

## ~LAUREL (32)

[Hebrew, 'o'ren]

- An evergreen, often growing as a shrub but capable of heights up to some 15 meters (50 feet). The entire tree, leaves, bark, roots, and fruit, contains an oil long employed in medicine. The leaves are oblong and leathery, with a glossy upper side.
- This tree is mentioned as the last of several trees in;
- There is one whose business is to cut down cedars, and he takes a certain species of tree, even a massive tree, and he lets it become strong for himself among the trees of the forest. He planted the **laurel** tree, and the pouring rain itself keeps making it get big. (**Isaiah 44:14**)
- It is the only reference to the tree in the **Hebrew Scriptures**. **Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros** [by L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, Leiden, 1958, p. 88] identifies the name with the **laurel** tree, *Laurus nobilis*, also commonly called the **sweet bay tree**.
- **The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible**, edited by G. A. Buttrick, 1962, Vol. 2, p. 293] **The *Laurus nobilis* is found from the coast on up into the middle mountain regions of Palestine and grows in other Mediterranean countries as well.**
- **Laurel** leaves were used by the ancient Greeks to form wreaths, which they placed on the heads of victors in the Pythian Games and also extended to those holding certain offices as a symbol of distinction.