

The Cedars of God and Godliness

❖ Before Christ (BC)

Holiness has always been present in this forest since God created the first man.

- The Old Testament states that Adam resided in the forest during summer where he provided the sacrifices after that God planted the trees of the forest with his hands.
- The prophet Noah cut branches from the Cedars of God and made wooden panels of them to construct his ship.
- One of the Cedar trunks was used in the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified above the Golgotha of Jerusalem.
- The cedar was mentioned 75 times in the 18 books of the Torah, being the king of trees and the master of the forests for its immortal features and its relationship with God the Creator.
- Ancient peoples used cedar wood to build temples (as that of Solomon), castles, tombs (most famously "Karnak" the city of the dead during the era of the Pharaohs) and valuable gifts.
- Adonis, the god, was named the "Cedar" god after that the people consecrated the cedars.

❖ After Christ (AC)

With the expansion of Christianity, the pagan symbols were eradicated and thus:

- Jesus Christ's cradle was made of cedar wood given that Saint Joseph was a carpenter.
- The chair that Jesus sat upon in the temple of Jerusalem as well as the altar and all furniture are made of cedar wood.
- The legendary forest became a shrine that people visit to pray and to make vows.
- The myrrh of the cedar was used as incense in their religious ceremonies, its oil to protect against mold and its wood was used in the construction of churches, altars, sacred utensils and gifts.
- The cedars were considered sacred, and they were used to expel evil spirits. They were also considered to bring blessings, heal diseases and cure epidemics.
- The Virgin Mary was named "Lebanon's Cedar".
- The Transfiguration feast: the forest of the Cedars of God kept its sanctity throughout generations, not being influenced by religious contradictions, military sweeps and political

differences that the people of the surrounding area went through.

Its sanctity is stated loud and clear in the Old Testament and it remarkably increased with the presence of Christianity and became more engraved with the presence of the Maronites.

The Transfiguration feast, which takes place on the sixth of August, is one of the most important holidays celebrated in the Church of the Transfiguration located within the legendary forest. It is a feast where celebrations filled with hymns, masses, poetry and so on take place around the clock.