

~GARLIC (31)

[Hebrew, *shu-mim*]

- A bulbous perennial plant, *Allium sativum*, the strong-scented, pungent-tasting bulb of which is composed of up to 20 smaller bulbs, or cloves. The flower stalk of **garlic**, bearing tiny bulblets and sterile flowers, at times may attain a height of 0.3 meters (1 foot) or more.
- The indications are that **garlic** was extensively cultivated in ancient Egypt. In the wilderness the mixed crowd and the Israelites longed for the garlic they used to eat there.
- And the mixed crowd that was in the midst of them expressed selfish longing, and the sons of Israel too began to weep again and say; Who will give us meat to eat? (**Numbers 11:4**)
- How we remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers and the watermelons and the leeks and the onions and the **garlic**! (**Numbers 11:5**)
- The Greek historian **Herodotus** [II, 125] tells of an inscription that listed **garlic** as one of the foods provided for the laborers on a certain pyramid.
- **Garlic** is still widely used by the inhabitants of Mediterranean areas. In the **Mishnah** [Nedarim 3:10], the Jews referred to themselves as **garlic-eaters**. **Garlic** has been used medically as a digestive stimulant, as an antibiotic, and as an antispasmodic.