

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

The Queen of All Herbs



Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; [for] thou shalt not be cured. – Jeremiah 46:11

The ancient Greeks called it the "queen of all herbs." The earliest mention of this common shrub refers to its medicinal value.

The peonies with which most of us are familiar are painstakingly developed hybrids. Greece, as well as much of the rest of the world's temperate zone, offers many species of wild peony. It gets its name from the Greek god, Paeon, who was, in legend, a follower of the Greek god of medicine. According to the myth, Paeon used the healing properties of the peony to heal Pluto after he was injured in the Trojan War. This made the Greek god of medicine jealous, and he wanted to kill Paeon. To save Paeon's life, says the legend, Pluto changed Paeon into a peony plant.

According to medicinal encyclopedias dating back as far as the first century A.D., the peony was thought to offer a cure for lunacy and epilepsy. Peony roots were said to offer medication for kidney and bladder problems, and abdominal pains. The seeds were said to be effective against nightmares and hysteria. Medical research may someday confirm that the ancients understood more about the medicinal effects of the peony than science does today. Is it possible that such knowledge was originally given by God to Adam and Eve?

Ref: Julie Miller. 1984. "Greek Portraits of a Queen." *Science News*, Vol. 126, July 28, pp. 56-57.

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