

Fredericksburg
United Methodist
Church

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The Biblical Garden

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United Methodist
Church

The Garden is open during church business hours
or by entry through the outside gate

Biblical Garden Introduction

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"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener."

-Jesus Christ (John 15:1, NIV)

Welcome to the Biblical Garden! This place has been prepared for you...to meet the Gardener! A place for you to connect with the Gardener in prayer. A place for you to seek the Lord and know how to be effective as possible for the cause of Christ Jesus.

Read on in the Book of John and Jesus says: "Abide in Me." (John 15:4) This garden is a place for you to abide, relax, renew and re-focus. A place to pray (to talk) to the One whom Jesus called "the Gardener" while you quiet your mind, body, and soul and listen to the voice of the Gardener in the bubbling water, the scripture reference identifying a plant; or a plant you have never seen.

The first time I visited this garden, I sat in the left seat next to the fence. The first thing I noticed were the grape vines above my head. I heard the traffic on Highway 16. I heard the noise of the world on the highway and in my head. Then I focused on the bubbling water pouring from the rock to my right. I noticed the pink roses covering the arch way next to the building. I noticed the crown of thorns that had just been planted in the garden. I turned my head to the left and the yellow flowers of the Jerusalem Sage came into view. My eyes surveyed the mural of sheep painted on the entry door to the building...I was transported back to the gardens in the Holy Land; especially remembering the breeze blowing the ancient olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane that I had the privilege of visiting on three different trips I had made to the Holy Land. In this garden, I had "come home" in my Spirit and I did not have to leave Fredericksburg!!!

I continue to come to this garden "to abide." The noise of Highway 16 is still heard as it was on my first visit. But I have met the Gardener and God's beauty I find in this garden. I invite you to "abide" here with the Gardener today. Stay as long as you wish and notice something new the next time you come...even the new "you" because here in this garden, the Gardener, is growing God's best in the love of God's son, Jesus Christ. And the Gardener's best is YOU. Be Blessed!

MAY 2016

Rev. Sid Spiller, Associate Pastor



Foreword

During the summer of 2002, our associate pastor, Colleen Haley, gave me a book entitled Planting a Bible Garden by F. Nigel Hepper. I didn't know why she gave it to me, and I certainly didn't know what I would do with it. As I read the book, I became more and more intrigued with the idea of planting such a garden somewhere on our church grounds. I solicited the help of John Dadds and Jeffery Hallford, and we began thinking of what we could do about planting such a garden for our community. After meeting for about a year, we decided that we needed to postpone further planning until drainage and location issues were resolved.

In 2004, the project was reinstated and plans were again begun. By this time, I was really excited and spent many hours designing, researching and recruiting volunteers to help, as well as members to assist with the funding since the project was not to be a church budgeted item. John Dadds helped with plant expertise, offered encouragement and later helped in ordering plants and assisted in the planting of larger plants. Without his help, I would not have been able to fund many of the plants that I felt should be in a Biblical Garden!

In early 2005, volunteers helped to remove the play equipment and pea gravel from the site where the children's playground had once been and the Biblical Garden was begun! A stone mason was hired to lay the walks which were designed to be extra wide in order to accommodate visitors in wheelchairs. When the walks were complete, volunteers helped to improve the soil using Coma's amended soil. Trees were planted, but more tender plants had to wait until later.

Next, we added features to the Garden. Architect Tom Dance designed the wood entrance structure and covered seating area. He, also, arranged for volunteer workers with the supervision of a carpenter to build the seating area. Then the work on the fountain was begun. Volunteers dug the hole and Richard Laughlin donated, drilled and delivered the two large bowls which became the central part of the pondless fountain. With the help of a professional company, the rest of the fountain was completed and began gushing water from the center of the rocks. Dan Seehrst, Jason Barnes and Evan Barnes dug the hole and furnished large natural rock stepping stones for each side of the fountain to let the children know that it was okay to step in and touch the water.

