



## Olive (الزيتون • Il-zaytoon)

The olive tree is sacred in Palestine. A source of agricultural, ecological, and economic strength, Palestinians from each area of Palestine gather to help local farmers harvest each late October/early November. Many Palestinians press their olives to make olive oil that lasts them the whole year. There is often celebration surrounding the olive harvest, with traditional singing, dancing, and dress. Olive trees are ecologically special in their wide root system, which promotes healthy soil and allows a diverse intake of nutrients. Some of the oldest olive trees in Palestine date back to before Jesus's time, and the olive trees still standing in the Gethsemane garden in Jerusalem are said to be the same ones Jesus sat under with his disciples. Many Palestinians hold a special love for the olive trees, as many trees have offered harvest for several generations of the same family.



## Fig (التين • Il-teen)

The fig is mentioned many times in the bible, including several appearances in Jesus's parables. There are eight types of figs that grow in Palestine, and they ripen at different times throughout the year. Roots of fig trees, like olive trees, aerate and add nutrients to the soil, which encourages growth of other native plants. Figs are expensive, so farmers who have fig trees can make a good profit off of a fruitful tree. Some families make jams or dried goods with their figs, but many agree they are best when fresh and ripe. Because figs attract small gnats and flies that might endanger smaller crops, some Palestinian farmers plant fig trees in the corner of their fields, so the pests stay away from the weaker crops and are confined to the corner. Figs are believed to have healing properties for stomach pains, and are an excellent source of fiber. Older fig trees can grow to be quite tall, and their wide expansive leaves help us understand the safety from heat and sun a fig tree might provide as the prophet Micah wrote,

“but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken” (Micah 4:4).”





## Poppy (ورد الحنون • ward il-hanoon)

The poppy flower's bright red hues dot lush green hillsides throughout Palestine in the spring. For many, this flower represents a national identity--a connection to the land. Both Western scientific and native traditional sources cite the poppy as having medicinal properties that can relieve cold and cough symptoms. Culturally, some locals believe poppies show up where someone has died on that particular spot, and blooms as a testament to their life. While poppies are not explicitly named in the Bible, some believe that Apostle Peter may have been referring to them when he wrote of the "flowers of the field" in 1 Peter 1:24.





## Grapes (العنب • Il-'anab)

Grapes are mentioned around 70 times in the Bible (depending on translation) and even “star” in some of Jesus’s parables. Generally, grapes can mean a symbol of prosperity and fortune. There are cities in the Bible named after fruit, including one for grape “Anab”, which means “grape” in both Arabic and Hebrew, and is close to the Aramaic (which was spoken in Biblical times)-- “Anaba”. In Palestine today, grapes are a sweet summer snack, as well as the basis for many vineyards which make and sell wine throughout historic Palestine and Israel. Palestinians use grapes to make juice, season meat, molasses, and raisins. They also make a famous dish called “waraq-diwali”, which uses the grape leaves as a wrap with seasoned rice and meat. Grapes are another symbol for Palestinian connection to the land, and you can find grape imagery in ancient mosaic and tatreez (embroidery) art in Palestine.