

Place of Worship and Prayer

Scripture Reading — Genesis 21:22-34

Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the Lord, the Eternal God. — Genesis 21:33

In the center of Freetown, Sierra Leone, an enormous cotton tree (kapok tree) stands as a reminder of liberty and how freed American slaves, when they returned to Africa by way of Nova Scotia, gathered in its shade to worship and pray.

Abraham set up a significant land-mark when he planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, which was a new and foreign territory for him. Genesis 21 notes that Abraham lived there in Philistine territory for a long time. And after he formed a treaty with the Philistines in Beersheba, it became a place of worship where he called on the name of the Lord, the Eternal God.

The tamarisk is also known as the terebinth tree, which has a cooling effect during the day because it secretes salt and tiny water droplets, creating a fine, cooling mist.

There Abraham called on the name of the Lord, who blessed him. And Abraham became a blessing to others.

Because trees often live for a long time, they can help us remember God's faithfulness. So planting a tree can give us a forward-looking perspective, and it can also bless future generations. Planting a tree can also inspire hope for the future, especially when we know that we will live eternally with God on the new earth someday (Revelation 21-22).

Prayer

Eternal God, our guide and protector, bring us through whatever situations we live in, and lead us each day to call on your name. May we also be a blessing to the people around us, serving as your faithful witnesses wherever we are. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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