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THE USE OF "WINE" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

*Dallas Theological Seminary*

Th.D.

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THE USE OF "WINE" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of  
Semitics and Old Testament Studies  
Dallas Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Theology

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by

Robert P. Teachout

May 1979

Accepted by the Faculty of the Dallas Theological Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Theology.

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## THE USE OF "WINE" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Robert P. Teachout, Th.D.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the riches of the Old Testament insofar as it speaks concerning the subject of grape beverages, whether fresh or fermented. Surprisingly, this neglected area for research involves significant motifs of blessing and cursing and of God's intimate relationship with His people in addition to being of help in illuminating an aspect of everyday life in Old Testament times.

In order to provide a background in which to comprehend the biblical revelation concerning grape beverages, the ancient near eastern cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Syro-Phoenicia, as well as that of the classical world, are surveyed in regard to the production and consumption of wine. This information is compared briefly with that of ancient Israel and the differences are highlighted.

So that the study will rest upon a sound lexical basis, all of the pertinent etymological information from the Semitic family of languages is examined for each of the Hebrew words dealing with grape beverages. Several of the words were discovered to denote (by the use of the same word in different contexts) both fresh juice and fermented wine.

The major portion of the dissertation concentrates on the specific Old Testament usage of the words designating wine (in either sense): 'āsîs, hémer, sôbe, tîrôš, šēkār, and most significantly (by reason of its 141 occurrences) yáyin. It was

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found that a harmonistic approach to the exegesis of the respective passages required the conclusion (supported from etymological studies) that several key words refer to both grape juice and to wine, rather than to one or the other. The problem, then, of God's apparently contradictory evaluation of "wine"--as both, on the one hand, the epitome of His blessing and, on the other, a product which has so corrupted man and is thus condemned--is in essence a *lexical* rather than a *theological* one. When it is recognized that the same word may legitimately refer to two distinctly different beverages, it becomes clear that God always approves of grape juice and never approves (in any amount) of wine.

Thus the figurative language of the Old Testament is eminently appropriate in using the same Hebrew word, yáyin, to picture two contrasting themes. (1) The divine desire to bless His people abundantly is integrally related to God's purpose for the vine: to provide a nourishing and delightful beverage of grape juice throughout the year. (2) However, the opposite theme, the divine necessity of judgment upon sin, is related in Scripture to man's fermented perversion of this gift of the grape, which, rousing God's fierce anger, makes wine a frequent and fitting figure of speech for His wrath and His judgment.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AEL</u>	Edward William Lane, <u>Arabic-English Lexicon</u>
<u>ADHL</u>	Archaeological Institute of America, comp., <u>Archaeological Discoveries in the Holy Land</u>
<u>AH</u>	W. von Soden, ed., <u>Akkadische Handwörterbuch</u>
<u>ANEP</u>	J. B. Pritchard, ed., <u>The Ancient Near East in Pictures</u>
<u>ANET</u>	Idem., ed., <u>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</u>
ASV	The American Standard Version (1901)
AV	The Authorized Version
<u>BDB</u>	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, eds., <u>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</u>
<u>CAD</u>	A. L. Oppenheim, ed., <u>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</u>
<u>CML</u>	G. R. Driver, <u>Canaanite Myths and Legends</u>
<u>CUL</u>	R. Whittaker, <u>A Concordance of the Ugaritic Literature</u>
<u>GKC</u>	<u>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</u>
<u>HS</u>	R. J. Williams, <u>Hebrew Syntax: An Outline</u>
<u>HT</u>	Charles Singer, et al., eds., <u>A History of Technology</u>
<u>ISBE</u>	James Orr, ed., <u>The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</u>
<u>KB</u>	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, <u>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros</u>
<u>LLA</u>	C. F. A. Dillmann, <u>Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicae</u>
<u>L&amp;S</u>	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, comps., <u>A Greek-English Lexicon</u>

- M&M J. Moulton and G. Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources
- MT The Masoretic Text
- NASB The New American Standard Bible
- NBD J. D. Douglas, ed., The New Bible Dictionary
- NEB The New English Bible
- NIV The New International Version
- NW Noah Porter, rev. ed., Webster's International Dictionary of the English Language (unabridged)
- NWDB H. S. Gehman, ed., The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible
- SAT R. J. Forbes, Studies in Ancient Technology
- SHT T. K. Derry and T. I. Williams, A Short History of Technology from the Earliest Times to A.D. 1900
- UT C. Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook
- VB H. F. Lutz, Viticulture and Brewing in the Ancient Orient
- WAW Charles Seltman, Wine in the Ancient World
- YGC W. F. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan
- ZPBD M. C. Tenney, ed., The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary

## SYMBOLS

// parallel

✓ the basic or root meaning of the triradical consonant letters

x number of occurrences

\* on a Semitic word indicates a hypothetical or original form

\* on an English word indicates an alteration of the NASB translation

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

He [Yahweh] causes the grass to grow for the cattle,  
And vegetation for the labor of man,  
So that he may bring forth food from the earth,  
And wine which makes man's heart glad,<sup>1</sup>  
So that he may make *his* face glisten with oil,  
And [supply the] food which sustains man's heart.  
[Ps. 104:14-15]<sup>2</sup>

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,  
And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.  
[Prov. 20:1]

These two passages succinctly present a great contrast in God's evaluation of the utility of the juice of the grape. The truth presented very prominently (in many passages) in Scripture is that the grape vine was intended by man's Creator

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<sup>1</sup>Underlining is supplied for emphasis. Throughout this dissertation wherever the author desires to emphasize a word or a phrase within a quotation (biblical or other) he will underline. When the quoted portion was originally italicized, such italics will be maintained in the quotation, rather than italics being shown by underlining. Outside of a quotation, either underlining or italics may show emphasis.

Any passage (whether biblical or other) which this writer has considered necessary to translate will be designated by the initials RT in brackets, [RT]. In such a translation italics indicate which words must be supplied in order to adequately convey the sense of the original passage into English (upon the same principles used by the NASB).

<sup>2</sup>All biblical quotations in this dissertation are from the NASB unless otherwise specified. However, there are three changes which are *uniformly* and without further comment made throughout:

(a) The name *Yahweh* will be substituted for *the LORD* (although this writer recognizes that the NASB editorial board



to provide a nutritious and joyful element in man's diet--both as food and as beverage. Yet from the earliest of human records up to the present day, there is a uniform indication that man has freely misappropriated that "blessing" to his own sinful ends. The great poet Milton succinctly captured the essence of the tragedy in one of his poems when he wrote:

"Bacchus, that first from out the purple Grape, / Crush't the sweet poyson of mis-used Wine. . . ."<sup>1</sup> The glory and the trag-

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had good reason for not so transliterating the Hebrew consonants ויין).

(b) The older English forms Thee, Thou, Thine etc., which are retained in the text when one is speaking to God, will be exchanged for a more modern You, Your, etc. and the concomitant archaisms will be removed.

(c) In some quotations, where independent exegesis by this writer has caused him to conclude that the NASB is less than correct in its rendering of a word or phrase, the text has been changed and an asterisk (\*) appended to the word or phrase in order to alert the reader to that change. For example, the NASB may translate a verse well except for its uniformly uncritical rendering of yáyin as "wine," where this writer is convinced that "grape juice" is a better rendering. When this occurs, "grape juice\*" will be found in the text instead of the NASB "wine." Justification for the specific changes will be given either in the footnotes or in subsequent chapters where the biblical meaning of that word is expounded (for example, yáyin is examined in chapter 5).

<sup>1</sup>Milton A Mask l. 46-47. Although this phrase occurs in an earlier poem, it could well have fit in his masterpiece Paradise Lost. There, naming each of Satan's fallen host in turn and ascribing to them the names of the deities of classical antiquity, he unfolds his understanding of the ways in which the leaders of Satan's demonic hosts have influenced mankind. It would appear that he has biblical precedent for such an interpretation. As early as the time of Moses, it was written:

"They [Israel] made Him [Yahweh] jealous with strange gods,  
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.  
They sacrificed to demons who were not God,  
To gods whom they have not known,  
New gods who came lately,

edy of the grape's use by mankind are both chronicled in great detail in Scripture. Yet, despite the biblical prominence of the subject, it is one which has suffered from nonexposure within late twentieth-century Christendom. As such there exists a need for a somewhat definitive and exhaustive study to the end that this neglected aspect of God's Word may assume its proper place in the thinking of Christians today.

#### Demonstrated Need for the Study

Any dissertation needs a raison d'être. Therefore, it is important to clearly set forth the reasons why the study of one plant and its products in the ancient Near East should expand into a doctoral dissertation for one whose major is in Old Testament studies rather than in horticulture.

Some well-meaning people might obviously conclude that to spend many months studying "the grape" (especially from the Old Testament) would indicate that the perpetrator of this wasted energy must have become "intoxicated" with a worthless and impractical subject when there are so many areas in which he could have better put to use his abilities in research. However, any such reasoning would be shallow at best, as will be presently demonstrated. There is a great need in Christian circles for any scholarly research which can carefully and

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Whom your fathers did not dread." [Deut. 32:16-17]  
It is an obvious truth that Satan's hosts have constantly been behind the perversions of God's intended blessings into man's damnation.

accurately expose truth which is relevant to man's contemporary needs.

The need for studying the  
Old Testament in general

An alarming trend in dispensational circles which has been developing for many years is a "practicing hyper-dispensationalism"--an obvious ignoring of, and resultant ignorance in relationship to, Old Testament truth. Although dispensationally oriented professors and pastors are generally united in affirming that the Old Testament is valuable for today and not totally irrelevant,<sup>1</sup> there is still a devastating consequence which can result from consistently leaving that supposed value for others to find, while they concentrate on "church truth." The effect which such a policy can have on the Christian layman who is attempting to correctly interpret and apply what he has been taught by those in authority should not be unexpected: the layman may and often does have great difficulty understanding how the Old Testament can have any relevance at all in this "age of grace."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Kaiser notes this as well; he says: "Our evangelical disparagements of the Old Testament are mostly in the realm of practice and not theory. No one openly discards the whole Old Testament. . . ." (Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., The Old Testament in Contemporary Preaching [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973], p. 13).

<sup>2</sup>Lest it be thought that this discussion is not pertinent, a word of explanation from the writer's personal experience in many churches in several states and even overseas is in order. Experience in the classroom has repeatedly shown the wisdom of teaching Old Testament introduction chronologically

What great damage may be caused by such a practice on the part of those who teach and preach the Word! On the one hand, the great truths of the Old Testament which so inform and

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before Hebrew grammar and syntax, in order to first motivate and excite the student with the message and relevance of the Old Testament prior to expecting him to be interested in diligent study when he begins elemental Hebrew grammar. Otherwise, there is the very real possibility of lethargy and disinterest in Old Testament studies on the part of even bright students who have actually (either consciously or unconsciously) concluded that "the Old Testament is irrelevant anyway." Furthermore, the author was initially unprepared for, but has learned to accept and handle, such situations as the following: (1) adults proposing to an education committee of a local church that the Old Testament stories taught in Sunday school to small children be replaced by something "practical" from the New Testament which would be more in keeping with the remainder of the church's teaching program (which generally excluded the Old Testament); (2) adults (even a pastor) commenting on several occasions, after an earnest exposition from the pulpit on an Old Testament passage, that the message was surprisingly stimulating, interesting, and even practical--but questioning whether it was really consistent with a dispensational position to preach from the Old Testament at all.

G. Ernest Wright, who is not an evangelical conservative, may be considered to be a representative of others who realize the importance of not neglecting Old Testament truth. He echoes the concern of this writer in his book God Who Acts. In a chapter entitled "The Church's Need of the Old Testament," which provides very provocative reading, he wrote:

"Not by overt dogma but by actual practice, the Protestant Church has tended to emend radically the official canon of Scripture [by neglecting the Old Testament, apart from the Psalms].

". . . Surely, if the New Testament is not proclaimed as the fulfillment of the Old, if the Gospel as proclaimed by Jesus and by Paul is not the completion of the faith of Israel, then it must inevitably be a completion and fulfillment of something which we ourselves substitute--and that most certainly means a perversion of the Christian faith. . . .

". . . The significance of God's work in Jesus Christ can be comprehended only when the Bible is retained as *the Bible*, not as an abbreviated torso of the Bible."

[G. Ernest Wright, God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital, Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 8 (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1952), pp. 16, 17, 30.]

infuse (as well as supplement) the New Testament are neither understood nor taught, to the detriment of the universal church. On the other hand, the example of the leaders (im)practically teaches the laymen a negative attitude with regard to the value of a large corpus of holy literature, which the teacher himself (should he recognize the implications of his practice) would quickly decry.

Let it be simply and clearly stated that Paul wrote to a New Testament church leader: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). To neglect the Old Testament in practice will logically result in a deficient doctrine, an inadequate servant, and a weakened church, for the Old Testament is both the background for and the foundation of all of the truth revealed in the New Testament.

#### The need for studying wine in particular

Having emphasized the fact that the Old Testament presentation of truth is important for every age, it is yet imperative to indicate why the subject of wine in Scripture is worthy of an in-depth investigation. The importance of such a study can be seen from three perspectives. First, it is a relevant issue today in the conservative churches across America. Second, although the subject of wine appears to be of universal

interest,<sup>1</sup> the relationship of the contribution of the Old Testament to the subject has been inadequately researched. Finally, its importance is guaranteed from God's perspective simply because of its prominence in biblical revelation.

A relevant contemporary issue. Recently a statement was made by the noted evangelical leader Billy Graham which immediately caused great comment and concern across the United States. In response to a decision made public by President-elect Carter that the White House would serve nothing more potent than wine, Graham, apparently condoning Carter's position, was quoted in a Miami Herald interview: ". . . I do not believe that the Bible teaches teetotalism. . . . Jesus drank wine. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. That wasn't grape juice as some of them try to claim."<sup>2</sup> Because the wire services distributed the evangelist's words across America,<sup>3</sup> the resultant outcry from conservatives required Graham

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<sup>1</sup>A casual perusal of the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature of any issue indicates that every month the modern wine industry is featured, sometimes quite prominently. It is interesting, by contrast, to note the paucity of scholarly articles on the subject of wine in the ancient Near East or in Scripture by perusing all of the issues of the Elenchus Bibliographicus. Looking at Dissertation Abstracts is an even less fruitful exercise in research due to the lack of scholarly interest in this subject. Biblical commentaries were also found to be of little help.

<sup>2</sup>"Carter Will Restore Confidence, Graham Says," Miami Herald, 26 December 1976, sec. A, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>Note, for example, "Notes on People," New York Times, 28 December 1976, sec. 1, p. 15; and "Bible Teetotalism," Detroit News, 28 December 1976, sec. d, p. 16.

on more than one occasion to further clarify his own position in relation to the contemporary use and abuse of wine. The statement on radio and in pamphlet form which resulted from this undesired notoriety said in part:

It is my judgment that because of the devastating problem that alcohol has become in America, it is better for Christians to be teetotalers except for medicinal purposes. . . . The creeping paralysis of alcoholism is sapping our morals, wrecking our homes, and luring people away from the church.<sup>1</sup>

This incident alone would be enough to indicate that the biblical teaching concerning wine is an important issue today, but perhaps it would be well to mention a second evidence. Between 1973 and 1976, while this writer was teaching at a seminary in California, he became aware of growing pastoral concern in the West over the use of intoxicating beverages by Christians in conservative churches who were citing the Bible as their source of authority for so doing. This problem was somewhat enhanced by an article by Adrian Jeffers, a professor at a Baptist college in Oregon. In the article entitled "Wine in the Bible: Weal or Woe?" he concluded:

. . . There are no sustaining grounds for the interpretation that fermented wine is evil. Wine is good, it is a gift of God, if it is used in moderation. . . .

. . . For any church member to partake would be offensive to many, therefore total abstinence in our circles is required. It is here, however, that this whole study comes to bear--what is the proper scriptural attitude toward a genuine believer who may drink an occasional glass of wine or bring home a "six-pack" . . . ? Most of us would consign such (if it were in our power) to the lowest hell.

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<sup>1</sup>"Graham on Drink: 'Don't,'" Christianity Today, February 4, 1977, p. 63.

But this would be contrary to the Bible, for nowhere does the Bible command total abstinence.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, while Jeffers cautiously aligns himself with the "tee-totalers," his article clearly affirms that Scripture, in both testaments, specifically blesses the use of wine as an intoxicating beverage when used in moderation.<sup>2</sup> This article created a furor among the churches which culminated in a very firm letter from the college to their constituency representing the position of the board and administration and indicating that Jeffers' position was not representative of the school at which he taught.

These two incidents, which have together recently affected numerous evangelical churches, indicate that the biblical teaching concerning wine is more than pertinent; it is explosive!<sup>3</sup> In essence, if the writer of this monograph was a more cautious man, he would have chosen a subject which would be less likely to cause the "bursting of old wine skins" (to use a biblical mataphor). Any conclusion to a topic such as this is apt to please none and even to antagonize many. How-

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<sup>1</sup>Adrian Jeffers, "Wine in the Bible: Weal or Woe?" The Western Commentator 5 (July-August 1975):7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>As a further evidence of the contemporary interest in this subject, the following may be noted. After an article entitled "The Christian and Social Drinking" was printed in the March 1977 issue of Baptist Bulletin, a flood of "letters to the editor" was loosed. For several succeeding months letters (both pro and con) appeared in this section of the magazine, debating the issue (Loma G. Davies, "The Christian and Social Drinking," Baptist Bulletin, March 1977, pp. 8-9.



ever, despite the gauntlet of already closed minds on both sides of the issue which must be run in order to set forth his case,<sup>1</sup> the concern of this writer to present the evidence clearly, fairly, and as comprehensively as possible will at least, it is hoped, gain a respectful audience.

An inadequately researched subject. The second reason this subject is worthy of investigation is based upon the conclusion that previous work in this area has been less adequate than is required for any comprehensive understanding. Some of the works are very early and consequently are generally unavailable today since they have long been out of print.<sup>2</sup> Most articles and books on the subject are quite short; many are inadequately documented. Generally, much pertinent information must be gleaned from varied and disparate sources (many of these not even containing a helpful index entry which would eliminate the

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<sup>1</sup>It is feared by the author that a final conclusion that the Old Testament gives the divine stamp of approval to drinking intoxicating beverages might elicit from conservative churches an emotional reaction similar to that of the Roman arena, "Treason!" "To the lions!" Conversely, a considered judgment that Scripture only approves of drinking unfermented grape juice would bring forth from many professional colleagues the ultimate dispassionate opprobrium, "careless and distinctly unscholarly research!"

<sup>2</sup>This writer is here referring to books published in conjunction with the temperance movement at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one. Some of the more important sources include: Frederic Richard Lees and Dawson Burns, The Temperance Bible-Commentary, 5th English ed. (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1880); Eliphalet Nott, Lectures on Biblical Temperance (London: Trubner & Co., 1863); and G. W. Samson, The Divine Law as to Wines (New York: National Temperance Society and Publication House, 1880).

extra time spent in locating their discussions).<sup>1</sup>

There is another significant cause why many previous studies are, by their very nature, less consequential to this study than might be readily apparent. That reason relates, in essence, to the presuppositions of the respective authors. Since a writer's conclusions are definitely related to his presuppositions, and since the presuppositions of the majority of Old Testament scholars are not in line with those of God's revelation, it is obvious that their conclusions may frequently be at variance with biblical truth. When more apparent weight is given to extra-biblical evidence than to biblical statements, the research automatically becomes suspect.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, even where an author does have proper biblical presuppositions, the superficiality of the respective study does not lend credence to the position which he espouses (whether for or against the use of wine).<sup>3</sup> Similarly, on more than one occasion, recognized conservative scholars have dogmatically asserted to this writer that the

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<sup>1</sup>This fact may ultimately bring about some unintentional bibliographical omissions in this work.

<sup>2</sup>For further understanding of this writer's point, see the section below in this same chapter entitled "Presuppositions Governing this Study."

<sup>3</sup>Although the statement has wider relevance, Bible dictionary articles on wine are especially guilty here. The biblical research and exegesis on which they are based are normally extremely cursory and thus their conclusions are often inadequate and even incorrect. This is particularly dangerous because conservative Bible dictionaries are often relied upon as authoritative by pastors and laymen alike.

Old Testament clearly approves of intoxicating wine for the believer. However, any depth in their personal study of the problem was less than apparent in their discussion.

Another problem which helps to establish the need of a study such as this is that the subject is often virtually ignored as to its theological relevance. Writers who do study the grape in antiquity often pass over Scripture very superficially (or do not consult it) in their haste to study the "facts" from archaeological finds. Furthermore, even the biblical theologies generally consider the subject to be one which is too insignificant upon which to dwell.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>One interesting discovery made by this writer while doing research for this dissertation was the almost total lack of interest shown toward the vine and its products by authors dealing with the theology of the Old Testament. Even though (as will be demonstrated) the vineyard and its products are a very important subject for Old Testament theology, with ramifications relating to the sacrificial system, to priestly and Nazirite qualifications, to personal morality, to Israel's unique privileges, and to God's blessing and cursing, etc., yet the subject in any of its parts is deemed not worthy of serious investigation. Vos, Lehman, Oehler, Heinisch, Vriezen, von Rad, Davidson, Jacob, and Eichrodt, for example, do not even list the word "wine" in their indices (van Imschoot has no subject index). Payne does index the word but says little and contributes nothing of significance on the subject. Most of the above do not allude to the libation at all as it pertains to sacrifice, and what little is said is of no substance. Heinisch devotes less than half a page (pp. 198-99) to the subject of temperance in its application to both eating and drinking; Payne contributes less (p. 339); and the remainder contribute less or nothing. The books referred to above in alphabetical order of the authors are the following: A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament, ed. Stewart D. F. Salmond, The International Theological Library, ed. Charles A. Briggs and Stewart D. F. Salmond (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904); Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, 2 vols., trans. J. A. Baker, The Old Testament Library, ed. G. Ernest Wright, et al. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961, 1967); Paul

For these several reasons, there exists a need for a more carefully documented and comprehensive investigation which will bring together in one up-to-date volume the available materials for a thorough study.

A prominent biblical theme. A third reason for the need of such a dissertation on the grape pertains to its prominence in the Word of God. For anyone who holds a high view of inspiration and the authority of Scripture, this fact alone would make the subject worthy of intense study. If God saw fit to mention the grape and its products in all but one small Old Testament book<sup>1</sup> (most books deal with the subject many times), it is apparent that He considered the topic to be an important one.

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Heinisch, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. William G. Heidt (St. Paul: Liturgical Press, 1955); Paul van Imschoot, Theology of the Old Testament, vol. 1: God, trans. Kathryn Sullivan and Fidelis Buck (Tournai: Desclée & Co., 1954); Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958); Chester K. Lehman, Biblical Theology, vol. 1: Old Testament (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1971); Gustave Friedrich Oehler, Theology of the Old Testament (n.p.: T. & T. Clark, 1873; rev. trans. George E. Day, n.p.: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883; reprint ed., Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1978); J. Barton Payne, ed., The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962); Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, 2 vols., trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965); Geerhardus Vos, Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954); and Theodorus C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology, 2nd ed. (Newton, Mass.: Charles T. Branford Co., 1958).

<sup>1</sup>Considering the specific subject matter of the book, it is not unexpected that Jonah omits any specific reference to the grape or its products.

The clear and definitely stated testimony of Scripture is that the grape vine and its beverage(s) played an important role in the daily life of God's people (in cultivation, in preparation, and in consumption). It is not surprising, therefore, to find that one of the aspects of life in ancient Israel which is most easily documented from extra-biblical sources is their preoccupation with the vine.<sup>1</sup> Palestine was ideally suited to the cultivation of the industry, and the appetites of the people insured consumption of its products.

Anything which was a dominant influence in biblical times is innately worthy of investigation. However, the imperative to research is intensified with the realization that God considers this plant to be an important element in His material blessings toward Abraham's seed. The manner in which God blesses is almost as vital to the understanding of God's character and His purposes as is the fact that God does bless--for only with this knowledge does the word בָּרַךְ and its derivatives take on concrete meaning.

Finally, there is another fact which gives special impetus to the prominence of the grapevine in Scripture: the imagery with which it is used to show God's relationship with His people. Just as both testaments portray God's love to His chosen ones by the metaphor of marriage, so both testaments also portray that same relationship by the equally intriguing

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<sup>1</sup>For documentation see chapter 2 below, p. 95.

metaphors dealing with the vineyard.<sup>1</sup>

### Purposes Guiding the Study

Having demonstrated, therefore, that there is indeed the need for a scholarly investigation of the biblical use of wine, it is yet important to clearly state the purposes of the author which he will attempt to carry to fruition.

Primarily the writer desires to place a prominent aspect of Israel's everyday life into its proper biblical perspective: to research as carefully as possible the subject of wine as it pertained to God's purposes and will for His own people. If theological problems arise in the course of such an investigation, an attempt will be made to resolve apparent discrepancies, and solutions based upon the author's research will be proposed.

In light of this it should be specifically understood by the reader that it is not the purpose of this writer to exhaust all resources in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the beverages of the ancient world. Instead the intention is to come to as comprehensive an understanding as is necessary in order to fully comprehend the biblical revelation on the subject.

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<sup>1</sup>The major Old Testament theme showing this relationship is that of the husbandman's care of his vineyard (note Ps. 80:8-13; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 19:10-14; etc.). The well-known New Testament metaphor in John 15 uses the vine and its branches. (Note also the prominence of the vineyard in Matt. 20:1-15; 21:33-44.)

Another important purpose of this work is to provide the necessary background for others to investigate the New Testament message on the same topic just as thoroughly. Often, as has been previously indicated, men go first to the New Testament for information, implying that it alone is authoritative for contemporary faith and practice. This approach may lead not only to an ignorance of the very historical and theological context in which that New Testament was written but also to an actual distortion of the message which God intends through His further revelation in this "New Covenant."

By its very nature a dissertation is intended to be the product of careful research and cautious conclusions. It is not the proper forum for preaching per se. However, this work should provide a basis from which pastors and teachers may work in attempting to apply to contemporary Christendom the truth of God on the subject of the vine and its "wine," that they might labor not on the basis of emotion but upon the foundation of the explicit teaching of the Word of God.

#### Presuppositions Governing the Study

One element which is frequently lacking in many scholarly treatises is a specific declaration of the author's presuppositions. Often if the reader considers the presuppositions of a writer to be vital information, he must patiently garner clues to these as he reads, since the author has not prominently set them forth in a straightforward manner. (In

some instances the omission may be intentional, since there is an obvious advantage that can accrue to such a procedure: the naive, trusting reader may be misled into supposing that the conclusions reached are able to stand without the support of any unstated presuppositions.) Whether the failure of others to declare their presuppositions is intentional or not, this writer considers it to be of vital importance to clarify his own position from the beginning.<sup>1</sup>

The presuppositions of this author are in accord with those of historic fundamentalism. As such they will be stated but not amplified: (1) The Bible in its entire sixty-six books is the inspired, inerrant (in the original manuscripts) and, therefore, authoritative Word of the Creator of the universe. (2) As such it is true in its entirety (in context) and is as accurate in scientific and historical matters as it is in "spiritual" truth (if such a distinction is in any sense legitimate). (3) It has always been, and will always be in every age, applicable to the needs of men. (4) All Scripture, because it is truth, can be harmonized adequately if it is fully and accurately understood (which in some instances may be impossible for men prior to further revelation in heaven). It is, therefore, normally straightforward and ultimately noncon-

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<sup>1</sup>The hypothetical ability of beginning a study with no presuppositions is an impossibility, even if a given writer might suppose (and strive to do) otherwise. Therefore, an honest desire to communicate to the reader should include a clear declaration of the position which the writer assumes when he begins his work.



flicting in its message.

In effect, then, this research project receives both its impetus and its presuppositions from the Book it strives to illuminate and explicate. If the Bible were not the very Word of God with its statements both true and eternally relevant, this dissertation would have little ultimate value. (The very presuppositions which may doom it to be considered unacceptable scholarship by unbelieving scholars who attack the Bible's unity and accuracy should also commend it to those who in faith desire to know God and His revelation.)

Furthermore, it is well initially to note what presuppositions will not be in the background in the course of this study (unseen but not unimportant). It must therefore be stated that this work is not written in order to prove a thesis which was already reached before the research began. The author has no interest in twisting facts in order to arrive at a foregone conclusion. It would indeed, perhaps, be comforting to conclude with many conservatives (with whom the author is associated) that the Bible *directly* commands the position reflected in the widely used church covenant which states in part, "We will . . . endeavor . . . to abstain from the sale and use of all intoxicating drinks as a beverage. . . ." However, to begin the research with a conclusion already intact would be dishonest. Rather, it is the intention of the writer (within the already prescribed limits which are fixed by the above working presuppositions) to let the *truth*--insofar as it can be understood

from a thorough investigation of all the pertinent data--be the overseer, to the end that the conclusions of the investigation might be consistent with God's revelation.

One reason that such a position may be taken cheerfully is that the author has such a high regard for God's truth as a self-consistent, harmonious unit; as a result, the fear of being embarrassed by a proper understanding of the Word is very foreign to his imagination.

#### Limitations Applied to the Study

It is imperative for any writer to set the boundaries within which his research will be maintained. This serves to keep the research disciplined and manageable instead of open-ended. It is important for these boundaries to be known by the reader as well so that he may intelligently peruse the work without false expectations.

Major limitations have already been imposed upon this paper by the establishment of a title. "The Use of 'Wine' in the Old Testament" implies that this paper will be basically limited to the revelation in the older testament as opposed to that of the newer testament. That limitation is simultaneously appreciated and unwelcome. On the one hand it is a relief, because of time and the potential length of such a work (without such a restriction), to limit this research to the evidence from the first thirty-nine books. However, the same kind of careful study should be applied to the New Testament as well,

and it is with some regret that this cannot be a part of a dissertation in the area of Old Testament studies.

There is a second natural limitation which may be inferred from the title: the research will center especially on the beverages which are derived from the vineyard. In order to understand the proper context of the vineyard in Palestine, it will be necessary to compare briefly its harvest to that of other natural horticultural produce common to the land. Also there is a need to discuss the beverages from the vine in contrast to other available and useful beverages. However, the focus of attention will constantly be upon that of the grape itself.

A third limitation has already been mentioned: the necessity of giving central attention to the biblical data rather than to information from extra-biblical sources in the ancient Near East. The distinct purpose of the dissertation is to investigate the principles and instruction concerning wine and other grape products which God gave to His chosen people in His word, and to examine the practice of the nation of Israel in light of His revealed will for them. Therefore, it is only as information from outside sources is pertinent to this purpose that it will be included. To enter *at length* into the use and abuse of wine in all of the ancient world, even including the Greeks and Romans, is outside the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, freedom is reserved to glean from any and all sources data which are necessary to understanding the biblical narrative.

### Definitions Basic to the Study

Because the major purpose of this dissertation is to communicate precisely and clearly to the reader the results of the author's research, it seems evident that there is a need to present a brief glossary of terms used.

The need for such a glossary is apparent when the three-fold problem which this writer faces is recognized:

(1) The study is at times, by its very nature, quite technical and therefore must be presented with precision.

(2) Some of the words which will be used throughout the work, such as "wine," may properly refer to liquids with very differing connotations. Therefore, the exact and limited usage with which the author employs these words must be carefully understood, if accuracy of communication is to be achieved and if his argument is to be fully comprehended.

(3) Because of its innate association in contemporary conservative circles with the sin of drunkenness, the wine industry is not one which is very familiar to the average evangelical. As such, there is a need for simplicity and clarity in the use of language so that nothing will be misunderstood as a result of this very lack of familiarity.

Therefore, the following words are defined and the limitations of their meaning in this work by the writer are presented here for the aid of the reader.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Their inclusion in the introduction rather than in an

## Beverage

The derivation of the word beverage helps in the understanding of its proper meaning. The word is related through the French verb beivre, "to drink," to the Latin verb bibere with the same definition. The drinking to which these words refer is primarily the swallowing of a liquid without any innate indication concerning the kind of liquid which is thus imbibed. The dictionary definition is, "liquid for drinking; drink."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, throughout this dissertation, the word will have a totally neutral connotation and the context must determine the exact nature of the beverage, whether the liquid is natural or artificial, unfermented or fermented.

## Juice

A word which is very common in English parlance is the word juice. As such, it is perhaps unnecessary to define this word. Yet, because of its relatively frequent usage throughout this technically oriented study, a definition is here set forth in order that the reader may clearly understand the writer's specific employment of the word. Juice is defined as, "the characteristic fluid of any vegetable or animal substance; the sap or part which can be expressed from fruit. . . ."<sup>2</sup> There-

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appendix is based upon the fact that this information is vital to the reader's comprehension of all that is to follow.

<sup>1</sup>NW, s.v. "beverage," p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., s.v. "juice," p. 805.

fore, the word juice, as used throughout this dissertation, will refer to the natural (unmixed and unfermented) liquid which has been squeezed from newly harvested fruit.

### Must

Must, in the terminology of the grape industry, is a noun meaning, "the expressed juice of the grape, or other fruit, before fermentation."<sup>1</sup> This word, then, is more frequently used in the industry under investigation in this study than it is in common speech, and, as such, is likely to be an unfamiliar term to many readers. For that specific reason, even though the word is technically very proper, it will not be used as frequently as the more common word juice which can more readily convey the right concept to the average reader. Nevertheless, when the word is used in the following pages, must will always denote *the unfermented, pure juice of the grape*.

### Beer

Although the word beer has only peripheral relevance to this study, it is important to understand what the word means so that when the word is used there will be no confusion over terminology. Webster defines beer as, "fermented liquor made from any malted grain, but commonly from barley malt, with hops or some other substance to impart a bitter flavor."<sup>2</sup> (A close

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., s.v. "must," p. 957.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., s.v. "beer," p. 131.

synonym, which will not be used in this study, is the word ale. The only difference in common usage is that ale may denote a heavier and beer a lighter malt liquor.<sup>1)</sup> Beer was not manufactured by exactly the same process in the ancient Near East as it is today, as will be explained. It is sufficient to mention here that beer will be used in this monograph to refer to any intoxicating beverage which is made from grain.

### Liquor

Because of the technically ambiguous nature of the word liquor, it too deserves definition. While liquor may properly refer to any liquid substance, as its etymological relationship to the word liquid implies, it is generally used specifically of ". . . alcoholic or spiritous fluid, either distilled, or fermented, as brandy, wine, whisky, beer, etc."<sup>2</sup> In this dissertation liquor will be confined to its use as an intoxicating beverage.

### Wine

Webster's dictionary defines wine in this manner:

The expressed juice of grapes, especially when fermented; a beverage or liquor prepared from grapes by squeezing out their juice, and (usually) allowing it to ferment. . . . Wine is essentially a dilute solution of ethyl alcohol, containing also certain small quantities of ethers and ethereal salts which give character and bouquet.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., s.v. "ale," p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., s.v. "liquor," p. 858.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., s.v. "wine," p. 1656.

For the purpose of the writer of this monograph, wine will henceforth refer only to an intoxicating, alcoholic beverage. The technically proper but generally unused nuance of wine in the sense of *fresh, unfermented grape juice* will not be employed at all henceforth in this study. It is believed by this writer that to do so would lead to unnecessary confusion, rather than clarity, in the presentation of the subject at hand. Therefore, if wine is mentioned without further definition it will uniformly refer to a *grape beverage which is fermented and therefore which is capable of inducing intoxication or drunkenness*. Furthermore, if the word wine is used with a modifier, such as pomegranate wine, then the beverage referred to will still be considered fermented but will be a product of the pomegranate rather than of the grape.

#### Methodology and Arrangement of the Study

Before leaving introductory matters and proceeding to the body of the dissertation, it is well to include for the reader's benefit a brief description of the modus operandi to be used and the organization to be found in the remaining chapters.

With regard to methodology, there are two rather technical aspects which need to be researched if the conclusions reached are to be built upon a proper foundation. One area of investigation must be a study of the wine industry in the ancient world in general, and that of ancient Israel in par-



ticular. The manufacture, storage, transportation, preservation, and consumption of unfermented and fermented grape products all need to be understood if the biblical texts dealing with wine are to be accurately comprehended. While Scripture gives many clues to these various activities, there are yet questions to which the surrounding cultures may help to supply the answers.

A second area which has its very technical aspects is that of a comprehensive word study of selected important biblical words for "wine." This will entail an investigation into the meaning and usage of the cognate words throughout the literatures of the other Semitic languages. Without such a process it is less possible to be certain of the precise meaning of the words as they occur in the Old Testament. After this step there is a further related step of studying each pertinent Hebrew word in every context in which it occurs in Scripture. After these steps are accomplished, there will then be a relatively solid basis upon which to evaluate the degree of fermentation which is uniformly or spasmodically (as the case may be) associated with those words used in the Bible.

It is only after all this work has been carefully done that it is possible to be certain that solutions are being sought to the right theological problems, for prior to such a study it is likely for theological contradictions to be more apparent (rising from an improper understanding of the text) than real.

The arrangement and presentation of the findings of the research presented in this dissertation will be in the following logical sequence:

Chapter 2 will explore the wine industry in the ancient Near East and in Israel.

Chapter 3 will then include the more technical study of the etymological information concerning the pertinent Hebrew words to be gained from the cognate languages and literatures.

Chapters 4 and 5 will present an analysis of the way in which the Old Testament uses the various terms translated "wine" in the Authorized Version. The basis for the analysis will consist of a study of each occurrence of each word in context. The two chapters will, however, show the results of that study.

