herbs were used in this manner including dandelion, sorrel, sow thistle, wild lettuce, chicory and others. In Exodus 12:8 the Israelites were commanded to eat the Paschal Lamb “with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs.” Even today in the Seder or Passover meal, bitter herbs are eaten to remind the Jewish people of the bitterness of slavery during their time in Egypt.

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60. **FENNEL** *Ferula galbaniflua* You will not find fennel in the Bible, but you will find the term GALBANUM in Exodus 30:34--“These were the Lord’s directions to Moses concerning the incense: Use sweet spices—stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense.....”. Galbanum is the milky substance that comes from fennel that makes a gum resin used in perfume and anointing oil. It was also good for treating colds and inflammation and as an insect repellent.
61. **DAISY (SHASTA or CROWN)** *Chrysanthemum coronarium* This is the “open flower” named in First Kings 6:29--- “Figures of angels, palm trees, and open flowers were carved on all the walls of both rooms of the Temple...” It is used to treat dyspepsia, worms, and melanoma.
62. **TEREBINTH or TEIL** This tree has been translated as ELM *Ulmus sp.* and other times as OAK *Quercus sp.* by early Bible translators. In Hosea 4:13 this tree is mentioned----“they go up into the hills to burn incense in the pleasant shade of oaks and poplars and terebinth trees”. It is also mentioned in Isaiah 6:13. However from the various descriptions in the Bible, modern scholars believe the Terebinth is really the *Pistacia Palestine* or Pistachio Tree. It is also sometimes called the Turpentine Tree.

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63. **CASSIA** (now placed in the SENNA genus, this specimen is the *Senna splendens*) Member of the Fabaceae or bean family, Cassia is a plant with a flavor and aroma similar to cinnamon, but considered inferior. Moses included cassia in the anointing oil as told in Exodus 30:22-25 “Then the Lord God told Moses to collect the choicest of spices---five hundred shekels of pure myrrh; half as much of cinnamon and of sweet cane; the same amount of cassia as of myrrh; and 1 1/2 gallons of olive oil. The Lord instructed skilled perfume-makers to compound all this into a “holy anointing oil”. Cassia was also an article of trade in Ezekiel 27:19.

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Notes