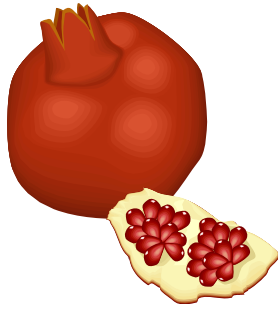


By Althea R. DeBrule



The pomegranate, a Persian native, is one of the oldest and most unusual fruits known to man.

Ancient Romans not only enjoyed the succulent flesh of this fruit, they also tanned and used the rinds as a form of leather.

Few fruits have as many myths associated with them as pomegranates. The ancient Greeks, for example, believed that the pomegranate was given to them by Zeus as a reward for their devotion to him, and many Arabs and Bedouins believed that the tree had power over evil spirits.

It was a tree under which one could sleep in safety and security. Ancient Egyptians were buried with pomegranates in hope of rebirth. Guests at Chinese weddings were served sugared seeds, and when it was time to consummate the marriage, pomegranates were thrown on the floor of the bedchamber to encourage a happy and fruitful union.

Berber women used pomegranates to predict the amount of their offspring by drawing a circle on the ground and dropping a ripe pomegranate in the center. The amount of seeds expelled outside the ring allegedly prophesied the number of her future children.

Perhaps the most charming of all myths is that which states that in each pomegranate fruit, one seed has come

down from paradise. Even today, many Christian and Jewish mystics believe that the pomegranate tree is the true Tree of Knowledge and that it was a pomegranate and not an apple with which the serpent tempted Adam and Eve.

Mentioned in the Bible as one of the five fruit trees indigenous to the Holy Land, the pomegranate has served as a source of artistic inspiration for many centuries. The golden bells that ornamented the Holy Temple in Jerusalem were shaped like pomegranates and their design often appears on mosaic floors, carved in stone on friezes and on ancient coins. In early Christian art, the appearance of the pomegranate symbolized eternal life and a fine example of this is seen in Bethlehem on the floor of the cave of the Church of the Nativity.



Pomegranates look like big red apples with little crowns on top.

When ripe, the fruit is about the size of an orange, has a thick jacket enveloping the pulp, is maroon in color and has many ruby-colored seeds. Syrup made from the pomegranate seeds is known as grenadine, a non-alcoholic red liquid often used for coloring in cocktails.

Because of the fruit's princely blossom crown, it has gained distinction as a royal fruit. With its abundance of seeds as many (as 100 per fruit), the

pomegranate has long been a symbol of fertility and bounty, particularly to those of the Jewish faith.

### 3 Things to Remember about the Pomegranate

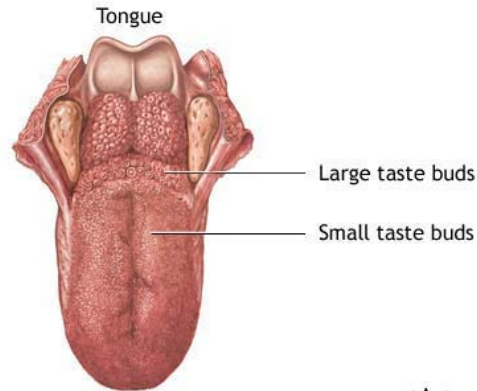
1. **The seeds are the fruit.** We tend to spit out the seeds of most fruits, but when eating a pomegranate, the seeds have a fresh, sweet and sour, very pleasant taste, but an astringent smell.
2. **Eat At Your Own Risk!** Those who dwell in hot, thirsty lands especially love the pomegranate, which is considered a refreshing delicacy. One should, however, take care, for pomegranate juice is extremely concentrated and when consumed in too-large quantities can affect the blood pressure or cause dizziness.
3. **Pomegranates Need To Be Controlled.** Pomegranate seeds germinate readily even when merely thrown onto the surface of loose soil. Quite often, when a branch of the tree has been broken off and planted in soil, within a few months fruit begins to grow.