Finally, chapter 6 will contain the development and suggested resolution of any legitimate theological problems that remain or of any significant discussions which are desirable after the detailed analysis in the preceding chapters. There will also be several appendices found at the end which will include supporting or supplemental information relating to this overall study.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WINE INDUSTRY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

In order to set forward a proper context for the study of the grape beverages mentioned in Scripture, it is well to begin with an overview of the wine industry of the ancient near eastern world. It must be made clear, however, that this chapter of necessity will be abridged in nature. Since the title of the dissertation is "The Use of 'Wine' in the Old Testament," it would be too far afield from the stated subject and too voluminous as well to thoroughly present all of the available material regarding wine production and consumption in the lands surrounding Israel. Nevertheless, it is beneficial for the reader to recognize the popularity of wine in the ancient world from the beginning of recorded history. The cradles of civilization in Egypt and Mesopotamia were well aware of this beverage, as was the classical world of Greece and Rome. Therefore, it is helpful by comparison and by contrast to show the relationship and distinctives between Israel and the surrounding nations in their use of the vineyard and its products. In addition, where pertinent, mention will be made of beer as well, for it was a frequently used intoxicant in the ancient world, just as it is in modern times.

### Egypt

A logical place to begin studying the wine industry of the ancient world is Egypt, both because of its early date and because of the availability of information from this civilization regarding this particular subject.

#### The relative importance of beer in Egypt

Egypt greatly valued both wine and beer as intoxicants. The importance of wine can be clearly demonstrated from various pictorial scenes which have been discovered there, illustrating the vineyard, the grape harvest, the act of treading grapes, the storing of wines, the mixing of drinks, and the consumption of these.<sup>1</sup> However, the use of wine should be kept in perspective in that beer was the more popular fermented drink. Doubtless the Egyptian preference for beer over wine was at least partially due to the fact that it was more readily available, in that it required far less time and sophistication in processing and less land for the cultivation of the grain from which it came.<sup>2</sup> Beer can be made at any time from stored grain and therefore does not require as much care in preservation and storage as was necessary for wine.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, it was avail-

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<sup>1</sup>For example, note VB, pp. 19, 47, 51-55, 57; and ANEP, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>No land needed to be set aside for this particular use, since grain was grown in great quantities for food anyway. Vineyards, on the other hand, would require special cultivation.

<sup>3</sup>However, beer definitely did sour on occasion, as is attested in their literature. For example, a dead pharaoh was

able to anyone who desired to utilize a part of his basic staple of grain to produce a beverage instead of bread.<sup>1</sup>

Since beer was made from bread, the brewery and the bakery were organically connected. This connection may be clearly seen in the models that were buried with important personages during the Middle Kingdom. For example, one model depicts an Eleventh Dynasty brewery and bakery which are adjoining rooms in one building.<sup>2</sup>

One authority indicates that Egyptian beer was made in the following manner:

Coarsely ground wheat is kneaded with water into a dough, yeast being added, then lightly baked into thick loaves in order not to destroy the enzymes or kill the yeast. A quarter of the quantity of wheat used, after being moistened with water, is exposed to the air and crushed while still moist. This is then added to the loaves, which have been broken up, and the mixture is put into a vessel and allowed to ferment, after which it is strained through a sieve into jars. The beer was almost certainly not malted,

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promised a blessing in the after-life: bread that would not crumble and beer that would not sour. This indicates that a frequent problem was stale bread and spoiled beer; Pierre Montet, Everyday Life in Egypt in the Days of Rameses the Great, trans. A. R. Maxwell-Hyslop and Margaret S. Drower (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1974), p. 83. Note also Adolf Erman, The Ancient Egyptians: A Sourcebook of their Writings, trans. Aylward M. Blackman (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks--The Academy Library, 1966), p. 157.

<sup>1</sup>Diodorus Siculus, himself prejudiced in favor of wine, gives credit to the Egyptian deity Osiris for both the original discovery of wine (presenting it to man, l. 15. 8) and the introduction of beer into lands less suitable for the vine. He states: "And if any country did not admit the growing of the vine he [Osiris] introduced the drink prepared from barley; which is little inferior to wine [οἶνος] in aroma and in strength"--l. 20. 4. Compare also l. 34. 10 where he refers to it by name as ζυθος.

<sup>2</sup>No. 154, ANEP.

fermentation being caused by the conversion of the natural sugars in the grain into dextrose by one of the enzymes of the yeast; . . .<sup>1</sup>

According to Forbes, brewing began in the home and only became an entity separate from the household when large quantities were needed. He states that Egypt never demonstrated as much variety in technique of making beer as was found in Mesopotamia. The fermenting vat used in the breweries was large enough for men to stand in it and tread the mash while holding on to its rim. The beer made by the above process was able to attain an alcoholic content of up to twelve per cent if sugar-rich substances were added to the brew (six per cent to eight per cent is more normal). This high concentration of alcohol would have been designated by the Egyptians as "strong beer."<sup>2</sup>

The preference for beer as the fermented beverage of Egypt is easily documented from their own literature.<sup>3</sup> Bread

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<sup>1</sup>Barbara Sewell, Egypt under the Pharaohs (London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1968), pp. 56-57. Modern analysis of surviving portions of the mash indicates that the most common type of grain used for beer was barley; John Ruffle, The Egyptians: An Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>SAT, 3:71-72. Pliny (Natural History 14. 29. 149) expresses amazement that the Egyptians drank their beer undiluted, since the classical world normally diluted their wines.

<sup>3</sup>A casual perusal of Erman, Egyptians, shows that wine is not mentioned nearly as often. Beer appears in the Egyptian writings in this sourcebook on pages 71, 79, 102, 122, 157, 164, 190, 209, 210, 212, 216, 236, 239, 244, 249, 250, 297, 305. Of these, on pp. 157, 210, 212, and 249 wine is mentioned also. Wine is included by itself on pp. 191, 226, 245. According to one source (HT, p. 276) date wine was probably a more popular Egyptian beverage than grape wine, but that conclusion is questionable.

and beer are frequently found together as a summary of a meal:

*Be content with thy diet: If three loaves satisfy thee, and thou drinkest two pots of beer, and thy belly is not yet contented, fight against it (?)*.<sup>1</sup>

"Satisfy thee with thy bread and with thy beer."<sup>2</sup>

"But thou art sated with thy bread and drunken with thy beer. Thou art rich in all things."<sup>3</sup>

Double the bread that thou givest to thy mother, . . . She put thee to school, when thou hadst been taught to write and daily she stood there [outside the school] . . . with bread and beer from her house.<sup>4</sup>

O Thōth, place me in Hermopolis, in thy city, where life is pleasant! Thou suppliest what I need in bread and beer, . . .<sup>5</sup>

Beer was, in fact, so appreciated that it could be used in love poetry: "If I kiss her and her lips are open, I am happy (even) without beer."<sup>6</sup>

#### The importance of wine in Egypt

Although beer was more prevalent, wine was also a very important and appreciated beverage in Egypt. As such, wine was both made locally and imported. Apparently, the wines of Egypt were not considered as choice as the wines of ancient Aram (Syria). This may be demonstrated by the Syrian wine

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<sup>1</sup>"The Instruction of Duauf," Erman, Egyptians, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>"The Instruction for King Merikerē," *ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup>"The Complaints of the Peasant," *ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup>"The Wisdom of Athii," *ibid.*, p. 329.

<sup>5</sup>"Shorter Hymns and Prayers," *ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>6</sup>"Discourses of the Lovers," *ibid.*, p. 244.

trade itself<sup>1</sup> and by the literature of Egypt as well. For example, a pharaoh of the New Kingdom had regular amounts of Syrian wine in his daily fare:

Take heed to have full preparation made in front of Pharaoh, thy good lord, in fair and excellent order, with bread, beer, meat, cakes . . . ; with oxen . . . , from the west, with fat calves from the south, and many fat birds from the reed-swamp. . . , oil for eating, fat of geese, cream, . . . beer from Kedi, wine from Syria, and beans in heaps.<sup>2</sup>

While Egypt imported some of its best wine from afar, the nation was well acquainted with the grape vine and every aspect of its care and wine production. Apparently the vineyards of Egypt were originally planted in the northern lower regions and gradually as time passed were planted farther south as well.<sup>3</sup>

One of Egypt's especially important vineyards was the vineyard called *Ka-n-kemet*. It was situated beside the canal *Ptry* near the city of Rameses in the delta. The vineyard was planted initially at least by the time of Ramses II (early thirteenth century B.C.) and probably earlier.<sup>4</sup> Many broken

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 64 under the discussion of Syria below.

<sup>2</sup>Erman, Egyptians, pp. 209-10. Even though this is found in what is purported to be a model letter for school boys to practice, it would certainly be in accord with the known fare of royalty.

<sup>3</sup>By Ptolmaic times, vineyards were established as far south as Elephantine in Upper Egypt; VB, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup>William W. Hallo and William Kelly Simpson, The Ancient Near East: A History, under the general editorship of John Morton Blum (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.,



sherds were found by archaeologists at the Ramesseum from wine jars which identified this vineyard as their place of origin. Rameses III was very interested in the development of *Ka-n-kemet* but his viticultural interests extended much farther as well.<sup>1</sup> One papyrus document quotes him as saying:

I created for thee vineyards in the oases of the south and of the north, and many others besides in the southern districts. In the Delta their numbers increased by hundreds of thousands. I appointed gardeners from among the foreign captives to tend them and I dug pools of water for them filled with water lilies: wine and liquor from them flow like water, to be offered in thy presence in Thebes, the city of victories.<sup>2</sup>

Vineyards were known in Egypt from earliest times.

Excavated predynastic and First Dynasty graves contained wine jars whose clay stoppers bear the testimony that their wine was from vineyards near Memphis in Lower (Northern) Egypt. These early vineyards were apparently oval in shape and surrounded by walls. The early vineyards were especially utilized to produce wines needed for ceremonial purposes in the funerals of the early kings and high government officials. In all probability, wine was also used from these vineyards or others for the enjoyment of the living royalty as well. The earliest known vineyards all had individual religious names applied to them

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1971), p. 300; and VB, p. 15.


<sup>1</sup>VB, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Montet, Everyday Life, pp. 105-06. Another pharaoh, Amenhotep III (early 14th century), gave to the Luxor temple a vineyard whose vaunted production of wine was even greater; it ". . . was more plentiful than the water of the Nile at its highest mark, born from the Lord of Eternity"; SAT, 3:75.

and were (at least in large measure) used for ceremonial purposes.<sup>1</sup>

Vineyards in Egypt were normally controlled by the royalty and the nobility in all the earlier periods. For example, one very important Third Dynasty official by the name of Methen not only had a huge house but large personal land holdings:

Fine trees were planted, and a very large lake made; figs and vines were plentiful. Very plentiful trees and vines were planted and a great quantity of wine was made there. A vineyard was made, 2000 *stat* [each equals seven-tenths of an acre] of land within a wall, and trees were planted.<sup>2</sup>

The vines were planted on artificially elevated ground and usually were arranged in ordered rows. In the more prosperous vineyards, the vines were propped up either on forked sticks or more elaborate arbors and trellis work (as even the hieroglyph for vine, , demonstrates).<sup>3</sup>

Unlike the vineyards of Palestine, Egyptian vineyards normally formed a part of a larger garden or orchard in which other fruits, vegetables, and melons were raised as well.

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<sup>1</sup>VB, pp. 47-48. The earliest vineyard names almost always exalted the Egyptian god Horus in some manner; *ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Murray, *Splendor that was Egypt*, p. 77. According to Forbes (*SAT*, 3:75), the Greeks were the ones who introduced wine to the lower classes; private vineyards do not antedate the Hellenistic period.

<sup>3</sup>VB, pp. 49-50. See also signs 90-91 in E. A. Wallis Budge, *Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphics, with a Sign List* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1902), p. 73. Montet (*Everyday Life*, p. 105) adds that "Every garden contained at least a few vines set against a wall or bordering the central path," grown for their delicious grapes.

Because of the higher ground on which these gardens were laid out, there was a need for irrigation, so that most of these contained a pond in the center, often decorated with floating water lilies (lotus).<sup>1</sup> According to papyrus sources, the gardeners would spend the morning irrigating the vegetables and the evening watering the vines.<sup>2</sup>

### The production of wine in Egypt

Most of the information that is available regarding viticulture is in reference to the harvest time itself, for this is the goal of the year-long work.<sup>3</sup> Pictures illustrate this exciting time of the year. Apparently the grape clusters were either cut off the vine with sickle-shaped knives<sup>4</sup> or they were picked by hand.<sup>5</sup> Whole families were involved in the festivities as men, women, and children together picked the ripe fruit, singing as they worked.<sup>6</sup> The grapes were carefully placed into large wicker baskets and carried by men to the grape press.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>SAT, 3:74.

<sup>2</sup>VB, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>As the grapes began to ripen, it was the task of boys to protect them from hungry birds by means of throwing sticks or slings, as some of the ancient scenes indicate; HT, 1:284.

<sup>4</sup>VB, p. 50; and SAT, 3:75.

<sup>5</sup>Montet (Everyday Life, p. 106) states that only hands were used for this. Pictures #156 in ANEP and #5 and #7 in VB (pp. 52-53) would support Montet's conclusion.

<sup>6</sup>SAT, 3:75.

<sup>7</sup>On the tomb of Ti, men bearing grape-filled baskets

The grapes were then pressed in a treading vat.<sup>1</sup> These vats were always elevated so that the juice could flow into a lower vat. In the grape press, men and boys would tread the grapes with their feet, rhythmically dancing to music which they themselves provided, sometimes helped along by others near the press who sang and clapped their hands to keep everyone together.<sup>2</sup> The treaders held on to vines or ropes suspended from above (or to one another if no roof was overhead<sup>3</sup>) in order to keep their balance while they worked.<sup>4</sup> The expressed juice flowed by gravity through (one to three) holes into lower vats.<sup>5</sup>

Very early in Egyptian history a second pressing was done to more thoroughly wring all of the juice from the grapes. The leftovers on the bottom of the press were removed and

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are portrayed as marching single file and the words "the bringing of the grapes for pressing" are written beneath the picture; VB, pp. 51-52.

<sup>1</sup>Forbes (SAT, 3:76) says that these were made of wood or of stone. Montet (Everyday Life, p. 106) believes that they were only of stone; but the elaborate paintings (such as Fig. 17, SAT, 3:75) would seem to indicate otherwise.

<sup>2</sup>VB, pp. 53-54. Montet (Everyday Life, p. 106) indicates that the accompanying musicians disappeared by the New Kingdom period.

<sup>3</sup>VB, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup>Note Fig. 17 in SAT, 3:75, which pictures seven men in the press at once and picture #156 ANEP, which shows five men.

<sup>5</sup>Lutz (VB, p. 54) indicates that the fermentation occurred here. Montet (Everyday Life, p. 107) and Forbes (SAT, 3:77) disagree.

placed in a linen cloth which was then wrung by turning sticks attached to the two ends in opposite directions.<sup>1</sup> When the two means of pressing the grapes were used together, no juice was wasted. However, the treading of the grapes was never superseded by the cloth press, for the former produced the best wine and the latter method a secondary quality beverage.<sup>2</sup>

The process of fermentation is not documented. However, it is known that the juice was transported to fermenting vats in cool "cellars" in dark buildings. Apparently the fermentation process was carefully monitored<sup>3</sup> and upon completion the wines were filtered. This was accomplished by pouring the wine through a linen cloth into a container below. This filtered wine was then poured into tall, slender jars (narrow at the bottom) which had been previously coated with resin. After sealing the jars with clay stoppers to retard further fermentation, the jars were then ready for transportation or storage in cool cellars.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Forbes (SAT, 3:76) indicates that this was done by four men (two at each end). A fifth man is pictured helping in some way. Later a more efficient system was devised using a strong wooden frame with the cloth attached at one end to the frame and the other end turned by at least three men, indicating the difficulty of the task. Such a twist press is portrayed on the walls of the tomb at Beni-Hasan (VB, pp. 54-55).

<sup>2</sup>SAT, 3:76.

<sup>3</sup>Forbes (*ibid.*, p. 77) indicates that workmen are occasionally portrayed as coming out of the buildings overcome by the fumes.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

Scribes were apparently involved in every aspect of the vintage. When the grapes were picked, they were responsible to count the baskets. When the wine was "bottled" they recorded on the stoppers the necessary details for identification.<sup>1</sup> For example, one reads, "In the year one. Good wine of the great irrigated vineyard of the temple of Ramses (II) at Per-Ammon. The chief of the wine-bottlers, Tothmes."<sup>2</sup>

The jars were placed in the wine cellar standing upright either in sand or in straw rings<sup>3</sup> (which would make the necessary allowance for the conical shape of the jars<sup>4</sup>).

#### The consumption of wine in Egypt

Wine, which in the beginning of Egypt's history was used primarily for ceremonial purposes, gradually increased in popularity as a favored beverage among the nobility of Egypt. However, at all stages it continued to be popular in the temple ritual: "Wine-offerings were made at the common offerings and the offerings for the dead. Wine always headed the list of liquid offerings."<sup>5</sup>

The Egyptian nobility devised means of making their wines both a cool and an aesthetic contribution to dining by

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<sup>1</sup>Montet, Everyday Life, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup>SAT, 3:77.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>4</sup>The shape of the jars was more conducive to carrying on the shoulder than to storing in an upright position.

<sup>5</sup>VB, p. 19.

the following means:

When taken out of the cellars to be used at dinner parties, the wine-jars were put on stands and decorated with garlands of flowers, kept wet so that the wine might be cooled by evaporation. Wines were tapped from the jars with siphons, and mixed to taste.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting that Egyptian wines did not rate very highly with the later Graeco-Roman world which considered them to be not worthy of drinking. Martial even declared that vinegar was preferable in taste.<sup>2</sup>

Drunkenness was certainly a well-known phenomenon in Egypt, but apparently it was not always considered to be a problem. A Twelfth Dynasty poem presents an angel positively comparing the pleasant sensation of death to the more commonly experienced state of drunkenness. In a pictorial portrayal of an Eighteenth Dynasty party, a serving maid who was offering cups of wine to the guests persuades a lady to take one with the words: "Drink this and get drunk." Her unhesitating, sophisticated reply was, "I shall love to be drunk."<sup>3</sup> Whatever this may show of the prevailing mores, there were certainly voices of caution in Egypt against the pitfalls of drunkenness. "The Wisdom of Anii" contains this admonition:

Take not upon thyself(?) to drink a jug of beer. Thou speakest, and an unintelligible utterance issueth from thy

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<sup>1</sup>HT, 1:284. Apparently unfermented grape juice was valued as well, but documentation regarding this is scarce; *ibid.* Also note Ruffle, Egyptian Archaeology, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>HT, 1:284.

<sup>3</sup>Murray, Splendor that was Egypt, p. 87.

mouth. If thou fallest down and thy limbs break, there is none to hold out a hand to thee. Thy companions in drink stand up and say: "*Away with this sot!*" If there (then) cometh one to seek thee in order to question thee, thou art found lying on the ground, and thou art like a little child.<sup>1</sup>

Another text warning against drunkenness contains these descriptive words:

Thou art like a broken steering-oar in a ship, that is obedient on neither side. Thou art like a shrine without its god, and like a house without bread.

Thou art encountered climbing a wall. . . .

Would that thou knewest that wine is an abomination, that thou wouldst . . . set not thy heart on the bottle(?)

. . . . .  
Thou dost reel, and (then) fallest upon thy belly and art besmirched with dirt- - - .<sup>2</sup>

### Mesopotamia

Having perused the available information from Egypt it is now helpful to look at the contemporary world of Mesopotamia.

### The relative importance of beer in Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia, like Egypt, favored their beer over wine as the most popular intoxicant. Wine was always expensive and normally imported, whereas beer was available all year long from the stores of grain.<sup>3</sup> According to a Greek tradition, the

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<sup>1</sup>Erman, Egyptians, pp. 236-36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 190-91.

<sup>3</sup>The classical world apparently considered the beer of Egypt to be preferable to that of Babylon. The former beer was praised as "little inferior to wine" by Diodorus Siculus (1. 20. 4), whereas the Babylonian beer was considered somewhat sour in taste; HT, 1:280. The kind of grain most used in Mesopotamia for beer was barley. Emmer (wheat) was used in decreasing percentages in the beer bread; SAT, 3:68.



Mesopotamians' addiction to beer was so strong that Dionysus (the wine god) fled westward in disgust.<sup>1</sup> Beer was so prevalent a drink that as much as forty per cent of the grain crop was set apart for brewing.<sup>2</sup>

In the Sumerian times, workmen received from the temple about two pints of beer for a day's ration, while the more important officials (including the women) would receive between three and five times this amount.<sup>3</sup>

The basic ingredient for Mesopotamian beer was malted grain--that is, grain which has been soaked in water and thus has sprouted. The germinated product was then dried, ground up into flour, and subsequently baked into cakes which could either be eaten or used to make beer.<sup>4</sup> (Many different varieties of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>HT, 1:279.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 279-80. In light of the volume of beer allotted, one might expect to learn of widespread drunkenness in their society; but they apparently did not consider such to be "newsworthy." Beer was so common that in one story regarding a monkey, the monkey is purported to have written a letter to its mother complaining: "I must eat garbage; may I not die from it! I don't even get a taste of bread; I don't even get a taste of beer" (Samuel Noah Kramer, History Begins at Sumer [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959], p. 135).

Another text, "Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi," 2:89, shows the enjoyment of beer as almost the equivalent of life itself. A man who has become so sick that even the best has become of no value says: "Beer, the life of mankind [*napsat nišā-mes*], is distasteful to me" (W. G. Lambert, Babylonian Wisdom Literature [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960], pp. 44-45).

<sup>4</sup>The extant evidence indicates that the malting process which was so characteristic of the Mesopotamian art of brewing was first used to manufacture food products and then was applied popularly to produce beer. Oppenheim writes:

"It has to be kept in mind, that the malting of barley

beer were made, depending on what additional ingredients--herbs, dates, spices, etc.--were added during the brewing process.) These beer cakes made with selected additives were soaked and allowed to ferment. After 1500 B.C., yeast was available throughout the Near East to control the fermentation process, but prior to this time, various microorganisms were available on the husks of the cereals to begin the fermentation. This mash was then strained through sieves into the fermentation vats. After the fermentation was complete and the sediment had settled, the beer was then filtered and placed into jars ready for sale or storage.<sup>1</sup>

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(and emmer) was not invented as a preparatory process to be utilized at a certain stage of the brewing of beer. In fact, malting belongs to an important technological stage in the development of methods for the preparation of vegetable food stuff without the application of fire. On that level of the history of food-technology, seeds and other hull-protected (or bitter tasting) fruits (like acorns, e.g.) were made palatable and easier to digest by prolonged soaking in water (with or without added chemicals such as lye, salt, etc.). This was done for immediate consumption and also to prepare food for preservation in various forms. Hulled barley soaked in water begins to sprout and tastes sweet after having been dried. These sprouted grains are either preserved as such or ground into groats or flour, or also made into a dough and baked as cakes. In these forms the nutritional value of the farinaceous grains is highly increased. This makes malted cereals an ideal food for journeys; . . ."

(Louis F. Hartman and A. L. Oppenheim, On Beer and Brewing Techniques in Ancient Mesopotamia [Journal of American Oriental Society Supplement, Dec. 1950], p. 13.)

In the Sumerian economy, malted products other than drink were frequently distributed as wages to workmen in the temples of Mesopotamia, but this kind of food disappeared by about 2000 B.C. (ibid., p. 14).

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 15-16; and HT, 1:278-79.

There were many technological changes in the long history of brewing in Mesopotamia. Some of the early (third millennium B.C.) evidence from this area indicates that a type of beer then in popular use was of such a coarse variety that it needed to be strained in some manner before drinking. Thus extant clay cylinder seals show beer drinkers sipping their drink through long tubes so as to prevent these persons from imbibing the malted barley hulls along with the beer. Apparently this practice originated in the mountainous regions northwest of Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup>

Another change which occurred quite early (by the first quarter of the second millennium) was removing the brewing industry from the domination of women. The female brewer (sabîtum) disappears from mention after the time of Hammurabi.<sup>2</sup> That women had dominated the brewing industry prior to this change is indicated by the fact that the only Mesopotamian profession protected by a goddess was that of the brewer.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hartman and Oppenheim, Beer and Brewing, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Theophile J. Meek has certainly misinterpreted when he translates SAL/MÍ.KAŠ.TIN.NA = sabîtum as "women wine sellers" in the Code of Hammurabi (ANET, paragraphs 108-11, p. 170). The sign KAŠ would normally refer to "beer" rather than to "wine," so this should instead be interpreted as "female brewer," in keeping with Oppenheim (*ibid.*, p. 12). (The text above was taken from Riekele Borger, Babylonisch-Assyrische Lesestücke, 3 vols., vol. 3: Die Texte in Keilschrift [Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1963], Tafel 2.)

<sup>3</sup>Actually two female deities patronized beer brewing, Ninkasi and Siris (Hartman and Oppenheim, Beer and Brewing, pp. 12, 41). The latter lady, Siris, is actually a deification of the beverage itself (*ibid.*, p. 10).

Apparently beer brewing began as a home industry, which would account for the female brewers during the early stages. (This would be analogous to the history of the industry in Egypt.)

A further radical change occurred much later (by 600 B.C.). The popular taste changed from barley-beer to a beer made from dates. "The techniques of preparing alcoholic beverages from . . . the domesticated cereals seems to have been [largely] abandoned and a beer was brewed [from dates] which had nothing but the name (*šikaru*, *kaš*) in common with that of the preceding period."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to providing a beverage for the people, beer was also used for medication as early as the Sumerian period. The beer was mixed with paste of various kinds to make poultices which were placed upon the part of the body which pained the sufferer:

Prescription No. 6. Pulverize pears (?) (and) 'manna,' pour the lees of beer over it; rub with vegetable oil, (and) fasten as a poultice.

Prescription No. 7. Pulverize the lees of the dried vine, pine tree, and plum tree; pour beer over it, with oil, (and) fasten as a poultice.

Prescription No. 8. Pulverize the roots of the . . . -tree, . . . , and dried river bitumin; pour beer over it; rub with oil, (and) fasten as a poultice.<sup>2</sup>

As well as being used in external medicine, beer was also a

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 12. On p. 42 Oppenheim mentions that beer from grain did not altogether disappear during the Neo-Babylonian period.

<sup>2</sup>Samuel Noah Kramer, The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 95; ellipses inherent to the quotation.

part of prescriptions taken internally (probably to make them more palatable<sup>1</sup>), such as the following:

Prescription No. 9. Pour strong beer over the resin of . . . -plant; heat over a fire; put this liquid in river bitumen oil, (and) let the (sick) man drink.

. . . . .  
Prescription No. 10. Pulverize pears (?) (and) the roots of the 'manna'-plant; put (the pulverized simples) in beer, (and) let the (sick) man drink.

Prescription No. 11. Pulverize the seeds of the *nignagar*-vegetable, myrrh (?), (and) thyme; put in beer, (and) let the (sick) man drink.<sup>2</sup>

This "healthful" liquid was even used as a cleansing agent in more complex prescriptions. Prescription No. 12 directs: ". . . wash (the sick spot) with quality beer (and) hot water; . . ." Likewise, another medical tablet prescribes: "After rubbing with the crushed shell you shall rub (again) with fine beer; after rubbing with fine beer, you shall wash with water; . . ."<sup>3</sup> One text includes wine with beer and other materials in an unpleasant remedy for a cough:

If a man is sick of a cough, you shall beat up styrax in strong beer, honey, and refined oil: you shall let his tongue take it without a meal; let him drink it steaming hot in beer and honey. You shall make him vomit with a feather. Afterwards he should eat a mixture of honey and curds and drink sweet wine, and he will recover.<sup>4</sup>

The Sumerian deity in charge of the preparation of beer

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, History Begins, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>Kramer, Sumerians, p. 96; ellipses inherent to the quotation.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 96 and 99.

<sup>4</sup>H. W. F. Saggs, The Greatness that was Babylon: A sketch of the ancient civilization of the Tigris-Euphrates valley (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1962), p. 469.

was a goddess named Ninkasi (whose name means "the lady who fills the mouth"). Kramer says of her:

Although she was a goddess "born in sparkling-fresh water," it was beer that was her first love; and she is described . . . as the brewer of the gods who "bakes with lofty shovel the sprouted barley," who "mixes the *bappir*-malt with sweet aromatics," who "bakes the *bappir*-malt in the lofty kiln," and who "pours the fragrant beer in the *lahtan*-vessel which is like the Tigris and Euphrates joined."<sup>1</sup>

### The importance of wine in Mesopotamia

Wine was known very early in Mesopotamia.<sup>2</sup> Textual evidence indicates that Urukagina (twenty-fourth century B.C.<sup>3</sup>) drank wine. Viticulture per se in this geographical area was known at least by the late twenty-second century, since Gudea of Lagash had vineyards built on irrigated terraces.<sup>4</sup> The kings of Assyria especially valued the products of the vine, establishing vineyards in the mountains. Ashurnasirpal (eighteenth century) planted vineyards near Kalah. Sargon II (late eighth century) considered his wines to be sufficiently important that he had large cellars constructed at his palace in which to store them. Sennacherib (early seventh century)

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Sumerians, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>One source (HT, 1:282) locates it as early as the Jemdet Nasr (prehistoric) period. Note: The dating chronology of the secular sources is recorded without comment in this section. This does not imply that the dates will accord with biblical chronology.

<sup>3</sup>Hallo and Simpson, Ancient Near East, pp. 46 and 50.

<sup>4</sup>At a later period vineyards with up to 29,000 vines are mentioned near Harran; HT, 1:282.

imported various kinds of vines in order to improve his vineyards. In Ashurbanipal's (seventh century) library was discovered a list of the ten most appreciated wines. The royal vineyards ranked only third in the list with the wine of Helbon (Syria) second and the "pure wine of Izalla" first.<sup>1</sup>

Babylon did not have an area as conducive to vineyards as Assyria did; therefore, the vine was never as extensively cultivated in the south. Babylonian kings primarily imported their wines from other areas. The vineyards that were grown were apparently on raised terraces, the method used earlier by Gudea of Lagash and the Egyptians.<sup>2</sup>

Very little is known of the viticulture and wine making of Mesopotamia as compared to that of Egypt, but it is assumed by scholars that the methods employed were very similar.<sup>3</sup> Unlike the Egyptian custom of training vines over arbors, the vines in Mesopotamia were apparently encouraged to climb trees planted strategically for this purpose, or to simply spread out near the ground.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>VB, p. 69. Gudea too called his vineyards by special names as was done in Egypt (ibid., p. 37).

<sup>3</sup>All of the operations described earlier from pressing the grapes to storing the filtered fermented wine are assumed to apply in Mesopotamia as well (SAT, 3:73). Lutz (VB, p. 69) mentions that date-wine was a more frequent Babylonian drink than grape wine, probably because it would have been so much less expensive.

<sup>4</sup>Note pictures #13 and 14 on pp. 70-71 of VB.

In Assyria the chief winemaster (rab karâni) was apparently an important official in state affairs as well as in vineyard control. His assistant is referred to as "the second" (amêlu šanû).<sup>1</sup> The man in charge of pressing the grapes is referred to as the širašû. He was responsible for the whole process from pressing to selling the wine.<sup>2</sup>

#### The consumption of wine in Mesopotamia

Apparently grape wine never attained the prominence in Mesopotamia that it did even in Egypt.<sup>3</sup> However, it was certainly enjoyed by the nobility and royalty, as has been mentioned.<sup>4</sup> The Gilgamesh Epic contains an allusion to the appre-

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<sup>1</sup>One tablet (K. 342 a, b) recording the sale of wine for an offering reads thus:

"Seal of Zêrûti, the chief winemaster, seal of Ulûlâ, the second (i.e., the assistant winemaster). Nine minas, fifteen shekels of silver, according to the mina of Carchemish, sacrificial offering of the god Ashur, belonging to Ashur-rêshu-ishi, at the disposition of Zêrûti, the chief winemaster of the New House (and) at the disposition of Ulûlâ, the second (winemaster). The 16th day of Sivan, in the eponymate of Sha-Nabû-shû, the chief-officer etc." [VB, p. 70-71]

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 69-71.

<sup>3</sup>SAT, 3:74.

<sup>4</sup>The Mesopotamian humor and delight (in wine as well as) in puns may be demonstrated from the engraved pictures on the end of the sound box of a beautifully colored lyre which sports the golden head of a bull. The inlayed shell engravings are of exquisite quality and detail, showing several scenes with animals substituted for people (ANEP, #192). This twenty-fifth century B.C. (ibid., p. 271) workmanship is described thus by Contenau (Georges Contenau, Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria [London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1954], p. 73):

"The lion is presiding over the gathering, the bear is dancing, and the ass is portrayed as musician [playing a



ciation of wine by the kings in these lines: "Who made thee eat food fit for divinity, / And gave thee to drink wine fit for royalty, . . ."<sup>1</sup> This early Akkadian epic also indicates that the precious liquid was dispersed to workmen on special occasions:

Bullocks I slaughtered for the [people];  
 Sheep I killed every day.  
 Must, red wine, oil, and white wine,  
 [I gave] the workmen [to drink] as if it were river  
 water,  
 (So that) they made a feast as on New Year's Day.<sup>2</sup>

It is noteworthy that unfermented juice (as indicated above) was drunk as well as wine. This fact may also be mentioned by Contenau. Apparently he is referring to must preserved unfermented when he says that after the first millennium Babylon produced many wines, ". . . those which aged without fermenting being especially highly esteemed."<sup>3</sup>

Wine also figured prominently in offerings to deities. For example, one ritual text from Uruk repeats several times the formula, "You shall make a libation of prime beer, wine,

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lyre shaped like a bull]. . . . Bringing up the rear is a little gazelle holding a wine jug and a cup, the significance being that in Akkadian the same word *ṣābītu* is used for both 'gazelle' and 'tavern keeper.'"

<sup>1</sup>ANET, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1963), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup>Contenau, Babylon and Assyria, p. 72. It is acknowledged that the statement is somewhat ambiguous, and that he may possibly have meant "without (further) fermentation."

and milk."<sup>1</sup> Another ritual text from the same city included the instruction, ". . . you shall make a libation of 'pressed' wine from a golden libation vessel."<sup>2</sup>

Both the appreciation of the worshippers for their gods and for their wine can be noted in the opening of a hymn of praise: "I will sing the glory of Bel-ili! Friend, give ear to me! Warrior, hearken to me! To sing the praises of Bel-ili is better than honey and wine, yea better than the best of pure butter!"<sup>3</sup>

### Anatolia

The Hittites<sup>4</sup> of Anatolia were also certainly familiar with vineyards and their products. From this area, which is thought by some to be the ancient source of viticulture,<sup>5</sup> there

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<sup>1</sup>ANET, p. 335; compare the ritual text on p. 339 with the same formula.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 338. Apparently the libation was frequently offered to the deity by nude priests. Ancient pictorial representations would so indicate. Note ANEP, pictures #600 from Nippur, #597 from Tello (early third millennium B.C. [p. 321]), #603 and 605 (both mid-third millennium B.C. [pp. 332 and 323]). Another late representation (mid-seventh century B.C. [p. 325]), #626, shows King Ashurbanipal (clothed) pouring out a libation over lions killed in the hunt.

<sup>3</sup>Contenau, Babylon and Assyria, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup>The time of Hittite power was between the eighteenth and the thirteenth centuries B.C.; O. R. Gurney, The Hittites, 2nd edition (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1954; a Pelican Books reprint, 1966), p. 216.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 82; and WAW, p. 15. The fact that Noah's vineyard (Gen. 9:20 ff.) was probably in Anatolia would support this. Forbes (SAT, 3:78) believes Syria to have been the original center of wine production in the ancient world. Con-

are extant land deeds which include the mention of vineyards. For example, a written deed which sets forth the estate of a man named Tiwataparas includes these words: "As pasture for oxen, 1 acre of meadow in the town of Parkalla. 3½ acres of vineyard, and in it 40 apple-trees(?), 42 pomegranate-trees(?), . . ."<sup>1</sup> The three basic staples of the Hittites were corn, wine, and (olive) oil.<sup>2</sup> The grain, barley, and wheat (emmer) were used for beer as well as for bread.<sup>3</sup>

The literature of these people frequently pairs beer and wine together. For example, concerning a meal which the deity, Sea, prepared for the "father of the gods," Kumarbis, are these words:

The Sea said: "For Kumarbis let them set up a seat to sit upon! Let them set up a table before him! Let them bring him food! Let them bring him beer to drink!["] The cooks brought dishes, the cupbearers brought sweet wine for him to drink. They drank once, they drank twice, they drank three times, they drank four times, they drank five

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tenau mentions Lebanon as the source (Babylon and Assyria, p. 72).

<sup>1</sup>Gurney, Hittites, p. 81. Apparently the Hittite vineyard included fruit trees as well as vines. The Hittite law code would support this:

"If anyone sets [brushwood(?)] on fire and [leaves] it there and the fire seizes a vineyard, if vines, apple-trees, pomegranates, and pear-trees(?) burn up, for one tree he shall give [six] shekels of silver and re-plant the plantation." [Ibid.]

<sup>2</sup>One text ("The Telepinus Myth," ANET, p. 127) links the olive and the grape thus: "Just as the olive [holds] oil within it, [as the grape] holds wine within it, so hold thou, Telepinus, in (thy) heart (and thy) soul good feelings [toward the king]!"

<sup>3</sup>Gurney, Hittites, p. 82.

times, they drank six times, they drank seven times.<sup>1</sup>

Another divine banquet mentions wine along with two other intoxicating beverages:

The Storm-god besought all the gods: "Come ye to my aid! Let Inaras prepare a celebration!"

He made everything ready on a grand scale: amphorae of wine, amphorae of *marnuwan*, (and) amphorae of *walhi*. The amphorae he had filled to the brim.<sup>2</sup>

Since in the Hittite culture, as in others in the ancient near east, the habits of the "gods" mirrored the habits of their worshippers, these above quotations can give the modern reader some idea of the early Anatolian drinking habits.

