

Appendix C

Historical Presence



Olive oil has long been considered sacred. The olive branch was often a symbol of abundance, glory and peace. The leafy branches of the olive tree were ritually offered to deities and powerful figures as emblems of benediction and purification, and they were used to crown the victors of friendly games and bloody wars. Today, olive oil is still used in many religious ceremonies. Over the years, the olive has been the symbol of peace, wisdom, glory, fertility, power and purity.



Egypt

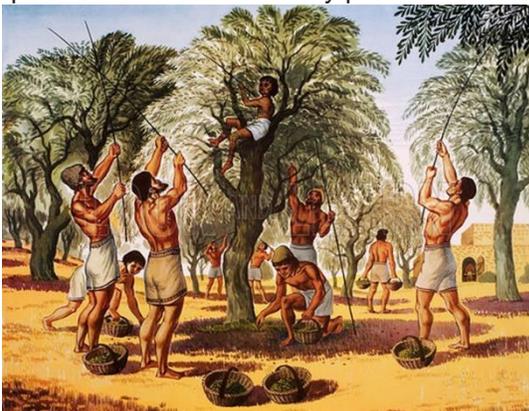
Leafy branches of the olive tree were found in Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt.

Israel

The olive was one of the main elements in ancient Israelite cuisine. Olive oil was used for not only food and cooking, but also lighting, sacrificial offerings, ointment, and anointment for priestly or royal office.

Hebrew Bible

The olive tree is one of the first plants mentioned in the Hebrew Bible and in the Christian Old Testament, and one of the most significant. It was an olive leaf that a dove brought back to Noah to demonstrate that the flood was over (Book of Genesis, 8:11). The olive is listed as one of the seven species that are noteworthy products of the Land of Israel.

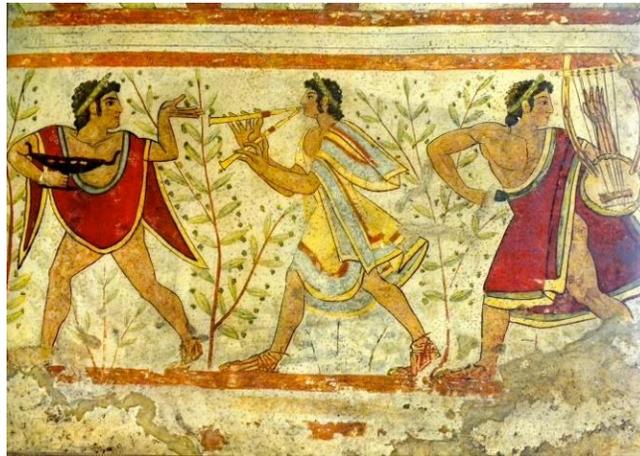


Greeks

The ancient Greeks used to smear olive oil on their bodies and hair as a matter of grooming and good health. Olive oil was used to anoint kings and athletes in ancient Greece. It was burnt in the sacred lamps of temples as well as being the "eternal flame" of the original Olympic Games. Victors in these games were crowned with its leaves. The olive was sacred to Athena and appeared on the Athenian coinage.

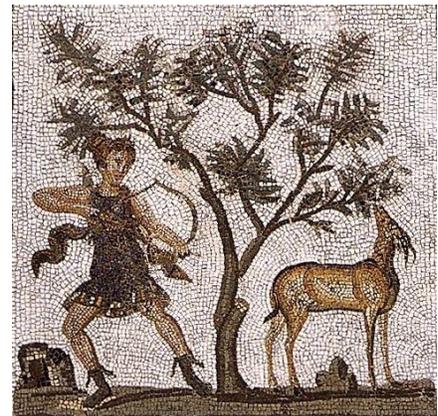
Rome

According to Pliny the Elder, a vine, a fig tree and an olive tree grew in the middle of the Roman Forum; the latter was planted to provide shade (the garden plot was recreated in the 20th century).



New Testament

The Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem is mentioned several times in the New Testament. The Allegory of the Olive Tree in St. Paul's Epistle of the Romans (which reappears in greatly expanded form in the Book of Jacob in the Book of Mormon) refers to the scattering and gathering of Israel. It compares the Israelites to a tame olive tree and the Gentiles to a wild olive branch. The olive tree itself, as well as olive oil and olives, play an important role in the Bible.



Islam

The olive tree and olive oil are mentioned seven times in the Quran and the olive is praised as a precious fruit. Olive tree and olive-oil health benefits have been propounded in Prophetic medicine. Muhammad is reported to have said: "Take oil of olive and massage with it – it is a blessed tree" (Sunan al-Darimi, 69:103). Olives are substitutes for dates (if not available) during Ramadan fasting, and olive tree leaves are used as incense in some Muslim Mediterranean countries.