### T-T-T Taming The Tongue

Now, let's change perspectives and look at T-T-T or **TAMING THE TONGUE**. We are told that the tongue, signifying how we speak, can control and effect the direction of our lives. It is a small part of the body that can do so much good, and yet sometimes get us into very big trouble. Although never easy, and much more difficult for some of us, controlling the tongue may be one of the most important keys to happiness and success.

Words have great healing power. They are like water and can be a pure spring of life-giving substance, or they can be

a septic tank of contamination. A few apt words can change a sad expression to a happy one. What a joy it is to see someone cheered up by truthful encouragement.



 ADAM.

### How is the tongue like a pomegranate?

Remember the three key things about the pomegranate?

1. **The seeds are the fruit.** Words are the seeds of the tongue. They can wound or build up. Scripture says that, "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24). With our words, we hurt ourselves as well as our relationships with others.
2. **Speak At Your Own Risk!** Words are powerful and extremely concentrated! God spoke the world into being with His words. When spoken in too-large quantities, our words can affect emotions and attitudes. Again, the book of Proverbs states, "Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue" (17:28).
3. **Words Need To Be Controlled.** Words germinate readily when spoken. We must be careful in what

we say and how we say it. What comes out of our mouths reflects what is in our hearts! So this isn't a matter of simply biting our tongues!!! This is a matter of checking our hearts and watching where our word seeds land!

### So how do you T-T-T?

By making a commitment right now—at this very moment to:

1. **Refuse to participate in, hear or tolerate negative things** said about another person. If you will speak up, people will stop including you in the negative conversations.
2. **Build up instead of tearing down** by allowing words of praise and encouragement to come out of your mouth. Remember that the tone and attitude behind your words do far greater damage sometimes than even the words themselves.
3. **Think positively.** Look to the bright side. Develop a "can do" attitude. A positive mental attitude brings you contentment and brightens your personality.
4. **Practice being patient.** When you are stuck in line or in traffic, ask yourself if a few more minutes matters. Be honest -- does it really matter? If so, and you have no control of the situation, plan the rest of your day or do the thinking that you say you never have time to do. Talk to someone, even a stranger in line with you.
5. **Learn to cope.** We live in an imperfect world, yet our expectations continually increase. Each day can be filled with aggravations, delays, disappointments and frustrations. The fact is we have to deal with them anyway. So learn to cope. Consider even the smallest annoyance a challenge, and feel proud of yourself for taking care of it cheerfully and efficiently.
6. **Stop complaining.** Before you start griping or whining about something, remind yourself of a very important reality: no one wants to hear it! Why would they? Avoid complaining about matters that you and the people with you have no control over. For all other complaints, try to offer a rational solution. Others will admire your common sense, wisdom and calm approach to the problem.
7. **Make your point politely.** Think of the response to what you are about to say, and decide if you need to re-word your statement to be more effective. Take the time to make your point in a mature and convincing manner.
8. **Think of what you should have said.** It is easy to blurt out an inappropriate word at an inappropriate time, or to bark out a tactless or tasteless remark before you have a chance to consider the impact. Think of what you could have said. Simply say the words you wish you had said. If you make a statement that you later realize was negative, confrontational or rude, think of how you could have phrased the statement. Over time, these exercises will train you to think and act differently.
9. **Work at it.** It takes practice, support from others, and a true desire to be a better person -- not only by controlling your tongue, but the emotions that prompt you to speak negatively. When you are on your way to a situation you know will test your temper and your tongue, plan

ahead what you will say and how  
you will say it.

“A WORD APTLY SPOKEN IS LIKE  
(POMEGRANATES) OF GOLD IN SETTINGS  
OF SILVER.” (Prov 25:11)

*Althea R. DeBrule is the developer of ChristianCareerTools.com. She has over 30 years leadership experience both domestically and internationally in human resources and executive development. ChristianCareerTools.com is dedicated to helping individuals reach their professional potential by helping them manage their careers according to Biblical principals. We help career-minded professionals set a course and establish processes for achieving goals. And because conditions are ever changing, we provide the concrete tools to be responsive.*

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