Wine also played a part in the burial customs. Cremation was apparently normal for royalty. After the actual burning of the body, wine is used to douse the fire, along with other favorite drinks: "On the second day as soon as it is light the women go [to?] the *ukturi* to collect the bones; they extinguish the fire with ten jugs of beer, ten [jugs of wine], and ten jugs of *walhi*."<sup>3</sup>

### The Graeco-Roman World

In order to be comprehensive in scope, a brief discussion of the viticulture of the classical world of Greece and Rome will be undertaken below.


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<sup>1</sup>"The Song of Ullikummi," *ANET*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>"The Myth of Illuyankas," *ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup>Gurney, *Hittites*, p. 164; later in the same text (p. 165) these words occur: "The fire has already been quenched with beer and wine."

## Mycenae

Exactly how early the ancient Greeks were acquainted with viticulture cannot be verified at the present, but it is clear that this occurred very early in their history. They apparently adopted the technology from Anatolia or Egypt.<sup>1</sup> The word "wine," woinos, has been found in Mycenaean but this commodity is normally represented by an ideogram .<sup>2</sup>

Wine was originally used primarily as a luxury for the wealthy or as an offering for deities, but it was not available to the poorer people. A tablet from Knossos on the ancient island of Crete makes reference to 420 vines along with 104 fig trees. Another from Pylos mentions 1,100 vines in conjunction with fig trees.<sup>3</sup> Records regarding the amount of wine produced are fragmentary. The last vintage at Knossos produced at least 14,000 litres of wine.<sup>4</sup>

Wine was certainly offered in quantity to the gods in the Mycenaean age along with quantities of sacrificial animals,

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<sup>1</sup>SHT, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup>John Chadwick, The Mycenaean World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 124.

<sup>3</sup>The uniquely shaped "loaf" tablets from Mycenaean culture are quite small and often fragmentary. Most of the records recovered by archaeologists from Knossos belong to the final year before the palace was destroyed. The only reason these originally unbaked tablets were preserved at all is that the fire which destroyed the palace in the 14th century B.C. baked the clay tablets enough to make them durable (*ibid.*, pp. 27 and 188).

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 124.

grain, honey, cheeses, olives, and figs.<sup>1</sup> On one occasion (possibly the initiation ceremony of a king), 585½ litres of wine were offered, along with 1,574 litres of grain and other commodities.<sup>2</sup>

### The classical world

As the classical period of Greek history unfolds, records become more numerous.

The production of wine. Viticulture and classical Greek culture seem inextricably bound as one becomes acquainted with the ancient northern Mediterranean world. The most valuable commodities which came from the soil in Greece were grape wine and olive oil. As such, these were also important trade items within the Mediterranean world and beyond.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 72 and 100.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 100-01. This amount of grain would have provided sufficient rations for a group of 43 people for a whole month. It is possible that the name of the god Dionysus has been found on a fragment associating him with the wine industry at this early date (ibid.).

<sup>3</sup>M. L. W. Laistner, A History of the Greek World from 479 to 323 B.C. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 378.

Brown mentions that hundreds of ancient winejars have been found in the Mediterranean Sea by modern archaeologists. A number of ancient wrecks have likewise been discovered which have given twentieth century man a better glimpse of the shipping and trade of the classical world. Perhaps one reason for the proliferation of these wrecked ships is implied in a fragment of Greek writing from the island of Samos, in which is recorded the crew's unauthorized sampling of the cargo being transported. Brown quotes this fragment:

"But come with your cup (*kothon*) along the benches of the swift ship, and lift the lids from the hollow *kadoi*, and

Unlike Egypt and Mesopotamia but analogous to Palestine, beer was never favored by the Greeks and Romans. These later peoples considered beer to be a drink fit only for barbarians such as the Celts and the later Germans.<sup>1</sup> The vineyard, then, is a more important feature of the ancient Graeco-Roman world than it is of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures.

The vines of the Greeks normally were a dwarf variety which grew close to the ground, although climbing vines are also rarely represented.<sup>2</sup> The Romans, on the other hand, grew taller vines which were placed on trellises.<sup>3</sup> Apparently only the peasants<sup>4</sup> were involved in the work of the vintage. The vats into which the grapes (picked in September) were placed for treading were variously made of stone, wood, or a type of

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take the red wine off the dregs [ἀγρευ δ' οἶνον ἐρυθρὸν ἀπὸ τρυγός]; for we shall not be able to stay sober on this watch."

(J. Pairman Brown, "The Mediterranean Vocabulary of the Vine," Vetus Testamentum 19 [1969]:155.)

<sup>1</sup>SHT, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>A mid-sixth century B.C. Attic vase shows a scene in which a vine is supported by a dead tree trunk. As the vine's branches spread out from the tree, they were supported by forked wooden staves. Boys are shown climbing into the branches of the tree to retrieve the fruit, which was then packed by older men into baskets placed on the ground; WAW, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>SHT, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup>The peasants are portrayed as naked and with hairy chests, indicating lack of proper breeding with reference to Greek society; WAW, p. 69.

cement.<sup>1</sup> The grapes were trodden in rhythm to the accompaniment of music,<sup>2</sup> the best juice coming from this means of expression.<sup>3</sup> A secondary yield of inferior quality was then mechanically extracted from any juice that was left in the treading press. This was a classical improvement over the Egyptian twist "bag press" mentioned above: beams with heavy weights (using the principle of leverage for extra force) were used to crush the pulp under the beam and thus extract the juice. Also presses using a screw principle to tighten the pressure might be used. This allowed the juice to be extracted effectively with less manpower.<sup>4</sup> The inferior quality juice was used for lesser grades of wine to be consumed by the poor.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>SHT (p. 60) mentions the time of year and the latter two materials. WAW (p. 69), in contrast, cites only the first material.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. One intentionally comic picture (ca. 550 B.C.) is extant which shows the whole vintage process. Painted on an Attic amphora, it portrays the harvest of the grapes from the vines, the treading of the grapes in the vat (the treader hanging on to overhead vines for support), a musician playing a double flute to provide the rhythm, and the pouring of the final product into large pottery jars. What makes the scene particularly amusing is that, instead of peasants, rotund satyrs are shown doing the work; ibid., pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup>The juice that flowed from the vat due to the pressure of the heavy grapes prior to treading was the very best and was called ποτρόςμος; The Oxford Classical Dictionary, edited by N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, 2nd edition, 1970, s.v. "Wine," p. 1138. L&S (p. 1537) defines this word as "a sweet Mytilenean wine, that flowed from the grape *before the treading*."

<sup>4</sup>SAT, 3:76. SHT, p. 60.

<sup>5</sup>Oxford Classical Dictionary, s.v. "Wine," p. 1138.



The expressed juice (γλεῦκος) was then utilized in several ways. Some was drunk immediately as fresh juice;<sup>1</sup> some was boiled down to a grape jelly (ἔφημα<sup>2</sup>); but most of the juice went into the production of wine.<sup>3</sup>

For making wine, the juice was poured into large, flat bottomed earthenware jars called κίθου which were frequently smeared with pitch. There fermentation began and any scum which rose to the top was removed during the first nine days. If augmentation of the alcoholic strength of the wine was desired, some of the grape jelly would be added at this point. Then the jars were covered with their lids which had been previously rubbed with pine cones and other substances to keep the wine from being too sweet. The developing wine took at least six months to ferment.<sup>4</sup> When this stage was over, the wine was finally filtered into the long jars which were pointed on the bottom, called amphorae, for subsequent sale and distribu-

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<sup>1</sup>Apparently the freshly expressed juice was valued by some and superstitiously regarded by others. For example, one second century A.D. source (Lucianus Sophista in Philopseudes) says of must: "I have concluded, by Zeus, that those who drink must, having [thus] bloated the belly, are in need of vomiting." The Greek from which this is translated is the following (M&M, p. 127): "ἤκω, νῆ τὸν Δία, ὥσπερ οἱ τοῦ γλεῦκος πιόντες, ἐμπεφυσημένος τὴν γαστέρα, ἐμέτου δεόμενος."

<sup>2</sup>L&S, p. 751, defines the word as "must boiled down to one third part." Pliny (Natural History, 14. 11. 80) calls this sapa.

<sup>3</sup>WAW, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup>Seltman, (ibid.) states that the jars were opened and examined at 36 day intervals, at which time more flavoring of pine cone might be added.

tion.<sup>1</sup> The Greeks and the Romans normally were able to preserve wine for three or four years, but much care had to be taken to keep the wines from turning into vinegar.<sup>2</sup> Some Italian wines matured for up to fifteen years before being consumed, but this was more rare.<sup>3</sup> Greek wines were generally considered to be of higher quality, but the Italians produced much more in quantity.<sup>4</sup>

The consumption of wine. The wine industry was so important in Greece that it spawned many different types of containers designed specifically for its use. Seltman has written a whole chapter regarding the various containers used, from storage jars to mixing bowls (κρατήρ) to drinking cups (κύλιξ), etc.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>SHT, pp. 60-61; WAW, pp. 70-71.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 152. One source indicates that preserving wines was difficult unless the vintners added salt water or other ingredients; A Dictionary of Ancient Greek Civilisation, by Pierre Devambez et al., 1967, s.v. "Wine," p. 486.

<sup>3</sup>Oxford Classical Dictionary, s.v. "Wine," p. 1139.

<sup>4</sup>According to one source (SHT, p. 61), ancient Italian vintners produced up to 1700 gallons per acre. The Romans were apparently responsible for introducing the vine and hence wine into its far flung empire in France, Germany, and even Britain (ibid.).

<sup>5</sup>WAW, chapter 6. These were made out of pottery and of precious metals, such as silver and gold, as well. Very early in Greek history the various containers were decorated by famous painters with scenes of life. Vessels specifically designed for drinking wine were normally covered with pictures depicting the revelry which accompanied their drinking; ibid., p. 93.

Wine in the Graeco-Roman world was usually drunk mixed with water, so as to diminish the possibility of drunkenness.<sup>1</sup> A favorite proportion, according to one authority, is three parts of water to one of wine.<sup>2</sup> Other attested ratios are:

20 to 1 (Homer)  
 8 to 1 (Pliny)  
 4 to 1 (Alexis)  
 5 to 2 (Nichocharēs)  
 2 to 1 (Anacreon)  
 3 to 2 (Aristophanes)  
 1 to 1 (Mnesitheus)<sup>3</sup>  
 1 to 2

The classical world was well acquainted with the risks from overindulgence in the potent beverage, grape wine.<sup>4</sup> Their

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<sup>1</sup>Forbes states that this classical practice was a universal custom in antiquity and that only those desiring to become drunk would drink unmixed wine (SAT, 3:80; note also HT, 1:284). However, he gives no documentation for this. While Egypt and Mesopotamia certainly drank mixed wine, such mixing in these cultures, when specified, appears normally to have been a concoction of spices or herbs (rather than water) mixed with the wine to change the taste.

<sup>2</sup>WAW, p. 91. The (5th century B.C.) poet Euenos says of this mixture:

"The best measure of wine is neither much nor very little;  
 For 'tis the cause of either grief or madness.  
 It pleases the wine to be the fourth, mixed with three  
 nymphs."

(Cited by Robert H. Stein, "Wine-Drinking in New Testament Times," Christianity Today, June 20, 1975, p. 9; no source was given.)

<sup>3</sup>Stein (*ibid.*) quotes these ratios. The last ratio (1 to 2) is mentioned in WAW, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>A most interesting and amusing tale of drunkenness was recorded by a (4th century B.C.) historian Timaeus of Sicily. He gives the reason why a house in the city of Akragas became known as "trireme":

"A party of young men were drinking in it, and became so wild when over-heated by the liquor, that they imagined they were sailing in a trireme, and that they were in a

solution was to dilute it to minimize the dangerous effects while enjoying its "positive" effects. Athenaeus (writing in the early second century A.D.), in his book The Learned Banquet, quotes the Athenian Mnesitheus as saying that wine was revealed by the gods to men,

. . . to be the greatest blessing for those who use it aright, but for those who use it without measure, the reverse. For it gives food to them that take it and strength in mind and body. In medicine it is most beneficial; it can be mixed with liquid [and] drugs and it brings aid to the wounded. In daily intercourse, to those who mix and drink it moderately, it gives good cheer; but if you overstep the bounds, it brings violence. Mix it half and half, and you get madness; unmixed, bodily collapse.<sup>1</sup>

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bad storm on the seas. Finally they completely lost their senses, and tossed all the furniture and bedding out of the house as though upon the waters convinced that the captain directed them to lighten ship because of the raging storm. Well, a great crowd gathered and began to carry off the jetsam, but even then the young men did not cease from their mad actions. Next day police appeared at the house and lodged a complaint against the young men when they were still half-seas over. Questioned by the Magistrates, they answered that they had been much put to it by the storm and had been compelled to throw into the sea the superfluous cargo. When the authorities expressed surprise at their insanity, one of the young men, though he appeared to be the oldest of the company, said to them, 'Noble Tritons, I was so frightened that I threw myself into the lowest possible place in the hold and lay there.' The Magistrates, therefore, pardoned their delirium, but warned them never to drink too much and let them go, and they gratefully promised (to be careful). 'If', said the oldest, 'we make port after this awful tempest, we shall raise altars in our country to you as Saviours Manifest, side by side with the Sea Gods, because you appeared to us so opportunely.' That is why the house was called the 'trireme'." [WAW, p. 92; Athenaeus Deipnosophistae 2. 37b-e]

<sup>1</sup>Athenaeus *ibid.* 2. 36a-b. When Bacchus/Dionysus (the god of wine) was elevated to the position of one of the twelve Olympian deities (in the 5th century B.C.), another deity was forced into retirement in order to keep the number to

Apparently, then, the contemporary concept of "drinking in moderation" was accomplished in the Hellenistic age by the dilution of wine with water. According to the above quotation, even mixing wine and water half and half would have constituted "strong drink."<sup>1</sup>

One custom that was particularly enjoyed by the "upper class" of Greece was called the symposium.<sup>2</sup> The word itself signifies "drinking together" and so is descriptive of the purpose of the gathering. The symposium would begin with a meal, after which the drinking would commence along with conversation, which might be either serious or merry in tone. The party might last most or all of the night, depending upon the desire of the guests and the nature of the entertainment. A good host would normally provide paid entertainment for his guests, especially when conversation lagged. Xenophon

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twelve. The goddess Hestia (a gentle maiden deity) is included in the depiction of the Olympian twelve on a mid-fifth century marble relief from Tarentum. However, when the Parthenon in Athens was completed (432 B.C.) the frieze on this temple, which depicted the twelve gods of Olympus, omitted Hestia but included Dionysus (WAW: p. 66).

<sup>1</sup>Seltman (ibid., p. 3) indicates that two parts wine to one part water was also used.

<sup>2</sup>Both Xenophon and Plato wrote works entitled The Symposium, each describing a party by this name at which the philosopher Socrates (last half of the 5th century B.C.) was the prominent guest. The accounts deal with very different events, since Xenophon's portrayal is more entertainment-oriented and (as might be expected) Plato's is more concerned with serious thought. However, together the two works give the modern reader a sense of the various kinds of symposiums that were popular in classical Greece.

describes a lengthy floor show in which three attractive and naked young people provided the entertainment. The two girls and the boy<sup>1</sup> were accomplished in music (instrumental and vocal),<sup>2</sup> in dancing, and even in acrobatics.<sup>3</sup> One girl, as Xenophon describes it, somersaulted effortlessly over several upright swords, amazing the guests with such courage exhibited by a member of the gentle sex.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, there were apparently dinner parties at which drinking to excess was almost the goal. First one would drink to the gods, then to absent friends, these drinks being of unmixed wine. This must not have been done too rarely in later Greece, since the Roman Cicero considered such drinking to be "after the Greek manner."<sup>5</sup> Sometimes prizes were given to those who could drink the most in contests, or to those who would first get drunk.<sup>6</sup> At some drinking parties in

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<sup>1</sup>Probably (from paintings showing similar scenes) these were in their early teen age years.

<sup>2</sup>The harp and the double flute; Xenophon Symposium 2. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Juggling while revolving on a potter's wheel was mentioned, along with spinning twelve hoops in the air at once; ibid. 7. 2; 2. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. 2. 11-12. Apparently at these parties for men the wives were not invited; *hetairai* (courtesans) were; WAW, p. 95.

<sup>5</sup>John Potter, Archaeologia Graeca, or the Antiquities of Greece, new edition, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: printed for Stirling & Kenney, et al., 1827), 2:393.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 395. According to Seltman, the wives of the Greeks often became drunk in the privacy of their homes

Athens it was poor manners not to drink a fair portion with the rest, so that anyone who would not was dismissed in accordance with the maxim "ἢ πῖνέ, ἢ ἄπινε" meaning "Drink, or begone!"<sup>1</sup>

The Romans adapted the symposium to their own culture, making it (in time) a place for ostentation, drunkenness, and debauchery. In conversation, entertainment, and every other category, there is a lowering of standards from the early Greek practices which is quite evident.<sup>2</sup> (In fact, the Roman popularity of drinking and fondness for chilled wines at such occasions made the transport, preservation, and sale of ice into an industry in ancient Rome.) Potter indicates that many Romans did not consider the drunkenness which resulted at such parties to be a problem. Seneca, for example, believed that drinking even to the point of intoxication was a panacea for the tormenting cares of life.<sup>3</sup> The older Cato, according to Horace, was apparently at his best when heavily under the influence of wine.<sup>4</sup>

There were, however, voices in the Graeco-Roman world which proclaimed the dangers of drinking wine (mixed or not).

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as well. They were often enamored with unmixed wine. It is notable that Aristophanes (late 5th century B.C.) wrote three plays regarding women which clearly indicate the increasing addiction of Athenian wives to wine; WAW, p. 95-101.

<sup>1</sup>Potter, Antiquities, 2:396.

<sup>2</sup>This is substantiated thoroughly in the Satyricon by Petronius (1st century A.D.). Pliny (Natural History 14. 28. 137-48) indicates that he is quite disgusted over the efforts of his own countrymen to become drunk.

<sup>3</sup>Potter, Antiquities, 2:358, 396. <sup>4</sup>Horace Odes 3. 21.

Xenophon quotes Socrates at a symposium: "'If we pour ourselves immense draughts, it will be no long time before both our bodies and our minds reel . . . ; but if [we take] small cups, we shall . . . instead . . . be brought by its gentle persuasion to a more sportive mood.'"<sup>1</sup>

The philosopher Plato more cautiously approved of drinking wine in moderation but clearly considered total abstinence from this intoxicating beverage to be preferable for certain people and occasions. Those he would totally exclude would be soldiers in any military campaign, rulers during their tenure of office, judges deciding cases; anyone needing to make an important decision, and couples desiring to become pregnant.<sup>2</sup>

One kind of "wine" (Greek οἶνος, Latin vinum) which was explicitly valued and drunk in the Graeco-Roman world was unfermented grape juice.<sup>3</sup> (Whereas this was, of course, also true of the early Egyptians and the Mesopotamian peoples,<sup>4</sup> the evidence for it is not as readily available or as extensive.) Not one but several different means were used to preserve the juice long after the harvest.

With regard to the common man, wine was much more available to him than it had been to his counterpart in the

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<sup>1</sup>Xenophon Symposium 2. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Plato Laws 2. 674a-b.

<sup>3</sup>See the discussion at the end of appendix C and that in appendix G, below, and p. 40, note 1, and p. 50 above.

<sup>4</sup>Note p. 106 of chapter 3 below.



earlier Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures. Because of its supposedly healthful qualities, it was even shared with the slaves on a regular basis in order to keep them healthy.<sup>1</sup>

One further use of wine which is not unexpected is the part it played in religious life. Wine was considered to be the nectar of the gods. As such it was deemed a most appropriate libation for the gods in any Greek religious ceremony.<sup>2</sup>

### Syzo-Phoenicia

Having surveyed the viticulture of the ancient world in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Anatolia and then the later evidence from the Graeco-Roman world, it is now important to turn to the land of Canaan for more relevant background prior to looking at viticulture in ancient Israel.

### Syria

The wines of Syria were widely appreciated in the ancient world. They were carried in trade as far as to Babylon in the southeast<sup>3</sup> and, on the other hand, to Egypt in the

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<sup>1</sup>WAW, p. 68. The relationship between wine and health was so certain that a physician, such as Galen, would frequently recommend to his patients the moderate use of wine; *ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup>The city-state of Mari on the upper Euphrates was a key city in the trade between Babylon and Syria. Syria's wine and olive oil were greatly prized in Babylon (I. E. S. Edwards et al., History of the Middle East and the Aegean Region c. 1800-1380 B.C., vol. 2, part 1 of The Cambridge Ancient History, 3rd edition [Cambridge: University Press, 1971-75], p. 13.) Mari itself enjoyed the wine of Syria as well. Some-

southwest. Egypt certainly traded for these favored wines, but it also seems that this ancient power tried to minimize the necessity of trade by conquest. Outright seizure as the booty of war<sup>1</sup> or exacted tribute<sup>2</sup> supplied much of the nation's demands during times of great Egyptian might.

The wine of Helbon (near Damascus) was an especially appreciated export, having a reputation which made it particularly desirable for the Assyrian<sup>3</sup> and then the later Persian kings.<sup>4</sup> An interesting Egyptian tale relates conditions found by a runaway official when he fled to the greater Syro-Phoenician area from his Nile homeland in the twentieth century B.C.<sup>5</sup> This popular narrative concerns the self-imposed exile of Sinuhe who settled in the land of Yaa.<sup>6</sup> Describing the beauty of the land in which he settled, Sinuhe says:

He [a ruler of Upper Retenu] let me choose for myself of his country, of the choicest of that which was with him on his frontier with another country. It was a good land, named Yaa. Figs were in it, and grapes. It had more wine than water. Plentiful was its honey, abundant its olives. Every (kind of) fruit was on its trees. Barley was there, and emmer. There was no limit to any (kind of) cattle.

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times choice wines were given as gifts to the kings of this city-state (ibid., p. 219).

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 478.    <sup>2</sup>VB, p. 22.    <sup>3</sup>HT, 1:282.

<sup>4</sup>Athenaeus (*Deipnosophistae* 1. 28. d) noted: "The Persian king used to drink only Chalybonian wine, . . ." but he wrongly assumed the Persians introduced the vine into Syria.

<sup>5</sup>ANET, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup>The land of Yaa within the land of Upper Retenu (cited earlier in the tale) is somewhere in the region bounded by northern Palestine and central and southern Aram; ibid., p. 19.

Moreover, great was that which accrued to me as a result of the love of me. He made me ruler of a tribe of the choicest of his country. Bread was made for me as daily fare, wine as daily provision, cooked meat and roast fowl, beside the wild beasts of the desert, for they hunted for me and laid before me, beside the catch of my (own) hounds.<sup>1</sup>

Another corroboration of the beauty of the land and the primacy of the vine comes from a Mesopotamian epic dating originally to about the same time period, the Epic of Gilgamesh.<sup>2</sup> When Gilgamesh goes west almost to the Mediterranean<sup>3</sup> he reaches a land which is sufficiently different from his Mesopotamian heritage that the remarkable sight is described. He views plentiful vines hung with clusters of fruit (grapes) which the narrative compares to lapis lazuli (a mineral which is very blue in color): "It is hung with vines good to look at. The lapis bears foliage; it, too, bears fruit lush to behold."<sup>4</sup>

Another Egyptian source described the "wine" as running "like a stream" in the grape presses of Daha (another name of the Syro-Phoenician area).<sup>5</sup> Certainly the ancient world

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20. This description compares favorably with God's description of the land farther south in Deut. 8:7-9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 89, footnote no. 152. Compare Contenau, Babylon and Assyria, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup>ANET, p. 89. The vine stock of Syria was so valued that vines were imported into Egypt to improve Egyptian vineyards; HT, 1:285.

<sup>5</sup>Lutz, VB, p. 22, quoting Tothmes III.

attests to the fecundity of the grapes and the quality of the liquid produce of ancient Aram.

Since most of what is known about the early vineyards and wines of Syria is from Egypt and Mesopotamia rather than from the region itself, it is important to examine material that is indigenous to Canaan. Such information is most readily available from the city-state of Ugarit.

### Ugarit

Both because of its proximity to Israel (geographically and culturally) and because of its extant literary heritage, the city-state of Ugarit is an especially important source of information for this study.

In the following pages will be presented an analysis of the Ugaritic information regarding the vineyard and its wine. The method of dealing with this subject will differ somewhat from the preceding sections of this chapter in that the literature itself of this city-state will be the primary source for the conclusions presented. Because of the close proximity of Ugarit to Israel, the evidence from this pagan civilization will be contrasted particularly with that of Old Testament Israel, rather than with the cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the classical world. On the one hand, the examination of the literature of Ugarit will produce a useful cross-reference to the Old Testament usage of yáyin and its consumption. On the other hand, there is a startling difference

between the literary evidence from Ugarit and the literary evidence from Israel. That very difference, however, is as important as the similarities, which will be demonstrated.

The production of wine. The distinct implication which is given by the Ugaritic literature is that *wine as a beverage was exceedingly important to the nobility of Ugarit, while its manufacture was of little importance* (as long as quality was maintained). This deduction is inescapable when the literatures of the two peoples of Ugarit and its southern neighbor Israel are compared. In distinct contrast to the Old Testament, there is almost no mention in the Ugaritic epics of the vineyard, the vine, the grape, the grape harvest, or the treading of the grapes and its accompanying merriment. The omission must have been intentional and significant; these elements would have been an integral part of the villages and towns supplying the wine to Ugarit, but the literature was composed by the wealthy, sophisticated city-dwellers who knew little about the manufacture of wine and cared less. The epics therefore reflect the interests of the upper class whose style of life would differ so greatly from the farmers and vintners who undergirded their economy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Definite parallels can be noted between the cultures of Ugarit and the northern kingdom of Israel, particularly in their respective periods of cultural zenith. Although these were chronologically centuries apart (Ugarit, 1440-1360 B.C. [Hallo and Simpson, Ancient Near East, p. 112] and the northern kingdom of Israel, 875-750 B.C.), the resemblances are more than artificial, for the cultural zenith of Israel was a time

The one text in which a few references to the vine and related matters do occur is a poem which J. Finkel designated as "an Ugaritic viticultural poem."<sup>1</sup> For example, this small epic, which details the genesis of the deities Dawn and Dusk (šḥr wšlm), contains the following lines:

## 52:8-11

mt . wšr . ytb .	Death and Evil sits;
bdh . ḥṭ . tk̄l .	In his <i>one</i> hand is the
	sceptre of bereavement,
bdh ḥṭ . ulmn .	In his <i>other</i> hand is the
	sceptre of widowhood; <sup>2</sup>
yzbrnn . zbrm gpn	Those who prune <i>the</i> vineyard
	shall prune him <i>like</i> a
	vine,
yšmdnn . šmdm . gpn	Those who tie up <i>the</i> vines
	shall tie him <i>like</i> a vine,

---

during which the "Canaanite" culture and morality were triumphant. That Canaanite culture was an integral part of the whole Phoenician littoral in the early second millennium and its encroachment in Israel was specifically an evidence of the overt rebellion of Yahweh's people against their Creator and special Benefactor. The heavy taxation and oppression of the poor by the rich, against which the biblical prophets thundered, and the opulent city life rather than the secure and satisfying village life, were never the intention of Israel's God for His people.

<sup>1</sup>J. Finkel, "An Interpretation of an Ugaritic Viticultural Poem," The Joshua Starr Memorial Volume (New York: 1953), pp. 42-43.

<sup>2</sup>Note a similar idea in Isa. 47:8 and 9:  
 "'Now, then, hear this, you sensual one,  
 Who dwells securely,  
 Who says in your heart,  
 "I am, and there is no one besides me.  
 I shall not sit as a widow ['almānā],  
 Nor shall I know loss of children [šekôl]."  
 "'But these two things shall come on you suddenly  
 in one day:  
 Loss of children and widowhood [š<sup>e</sup>kôl w<sup>e</sup>'almôn].\*  
 They shall come on you in full measure  
 In spite of your many sorceries,  
 In spite of the great power of your spells.'"

yšql . šdmth km gpn<sup>1</sup>

They shall violently remove  
him like a vine from its  
vineyard. [RT]

Although this passage is obviously used in the figure of judgment upon the god Death and Evil, yet it still relates something of the horticulture of the vineyard.

Another glimpse of viticulture may be seen later in this same poem, if Driver's translation is correct:

52:25-26

špš myprt . dlthm [ ]  
wǵnbm .<sup>2</sup>

Shapash makes their tendrils  
abound with . and grapes.<sup>3</sup>

Aside from this viticultural poem cited above, most of the Ugaritic references to the vineyard and its production are notable in comparison to the Old Testament more by contrast than by similarity.

For example, one very frequent triple parallelism in the Old Testament is dāgān ("harvested grain"), tîrôš ("freshly squeezed grape juice"), and yishār ("freshly pressed olive oil").<sup>4</sup> It is amazing that there is no trace of such parallelism in the Ugaritic epics.<sup>5</sup> However, the related Old Testament

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<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 174. In this and all subsequent entries in this dissertation the text is arranged according to poetic sense and parallelism. This will facilitate easy comprehension, especially since the English translation will be opposite the pertinent text.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>CML, p. 123.

<sup>4</sup>For documentation of this fact and a justification of these definitions, see chapter 4, pp. 191-98.

<sup>5</sup>The cognate word for yishār is not even attested and tîrôš is never paired with dāgān.

triple idea of bread, wine, and oil as the *finished products* does occur once as a logical triplet in the Keret epic, referring to a time of drought:

Keret 126:III:13-16

kly lhm . [b]dnhm	The bread has failed in its jar,
kly yn . bhmthm .	The wine has failed in its skin-bottle,
k[l]y šmn bq[bqhm] <sup>1</sup>	The oil has failed in [its clay vessel]. [RT]

There is one other text (the viticultural poem) where, if Driver is correct, "grain" (dgn) is mentioned in a reconstructed lacuna (together with lhm), which is parallel with yn. But other than these two references the epics omit any hint of that which in the Old Testament is a frequently reiterated idea. The text referred to is the following:

52:71-76

w'rb . hm .	They entered, <i>saying</i> :
hm [it dgn l]lhm .	"If [there is grain for] bread,
wtn wnlhm .	Then produce it so that we may eat;
hm . it [yn dšrb]	If there is [wine for drinking]
[w]tn . wnšt	[Then] produce it so that we may drink."
w'nhm . ngr mdr'	So the guardian of the sown

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<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 193. The word hmt is apparently cognate with Hebrew hēmet which designates a skin bottle used to carry drinking water in Gen. 21:15, 19. Since baqbûq is also a Hebrew word for a (household) container, it is suggested by this writer that bqhm be placed in the lacuna in order to complete an obvious idea. (Baqbûq signifies a clay vessel in Jer. 19:1 and a portable container of honey in 1 Kings 14:3.) The Hebrew word qubbá'at, "cup," is another possibility but is much less suitable to this context, for it is a drinking cup rather than a container.



[it dgn llhm]  
wīt . yn . dšrb .

*harvest* answered them:  
["There is grain for bread,]  
And there is wine for drink-  
ing."

mġ hw : lhn lg ynh [ ]  
whbrh . mla yn[h ]<sup>1</sup>

He offered them an amount of  
his wine,  
Namely a full measure of wine  
to his companions. [RT]

Turning attention to the subject of vineyards (Ugaritic krm, Hebrew kérem), it is true that the economic texts do mention them even though the epics do not.<sup>2</sup> However, as might be expected, the vineyards are mentioned primarily in reference to their value as taxable property. For example, text 1081 is a registry of vineyards, with lines 4-30 citing many different vineyards.<sup>3</sup> Similarly text 2027 is a registry of both fields (šd, lines 1, 6, 7, 8) and vineyards (krm, lines 4, 5, and Rev. 12), although the text is quite damaged.<sup>4</sup> A more readable

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 175. A few insertions in the lacunae are from Driver, CML, p. 124. Two other changes from Gordon's text have been made: (1) At the end of line 73 Gordon has a t which was exchanged for the w which Driver indicates. (2) The final h in line 75 was inserted in the lacuna because of the natural parallelism with line 75. Driver apparently considers that there is enough room in the lacuna of line 71 to insert dgn, although Gordon does not so indicate. However, Gordon does leave sufficient room in the lacunae of lines 72 and 73 for Driver's other reconstructions. While the insertion of dgn does make sense, it is tenuous at best, since this overall construction is unparalleled elsewhere in the epics.

<sup>2</sup>If text 77 (dealing with the marriage of Nikkal to Yariḥ) or the more badly damaged text 2001 (a possible fragment of the Baal-Anath cycle) are included in the epics, these would be the only exceptions. For a translation of the first text, see pp. 75-76 below.

<sup>3</sup>For the text, see UT, p. 230.

<sup>4</sup>See UT Supplement, p. 10\*.

text with similar registry of fields and vineyards is 1079 (note explanatory lines 6, 8, 12).<sup>1</sup> Other texts mentioning vineyards include 1008 (concerning a land grant),<sup>2</sup> 2001 (a text concerning rations to certain of the king's subjects),<sup>3</sup> and 2114. This last text is of special interest, for it was written in the final days of the Ugaritic city-state. It is an account of the loss of certain towns and vineyards together with the pillaging of grain.<sup>4</sup>

One text which is worthy of quotation in reference to the vineyard deals with the betrothal gift offered by Yariḥ, the Moon-god, to his prospective father-in-law, King Ḥrḥb, for the hand of his intended bride Nikkal, the Sumerian Moon-goddess.<sup>5</sup>

77:16-24

ylak yrḥ nyr šmm .

Yariḥ, the illuminator of the  
night-heavens sends *this*

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<sup>1</sup>See UT, pp. 229-30.

<sup>2</sup>See UT, p. 217, especially line 9.

<sup>3</sup>See UT Supplement, p. 5\*, line 12.

<sup>4</sup>UT, p. 289. For the text, see Supplement, p. 29\*, line 10.

<sup>5</sup>The Ugaritic name Nikkal is a corruption of the Sumerian name NIN.GAL, meaning "Great Lady." The name Ib in line 18 is an alternate name for Nikkal and has already occurred in line 1 in the compound name Nikkal-and-Ib (nk1 wib). It is probably derived, as Gordon (UT, p. 348) suggests, from the common Semitic noun ibb-<\*inb (Hebrew \*'ibb, Song of Sol. 6:11; Aramaic 'inbā, Dan. 4:18; and Akkadian inbu, "fruit"). This pairing of the moon with the harvest in Ugaritic is also found in the Akkadian literature where this deity is referred to as ilat inbi, the "goddess of fruit" (CML, p. 125).

'm hr[h]b mlk qz .

tn nkl

yrh ytrh . ib t'rbm bbhth .

watn mhrh labh .

alp ksp . wrbt hrs .

išlh žhrm ignim

atn šdh krmm

šd dāh hrnqm .<sup>1</sup>

*message*

To Hrhb, King of the summer fruit:

Give me your daughter Nikkal for my wife!

Yarih offers a dowry so that Ib may enter his mansions; Yea, I will give the marriage-price to her father:

A thousand shekels of silver and ten thousand of gold; I will send the purest gems of lapis lazuli;

I will give vineyards to be her pleasant fields,

Orchards to be her fields of love. [RT]

Here alone in the Ugaritic literature is there any mention of vineyards in any way approximating the Hebrews' zeal for their vines and vineyards. Nevertheless, a pertinent deduction from this poem is that there was for these people at least some lingering romantic as well as monetary value pertaining to the vineyard. It is hardly accidental that the biblical Song of Solomon indicates the same concept, but with much more emphasis and detail.<sup>2</sup>

Another very significant omission in Ugaritic (aside from the above quoted passage) is the very frequent biblical parallelism of the field (šādeh) and the vineyard (kérem).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup>For example, note Song of Sol. 1:14; 2:12-13, 15; 6:11; 7:8, 12; 8:11-12 etc.

<sup>3</sup>Over one-third (34 times) of the 94 references to vineyard in the Old Testament include the parallel idea of a field. Another frequent (17 times) parallel concept in Scripture, both in reference to blessing and to judgment, is between houses and vineyards.

This omission is so unexpected because in Scripture the parallelism of fields and vineyards provides the *epitome* of the land's fertility (for such fertility is the evidence of the blessing of Yahweh, while infertility of the land indicates the withholding of Yahweh's blessing in judgment). Since the epics of Ugarit deal with the themes of fertility and infertility of the land also, it would seem natural to find this type of parallelism there as well. However, such is not the case. In Ugaritic the emphasis instead is upon the field and its grain alone.

One exception to this general denigration of the grape (by its omission from consideration)<sup>1</sup> appears in the Aqhat epic:

1 Aqhat I:38-45

apnk . dnil . mt rpi .	Therefore, Daniel the man of Rapha
yšly . 'rpt . bhm . un .	Prayed(?) for rain-clouds to dispel the summer heat,
yr . 'rpt tmṛ . bqz .	For the clouds to pour down the early rain upon the summer fruit,
ṭl . yṭll . l'gnbm .	For the dew to provide suffi- cient moisture for the grapes. <sup>2</sup>
šb' . šnt yšrk . b'1 .	Because Baal had made the land destitute for seven

<sup>1</sup>An explanation of the emphasis upon the grape and its products in Scripture (see chapter 6) can be more easily made than an explanation of the contrasting omission in Ugaritic literature. Yn appears to have been as important in Ugarit as yáyin was in Israel. However, the pagan theology of Ugarit did omit it, whereas the Yahwestic theology of Israel emphasized it.

