

THE INTERCONTINENTAL CHURCH OF GOD

SPECIFIC BIBLE STUDIES - BIBLE FOODS - BITTER HERBS

SUBJECT: Bible Foods -Bitter Herbs

HERBS

(hurb), (urb):

1. yaraq, "green thing" (Ex 10:15; Isa 15:6); a garden of herbs" (Deut 11:10; 1 Kings 21:2); "(a dinner, the margin portion of) herbs" (Prov 15:17).
2. `esebh; compare Arabic 'ushb, "herbage," "grass," etc.; "herbs yielding seed" (Gen 1:11); "herbage" for food (Gen 1:30; Jer 14:6); translated "grass" (Deut 11:15; Amos 7:2); "herbs" (Prov 27:25, etc.)..
3. deshe', translated "herb" (2 Kings 19:26; Prov 27:25; Isa 37:27; 66:14 the King James Version), but generally GRASS (which see)..
4. chatsir, vegetation generally, but translated GRASS (which see)..
5. 'oroth, 'owroth (plural only), "green plants" or "herbs." In 2 Kings 4:39 the Talmud interprets it to mean "colewort," but it may mean any edible herbs which had survived the drought. In Isa 26:19 the expression "dew of herbs" is in the margin translated "dew of light" which is more probable (see DEW), and the translation "heat upon herbs" (Isa 18:4 the King James Version) is in the Revised Version (British and American) translated "clear heat in sunshine.".
6. botane (Heb 6:7)..
7. lachana = yaraq (Matt 13:32). S.

BITTER HERBS

(hurbs), or (urbs) (merorim): Originally in the primitive Passover (Ex 12:8; Num 9:11) these were probably merely salads, the simplest and quickest prepared form of vegetable accompaniment to the roasted lamb. Such salads have always been favorites in the Orient. Cucumbers, lettuce, water-cress, parsley and endive are some of those commonly used. Later on the Passover ritual (as it does today) laid emphasis on the idea of "bitterness" as symbolical of Israel's lot in Egypt. In modern Palestine the Jews use chiefly lettuce and endive for the "bitter herbs" of their Passover. In Lam 3:15 the same word is used: "He hath filled me with bitterness merorim, he hath sated me with wormwood." Here the parallelism with "wormwood" suggests some plant more distinctly bitter than the mild salads mentioned above, such, for example, as the colocynth (*Citrullus colocynthus*) or the violently irritating squirting cucumber (*Ecballium elaterium*). (from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia)

Some Specific Herbs

1. Coriander.

When the children of Israel wandered in the desert and received manna for food, they described it as looking like coriander seed:

Now the manna was like coriander seed, of the color bdellium gum, and all the people went about, and gathered it, ground it in a mill, or beat it in a mortar, and boiled it in a pot, and made cakes thereof the taste of bread tempered with oil. And when the dew fell in the night upon the camp, the manna also fell with it(Num 11:7-9) Ever since, coriander (also known as cilantro) has been called "The healer from heaven"

Coriander is an annual plant of the carrot or parsley family and has pink or white flower clusters. The fruit consists of globular grayish-white colored seeds. It grew wild throughout Egypt, ancient Palestine and other countries in the region.

The seed have pleasant, aromatic oil. They are used as a spice or flavoring for pastries, meats, candies, salads, soups, curries and wine.

Chances are, none of the early peoples suffered from indigestion because coriander has been used for centuries as a treatment for minor stomach ailments. Unlike most medicines for digestive problems, coriander tastes great and has a warm fragrance like citrus and sage.

It's recommended for indigestion, flatulence and diarrhea. Externally. Its used to ease muscle and joint pain. Recently, scientists began looking at coriander as an anti-inflammatory treatment for arthritis. Other research has demonstrated that it reduces blood sugar levels, an indication that it may prove to be a useful sugar management tool for diabetics.

2. HYSSOP

Beginning with the Passover in Egypt, hyssop was often referred to in the Old Testament in connection with purified rites. David, for example, prayed to be purified with hyssop: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean... (Psalms 51:7)

Some modern scholars say that the hyssop of the Hebrew Scriptures may have been a type of marjoram. This plant -part of the mint family -is common in Palestine.

One variety of hyssop that grew abundantly in Israel and Sinai in biblical days is still used extensively by many people there today to flavor cooking and in medicinal teas.

The Romans brought hyssop from Middle East to Europe where even today hyssop tea is a standard home remedy for belief of rheumatism and respiratory complaints.

The hairs on the stem of the plant are often used to prevent blood from coagulating. Which explain why the Jews in Egypt were told to use it as the time of the Passover.

And you must take a bunch of hyssop and dip it into the blood in a basin and strike upon the upper part of the doorway and upon the two doorposts some of the blood... (Exodus 12:22)

The medicinal use of hyssop is found elsewhere in the New Testament:

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished.

(John 19:29-30)

Scientists have found that the herb contains several soothing camphor-like substances, which help loosen phlegm so it can be coughed up more easily.

King Solomon spoke of tees, from cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall...(1 Kings 4:33)

Hyssop is used in sprinkling blood on the doorpost before the Passover. (Exodus 12:22) Hyssop was used to offer to Jesus vinegar... (John 19:28)

3.MINT

The warm flavor of mint, due to the presence of characteristics essential oils, is well known to all of us today, just as it was to the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans of Bible times who used mints as medicines, as well as a flavoring.

Greek and Roman physicians used mint. They recommended adding it to milk to prevent spoilage and serving it after meals as a digestive aid. They also suggested hanging it in sick rooms to speed healing.

Several species of mint grew wild throughout the Holy land. Today, we know mint mainly as peppermint and spearmint. Modern herbalists recommend peppermint be taken straight or added to foods as a treatment for menstrual cramps, motion and morning sickness, colds, and flu, headache and heartburn, fever, and insomnia.

Medical experts also know that the mints are marvelous for treating dozens of problems. That's why mints, with their menthol contents, are found in many over-the counter remedies for indigestion, minor pain and congestion.

The mints are also anti-spasmodics. They soothe the muscles of the digestive tract and the uterus. But while peppermint may be good for nausea, it may also stimulate menstruation.