

ONEG SHABBAS

THE UNOFFICIAL PARASHAH SHEET FOR KIDDUSH CLUBS

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Let The Wine Flow

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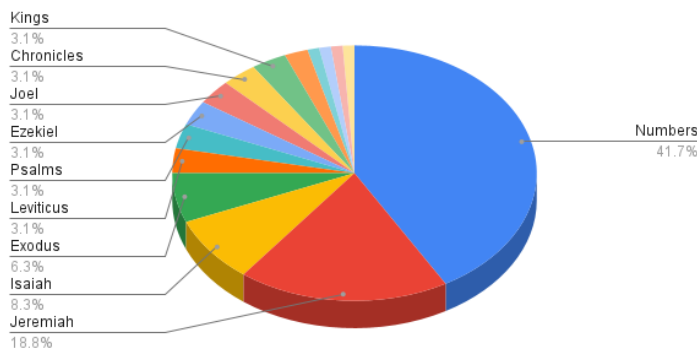
While libations come up in a variety of Torah portions, there is none like that of our parshah. This week's parshah features the absolute most amount of libations. While it is true that this Torah portion features the most appearances out of any Torah portion, there are actually more appearances of the word נסך (libation) in this Torah portion than in any other book of the Tanakh.

While there are 11 appearances of the word נסך in the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus, the 40 appearances in the book of Numbers far outstrips those appearances, so this book has clearly the most out of any book in the Torah. Moreover, the 27 appearances of the word נסך in this week's Torah portion represents more than a quarter (28.7%) of all appearances of the word in the entirety of the Tanakh. In fact, the next closest number of appearances in any book is 18 in Jeremiah, with no other book featuring a double-digit number of appearances in the Tanakh (for a listing of the appearance of this word amongst Biblical books, see JewishDrinking.com/LibationBibleBooks). The sacrifices in our Torah portion are the primary location for regularly-scheduled recurring libations (with the sole exception of Lev., ch. 23), although not for others (such as Nazir (see Numbers, ch. 6)).

The libations that occur in our Torah portion are not independent, but rather part of a package of any given offering, featuring meat, along with a side of oily starch. "Offering an animal with accompanying non-animal materials, such as grain offerings and libations, is a kind of a 'combo-meal', as it were", writes Dr. Naphtali Meshel ("Which Sacrificial Offerings Require Libations?"), continuing that a complete combo meal "includes a burger, a soda, and fries (a starch prepared in oil and often salted)—or other combinations of food that together constitute a full meal.... A combination of only fries and a soda, however, is not licit: that is, while it is not illegal to order fries and a drink separately, they do not constitute a meal. This is reflected in the absence of such an option from most 'combo' menus."

For those less familiar with libations in our tradition, there is a standard formula: for a sheep, there is a corresponding quarter-*hin* libated, for a ram, a corresponding third-*hin*, and, for a bull, a corresponding half-*hin*. As far as how much volume a *hin* is, it's roughly a gallon-and-a-half.

Appearances of נסך in Books of the Tanakh



As to libating, what is one to use? Although it's not 100% clear if wine is always supposed to be libated, we do read of another beverage. That beverage is beer. Sure, everywhere else in the Torah, wine is the liquid to be libated, however, for the daily offering/libation mentioned in our parshah, beer is meant to be libated for/to accompany the daily offerings (Num. 28:7), while wine is to be libated at special occasions. On the face of it, that makes a lot of sense, as beer is more pedestrian, whereas wine attains a special status. Indeed, as Prof. Michael Homan wrote in a fascinating article, "Did the Ancient Israelites Drink Beer?", God "consumed at least half a *hin* of beer (approximately 2 liters, or a six-pack) per day through the cultic ritual of libation, and He drank even more on the Sabbath (Numbers 28:7-10)". It is unclear whether we're necessarily reading of beer that is grain-based - whether wheat, barley, or other grains - or whether it is fruit-based, such as fig or date beer. While this brings up a fascinating sense of a dichotomy between the regular libation God expects of beer on a daily basis versus wine on special occasions, the rabbis sought to eliminate any possible confusion here and interpreted the beer as something that gets one drunk, thus it needs to be wine aged 40 days (cf. *Sifra, Shemini* 1:1).