<sup>2</sup>Note that text 124:20 (cited in chapter 3) takes this idea further by making the dew responsible for the beverage [grape juice(?)] and making El the husbandman.

tmn . rkb 'rpt .

bl . tl . bl rbb!  
bl . šr' . thmtm .

bl tbn . qí . b'1 .<sup>1</sup>

years,  
Because the Rider-of-the-  
Clouds had so done for  
eight years;  
Supplying no dew nor rain,  
Allowing no welling up of the  
deep springs,  
Providing no heartening thun-  
der from Baal.<sup>2</sup> [RT]

It is notable that the parallelism here is not of grain and grapes (as in the Old Testament--Lev. 25:5; Deut. 32:14; Amos 9:13) but of summer fruits and grapes. Also, in a clearly pagan way, the epics (as demonstrated both here and in the following quotations) ascribe to Baal rather than Yahweh the responsibility of providing the moisture needed for fertility (as would be expected in pagan literature; see in contrast Ps. 104:10-11, 13-16, 27-28).

More characteristic texts among the epics speak of fertility or its lack in terms which omit the vineyard entirely. For example, in the Baal-Anath cycle are these lines:

49:III:4-9

bhlm . ltpn . il dpid

bdr̄t . bny . bnwt

šmm . šmn . tm̄tr̄n

In his dream Luṭpan, the  
merciful god, saw,  
In his vision, the Creator-  
of-Creatures perceived,  
That the heavens poured down  
oil,

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup>Rather than adhering to a more wooden translation as have Ginsberg (ANET, p. 153) and Driver (CML, p. 61), this writer has chosen to infuse the English translation with the same poetic beauty and comprehension which the people of Ugarit would have recognized in this poem. The word for "thunder" is literally "voice." Ps. 29 uses the same figure of speech (with corrected theology) when it refers seven times to the qôl Yahweh as thunder in a Palestinian storm.

nhlm . tlk . nbtm  
 wid<sup>c</sup> . khy . aliyn b<sup>c</sup>l  
 kit<sub>u</sub> . zbl . b<sup>c</sup>l . arş

That the ravines flowed with  
 honey.  
 So I knew that Baal, the vic-  
 tor, had come to life,  
 Yea, that the Prince, Lord of  
 the earth, was alive. [RT]

Lines 10-13 that follow are a verbatim repetition of lines 4-7  
 above and then are these words:

49:III:14-21

šmh . ltpn . il . dpid  
 p<sup>c</sup>nh . lhdm . ytpd  
 wyprq . lşb wyşhq  
 yşu . gh . wyşh  
 atbn ank . wanhn  
 wtnh . birty . npş<sup>y</sup>  
 khy aliyn b<sup>c</sup>l  
 kit<sub>u</sub> zbl b<sup>c</sup>l arş<sup>1</sup>

Then Luṭpan, the merciful god,  
 rejoiced;  
 He placed his feet on the  
 footstool,  
 He opened wide his mouth and  
 laughed,  
 He raised his voice and cried  
 out:  
 "Now I can sit down and rest,  
 And my soul can relax within  
 my breast,  
 Because Baal, the victor, has  
 come to life,  
 Yea, the Prince, Lord of the  
 earth is alive." [RT]

While the figure of speech dealing with "fat" and "honey" above  
 (lines 6-7 and 12-13) can be all-inclusive enough to encompass  
 the vineyards, that they were not specifically in view can be  
 demonstrated from the text which deals with the tragic results  
 of Baal's untoward demise (which logically precedes the lines  
 above, but which occur later in the text):

49:IV:25-29

pl . 'nt . šdm . yşpş<sup>y</sup>  
 pl . 'nt . šdm il .

"The furrows in the fields  
 are cracked (with drought),  
 O Shapash;  
 "Cracked (with drought) are  
 the furrows in the fields

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<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 168.

yštk b'1 . 'nt . mḥrtt	of El. "Shall Baal provide for(?) the furrows of the plough- land?
iy . aliyn . b'1	"Where is the victor Baal,
iy zbl . b'1 . arṣ <sup>1</sup>	"Where is the prince lord of earth?" <sup>2</sup>

Another text which emphasizes the fertility which Baal provides is from the Keret epic. Again this fertility is spoken of in terms of the field and its grain.

126:III:5-10

larṣ m[ṭ]r . b'1	Upon the earth Baal poured down rain,
wlšd . mṭr . 'ly	Yea, upon the field the Exalted one showered rain.
n'm . larṣ mṭr b'[1]	How pleasant to the earth is the rain from Baal,
wlšd . mṭr . 'ly	And to the field--the shower from the Exalted one;
n'm lḥtt b'n	How pleasant to the wheat in the furrow
bm nrt . ksm <sup>3</sup>	And to the spelt on the ploughed land. [RT]

A further text in the Aqhat epic shows the severity of a drought in terms relating to a corn field. Driver's translation is the following:

1 Aqhat II:61-74

Danel approached,  
He went round his parched land(?),  
(That) he might descry green corn in the parched land(?),  
Might descry green corn in the scrub,  
Might embrace the green corn and kiss (it, saying):  
'May, ah! may green corn shoot up in the parched ground(?),  
'May green corn shoot in the scrub (blasted) with heat,  
'May the hand of Aqhat the hero gather thee

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. 49:IV:36-40 is an almost exact repetition of these lines.

<sup>2</sup>CML, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup>UT, p. 193.

'(And) put thee within the granary.'  
 He approached it,  
 He went round his blasted land,  
 He descried an ear of corn in the blasted land,  
 He descried an ear on the stalk;  
 He embraced the ear and kissed (it, saying):  
 'May, ah! may an ear of corn shoot in the blasted land,  
 'May an ear of corn shoot [in the scrub] (blasted) with heat,  
 'May the hand of the hero Aqhat gather thee  
 '(And) put thee within the granary.'<sup>1</sup>

There is also another parallelism common in the Old Testament which is significantly absent in the Ugaritic literature: the pairing of the harvested products of the grain on the threshing floor (gören)<sup>2</sup> with the grape juice in the vat (yégeb).<sup>3</sup> However, not only is the pairing of such words omitted in Ugaritic, but it is doubtful whether the word yégeb has even been discovered in the extant texts.<sup>4</sup> The cognate word grn does indeed appear several times,<sup>5</sup> indicating that the

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<sup>1</sup>CML, p. 61. The lines have been arranged poetically by this writer. Compare this with Ginsberg's translation (ANET, p. 153) and Gordon's text (UT, p. 245).

<sup>2</sup>Of the 16 times that yégeb is mentioned in Scripture, goren is paired with it in almost half of the occurrences (7 times). Three of the other times the idea of a grain harvest is mentioned in a parallel construction.

<sup>3</sup>A related word, gt (Hebrew gat), occurs much more often in Ugaritic (in the economic texts) than does its Hebrew counterpart. However, instead of meaning a "wine-press" or "juice press" per se (as in Hebrew), the word gt is used uniformly in compound names of villages. (Compare with biblical gat hahéper, the name of Jonah's hometown in 2 Kings 14:25.) For example, gt is so used seventeen times in text 146:1104 in compound place names.

<sup>4</sup>Driver notes it in one place (CML, pp. 113 and 144), but Gordon (text 49:IV:42 [UT, p. 168 and glossary, p. 476]) and Ginsberg (ANET, p. 141) do not agree with him.

<sup>5</sup>The threshing floor was apparently, among other things,



opportunity for such parallelism did occur in the language.

The consumption of wine. Having examined the evidence concerning the wine industry, it is well to discuss briefly the beverages which were used at Ugarit. The reader should bear in mind that a more detailed discussion of the specific Ugaritic words for wine will be investigated in the following chapter. Therefore this present section will present more of an overview.

The actual beverages which are mentioned in the Ugaritic texts<sup>1</sup> include water (mym), an undesignated "drink" (mštt), milk (hlb--128:2:26), and various kinds of wine (hsp, hmr, yn,

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a place for holding court (note 1 Aqhat 30 and 2 Aqhat V:7). One example of the usage of gören as a "threshing floor" per se is from the Keret epic. Speaking of the siege of a city by a great army ("three hundred times ten thousand" in size, from line 89) are these words:

	<u>Keret</u> 103-105, 110-114
"kirby tškn . šd	"They shall alight like
	locusts on the field,
km . hsn . pat . mabr	Like grasshoppers on the
	edges of the wilderness.
. . . . .	. . . . .
wgr . nn . 'rm .	Then attack the towns;
šrn pdrn .	Assault the villages!
s't . bšdm ḥṭbn .	Evict from the <i>surrounding</i>
	fields the woodcutters,
bgrnt . ḥpšt	And from the <i>nearby</i> threshing
	floors those gathering
	straw!
s't . bn p(k) . šibt .	Sweep from the wells the
	women drawing water,
bbqr mmlat . "	And from the springs the
	girls filling <i>their</i> jars!"
	[RT]

The text is found in UT, p. 251. The words ḥṭbh and šibt (lines 112 and 113 above) are also paired in Scripture: Deut. 29:11(10), ḥōtēb 'ēsekā // šō'ēb mēmēkā, meaning "the one who chops your wood // the one who draws your water."

<sup>1</sup>Note Gordon's list on p. 53, UT.

msk, mrt, trt<sup>1</sup> and possibly mtt<sup>2</sup>). One beverage which might be expected to occur which does not appear to be attested at all is beer (a beverage popular in Egypt, Mesopotamia and even in Hatti, but lacking popularity in the Phoenician littoral which includes Phoenicia and Palestine).

The beverage which is definitely the most frequently mentioned in the epics as well as in the economic texts is the beverage yn, usually translated "wine."<sup>3</sup> It appears that this was a valuable and therefore relatively expensive commodity. One twelve line text (110)<sup>4</sup> indicates that several towns had their taxes levied in quantities of wine.<sup>5</sup> Although the Ugar-

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<sup>1</sup>All of these words for wine are discussed later (chapter 3) except for the first word in the list. This word, hsp, is apparently a type of wine, since it describes yn four times in 1084:24-27. On page 398, UT, Gordon indicates that hsp is related to the verb of the same root meaning "to pour (water)."

<sup>2</sup>In UT, p. 432, Gordon suggests that it is probably a (grape?) beverage, for it is measured by a liquid measure and is parallel to yn in text 1090:7.

<sup>3</sup>For a discussion of the nature of this grape beverage, here designated "wine" for convenience, see chapter 3 under the etymology of yáyin. The reader should be apprised of the fact that the translation of 126:III:13-16 and of 52:71-76 (rendering yn as "wine") is artificially consistent in this introductory chapter. Even though this writer would otherwise suggest the possible translation of yn as "grape juice" in these passages, it is premature to introduce this idea until the evidence is examined.

<sup>4</sup>UT, p. 188.

<sup>5</sup>Text 59 may fit into the overall picture as a fulfillment of a given tax levy. The two line text (UT, p. 176), a tag accompanying a wine shipment, simply says kd yn lprt, "one liquid measure of wine from Prt" (a personal name). While kd is obviously a liquid measurement of some kind, it is difficult to say just how it would relate to modern containers in

itic word yn is not mentioned, the reverse side of the text so identifies the document in the Akkadian language (DUG GEŠTIN [= karānu] refers to "jars of wine"). Similarly text 1084<sup>1</sup> lists quantities of wine (together with their quality<sup>2</sup>) apparently paid as taxes to the king.<sup>3</sup>

Just as wine was brought into the royal storehouses through taxes, it was also rationed out. Text 1089,<sup>4</sup> for example, mentions rations of wine to various military guilds including the renowned Maryannu, "noble chariot warriors"<sup>5</sup> (line 1), as well as to Assyrian (line 3) and Egyptian (lines 7 and 10) mercenaries. Other stated recipients were the queen (1088), other royalty (1092), the temple (1090), and craftsmen (1091).<sup>6</sup>

From an examination of the epic literature (taking into

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size. Gordon supplies the limitedly helpful information from text 1086:3 that one kd was at least twice and perhaps three times as large as a krsn size measure (UT, p. 423). That text reads (UT, p. 232): kd yn w krsnm, "a kd & 2 krsn's of wine" (the form is dual, for krsnt is plural; UT, p. 423).

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 272 and 402. The words yn . hlq (line 3), "bad wine" (spoiled?) and yn . ṭb (lines 1, 6, 9 etc.), "good wine," seem to be contrasted.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>4</sup>Note also texts 1067, 2004 (rev.), and 2092.

<sup>5</sup>Note UT, p. 438.

<sup>6</sup>The numbers in parenthesis refer to specific texts in UT (note especially pp. 273-74). Other texts also mention rations of wine and even of vinegar, hms (1099:27, 28, 35).

account the economic texts also), it appears that yn was normal fare as the liquid portion of a wealthy person's diet at special meals if not in the everyday main meals.<sup>1</sup> There is a frequent pairing of eating food (lhm) and drinking wine (yn) so that the strong impression is given that wine was primarily a beverage drunk with the meal rather than by itself.

Summary. Bringing together the evidence from the literature of the people of Ugarit, it is clear that the usage of the grape beverage(s) comprehended by the word yn would be closely analogous to the usage of yayin in the biblical "golden age" of the northern kingdom. However, the actual harvest of the grape and the preparation of the beverage was apparently considered unimportant as a literary motif. Instead the emphasis of this pagan culture is upon the planting, growing, harvesting and threshing of the grain; this would be expected from their elevation of the word dgn, "grain," to the name of a prominent deity Dagan, and the innate connection of grain with the fertility supposedly supplied by Dagan's son, Baal.<sup>2</sup>

### Phoenicia

The land of Phoenicia is most important (with regard to wine) as a trading nation. As a great seafaring people with a

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<sup>1</sup>It is difficult to know whether the everyday fare would have included this beverage, since the occasions spoken of in the epic when yn was consumed were uniformly special occasions. For further discussion and documentation see chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup>For appropriate texts, note UT, p. 384.

huge empire built on commerce, this country is without parallel in the ancient world. Indeed Yahweh Himself laments over the precipitous judgment for sin which He brought against this nation which had been so favored because of its friendship with Israel. Ezekiel 27 records God's high evaluation of Tyre and its vast trading activities prior to its prophesied judgment.

The Phoenician city of Byblos was, along with Ugarit,<sup>1</sup> an early trading port from which ships would carry the products of Canaan and the other eastern lands to Egypt and the west. Then in the early half of the first millennium B.C., Tyre was apparently the leading city-state. This trade prominently included wine and oil among its other wares.<sup>2</sup> Much of the wine traded through Phoenicia would doubtless have come from its eastern neighbor, Syria; however, Phoenicia itself had an advanced viticulture as well, and indigenous wines were produced in much quantity and maintained an excellent quality. The wine of Tyre was acclaimed by the classical world.<sup>3</sup>

As a transshipping point, Phoenicia from its several ports exported wine to as far away as India, East Africa, Arabia and even to Spain.

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<sup>1</sup>I. E. S. Edwards et al., History of the Middle East and the Aegean Region c. 1380-1000 B.C., vol. 2, part 2 of The Cambridge Ancient History, 3rd edition (Cambridge: University Press, 1971-75), p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>John A. Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 100-01.

<sup>3</sup>VB, p. 31.

## Israel

The viticultural practices of the ancient cultures which surrounded Israel have been briefly surveyed as a means of providing a background for further study of this subject as it relates to the Old Testament. It is now appropriate to turn to the viticulture of Israel. Since the grape beverages of this nation will be the subject of the remaining chapters of this dissertation, it is important here to discuss what may be known of Israel's practices of viticulture, drawing both from Scripture and from secular sources.

### The central importance of the vineyard

It is apparent in Israel's divinely inspired literature that the grape is treated as an exceptionally important plant, not only with reference to the economy, but also in the theology of this ancient people. Even in a brief study of the concordance, this momentous truth is evident. The word "vineyard" (kérem) occurs almost one hundred times (94) in the Old Testament, the word "vine" more than half as many (54), and the word "grape" eighteen times. This preponderance of references in itself, without the study of the contexts, indicates the importance of the grapevine in Israel. However, the central value of the plant becomes even more evident when the content of Scripture is examined in addition to this merely statistical information.

One plain implication of the Scripture passages which

refer to this subject is that the vineyard somehow *epitomizes* the blessings which Yahweh chose to shower upon His obedient people. As early as the patriarch Isaac, his "dying" blessing<sup>1</sup> upon Jacob included these words:

"Now may God give you of the dew [tal] of heaven,  
And of the fatness [šāmān] of the earth,  
And an abundance of grain [dāgān] and grape juice\*  
[tîrôš];<sup>2</sup>  
May peoples serve you,  
And nations bow down to you. . . ." [Gen. 27:28-29a]

The next patriarchal blessing, that of Jacob, contains these grape-saturated words directed toward his son Judah:

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh comes,  
And to him *shall be* the obedience of the peoples.  
He ties *his* foal to the vine,  
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine;  
He washes his garments in grape juice\* [yáyin],  
And his robes in the blood of grapes [dam-  
anabîm],  
His eyes are darker than grape juice\* [yáyin],  
And his teeth whiter than milk."<sup>3</sup> [Gen. 49:10-12]

Yahweh began to fulfill Isaac's prophecy of blessing upon Jacob when He brought Israel out of Egypt and into the promised land. Note Moses' confirmation of God's blessing upon

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<sup>1</sup>While Isaac still lived forty-three years longer (Leon Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History* [Grand Rapids: Zondervon Publishing House, 1970], p. 67), he assumed that this was his final blessing: "And Isaac said, 'Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death'" (Gen. 27:2).

<sup>2</sup>Note the parallel between grain [dāgān] and grape juice [tîrôš].

<sup>3</sup>The NASB marginal reading was used in verse 12. For justification of the change from "wine" to "grape juice" see chapter 5. See footnote 2, p. 305 in chapter 5 for further discussion of this passage.

the generation who grew up in the wilderness:

"Then it shall come about when Yahweh your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, [that he will bestow upon you] great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied, then watch yourself, lest you forget Yahweh. . . ."<sup>1</sup> [Deut. 6:10-12a]

"Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For Yahweh your God is bringing you into a rich land,\* a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless Yahweh your God for the rich land which he has given you." [Deut. 8:6-10]

While it is obvious from the multiplicity of the above statements that Yahweh is the source of the land's fertility, it may yet be unclear from these passages how the grapevine is a central motif in God's beneficent bestowal of blessings. It is true that a number of passages cite manifold blessings in which the vineyard may seem less than central; but the preponderance of references taken together gradually bring the vine more to the fore.

At this point, the centrality of the grape in the blessing motif of Israel must be assumed (this work in its entirety will demonstrate the fact). However, it is extremely important for the reader to realize that there is a marked con-

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<sup>1</sup>This passage is repeated, as a fulfilled promise, in Josh. 24:13.



trast between all of the surrounding cultures and the nation of Israel. Revelation from Yahweh made very clear to the Israelites that the prominence of the vineyard in their culture was not to be solely a matter of individual preference, nor primarily a matter of personal wealth; rather it was a *gift of God* to be *enjoyed* by the nation as an outstanding example of His goodness to them for which they could joyfully praise Him. Hence it was not mere chance, nor cultural assimilation from the Canaanites, nor a felicitous environment for the vine per se, which caused the vineyards of Israel to be prominent. *It was God's benevolent design for His people.*

The very fact that the vineyard was a major aspect of God's blessing is emphasized as well in those passages in which Yahweh threatened to remove it from His people if they failed Him. The fecund production of the vine guaranteed by divine pleasure was subject to change should His displeasure be aroused.

"Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey Yahweh your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, Yahweh your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey Yahweh your God. Blessed *shall* you *be* in the city, and blessed *shall* you *be* in the country. Blessed *shall* *be* the . . . produce of your ground. . . .

". . . . And Yahweh will make you abound in prosperity, . . . and in the produce of your ground, . . . Yahweh will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. . . .

"But it shall come about, if you will not obey Yahweh your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I charge you today, that all these curses

shall come upon you and overtake you. Cursed *shall* you be in the city, and cursed *shall* you be in the country. . . . Cursed *shall* be the . . . produce of your ground, . . .

". . . . And the heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. Yahweh will make the rain of your land powder and dust; . . .

". . . ; you shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not use its fruit. . . .

". . . . You shall plant and cultivate vineyards, but you shall neither drink of the juice\* nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall devour them. . . .

"Yahweh will bring a nation against you from afar, . . . Moreover, it shall eat the . . . produce of your ground until you are destroyed, who also leaves you no grain, grape juice,\* or oil, . . . until they have caused you to perish." [Deut. 28:1-3, 4a, 11a, 12, 15-16, 18a, 23-24a, 30b, 39, 49a, 51]

Another related factor of importance in considering the grape industry in Israel is that Yahweh deems it His exclusive right to demand allegiance from His people to His own instructions on viticulture, rather than each vine dresser having the option of complete freedom of choice in the care of the vines. This fact is evidenced by the Mosaic legislation concerning the vineyard. The following verses provide a glimpse of the pertinent laws:

"'. . . who is the man that has planted a vineyard and has not begun to use its fruit? Let him depart and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man begin to use its fruit.'" [Deut. 20:6]

"Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to Yahweh; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of trimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year. And all of you shall have the sabbath products of the land for food: yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you. Even your cattle and the animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat. . . .

"You shall . . . consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family. You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee: you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in from its untrimmed vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field.

"On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property. If you make a sale, moreover, to your friend, or buy from your friend's hand, you shall not wrong one another. Corresponding to the number of years after the jubilee, you shall buy from your friend; he is to sell to you according to the number of years of crops. In proportion to the extent of the years you shall increase its price, and in proportion to the fewness of the years, you shall diminish its price; for *it is* a number of crops he is selling to you. . . .

"You shall thus observe My statutes, and keep My judgments, so as to carry them out, that you may live securely on the land. Then the land will yield its produce, so that you can eat your fill and live securely on it. . . .

"The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine;<sup>1</sup> for you are *but* aliens and sojourners with Me.'" [Lev. 25:3-7, 10-16, 18-19, 23]

"You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest all the produce of the seed which you have sown, and the increase of the vineyard become defiled." [Deut. 22:9]

### The labor required by the vineyard

It has been demonstrated in the above passages that *Yahweh Himself* was the *actual owner* of the vineyards of His chosen people. What manner of care, then, was given to vineyards of the Old Testament period? This matter is worthy of consideration before attention is turned to the harvest.

While the language of Isaiah chapter five is intentionally figurative (dealing with Yahweh's relationship to Israel),

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<sup>1</sup>God owned the land; the people had the right to use it only according to His instructions. This concept, though foreign to contemporary thinking, is appropriate to a theocracy.

there is no reason to doubt that the description of viticulture thus provided is authentic in its detail. Since this passage gives an explicit overview of a vineyard and the labor which it demanded, the section is quoted:

kérem hāyâ lîdîdî

b<sup>e</sup>qéren ben-šāmen  
way'azz<sup>e</sup>qēhû

way<sup>e</sup>saqq<sup>e</sup>lēhû

wayyitṭā'ēhû šōrēq

wayyiben miḡdāl b<sup>e</sup>tōkō

w<sup>e</sup>ḡam-yéqeb ḥāṣēb bō

wayqaw la'<sup>a</sup>sōt <sup>a</sup>nābîm

wayya'<sup>a</sup>s b<sup>e</sup>,ušîm

mâ-lla'<sup>a</sup>sot 'ôḏ i<sup>e</sup>karmî

w<sup>e</sup>lō' āsîṭî bō

My well-beloved had a vine-  
yard *plot*

Upon a fertile hillside;  
So he carefully tilled *the*  
*soil,*

And cleared *the plot* of  
stones,

And planted it with the choic-  
est vine;

Then he built a watchtower in  
the center,

And hewed out a grape *press*  
*and vat in one corner.*

And eagerly waited for it to  
bring forth grapes;

But *instead* it yielded *only*  
worthless ones.

What else could have been  
done for my vineyard

That I have not already done  
for it? [Isa. 5:1b-2, 4a;  
RT]

The pathos of Yahweh in His unrequited care for Israel is vividly portrayed in this extended metaphor. However, that which is of pertinent interest here is the information given concerning viticulture in ancient Israel.

It is worth noting that the vineyards in Palestine seem to have been particularly located in the hill country, a practice which still continues in the twentieth century. Perhaps a major reason for this is that the hillside was less usable for grain and yet was ideally suited to the temperament of grape vines. In any case, it was a hillside here which was

chosen as the plot for the vineyard.<sup>1</sup> However, it is not to be thought that vineyards were only planted on hills, for there is ample biblical evidence that viticulture was also practiced in the valleys. Note, for example, the vineyards of the Philistines at Timnah (Judg. 15:5) and the city whose name means "grape press," Gath, on the great coastal plain, as well as the vineyard in the valley of Jezreel (1 Kings 21:1).

Obviously a vineyard required a great deal of investment in time and energy during the first year. It was in this initial period that some hard work was done which required only light maintenance in later years--for example, the building of a sturdy wall.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this structure was to protect

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<sup>1</sup>Note other corroborative references: Jer. 31:5 speaks of vineyards on the mountains (hārîm) of Samaria; Joel 3(4):18 predicts that in the Millennium Yahweh will (again) provide mountains (hārîm) "dripping" with fresh grape juice ('āsîs); and Amos 9:13 uses the same figure of speech. (Compare Ps. 80:10[11] also.)

<sup>2</sup>While the wall is not specifically mentioned in the poem above, the erection of a wall in this initial year is assured from verse 5. There Yahweh, in destroying the vineyard, first takes away its defenses: "I will dislodge its fences so it will be destroyed, I will break its wall so it may be trampled underfoot" (RT). The words thus used for the wall are mēšūkkâ and gāḏēr. The first word (the verbal root škk is unattested in biblical Hebrew) is used in Scripture only here and apparently refers to a hedge of thorns or briars. A possibly related word is mēšukâ, meaning "hedge" (v-šuk), which occurs only in Prov. 15:19 and is there described as being composed of thorns (hēdeq).

The second word, gāḏēr, occurs 14 times in Scripture with 6 of them in reference to vineyards (3 literal, 3 figurative). The literal walls of vineyards are mentioned in Num. 22:24 (2 times), and Prov. 24:31. The figurative usages occur in Ps. 80:12(13), and here in the Isaiah 5 passage (of Yahweh breaking down the wall around his vineyard, Israel), and in Hosea 2:6(8).

the vineyard from the ravages of beasts; this purpose was reinforced by a suitable watchtower in the middle of the field (which also provided living quarters if the vineyard was some distance from the keeper's village home).<sup>1</sup> It was also during the first year that the back breaking chore of cultivating the soil was required, as well as that of removing the larger stones<sup>2</sup> which hindered maximum use of the land. This was followed by the careful planting of choice vines selected for their particular fecundity and the flavor of their grapes. Finally, while these vines were growing, the husbandman was still busy hewing from stone a grape press and juice vat combination in order to be ready for the expected harvest. With all of this work, it is no surprise that Yahweh legislated that one who did such labor was exempted from military service until he had enjoyed the fruit of his effort at the first harvest<sup>3</sup> of his

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<sup>1</sup>Beasts breaking in and wreaking havoc upon a vineyard are mentioned in Ps. 80:13(14), Isa. 5:5, 7:25, and Jer. 12:9, 10. In Isaiah 1:8, the structure in the vineyard is called simply a sukkâ, meaning "shelter" or "booth" (cf. Job 27:18). Therefore, it appears that the protective shelter could be temporary or permanent as here with the use of miḡdāl, "tower." In a parallel text in the New Testament, Jesus Christ mentions a tower also (Greek πύργος): "There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a grape\* press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine growers and went on a journey" (Matt. 21:33b and Mark 12:1).

<sup>2</sup>The verb used in Isa. 5 is sāgal, which usually means to "stone to death" (note BDB, p. 709); but it is used here in the sense of "clearing" stones from the field. See a similar usage in Isa. 62:10. Note that the verb pānâ is used in Ps. 80:9(10) with the same nuance.

<sup>3</sup>Lutz indicates that the period of time covered by this legislation may have included up to four years (VB, p. 63), but

vineyard (Deut. 20:6).

Maintenance of the vineyard was also required from year to year. This specifically included hoeing<sup>1</sup> the ground (both to remove any weeds<sup>2</sup> and to aerate the soil) and pruning<sup>3</sup> the vineyard this seems excessive.

<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew verb is ʿāḏar (Isa. 5:6). It occurs only twice, both times in the Niphal and in both cases it is used of a vineyard. Isa. 7:25 is the other passage, one which has a similar message and vocabulary to that of chapter 5 (verses 5-6): "And as for all the hills which used to be cultivated with the hoe, you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns; but they will become a place for pasturing oxen and for sheep to trample." The word "hoe" is a noun derived from this verb and occurs only here in the entire Old Testament. Note that words which both passages share include the verb yēʿādēr, and the nouns (1<sup>e</sup>) mirmās ("trampling place"--BDB, p. 942), šāmīr ("thorns"--BDB, p. 1039), and šāyit ("thorn bushes"--BDB, p. 1011).

<sup>2</sup>Note the opposite when such restraints are removed: "and briars and thorns will come up" (verse 6).

<sup>3</sup>The Hebrew verb is zāmar. It is used only three times in the Old Testament and always of the vineyard. The other two references are in Lev. 25:3, 4 (quoted above, p. 88). There are three other related words from this root, all of which pertain to the vineyard: (1) The noun zāmīr occurs only in Song of Sol. 2:12, "The time has arrived for pruning *the vines*." (This translation fits better in the overall context than does "singing.") (2) The word zēmôrâ, a "(vine)branch," occurs five times but apparently only three refer to the grapevine: Num. 13:23 (in reference to the branch holding a gigantic cluster of grapes which the spies brought back); Isa. 17:10 (speaking of the dedication of the planted "vine slips" to false deities--NASB); and Nah. 2:1(3) (of enemies destroying the "vine branches"). (3) The final noun, mazmērâ, "pruning knife," is used four times and exclusively of a grapevine pruning implement (as Mic. 4:3-4 makes clear). One time the Old Testament specifically employs the word with reference to pruning vine branches (though the context is figurative of judgment):

"For before the harvest, as soon as the bud blossoms,  
And the flower becomes a ripening grape,  
Then he will cut off the sprigs with pruning knives,  
And remove and cut away the spreading branches." [Isa. 18:5]  
Three of the four contexts are similar in wording and message:

vines to make each vine more fruitful.

The type of grape which was grown is not specified in Scripture, although deductions may be made from certain vocabulary used. It is probable that the preferred type of vine produced a dark blue grape and thus a darkly red juice. This may be indicated in the poetic description of grape juice as the dam-‘ēnāb (Gen. 49:11), which means literally "blood of the grape." It may also be hinted at in the word śōrēq, "choice species of vine,"<sup>1</sup> for the word is apparently derived from a cognate Semitic root in which deep redness is an innate idea.<sup>2</sup>

That the land of Canaan was a superbly suitable area in which to plant vineyards is quite obvious biblically:

(1) The very fact that the vineyard is a central aspect of God's goodness to Israel guarantees this fact.

(2) The Hebrew spies returning to Kadesh-barnea from scouting the land were quick to declare its extraordinary fertility and productivity (Num. 13:27). They even brought back a startling visual aid: a single grape cluster too heavy for one man to comfortably carry (verse 23).

(3) The value placed upon vineyards was in some instances very high. Isaiah 7:23 speaks of vineyards containing one

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changing ploughshares into swords and spears into pruning knives (Isa. 2:4, Mic. 4:3), or vice-versa (Joel 3[4]:10).

<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 978.

<sup>2</sup>BDB lists Akkadian šarku, "red blood," among others (p. 978); KB, p. 932, concurs. However, von Soden (AH) does not mention the word in his lexicon.



thousand vines which were worth a thousand shekels of silver. The Song of Solomon (8:11) similarly indicates that the king's vineyard at Baal-hamon was expected to produce a thousand shekels of silver annually.

(4) The frequent mention of the vineyards and their products, both in Scripture and in the extra-biblical ostraca,<sup>1</sup> would also indicate the importance of the grapevine to the inhabitants of Palestine.

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<sup>1</sup>In Samaria there have been found many (63) ostraca which refer to shipments of old wine (yn yšn) and fine oil (šmn rḥs) made in the last half of the eighth century B.C. (Allen P. Ross, "The Contributions of the Early Hebrew Inscriptions to Old Testament Studies" [Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1969], pp. 3-4; Yohanan Aharoni, The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography, trans. by A. F. Rainey [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967], pp. 315-17; and John C. L. Gibson, Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions, vol. 1: Hebrew and Moabite Inscriptions [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971], pp. 11-13).

At Arad in the south of Palestine were discovered several ostraca dealing with the rations of flour, wine (yyn) and oil assigned to a military garrison about 600 B.C. (Ross, "Early Hebrew Inscriptions," pp. 10-11; André Lemaire, Inscriptions Hébraïques, tome 1: Les Ostraca [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1977], pp. 229-32; and Gibson, Hebrew and Moabite, pp. 51-52). Much earlier (tenth century) the "Gezer Calendar" had also referred to the vineyard (Ross, "Early Hebrew Inscriptions," pp. 2-3; and Gibson, Hebrew and Moabite, pp. 1-4).

At Hazor an inscription was found on a wine jar (732 B.C.). The simple writing on the jar contains the destination, "for Pekah" (King of Israel), and the type of wine, semadar (Yigael Yadin, "Excavations at Hazor, 1955-1958," in The Biblical Archaeologist Reader, ed. by David Noel Freedman and Edward F. Campbell, Jr. [Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc.], 2 [1964]:204).

At Lachish were found jar handles (late seventh century B.C.), many of which were inscribed "belonging to the king," followed by the name of a town. These were probably originally attached to wine jars shipped from the royal vineyards (G. Ernest Wright, "Judean Lachish," in The Biblical Archaeologist Reader, 2 [1964]:304). Thus, a large proportion of the ostraca found in Israel refer to the liquid produce of the vine.

## The joy of the harvest<sup>1</sup>

When the carefully tended<sup>2</sup> vines had produced mature grape clusters, it was time for the harvest; this took place in September.<sup>3</sup> Scripture presents this as an event of great enjoyment.<sup>4</sup> Apparently it was intended by God to bring joy not only to the lowly peasants (as in the surrounding cultures),<sup>5</sup> but to

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<sup>1</sup>Because various aspects of the harvest are dealt with in more detail in other sections of this dissertation (for example, appendix F explores biblical details relating to the grape press), this section will be relatively short and present only an overview.

<sup>2</sup>The vine tender is mentioned five times in biblical Hebrew, always in parallel with the idea of "ploughman" (yōgēbīm, two times) or "farmers" ('ikkārīm, three times). The contexts include: (a) leaving the poorest of the people to tend the fields and vineyards during the Babylonian captivity--Jer. 52:16, 2 Kings 25:12; (b) King Uzziah's appointment of men to do this work, "for he loved the soil"--2 Chron. 26:10; (c) the mourning of the men in these occupations because of Yahweh's destruction of the crops--Joel 1:11; and (d) the Millennial exaltation of Israel to a position above these honorable occupations (which will be assumed instead by "foreigners") to responsibilities which are even more exalted: those of serving Yahweh as priests and ministers--Isa. 61:5.

<sup>3</sup>E. W. Heaton, Everyday Life in Old Testament Times, illustrated from drawings by Marjorie Quennel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. 104.

<sup>4</sup>For documentation of this, note the discussion regarding tîrôš in chapter 4, pp. 201, 204, 207.

<sup>5</sup>Class distinctions, which became so clear in the eighth century B.C. and against which the prophets like Amos preached, were not of God. That in later Israel the poor were almost enslaved and the rich relied upon others to do their labor for them is obvious. However, this coincided with, and was caused by, spiritual apostasy. The fact that Solomon shows such intimate knowledge of vineyards in the Song of Solomon may indicate that even a king could take a personal interest in the grape harvest. Ps. 4:7 also evidences that King David himself was personally familiar with the harvest and its accompanying jubilation.

every person in Israel. The harvest of fresh grape juice is consistently paired with the words for harvested grain and fresh olive oil,<sup>1</sup> reflecting that the vine gave great delight to the hearts of all Israel (at least in the days not dominated by spiritual apostasy). Since most families would have had at least a small vineyard,<sup>2</sup> it was doubtless a national holiday and a time of family togetherness.

While specific details of the harvest festivities are not recorded, the family would certainly have picked or cut off the grapes in the vineyard and then brought them to the treading vat.<sup>3</sup> The grape press<sup>4</sup> would have been a center of fun and merriment as the treaders expressed the juice with their feet.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See further the discussion of tîrôš in chapter 4, pp. 192-195.

<sup>2</sup>The epitome of the good life in the Old Testament includes the concept of each family having its own vine and fig trees (Zech. 3:10).

<sup>3</sup>The sparse mention of grapes and raisins in the Old Testament, when compared to the copious references to the beverages, indicates that the *primary* purpose of the grape harvest in Israel was for the beverage rather than the fresh or dried fruit.

<sup>4</sup>To this writer the word "grape press" provides a more accurate designation than does the more common "wine press." While it is true that the intended result of the "press" is to provide a beverage, it is yet the grape which is pressed and the juice that is thus expressed. "Wine press" implies that the end product will always be "wine"--an intoxicating beverage. Since that premise is not necessarily valid, the term "wine press" is considered also to be invalid, especially as it pertains to Israel.

<sup>5</sup>Scripture does not mention any other normal means for extracting juice from grapes. (However, note that in his dream Pharaoh's cupbearer squeezed the grapes by hand into

Such vocal enjoyment is mentioned prominently in Isaiah 16:10.

Scripture makes it clear that the liquid produce of the vineyard was stored<sup>1</sup> (1 Chron. 27:27) and was used during the whole year.<sup>2</sup> However, it is an intriguing fact that no hint is given as to how grape juice was kept from fermenting. Equally interesting, there is no mention in Scripture of the time or the process needed for controlled fermentation so as to make palatable wine. There is also no clue regarding how men in Old Testament times kept even wine from spoiling, which it would have done unless somehow specially treated. The whole matter of the preparation, storage, and commerce of wine is omitted. The Bible clearly indicates details regarding the vineyard, the harvest, and the treading of the grapes. The next area of

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Pharaoh's cup--Gen. 40:11.) The uniform verb for "treading" grapes was dāarak, which means to "tread upon" or to "march" (note BDB, pp. 201-02). It is used eleven times in the specialized sense of expressing juice by treading upon the grapes, although several of these are figures of speech (Isa. 63:2,3; Lam. 1:15, etc.). A passage such as Mic. 6:15 implies that the olive oil was expressed in the same manner:

"You will sow but you will not reap.

