

~LABDANUM (38)
(lab'da-num)

- A soft, black or dark-brown gum that exudes from the leaves and branches of several varieties of *Cistus*, or rockrose. The gum has a bitter taste but a fragrant odor.
- It is used in perfumes and, at one time, was also extensively employed in medicine. With reference to this substance the ancient Greek historian *Herodotus* [III, 112] wrote; *It is gathered from the beards of he-goats, where it is found sticking like gum, having come from the bushes on which they browse.*
- It is used in many sorts of unguents, ointments, and is what the Arabs burn chiefly as incense. [Translation by G. Rawlinson.]
- The Hebrew word *nekho 'th'* designates this item carried by a caravan of Ishmaelites to whom Joseph was sold and one of the fine products that Jacob told his sons to take as a gift to one who was ruler in Egypt.
- Then they sat down to eat bread. When they raised their eyes and took a look, why, here was a caravan of Ishmaelites that was coming from Gilead, and their camels were carrying **labdanum** and balsam and resinous bark, on their way to take it down to Egypt. (**Genesis 37:25**)
- So Israel their father said to them; If, then, that is the case, do this: Take the finest products of the land in your receptacles and carry them down to the man as a gift, a little balsam, and a little honey, **labdanum** and resinous bark, pistachio nuts and almonds. (**Genesis 43:11**)
- *Nekho 'th'* has been variously rendered, **spices** KJ, **gum**, AT, RS, **tragacanth**, Da, **resin**, Mo, and, as defined by Koehler and Baumgartner, **labdanum**, NW. [Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, Leiden, 1958, p. 615]