

~ALGUM (73)

[Hebrew, 'al-gum-mim', 'almug-gim']

- A tree included by Solomon in his request to Hiram of Tyre for timbers for the construction of the temple and from which stairs and supports as well as harps and stringed instruments were constructed.
- And send me timbers of cedar, juniper and **algum** from Lebanon, for I myself well know that your servants are experienced at cutting down the trees of Lebanon, and here my servants are together with your servants. (2 Chronicles 2:8)
- And, besides, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir brought timbers of **algum** trees and precious stones. (2 Chronicles 9:10)
- And the king proceeded to make out of the timbers of the **algum** trees stairs for the house of Yehowah and for the king's house and also harps and stringed instruments for the singers, and the like of them had never been seen before in the land of Judah. (2 Chronicles 9:11)
- And Hiram's fleet of ships that carried gold from Ophir also brought from Ophir timbers of **algum** trees in very great amount and precious stones. (1 Kings 10:11)
- And the king proceeded to make out of the timbers of the **algum** trees supports for the house of Yehowah and for the house of the king, and also harps and stringed instruments for the singers. Timbers of **algum** trees like this have not come in nor have they been seen down to this day. (1 Kings 10:12)
- The **algum** tree of this account cannot be identified with certainty. It is traditionally suggested to be the red sandalwood, *Pterocarpus santalinus*, now found in India and Ceylon, although some favor the white sandalwood, *Santalum album*, perhaps because of Josephus statement that **it is like pine wood but whiter and more gleaming**. [Jewish Antiquities, VIII, 177 [vii, 1]]
- The red sandalwood grows to heights of about 7.5 to 9 meters (25 to 30 feet) and has a hard, fine-grained, reddish-brown wood that takes a high polish. It is suggested as suitable for musical instruments

of the type mentioned in the Bible account. The wood has a sweet scent and is highly resistant to insects.

- The red sandalwood does not grow in Lebanon at the present time. However, the record is not definite whether the **algum** trees were native to Lebanon or not. At any rate, Hiram later saw fit to bring them from Ophir, and here again, the timbers may have been imports even in Ophir, as it was in position to act as a trading center dealing with India, Egypt, and other places in Africa.
- And Hiram's fleet of ships that carried gold from Ophir also brought from Ophir timbers of **algum** trees in very great amount and precious stones. (1 Kings 10:11)
- For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish on the sea along with Hiram's fleet of ships. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish would come carrying gold and silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks. (1 Kings 10:22)
- The rarity and preciousness of the wood delivered by Hiram is indicated by the statement that timbers of **algum** trees like this have not come in nor have they been seen down to this day.
- And the king proceeded to make out of the timbers of the **algum** trees supports for the house of Yehowah and for the house of the king, and also harps and stringed instruments for the singers. Timbers of **algum** trees like this have not come in nor have they been seen down to this day. (1 Kings 10:12)