You will tread the olive [záyit] but will not anoint yourself with oil [šémen];

And the grapes [tîrôš], but you will not drink wine [yáyin]."

It is probable, therefore, that the grape press was used for "treading" out olives as well, but this latter would probably have been done with the aid of a large stone to do the crushing. Note also Joel 2:24, "the vats [yēqābîm] will overflow with fresh grape juice [tîrôš] and fresh oil [yîšhār]."

<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew words relating to storage are referred to in appendix F, which deals with the grape press.

<sup>2</sup>The use of yáyin ("juice/wine") in the perpetual sacrifice would necessitate its year-around availability.

information which Scripture gives is in relation to the consumption of juice and wine. Between these extremes--the harvest of the vineyard and the ingestion of the liquid products--there is a major omission. Implications drawn from scriptural principles which relate to this lack of information will be mentioned in chapter six.

### Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of the importance and use of wine in the ancient world. Two conclusions are inescapable. First, Egypt and Mesopotamia share the distinction of having valued wine but of having used beer with much more frequency. Wine was primarily the drink of the nobility rather than of the common man. The literatures of Greece, Italy, and Palestine, on the other hand, present the truth that in these countries the liquid produce of the vine, whether as grape juice or as wine, was the common and preferred beverage.

Second, whereas in these other countries wine was offered to the deities as an acceptable libation and its production was considered to be nominally under the direction of a deity (such as Bacchus), yet Israel's relationship to God was different in kind. In Israel, Yahweh explicitly owned the land and desired that Israel use this land to grow vineyards. He particularly desired His people to use the liquid produce for their own enjoyment. Since Yahweh alone of all the "gods" not only blessed His people with the vineyard but concurrently

required of them the highest moral standards (righteousness, holiness) in every area of life, it is not unexpected that this God would have applied clear standards to the use of the vineyard's products (unlike the pagan world). Such was the case, as will be demonstrated in chapter five. Therefore, it is apparent that for the Old Testament saint both the purpose and the use of the product of the vineyard, as outlined in Scripture, would be very distinct from that of Israel's contemporaries, whose relationship to their deities also differed greatly.

### CHAPTER III

#### AN ETYMOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### WORDS FOR "WINE"

##### Introduction

Prior to examining the biblical usage of the words which designate grape beverages, it is important to look at other pertinent literature from the ancient Near East with regard to these same words. While it is obvious that the ultimate source for understanding the nature and usage of these beverages in the Old Testament must be Scripture itself, it is yet helpful to understand how the words were used in the surrounding contemporaneous cultures.

Of the surrounding cultures which can contribute most to an understanding of the Old Testament vocabulary of beverages, none is more important than that of the city-state of Ugarit. The major reason for the strategic nature of the Ugaritic language and literature is that this influential community, which flourished in the middle of the second millennium B.C., was somewhat representative of the prevailing "Canaanite" culture along the Phoenician littoral. It is this very similarity of culture which guaranteed that the beverages of Palestine together with their vocabulary would appear prominently both in the Hebrew Old Testament and in the Ugaritic epics.

As will be seen, the vocabulary of grape beverages is more homogeneous to the Northwest and Southwest Semitic languages. Northeast Semitic cognates are only attested for the roots škr and sb'. Even though Akkadian has a comprehensive vocabulary pertaining to the vine and its products, most of that vocabulary is irrelevant to this study.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In order to demonstrate both the difference of vocabulary and the similarities of culture between Mesopotamia and Palestine, it is helpful to take a brief excursus.

The Akkadian vocabulary of the vine would include, among others, the following words:

(1) A possible cognate word for Hebrew 'ēnāb, "grape," is almost completely unrelated in meaning; this word, inbu or GURUN, designates either a "fruit tree" or its "fruit" (CAD, 7:144). The word can encompass the grape vine along with other fruit bearing trees. For example, one source (Nbn. 606:1) speaks of "in-bi-i-ti ša GN," which may be translated "fruit trees of GN"; these trees are itemized in context as vines, figs and pomegranates (ibid., p. 145). Another text indicates that wine [GEŠTIN.MEŠ] was made from the produce of fruit trees [GURUN.MEŠ]; (Iraq 14 41:39; ibid., p. 144). However, in the sense of "fruit," inbu is in one context distinguished from grapes: "kullat išše hišihiti GURUN u GEŠTIN.MEŠ" may be rendered "all sorts of trees desirable for their fruit and grapes" (TCL 3 327; ibid., p. 145).

(2) Contrasted etymologically with Hebrew 'eškôl is Akkadian ishunnatu (or [GIŠ.]KIN.GEŠTIN) and ishunnu, both meaning "cluster" or "bunch of grapes" (ibid., p. 190). The word karānatu also means "grape cluster" (CAD, 8:202).

(3) Another Akkadian word, karānu or [GIŠ.]GEŠTIN, has no probable relation to Hebrew vocabulary at all, yet occurs very frequently and with several diverse nuances. This word can designate either the "grapevine," "grapes," or especially the "wine" which is made from the grapes (ibid.). The literature regarding this word is so extensive that CAD devotes more than four pages to its discussion. In the sense of "vine" one text (TCL 15 No. 16:46) makes this interesting statement: "for my husband I am laden (with grapes) like a vine." The normalized Akkadian text is "ana ha'iriša ki-ma ka-ra-nu til-la-<sup><ti></sup> ma-la-ku" (ibid., p. 203). As "grapes" the word occurs in the phrase "to pick grapes [GIS.GEŠTIN]" (ibid., p. 202). One text states, "GIŠ.GEŠTIN ina panātūa šahit" which may be translated, "the grapes were pressed in my presence" (ibid.,



In this chapter will be discussed the contributions which the cognate Semitic languages can provide toward an under-  


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p. 206).

"Wine" is the most frequent nuance for karānu. Several representative ways in which wine is spoken of in the Akkadian texts are included here in order to provide a glimpse of Mesopotamian culture as it pertains to wine. One text (VAS 16 52:14) says, "the boats have arrived [,] why did you not buy and send me good wine [GEŠTIN tābam]" (ibid., p. 203). Another (RA 19 105:17) reads "be not negligent [,] you shall have ready for the archers of the king much food, wine, plenty of everything" (ibid.). Sennacherib claims, "at the inauguration of my palace I drenched their insides with sweet wine" (OIP 2 116 viii 76; ibid.). Among Nabonidus' records is the following statement: "wine, the fine drink from the mountains, of which there is none in my country, was priced at 18 silas of wine per shekel of silver in my country" (BBSt. No. 37:10f.; ibid.). The same king claims to have treated some of his workmen well, though not without a selfish motive: "I provided them (the workmen engaged in building the temple) richly with assorted food, fine beer, meat and abundant wine (in order to make them say blessings)" (OECT 1 p. 36 iii 27; ibid.).

Two letters give some evidence of the great quantities of wine which were consumed by royalty. One (ABL 307:4 and 6) states, "as to the wine concerning which the king has ordered me: deliver two hundred homers of wine for storage" (ibid.). Since the homer was a donkey load equivalent to about 48.4 gallons (NBD, p. 1322), this refers to a fairly sizable delivery. A Neo-Babylonian letter (ABL 86 r. 6) asks an interesting question: "the king has much wine, where should we put it?" (ibid.).

Another use of wine which is worthy of mention is the practice of offering it as a libation to the deities of Mesopotamia. This was apparently a common occurrence (ibid., p. 204).

Apparently "must" is also a legitimate rendering for karānu. The texts of Sargon II include the statement, "They drew sweet wine (from the vats) with large and small skin bottles." The Akkadian text (TCL 3 220) reads: *ina nādi mašlê iḥbu GEŠTIN DUG.GA*" (ibid., p. 203). The texts of Sargon II (TCL 3 KAH 2 141:220) also make this claim: "I entered his secret wine cellar (and my soldiers drew sweet wine as if it were from a canal)" (ibid., p. 206). Further, CAD (ibid., p. 205) renders the phrase "GIŠ.GEŠTIN eš-šú" literally as "new wine."

(4) The phrase bīt karāni or É(GIŠ.)GEŠTIN is used variously in reference to a "tavern" or "wine cellar" and to a

standing of the Hebrew words for grape beverages. The order of presentation of cognate words will be based upon the relative importance of the respective Hebrew word (based upon the frequency of usage) in the Old Testament. The word which occurs most often in the Hebrew Scriptures will be discussed first and then the other words in descending order of occurrence. Within each discussion pertaining to a specific word, the contribution of the pertinent languages will be grouped according to geographical distribution. Within each geographic area, the order of presentation will be based upon chronology with the earlier, more important evidence presented first.

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There is a problem which immediately confronts anyone who studies the etymological information which is available for the Hebrew word yáyin. The problem relates to the linguistic

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"vineyard" also (ibid., p. 206).

As can be readily grasped from the above material, most of the key words for the vine and its products differ between Mesopotamia and Palestine. Even where the words are clearly cognate (note also the following discussion under the root škr), yet the usage of these cognate words differs widely between these two geographic areas. Mesopotamia never was an area where growing of vines was either as easy or as prevalent as Palestine. Yet the vine and its products were valued at various periods. Therefore the lack of homogeneity in vocabulary between Palestine and Mesopotamia is due to a different linguistic heritage more than to a diverse culture per se. It is also interesting that the Akkadian word for "wine," though not related to yáyin, was used in a similar manner: both for fermented wine and for "must" (grape juice). Its consumption in the Mesopotamian culture was primarily by the upper class and it was also used in temple libations. The more common beverage both by preference and availability was beer, made from grain, as mentioned previously in chapter 2.

pre-history of the word. Therefore, prior to examining the contribution provided by the cognate languages to an understanding of yáyin, it is helpful to clarify the problem pertaining to the linguistic source of this word.

Virtually all authorities seem to agree that the word yáyin, which is common in Hebrew, must be non-Semitic in its origin.<sup>1</sup> This general agreement is based upon two evidences. The first is that the word does not have any related Semitic verbal root (wyn) and is not a word which is widespread throughout the Semitic family of languages. The second is that the non-Semitic languages of Greek and Latin also include the word prominently in their vocabulary at a very early time.

The original proto-Semitic form of the noun was probably wyn rather than yyn. This conclusion is based both upon the fact that the Northwest Semitic languages regularly changed initial w to y<sup>2</sup> and upon the etymological data available.

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<sup>1</sup>For example note BDB, p. 406, which implies this very thing, and KB, p. 379, which states it clearly. A. van Selms wrote as late as 1974: "As far as the present author is aware, all dictionaries agree that Hebrew *yayin* is a non-Semitic word" (A. van Selms, "The Etymology of *Yayin*, 'Wine,'" Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages 3 [1974]:76). Edward Horowitz wrote: "It [yáyin] has no clear explanation in either Hebrew Greek or Latin. It was probably borrowed by all these groups from some now lost and unknown language" (Edward Horowitz, How the Hebrew Language Grew, illustrated by Paul Sharon [New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1967], p. 5).

<sup>2</sup>Note the brief discussion of this phenomenon by Zellig S. Harris, Development of the Canaanite Dialects: An Investigation in Linguistic History, American Oriental Series, 16 (New Haven, Conn.: American Oriental Society, 1939; reprint ed., New York: Krause Reprint Corp., 1967), p. 8. See also Sabatino Moscati et al., An Introduction to the Comparative

Greek,<sup>1</sup> Latin, Ethiopic, and Epigraphic South Arabic all show initial w.

Even though there is general unanimity that \*wyn (the \* indicates proto-Semitic) is non-Semitic in its origin, there is a real possibility that such thinking is superficial. One cannot arbitrarily make the simple equation that if extant Akkadian does not contain the word, then it cannot be Semitic. A recent article by A. van Selms presents an interesting possibility which is worthy of mention. Since both the Sumerian and the Egyptian languages have their own unrelated words for the products of the vine, he believes this would argue against the assumption that \*wyn comes from some unknown language. He continues by stating:

It is evident . . . that the [normal] Biblical terminology relating to viticulture is Western-Semitic, and this makes it rather improbable that the most important [and most frequently used] of all words, *yayin*, should be taken over from an unknown, non-Semitic language. This prompts us to look for a Semitic etymology also for this word.<sup>2</sup>

Van Selms finds the suggested solution in the phenomenon of the

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Grammar of the Semitic Languages: Phonology and Morphology, ed. Sabatino Moscati, *Porta Linguarum Orientalium, Neue Serie VI* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1969), p. 46.

Speaking specifically of this phenomenon in Ugaritic, Al-Yasin states: "The initial w in Arabic (and proto-Semitic) almost always shifts to y in Ugaritic" (Izz-al-Din Al-Yasin, The Lexical Relation Between Ugaritic and Arabic, Shelton Monograph Series, No. 1, ed. G. Douglas Young

<sup>1</sup>The early Greek form of οἶνος was with a digamma, Fo῭vos (L&S, p. 1207).

<sup>2</sup>van Selms, "The Etymology of *Yayin*," p. 77.

transposition of the medial w/y with the final w/y within the weak triradical formations containing these vowel letters. Arguing from the general, evident etymological relationship between the two metathesized formations (as demonstrated by many analogous word pairs in Hebrew), he believes that Hebrew yáyin (\*wyn) is related to the verb yānâ (verbal root \*wny), meaning "to oppress" or "to maltreat."<sup>1</sup> The author then conjectures that the original concrete idea of the verb is "to press" or "to squeeze" which would equally fit the idea of "oppressing" a foe or "squeezing out" the liquid produce of the vine.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not van Selms' position will become generally accepted, it certainly does merit careful consideration. At this point in the contemporary knowledge of the Semitic languages, it cannot be lightly dismissed. However, even if an etymological relationship between yáyin and yānâ cannot be definitively established, neither can it be stated dogmatically that yáyin is non-Semitic in origin. The common use of this noun in Hebrew and the earlier Ugaritic<sup>3</sup> argues strongly for its intrinsic relationship to the Northwest Semitic dialects.

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 413. It is interesting to note that van Selms' suggestion is not a new one, even if he is unaware of this. For example, Parkhurst made this suggestion in his Greek lexicon more than 150 years earlier (A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament, by John Parkhurst [1817], p. 469).

<sup>2</sup>Van Selms, "The Etymology of *Vayin*," pp. 77-82.

<sup>3</sup>Hebrew yáyin and Ugaritic yn completely overwhelm in frequency any other word dealing with grape beverages in their respective languages.

After these preliminary observations it is important to compare the data relating to yáyin from the other Semitic languages.

#### Northeast Semitic (Akkadian)

Apparently, if the word occurs at all in the sense of "wine," inu is merely a rare, young-Babylonian loanword. The reputable scholarly lexicon edited by Oppenheim issues a terse disclaimer of any relationship between inu and yáyin in these words: "Not to be connected with Heb. *yayin*, 'wine,' etc."<sup>1</sup> However, von Soden demurs without comment, simply translating inu II as "Wein" and relating it to the Hebrew cognate.<sup>2</sup> This modern disagreement between lexicons is based upon battle lines drawn before the turn of the century. F. Hommel considered the word to be a Western Semitic loanword, but Jensen disagreed.<sup>3</sup>

In any case, whether or not inu is a cognate word, the paucity of its usage provides no help in understanding the meaning of yáyin.

#### Northwest Semitic (Ugaritic)

There is only one language which provides any help in discerning the meaning of yáyin within the Northwest Semitic

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<sup>1</sup>CAD, 7:152 (inu C), apparently bases its conclusion on the late nineteenth century work of Jensen.

<sup>2</sup>AH, p. 383.

<sup>3</sup>As early a work as BDB (1907) refers to this disagreement (p. 406).

group. The extant Aramaic texts do not use the word at all. Neither does Phoenician, although it would be no surprise if in the future new texts would be discovered which contain the word.<sup>1</sup>

Ugaritic is the one Northwest Semitic language<sup>2</sup> which does contain a word which is cognate to Hebrew yávin. It should be pointed out that, because of the similarity of culture and the geographical proximity of Ugarit to Israel, the frequent Ugaritic usage of its cognate word more than compensates for the lack of such information from the other related languages.

The Ugaritic cognate word yn (originally yyn)<sup>3</sup> seems to be used in contexts very similar to those of the Old Testament regarding yávin. For example, it is used in sacrificial contexts as well as in the context of normal (but possibly special, i.e., for visiting dignitaries, for feasts, etc.) drinking. The following are some representative usages of the word.

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<sup>1</sup>Van Selms ("The Etymology of *Vayin*," p. 76) agrees.

<sup>2</sup>The contribution of extra-biblical Hebrew has been discussed in chapter 2 and need not be recapitulated here. There is one phrase, though, which occurs in several disparate sources which should be noted. The "wine of Helbon," which was important enough to be known in Israel (Ezek. 27:18) as yên helbôn was sufficiently famous to be also known in Mesopotamia (as geštin hulbūnu) and in the classical world as well (as οἶνος χαλυβέντιος); S. M. Paul, "Classifications of Wine in Mesopotamian and Rabbinic Sources," Israel Exploration Journal 25:1 (1975):43.

<sup>3</sup>UT, p. 410.

A beverage used in sacrifice. As might be expected, passages dealing with sacrifice are prominent in two Ugaritic epics which concern human beings who are desiring the favor of the gods. These epics are those dealing with Keret and Aqhat.

In the Keret epic "wine" (yn) is mentioned twice in connection with sacrifice. In both of the occurrences the vocabulary is the same. On the first occasion the god El commands King Keret in a dream to offer sacrifice (note lines 35-36); the second occasion is an account of the fulfillment of that command. El's command is in these words:

Keret 66-79

	Take a lam[b in thy hand]
	A lamb of sac[rifice in thy]
	right hand;
[bg]l . htt yn .	[In a bo]wl of silver pour
	<u>wine</u> ,
bgl [h]rş . nbt	Honey in a bowl of [g]old.
	And go up to the top of a
	[to]wer;
	Bestride the top of the
	wal[l];
	Lift up thy hands to heaven,
	Sacrifice to Bull, thy father
	El;
şrd . b'1 bdbhk .	Honor Baal with thy sacrifice,
bn . dgn bmsdk <sup>1</sup>	Dagon's Son with thine obla-
	tion. <sup>2</sup>

In fulfillment of the god's command, Keret does as he was bidden, offering yn and honey, which apparently were commodities special enough to be suitable for a deity:

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 250. Only the most pertinent phrases of the text are included here.

<sup>2</sup>ANET, p. 143.



Keret 164-171

In a bowl of silver he poured wine,  
 Honey in a bowl of gold.  
 He went up to the top of a tower,  
 Bestrode the top of the wall;  
 Lifted up his [han]ds to heaven,  
 Sacrificed to Bull, his father El;  
 Honored Baal with his sacrifice,  
 Dagon's Son with his [ob]lation.<sup>1</sup>

In light of the above two texts, yn also seems to be the "drink" included by inference in the sacrifice mentioned in the Aqhat epic. Repeated several times (for he did it for a week) are the words:

2 Aqht:I:12-14

uzr [ilm] . dnil .	Oblation to the gods gives
	Daniel,
uzr . ilm . ylhm	Oblation to the gods to eat,
[uzr] yšqy . bn qdš . <sup>2</sup>	Oblation to drink to the holy ones. <sup>3</sup>

Similarly, Daniel tells his wife Danatiya to serve the god Kothar wa-Khasis food and drink. (Because the visitor is a deity it would appear that this is both social and sacrificial.)

2 Aqht:V:16-17,19-20

‘db imr . bphd .	Prepare a lamb from the flock
šlhm . ššqy ilm .	Give food, give drink to the godhead;
sad . kbd . hmt <sup>4</sup>	Serve, honor him. . . .

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>UT, p. 247. Uzr = "food or drink offerings" (UT, p. 354).

<sup>3</sup>ANET, p. 150.

<sup>4</sup>UT, p. 248. The corresponding translation is found in ANET, p. 151. This is repeated as Danatiya does as she was

A beverage in ordinary life. A much more frequent usage of the word yn is as a beverage which was usually served with a meal. Apparently yn was a grape beverage<sup>1</sup> analogous to Hebrew yáyin, both as an intoxicant and (probably) as grape juice.

The nature of yn as a fermented wine beverage may be demonstrated from the tale of Aqhat. In the story, Daniel wants a son to protect him from others (2 Aqht I:29-30), to uphold him before the gods (lines 27-28), and to generally care for him. The care of the son for the father is variously specified as fixing the roof (line 33), washing his clothes (line 34), and helping him when he is drunk (lines 31-32):

2 Aqht I:31-32

[a]hd . ydh . bškrn .  
m'msh [k]šb<sup>c</sup> yn .<sup>2</sup>

Who takes him by the hand  
when he's drunk,  
Carries him when he's sated  
with wine;

While the use of yn as wine, a fermented beverage, is thus assured, it is interesting that the other major contexts

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bidden in lines 29-30.

<sup>1</sup>The relationship between the grape and yn does not appear to be directly specified, but the frequent mention of vineyards as taxable productive property in the economic texts and the mention of yn received as payment of taxes are logically related (see chapter 2, pp. 83-84). The etymological relationship to Hebrew yáyin, for which the relationship is specified, would also indicate this to be true.

<sup>2</sup>UT, p. 247. This is repeated again in 2 Aqht II:5-6 and again in II:19-20. For the discussion of another possibly related text on drunkenness, see the discussion on RŠ 24:258:16 under tīrōš on page 138 below. The corresponding translation is found in ANET, p. 150.

in which the word is used within the epics do not even hint of drunkenness as an intentional or a normal result. Instead, yn is apparently a special beverage used to succour weary travelers, feast dignitaries, etc. One thing that should be stated at the outset is that there is no intent here to view the people of Ugarit as saints nor to upgrade their morals. However, it appears to this author that others have automatically assumed, without specific evidence, that yn necessarily and universally means "a fermented wine beverage" in Ugaritic, just as they assume yáyin uniformly meant the same in the Old Testament. If that assumption is not necessarily proven, it is well to challenge or at least to question it.<sup>1</sup>

It appears to this writer that the following passages could with equal (or more) contextual justification be translated "grape juice" instead of "wine."

(Baal-Anath Cycle) 51:IV:33-38

[hm] <sup>2</sup> rǵb . rǵbt . wtǵt[ ]	[if] you are hungry, having travelled far (?)
hm . ǵmu . ǵmit . w's[ ]	if you are thirsty having gone by night (?) <sup>3</sup>
lhm . hm . štym .	Eat; yea drink!
lh[m] btlhnt . lhm	Eat food from the tables,
št[y] bkrpnm . yn .	Drink <u>grape juice</u> from the goblets,

<sup>1</sup>For the demonstrably ambiguous nature of Hebrew yáyin see chapter 5 of this dissertation.

<sup>2</sup>[hm] is Driver's reconstruction (CML, p. 96).

<sup>3</sup>This translation follows Driver, CML, pages 97 and 140. It also fits well contextually with the preceding lines 16 and 17: "Qadesh takes the lead / Amrur is like a star before (them)" [RT].

bk (s) . hrš dm . 'šm .<sup>1</sup>

the juice of the vine from  
the golden cup. [RT]

Two things are notable about this text: one is notable linguistically; the other is notable in light of modern science. Linguistically it is important that the word yn is in parallel with dm 'šm. A general rule in translating poetic parallelism is to interpret the more ambiguous word in light of its more specific counterpart when this is possible. In light of the potential ambiguity of yn, it is legitimate to interpret it by the less ambiguous phrase dm 'šm, literally "blood of trees." Gordon considers the figure of speech to be interpreted by "red wine" and believes that the word "blood" was included simply to designate the color of the wine.<sup>2</sup> However, it appears to this writer that a more normal interpretation would be "juice of the vine" (analogous to the biblical dam 'ēnāb, Gen. 49:11). Driver<sup>3</sup> translates it "juice of trees," even though he interprets it in a footnote (page 95) as "wine made from the juice of grapes." Ginsberg translates dm, without interpretation, as the "blood of vines."<sup>4</sup>

With the general disagreement among scholars mentioned above, it will doubtless appear gratuitous to claim that the second phrase may in any way explicate the first. However, when the general bias of other scholars is recognized in uniformly translating yn or yāyin as "wine," their attempt to cor-

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 171.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 385.    <sup>3</sup>CML, pp. 97 and 154.

<sup>4</sup>ANET, p. 133.

relate the second to the first is immediately apparent.

A further consideration may carry little weight and yet is worthy of note. Medically, it would be foolish to give an intoxicating beverage to one who is weary and faint, since wine is a depressant. Grape juice, on the other hand, would be both refreshing and invigorating to a weary traveller along with a meal. Experience, if not medical technology, could well have taught the ancients this same truth. In any case, there is sufficient reason to consider that a forced interpretation of this passage as referring to an intoxicating beverage is unwarranted. There is at least an equally good possibility that grape juice is intended.

The same poetic formula occurs in another text:

(Baal-Anath Cycle) 51:III:40-45

[‘d tl]ḥm . tšty [ilm]	'[While the gods] eat (and) drink,
[wtp]q . mrgtm [td]	'[and] sweetmeats are sup- plied,
[bḥrb m]lḥt . qš [mri]	'[the breast of a fatling] is carved [with] a gleaming [knife];
[tšty k]rpnm yn [bks ḥrṣ]	'(while) they drink flagons of <u>grape juice</u> * [in cups of gold],
[d]m ‘šm [bks ksp] <sup>1</sup>	'the juice of the vine* [in cups of silver]. . . . <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 171 and CML, p. 94 (following Driver in the lacunae, since Gordon makes no attempt at reconstruction).

<sup>2</sup>This translation is that of Driver (CML, p. 95) except for the words yn and ‘šm, which he translates as "wine" and "trees." However, the poetic rearrangement is intentional, following Ginsberg's style rather than keeping Driver's specific lines of the text. Driver's other reconstructed lines (45-46) "[hn . krpn ‘l krpn . ypṭḥ . / wmsk . ymsk]," which

Initially it might appear that this is a bold reconstruction and thus an unwarranted translation; however, the same words are repeated verbatim (except with the unprefixing conjugation of the verbs) in 67:IV:12-18, which is part of the same corpus of literature regarding Baal. There Gordon's unreconstructed text (page 179) fully substantiates Driver's reconstruction here, since the locations of the lacunae differ. Yet a third place where a very similar passage may be found is in another epic, 2 Aqht VI:4-6.<sup>1</sup> There again Gordon has a text identical to the above text 51:III:42-44 (beginning with bhrb and ending with dm 'sm).

Another passage in the Baal epic (51:VI:35-60) also ends in the manner of the one quoted. It tells of a great feast for the gods as a house warming for Baal's elegant new palace. Driver's translation is the following:

(Baal-Anath Cycle) 51:VI:35-60

The victor Baal did rejoice (saying):  
 "I have built my mansion of silver,  
 "My palaces(!) of gold,  
 "I have made a mansion [for] Baal  
 "Who makes the thunder;  
 "Surely I have made his palace."  
 He did slay oxen, [also] sheep,  
 He did fell bulls [and] a fatling,  
 Rams, yearling calves and a lamb,  
 He did strangle a kid.  
 He did call his brother(s) into his mansion,  
 His kinsfolk into the midst of his palace,

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would read "Yea, flagon after flagon is opened / and a mixture is mixed" appears to be much more fanciful even when the two other similar texts (see below) are taken into consideration.

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 248.



Upon examination of the evidence, it is obvious that yn<sup>1</sup> was the most common beverage mentioned in the epics. A question which naturally arises at this point is: *What clear implications may be drawn from these epics regarding the use of yn in common, everyday life in Ugarit?* Two conclusions in this regard seem warranted from this literature.

First, it appears that yn was a normal beverage rather than an esoteric one. The relatively frequent use of yn in the epics would indicate that yn must have been more than just a literary device. It would obviously indicate a beverage actually utilized in society.<sup>2</sup> Those who write literature nor-

"ltšt yn . tgzyt ."

"You will drink the 'wine' of entreaty." [RT]

(Here and in some of the following translations this writer has put the word wine in quotation marks to indicate that there is some doubt as to the proper translation of the word in these contexts; the nature of the beverage [alcoholic or not] is uncertain.)

One unusual feature of Ugaritic parallelism in contrast to the Old Testament is the consistent use of the verb lhm, "to eat," to parallel the verb šgy, "to drink" (or the verb šty, "to drink"). The Hebrew pair would normally be 'ākal and 'šātā. This last pair does exist in Ugaritic but infrequently. Note, for example, that the mythological fragment 2003 ends (line 3) with this injunction: "l . tikl wl tš[t]," which is translated, "you shall not eat nor drink" (UT, p. 3\*, Supplement).

<sup>1</sup>The reason that the Ugaritic word yn is used in this discussion instead of the English word "wine" has been alluded to earlier: yn definitely is a grape beverage, but its alcoholic content or lack of it is dependent upon the context. "Wine," on the other hand, removes any ambiguity and interprets the word as referring to an intoxicating beverage.

<sup>2</sup>In a short tablet (1019:15,16), which Gordon calls a "practice tablet" (UT, p. 268), are these words (text, UT, p. 220):

"tn ks yn wištn"

"Give (me) a cup of 'wine' so that I may drink it." [RT]



mally use familiar terminology and vocabulary which is representative of current customs.

A related indication of the prevalence of yn in normal life is the use of the word as a simile which occurs in the Baal-Anath cycle. There Anath is violently mourning Baal's death:

(Baal-Anath Cycle) 62:I:6-10

b <sup>c</sup> l . mt .	Baal is dead!
my . lim . bn dgn	Woe to the people of the son of Dagan!
my . hmlt . atr . b <sup>c</sup> l .	Woe to the persons of 'Atr- Baal!
nrd barš .	Let us go down into the earth."
'mh . trd . nrt ilm . špš .	Shapash, the luminary of the gods, descended with her,
'd . tšb <sup>c</sup> . bk	While she satisfied herself with weeping,
tšt . kyn . udm <sup>c</sup> t <sup>1</sup>	While she drank deeply of bitter tears, as if they were <u>grape juice</u> . [RT]

A normal occurrence in any language is that figures of speech are drawn from the familiar rather than from the obscure. Therefore, since weeping copiously is here compared to drinking yn, drinking yn to satisfaction would apparently not be an infrequent activity of life.

A second observation is that yn appears to be primarily a beverage used with a meal rather than by itself, and that it was an indication of proper hospitality to others when served with a meal. One other series of passages (not previously referred to) would further substantiate this assertion. The

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<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 177.

scene opens with Keret speaking to his wife:

Keret 128:IV:2-7,14-18,26-27

sm' [lmtt hry]  
tb[h] šm[n] . mrik

pth . r[h]bt . yn  
šh . šb'[m] try  
tmnym . zbyy

tšm' . mtt [h]ry  
ttbh . šmn . [m]r[i]h

tpth . rhbt . yn

'lh . trh tš'rb

'lh . tš'rb zbyh

[wt]'n . mtt . hry<sup>1</sup>  
[llh]m . lšty štkm<sup>1</sup>

"Hearken, [O Lady Hurriya]!  
Prep[are] the fattest of thy  
stall-fed ones;  
Open a jar of grape juice.  
Summon my seven[ty] peers,  
My eighty barons:"

Lady [Hu]rriya obeys.  
She prepares the fattest of  
her [stall-fed ones];  
She opens a jar of grape  
juice.  
Into her presence she causes  
his peers to come,  
Into her presence his barons  
she causes to come:

[And] Lady Hurriya [dec]lared:  
"[To ea]t, to drink have I  
summoned you:"<sup>2</sup>

The reason the claim is made that yn is primarily a beverage served at (elegant) meals is that this is the way in which the epics uniformly present yn-drinking. Also, when the epic literature is compared with the economic texts<sup>3</sup> it would appear that yn was expensive and therefore primarily a beverage for the wealthy.

Summary. The above mentioned passages have carefully

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup>ANET, p. 146 (the translation of yn was changed from *wine* to *grape juice*). One interesting point concerning the storage of yn is that the large storage jars (rhbt) were apparently sealed. This would be the logical deduction from the use of the verb pth, "to open."

<sup>3</sup>See further chapter two.

brought together the clear references to yn which occur in the Ugaritic epics. These have all been presented together with the pertinent contexts (where appropriate) so that the reader may draw his own conclusions regarding the exact nature of the grape beverage used in Ugarit. Doubtless, yn can refer to an intoxicating beverage; however, to this writer the evidence is equally clear that yn can refer also to grape juice which produces only enjoyment and not intoxication.<sup>1</sup>

Since drunkenness is only infrequently implied (and these occasions not in the contexts of a meal)--even though there is no apparent attempt in the epics to present either the deities or the heroes as unflawed, "sinless" beings<sup>2</sup>--it would appear that the beverage often used was grape juice. This assumption is supported also by the normal parallelism of eating and drinking rather than the mention of "drinking bouts." The ancients certainly knew the properties of wine as an intoxicant and it is reasonable to assume that, if the desired end<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See also the passages and discussion below regarding msk, trt, and škr, which, when examined, further substantiate this conclusion.

<sup>2</sup>Note a discussion of this aspect of pagan deities in general in Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, trans. and abridged by Moshe Greenberg (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1961), p. 39. (See in addition the treatment of this subject on pp. 57-62 of Robert P. Teachout, "The God of the Fathers" [thesis for a course in the doctoral program, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1973]).

<sup>3</sup>An American physician makes this enlightening and pertinent statement regarding drinking habits in the United States today: "Remember that alcohol is used solely for its effect (or for some degree of inebriation), *never to satisfy thirst* or

was inebriation, rather than quenching thirst, their vocabulary was quite capable of indicating it. A further indication that grape juice is meant on occasion is the use of dm 'sm as a parallel idea to yn. This relatively frequent parallel idea which is prominent in the contexts of feasts would seem more naturally to refer to "the juice of the vine" as mentioned above, rather than to a fermented brew.

In light of these evidences which go contrary to accepted dogma, it appears to this writer that any opposing voices must base their views upon one or both of two common presuppositions. The first presupposition is that Ugaritic yn and Hebrew yáyin simply always refer to "wine," a naturally fermented, intoxicating beverage. This would be in accord with the standard lexicographers and translators. The second presupposition would be that there was no way known by the ancients to keep grape juice fresh for extended periods of time, so that any grape beverage drunk after the harvest period would be a fermented one.

It is obvious therefore that the predetermined bias of the scholars would influence their treatment of the material and thus obscure any evidence to the contrary. As will be

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to cool off, since it does the opposite" (italics supplied for emphasis). That statement is made by one who advocates the moderate use of alcoholic beverages, rather than by a non-drinker (William B. Terhune, M.D., The Safe Way to Drink: How to Prevent Alcohol Problems Before They Start [New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968], p. 30). To assume that the motives of the ancients were appreciably different from those of people today would be unwarranted.

shown, neither of the two presuppositions mentioned above is necessarily legitimate. Therefore, the possibility that the Ugaritic word yn could refer to either fermented wine or unfermented grape juice, depending on the context, is a valid option.

### Southwest Semitic

The Southwest Semitic languages of Arabic and Ethiopic both contain words cognate to the Hebrew yáyin.

Arabic. Classical Arabic does not have a frequently used cognate word. However, the very rare word وَيْنٌ, meaning "black grapes," is probably related.<sup>1</sup> It is significant that Lane's classical lexicon<sup>2</sup> omits this word. On the other hand, the Old South Arabic inscriptions attest to both the spellings of wyn and yyn in the sense of "vineyard."<sup>3</sup>

Ethiopic. The Ethiopic word ወይን (wyn) is used in the sense of "vine" or "vineyard" as well as to designate "wine."<sup>4</sup> A denominative verb ኣወየን ('wyn) is also attested with the meaning "to make wine, to change into wine."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 406; van Selms, "The Etymology of *Yayin*," p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>AEL.

<sup>3</sup>KB, 3rd ed., 1967 ff., p. 391; van Selms, "The Etymology of *Yayin*," p. 76, only mentions the spelling wyn.

<sup>4</sup>LLA, cols. 928-29: "1) *vitis*, *vinea*. . . .  
2) *vinum*. . . ."

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., col. 929: ". . . *vinum efficere, in vinum convertere*. . . ."

### Concluding remarks regarding the cognates of yávin

It would appear then that the Semitic noun \*wyn (possibly related to the verb yānâ, originally meaning "to squeeze") is primarily a word dealing with the liquid produce of the grape. Although only the meaning of "intoxicating wine" is explicitly given in the lexicons, it can probably mean "fresh grape juice" as well, as a number of literary contexts from ancient Ugarit would suggest. The fact that the Akkadian word for "wine," karānu, can refer to both wine and unfermented juice ("sweet wine," "new wine")<sup>1</sup> would support this conclusion also. This information, when related to the biblical Hebrew usage (chapter 5) and especially to the Greek usage (appendix C --οἶνος clearly refers to both wine and grape juice), would make such an understanding virtually certain.

### שכר

Of all the Hebrew words for wine, the one which is most widely attested in the various languages which comprise the Semitic family is the noun šēkār, together with its related verb šakar. This triradical root occurs with similar meaning in almost every Semitic language.

### Northeast Semitic

In Akkadian it appears that the noun šikarum (written as KAS<sup>v</sup>), "beer," was in common use earlier<sup>2</sup> than the verb

<sup>1</sup>Cited previously in footnote no. 1, pp. 105-6.

