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BIBLE HOUSE
OF
GRACE**

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Trees

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Trees.

OVERVIEW OF SYMBOLISMS

Depending on the context trees can signify:

- Abundant blessing, prosperity, and spiritual food (Ezekiel 34:27-29).
- Long life (Isaiah 65:22).
- Proud and lofty men.
- Shepherds of God's people.
- Strong nations and faithful believers.

VARIOUS TREES

- **Burnt up trees:** trees burnt up signify, great, powerful, and rich men and nations being destroyed.
- **Cedar and cypress trees:** being of great value, and resistant to decay, signify:
 - Heads of Israel and the faithful of Judah and Israel.
 - Inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah, especially when the words glorious trees are added.
 - Shepherds, priests and prophets of Judah and Israel.
- **Devour your cedars:** carry the idea of destroying worthless shepherds, and proud and lofty men.
- **Forest of trees:** symbolise: the entire nation of Judah and Israel, and nations and multitudes of people, especially when the word thick forests is added.
- **Fruitful trees:** signify those who delight in God's law and who are fruitful, and life, wisdom, and righteousness.
- **Fruitless trees:** signify, hypocrites, and those who pretend religion the rebellious to
- **Glorious trees,** signify, shepherds of Israel, and the faithful inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah, and by extension, every faithful believer.
- **Grass and trees:** when trees and grass are set together, the trees signify the great ones, while the grass in contrast signifies the common people.
- **Green olive tree:** signifies the faithful in the House of God.
- **Oak trees:** signifies strength, faithful kings, prophets, and shepherds of Israel.
- **Planted trees:** signified believers solidly established in their faith, as trees are solidly rooted in the ground.
- **Splendid trees:** signify, the faithful and glorious ones in God's Kingdom, and fruitfulness, safety, and pleasant shelter.

- **Strong trees:** signify great and strong kings, rulers, and nations.
- **Tree of life:** salvation and eternal life.
- **Uprooted trees:** trees that will be uprooted signify, the wicked and pretenders of the faith being cast away.
- **Waving trees:** signify trouble nations.
- **Woodcutters:** cut down mighty, strong, and tall trees, leaving forests barren, and trees that were once admired, tall and great lying dead on the surface of ground. Woodcutters signify; there is no longer any powerful ruler, nation or army remaining to go up against Israel.

FIG TREE

The Encyclopedia Britannica, states, the fig tree grows 1 to 12 metres (3 to 40 feet) high, and can be grown as a bush or a tree. It could produce two crops of figs, one in the winter and one in the summer. Scripturally, it is a symbol of the nation of Israel.

Good and bad figs: very good and ripe figs are likened to the faithful who obeyed the LORD, in contrast to this, very bad figs, especially those that could not be eaten, are likened to those who disobeyed the LORD and rebelled against him.

Figuratively: the fig tree is a symbol of those who belong to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. If they are obedient and bear fruit, they are likened to a good fig tree, in contrast to this, if they rebel and are fruitless, they are likened to a bad fig tree

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A fig tree that is withered to its roots: being the heads of the nation, the Pharisees, scribes' elders, and chief priests, represent Israel, but like the fruitless fig tree, they were barren and did not produce any fruit, for their religious system of legalism and formalism caused the nation to wither away from God to their roots, which is why they, and other hypocritical religious leaders are likened to a fig tree that is withered to its roots.

LAUREL TREE (ALSO CALLED THE BAY LAUREL TREE)

The laurel tree (the bay laurel tree) of biblical times grew in Israel. It can be a huge tree, reaching heights of (21 meters) (70 feet) and more and can be as wide as it is tall. It grew in Israel; is evergreen; produces white flowers and in the summer produces blueberry sized black fruits. Every part of the tree is loaded with aromatic volatile oils that have an appealing scent.

One of the leading features of the tree is that it stays nice and green no matter what the weather is like. Drought, torrential rains, and hot winds do nothing to alter its green coloration. The ancient Israelite society not only saw the laurel tree as being very much a symbol of their homeland, but also as a symbol of triumph over adversity and of people that survived, despite whatever was happening around them. All other ancient civilisations around the Mediterranean were also impressed with the laurel tree, the Greeks, the Romans and most esteemed citizens, priests, poets, heroes, and the like, used its leaves as headwear. The winners at the Pythian games as well as the Olympic games were given a head-dress of

bay laurel leaves to wear about town. It was also the symbol of triumph and military leaders would send a branch of laurel to their Emperor to let him know they had won the battle. The Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans all saw the bay laurel tree as a powerful plant. Every part of the tree, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, and roots were thought to contain power and were used to stimulate healing and protect from all sorts of dangers.

TEREBINTH TREE

- **Judges 16:11:** Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah.

The terebinth at Ophrah refers to some well-known oak tree still standing in the writer's days. There were two cities with the name Ophrah spoken of in Scripture, one in Benjamin. The other was a city in the tribe of Manasseh, about sixteen miles north of Jericho.

WAS CHRIST HANGED ON A TREE

Throughout history there have been sceptics who have used the following Scriptures to undermine the Bible, because traditional Christianity proclaims that Christ was crucified on a cross, yet Scripture says, he was hung on a tree.

- **Acts 5:30:** The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.
- **Acts 10:39:** We (the apostles) are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.
- **Galatians 3:13:** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.

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The argument of those who use these verses to undermine the Bible is futile, since what is important to God's eternal foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind is that Christ laid down his life for the world, and that he died and rose again to eternal glory, what he died on is irrelevant to God's plan, and makes not the slightest difference to the Christian message of salvation. Added to this the use of the word 'tree' and the 'cross' can be harmonised in the following two ways:

1. Since the word tree as used in these verses comes from the Greek word (xulon) which can refer to a literal tree or any other wooden article. Obviously, the cross was made from wood so in this sense it was simply a tree cut and chopped and made into the shape of a cross.
2. The words, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree' are cited from the book of Deuteronomy in which the civil law of that era stated:
 - **Deuteronomy 21:22-23:** If a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God.

These words were written in a time when men deserving death were hung on a tree and not crucified on a cross since crucifixion only began during the Roman era. Added to this Paul in (Gal 3:13) is not citing a prophecy of Christ, but a civil law that existed under Old Testament law, which means the expression hanged on a tree is simply a Jewish idiom that in this context means put to death as a criminal.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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