Janet Lindley presented the Garden with a Mezuzah which has been placed on doorposts in Jewish homes since Bible times. It contains 22 lines of the book of Deuteronomy, including a portion of the Shema prayer. It is located on the right side of the door into the church and is there to indicate

a spiritual gateway. Bill and Annette Tilley gave a stone angel which is placed in front of the fig tree to remind us that God protects us.

Another of God's gifts to the garden is a pastoral scene created by Marynell Dance. It is located on the double doors in the arched seating area.

During the Spring of 2006, plants were planted and a drip irrigation system was installed. Signs at the entrance and in front of each of the plants were put in place. Mary Seeger sculptured a wonderful stone piece depicting "The Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove" and it was placed among the flowers in the front bed. Architect Lance Tatum and Dr. Jim Lindley painted the metal fence green so that it blends with nature. Later, the beautiful additions of an entrance arbor at the exit gate and a metal seating area inside the Biblical Garden were made and donated by the Laughlin Family in memory of JoAnn Laughlin. The vine covered seating areas give visitors a place to relax and meditate without being in the sun.

We were also blessed with a lovely bench which was placed in front of the Cedar of Lebanon Tree outside of the Garden in memory of Marilyn Jenkins by the Jenkins family.

In October, 2006 the Biblical Garden was dedicated and blessed by Rev. Jarrel Sharp with Rev. Colleen Haley singing a song she had composed specifically for the dedication. (The words are listed on page 6 of this booklet.) It was stressed during the dedication that the Biblical Garden would always be open to all people who desire to enter for meditation and spiritual renewal.

It is now Spring of 2016 and the Garden has awakened from the winter and is beginning to flourish. Thanks to the many volunteers, who continue to help with weeding, pruning, fertilizing and planting, the Garden contains an abundance of flowers, herbs, shrubs, trees, and vegetables that are a delight to see. We hope you enjoy your visit to the Biblical Garden and plan to visit it often as the garden changes in appearance with the seasons.

Peggy Benson
Biblical Garden Chair



Pentateuch Flower-the five petal rose. Symbolic of love that transcends even death. It represents beauty, security, love, life, blood, death and rebirth.

This song was written and sung by Rev. Colleen Haley during the
Biblical Garden dedication,
October, 2006

It Was in a Garden
w/M Colleen Haley; c. 2006

1. It was in a garden long ago when God first spoke to man.
"I will give you everything you need, delivered by my hand."
So the man began to name all things, the soil gave up its food,
And the Earth gave life abundantly, and God said it was good.

REFRAIN

So sing the praises of our God, the garden gives us life
A place of healing grace, and love; a place of holy light

2. After many years the man forgot the gift that God had given
So he left the garden searching for a different way to live
But he never forgot the garden — the place it all began
And he never forgot the sweetness of the love of God for man

REFRAIN

3. God still walks the garden, calling us back home
giving life abundantly, asking all to come
The garden waits in silence, its simple gifts to share
And for all who enter in this place, you'll find that God is here

REFRAIN

It was in a garden long ago that God first spoke to man.
"I will give you everything you need, delivered by my hand."



Plant History
By Peggy Benson

First of all, I would like to list the major sources that I used in planning the Biblical garden for our church. Planting a Bible Garden by F. Nigel Hepper and Plants of the Bible and How to Grow Them by Allan A. Swenson were most helpful, as was the internet. When I first began studying about Biblical gardens four years ago, I found very little information on the internet, but, as I continued to search, there was more and more information available to me there. Even today, there are very few gardens that are planted with only Biblical plants. St. John the Divine Church in New York has a wonderful Biblical Garden that my husband and I have visited twice, but due to the severe winters they are limited in what they can plant. Even so, I was able to get inspiration and assistance from them on how to go about planning for such a garden.