<sup>2</sup>This deduction was based on the fact that Gelb lists

šakāru, meaning "to become drunk."<sup>1</sup> The noun is used frequently, particularly since beer was the favorite Mesopotamian beverage. It is found often in conjunction with bread<sup>2</sup> (Akkadian akalu or NINDA[.HI.A]<sup>3</sup>). For example, one text says, "he should not wait for food and beer [šikarim]."<sup>4</sup> Another records that ". . . when the troops and chariotry of (my) lord came, bread, beer [KAŠ.HI.A], oxen, . . . , honey, and oil were brought out (lit. came out) to my lord's troops and chariotry."<sup>5</sup> One record relates an enviable condition for at least the priestly personnel: "with regard to the temples the bread looks nice [*a-ka-lum banī*], the beer tastes good [*šikaru tāb*], the activities proceed well, (and) the income is up to schedule."<sup>6</sup> A similar text includes wine also: "the service in Eanna is in good order, the bread, wine [GEŠTIN], (and) beer [KAŠ.HI.A] are good and the temple itself is in good order."<sup>7</sup>

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only the noun in his glossary which covers the early period up to the third dynasty of Ur; Glossary of Old Akkadian, Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary No. 3, by I. J. Gelb, pp. VII and 270.

<sup>1</sup> AH, p. 1139, "betrunken werden."

<sup>2</sup> Contrast this with the Old Testament diet of food and drink, léhem with yáyin or máyim, "water." Note appendix F. Akkadian records bread and water together as well: "*a-ka-la-am u mē ul elemmi*" may be rendered "I cannot taste bread or water" (CAD, 1A:239). It even mentions food and wine together, though more rarely: "now I have sent you good wine [*karānam tābam*], drink!--also dishes from Carchemish, eat!" (ibid., ARM 5 5:6).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 238. <sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>5</sup> EA 55:11; ibid., p. 240. <sup>6</sup> WZJ 8 pl. 9:3; ibid.

<sup>7</sup> YOS 3 194:13; ibid.

The fact that beer is considered a valuable staple is shown by this statement, "his innards burn with craving for bread, his looks are emaciated with craving for meat and fine beer [KAŠ.SAG]."<sup>1</sup> In addition to beer being a favorite beverage of the people, it was also considered to be an appropriate libation for the gods.<sup>2</sup>

The verb šakāru as attested by the lexicons has the innate idea of *drunkenness*.<sup>3</sup> However, the idea found in the other Semitic languages of "to be full" cannot be discounted as impossible, for that condition (if the beverage is intoxicating) is the cause of drunkenness. Bezold lists several additional Akkadian words which are also related both to the root škr and the concept of drunkenness. These are, in his order of listing: šakru, "Trunken"; šakrānu, "Trinker, Trunkenbold"; šikāra, "Getränk; Trank . . . Trunk; Rauschtrank"; and šakkūru, "berauscht."<sup>4</sup>

#### Northwest Semitic

Within the Northwest Semitic group, both the Canaanite

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<sup>1</sup>STT 38:7; *ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup>Note the many entries demonstrating this; *ibid.*, pp. 242-43.

<sup>3</sup>Both von Soden (AH, p. 1139) and Bezold give only this nuance. Bezold defines the word as "trunken werden, sich berauschen (beim Trinken *ina šatī*)"; Babylonisch-Assyrisches Glossar, by Carl Bezold, ed. by Adel Bezold and Albrecht Götze, p. 273.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*



and the Aramaic families of languages utilize the root škr. Ugaritic has the cognate verb but no related noun; Aramaic uses both the noun and the verb.

Ugaritic. The verb škr<sup>1</sup> in Ugaritic, a cognate of the biblical verb šākar, occurs several times (twice in RŠ 24:258 in lines 4 and 16; and three times in the tale of Aqhat: 2 Aqht I:31, II:5, and II:19). Since all of these references have been translated elsewhere in this work (the sections on Ugaritic evidence dealing with yn and trt),<sup>2</sup> only a summary statement will be made here concerning its usage.

The few references in which this verb occurs indicate, just as in the Old Testament, that škr can refer to *being drunk* (note the 2 Aqht contexts). However, it also appears equally possible that it can have the more neutral biblical nuance of "to fill oneself with a beverage" or "to imbibe deeply"<sup>3</sup> (as in RŠ 24:258:4 and 16).

Since the verb is attested these five times in the Ugaritic literature, it is interesting that the cognate form

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<sup>1</sup>Note that there is another root, škr, in Ugaritic which is not a cognate word, even though it looks the same. (See the Keret text, lines 97-98 and 185-86, and compare these with UT, p. 490 and ANET, p. 143).

<sup>2</sup>Note pp. 115, 138.

<sup>3</sup>For example, Gesenius explicitly recognized this nuance over a century ago when he stated, regarding the verb šākar: "Not always of drunkenness; but sometimes *to drink to the full*. . . ." (A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament Including the Biblical Chaldee, by William Gesenius, trans. by Edward Robinson [1865], p. 1063).

for the biblical noun šēkar, "strong drink," was not included in the vocabulary of the extant published Ugaritic texts.

Aramaic. The Aramaic cognate of Hebrew šēkār, the noun šikrā,<sup>1</sup> apparently could refer to several different intoxicants. Driver claims that the word ". . . appears to have denoted various intoxicating liquors, including beer from barley and date-wine as well as mead or mixed wine. . . ."<sup>1</sup> One fifth century letter (No. 6) provides rather handsome rations for a Persian officer traveling to Egypt. Among the daily rations provided was the beverage in question:

Do you give [him] (as) provisions from my estate in your provinces every day two measures of white meal, three measures of inferior (?) meal, two measures of wine or beer<sup>2</sup> and one sheep, and for his servants, 10 men, one measure of meal daily for each, (and) hay according to (the numbering of) his horses; . . .<sup>3</sup>

The later Syriac word, /ܫܝܚܐ/, is similar in meaning, designating "strong (intoxicating) drink, date wine or mead, not from grapes, . . ."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>G. R. Driver, Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C., abridged and revised (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 60. The French lexicon of the Northwest Semitic languages more cautiously defines the noun as "espèce de boisson forte: bière?" ["some kind of strong drink: beer?"--RT]; Dictionnaire des Inscriptions Semitiques de l'Ouest, by Charles F. Jean and Jacob Hoftijzer, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup>The Aramaic phrase is: חמר או שְׂכַר הַבֹּרֶךְ הַזֶּה [י] (Driver, Aramaic Documents, p. 27).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>4</sup>Lexicon to the Syriac New Testament, by William Jennings, revised by Ulric Gantillon, p. 222. Brockelmann simply normalizes the word as "sicera," assuming that the reader will

The verb škr is attested both in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic and in Syriac in the sense of "to make drunk"<sup>1</sup> or "to be drunk"<sup>2</sup> respectively.

### Southwest Semitic

The cognate root škr is attested both in Arabic and in Ethiopic.

Arabic. In classical Arabic there are cognate words for both the Hebrew verb šākar and its noun šēkār. Apparently the basic nuance of the verb, سَكِرَ, is the idea of filling. Lane lists as his first entry, "He was, or became, intoxicated, inebriated, or drunken."<sup>3</sup> However, this was probably so listed because of the obvious relationship between this word and the Hebrew verb. The more basic idea "to fill" is evident even in Lane's ensuing discussion. He mentions the nuances of being violently angry (= full of rage), of a watering trough being full, of a dam in a river, and of a closed door.<sup>4</sup> The idea of drunkenness is not different in kind, for it too relates to

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understand this allusion to the Hebrew/Greek word (Lexicon Syriacum, by Carolo Brockelmann, 2nd. ed., p. 777).

<sup>1</sup> Franz Rosenthal, ed., An Aramaic Handbook, *Porta Linguarum Orientalium*, Neue Serie X, 4 parts (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967), 1/2:74.

<sup>2</sup> Brockelmann defines سَكِرَ as "inebriatus est"; Lexicon Syriacum, p. 777.

<sup>3</sup> AEL, p. 1390.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Even the last two nuances are related in the sense of filling a space with an obstruction.

filling; but, with a beverage which is intoxicating, such filling causes inebriation.<sup>1</sup>

Arabic also contains several related nouns, one of which is pertinent to the Hebrew word šēkār. The word سكر means "wine." Its normal usage was in reference to intoxicating beverages made either from the fruit of the vine or from the dates (fresh or dried) of the date palm.<sup>2</sup> For example, the Koran (XVI, 69) states, "And of the fruits of palm-trees, and of grapes, ye obtain an inebriating liquor [سكراً], and also good nourishment [the latter referring to dates and raisins]."<sup>3</sup>

Ethiopic. The Ethiopic language also includes a cognate verb for šākar, although, like Arabic, the initial letter is normalized as s rather than š. The verb ሰከረ is defined as " 1) to make oneself drunk, to be drunk . . . 2) drunk, surrendered to wine. . . ."<sup>4</sup> Dillmann only presents meanings

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<sup>1</sup>Note entry no. 4 (ibid., p. 1391): "اسكره It (wine, or beverage,) intoxicated . . . him; . . ." Entry no. 8 (ibid.) again prominently mentions filling: "استكر الضرع! The udder became full of milk."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Another noun, سكر, signifies "intoxication, inebriation, or drunkenness; . . ." and is used of any state which puts an obstruction between a person and his reason. It is used primarily of fermented beverages but also is used of states in which either excessive anger or the passion of love has brought such temporary derangement (ibid.).

<sup>3</sup>The Koran, translated by George Sale, The Chandos Classics.

<sup>4</sup>Translated from LLA, col. 379: " 1) se inebriare, inebriari, ebrium esse: . . . 2) ebriosum, vino deditum esse . . . ."

related to drunkenness for this verb and its related substantives and gives no evidence for a cognate word signifying the beverage itself.<sup>1</sup> However, again the primary nuance would apparently go beyond drunkenness per se to the state of being filled with an intoxicant.<sup>2</sup>

Concluding remarks regarding the cognates of šēkār

It would appear obvious that the verbal root škr is integrally related to drunkenness. Every language so utilizes it. However, an even more basic nuance of this verbal root is the concept of *being full* (of a liquid). This nuance is found independently of intoxication both in Hebrew and in Arabic and probably in Ugaritic as well. Apparently, then, since the word originally conveyed the idea of being full of a beverage, it was ideally suited to convey the concept of drunkenness, since filling up with an intoxicant would automatically result in such a condition of inebriation.

The nominal root škr occurs in Akkadian, Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic and apparently derived its meaning of *intoxicating beverage* from the verbal idea of drunkenness. As might be expected, the exact type of intoxicant designated by the root is determined primarily by the drinking habits of the respective peoples. It is for this reason that the nominal

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Note the definition "*vini plenus*" - "full of wine" for the word ן ה (ibid.).

root škr designates various intoxicating beverages: beer in Mesopotamia and Egypt (Aramaic), grape wine in Palestine, and grape or date wine in Arabia. Thus there is no reason to assume, unless clear contextual biblical evidence would support it (which it does not), that Hebrew šēkār refers to "beer" simply because Akkadian šikarum clearly does.

### טירוש

One word dealing with the liquid produce of the vine, the Hebrew word tîrôš, requires some introductory remarks prior to the examination of the cognate information. There is little apparent agreement among scholars concerning the meaning of this word, both in the Old Testament itself and in the interpretation of the same nominal root in the cognate languages.<sup>1</sup> The reason for the relative uncertainty concerning this word is that it is attested in so few of the Semitic languages and only in those in the Northwest Semitic group; therefore, it may possibly be a non-Semitic loan word.<sup>2</sup> Brown considers the word to

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<sup>1</sup>KB (p. 1027) simply renders the word as "Wein"; BDB (p. 440) defines it as "must, fresh or new wine." The disagreement concerning the rendering of the cognate words will be demonstrated in the section which follows.

<sup>2</sup>Albright makes bold assertions regarding both the origins of the word tîrôš and the proper understanding of its meaning. He states,

". . . it is now virtually certain that tîrôš, 'wine', Ugar. tîr, 'wine', is derived from the Canaanite divine name Tîršu, which appears at Hazor and Ugarit; the name has nothing to do with unfermented wine, as was formerly thought on the basis of imaginative etymologies."

He also says that he considers the word to be non-Semitic in origin; YGC, p. 186. However, his analysis does not fit with

be related to a non-Semitic family of languages: to the Hittite tuwarsa, the Greek θύσσοις, and the Latin thyrsus. Noting that hieroglyphic Hittite is not yet perfectly deciphered, he yet considers the word tuwarsa to be contextually certain enough to be translated as "vine."<sup>1</sup> He believes this Hittite word to be a mediating word both with reference to geography and to phonetics between the Greek/Latin<sup>2</sup> "staff twined with ivy and vine" and the Northwest Semitic "(new) wine."<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the possibility of relationship existing between the non-Semitic Western, Northern, and Northwestern Mediterranean vocabulary (Greek, Latin, Hittite etc.) on the one hand and the Northwest Semitic on the other, it must be clearly understood that such relationship (if it is real rather than merely apparent<sup>4</sup>) is in no way helpful to a specific understanding of the Northwest Semitic word tīrōš. This word has a relative homogeneity of usage which is quite removed from the

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the contextual usage of the word either in biblical Hebrew or in some of the cognate languages, as will be demonstrated.

<sup>1</sup>Gordon, UT, p. 499, agrees.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek word θύσσοις referred specifically to a "wand wreathed in ivy and vine-leaves with a pine cone at the top, carried by the devotees of Dionysus. . . ." (L&S, p. 812). Latin thyrsus is similarly defined as a "Bacchic wand twined with vine tendrils and ivy, and crowned with a fir cone" (The New College Latin & English Dictionary, by John C. Traupman, p. 312).

<sup>3</sup>J. Pairman Brown, "The Mediterranean Vocabulary of the Vine," Vetus Testamentum 19 (1969):168.

<sup>4</sup>Even if there is a genuine relationship, the borrowing could have been from East to West rather than the converse.

more Western idea (reflected in the Hittite, Latin, and Greek words cited above), even if both groups of languages loosely relate a nominal root t(w)rs to the grape vine. Therefore, the remaining discussion of this word will be limited to the specifically *Semitic* evidence.

While the biblical Hebrew word tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> is used frequently and consistently in relation to the fresh grape juice of the harvest,<sup>1</sup> the word has not been found in the extant (extra-biblical) Hebrew inscriptions. Furthermore, it occurs only two times in the extant Phoenician inscriptions (both in one text) and only a few times in Ugaritic. Therefore, rather than the Ugaritic and the Phoenician texts shedding light on Scripture, this word provides an example of the way in which the Old Testament can help scholars to interpret the other Semitic languages.

### Ugaritic

The Ugaritic language contains two words which are apparently cognate with reference to Hebrew tîrôš<sup>^v</sup>. The use of the words trt and mrt, however, differs significantly from the way tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> is used in the Old Testament, for these former words refer to beverages in the Ugaritic literature, while the biblical word tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> is used exclusively for the harvest commodity of grape juice rather than as a beverage per se.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Note the discussion in chapter 4 concerning the use of this word in Scripture.

<sup>2</sup>See further chapter 4 on the biblical usage of tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> as a harvest commodity.



Trt occurs five times in the Ugaritic corpus according to Whitaker's Concordance.<sup>1</sup> Two of these occurrences are in contexts of sacrifice to the gods, and it is probable that the words refer to a god, Tiršū, by name.<sup>2</sup> The other three references specifically indicate a beverage and in each instance yn is a parallel word. The three texts are these:

RS 24:258:2-4

tlhmn . ilm . wtštn .	The gods eat and drink.
tštn y[n] 'd sb' .	They drink wine until (they are) satisfied
trt 'd . škr . <sup>3</sup>	An <u>intoxicant</u> until (they are) drunk. [RT]

RS 24:258:15-18

il . ytb . bmrzhh .	El sits in his festive hall;
yšt [il . y]n' . 'd sb' .	El drinks wine until he is satisfied,
trt . 'd . škr .	An <u>intoxicant</u> until he is drunk.
il . hlk . lbth .	El walks to his house,
yštql . lḥtrh . <sup>4</sup>	He arrives at his court. [RT]

2 Aqht VI:7-8

wt'l trt	And lift up the <u>intoxicant</u> ,
[ ] . yn . 'šy lḥbš <sup>5</sup>	[Raise] the wine fit for a ruler(?). <sup>6</sup> [RT]

While it would appear in light of the above three texts that trt is uniformly an intoxicating beverage, there is not sufficient evidence to make this certain, both because of the

<sup>1</sup>CUL, pp. 621-22. <sup>2</sup>Cf. YGC, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup>The text is found in CUL, p. 621, although *his* designation is UG 5.1.

<sup>4</sup>The text is found in CUL, p. 621 and UT, p. 453.

<sup>5</sup>UT, p. 248. <sup>6</sup>"Ruler" following Driver, CML, p. 53.

paucity of references and because of the relative ambiguity of the texts. In light of the meaning of the Hebrew verb šākar, "to imbibe deeply,"<sup>1</sup> the alternate Hebrew definition of yáyin as "grape juice,"<sup>2</sup> and the uniform biblical sense of tīrōš<sup>4</sup> as an unfermented juice, the above texts could more logically have been read without any connotation of intoxication. For example, RS 24:258:16 would read:

El drinks grape juice until he is satisfied,  
The freshly pressed grape beverage until his  
thirst is quenched. [RT]

The parallel ideas of quenching thirst and satisfaction are much more congruous than are the ideas of getting drunk and satisfaction. This interpretation is especially preferred since the following line indicates El "walked" (not "staggered" or "was carried") to his house, giving no hint of inebriation on the part of the drinker.

These two translations of the same passage illustrate the well known fact that the presuppositions of the translator influence the resulting translation. Gordon would translate trt as "wine,"<sup>3</sup> but Driver would interpret it as "new wine," meaning "must."<sup>4</sup> In any case, the few references to trt provide no help in interpreting Scripture, since the respective contexts differ so greatly.

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<sup>1</sup>See chapter 4 on the biblical usage of this word.

<sup>2</sup>Note the discussion regarding this definition of yáyin in chapter 5.

<sup>3</sup>UT, p. 499. <sup>4</sup>CML, p. 153.

The use of the Ugaritic word mrt is equally ambiguous. Gordon defines it as "perhaps a wine product;"<sup>1</sup> Driver, however, on the basis of the cognate meaning of tîrôš in Hebrew, and of Aramaic mêr<sup>e</sup>tâ, and of Syriac me'rî<sup>â</sup>tâ, which mean "must" ("grape juice"), calls it "sweet wine" (that is, unfermented).<sup>2</sup>

There are two contexts in which this second word, mrt, occurs in Ugaritic; in both passages, whatever the word might have meant, mrt does at least clearly refer to a beverage.

The first text in which the word occurs twice concerns a feast which not only included excellent food and drink to tempt the palate but delightfully decorated tables full of fragrant and beautiful things to tantalize the other senses as well. The problem is that, although the text is intact, some of the key words are, at this point in lexicographical study, incapable of being understood with any certainty. The following is an attempt to make some sense out of the text, which is apparently connected to the Aqhat epic in some way.

## 124:12-25

tbh . alpm . ap šin .	He slaughtered oxen as well as sheep,
šql . trm wmri ilm .	He killed bulls and the fat- test rams;
kksp l'brm . zt . . . . .	The <i>displayed</i> olives are as <i>inviting</i> as silver to travelers,
hrs . l'brm . kš	The <i>displayed</i> dates(?) are as welcome as gold to travel- ers;
dpr . tlhn . bq'l .	The tables are made fragrant

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 493.

<sup>2</sup>CML, p. 161.

bq<sup>c</sup>l mlkm .

hn . ym . ysq . yn . tmk

mrt . yn . srnm .

yn . bld ǧll . yn . išryt

‘nq . smd lbnn .

tl mrt . yhrt il

hn . ym . wtn . tlhm . rpum

tštyn . tlt . rb<sup>c</sup> . ym .

hmš tdt . ym . tlhmn . rpum

tštyn . bt . ikl

bpr<sup>c</sup>

bšq . birt . lbnn .

with the vine blossom,  
With the vine blossom *enjoyed*  
by kings.

Behold, today the "wine"  
of tmk<sup>1</sup> is poured out,  
Fresh grape juice, the grape  
juice of srnm,

"Wine" of the country of ǧll,  
the "wine" of išryt.

The finest flour of Lebanon  
*is baked into* round loaves,

The dew has brought forth  
fresh grape juice, pro-  
duced by El *himself*.<sup>2</sup>

Behold for one day and two  
the Rephaim eat,

A third day and fourth they  
drink;

A fifth day and sixth the  
Rephaim eat,

They drink in the house of  
feasting,

Eating the firstfruits and  
Drinking of the overflow of  
the wells of Lebanon.<sup>3</sup>

[RT]

Another very short text also presents mrt as a beverage:

"hn . mrt . d . štt"<sup>4</sup> which may be translated, "Behold, the  
grape juice which you drank!" [RT].

<sup>1</sup>The words tmk, srnm, ǧll, and išryt are apparently geographic names.

<sup>2</sup>See also 1 Aght I:41-42 which shows dew as providing moisture for grapes; UT, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup>The text is found in UT, p. 192. (One insertion has been made on line 25 from Driver, CML, p. 70; Gordon has left blank the first two letters while Driver supplies bs.) The translation has been based largely upon the etymologies supplied by Driver's glossary (CML, pp. 134 ff.). Gordon's glossary (UT, p. 348 ff.) does not even attempt to translate many of the words. It must be admitted that the translation is, at best, tenuous.

<sup>4</sup>UT Supplement, p. 5\*.

The Ugaritic evidence is not really clear, then, as to the exact nature of the beverages trt and mrt, even though the verbs for drinking in the same contexts do indicate that beverages are indeed meant. Probably, until clear evidence to the contrary is available, they should be considered as two cognate synonyms signifying fresh grape juice.

### Phoenician

A Phoenician cognate word, חרש,<sup>1</sup> occurs in the Azita-wadda (personal name) or Karatepe (place of discovery) inscription. The pertinent text<sup>2</sup> reads as follows:

וכן הקרת ז בעלת שבע  
וחרש ועם (8) ז אש ישב  
בן יכן בעל אלפם ובע(9)ל  
צאן ובעל שבע וחרש

This passage is rendered somewhat differently by various translators. Rosenthal translates it:

And may this city possess plenty to eat and wine (to drink),  
and may this people that dwells in it possess oxen and  
small cattle and plenty to eat and wine (to drink)!<sup>3</sup>

Donner and Röllig render the pertinent phrase as follows:

"... Besitzerin von Sättigung und Wein, . . ." "[And may this city be] possessor of satiation and wine. . . ." <sup>4</sup> Brown, in

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<sup>1</sup>The word is defined ambiguously as either of two grape drinks which are different in kind, "Most, Wein" (H. Donner and W. Röllig, Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften, 2nd ed., 3 vols. [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971-76], 3:26).

<sup>2</sup>The text (Donner, Kanaanäische, 1:6), text 26 A III, lines 7-9, is identical to that found in text 26 C IV, lines 7-9.

<sup>3</sup>ANET, p. 500.

<sup>4</sup>Donner, Kanaanäische, 2:37.

turn, translates it: "And this city will be mistress of 'plenty' and of wine; and this people which lives in it will be master of oxen, master of sheep, master of plenty and of wine."<sup>1</sup>

The fact that all three translations above render תרש as "wine" must not prejudice the reader to automatically assume that their judgment is correct.<sup>2</sup> Since the word occurs only in this one context in Phoenician, it would be most normal to understand the word in light of the usage of its Hebrew cognate tîrôš, if the latter word occurs in the same kind of contexts. Biblical Hebrew does indeed provide assistance, since it is uniform in its usage of tîrôš as "fresh grape juice."<sup>3</sup> One passage which is especially helpful is Proverbs 3:9-10.

Honor Yahweh from your wealth,  
And from the first of all your produce;  
So your barns will be filled with plenty [sābā'],  
And your vats will overflow with fresh grape  
juice\* [tîrôš].

The use of שָׁבַע and תְּרֹשׁ in parallel construction in verse 10 sheds light on the Phoenician pairing of these same words without vowels, תרש and שרע, in the text cited above. Both contexts clearly refer to the harvest of the best in the land.<sup>4</sup> Both

<sup>1</sup>Brown, "Mediterranean Vocabulary," p. 169.

<sup>2</sup>As mentioned earlier (p. 142, footnote 1), Donner and Röllig put "must" as their first definition for this word, even though they translate it as "wine" in their commentary.

<sup>3</sup>Note the discussion in chapter 4 regarding tîrôš.

<sup>4</sup>The harvest in Israel is regularly summarized by the triplet grain, grape juice, and oil. If one of the three words is missing, then grain and grape juice are the stock vocabulary to summarize the harvest (note Ps. 4:7[8]–8[9]; Deut.

contexts obviously were intended to include the produce of the fields and of the vineyards. There is no necessity, as some would assert, to translate 𐤅𐤋𐤕 as "corn" or "grain" (instead of as "plenty") in the Phoenician inscription or in the Proverbs passage<sup>1</sup> in order to clearly refer to this commodity. The word "plenty," which would be a more normal translation, merely needs the supplied idea of the commodity to which it refers. The phrase should therefore be translated (taking 𐤅𐤋𐤕 as a verb<sup>2</sup>):

*"May this city enjoy a harvest of plentiful grain and of fresh grape juice; and may this people that lives in it possess oxen and sheep and enjoy a harvest of plentiful grain and of fresh grape juice!" [RT]*

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33:28). Several times in the Old Testament, the harvest of the flocks and herds is included with the above words to indicate the comprehensive harvestable wealth of the land (note especially Deut. 7:1-3, 12:17, 14:23). These matters will be further developed in chapter 4 of this dissertation. However, in light of this Hebrew evidence, it is obvious that Azitawadda was interested in a continuing bountiful harvest from both the flocks and the herds and the produce of the ground epitomized by grain and grape juice. While Phoenician does not utilize the Hebrew triplet, it does convey a similar idea with the pairing of šb and trš. Interestingly, in a time of close diplomatic and personal ties with Phoenicia, Solomon uses the same pair in Prov. 3:10 to indicate the comprehensive harvest blessing of God.

<sup>1</sup>Ginsberg claims that šb in Prov. 3:10 ". . . has the concrete meaning of 'corn'" (ANET, p. 500, footnote 5). Dahood translates the phrase in Azitawadda's inscription as "grain and new wine [= must]" (Mitchell Dahood, Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology [Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1963], p. 9).

<sup>2</sup>The word bā'al occurs in Hebrew as a verb along with the more frequent noun ba'al. Though not attested specifically in the sense of "to possess," the verb does have the idea of "rule" (1 Chron. 4:22) and "mastery" (Jer. 3:14), which are closely related ideas to that of possession. The Hebrew noun

The evidence from Phoenicia, then, regarding טרף needs to be corollated with Hebrew rather than the converse.

### Aramaic

The Aramaic cognate is written with a prefixed m rather than a t. The word both in Aramaic (mêr<sup>e</sup>tâ)<sup>1</sup> and in later Syriac (me'rî<sup>tâ</sup>)<sup>2</sup> refers solely to unfermented grape juice.

### Concluding remarks regarding the cognates of tîrôš

The cognate languages overall do not provide much information which would contribute to a better understanding of the Hebrew word tîrôš. From the Northwest Semitic evidence, there is no clear indication that the cognate words for Hebrew tîrôš should be translated any other way than as "(fresh) grape juice." The evidence from Aramaic, Phoenician, and biblical Hebrew would support this assertion. Ugaritic clearly uses trt and mrt in reference to beverages, but the exact nature of these beverages is unclear in context. While this Ugaritic

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ba'al certainly does have the idea of ownership and possession (Exod. 21:28, 29). The corresponding Ugaritic noun b'l also denotes the idea of ownership (UT, p. 374). An *integral* idea associated with ownership and possession is that of enjoyment of such a relationship. Therefore it is not reading in ideas foreign to the root טעל to render it "enjoy" in this inscription. The idea of "possess" or "master" does not make very good sense in English with the nouns טעל and טרש. In the translation above טעל has been changed from a noun to an adjective only for smoothness of rendering. Literally the phrase would be "plenty of grain."

<sup>1</sup>CML, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Brockelmann, Lexicon Syriacum, p. 406, defines /ܡܪܝܬܐ/ as "mustum."



evidence would lend support to the possibility that Hebrew tîrôš could be a beverage, it does not demand that this nuance appear in Hebrew. For Old Testament studies, the *biblical* context is the one which is ultimately determinative. It is interesting that the Phoenician cognate in its sole usage fits very well with the uniform Hebrew usage of tîrôš as a harvest commodity.

### סב

The Hebrew root sb<sup>1</sup> is attested in all three language groups.

#### Northeast Semitic

The Akkadian verb sabû signifies "to prepare beer."<sup>1</sup> Von Soden, noting the etymological relationship between this Akkadian word and Hebrew sôbe<sup>2</sup>, considers the Akkadian evidence to so closely relate to beer that he even interprets the biblical Hebrew word as "wheat beer."<sup>2</sup> A related noun, sābû(m), designates either the producer or the seller of beer.<sup>3</sup>

#### Northwest Semitic

In addition to the Hebrew verb (sābā<sup>3</sup>) and noun (sôbe<sup>3</sup>) (which will be discussed later in chapter 4), signifying "to

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<sup>1</sup>AH, p. 1000. BDB, p. 684, gives "sesame-wine" as the definition for sabû.

<sup>2</sup>AH, p. 1000, has "Weizenbier." KB, p. 646, agrees.

<sup>3</sup>AH, p. 1000, has "Bierbrauer, Schankwirt."

drink deeply" and "drink" respectively, there is a Judaeo-Aramaic verb with the same nuance.<sup>1</sup>

### Southwest Semitic

The Arabic verb سَبَّ when referring to the act of buying is only used in reference to wine. It could thus be translated "He bought wine."<sup>2</sup> The noun سَبَّ signifies "wine."<sup>3</sup> A related noun, سَبَّاء, refers to a "vintner."<sup>4</sup>

### Concluding remarks regarding the cognates of sb'

The information from the cognate languages provides little understanding in relation to biblical Hebrew with regard to the root sb'. The Northeast Semitic evidence (both verbal and nominal) pertains primarily to *beer*, whereas the Southwest Semitic words in turn refer to *wine*. Hebrew (and Aramaic), on the other hand, has no innate idea of fermentation associated with its use of the root sb', either in the verb or in the noun.

### חמר

The root hmr is attested in both Northwest and Southwest Semitic.

### Northwest Semitic

Ugaritic.--Hmr is a word found only a few times in Ugaritic. It appears that it fits in with the biblical pattern

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<sup>1</sup>KB, p. 646. <sup>2</sup>AEL, 1:1286. <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 1287. <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

of its Hebrew cognate hémer in referring to a grape beverage, but the occurrences are too infrequent and the passages too obscure to be clearly indicative of its exact nuances.

In 1081:22 hmrm appears in a text dealing with a registry for vineyards (surrounded by numbers, leaving its meaning somewhat unclear).

Another text (52:6) apparently uses hmr as an adjective describing yn:

lhm . blhm ay  
wšty . bhmr yn ay<sup>1</sup>

Ho! feed on the food;  
And ho! drink of the foaming  
"wine."<sup>2</sup>

The alcoholic content of this beverage is mainly subject to presupposition,<sup>3</sup> for, as has been noted, the few references are inconclusive. The "foam" could come from fermentation, but it is not necessarily absent in mere grape juice. One additional reference exists in Ugaritic which seems to imply that hmr by itself could be used as a noun which referred to a specific beverage, but whether fermented or not is unclear.

nt I:8-11, 15-17

ndd y'šr . wyšqynh  
ytn . ks . bdh  
krpnm . bklat . ydh  
alp kd . yqh . bhmr

He went to pour and give him  
a drink,  
He put the cup into his hand,  
A flagon into both his hands  
He took a thousand pitchers  
of "wine,"

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>CML, p. 121. (Poetic division is employed and quotation marks added.)

<sup>3</sup>See further chapter 4 on the biblical usage of hémer.

rbt . ymsk . bmskh<sup>1</sup>

(In) ten thousand he mixed his  
mixture. [RT]

Aramaic. The noun hmr is widely attested in the Aramaic dialects, for it is the primary word in this language group denoting "wine." Aramaic employs this word in a way analogous to the Hebrew usage of yáyin. For example, Rosenthal indicates that the noun hmr is attested: (a) in the late classical Aramaic from Achaemenid times;<sup>2</sup> (b) in Palmyrene;<sup>3</sup> (c) in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic;<sup>4</sup> (d) in Syriac;<sup>5</sup> (e) and in Babylonian Talmudic.<sup>6</sup> All of these are in addition to the biblical usage in the Aramaic sections of Daniel and Ezra.<sup>7</sup>

In a fifth century (B.C.) Aramaic letter (during the Persian domination of the Near East) an officer who had appropriated wine (𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏) wrongfully, along with other commodities, is instructed to restore what he had taken:

Also he has sent a complaint about thee, saying:  
"Nehtihūr has taken and appropriated the wine which is in Papremis and the crop from the land, all (of it)."

Now restore the wine (and) the crop and anything else that thou hast taken, all (of it), to Maspat, . . .<sup>8</sup>

An important papyrus document which records a fifth century B.C. petition to the governor of Judea from Elephantine

<sup>1</sup>UT, p. 253.    <sup>2</sup>Rosenthal, Aramaic Handbook, 1/2:10.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 45.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 2/2:38; Brockelmann concurs, rendering ܝܝܢ<sup>\*</sup> as "vinum"; (Lexicon Syriacum, Brockelmann, p. 241).

<sup>6</sup>Rosenthal, Aramaic Handbook, 2/2:62.    <sup>7</sup>Ibid., 1/2:25.

<sup>8</sup>Letter XII, 5-7; Driver, Aramaic Documents, p. 36.

in Egypt describes a time of mourning in these words:

Also since the month of Tammuz in the 14th year of Darius the king till this day we wear sack-cloth and fast. Our wives are made widow-like, we do not anoint ourselves with oil and we drink no wine [חמר].<sup>1</sup>

Another important Aramaic papyrus (composed of eleven fragmentary sheets) from the fifth century is the story and proverbs of Ahiqar. Cowley renders line 79 of this text thus: "What is stronger than wine foaming in the *press*?"<sup>2</sup> This text unfortunately cannot be rendered with certainty because one key letter is missing. However, it is apparent that there is some misunderstanding when Cowley implies that the proper interpretation of the phrase is the following: "The proverb must then have been '(there are various strong things but) what is stronger than wine foaming in the press?' Alluding to the intoxicating effect of new wine."<sup>3</sup> Cowley has made an assump-

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<sup>1</sup>Papyrus #30, lines 19-21; A. Cowley, ed., Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C., with translation and notes (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 114. Papyrus #31 is a copy with the same words (ibid., pp. 119, 121).

A proverb (Ahiqar, lines 188-89) also shows the importance of wine in the daily life: "Hunger sweetens that which is bitter and thirst . . . Let him that is vexed be satisfied with bread, and *the soul of the poor* be sated with wine [חמר]"; (ibid., p. 225). Papyrus #72 is a fragment of papyri with writing on both sides detailing the wine accounts of a private household, further documenting the common use of this beverage. It mentions the word חמר several times and alludes to it even more often (ibid., pp. 182-83).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 222. The Aramaic text has two letters missing which he supplied (p. 214):

"[מ]ה[ה] חסין חו מן חמר וער ב[ג]חמא."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 234. Ginsberg (ANET, p. 428) renders the same phrase quite differently: "[Wh]at is stronger than a braying ass? The l[o]ad."

tion which is unwarranted from the evidence of wine making. Nevertheless, the close proximity of the noun hmr with the word for *vat* lends support to the idea that hmr can refer to grape juice as well as to wine, just as the biblical Aramaic would more clearly indicate. The same implication can be gained from line 209 of Ahiqar's words. Cowley translates the fragmented text as, "He who treads out the wine is he who should taste it, and he who . . . he should guard it."<sup>1</sup> Because of the lacunae, this rendering is not totally certain, but it does accord with the extant textual evidence.

In summation, the word hmr is the normal Aramaic word for clearly denoting a fermented grape beverage, "wine." It probably can also refer to the juice prior to fermentation.

#### Southwest Semitic

The cognate Arabic verb خَمَرَ denotes primarily "to cover" or "to conceal"; secondarily it can convey the idea of fermenting beverages or of leavening dough by the nuance "to change."<sup>2</sup>

The cognate noun خَمْرٌ has a relatively wide latitude of meaning. It primarily has reference to wine made from grapes but may also refer to any wine made from any kind of expressed juice (but not to beer).<sup>3</sup> It can also denote fresh juice.

<sup>1</sup>Cowley, Aramaic Papyri, p. 226. The Aramaic text (p. 219) is this:

" . . . חמרא הוּ זי יטעמנהי ומ . . . הוּ י[נ] טרונהי."

<sup>2</sup>AEL, 1:808.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Lane remarks that this noun can be ". . . applied to expressed juice from which خمر [properly so called] is made [i.e. to must, or unfermented نَبِيذ]."<sup>1</sup>

Concluding remarks regarding the cognates of hēmer

The etymological information for the root hmr is not significantly helpful. The verbal idea in Hebrew (perhaps denominative) seems to be primarily "to foam";<sup>2</sup> in Arabic it seems to be "to cover," with a secondary nuance of "to change." The relationship of the cognate languages in their usage of the noun is more unified, since in Ugaritic, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic the word refers to a grape beverage. In biblical and secular Aramaic, as well as in Arabic, the cognate noun clearly denotes "wine." Furthermore, the noun can refer also to unfermented juice in Hebrew,<sup>3</sup> in Arabic, in biblical Aramaic, and probably in secular Aramaic. The Ugaritic evidence is ambiguous: hmr could be interpreted either as "juice" or as "fermented wine."


ssy


The rare Hebrew root 'ss, which encompasses both a verb and a noun, is apparently related to a Syriac verb and an Arabic verb. However, very little help is provided from these sources toward an understanding of the Hebrew words in question.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. (The brackets are innate to the quotation.)

