ONEG SHABBAS

THE UNOFFICIAL PARASHAH SHEET FOR KIDDUSH CLUBS

ט"ו אייר תשפ"ג - Vol. 2, Iss. 13 - 5-6 May 2023 - פרשת אמור

Libations in Leviticus Rabbi Drew Kaplan

As we were heading towards the end of the book of Exodus in March, I shared with some folks that I was getting nervous about finding drinking-related material for the book of Leviticus. They gave me a look and said, "Isn't there a lot of libating in Leviticus, with all of the offerings?" While it's true there are certainly a lot of offerings detailed throughout the book, I revealed to them that there are shockingly only a few references to libations. They were certainly surprised.

It turns out that all...three(!) references to libations in Leviticus are in this week's Torah portion. The first mention being for the sheaf-elevating (Lev. 23:13), another mention for Shavuot (Lev. 23:18), and one general, inclusive reference to holiday libations (Lev. 23:37). In fact, one of the only two references to wine in the entirety of Leviticus occurs with the sheaf-elevating libation (Lev. 23:13). Moreover, the book of Leviticus has only one other mention of wine (10:9), making it only one more mention than the book of Exodus' mention (Ex. 29:40). Basically, wine is not a focus of the book, nor are libations.

So what are these libations?

The libation for the sheaf-elevating is simply a quarter-hin of wine, as specified in Leviticus 23:13, which is a typical amount to correspond with the first-year lamb it accompanies. However, what is peculiar about this offering (in addition to this day not being one where labor is forbidden, unlike the rest of the chapter) is that it has two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in, even though the typical quantity would be one-tenth. However, an early rabbinic teaching considers these quantities (Menaḥot 89b and parallel in Sifra, Emor 10:8 (cf. Rashi, Lev. 23:13, S.V.

תנו רבנן (ויקרא כג, יג) ומנחתו שני עשרונים לימד על כבש הבא עם העומר שמנחתו כפולה יכול כשם שמנחתו כפולה כך יינו כפול תלמוד לומר (ויקרא כג, יג) ונסכו יין רביעית ההין יכול לא יהא יינו כפול שאינו נבלל עם מנחתו אבל יהא שמנו כפול שנבלל עם מנחתו תלמוד לאמר ונסכו כל נסכיו לא יהו אלא רביעית The Sages taught: "And its meal offering shall be two tenths" (Lev. 23:13) - Teaches about the lamb that comes with the omer that the size of its meal offering is doubled. One might have thought that just as its meal offering is doubled, so too its wine libation should be doubled; the verse states, "And its libation shall be of wine, a quarter-hin" (Lev. 23:13). One might have

bation should be doubled; the verse states, "And its libation shall be of wine, a quarter-hin" (Lev. 23:13). One might have thought that it is only its wine libation that should not be doubled, as it is not intermingled with the flour of its meal offering, but its oil should be doubled, as it is intermingled with the flour of its meal offering. The verse states: "And its libation" - all of its libations shall be only a quarter-hin.



For the libations for the Shavuot offering, it seems

that the calculation would yield 2.9167 (35/12) hins to accompany the elevation offering. However, the other time Shavuot's offerings are mentioned, there's a different number of rams and bulls for the elevation offering (Num. 28:27), yielding, instead, 3.0833 (37/12) *hins*. To deal with this apparent contradiction, Rabbi Akiva suggested, "עומש הפקודים The offerings that are mentioned in the book of Numbers were sacrificed in the wilderness, but the offerings that are mentioned in Leviticus were not sacrificed in the wilderness" (*Menaḥot* 45b).

Apparently, Rabbi Akiva was not the only rabbi to come up with a way to alleviate this seeming contradiction, as Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra (1092-1167) mentions not only Rabbi Akiva's approach, but other possible approaches to this difference:

ויתכן ששנה הכתוב בשנה הראשונה בעבור שהיא תחלת ההתחלה ויש אומרים כי יקרב פר ואילים שנים או שני פרים ואיל אחד כרצון הכהן ועוד לא ראינו מצוה כזאת ובפנחס אפרש האמת It is possible that Scripture changed the sacrifices in the first year because it was the outset of the beginning. Some say that the kohen shall offer either a bullock and two rams or two bullocks and one ram. It depends on the will of the kohen. We do not find such a commandment again.

These two libations are fascinating, as the only libations mentioned in Leviticus, although they are further fascinating in that they have unique characteristics. Either way, the wine libations that God commands in Leviticus are not as numerous as some might think. Although libations seem obscure, they are, as remarked previously in this publication, God's drinking, along with His eating of the animal sacrifices He commands us to offer. While we tend to think of drinking as a human practice, these commandments offer us another angle to consider of Jewish drinking - Divine Drinking. L'chaim!

Oneg Shabbas is a project of Jewish Drinking, Inc., a 501(c)3 initiative to educate about drinking in Jewish wisdom, tradition, history, practice, and more in order to enrich people's lives. This publication is composed by, edited by, and published by Rabbi Drew Kaplan. If you have any comments, compliments, or suggestions, he can be reached at Drew@JewishDrinking.com

The Jewish Drinking Show Newest Episode

The newest episode of *The Jewish Drinking Show* features an award-winning Yiddish scholar, Dr. Jordan Finkin. For centuries, Ashkenazi Jews spoke this incredibly colorful language, so how could they not have amusing drinking terms?

While the full episode is available on YouTube, as well as wherever you listen to podcasts, you can check out the episode at JewishDrinking.com/YiddishTerms.

In addition to the episode, there are a couple of clips separately published from this episode on "Whiskey & Other Spirits in Yiddish" and "Rabbinic Expressions In Yiddish Drinking Terminology".

The Jewish Drinking Show is available on YouTube, as well as wherever you listen to podcasts



Jpcoming Episodes

Yiddish Drinking

Terms

EPISODE #133

May 10 – Yossi Francus – Cincinnati Kiddush Club Scotches May 16 – Prof. Sacha Stern – Compulsively Libating Gentiles in the Talmud? June 13 – Prof. Phil Lieberman – Wine in Geonic Literature June 20 – Prof. Claudia Bergmann – Drinking in the World to Come in Second Temple Literature?

YouTube.com/@JewishDrinking



With Shavuot on the horizon, you may be looking to stock up wines for the holiday. If you are looking to save some money, go to JewishDrinking.com and click on the KosherWine.com discount logo and you get \$15 off orders of \$200 or more. Disclosure: Jewish Drinking, Inc. receives affiliate commissions on qualifying purchases.

If you're interested in viewing our reviews of the wines from the recent event, you can do so at JewishDrinking.com/ShiranGhitoTasting

There is still; one further event in this mini-series, taking place on Wednesday 21 June. If you're in Cincinnati, mark your calendars for closing out this miniseries. L'chaim!

Wine Wednesday Events

Building on recent Texts-and-Tasting Events in Cincinnati led by Rabbi Drew in February and March, Jewish Drinking has now held two out of three monthly wine-tastings, taking place in April, May, and June.

This miniseries of wine-tastings has featured Israeli wines supplied to JewishDrinking for review purposes. This past Wednesday was the second such event in the series, as the May event, featuring a discussing on how drinking should play a part in elevating one's experience on Jewish holidays, exploring not only Talmudic texts, but writings by Maimonides, Rabbi Yosef Karo, and more.



If you are, or know of someone, who struggles with alcohol abuse, alcoholism, or other substance abuse, there are resources out there to help, which are available at JewishDrinking.com/AlcoholAbuse