In researching what plants would survive in our area, I discovered that due to climate similarities many of the Bible plants could be grown in the Texas Hill Country. In Biblical times, gardens were essentially for food, medicine or shade, not simply to display the beauty of flowers, as we do today. As you walk through the garden you will find beautiful plants and flowers but most of them have a value in addition to their beauty.

Many of the trees in the ancient gardens were fruit trees such as olive, fig, date palm, and pomegranate and you will see each of them as you tour the Garden. One of the trees that you probably think of from the Bible is the apple tree in the Garden of Eden. However, you will not find an apple tree in our Garden because botanists believe that apple trees did not exist in that area but that it most probably was an apricot tree instead that Eve found in the Garden of Eden. Since apricots are not easy to grow here, a pear tree has been substituted in its place. Unfortunately, the Bible translators were not botanists so sometimes different Bible translations use different but similar words for the plants. Verses from the King James translation of the Bible will have the closest description of the plants but the newer versions will, in most cases, give you a good description as well.

Biblical plants found in this Garden fall in the categories of herbs, vegetables, bulbs, vines, shrubs and trees. There are approximately seventy-five (75) of these plants in the Garden, with a few more difficult-to-find plants still being searched for at this time. In our plantings, it would have been helpful if we could have arranged them by category or in alphabetical order but since each plant has special sun and water requirements it was important that we place them where they would grow best. All plants found in the Garden are listed in alphabetical order in the plant section which follows this article so as you walk through the Garden you may look up a plant and get information about it. It will not be possible for you to see all plants in one visit to the Garden because some are annuals that grow only during the summer and others are perennials that go dormant during winter. The bulbs will bloom mainly in the spring and foliage color will be more visible during the fall. Therefore, we invite you to visit the Garden often to see the changes that happen from season to season.



Plants in the Bible

In scripture plants often serve as illustrations for spiritual teaching. Plants depend on water, sun and food, just like man. They need all three. Plants and man thrive under a Master Gardener. Hosea compares plant growth to spiritual growth. Hosea 14:5-7, compares the walk of obedience to;

- the glory of a lily,
- the fragrance of the cedars of Lebanon,
- the beauty of an olive tree, and
- the fruit-bearing of a grape vine.

Moses chose cherished plant products to describe the abundance that existed in the promised land of Canaan. He described it as a "land of wheat and barley (late and early grain crops), vines, figs, pomegranates and olives." Deuteronomy 8:7-8

The gift of water is used throughout the Bible to demonstrate God's pleasure or displeasure with His people. Withered plants that lack adequate water illustrate the result of wayward behavior. James 1:11 says "For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass; and its flower falls off; and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away." The rich man in this verse is walking in the flesh, not in the spirit and will of God.

In Isaiah 40:6-7 our mortality is compared to grass. "All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades."

In Matthew 15:13, Jesus warns that "every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up." In Matthew 13: 24 Jesus had earlier taught that "tares" are sown among the wheat by an enemy of God. They look like wheat, but are really weeds

Acacia (thuisache) Exodus 37:1
In Hebrew it is known as the Shittah Tree, and its wood is called shittim. This gnarly tree, one of the few which grows in the Sinai desert, also provided hard brown wood for the furniture of the Tabernacle. Acacias grow by the wadis (dry creek beds) and require a warm climate. They are flat topped, sport thorns larger than their leaves, and have yellow flowers followed by hard brown seed pods. The gum of this tree had value as an insect repellent. It is one of the trees Isaiah (Isaiah 41:19) says God will plant after He has provided rivers, springs and pools of water for His thirsty people in the wilderness. It will cause them to testify of His faithfulness.

Allium (Garlic) Numbers 11:5

Onions, leeks, and garlic are all from the same family of plants. They were used by the Egyptians to make food savory. When the Israelites wandered in the Sinai desert they remembered the loss of these food enhancers and complained about their life nourishing manna. The garlic plant produces a bulb or head with separate cloves.



