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that יסך can be meant in the sense of libation. What is curiously ambiguous, however, is that the same verse that Rabbi Bekhor Shor used is the exact same verse that Rabbi Yitzhaki used, so that verse remains unclear as to how it should be used in relation to the verse in front of us. Indeed, there seems to be some lacking in consensus amongst the commentaries as to how the terms in this verse are to be translated (see *על רמב"ן* על אבן עזרא על שמות כ"ה:כ"ט, ד"ה ומלת אשר יוסך בהן ורמב"ן על הכתב והקבלה, שמות כ"ה:כ"ט, as well as the 19th century (שמות כ"ה:כ"ט, ד"ה יסך בהן).

Contemporary Translations

With this aforementioned lack of consensus, when we look at contemporary English translations of this verse, we see translations in both directions, beginning with the non-libation understanding:

- "You shall make its dishes, its spoons, its shelving-tubes, and its pillars, with which it shall be covered; of pure gold shall you make them." (Rabbi Nosson Scherman (ArtsScroll))
- "You shall make its bowls and its spoons and its tubes and its supports with which it shall be covered. From pure gold you shall make them." (Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz (Koren))
- "For [the table] make bread forms, incense bowls, and side frames, as well as the half tubes that will serve as dividers [between the loaves of bread]. All these shall be made of pure gold." (Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan (*The Living Torah*))

I must note that while Rabbi Steinsaltz' version is actually translated by someone else, it would seem the translation of his words accurately reflect how he sees this verse, especially since both Rabbi Steinsaltz and Rabbi Kaplan were Chabad rabbis, which may also have been why they both understand *אשר יסך* not in the sense of libational purposes (even though their translations for each of the items within the verse differ from one another).

While these aforementioned translations do not reflect anything to do with libations, there are, however, others that specifically mention libating:

- "And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and the pans thereof, and the jars thereof, and the bowls thereof, wherewith to pour out; of pure gold shalt thou make them." (Rabbi JH Hertz (Soncino))
- "Make its bowls, ladles, jars and jugs with which to offer libations; make them of pure gold." (NJPS)
- "You must also make, out of pure gold, its bowls, spoons, pitchers, and jars for pouring libations." (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (Koren))

In this set of understandings, it seems that God is establishing that, before one can pour/libate, one needs the appropriate vessels to do so.

Conclusion

While up to and including our parashah, there has not yet been any divine command to libate, we do encounter a verse in this week's Torah portion that could be interpreted/translated as using vessels for libation, as we will read in next week's Torah portion the command to libate. Would it not make sense to provide a vessel for libation in order to then libate therewith? However, there is some ambiguity, as well as differing translations for the items in the verse, providing the opening for multiple understandings of this verse. Either way, whether these utensils are intended for libations, as it would seem, or for the showbread table where they are mentioned, they are definitely meant to be made of pure gold. If they are, indeed, meant for pouring wine for God, however, golden wine-pouring vessels are certainly a stylish and fancy way to provide wine for God. Perhaps this could inspire us, since we are made in God's image, to use well-appointed vessels for our drinking. L'chaim 🍷

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Writing in the 16th century, however, Rabbi Karo then concludes ועכשיו לא נהגו להרבות בסעודה לא ב"ד ולא בט"ו שבאדר הראשון "But now, we are accustomed to increase our feasting on neither the 14th, nor 15th of the first Adar." Indeed, he does not even mention anything about celebrating this day in his famed work, *Shulhan Arukh*. However, thereupon Rabbi Moses Isserles (1530-1572) does, indeed, mention this possibility (רמ"א על שולחן ערוך, אורח חיים תרצ"ז:א):

There are those who say that one is obligated to increase in drinking and joy on the 14th of Adar I (Rabbi Ya'akov ben Asher (1270-1340) quoting Rabbi Yitzhak ben Jacob Alfasi (1013-1103)).	י"א שחייב להרבות במשתה ושמחה ב"ד שבאדר ראשון (טור בשם הרי"ף)
But, we are not accustomed this way. Nevertheless, one should increase their feasting slightly, in order to fulfill the opinion of those who are stringent (Rabbi Meir HaKohen (end of the 13th century) quoting Rabbi Yitzhak ben Yoseph of Corbeil (d. 1280)).	ואין נוהגין כן מ"מ ירבה קצת בסעודה כדי לצאת ידי המחמירים (הג"מ בשם סמ"ק)
And "the good-hearted has a continual drinking-party" (Prov. 15:15).	וטוב לב משתה תמיד

In commenting subsequently, Rabbi David HaLevi Segal (1586-1667) wrote *טורי זהב על שולחן ערוך אורח חיים תרצ"ז:ב*, ד"ה מ"מ ירבה קצת בסעוד' (ט"ו):

Rabbi Shimson ben Zadak (d. 1312) wrote that one should increase (Tashbetz Commentary §178), and Rabbi Ye'hiel of Paris (d. 1268) was accustomed to increase and to invite people, according to the straight-forward understanding of the Mishnah: "The only difference between Adar I and Adar II is the reading of the megillah and gifts to the poor" (<i>Megillah</i> 1:4). And it is brilliant how Rabbi Moses Isserles (1530-1572) concludes here: "And a good-minded person always enjoys drinking-parties."	מ"מ ירבה קצת בסעוד' כו'. בהג"ה תשב"ץ סי' קע"ח כ' דיש להרבות ורבינו יחיאל מפרי"ש רגיל להרבות ולהזמין בני אדם כמשמעות לשון המשנה אין בין אדר כו' ושפיר מסיים רמ"א כאן וטוב לב משתה תמיד
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Later on, Rabbi Yisrael Meir HaKohen Kagan (1838-1933) largely quotes Rabbi Segal, then concludes with (משנה ברורה תרצ"ז:ה):

"And a good-minded person is continually enjoying drinking-parties" is that it is good to increase one's drinking-parties out of honor of the miracle that occurred during these times.	וטוב לב משתה תמיד היינו שטוב להרבות לכבוד הנס שנעשה בעתים הללו
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Conclusion

While there were many medieval rabbis who saw the words of the Mishnah as indicating that one either should enjoy oneself through drinking parties on 14 Adar I, or perhaps even requiring that it is necessary to do so, there were also other rabbis who were uncomfortable requiring this celebration. Although Rabbi Karo and Rabbi Isserles observed in their communities in the 16th century that such practices had fallen into disuse on 14 Adar I, subsequent rabbis were supportive of those who want to celebrate this date. Ultimately, no rabbi ever wrote that it was inappropriate. As we are about to encounter 14 Adar I this upcoming Thursday night and Friday, hopefully, this will get us into the mindset to celebrate 😊

L'chaim 🍷