

ONEG SHABBAS

THE UNOFFICIAL PARASHAH SHEET FOR KIDDUSH CLUBS

פרשת בשלח - VOL. 2, ISS. 2 - י"ג שבט תשפ"ג

What Will We Drink?

Not once, but twice do we encounter incidents in this week's Torah portion whereby our ancestors struggle to find potable water (Ex. 15:22-25 and Ex. 17:1-7). This gives rise to a simple, yet important, two-word question "מה ונשתה What will we drink?" (Ex. 15:24). This is certainly an important question to always ask, as humans need potable drinking water. And this question comes at a point of great concern for our ancestors - now that we have escaped from Egypt, how are we going to survive in a desert?

While this is certainly a valid concern, especially considering that our parashah tells us "**וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לִשְׁתֹּת מִים מִמְּרֹה כִּי מַرְיִם הֵם** they were not able to drink water of Marah, since the water was bitter" (Ex. 15:23). This is clearly a matter of concern. We can also imagine how utterly frustrating this must have been: while wandering in the desert, they actually chance upon water, which is wonderful! Yet, those waters are non-potable, which is deeply unfortunate. This then yields a frustrated question of their complaining - **וַיֹּלְאֻנּוּ הָעָם עַל-מֹשֶׁה** "And then the nation complained against Moshe" (Ex. 15:24) - about this undrinkable water situation.



However, was this the best way to deal with this concern? Perhaps not, as one of our leading first-century sages pointed out: "**ר' יהושע אומר היה להם לישראל שביהם תחלה לומר**" Rabbi Yehoshua says: 'They should have taken counsel with their leader (Moses) first as to what they should drink. Instead, they took him to task' (Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 15:24).

This important point by Rabbi Yehoshua is an observation not to simply attack, but reach out to him and see how they could work together on finding appropriately potable water. What good does complaining about an insufficient drinking situation when one can actually work towards improving it? Perhaps a broader lesson from Rabbi Yehoshua's wisdom is - instead of simply going straight to complaining when finding one's drink options to be lacking - working to improve one's drinking options/situation. l'chaim!

If you are or know of someone who struggles with alcohol abuse, alcoholism, or other substance abuse, there are resources out there to help. You can check out JewishDrinking.com/alcoholabuse/

Newest Episode

This week's episode of *The Jewish Drinking Show* features a return guest, Prof. Glenn Dynner, the author of *Yankel's Tavern: Jews, Liquor, and Life in the Kingdom of Poland*. While he had spoken on the topic of tavernkeeping Jews in 18th & 19th century Poland on a previous episode, it was fascinating to hear some details about specific tavernkeeping Jews and Jewesses and some of the travails they endured. Two clips are available online for viewing, in addition to the full-length episode: "Roles of Tavernkeeping Jewesses In 18th & 19th Century Poland" and "Controversy Amongst Polish Scholars".



Upcoming Episodes

Stay tuned for upcoming episodes:

February 7: Dr. Michal Shaul - Kiddush Clubs as Mens' Clubs

February 14: Hudi Zinar - Kiddush Club Experiences

February 21: Prof. Richard Sarason - *Massekhet Purim* (18th century Purim parody)

February 28: Rabbi David Fried - 18th and 19th century *aharonim* on Purim-drinking

L'chaim

Having never had an ice wine in my entire life, I was excited to go on a new flavor exploration with a trio of ice wines. All three of these ice wines are from Tzafona Cellars – Riesling, Gewürztraminer, and Vidal (all 2020). These ice wines (perhaps all ice wines are this way?) are all more syrupy than typical wines and sweeter, as well. A similar note amongst all of these was a delicate and pleasant honey flavor.

The Riesling icewine was jammy and thick, while the Gewürztraminer icewine would pair well with a cheese board or a creamy dish. Both of these had nutty flavors.

However, my favorite (and the favorite amongst my drinking comrades) was the Vidal icewine – this was fruitier than nutty, along with heavy notes of apricot and peach. This was our favorite.

For more tasting notes on this trio of icewines, you can check out
<https://youtu.be/EM-XJHH4kQA>

Disclosure: a review sample of each of these bottles was provided to Jewish Drinking for review purposes.



Oneg Shabbas is a project of Jewish Drinking, Inc., a 501(c)3 initiative to educate and enrich about drinking in Jewish wisdom, tradition, history, practice, and more. For more on Jewish Drinking, you can check out JewishDrinking.com.