Almond Tree Genesis 43:11

Nuts were carried to Egypt by Joseph's brothers; and the holy lampstand had cups shaped like almond flowers. (Exodus 25:33)

Aloe (Aloe vera) John 19:39

The combination of myrrh and aloe juice with water was the recipe for embalming. The Aloe plant leaves are succulent multi toothed and pointed. In early spring it produces spikes of yellow flowers. Even today, the juice of its leaves is used for burns and to heal skin lesions.

Anemone Song of Solomon 2:12

One of the earliest spring flowers in the Holy Land is the brightly colored Anemone or poppy. Although only about a foot tall, its strong red, blue or purple blossoms make it a joyful harbinger of spring. They don't like wet feet nor do they tolerate freezing.

Avise (correctly translated Dill) Matthew 23:23

Avise seeds were a required tithe to the Levites, who were not given land to raise crops or animals. Levites were to be supported with tithes from the other tribes. Avise is an aromatic annual used in cooking and pickling. Medicinally it was used to relieve colic or gas.

Barley John 6:8-13

Coarse Barley bread was a common staple of lower class people in Palestine. Finer textured wheat bread was eaten by the wealthy. These loaves were a humble gift from this poor lad. In Judges 7:13, the Midianite soldier dreamed of a loaf of barley bread filling the camp of the Midianites. The dream was correctly interpreted to prophesy that the Israelites (despised as eaters of barley bread), under Gideon's leadership, would defeat Midian. Barley is the first grain harvested, and it was probably a barley field where Ruth gleaned. The Jewish spring feast of Firstfruits is on the 16th of Nissan. The Lord's acceptance of their barley offering signified his pledge of a later full harvest. Symbolically, the feast of Firstfruits pictures Christ's resurrection which occurred on the Feast of Firstfruits. His resurrection is the promise to believers that our bodies will be resurrected in the future. See 1 Corinthians 15:20.

Brambles (Blackberries) Numbers 33:55

There are a variety of plants known as brambles. What they have in

common is flowers, edible fruit, and a thicket type of growth with thorns. They are easily grown and seem to love the most worthless plot of ground - like ditches. Their fruit can be eaten naturally or made into jam or jelly. Once established they are hard to eliminate from a garden, hence the warning from God.

Beans (Fava) Ezekiel 4:9

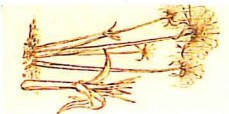
It is also known as the horse bean. It grows as a tall (40 in.) bush bean. If eaten young, the pod is edible as well. Beans were likely one of the vegetables that Daniel requested during his captivity in Babylon. They are a good source of protein so Daniel could "keep kosher" and stay healthy (see Daniel 1:12-16) in a pagan land. They were also dried, ground and mixed with other grain flour and made into bread.

Bitter herbs (Sorrel) Numbers 9:11

Sorrel is one of a number of herbs in this category. It is eaten by Jews at the Passover meal (Seder) to remind them of the bitter experiences in Egypt. It can be eaten in salads or roasted and added to coffee. It grows like lettuce but on its second year attains a height of 6 feet and is covered with blue flowers.

Burush (Papyrus) Exodus 2:3

This over 10 foot tall sedge grows in the muddy banks of water in Egypt. It is aggressive and dense, thus providing Moses' mother a wonderful hiding place for him. It has large wops of green flower heads. The stems were pounded together to make the paper the Bible was written on.



Burning Bush Exodus 3:2-4

This was very likely a Boxthorn bush. It grows 6 feet tall. Tubular purple flowers in the spring yield orange berries for the birds. It is often used as a hedge. Since it grows easily, it can become a nuisance. It is a member of the *acacia* family.

Calamus - Sweet Cane (Lemon Grass) Jeremiah 6:20a

Calamus grows in mud by shallow water. While it resembles the iris, its yellow green flowers bloom lower on the plant. Because of its fragrance it was used in perfume and anointing oil. The rhizome clumps need periodic thinning so they don't crowd neighboring plants.

