

ONEG SHABBAS



THE UNOFFICIAL PARASHAH SHEET FOR KIDDUSH CLUBS

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Exploring Ma'aser Sheni Drunkenness in the Rabbi Drew Kaplan

I'll be honest with you: I am not an expert in מעשר שני, secondary tithes. But reading this Torah portion has instilled within me guite the interest in this topic.

For those of you like me who are not so deeply familiar with this secondary tithing, back in the Temple times, after one would provide terumah to the kohanim, then provide one-tenth to the kohanim/levites, then one would take one-tenth of specific agricultural produce during the first, second, fourth and fifth years of each seven-year cycle, for the purpose of taking it to Jerusalem and enjoying it there.

In this Torah portion, we read that Moshe commands that we are not to consume "בָּשְׁעָבִירְ מַּעְשַׂר דְּגֶנְרְ וְתִירְשָׁךְ וְיִצְהָבֶׁר וּבְכֹרָת בָּקָרְךָ וִצֹאנֶךְ in your gates of the tithes of your new grain, new wine, new oil, nor of the firstlings of your herds and flocks" (Deut. 12:17), rather we are to consume them in the place that God will choose (Deut. 12:18). But what if we cannot?

For this, we read later on in our Torah portion that "וְאַכַלתָּ לְפַנֵי ה' אַלֹקִיךְ בַּמַקוֹם אַשֶּׁר־יִבְחַרٌ לְשָׁכֵּן שָׁמוֹ שָׁם מַעשָּׁר דְּגַנְרְ תִּירִשְׁרְ וִיצְהַרֶּךְ וּבְּכֹרִת בָּקַרְרְ וִצֹאנֵךְ לְמַעַן You shall consume the tithes of your new תַּלְמֵּד לְיֵרְאָה אֶת־ה' אֱלֹקִיךְ כַּל־הַיָּמִים grain, new wine, new oil, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks, in the presence of The LORD, your God, in the place where [God] will choose to establish the divine name, so that you may learn to revere The LORD, your God, forever" (Deut. 14:23). Again, we have the same question: what if it's a lot of food?

As a contingency, should it be too far to bring all of this bounty (Deut. 14:24), we can sell these products off for money (Deut. 14:25), bring that money to Jerusalem "וַנַתַתַּה הַכֶּּסֶף בָּכֹל אֱשֶׁר־תָּאָוָה נַפְשָׁךְ בַּבַּקָר וּבָצֹאן וּבַיֵּין וּבַשֶּׁכַּר and spend ובכל אַשֶּׁר תַשָּׁאַלְרָ נַפְשַׁרְ וָאַכַלְתַ שַׁם לְפָנֵי ה' אַלקיך ושַׁמַחָת אַתָּה וּבִיתַרְ the money on anything you want-cattle, sheep, wine, beer, or anything

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Torah

Rabbi Drew Kaplan

When it comes to drunkenness, which is not an obscure human occurrence, what does the Torah have to say? At Jewish Drinking's recent monthly Texts-and-Tasting event, we explored drunkenness in both the Tanakh/Bible, as well as early rabbinic literature (specifically, Mishnah and Tosefta).

When it comes to the Torah, all of the descriptions of human drunkenness take place in the book of Genesis (the only other mention of drunkenness in the Torah is a poetic one, as found in Deuteronomy 32:42). The first occurrence is that of Noah, when he is described as planting a vineyard (Gen. 9:20), drinking and getting drunk (Gen. 9:21), followed by his sons dealing with his nakedness being revealed (Gen. 9:22-25), and Noah's curse of Canaan (Gen. 9:26-28). While we will set aside what exactly it is that happened to Noah and the aftermath (for more on this, you can check out the fifth episode of The Jewish Drinking Show, "Exploring Noah's Getting Drunk: What Did Ham Do To Noah?"), what happened?

It seemed that, as someone deeply knowledgeable about agriculture (Noah is described as an איש האדמה, a man of the earth (Gen. 9:20)), he agriculturally innovated in being the first to create a vineyard (see Ramban to Gen. 9:20), and drank of the juice of his plantings. Perhaps he simply enjoyed the flavor of this juice of these fruits and continued drinking this juice. As no one had ever previously planted vines on this scale, there was a lot of this juice of grapes to drink, so he couldn't drink it all at once, so he paced himself. This stockpile of juice of grapes lasted him not only days, but weeks. Over time, he realized it was really good

and made him feel great. One day, he drank a lot of this grape juice, which had clearly fermented into wine (the first appearance of wine in the Tanakh), leading him to become drunk. No one had ever experienced this feeling before, so this was entirely unexpected and it seemed to blindside him, leading to drink drunkenness and falling asleep. So, basically, the first appearance of wine in the Tanakh is also the first appearance οf drunkenness, since Noaḥ

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you may desire. And you shall feast there, in the presence of The LORD, While I have a lot further to learn on this topic, I will share with you your God, and rejoice with your household" (Deut. 14:26).