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 330.

<sup>3</sup>Note chapter 4, pp. 163-64.

The probable Syriac cognate, II , is both associated with and apparently derived from the idea of walking with purpose; it denotes primarily the ideas of exploration and thorough searching.<sup>1</sup>

Probably the Arabic verb  is a cognate word also. It is used in the sense of "to patrol"; "He went round about, patrolled, or went the rounds by night."<sup>2</sup>

Hebrew,<sup>3</sup> Syriac, and Arabic all possess a verbal root 'ss with the related idea of purposeful walking. Hebrew alone<sup>4</sup> has a noun signifying "pressed out juice."<sup>5</sup>

### Summary and Conclusions

Since this chapter has included much information on several different words, it is important to summarize the conclusions reached thus far from an etymological study of the various terms dealing with grape beverages in Hebrew. The following chart is given in order to assist the reader in gaining a better overview of the material and thus to aid him in obtaining a better comprehension of this data and its significance.

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<sup>1</sup>Brockelmann, Lexicon Syriacum, p. 536, defines the word as "exploravit, perscrutatus est."

<sup>2</sup>AEL, 1:2039.

<sup>3</sup>BDB, p. 779.

<sup>4</sup>KB, p. 723, lists a Judaeo-Aramaic noun כס'ס, but this is not listed in any lexicon consulted by this writer.

<sup>5</sup>BDB, p. 779. The Hebrew verb is used one time figuratively of treading down the wicked (Mal. 3:21 [4:3]).



## CHART OF ETYMOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

<u>Noun Root</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Verbal Root</u>	<u>OT evidence</u>	<u>Cognate Support</u>
<u>yn</u>	"wine" "grape juice"	[*wny "to (op)press"]	Heb <sup>1</sup> Heb	Ugar <sup>2</sup> Eth Grk <sup>3</sup> Lat <sup>3</sup> Ugar <sup>2</sup> Grk <sup>3</sup> Lat <sup>3</sup>
<u>skr</u>	"grape wine" <sup>4</sup> "date wine" <sup>4</sup> "beer" <sup>4</sup> "grape juice"	[skr "to drink deeply"; "to fill or be full"]	Heb  Heb	Arabic Arabic Aramaic Akkadian Aramaic
<u>urs</u>	"harvest grape juice" "grape beverage" <sup>5</sup>	[?]	Heb	Phoenician Aramaic Ugaritic
<u>sb</u>	"wine" "grape juice" ["beer"] <sup>6</sup>	[sb "to drink deeply"]	Heb Heb	Arabic  [Akkadian]
<u>hmr</u>	"grape juice" "wine"	[hmr "to foam" (Heb); "to cover/change" (Arab)]	Heb BA BA	Ugar(?) <sup>7</sup> Aram(?) Arabic Ugar(?) <sup>7</sup> Aram Arab
<u>'ss</u>	"grape juice"	['ss "to tread"]	Heb	

<sup>1</sup>The data in the Hebrew column is from chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>2</sup>Yn was the most frequently used word for the grape beverages whether juice or wine.

<sup>3</sup>Both οἶνος and vinum, the Greek and Latin non-Semitic cognates, can clearly refer to juice or to wine; note appendix C.

<sup>4</sup>The *type* of intoxicant depends on the drinking habits of the people rather than upon the meaning of the noun.

<sup>5</sup>Whether trt and mrt are intoxicating is uncertain.

<sup>6</sup>The Akkadian verbal evidence indicates that the root is associated with beer but there is no Akkadian noun from this root for beer per se.

<sup>7</sup>Whether the Ugaritic cognate refers to a fresh or a fermented grape beverage is unclear.

From the etymological study of these words for grape beverages, some important facts become evident:

First, the precision with which these words are used is different in kind from what might be assumed. For example, the cognate nouns for šēkār indicate that, while normally an intoxicating beverage is in view, yet the specific fermented beverage is determined by the drinking habits of the respective peoples. Also the related verb meaning "to drink deeply" is neutral enough to encompass a nominal use with any beverage which is enjoyed, fermented or not.

Second, not only in regard to one word but actually with regard to the majority of words studied, the same word can encompass both the nuances of "grape juice" and "grape wine." This is so with the words h<sup>a</sup>mar, sōbe', yáyin, and šēkār. Since two of the four<sup>1</sup> words (h<sup>a</sup>mar and yáyin) have explicit cognate support for this conclusion from languages other than Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic, it is reasonable to assume that this writer is not outside scholarly bounds if he concludes that Scripture also uses these words with reference to both fermented and unfermented grape drinks.<sup>2</sup> However, it should be

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<sup>1</sup>If this evidence can be found for two of the four, it sufficiently establishes the principle that other words in a given language, such as Hebrew, might also share this distinction, given that the verbal roots did not dictate otherwise. It should be noted that all of the verbal roots for these four nouns do support the possibility that their cognate nouns can refer to either fermented or unfermented beverages.

<sup>2</sup>This is true even if lexicons for specific languages like Hebrew (BDB etc.) have overlooked this truth (perhaps due

noted that such a conclusion for these words was also necessitated by the biblical contexts themselves (as will be shown) rather than merely by the etymological study per se which does substantiate it.

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to a less extensive study).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE USAGE OF THE WORDS FOR "WINE" IN SCRIPTURE:

#### THE LESS FREQUENT WORDS

##### Introduction

Having surveyed in chapter 2 the general place of wine in the ancient world and then in chapter 3 the etymological relationships of the Hebrew words for grape beverages, it is now most appropriate to turn to the Scriptures themselves. While these other chapters were necessary for background information peripheral to the study, the heart of the dissertation begins here. Scripture can often be better understood in light of the available information and evidence regarding its surrounding cultures, but it must be clearly pointed out that ultimately Scripture must be pre-eminently comprehended as a self-inclusive whole which is authoritative. Hence the most vital aspect of any study of biblical words is obviously the study of the manner in which those words are used in Scripture. Chapters 4 and 5 will now present such a study. The order of presentation of the biblical data regarding these words will be reversed from that in the last chapter. Therefore, chapter 4 will begin with the least frequently used words and progress to the more frequently used ones. Finally, chapter 5 will consist only of the biblical evidence regarding the one word yáyin,

since that word is used so extensively in the Old Testament and is therefore of central importance in ascertaining the place of the grape beverage in the Old Testament. Each occurrence of every relevant word for grape beverages was examined carefully in the research for this study. The more important verses and especially the problem passages are dealt with in some detail in these two chapters.

### וּדַם

#### The verb 'āsas

The verb 'āsas occurs only once in the Old Testament. However, from its cognate relationships as well as from the biblical context of Malachi 4:3 (3:21) it appears that a definition of "treading down"<sup>1</sup> is accurate: "'And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,' says Yahweh of Hosts." Although the imagery of the grape press is not directly used in this sole occurrence of the verb, yet there is an obvious parallel idea between this verb and the normal verb used for treading grapes, dārak.

#### The noun 'āsîs

Whereas the verb form 'āsas was limited to one occurrence, the related noun 'āsîs occurs more frequently. It is found five times, all of these except one being in the earlier

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 779.

prophetic writings of Joel (two times), Amos, and Isaiah. The word is a noun which denotes "freshly pressed out juice," a conclusion supported by the lexicons.<sup>1</sup>

In Song of Solomon 8:2 the last line of the verse reads, in Hebrew: "ʾašq<sup>e</sup> k̄a miyyáyin hārēqah mēʿ<sup>a</sup>sīs rimmōnī." The New American Standard Bible translation renders this: "I would give you spiced juice\* to drink from the juice of my pomegranates." Although this is certainly a possible option, it does seem that there is a poetic parallelism in the Hebrew text which is not evident in the above translation. Apparently miyyáyin hārēqah is parallel to mēʿ<sup>a</sup>sīs rimmōnī.<sup>2</sup> Even so, both phrases could still refer to the same beverage, grape and pomegranate juices mixed together. A suggested translation then would be: "I would give you some mixed grape juice<sup>3</sup> to drink,

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<sup>1</sup>The lexical entry in BDB (ibid.) simply reads "sweet wine," which he defines as "pressed out juice." Note also KB, p. 723, where the only definition given is a very explicit one: "freshly pressed out, sweet, not yet fermented juice of the grapes." This lexicon apparently considers γλεῦκος in Acts 2:13 to be a translation of ʿāsīs.

<sup>2</sup>This would be the normal way to translate these, since both yáyin and ʿāsīs are prefixed by the preposition min. Both times the min may be taken as partitive (HS, p. 56).

<sup>3</sup>The word rēqah may mean "spiced" here as BDB suggests (p. 955). However, since the basic connotation of the cognate verb rāqah is apparently "to mix," it is just as possible and more preferable to take this form (occurring only here) as "mixed" instead. It should be kept in mind that an exact synonym méseḱ is also formed identically in the segholate pattern. Furthermore, the idea of mixing yáyin (verb māsak) can be used both of mixing an intoxicating beverage (Isa. 5:22) and of mixing grape juice (Prov. 9:2, 5). Therefore, this "mixed grape juice" is in keeping with the context, even though it may be in English less poetically pleasing to the ear than "spiced wine."

/ Even some mixed with the juice of my pomegranates" [RT].

Such a rendering is fully in accord with a context of love and the enjoyment of refreshing beverages.

As has been noted above, ‘āsîs is always used biblically with reference to freshly pressed juice. Although this is true, it is not immediately apparent. For example, Isaiah 49:26, as it is normally translated, would imply that the beverage is intoxicating: "And I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, / And they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine; . . ." A more legitimate translation, taking into account the meaning of the noun, would be, ". . . And they shall drink copiously<sup>1</sup> of their own blood as if it were fresh juice; . . ." [RT].

In Joel 1:5 and 3:18 (4:18) are two references to ‘āsîs. The first passage deals with the severe judgment of God because of sin and the second extols the blessing in store for Israel in the latter days. While at first glance it may appear that Joel 1:5 uses ‘āsîs in reference to an intoxicating beverage, this passage can be readily harmonized with the normal meaning of the word as (freshly) pressed juice. After cit-

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<sup>1</sup>For a justification of this rendering of the verb šākar refer to the section which deals with this verb, pp. 209 - 219 below. It is interesting to note that lexicons can be self-conflicting in the definitions which they give. KB, which asserted unequivocally that ‘āsîs does not mean a fermented beverage (p. 723) uniformly translates the Qal stem of šākar as "be, [or] become drunk" and specifically translates this verse "be drunken with blood" (p. 971). A comparison of pages 779 and 1016 of BDB indicates that this lexicon is also inconsistent (although not as explicitly for either verse).

ing the devastation caused by a locust plague, Joel pens the words:

Awake, drunkards, and weep;  
And wail, all you wine drinkers,  
On account of the freshly pressed  
out grape juice\*  
That is cut off from your mouth.

It is true that one might expect the text to refer to the fact that intoxicants were unavailable rather than that grape juice has been taken away.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is also an obvious truth that wine is produced from juice by fermentation. Therefore, if even the juice is unavailable,<sup>2</sup> then the wine will be even more so. This interpretation is confirmed by the statement that the vines themselves have been destroyed (Joel 1:7, 12); it is for this reason that: ". . .the *fresh* grape juice [*tîrôš*] dries up. . . ." (verse 10 [RT]).

In the last few verses of Joel's prophecy, God's message is one of blessing upon a repentant people. In contrast to the previous removal of *'āsîs* (1:5) in judgment, now God promises an abundance of good things. Symbolizing the best of God's ample provision, Yahweh says in 3:18 (4:18):

And it will come about in that day  
That the mountains will drip with freshly  
pressed out grape juice,\*

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<sup>1</sup>It is, of course, possible to consider *'āsîs* as the juice of fruit other than grapes. However, here the recurring emphasis (note verses 7, 9-13) is upon the vine and its product.

<sup>2</sup>The juice (not the grapes) is that to which the reference is made here because the vine was primarily grown for its beverages rather than for the grapes themselves.



And the hills will flow with milk,  
 And all the brooks of Judah will flow  
 with water;  
 And a spring will go out from the house of  
 Yahweh,  
 To water the valley of Shittim.<sup>1</sup>

Amos 9:13 has a similar message of eschatological comfort:

"Behold, days are coming," declares Yahweh,  
 When the plowman will overtake the reaper  
 And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;  
 When the mountains will drip freshly pressed  
out grape juice,\*  
 And all the hills will be dissolved."

In summary, it is quite apparent that there is no need to conclude that this noun in its biblical usage refers to any intoxicating beverage whatever. Instead it is uniformly used of fresh juice. Insofar as there is specific Old Testament attestation, the juice could be from the grape or from the pomegranate.

### חמר

The infrequently used verb hāmar apparently means primarily "to foam" or "to ferment."<sup>2</sup> Whereas the word is usually used in unrelated contexts, on one occasion this verb is used in association with the noun yáyin, "the wine foams" (Psalm 75:8[9]).

For a cup is in the hand of Yahweh, and the wine foams;  
 It is well mixed, and He pours out of this;  
 Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink  
 down its dregs.

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<sup>1</sup>The NASB has "sweet wine" in the text but the above much preferable translation is the marginal, "literal" reading.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 331.

In the context this statement is figuratively used to convey the imminent judgment of God. Related to this verb are two nouns for grape beverages. The Hebrew noun is hémer and the Aramaic one is h<sup>a</sup>mar. The etymological study in the previous chapter regarding the nominal root hmr indicated that the word could refer either to fresh juice or to fermented wine. That evidence from secular data accords well with the biblical usage of the above words.

The word hémer is utilized in only two contexts in the Old Testament:

"Yahweh alone guided him [His people Israel],  
And there was no foreign god with him.  
He made him ride on the high places of the  
earth,  
And he ate the produce of the field;  
And he made him suck honey from the rock,  
And oil from the flinty rock,  
Curds of cows, and milk of the flock,  
With fat of lambs,  
And rams, the breed of Bashan, and goats,  
With the finest of the wheat--  
And of the blood of grapes you drank grape  
juice.\*" [Deut. 32:12-14]

In that day,  
"A vineyard of grape juice,\*<sup>1</sup> sing of it!  
I Yahweh am its keeper;  
I water it every moment.  
Lest any one damage it,  
I guard it night and day."  
.....  
In the days to come Jacob will take root,  
Israel will blossom and sprout;  
And they will fill the whole world with fruit.  
[Isa. 27:2-3, 6]

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<sup>1</sup>This construction is similar in intent to that of gépen hayyáyin in Num. 6:4. The purpose of raising the vine or of planting the vineyard is indicated in the construct relationship.

Both of these contexts extol the goodness of God and His provision. The passage quoted above from Deuteronomy 32 clearly indicates that God gave to Israel the *best* of His resources. This best includes hémer, an exact synonym for yáyin in the specific sense of "grape juice."<sup>1</sup> The dam-ʿēnāb, "blood of grapes," is a picturesque synonym for tîrôš which is the fresh juice of the grape, whether still in the cluster or expressed by treading in the grape press.<sup>2</sup>

In the context of Isaiah 27, Yahweh returns to the extended metaphor which He had used previously in Isaiah chapter five. In the earlier chapter, despite the best possible provision for His people, God's "vineyard" (Israel) had become so worthless that it merited the destruction of God. However, because of God's unbreakable promise to Abraham (Gen. 13:15-16; Isa. 41:8), in the millennial period yet future ("in that day") God will rebuild His vineyard and guarantee its fruitfulness as explained in Isaiah chapter twenty-seven.

Perhaps one matter ought to be clarified here regarding the etymological relationship between the verb hāmar, "to foam" or "to ferment," and the derived noun hémer, "grape juice." While it might initially appear that the meaning of the verb would indicate that hémer should be interpreted as a fermented beverage, such is not the case. Any concept of foaming in the

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<sup>1</sup>For a full discussion of yáyin, see chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup>Note the relevant discussion under tîrôš in this chapter below, pp. 196 ff.

verb can relate very well to the idea of fresh juice foaming in the juice vat immediately after being expressed. This should be especially obvious when it is noted that Psalm 46:3(4) uses the verb hāmar to refer to foaming water: ". . . Though its [the earth's] waters roar and foam [yehm<sup>e</sup>ra], . . ."

The related Aramaic word h<sup>a</sup>mar does not consistently refer to the same beverage as does hēmer. Just as the Aramaic word h<sup>a</sup>mar is used both in reference to intoxicants and to fresh juice in contemporary secular texts, so it is not unexpected that the biblical Aramaic usage follows suit. For example, in Daniel 5:1, 2, 4, and 23 the word rather clearly should be translated as "wine." In this context Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, held a great feast for his nobles during which they drank h<sup>a</sup>mar. The king and his nobles aroused the wrath of God by using the temple vessels captured in Jerusalem to drink wine while praising their pagan deities. As a result of this foolish act, God gave the kingdom that night into the power of the Medes and Persians.

Although the Aramaic h<sup>a</sup>mar can refer to wine as an intoxicant, it can also denote grape juice as well. Twice the word is so used in the book of Ezra:

"And whatever is needed, both young bulls, rams, and lambs for a burnt offering to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, grape juice,\* and anointing oil, as the priests in Jerusalem request, *it* is to be given to them daily without fail, that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons."  
[Ezra 6:9-10]

"And I, even I King Artaxerxes issue a decree to all the

treasurers . . . beyond the River, that whatever Ezra . . . , may require of you, it shall be done diligently, even up to 100 talents of silver, 100 kors of wheat, 100 baths of grape juice,\* 100 baths of oil, and salt as needed. Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal . . . , lest there be wrath against the kingdom of the king and his sons." [Ezra 7:21-23]

Since King Artaxerxes was desirous of pleasing the God of Israel,<sup>1</sup> and since the required libation was grape juice (note the discussion in chapter 5), it is obvious that the word h<sup>a</sup>mar here does not refer to wine. Since Aramaic was the lingua franca of the ancient Near East during this period, it is to be expected that in the days of Daniel and Ezra the Aramaic synonym for Hebrew yáyin would be used in these contexts.<sup>2</sup> H<sup>a</sup>mar then is an exact synonym for yáyin in that it can designate either a fresh juice or a fermented wine.<sup>3</sup>

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Because of the dual facts that the Hebrew verb māsak is usually used with drinks and that two related rare nouns refer to beverages which are pertinent to this overall discussion, these words will be dealt with briefly at this point.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Even the salt mentioned by the king is prescribed in the law as part of the required offering. Note especially Lev. 2:13.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel 5 is in the middle of the Aramaic portion of the book; the quoted verses in Ezra also appear within the Aramaic portion of this small book.

<sup>3</sup>See chapter 5 concerning the biblical use of yáyin.

<sup>4</sup>Because this root refers to a drink by usage rather than by innate etymological meaning, it was not discussed in chapter 3. It is possible, but still mere conjecture at best,

The verb māsak is found only five times in the Old Testament. In all of the contexts in which it occurs it signifies a mixing of a beverage, whether real or figurative. Such mixing of drinks can apparently enhance or detract from the beverage so treated.

Of the five times māsak is used, two of the contexts are very negative in perspective:

Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine,  
And valiant men in mixing strong drink. . . .  
[Isa. 5:22]

Yahweh has mixed within her [Egypt] a spirit  
of distortion;  
They have led Egypt astray in all that it does,  
As a drunken man staggers in his vomit.  
[Isa. 19:14]

The first context above clearly indicates an intoxicating beverage. Exactly what is mingled with the wine is not stated;

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that the word is Indo-European rather than Semitic in origin. Brown argues that the apparent interchange in Hebrew between the roots msk and mzg indicates a borrowing of the word. He relates both Hebrew words to Greek μίσγω, μίσγνυμι and Latin misceo. (J. Pairman Brown, "The Mediterranean Vocabulary of the Vine," Vetus Testamentum 19 (1969):153.

The mixture of wines is documented several times in the Ugaritic texts. However, there is little in the contexts to specify the ingredients that were mixed. Whether water was mixed with wine, whether spices were mixed, or whether it was merely stirred to avoid sedimentation in the bottom of the container is not indicated.

In the text of ʿnt 1:17 the commodity that is mixed refers to the beverage designated hmr, "wine," with no additive mentioned. In I Aqhat 224 (ANET, p. 155) the mixture refers apparently to yn, "wine" (note lines 215 and 219): the command "Take the wine" (yn, in line 215) is fulfilled by giving him a "mixture" (mskm, line 224). Again, no additive is specified. Another passage (67:1:21) reverses the order, with a mixture mentioned first, "the cup is mixed" (ks . ymsk [CML, p. 105]). This is followed by drinking "wine" (yn) in line 25.

however, it is obvious that such mixing does not dilute the innate harmful quality of the beverage. It may be surmised that the elements which were mixed in were spices which would vary the taste of the wine. In the second context which has been quoted above there is an apparent reference to the same phenomenon in a figure of speech. The effect of God's judgment is to make Egypt stagger like a drunkard because Yahweh has glutted her with the mixed "wine" of a spirit of distortion.

A third passage uses the word negatively also (but differently). In a context of great sorrow and mourning (sackcloth [assumed], ashes, and weeping), the psalmist complains:

My enemies have reproached me all day long; . . .  
 For I have eaten ashes like bread,  
 And mingled my drink [šiqquway] with weeping,  
 Because of . . . Your wrath; . . .  
 [Ps. 102:8(9)a-10(11)a]

By this vivid terminology the psalmist has conveyed clearly his unhappiness in having to substitute ashes and weeping for his normal fare during this time of spiritual crisis.

The other two places in the Old Testament where māsak is used portray the opposite connotation. Instead of mixed drinks suggesting a problem, the idea portrayed is, contrariwise, that the mixing of yáyin is antidotal in intent. In Proverbs 9, Wisdom is personified as a woman who builds a house, prepares a great banquet, and then summons those classified as "simple" or "naive" to come and partake and so learn wisdom:

Wisdom has built her *own* house,  
 She has hewn out her seven *supporting* pillars;  
 She has prepared her meat *dish*,  
 She has mixed her grape juice [*yáyin*<sup>1</sup>],  
 She has also arranged her table *attractively*;  
 She has sent *abroad* her maidens,  
 She has *had* proclaimed from the highest point  
 of the city:

"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here;"  
 To him who lacks a *discerning* will, she cries:  
 "Come, dine on my *prepared* feast,  
 And drink of the grape juice *which I have mixed*;  
 Forsake simplicity and live,  
 Yea, proceed in the way of understanding."  
 [Prov. 9:1-6; RT]

In the above passage the serving of a mixed drink is an obvious remedy for the naivete of the simple. Serving food and drink is a metaphor which clearly conveys the idea of the spiritual nourishment so needed in order for the simple person to recognize his folly and to learn discernment. In light of this it would appear that the mixed drink referred to would be a pleasing combination of juices (perhaps a mixture of grape and pomegranate, for example). Two other possibilities present themselves as well. This mixed beverage could simply refer to stirring grape juice in order that any nutritional dregs might not remain settled on the bottom of the container. Another possibility is that the mixed drink is comprised of a juice concentrate to which water is added. However, there are two additional alternatives which are effectively ruled out within the Old Testament biblical context. The first impossible conclusion would be that wine rather than juice is in view here. In

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<sup>1</sup>The reader is referred to chapter 5, pp. 270 ff., for the justification for this translation.



light of the argument of Proverbs, this view is totally untenable.<sup>1</sup> The second possibility which must be ruled out is that the word yáyin here in Proverbs 9:2 and 5 refers to intoxicating wine but that the specified mixing of the drink applies to a mixture of water with the wine which would thus eliminate the harmful effects of wine by dilution.<sup>2</sup>

This latter viewpoint has been capably presented by Robert Stein in a recent article in Christianity Today. In the article he attempted to solve the apparent biblical paradox of the position of wine in Scripture by stating that the answer lies in the Graeco-Roman habit of diluting wine with water. By this method the ancients in pre-New Testament times, including the Jews, would take a beverage (wine) which would normally induce drunkenness and dilute it to the point where satiety would be reached prior to any possibility of drunkenness.<sup>3</sup>

While initially it might appear that this presents an adequate solution, there are at least two problems with this

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<sup>1</sup>Note chapter 5, pp. 271 ff., for the development of this point.

<sup>2</sup>Cohen, in reference to a rabbinic dialogue over Prov. 9:2, explains the artificial rabbinic distinction between the roots msk and mzg thus: "In the language of the Rabbis *mazag* has the signification to mix wine with water; but *masak*, while having that meaning in Biblical Hebrew, means in Rabbinic Hebrew to mix strong wine with weaker wine." Cited in Brown, "Mediterranean Vocabulary," p. 154 from Aboda Zara 58b: L. Goldschmidt, Der Babylonisch Talmud, vii.977; tr. A. Cohen, p. 291. As will be shown, Cohen is wrong in assuming that biblical Hebrew uses any word to denote wine mixed with water.

<sup>3</sup>Robert H. Stein, "Wine-Drinking in New Testament Times," Christianity Today 19:19 (June 20, 1975):9-11.

viewpoint as far as the Old Testament is concerned.<sup>1</sup> The first is that all of the evidence which Stein offers is both extra-biblical and very late (after Old Testament times); it is also based primarily upon evidence from the Graeco-Roman world rather than upon evidence from the earlier literary and cultural milieu within which the Old Testament stands.

The second problem is that Scripture refers both with approval and with condemnation to the mixing of yáyin. This is not surprising, since yáyin can refer either to fresh juice or to fermented wine (see chapter 5). It then follows that the beverages spoken of as being mixed are different in kind (either fermented or unfermented juice) instead of the reference being to one kind of liquid (wine) into which various elements (either harmful or beneficial) might be mixed.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the lament of the prophet Isaiah goes directly contrary to Stein's position by mourning the mixing of the drink with water:<sup>2</sup> "Your silver has become dross; / Your drink diluted with water" (1:22). Since this verse is discussed in some detail later in this chapter

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<sup>1</sup>Any possible applicability of Stein's solution to the New Testament is outside the scope of this discussion.

<sup>2</sup>Note that the apocryphal passage from inter-testamental times which Stein uses to bolster his viewpoint does not apply, for it too is extra-biblical and late. The pertinent verse states: "For just as it is disagreeable to drink wine alone or water alone, whereas the mixing of the two gives a pleasant and delightful taste, so too variety of style in a literary work charms the ear of the reader" (2 Mac. 15:39a, NEB).

under sōbe, it should merely be noted here that Isaiah considers it a tragedy that Israel's drink has become diluted. It is also interesting that the standard lexicon observed many years ago that the mixing of wine with water is a later custom than that found in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>

To summarize the biblical evidence from the usage of the verb māsak, the word is used five times: twice in a favorable context and three times in an unfavorable one. It should also be noted that only three times is a grape beverage specified. Of these, the word is used twice (Prov. 9:2, 5) of grape juice (yáyin) and only once (Isa. 5:22) of wine (šēkār).<sup>2</sup>

A derived noun mimsak is used twice in the Old Testament:

To whom is distress? . . . misery? . . . quarreling? . . .  
 To those who *regularly* prolong their *drinking* of wine;  
 To those who go about searching diligently for *any*  
*available mixed intoxicant*.<sup>3</sup> [Prov. 23:29-20; RT]

"But you who forsake Yahweh,  
 Who forget My holy mountain,  
 Who set a table for Fortune,  
 And who fill cups with mixed wine  
 for Destiny,  
 I will destine you for the sword,  
 . . ." [Isa. 65:11-12a]

The first reference above, where mimsak is in a parallel construction with yáyin ("wine"), clearly uses the word mimsak as

<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 587.

<sup>2</sup>Note the following discussions of these references on pp. 241 and 270 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Note chapter 5, pp. 259-61, for the context and discussion regarding this verse.

an intoxicating beverage. The other reference apparently is alluding to the practice of offering libations to pagan deities rather than to Yahweh Himself, and probably indicates "wine."

A second rare noun is also related to the verb māsak. This word, mések, occurs only in Psalm 75:8(9):

For a cup is in the hand of Yahweh, and the wine [yáyin]  
foams;  
It is well mixed [or "full of mixture"], and He pours  
out of this;  
Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink  
down its dregs.

Here again the text specifies a mixture of yáyin ("wine") which is obviously harmful in nature. It is used in a figure of speech which graphically portrays the judgment of God.

A summary of the usages of mixed beverages above indicates that mixed yáyin can be beneficial (Prov. 9:2, 5) or innately harmful (Ps. 75:8[9]); mixed šēkār ("wine") is harmful also, as is mimsak ("mixed intoxicant"). Since yáyin, by itself, can be demonstrated to be alternately beneficial juice or harmful intoxicant (see chapter 5), it is no wonder that the mixing of yáyin can result in a mixture (of juices)<sup>1</sup> which is healthful and beneficial to the body or in a mixture of wine (with spices?) which is innately harmful to body and mind.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Note especially Song of Sol. 8:2 discussed under ‘āsīs in this chapter, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>An account in 2 Maccabees 5 and 6 indicates that mixing of undiluted wine (verse 2) with spices could be especially potent. Elephants were given a potion of wine mixed with frankincense (5:45, οἶνου λελυβανωμένου) in order to prepare them to trample captives to death in a maddened fury.

There is no evidence in the Old Testament at all to support (and there is evidence against) any practice of mixing wine with water in order to nullify its intoxicating effect by dilution. While a logical case might be constructed for such a practice, the inference that God would have approved of it has no explicit *biblical* justification.

### סָבָא

#### The verb *sāba'*

The verb *sāba'* means "to drink deeply."<sup>1</sup> One reference where this nuance is very clear in Scripture is Isaiah 56:12 where God describes his rebellious people in these words:

"Come," says each one,  
 "I will get the wine [*yáyin*],  
 And let us drink deeply of strong drink  
 [*šēkār*];  
 And tomorrow will be like today.  
 Yea, *it will be greater by far!*" [RT]

Logically and biblically, whenever one drinks heavily or deeply of an intoxicant the result is drunkenness. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the Old Testament participial usages of this verb are with regard to drunkards.

For example, Nahum 1:10 relates the judgment of God picturesquely when it says:

Like tangled thorns,  
 And like those who are drunken [*s<sup>e</sup>bū<sup>u</sup>'im*]  
 with their drink [*uk<sup>e</sup>sob'ām*],  
 They are consumed  
 As stubble completely withered.

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<sup>1</sup>Both KB (p. 646) and BDB (p. 684) give the definition to "drink largely."

The remaining three verses<sup>1</sup> (all with Qal active participles) use the verb sābā' similarly:

"If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, . . . then his father and his mother shall . . . bring him out to the elders of his city. . . . And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.'" [Deut. 21:18a, 19, 20]

Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine [yāyin],  
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat [bāšār];  
For the heavy drinker and the glutton will  
come to poverty, . . . [Prov. 23:20,21]

In all three of these verses the parallel idea is provided by the corresponding participle from the verb zālal, meaning (in this context) "to be a glutton." Both the verbs sābā' and zālal when used together indicate excess. However, the excess of eating and drinking here differs in kind. zālal, which has a basic connotation of to "be light, worthless,"<sup>2</sup> here denotes an excess in quantity, consistently eating too much of an otherwise proper diet. By contrast the verb sābā' is shown by the contexts to apply to an excess in the nature of beverage consumed as much as in the amount which is imbibed. Drinking deeply to satisfaction is recommended for lovers in Song of

<sup>1</sup>It is the judgment of this writer that one other reference should be included here as well. Ezekiel 23:42 includes the phrase: mūbā'īm sob'īm mimmidbār, "drunkards were brought from the wilderness." This (ketīb) defective form of the Qal active participle seems to have been chosen over the more normal sōb'e'īm (note Prov. 23:20) simply to more poetically match the preceding Hophal participle. To take this form as being from a separate noun sābā' (see BDB, p. 685) is apparently unwarranted on textual critical grounds.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 272.

Solomon 5:1.<sup>1</sup> However, drinking deeply of an intoxicant, wine, causes drunkenness which is sin.

Therefore, although the verb sābā' is uniformly used in negative contexts in the Old Testament, there is nothing innately wrong with drinking deeply until satisfaction is reached. Such drinking only becomes a problem if the beverage so consumed is innately harmful because it induces intoxication.<sup>2</sup>

### The noun sōbe'

The noun sōbe' occurs only three times in the Old Testament. As expected from the previous discussion of its cognate verb, the noun is used exclusively of beverages. However, the exact nature of the beverage does not seem to be implied. One lexicon, in light of this, defines the word as "drink, liquor."<sup>3</sup> Another assumes it to be "beer made from wheat"<sup>4</sup> without giving any basis for this definition.

Certainly it is apparent that twice the word is used of an intoxicating beverage. Nahum 1:10 has already been quoted above<sup>5</sup> so need not be repeated here. The other reference is found in Hosea 4:18, which is a somewhat obscure passage:

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<sup>1</sup>Note the pertinent discussion under the verb šākar, pp. 212-13 below.

<sup>2</sup>This will be demonstrated more clearly when the word yāyin is examined in its biblical usage in chapter 5.

<sup>3</sup>BDB, p. 685.

<sup>4</sup>KB, p. 646.

<sup>5</sup>See p. 174 above for the quotation of this verse.

Their drink has turned *them* aside,  
 They prostitute *themselves* continually;  
 Their rulers dearly love dishonor.<sup>1</sup> [RT]

However this verse should be understood, it would seem that an intoxicant is indicated in the context.

The third passage which contains this Hebrew noun is in Isaiah 1:22. Lamenting concerning the corruption of Jerusalem, Isaiah penned these words:

How the faithful city has become a harlot,  
 She *who* was full of justice!  
 Righteousness once lodged in her,  
 But now murderers.  
 Your silver has become dross,  
 Your drink diluted with water.  
 Your rulers are rebels,  
 And companions of thieves;  
 Every one loves a bribe,  
 And chases after rewards.  
 They do not defend the orphan,  
 Nor does the widow's plea come before them.

The lexical suggestion that the pertinent phrase sob'ēk

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<sup>1</sup>The first phrase seems to be misunderstood in the NASB, for it takes the verb sār as referring to the cessation of drinking an intoxicant. In the context this is unlikely. Continual harlotry would fit better with the drinking of wine (or other intoxicating beverage) rather than with the cessation of this practice; note verse 11. Keil translates the phrase "Their drinking has degenerated," taking the noun as being substituted for its effect (Carl Friedrich Keil, The Twelve Minor Prophets, 2 vols., trans. James Martin, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament [n.p.; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967], 1:83). Schmoller similarly translates: "Their drinking feast is spoiled" (John Peter Lange, ed., A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures [n.p., n.d.; reprint ed.: Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960], 12 double vols., vol. 7: Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets: The Book of Hosea, by Otto Schmoller, translated with additions by James Frederick McCurdy, p. 50).

Since the verb is frequently used in the sense of turning aside from that which is right toward evil (BDB, p. 693), the phrase could very plausibly be translated, "their drink has turned *them* aside, . . .".[RT], as above.



māhūl bammāyīm should be rendered "thy choice wine weakened with water"<sup>1</sup> has been agreed upon by many.<sup>2</sup> However, the immediate context clearly indicates that that which is good (sōbe') has become adulterated (māhūl) or worthless (parallel with dross, siġīm, that which is removed when the silver is purified by fire). Since that is so, and since the Old Testament nowhere (clearly)<sup>3</sup> recommends any intoxicating beverage as good, it becomes obvious that sōbe' must be understood as fresh juice in this passage. Not only a harmonistic approach to biblical interpretation would demand such a conclusion. This is a conclusion which logic would also support. Since the context clearly shows that Isaiah considered the dilution of sōbe' with water to be a tragedy rather than a blessing, he must have been referring to a nutritional juice rather than to a harmful intoxicant (which would be better diluted). The specific beverage in view here then is juice which, when diluted, loses in both

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 554.

<sup>2</sup>E. J. Young, for example, uses this translation verbatim (Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 2 vols., The New International Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965], 1:75). In amplification of this verse he states:

"Jerusalem once possessed something desirable, represented by silver and choice wine. A great change, however, has come over the city; the silver and choice wine are gone, and in their place are dross and wine mixed with water." [Ibid., p. 83]

<sup>3</sup>Actually it is the considered judgment of this writer that every mention of intoxicating beverages in the Old Testament is in a context of divine disapproval. This will be further developed and demonstrated in this chapter and in the following one.

its nutritional value and its taste. The righteous city, which had enjoyed the copious blessings of God upon itself as exemplified by its harvest of grape juice, would now (in sin) have had to greatly dilute its harvest in order to even approximate its previous bounty. Therefore, both worthless silver dross and diluted juice are apt figures of speech to dramatically indicate the great loss which had come about through the city's neglect of divinely imposed ordinances.

The overall meaning of this word, then, is mixed. Sôbe can refer to either an intoxicating wine or a fresh juice, somewhat analogous to the use of yáyin (see chapter 5).

### תירוש

#### Introduction

One word which is normally translated "wine"<sup>1</sup> is of prime importance in any debate regarding whether or not Yahweh approves of intoxicating beverages. This word, tîrôš, is relatively unambiguous in meaning because it occurs frequently enough in similar contexts so as to provide a high degree of precision as to its meaning with regard to Old Testament usage.

The word occurs thirty-eight times in the Old Testament in sixteen books, including every major type of literature (law, history, poetry, wisdom, prophecy).<sup>2</sup> A careful personal

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<sup>1</sup>The AV translates tîrôš as "wine" 26 times, "new wine" 11 times, and "sweet wine" 1 time.