Cassia (Senna) Exodus 30:23-24

The bark of this tree from the laurel family is ground to produce a fine spice. The LORD gave Moses a recipe for creating an aromatic oil to be used in anointing the tabernacle and priests. Botanists are not sure if the exact species used continues to grow today. This tree prefers hot moist conditions to prosper and grows from cuttings. Two trees that are considered alike grow in China, India and Sri Lanka. One variety is shrubby and the other grows to 30'.

Cedar of Lebanon 1 Kings 4:33

There are lots of references in the Bible about this tree. King Solomon used cedar and fir timbers to build his great temple to the glory of God. Cedars, which were plentiful in the Holy Land in Old Testament times, were prized for construction and in the making of furniture because of its quality to resist decay. Cedar was a valuable product for trade and thus through the years many of the groves of cedars have disappeared from the Holy Land area. (Because this stately tree grows to such a large size, we have chosen to place it just outside the Biblical Garden on the west side.)

Crocus Song of Solomon 4:13-14

The crocus yields saffron from its pistils. It takes many flowers to yield an ounce of saffron. This is why it is so expensive. It grows by corns and is a perennial. It was used to dye and flavor food as well as in medicine. The saffron crocus blooms in the fall and requires very well composted soil to bloom.



Cucumber Numbers 11:4-6

Cucumber plants require regular and significant water to yield their crop. The Israelites while living in the Nile Delta during the Egyptian captivity had developed a fondness for them. While they wandered in the wilderness their yearning for the cool moist fruit caused them to murmur. Cucumbers will not grow naturally in the desert. The variety that grows in Egypt is not the same as that we grow in the U.S. The Egyptian variety is known as the snake cucumber or musk melon and has long grooved fruit.

Date Palm John 12:13

The date palm grew in oases in Sinai and the warmest parts of Palestine. It is very tall has a straight trunk, huge leaves and produces dates. It became one of Israel's national symbols. Its leaves were the branches people carried when Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Jericho was known as the city of palm trees. This palm tree inspired the stone carvers of many ancient buildings

Day Lily (Lily) Matthew 6:28-29

Many believe that the "lily" referred to in this verse is the richly colored anemone which blooms profusely in early spring in the Holy Land. It can be scarlet, blue, purple, or even white; the colors of King's robes. It is a wild perennial which grows by corns in a sunny well-drained area to about 12 inches. While they thrive in wild rugged areas, when grown in gardens they require richer well drained soil.

Desert Thorn (Love-in-a-mist) Judges 8:16

As far as imagery in scripture, the idea of thorns is always negative and often speaks to judgment. Thorns are worthless, and will be burned. They are associated with other thorny plants like thistles and briars. They have

the ability to choke tender plants if not rooted out. Love in a mist is identified as a close relative of black cumin and a good Bible garden substitute for it. Thorns are abundant in Palestine and while the flowers may be beautiful, their aggressive growth habit will choke tender wheat and corn plants.

Dove's Dung (Narcissus) 2 Kings 6:25

It is so named because its flowers resemble bird droppings. Another common name for this plant is Star-of-Bethlehem. It is a wild perennial very common to Samaria. While the varieties most common today are poisonous, the one mentioned here was used as food during a famine.

Fennel (Herb) Exodus 30:34

Today Fennel is a substituted for Galbanum in Bible gardens. The nearest relative growing today is the giant Fennel which only grows in Iran. The 3 plants/trees mentioned in this verse all produce a gummy resin in their stem or bark. When the resin is burned it produces a pungent but pleasant odor. The combination of them yielded a perfume used in the Holy Place by the priests.

Flag (iris) Song of Solomon 4:14

The dried rhizome of this plant furnished sweet cane (unlike our common sugar cane). Anointing oil and perfumes were created with it. While it resembles an iris it is a very different plant. The yellow green flowers are not showy and are almost hidden from view. The leaves are fragrant! It likes to grow in mud.



