

~TAMARISK (92)

[Hebrew, 'e'shel]

- The **tamarisk** grows as a tree or shrub. Though its trunk is gnarled, the branches are often wandlike, giving the tree a feathery appearance.
- The evergreen leaves are tiny, scalelike, and pressed close to the branches, so they lose very little moisture by transpiration, enabling the trees to live in desert regions and even on sand dunes. In spring the tree blossoms with spikes of tiny pink or white flowers, which give welcome color to otherwise barren regions.
- Salt-loving tamarisks will often grow very near the ocean and on salt marshes. Abundant **tamarisks** along the banks of the Jordan form junglelike thickets that are the habitat of wild animals, and in Bible times they may have helped compose the proud thickets along the Jordan where lions once found cover.
- Look! Someone will come up just like a lion from the proud thickets along the Jordan to the durable abiding place, but in a moment I will make him run away from her. And the one who is chosen I shall appoint over her. For who is like me, and who will challenge me, and who, now, is the shepherd that can stand before me? (**Jeremiah 49:19**)
- Listen! The howling of shepherds, for their majesty has been despoiled. Listen! The roaring of maned young lions, for the proud thickets along the Jordan have been despoiled. (**Zechariah 11:3**)
- Though the **tamarisk** is generally of relatively low height, one kind of tamarisk tree, *Tamarix aphylla*, sometimes grows to a height of 18 meters (60 feet). Abraham is recorded as having planted a **tamarisk** at Beer-sheba.
- After that he planted a **tamarisk** tree at Beersheba and called there upon the name of Yehowah the indefinitely lasting God. (**Genesis 21:33**)
- King Saul sat in the shade of a **tamarisk** at Gibeah.

- And Saul got to hear that David and the men that were with him had been discovered, while Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the **tamarisk** tree on the high place with his spear in his hand and all his servants stationed about him. (**1 Samuel 22:6**)
- And his bones and those of his sons were buried under a large **tamarisk** tree in Jabesh-gilead.
- And Saul got to hear that David and the men that were with him had been discovered, while Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the **tamarisk** tree on the high place with his spear in his hand and all his servants stationed about him. (**1 Samuel 22:6**)
- So all the valiant men rose up and carried off the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons and brought them to Jabesh and buried their bones under the big tree in Jabesh, and they went fasting for seven days. (**1 Chronicles 10:12**)
- Where the **Hebrew** word for big tree, '*e-lah*' is used.
- **Dr. Joseph Weitz**, a noted authority on reforestation in Israel, said, The first tree Abraham put in the soil of Beersheba was a **tamarisk**. Following his lead, four years ago we put out two million in the same area. Abraham was right. The **tamarisk** is one of the few trees we have found that thrives in the south where yearly rainfall is less than six inches. [**The Readers Digest**, March 1954, p. 30]
- Another type of **tamarisk**, *Tamarix mannifera*, when pierced by a scale insect, exudes drops of honeylike sap that are gathered and sold to pilgrims in some places as manna.
- This has no relation, however, to the manna provided for Israel in the wilderness, since such true manna was miraculously provided and gathered from the ground.
- Accordingly it occurred that in the evening the quails began to come up and cover the camp, and in the morning there had developed a layer of dew round about the camp. (**Exodus 16:13**)
- In time the layer of dew evaporated and here upon the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flaky thing, fine like hoarfrost upon the earth. (**Exodus 16:14**)
- When the sons of Israel got to see it, they began to say to one

another; What is it? For they did not know what it was. Hence Moses said to them; It is the bread that Yehowah has given you for food. (**Exodus 16:15**)