

## ~PITCH (62)

[Hebrew, *ze'pheth*, Greek, *a-sphal-to'pis-sa*]

- The **sticky, liquid form of bitumen**, a dark-colored hydrocarbon similar to what is generally called tar. It is translated from the Hebrew word *ze'pheth*.

### See Also BITUMEN

- Mineral **pitch** is **highly flammable** and, unless kept well supplied with air, gives **off great quantities of smoke when burning**. Filling Edom's torrents with **pitch** and causing the land to become **burning pitch** with smoke ascending to time indefinite would be a fitting picture of devastating destruction.
- And her torrents must be changed into **pitch**, and her dust into sulphur, and her land must become as **burning pitch**. (**Isaiah 34:9**)
- By night or by day it will not be extinguished, to time indefinite its smoke will keep ascending. From generation to generation she will be parched, forever and ever no one will be passing across her. (**Isaiah 34:10**)
- This description also helps to identify the substance, for Edom was near the Dead Sea, and even today bitumen is occasionally washed up on its shores, evidently coming from deposits now covered by the sea.
- According to;
- When she was no longer able to conceal him, she then took for him an ark of papyrus and coated it with **bitumen** and **pitch** and put the child in it and put it among the reeds by the bank of the river Nile. (**Exodus 2:3**)
- The papyrus ark in which Moses was concealed was coated with both, **bitumen** and **pitch**. Jewish commentator Rashi suggested that this meant **bitumen** on the inside and **pitch** on the outside. Or it could mean a mixture of two different consistencies of the same basic substance. For instance, in **The Land and the Book**, **W. M. Thomson** suggests that;

- When she was no longer able to conceal him, she then took for him an ark of papyrus and coated it with **bitumen** and **pitch** and put the child in it and put it among the reeds by the bank of the river Nile. (**Exodus 2:3**)
- Reveals the process by which they prepared the **bitumen**. The mineral, as found in this country, melts readily enough by itself, but then, when cold, it is as brittle as glass.
- It must be mixed with **tar** while melting, and in that way it forms a hard, glassy wax, perfectly impervious to water. [Revised by J. Grande, 1910, p. 200]
- The **Greek Septuagint** uses the single **Greek** term *a-sphal-to'pis-sa*, a mixture of **asphalt** and **pitch**. In parts of the Middle East, mineral **pitch** has been used even in recent times as a coating for certain sailing vessels.