FLAX (linen) Genesis 41:42

Linen comes from flax and is one of the oldest textiles in the world. Many things were made from flax. The curtains in the Old Testament Tabernacle and the Temple was made of linen (Exodus 38: and 18) and Jesus' body was shrouded in linen prior to burial (John 19:40).

Fig Genesis 3:7

The small quide growing fig tree produced fruit which was a significant part of the Israelites diet. Figs were eaten fresh or dried. The leaves are large and leathery. A fig tree has many branches and is also a good provider of shade.

Flowers of the Field (Narcissi and Daffodils) Isaiah 25:1

These flower, which are seen in cluster heads, grow by bulb and are seen in abundance in the Holy Land. They flower when the weather is cool and moist - winter. Their scent is sweet, and they are beautiful in arrangements. Because the bulbs need the leaves to grow and multiply, the leaves shouldn't be cut back but allowed to dry naturally.



Gall (Poppy) Hosea 10:4

The bold watermelon pink colored flowers of this plant appear in spring-time on what is also called the opium poppy. The gall in the vinegar offered to Jesus on the cross is believed to have come from the seeds of this plant. It is a reseedling annual whose seeds are held in a hard capsule and thrown, when fully dry, to the ground for next year.

Grape Vine Song of Solomon 2:15

Grapes and their vines were common imagery for Hebrew people in scripture. Grapes symbolize abundance and prosperity. In Micah 6:15, the withholding of wine is punishment for sin. The Nazarenes self-denial of grapes and the products of grapes is because joy is associated with grapes. In Isaiah 5, God uses a poor vineyard to picture a wayward Israel. In Revelation 14, grapes will be thrown into the winepress of God's judgment and wrath. Grapes were eaten fresh, dried as raisins, as juice and as fermented juice - wine. Grapes grow on climbing vines. They require the care of a gardener to prune, feed, water, control mildew, mulch, and train the runners.

Green Bay Tree (Laurel) Psalm 37:35

This can be a very tall evergreen tree but more often is mid-sized. Its leaves are used in cooking. It will not survive either a hard freeze or drought. It is easy to propagate.

Gopher Wood (Italian Cypress) Genesis 6:14

The timbers of King Solomon's Temple were made in part by this wood. It is speculated that this was the wood Noah used to build the ARK. It is a hardy evergreen with fragrant resinous leaves. It easily grows in rich soil and produce fruits which become cones. Because of its slender form it makes a good hedge or screen. This tall slender tree is often planted in graveyards.

Hyssop (Marjoram) Leviticus 14:52

During Passover a branch of hyssop held the blood of a lamb which was to be sprinkled on the lintel of the door and its posts. The hairy stems are broom-like. In warm climates it is a 12 inch perennial found growing on rocky dry soil. It can be planted by seed in temperate climates as it will not survive a hard freeze. It is also known as the herb marjoram and can be dried for use as a longer lasting spice.

Jerusalem Artichoke (Thistle) 2 Chronicles 25:18 "And Josiah the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, 'The thorn bush which was in Lebanon sent to the cedar which was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' But there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trampled the thorn bush." Thorns were often used as firewood and in hedges to protect gardens.

Jerusalem Sage Exodus 37:17

The form of the Menorah is plant-like and resembles a wild rugged sage commonly seen in the Holy Land. It does not occur naturally in this continent so common sage is substituted in Bible gardens. It can be raised by seeds or cuttings and needs to be pruned annually to control its size. The plant in Israel has blue flowers but the one grown here usually has yellow flowers. The fragrant leaves were used in cooking.

Jerusalem Thorn (Crown of Thorns) Mark 15:17

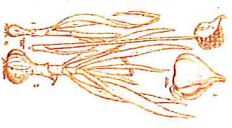
A large shrub (grows 6-9'). Its branches are pliable and can be easily bent into a shape. It is probably the branch that was made into the crown used on Jesus during His passion.