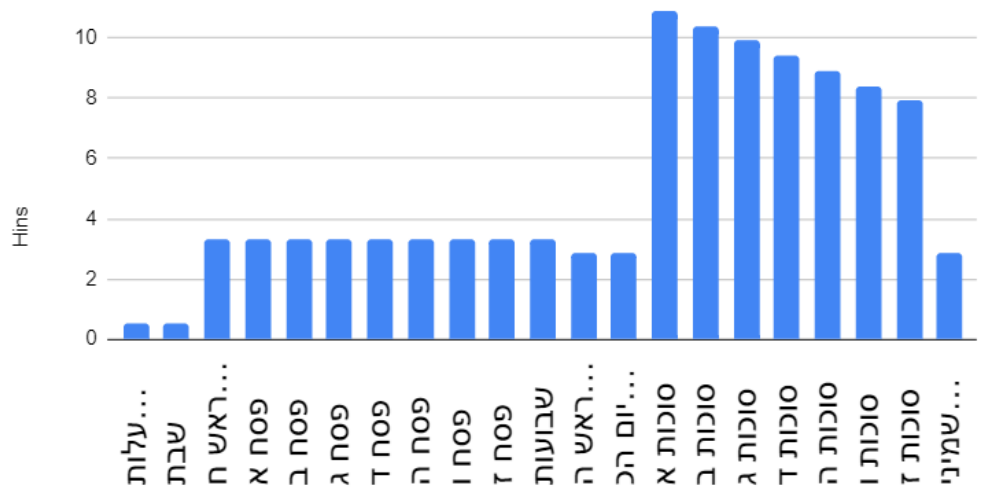
In addition to the daily model of offerings (Num. 28:3-8), as well as the special Shabbat offerings, which are doubled (Num. 28:9-10), we then read of three main models of quantities. The first model is that of new moons, Passover, and Shavuot, where there is to be 3.0833 *hin* to be libated in addition to the daily offerings (Num. 28:11-31), with the second model being that of Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Shemini Atzeret, with 2.5833

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hin to be libated in addition to the daily offerings (Num. 29:1-11 & Num. 29:35-38). It should be pointed out that, for both of these models, there is also a goat to be sin-offered with its accompanying libation. As there is nowhere specified in the Torah how much wine is to be libated for these goats offered as sin-offerings, as was suggested to me on "The Libation Episode" of *The Jewish Drinking Show* (JewishDrinking.com/The-Libation-Episode), by Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Zuckier, perhaps it is the same amount as that

for sheep. In that case, the first model would yield 3.333 hin (roughly five gallons), while the second model would yield 2.5833 hin (almost four gallons).



The third model is totally different - it is that of Sukkot. While the amount of sheep and rams remains the same [as well as the goat for the sin-offering], the amount of bulls offered decrease by one each day. Thus, this yields an astonishing 10.91667 hin offered the first day, 10.41667 hin offered the second day, 9.91667 hin offered the third day, 9.41667 hin offered the fourth day, 8.91667 hin offered the fifth day, 8.41667 hin offered the sixth day, and 7.91667 hin offered the seventh day. These 65.91667 hin are equivalent to about 99 gallons of wine(!). This massive amount of wine libated over the course of these seven days of Sukkot far surpass that of all of the other holidays combined throughout the rest of the year, excluding new moons. Only if we were to include all of the new moons would it be close (with all of the other holidays and new moons slightly being more voluminous).

Surely, whether for readers of this publication or not, we certainly tend to give little thought of libations in the Torah, yet it's hard to ignore this week, as they are/figure quite prominently in this parashah. L'chaim

The Jewish Drinking Show Invites Drink Recommendations

While *The Jewish Drinking Show* is currently on a summer break with episodes set to return in mid-August, a new segment on the show encourages listeners to share with listeners their own personal recommendations of beverages. With a couple of episodes already having received listener input for suggested beverages, we would love to receive your recommendations for fellow listeners. These audio and/or video clips are suggested to be 60-90-second video clips on a beverage they want to recommend, especially if it is a beverage that they not only enjoy, as well as being widely available and perhaps a beverage that people are generally either not necessarily aware of or familiar with but something to encourage. Submissions may be sent by email to Drew@JewishDrinking.com or by WhatsApp at 562-400-5627.



July Wine Wednesday Event This Week

The next Wine Wednesday event in the Cincinnati local Texts-and-Tasting Series will be taking place this Wednesday. Featuring a few wines from Twin Sons, as well as a kosher-for-Passover reposado tequila, this tasting event will be paired with a text-based discussion on the Talmudic foundations of dining-and-drinking for Friday Night Kiddush (which becomes popularly known as קידוש במקום סעודה).

This event will be taking place at a private residence in Amberley Village in Cincinnati at 8:00 p.m. on this coming Wednesday 12 July 2023. While there is no required fee, a suggested minimum donation of \$18 to Jewish Drinking is encouraged, which can be made online at PayPal.me/JewishDrinking or a check made out to Jewish Drinking, a registered 501(c)3. For location, please reach out to Rabbi Drew at Drew@JewishDrinking.com



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