

The symbolism of the Cedar

We read in the Holy Writings "Now Hiram the King of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire, that then King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee." Lebanon is famous for the cedars, which besides being used in K.S.T., according to legend were also used in the construction of Noah's Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, the cross on which Christ was crucified and in the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel.

Cedars were especially abundant in Biblical times, but there is more symbolism attached to cedars. For example, cedars produce purple cones, purple is the symbol of royalty. Cedars are famous for lasting a long time (the roof of the temple of Apollo is said to have lasted 1170 years), and that they are indestructible by rot or borers, hence being compared to immortality and incorruptibility. The ancient Egyptians used it to coffins for their mummies, the Romans carved many of their gods and ancestors using cedar. Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria (412-444 AD) likened the cedar to the flesh of Christ which remained unspoiled. Only the wrath of God was said to be mightier than cedar "The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars....." (Psalm 29:5).

The cedar is prominently displayed on the national flag of Lebanon, where, ironically, it is close to extinction