Judas Tree (Red Bud) Matthew 27:5

We know nothing about the tree from which Judas hung himself. However, tradition has selected this tree because it produces many little red flowers in the spring which people like to believe represent the blood of Judas and Jesus. It is a nice tree which grows in the Holy Land.

Leek Numbers 11:5-6

While leeks are in the same family as onions, they do not have a large a bulb but have larger leaves. If left in the ground they will produce a white to mauve flower head the next year. They should be planted in the winter, transplanted in early summer then can be eaten the following autumn or winter. They are less strong than their cousins the garlic and onion.



Lily (Maddonia Lily) Song of Solomon 2:1-2

When this spectacular white lily is seen, it is on Mt Carmel in the Holy Land. It is 3 feet tall when it buds and produces very large flowers. The beautifully perfumed flowers occur throughout the summer. They will prosper in alkaline soil but need some protection from the summer sun. They can be infected by a devastating virus which will necessitate burning of the plant.

Mallow (Nollyhook) Job 30:4

This tall hollyhook can be found growing beside roads and in alkaline ground near the Dead Sea. It can be eaten cooked like spinach or used to thicken soups. It was an ingredient in dintments and cough remedies. It is planted by seed but doesn't produce its beautiful flowers until the next year. Some are perennials. When infected with fungus, it will need anti-fungal spray.

Manuwa (Coriander) Isaiah 28:25

Coriander was a spice the Israelites grew to love while captives in Egypt. They compared the manuwa they were fed while wandering in the desert to the appearance of coriander. When used as an herb (fresh) it is known as coriander, when its dry seeds are crushed it is known as cummin. Fresh coriander is used in salads and soups, meats and poultry. In the dried form it flavors wine, curries and other foods. We use it in chili. Because it was so commonly used it was to be tithed for the scribes and Pharisees. It served medicinally as a remedy for digestive disorders (diarrhea and flatulence) and was inhaled to relieve dizziness.

Manadrake (Skullcap) 2 Kings 4:39

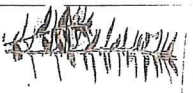
The fruit of the manadrake, which resembles an egg, was considered a fertility fruit in the time of Rachel and Leah (Gen 30:14-16). This might be because its root looks like the form of a man. It can be hard to grow because the seedlings are tasty to snails and slugs.

Melons (Watermelons) Numbers 11:5

When living on manuwa in the desert, the Israelites fondly remembered the refreshment they enjoyed from watermelons. Watermelons require abundant water and heat to bear their luscious fruit. The trailing vines grow best in soil rich in manure. Periodic cutting of the vines will stimulate flowering and more fruit.

Myrtle (Dwarf Myrtle) Nehemiah 8:14-15

For the Feast of Tabernacles the Israelites were to build and live in booths outdoors so they would remember their flight from Egypt. Myrtle branches were used on the roof of these booths. Its leaves are fragrant and shiny due to tiny oil glands. The summertime flowers are white, star shaped and produce an edible olive like fruit. Myrtles will not survive a hard winter and when planted in full sun will produce abundant flowers. They are evergreens in the Holy Land and can be found growing wild on hillsides in either dry or moist soil.



Mint (Spear-mint) Matthew 23:23

This herb is aggressive in the garden, so should be grown in a contained area. It appreciates some shelter from full summer sun. It was used to season food and tea and continues to be used that way today. It was so much a part of life that it was tithed for the scribes and Pharisees.



Mustard Matthew 13:31-32

The hot oily seeds of the annual mustard plant are used to make mustard. Before going to seed they produce masses of very bright yellow flowers. Tender young seedlings can be used in salads.