Either way, this secondary tithing about which we read [twice] in this week's Torah portion is clearly a Jewish drinking topic: whether one is able to take one's grape juice and drink it in Jerusalem or sell it locally to take the money to purchase either beer or wine in Jerusalem to drink. this is definitely a Jewish drinking topic.

one Talmudic tidbit with you on this topic. When it comes to purchasing wine in Jerusalem, is that money restricted only for the purchase of wine, or can it be used for drinking accourrements also? In a beraita, Ben Bag Bag (yes, the same Ben Bag Bag of which we read at the end of *Avot* 5), explains that "' וביין מלמד שׁלּוֹקחין יין על גּב 'On wine' teaches that one may buy wine and include in its price payment for its jug" (Eruvin 27b).

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did not know what to expect.

Conversely, the next time we read of drunkenness, it does not even get described as drunkenness, since it is so obvious (cf. Rabbi Hanina's statement that references Lot's drunkenness (Eruvin 65a)), that of Lot and his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38). I say that it is so obvious, since the text describes him as "וֹלָא־יַדע בַּשְׁכָבַה וּבַקוֹמָה he did not know when she lay down or when she rose" (Gen. 19:33 & 19:35), so clearly the wine had a massive effect on him. While this is a Biblical story, this story does not require us to use our imaginations much to try to figure out how it could happen today, as people continue to use alcohol until this day for such access. As starkly contrasted against Noah, where he was blindsided by the effect that wine would have upon him, Lot's daughters clearly are intentionally using the alcohol to incapacitate their father for sexual access. So, by this time, it was known to be able to be used for such matters.

The final occurrence of drunkenness in the Torah is when Yosef's

brothers drink with him (although they do not yet know that his is their brother) in the royal palace, as "וישתו וישכרו עמו they drank with him and they got drunk with him" (Gen. 43:34).



The most remarkable aspect to this final story of drunkenness in the Torah is that nothing remarkable happens. There is no shocking aftermath or tragic fallout. In fact, it is simply understood to be a normal occurrence.

Perhaps this is the trajectory in the Torah of drunkenness: what started out as a blindsided surprise in incapacitation became to be understood to be used for incapacitating for sexual purposes, but, ultimately, something to simply enjoy in the company of others.

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Wine Wednesday Events

Jewish Drinking recently held its monthly Texts-and-Tasting event last Part of the Wine Wednesdays mini-series, this event also featured week, featuring an exploration of drunkenness in Judaism.

Led by Rabbi Drew, this exploration of all mentions of drunkenness in

Tanakh/Bible then continued on to considering all of the mentions of drunkenness in the Mishnah and Tosefta, two early rabbinic texts.



wines from Israel, two courtesy of KosherWine.com and one courtesy of Jezreel Valley Winery, along with a

few fascinating beers from Israel.

Our next Wine Wednesday event will be taking place on September 13th at 8pm, where we will continue enjoying Israeli wines from KosherWine.com, along with an Israeli gin. Stay tuned!



photo courtesy of Eric Schwartzberg

Kiddush Clubs Observe Siyum HaShots

Written by Yo Robbins

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On Saturday morning in synagogues around the long for the average kiddush club to polish world, Kiddush club members celebrated the offall its liquors and begin new bottles. completion of a seven-and-a-half-month cycle of weekly drinking.

The celebration, called Sivum HaShots, was marked by the downing of various whiskeys, bourbons, ryes, rums, and brandies until every whole campaign against us, called 'Now You bottle was empty. "Shots in shul are a timehonored tradition," said siyum-organizer Ben Shikker. "We all know that wherever four Jews gather, there's always a fifth."

seven-and-a-half months because it takes that spirits," he noted.

Shikker concedes that pressure is now being placed on synagogues to abolish their kiddush clubs and the Sivum HaShots. "It's shameful," said Shikker. "The OU is waging a Sivum. Now You Don't.' But we won't be intimidated."

Shikker asserts that being part of a kiddush club actually improves the fervency of one's "When my wife asks me to buy her a dozen

He added that men who partake in a private kiddush during the haftarah "shokkel more during Musaf."

Some rabbis see it differently, however. "They shuckel because they can't stand straight after all that schnapps," said Rabbi Nofun Ahloud. "Or even worse, they desperately need the bathroom."

Despite the current protests, Shikker vows that shul kiddush clubs and the Siyum HaShots will continue. Furthermore, he advocates bringing the tradition into one's home.

The siyum (Hebrew for conclusion) is held every davening. "You can't spell spirituality without roses, I give her three bottles of Four Roses," said Shikker. "I'm very proud of that."

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