



Links Players

Wilderness Images: Part 2

I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive. I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane, and the pine together, that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it. (Isaiah 41:19-20 ESV)

The oldest continuous LPGA golf event is played annually in the Portland, Oregon area, with Columbia Edgewater Golf Course hosting most of these tournaments since 1972.

The menacing characteristics of Columbia Edgewater are the predominant trees protecting the fairways and greens: giant sequoias, cypress, willows, and other evergreen species. While magnificent in beauty, these trees are relentless in the face of errant golf shots.

The harsh Judean wilderness is not lined with enormous trees, but there are trees crucial for survival that provide shade, provisions, and hope.

The broom tree appears when Elijah traveled into the wilderness and sat down under a broom tree (1 Kings 19:4). This small, modest bush has slender green stems, sparse leaves, and just enough shade for a weary traveler.

The broom tree reminds us that God's care comes as just enough shelter, just enough rest, and just enough strength as we walk through wilderness seasons.

The acacia tree is strong, thorny, and resilient, thriving in dry desert conditions. The acacia grows at the end of a wadi (canyon). It can look dead for a long season and then spring back to life unexpectedly. It is known as a gift of the desert.

This durable wood is rot-resistant and was used in the tabernacle and sacred furnishings. It also burns long and hot.

The acacia tree produces a sap used as a salve and for medicinal purposes. The tree produces little pods that, when boiled, become feed for livestock.

When facing a wilderness season, the acacia's endurance and resilience remind us to keep going, keep showing up, keep being faithful. What looks dead can flourish again.

The tamarisk tree is graceful and feathery, with fine branches and tiny, scale-like leaves, and it has a remarkable ability to survive in arid, salty soil.

This magnificent tree requires cultivation and grows slowly. Decades pass before it reaches maturity, with shade providing shelter from the wilderness heat.

When Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba (Genesis 21), he was doing so for his future generations. Abraham knew he would never benefit from the shade of his tamarisk tree.

When we walk through wilderness seasons, experiencing the shade, provision, and hope from God and others, we are to offer the same to others.

Where are you giving just enough shade to a fellow traveler? How are you being a gift of the desert? And, where are you planting seeds for your future generations?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your shade, provision, and hope in the good and harsh seasons of life.

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