Myrrh (Cistus) Rock Rose Genesis 43:11

Myrrh is a ladanum resin obtained from certain rock-roses. The leaves, stems and sepals are sticky and shiny, at least during the summer. This resin is used medicinally and in perfumery, including incense-burning and is one of the gifts the magi brought to celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus.

Ole Tree 1 Kings 13:14 Oaks vary in size and are both evergreen and deciduous. Some species have prickly leaves and others are lobed. In the Bible, oaks and Terabith trees are often confused.

Oleaster (Olive Tree) Genesis 8:11

While olives and olive oil were a staple of the Israelite diet, the oil was also used in lamps, ointments, and in oil for anointing. Long-lived trees, it is believed that some living when Jesus walked Palestine, remain today. The olive tree is grown in a grove. The garden of Gethsemane, on the mount of Olives, means the garden of the oil press. The less desirable wild form is called an oleaster.

Onion Numbers 11:5

Onions are in the same family as leeks and garlic. They are used in cooking and are a cool season crop. The Israelites became fond of them while in Egypt.

Pomegranate 1 Samuel 14:2

The scarlet flowers of this deciduous shrub yield a large fruit loaded with seeds which are very refreshing. It will bloom much of the summer. When "happy" it can become a nice size tree. It was also the figure used to decorate the hem of the priest's robe.

Reed (Horsetail Reed) Matthew 23:48

Reeds grow in water. On a windy day, they shake in the water. They are not strong, and are easily broken. They were used as arrows, pens, and measuring rods. They grow aggressively and should be segregated in a water environment.

Rose (Cecile Brunner) Isaiah 11:4-2

The dog-rose and the Phoenician rose grow in the Holy Land. They have white or light pink flowers.



Rosemary (Herb) Luke 11:42

Rosemary, a symbol of fidelity and remembrances once used in the holiest of Christian ceremonies. One story tells that the flowers were originally white but changed to blue when the Virgin Mary hung her cloak on the bush while fleeing from Herod's soldiers with the Christ child.



Rue (herb) Luke 11: 42

This grows wild as well in cultivation. Its leaves are highly fragrant. It is so pungent that it was used more as a medicinal for insect bites rather than to flavor food.

Salvia Exodus 25:34-32

The form of the Memerah is plant-like and resembles a wild rugged sage commonly seen in the Holy Land. It does not occur naturally in this continent, so common sage is substituted in Bible gardens. It can be raised by seeds or cuttings and needs to be pruned annually to control its size. The plant in Israel has blue flowers but the one grown here usually has pink flowers. The fragrant leaves were used in cooking.

Tamarisk Tree (Salt Cedar) Genesis 21:23

The tamarisk tree is mentioned in the life of King Saul. He was under one when he learned of David's rebellion. He was buried under one. This hardy tree has tiny flowers and very tiny leaves. The roots will grow very long in search of water so caution should be taken in selecting a place to plant it. It tolerates alkaline soil.

Terebinth (Pistachio) 2 Samuel 18:9 Genesis 43:11

This small tree produces resin prized as a balm. Balm was one of the gifts that Jacob's sons took as a gift to Egypt. It also produces a nut. The larger varieties look like oak trees. It could be a terebinth where Absalom's long hair was caught leading to his death by hanging. This is also known as the turpentine tree.

Typha (Papyrus) Exodus 2:3-5

This passage refers to the bulrush that is in the Typha family. It is a water plant that grows abundantly and should be contained to keep it from becoming a pest in the bog area.

Valerian. (Nard) John 12:3

An expensive perfume used by Mary to anoint Jesus' feet. This is from the Valerian family of herbs. The flowers are used in perfume and the roots are often ground, put in capsules and sold as a sedative or sleep aid.

Wormwood (Artemisia) Jeremiah 23:15

While fragrant, it is known for its bitterness. Revelation 8 uses it to describe bitter water. It is an attractive garden plant with its lacy gray green foliage. It is a hardy perennial in warm climates.

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Peggy Benson

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