<sup>2</sup>The references are: Gen. 27:28; 37; Num. 18:12; Deut. 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51; 33:28; Judg.

examination of all pertinent passages led this writer to the following general conclusions concerning its Old Testament usage:

1. Tîrôš uniformly refers to fresh, pure grape juice.
2. Tîrôš is the one word (aside from the word ‘ēnāb, "grape") particularly related to the harvest of the vineyard, the produce (t<sup>e</sup>bû’â) of the vine (2 Chron. 31:4).
3. As such, tîrôš was stored for unspecified but apparently lengthy periods of time (at least for some months) in a similar manner to that of putting grain in barns until there was need for this produce in the daily provisions (2 Chron. 32:28).
4. The word tîrôš primarily stresses the raw material rather than the finished product, the stored juice rather than the beverage fit for drinking. Another Hebrew word, yáyin, is apparently used when the juice is actually poured out into the cup to be used in the course of a meal or banquet (note especially Mic. 6:15). As will later be shown, there is no necessity to assume that when the word yáyin is used there has been any alteration of the tîrôš by fermentation. The fact that the Old Testament usage normally differentiates in its vocabulary between the stored harvested juice and the table beverage is simply an easily documented phenomenon. The precision does not

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9:13; 2 Kings 18:32; 2 Chron. 31:5; 32:28; Neh. 5:11; 10:37(38), 39(40); 13:5, 12; Ps. 4:7(8); Prov. 3:10; Isa. 24:7; 36:17; 62:8; 65:8; Jer. 31:12; Hos. 2:8(10), 9(11), 22(24); 4:11; 7:14; 9:2; Joel 1:10; 2:19, 24; Mic. 6:15; Hag. 1:11; Zech. 9:17.

appear to be artificial but rather pragmatic. When a man spoke of the harvest he used the word tîrôš<sup>1</sup>; when he spoke of the beverage he used the word yáyin.

A word which has been frequently misunderstood

These conclusions, while not totally new,<sup>1</sup> go against those of modern scholars; hence at this point some of these opposing opinions will be noted. Fitzsimmonds states his case against the conclusions enumerated above in the following manner. After discussing the Hebrew words yáyin and šēkār he says:

A third word, tîrôš, sometimes translated 'new' or 'sweet wine', has often been regarded as unfermented and therefore unintoxicating wine, but an example such as Ho. iv. 11, together with the usage of the Talmud, makes clear that it is capable of being used in a bad sense equally with the others. Furthermore, while there are examples of the grapes being pressed into a cup and presumably used at once (Gn. xl. 11), it is significant that the term 'wine' is never applied to the resultant juice.

The term 'new wine' does not indicate wine which has not fermented, for in fact the process of fermentation sets in very rapidly, and unfermented wine could not be available many months after the harvest (Acts ii. 13). It represents rather wine made from the first drippings of the juice before the winepress was trodden. As such it would be particularly potent and would come immediately to mind as a probable explanation of what seemed to be a drunken state. Modern custom in Palestine, among a people who are traditionally conservative as far as religious feasts are concerned, also suggests that the wine used was fermented. It may be said, therefore, that the Bible in employing

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Free has arrived at similar conclusions in the second appendix of his book (Joseph P. Free, Archeology and Bible History, 7th ed., revised [Wheaton, Ill.: Scripture Press Publications, Inc., 1962], pp. 351-56). Prior to this, various works put forth like concepts, such as Frederic Richard Lees and Dawson Burns, The Temperance Bible-Commentary, 5th English ed. (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1880) and William Patton, Bible Wines or the Laws of Fermentation (Little Rock: Challenge Press, n.d.).

various synonyms makes no consistent distinction between them.<sup>1</sup>

The position of the New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible differs from the above by correctly stating that "Hebrew *tūrōsh* . . . means juice of the grapes or must. . . ." in its many usages. However, it then also agrees that *tīrōs*<sup>^v</sup> can be intoxicating: "Must was drunk, and after fermentation had set in, was intoxicating (Hos. 4:11, *tūrōsh*; Acts 2:13, *gleukos*; and probably Isa. 49:26, 'āsās."<sup>2</sup>

The major argument against the conclusions of the writer of this work as set forward above appear to come from two biblical references: Acts 2:13 and Hosea 4:11. Therefore, it is important to demonstrate how weak these opposing arguments are before proceeding further.

Acts 2:13. Before a specific examination of Acts 2:13 is undertaken, an often overlooked principle of hermeneutics should be made clear: A Hebrew word should be interpreted in light of its Old Testament contexts. That is, interpreting *tīrōs*<sup>^v</sup> apart from a careful study of its Old Testament contexts may lead to error.<sup>3</sup> To rely heavily for an understanding of

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<sup>1</sup>NBD, s.v. "Wine and Strong Drink," by F. S. Fitzsimmonds, p. 1331.

<sup>2</sup>NWDB, 1970 ed., s.v. "Wine," pp. 1000-1001.

<sup>3</sup>Where a passage is quoted in the New Testament, it is true that the New Testament passage must be examined and comprehended also if an understanding is to be gained of all of the possible applications which the Holy Spirit would place upon a given Old Testament passage. However, to interpret the Old Testament word in light of its New Testament application is

this word upon a New Testament passage which has no contextual relationship at all and which utilizes a Greek word, gleūkos, is methodologically unsound. If the word tîrôś<sup>1</sup> is consistently used in many Old Testament contexts, it may shed light on the New Testament passage, but not vice-versa. One fact which is commonly overlooked by those holding the opposite view is that the word gleūkos in the Greek language, whether classical or Koine, consistently denotes an unintoxicating beverage. For example, the large Liddell and Scott classical lexicon gives only these meanings for the word gleūkos: "Sweet new wine," "grape-juice," and "sweetness."<sup>1</sup> In light of this it is quite

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unsound. Rather one should first study the Old Testament passage in light of its own immediate (and distant) contexts (including Old Testament word studies of key words) and then go to the New Testament and attempt to understand it in *light of its Old Testament context* (as well as its New Testament context). To go in the reverse order and look at the New Testament in a vacuum and then interpret the Old Testament in light of the New is contrary to every tenet of progressive revelation and has at times, in the judgment of this writer, hindered a proper understanding of both testaments. An example of this would be the AV translation in Ps. 104:4 which was made by totally ignoring its context and depending upon Heb. 1:7 for its translation. More up to date versions (for example, the 1901 ASV, the NEB, and the NASB), in contrast, do translate the Old Testament passage in light of the context. However, the surprising truth is that even after recognizing that Ps. 104 has nothing to say about angels but rather stresses God's total sovereignty and control in the world, these modern translators have yet ignored the Old Testament context and held tenaciously to a traditional rendering of Heb. 1:7. If the Old Testament is kept in view, the teaching of this New Testament passage would more clearly harmonize with its own context (verses 4, 6, 8) by making the angels just as subservient to God as are the natural elements, winds and lightning. Rather than the angels *being* winds and flames *in essence* they are *compared to* the winds and the lightning in their equally instantaneous obedience to their Creator.

<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 351. The reason for translating "sweet new

probable that the passage in Acts 2:13 should be understood as sarcasm. Since the context is explicit that the harassment came from those who were mocking (δυσχελεύοντες) the disciples, their sarcastic but humorous remark (in light of their knowledge of the early church's conservative habits) was "They have had too much grape juice *to drink!*"<sup>1</sup>

Hosea 4:11. The second passage, Hosea 4:11, provides a more legitimate challenge to the conclusions stated earlier that tíros<sup>^v</sup> always means "grape juice" in the Old Testament. This follows from two facts: (1) It is an Old Testament passage using the Hebrew word; and (2) the context definitely is one of divine disapproval. The New American Standard Bible translates verses 11 and 12 thus:

Harlotry, wine [yáyin], and new wine [tíros<sup>^v</sup>], take away  
the understanding.  
My people consult their wooden idol, and their *diviner's*  
wand informs them;  
For a spirit of harlotry has led *them astray*  
And they have played the harlot, *departing* from their God.

wine" instead of "grape juice" for the first entry is probably due to convention rather than to clarity. Since the Greeks spoke of oínou gleúkous (evidently in reference to a grape juice beverage), the word "wine" was included which can mean in English (as defined in chapter 1) "an unfermented grape beverage." Moulton and Milligan's lexicon of the Papyri indicates the same truth. The translators render gleūkos as "must" (grape juice) and even mention two papyri with the combination oínou gleúkous adólou, which may be rendered "genuine [or "unadulterated"] grape juice" (M&M, p. 127).

<sup>1</sup>Russell seems to have concluded similarly, as he states: ". . . the disciples, known to drink only unfermented grape juice, in their exuberant enthusiasm appeared intoxicated" (ZPBD, 1963 ed., s.v. "Wine," by Emmet Russell, p. 894.

However, it would appear to this writer that the assumption that tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> ("new wine," above) *must* therefore refer to an intoxicating beverage is simplistic at best. Since every other reference to tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> (thirty-seven times) is totally consistent with the premise that tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> is unfermented grape juice, a gift of God to be *enjoyed*, a normal hermeneutic would attempt to ascertain if such an idea could be harmonized with this problem passage. Indeed, it can! This is particularly evident if it is realized that Hosea, the prophet, mentions the word tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> six times in his book (more often than any other book except Deuteronomy, in which it occurs seven times). The word tîrôš<sup>^v</sup> in chapter 4, then, must be understood in light of its overall context rather than simply within the context of verse eleven.

The language of the vineyard is an important motif in this book. The vineyard is central specifically to the whole thought of Hosea's second chapter and thus serves as a context for chapter 4 as well. The reason that Yahweh must judge Israel (under the vividly poignant and tragic picture of Hosea's own unfaithful wife) is its spiritual apostasy, spoken of as harlotry:

"For their mother has played the harlot;  
 She who conceived them has acted shamefully.  
 For she said, 'I will go after my lovers,  
 Who give me my bread [léhem] and my water,  
 My wool and my flax, my oil [šémen] and my  
 drink [šiqqûy].'"<sup>1</sup> [Hos. 2:5(7)]

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<sup>1</sup>Apparently the word for "drink" here refers to grape



The specific indication of the passage is that Israel's spiritual "whoredom" was considered to be out of *necessity* rather than out of mere sensual desire. The nation had been so infused with Canaanite theology that Abraham's descendants considered it important to worship the Baals if they were to enjoy the necessities of life: food, drink, clothing, and oil for the body. All of Scripture so clearly demonstrates that it was Yahweh who actually provided these things; yet the prophesied amalgamation<sup>1</sup> of their pagan neighbors' "practical theology" into that of Israel's own had been total (note Hos. 4:11). Yahweh's personal pain resulting from this defection is very evident:

"For she does not know that it was I who gave her the grain,  
the grape juice,\* and the oil,  
 And lavished on her silver and gold,  
 Which they used for Baal.  
 Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time  
 And My grape juice\* in its season.  
 I will also take away My wool and My flax  
 Given to cover her nakedness." [Hos. 2:8(10)-9(11)]

It is most obvious that there was nothing innately immoral or harmful in the commodities received ("grain," "grape juice," "oil," "gold," "silver," "wool" and "flax") for which Israel

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juice, the natural beverage from tîrôš, since that is the implication in Yahweh's response in verses 8(10)-9(11). If so, this would fit well with the other two times the word šiqquy (from the verbal root šāqā, "cause to drink") occurs in the MT. In Ps. 102:9(10) the word is in parallel with lehem, "bread." Prov. 3:10 uses this rare word as a circumlocution for "refreshment."

<sup>1</sup>Note, for example, Deut. 32:15 ff., which is all prophetic.

had given the credit to Baal. The problem then was in their spiritual blindness and aborted allegiance. Therefore, Yahweh's response was to remove these necessities from His people in order to make them more aware of the genuine source of their good life. Since the harvest of the vineyard had provided times of great joy for Israel and the vine and the fig tree had been the epitome of safety and satisfaction (when Yahweh had blessed them), Yahweh chose to take these away from His people:

"I will also put an end to all her gaiety,  
Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths,  
And all her festal assemblies.  
And I will destroy her vines and fig trees,  
Of which she said, 'These are my wages  
Which my lovers have given me.'  
And I will make them a forest,  
And the beasts of the field will devour  
them." [Hos. 2:11(13)-12(14)]

It is intriguing to see that Yahweh even uses a figure drawn from the vineyard in one aspect of His remedy, in building a wall to keep her (Israel) from finding her lovers:

"Therefore I will block your way with a thorn hedge,<sup>1</sup>  
Yea, I will obstruct as with a vineyard wall her pathways  
so that she cannot find her old lifestyle!  
So she will pursue after her lovers, but not overtake  
them,  
And she will seek for them, but not find them.

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<sup>1</sup>The verb śûk means to "hedge or fence up, about" according to BDB (p. 962) and assuredly seems to be used for the figure of a vineyard wall in this context. The same figure fits well in its other reference (Job 1:10) where Satan complains of God's protection of Job against himself. (Job had been surrounded by a thorn-fence as one would surround a vineyard in order to protect it.) The aptness of the figure is proper, for vineyards were uniformly fenced, whereas other kinds of fields would not necessarily be.

Then she will *stop* and say:

'I will return again to my first husband  
Because it was *so much* better for me then than it is now.'  
[Hos. 2:6(8)-7(9); RT]

The point of the narrative is that Yahweh would totally remove by force the good things (including tîrôš), which Israel had assumed Baal had provided, by hedging her out of the vineyard with thorns. When Israel realized that Baal was impotent to provide them, she would once again return her allegiance to her God.<sup>1</sup> Then, but only after Israel has learned her lesson, Yahweh will once more bring her back inside the vineyard and restore her joy:

"Then I will restore<sup>2</sup> her vineyards to her from there,  
Changing her Valley of Trouble into a Gate of Hope,  
So she will sing there as *she did* in the days of her youth,  
As *she did* in the days when she came up out of Egypt. . . .  
[In that day . . . ] I will betroth you to myself forever.  
Yea, I will betroth you to myself *with a permanently*  
*changed character*:<sup>3</sup>

A character of righteousness and justice and loyalty to  
covenant and genuine love.

Our new betrothal will be based upon faithfulness

For then you will *really* know Yahweh."

"Therefore," Yahweh affirms, "in that day I will respond;  
I will respond to *the cry of* the heavens,  
And they will respond to *the cry of* the earth,  
And the earth will respond to *the cries of* the

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<sup>1</sup>The same thought of keeping her out of the vineyard is reinforced by the metaphor in verse 3(5) of making Israel die of thirst by placing her into a desert land.

<sup>2</sup>The whole sense of the passage would indicate this meaning for the verb nātan.

<sup>3</sup>This interpretation renders the Hebrew text clearly. The change was needed in Israel, not in God, for He has always had and displayed these characteristics. Since the betrothal is permanent, so is the change in Israel. (These characteristics were the very areas so lacking in Israel which made God's harshest discipline necessary; note 4:1-2.)

harvested grain, grape juice, and olive oil,  
 And these will respond to the prayers of Jezreel.<sup>1</sup>  
 For I will sow her for Myself in the land,  
 Yea, I will show real love to her who had been Not-Worthy-  
 of-Love,<sup>2</sup>  
 And I will say to the nation who demonstrated they were  
 Not-My-People:<sup>3</sup> 'You are my people!'  
 And they<sup>4</sup> will reply, 'You are my God!' [Hos. 2:15(17),  
 19(21)-23(25); RT]

After fully recognizing the entwining motif of the vineyard in Hosea chapter two, a proper understanding of the problem passage Hosea 4:11 is more easily gained. Chapter four begins with Yahweh's legal claims (rib) against Israel:

Listen to the word of Yahweh, O sons of Israel,  
 For Yahweh has a case against the inhabitants of the land,  
 Because there is no faithfulness or covenant loyalty\*  
 Or knowledge of God in the land.  
 There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and  
 adultery.  
 They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed.  
 Therefore the land mourns [te'e<sup>h</sup>bal],<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Jezreel" is a name for Israel meaning (here, preceded by 'et,) "the one whom God sows." This is a play on words in the Hebrew with the first phrase in verse 23(25) (cf. BDB, p. 283). It also refers the reader back to the name of Hosea's first son in 1:4-5.

<sup>2</sup>Here again is a play on words. The Hebrew phrase is Lō' Ruḥāmā, the name which Yahweh had bestowed on Hosea's second child (1:6-7).

<sup>3</sup>A third play on words refers back to Hosea's third child, Lō' Ammī (1:9-10). Note that in a mixing of metaphors Israel is compared to the harlot mother as well as, in another sense, to the illegitimate children of this harlot.

<sup>4</sup>Literally the word is "he."

<sup>5</sup>In light of Hosea's context thus far as well as from other Old Testament passages it is obvious that the "land mourning" specifically includes the vineyards' lack of productivity. Note especially Isaiah 24:7:

"The harvest grape juice mourns ['ābal],  
 The vine languishes in decay ['umlēlā];

And every one who lives in it languishes [<sup>u</sup>umlal]  
 Along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the  
 sky;

And also the fish of the sea disappear.

.....

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Because you have rejected knowledge,

I also will reject you from being My priest.

Since you have forgotten the law of your God,

I also will forget your children. [Hos. 4:1-3, 6]<sup>1</sup>

In light of the above and the continuing message of Hosea, it is the *spiritual apostasy* ("adultery" and "harlotry") against which God especially inveighs.<sup>2</sup> Logically (and clearly in context) the specific sins of the people are based upon their general antipathy toward God (note that the catalog of sins in verse 2 follows the mention of the basic problem in verse 1). Therefore, it appears obvious that in 4:11 God is not listing, in order, the three prime sins of Israel--"harlotry, wine [yáyin], and new wine [tîrôš]"--which have caused defection; rather He is further pressing a point already made in 2:8(10)-9(11): that even the good things which God has provided can, as a result of a perverted theology (which placed Baal as the source of the land's fertility and productivity), be linked with other more obvious sins in removing Israel's

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All the formerly merry-hearted ones now  
 lament." [RT]

<sup>1</sup>The text is from the NASB except for changing "kindness" (hésed) to "covenant loyalty." Note that biblically the pollution of the environment is related to a spiritual problem.

<sup>2</sup>Note especially 1:2b, ". . . the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking Yahweh"; and 4:12b, "For a spirit of harlotry has led them astray. And they have played the harlot, departing from their God."

loyalty from her God. Hence, "Harlotry, wine, and even the freshly pressed grape juice of the harvest have taken away their allegiance"<sup>1</sup> [Hos. 4:11; RT].

Therefore, it is foreign to the entire context (both to the preceding and to the following material) to interpret tîrôš as denoting an intoxicating beverage in this passage.<sup>2</sup> The above explanation and translation fits perfectly with the subsequent three verses which indicate that the pagan fertility rites, calculated to insure a *good harvest*, were central aspects of Israel's apostasy. Furthermore (and equally important), this interpretation of tîrôš fits well with every other Old Testament usage of the word, as will be shown, rather than making this passage an outstanding exception.

A word which occurs only in the vocabulary of the harvest

Prior to a general classification of the ways in which tîrôš is used in Scripture it is important to justify the author's conclusions which have been set forth earlier.<sup>3</sup> Therefore this section will demonstrate the general all inclusive meaning of the word tîrôš.

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<sup>1</sup>The justification for this full rendering of tîrôš will be forthcoming in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Free makes a very brief corollary remark concerning this verse: "Even here in this particular context there is . . . no suggestion that *tîrôsh* in itself is intoxicating" (Free, Archeology, p. 353).

<sup>3</sup>Note the introduction to this section, pp. 180-81 above.

Since even a cursory look at the word tîrôš<sup>1</sup> (either in a major lexicon<sup>1</sup> or in an elementary Hebrew concordance<sup>2</sup>) should be sufficient to establish the special harvest relationship of the word, it is remarkable that basic Bible dictionaries, such as The New Bible Dictionary and The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, do not even mention it. In any case, if great care is exercised in evaluating the biblical usage of the word, it becomes obvious that tîrôš is not, *by that name*, a beverage at all but rather is a harvested commodity capable of being so used. This will become more clear as it is examined in its contexts.

A tabulation of the words closely allied with tîrôš in parallelism indicates that of the thirty-eight times it occurs:

(1) It is paralleled by dāgān, "grain," and yishār, "fresh oil," nineteen times.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 440, lists almost every reference to the word following his notation (here unabbreviated): "usually as a sign of fertility, or as valuable product." It also shows the constant parallelism with dāgān and yishār. The definition and discussion are not entirely adequate but do give enough to insure that a reader of the lexicon would obtain a generally usable idea of the word. In a characteristically inadequate manner KB, p. 1027, gives a one word (inaccurate) definition; "wine," and then simply, without comment, gives the Hebrew phrase formulas in which tîrôš occurs. However, even by this latter means, the same deduction is apparent if the meanings of dāgān and yishār are understood.

<sup>2</sup>A work such as The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament (5th ed., p. 1346) would at least hint of its harvest motif in the frequent pairing of corn, "wine" and oil.

<sup>3</sup>The normal word order is always dāgān, then tîrôš, and then yishār. (Within this order there may be the Hebrew copu-

(2) It is paralleled by dāḡān alone eleven times.<sup>1</sup>

(3) It is paralleled by bār, "grain," and yishār one time.<sup>2</sup>

(4) It is paralleled by yishār alone (and following tîrôš) one time.<sup>3</sup>

(5) It occurs without any of the above words six times.<sup>4</sup>

Going immediately to the contexts where the triplet dāḡān, tîrôš, and yishār occurs, it is first important to establish the meaning of the other two words. Dāḡān<sup>5</sup> in

lative waw between each word [Hos. 2:8(10); Neh. 13:12], between only tîrôš and yishār [Deut. 18:4, 28:51], or not at all [Joel 1:10], with more stylistic whim than syntactic necessity for the changes.) In addition to the above references which include these three words are the following: Deut. 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 2 Chron. 31:5; 32:28; Neh. 5:11; 10:30(40); 13:5; Jer. 31:12; Hos. 2:22(24); Joel 2:19; Hag. 1:11. In one other reference yishār is placed first, with the other two in reverse order as well (Num. 18:12).

<sup>1</sup>The passages are: Gen. 27:28, 37; Deut. 33:28; 2 Kings 18:32; Ps. 4:7(8); Isa. 36:17; 62:8; Hos. 2:9(11); 7:14; 9:1-2; Zech. 9:17. Again dāḡān is always first.

<sup>2</sup>Joel 2:24. The order is bār, tîrôš, then yishār, maintaining the normal word order even though a synonym is used for dāḡān.

<sup>3</sup>Neh. 10:37(38).

<sup>4</sup>Judg. 9:13; Prov. 3:10; Isa. 24:7; 65:8; Hos. 4:11; Mic. 6:15.

<sup>5</sup>BDB, p. 186, gives as the definition of this word, "corn, grain (of cereals)." The word occurs only 10 times out of 40 without being paired with tîrôš. The synonyms for this word are bār (or bar), mentioned earlier (occurring 13 times, 5 of which are in Gen. 41-45), and šēber (9 times), which is the word used 7 times in Gen. 42-47 of the "corn" in Egypt during the famine in Canaan. In the Genesis account these two latter words are used interchangeably. In every one of its references, šēber clearly refers to threshed grain; bār (or bar) does also, except in two references (Ps. 65:13[14]; 72:16) where it refers to grain still on the stalk. Apparently dāḡān also always



every context which includes tîrôš always refers to the harvested grain after threshing has taken place. The pairing of tîrôš with dāgān is a very logical one in light of the frequent pairing of the grain threshing floor (gōren) and the grape press (yégeb) mentioned in chapter 2 above. The final word of the three which occur together so often is yishār. In the entry for this latter word, the standard lexicon is quite thorough and helpful. The definition provided is "fresh oil," which is further qualified by the phrases "as product of [the] land, in unmanufactured state."<sup>1</sup>

In light of the fact that dāgān and yishār are words dealing exclusively with the harvest (of the grain fields and of the olive groves<sup>2</sup>) it is not unexpected that tîrôš is also a word exclusively emphasizing the harvest (of the vineyard). It is also pertinent to notice that all three words speak of

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refers to threshed grain (as opposed to yet being in the stalk) except for 4 probable exceptions (Ps. 65:9[10]; Ezek. 36:29; Hos. 14:7[8]; and Joel 1:17). One additional intriguing passage, Ps. 78:24-25, describes the forty year wilderness provision of manna poetically as dēgān-šāmāyim, "grain harvest of heaven," as well as lehem 'abbīrīm, "bread of angels" and šedā . . . lašōba, "provision to satiety."

<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 844. Only one time does yishār occur in a verse that does not also contain the word tîrôš; that reference (Zech. 4:14) fits into the idea of harvested "fresh oil" as well. In the context two olive trees (4:3), apparently emptying oil directly into the golden candlestick (4:12), are called bēnē-hayyishār, "the anointed ones." The whole context is figurative but the vocabulary is appropriate for the newly harvested oil called yishār rather than šēmen.

<sup>2</sup>Note that the generic relationship between zāviṭ and yishār is specifically stated in 2 Kings 18:32: 'ēres zēt yishār = ". . . a land of olive trees. . . ."

the raw harvested product rather than of the commodity ready for the consumer. Other words are used for the standing ears<sup>1</sup> (or the gathered sheaves<sup>2</sup>) and for the gathered grapes<sup>3</sup> and olives<sup>4</sup> prior to pressing. The three words under discussion, then, refer to the storable product which has been threshed or pressed. Finally, another triplet is used for the finished product ready for the consumer: léhem, "bread" or "food,"<sup>5</sup> yáyin, "grape juice" or "wine,"<sup>6</sup> and šémen, "oil."<sup>7</sup> (These three words are used far more often than any of those to which reference has already been made.)

Therefore, returning attention specifically to the word tīrōš, it is easy to see that Hebrew differentiates clearly

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<sup>1</sup>Sibbōlet (14 times), "ear of grain" (BDB, p. 987); qāmā (10 times), "[mature] standing grain" (BDB, p. 879).

<sup>2</sup>ōmer (8 times), "sheaf" (BDB, p. 771); <sup>a</sup>lummā (5 times), "sheaf" (√ "to bind," BDB, p. 47-48).

<sup>3</sup>ēnāb, "grape(s)," BDB, p. 772.

<sup>4</sup>Záyit (2 times, Deut. 28:40; Mic. 6:15), "olives" (BDB, p. 268).

<sup>5</sup>Bread was the ordinary food of the Hebrews according to Scripture (supported by BDB, p. 537). The word occurs 296 times (ibid.).

<sup>6</sup>The word yáyin is used 141 times in the Old Testament. See chapter 5 for definition and discussion of this word.

<sup>7</sup>BDB, p. 1032, states that the word šémen occurs 192 times and, in the predominant sense as "oil," it was utilized as a condiment (seasoning), as a medicine, as an ointment, as a lighting fuel for the lamps, and as an anointing liquid for priests, kings, etc. It was specifically made from pressed olives (Mic. 6:15; Exod. 27:20; 30:24; Lev. 24:2 etc.) and was a common but valued staple in the Hebrew household.

between the raw product (expressed grape juice) and the table beverage (yáyin). To demonstrate the validity of these observations it is important to look at specific examples which indicate that tíróš<sup>AV</sup> is explicitly the fresh grape juice of the harvest.

One passage makes the freshness of the juice a certainty, since it speaks of the juice still on the vine:

Yahweh declares this message:  
 "Just as the fresh juice is found in the *grape* cluster  
 And one says 'Dēn't damage the *cluster* because there  
     is great benefit inside,'  
 In a like manner, I will act on behalf of my servants;  
 I will not destroy the whole *nation*!" [Isa. 65:8; RT]

God uses this simile to communicate the truth that He must judge sin and yet preserve the nation for His righteous servants' sake. There can be no doubt in this passage that tíróš<sup>AV</sup> is a word meaning fresh juice, for it is even spoken of as such while yet in the grape. That fresh juice is in view is clear from other references as well. For example, in a context of judgment upon His errant people, Yahweh pronounces these solemn words:

You will sow, but you will not reap;  
 You will tread the olives, but you will not anoint *your-*  
     *selves* with the oil;  
 And *you will express the juice* [tíróš<sup>AV</sup>], but you will not  
     drink the grape beverage [yáyin]. [Mic. 6:15; RT]

Other passages show the relationship between the yéqeb, "grape press and vat" (the place where the juice was expressed<sup>1</sup>) and

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<sup>1</sup>Note the discussion in appendix F regarding the grape press and vat.

the freshly harvested grape juice which was so prized by  
Israel:

Honor Yahweh from your wealth,  
And from the first of all your produce;  
So your barns will be filled with plenty,  
And your vats [yéqeb] will overflow with  
fresh grape juice.\* [Prov. 3:9-10]

[Yahweh] . . . has poured down for you the rain,  
The early and latter rains as before.  
And the threshing floors will be full of grain,  
And the vats [yéqeb] will overflow with grape juice\*  
and fresh oil.\* [Joel 2:23b-24]<sup>1</sup>

Another verse which is pertinent to this discussion is  
found in Nehemiah 10:37(38), where the passage specifies that  
the *fruit of the tree* is thought of as tîrôš (for the vine) and  
yîshār (for the olive): "We will also bring . . . the fruit of  
every tree, the grape juice\* and the fresh oil\* to the priests  
at the chambers of the house of our God."<sup>2</sup>

Having established that tîrôš definitely can refer to  
freshly pressed grape juice, and having shown that it always

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<sup>1</sup>The NASB translation of tîrôš was changed, and yîshār  
was altered. From henceforth in this chapter any translation  
not otherwise labeled will be the NASB but the translation of  
the words dāqān, tîrôš, and yîshār will be uniformly changed  
from the NASB's less accurate rendering of "grain, new wine,  
and oil" to a better translation marked with an asterisk.

The context of Joel 2 is Millennial. While these two  
passages may probably be interpreted as being in reference to  
stored commodities rather than the juice and oil actually still  
in the vat (see chapter 2), yet it is quite clear that the  
sparkling freshness of the harvest crop as well as its abun-  
dant is certainly meant to be conveyed.

<sup>2</sup>Normally it might be expected that the grape juice and  
fresh oil would be an additional offering rather than an ampli-  
fication of "fruit of every tree." However, the specific use  
of the copulative waw seems to indicate this interpretation.

occurs in contexts of the processed raw materials (that is, threshed grain and pressed juice or oil), it is not unwarranted to assume in every context, whether speaking of the harvest itself or of the storage of that harvest, that tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> uniformly means fresh grape juice unless there is clear evidence to the contrary. The only contrary evidence is from logic (assuming that stored tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> would soon ferment) rather than from biblical exegesis. Therefore, while the logical problem will be dealt with in chapter 6, the assumption that tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> is uniformly the raw but unfermented juice will be made from henceforth in this paper.<sup>1</sup> It is now appropriate to examine the kinds of contexts in which tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> appears in its Old Testament usage.

A word which conveys  
God's desire to bless

One of the facts which is most apparent about the biblical usage of the word tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> is that it speaks of a commodity which is not only approved by God but which also is a key

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<sup>1</sup>The very fact that léhem, yáyin, and śémen are very rarely spoken of in a harvest context, while the words dāgān, tîrôš<sup>AV</sup>, and yîṣhār always are, is very significant. This consistency is not a contrived one, but naturally arises from the contexts in which the words are found. Tîrôš<sup>AV</sup>, for example, is *never used with a verb of drinking*. The apparent exception to this, Isa. 62:8, is best translated by supplying the understood idea of beverages. (Note p. 206 of this chapter.) Instead, one passage quoted earlier (Mic. 6:15) makes very clear that when the freshly pressed juice, tîrôš<sup>AV</sup>, is actually imbibed it is called yáyin (without any implication of time for fermentation in the interim). The same passage indicates that when the pressed oil of olives, yîṣhār, is actually applied as an ointment, it is called śémen. To assume, therefore, that the Hebrews lacked any precision in the use of the other words in this case is unwarranted.

aspect of the blessing which He desires to bestow upon His people.

The blessing from God. From the very first mention of tirôš in Scripture (Gen. 27:28) to the very last (Zech. 9:17), it is a word which constantly upholds the goodness of God.<sup>1</sup> Tirôš is first mentioned in Isaac's "deathbed" blessing of Jacob:

" . . . Now may God give you of the dew of heaven,  
And of the fatness of the earth,  
And an abundance of threshed grain\* and harvested grape juice.\*"<sup>2</sup> [Gen. 27:28]

This blessing is later pronounced over the whole nation by Moses just before He died:

"So Israel dwells in security,  
The fountain of Jacob secluded,  
In a land characterized by threshed grain\*  
and harvested grape juice\*;  
His heavens also drop down dew."  
[Deut. 33:28]<sup>3</sup>

While the certitude of Yahweh's blessing is thus beyond doubt simply on the basis of His love for their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. 4:37; 10:15 etc.), He yet chose to make this blessing conditional as it applied to each

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<sup>1</sup>Indeed, the vine is so central to the motif of God's goodness that it is amazing that even one extended portion of Scripture, such as Ps. 65:9(10)-13(14), dealing with God's bountiful provision of harvest, omits any mention of the vineyard.

<sup>2</sup>Note also the reiteration of this in verse 37.

<sup>3</sup>In a passage already quoted, Hos. 2:8, Yahweh recorded that when He provided these things to His people, they gave the credit to Baal instead.

generation:

"Know therefore that Yahweh your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; . . . Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments. . . .

"Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that Yahweh your God. . . . will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your threshed grain\* and your expressed grape juice\* and your fresh oil,\* the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you." [Deut. 7:9-10a, 11a, 12a, 13]

"And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love Yahweh your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that 'I will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your harvested grain\* and your expressed grape juice\* and your fresh oil.\*'"<sup>1</sup> [Deut. 11:13-14]

One example of Yahweh's blessing when there was a life characterized (primarily) by obedience was in the case of Hezekiah, the King of Judah:

Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, . . . storehouses also for the produce of threshed grain,\* harvested grape juice\* and fresh oil,\* . . . for God had given him very great wealth. [2 Chron. 32:27a, 28a, 29b]

Consistent with Scripture's constant elevation of this liquid fruit of the vine to especially indicate God's favor is the parable in Judges which implies that those with nothing to offer are those who seek to rule. In the parable, Gideon's youngest son narrates that, upon being asked to reign over the other trees, the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine all

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<sup>1</sup>Note also Prov. 3:10 which has been cited earlier.

decline (each already has needed tasks) but the bramble bush is happy to oblige. The vine's reply to the summons to royalty is this: "'Shall I leave my fresh grape juice,\* which cheers God and men, and go to wave over the trees?'" (Judg. 9:13b).

It is interesting that even the spies of Assyria were so aware of those things which Israel valued most that Sennacherib's envoy was able to make a cunning, attractive offer:

"Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria, "Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of harvested grain\* and fresh grape juice,\* a land of bread and vineyards, a land of fresh olive oil\* and honey, that you may live and not die." But do not listen to Hezekiah, when he misleads you, saying, "Yahweh will deliver us.""<sup>1</sup>  
[2 Kings 18:31-32]

As central to the blessing motif as is tîrôš<sup>Y</sup>, it is a wonderful testimony to King David's relationship with God that he needed no harvest in order to rejoice with exceeding joy in God's overwhelming goodness. In a time of potential distress, David exults in God:

Thou hast put gladness in my heart,  
More than when their threshed grain\* and  
harvested grape juice\* abound.  
In peace I will both lie down and sleep,  
For Thou alone, O Yahweh, dost make me to  
dwell in safety. [Ps. 4:7(8)-3(9)]

The acknowledgement to God. Any commodity which par-

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<sup>1</sup>(Note that Isa. 36:17 is a parallel passage.) It is interesting that Sennacherib should provide the wrong parallel word for bread ("vineyards") instead of the proper word, yáyin. Also he placed yishār with honey instead of in its normal trilogy.



ticularly emphasizes God's beneficent gifts to man must, of necessity, elicit man's proper appreciation toward the source of this enjoyment. As would be expected, Yahweh desired that man specifically acknowledge His gifts by returning to Himself a portion. It is in this context that the Old Testament frequently mentions tîrôš<sup>1</sup> as a tithe or as an offering for the needs of God's designated servants, His priests:

"You are not allowed to eat within your gates the tithe of your threshed grain\* or harvested grape juice\* or fresh oil,\* or the first-born of your herd or flock, or any of your votive offerings which you vow, or your freewill offerings, or the contribution of your hand. But you shall eat them before Yahweh your God in the place which Yahweh your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Yahweh your God in all your undertakings." [Deut. 12:17-18]

"And you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your threshed grain,\* your harvested grape juice,\* your fresh oil,\* and the first-born of your herd and your flock, in order that you may learn to fear Yahweh your God always." [Deut. 14:23]

Then Yahweh spoke to Aaron, "Now behold, I Myself have given you charge of My offerings, . . . This shall be yours from the most holy gifts, reserved from the fire; every offering of theirs, even every grain offering and every sin offering and every guilt offering, which they shall render to Me, shall be most holy for you and for your sons. . . . This also is yours, the offering of their gift. . . . All the best of the fresh oil\* and all the best of the harvested grape juice\* and of the threshed grain,\* the first fruits of those which they give to Yahweh, I give them to you." [Num. 18:8a, 9, 11a, 12]<sup>1</sup>

These references are representative enough to make clear that God wanted His people to both acknowledge His gift

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<sup>1</sup>Deut. 18:4-5 is another legal passage with a similar message.

and to unselfishly share that gift with His servants whose employment in sacred matters precluded their active participation in the harvest themselves. Therefore, the priests shared in the bounty of the land by the offerings of God's people.<sup>1</sup>

The cursing from God. Since God had specifically placed His blessing upon each generation in Israel on a conditional basis, it was to be expected that the corollary was also true. Such was indeed the case. Yahweh very clearly outlined Israel's culpability should there ever come a time when the tirōš<sup>AV</sup> might fail:

"But it shall come about, if you will not obey Yahweh your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. . . . Cursed shall be the . . . produce of your ground. . . .

"Yahweh will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed . . . .

". . . you shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not use its fruit. . . .

"Yahweh will bring a nation against you from afar, . . . it shall eat . . . the produce of your ground . . . [the] threshed grain,\* [the] harvested grape juice,\* [and the] fresh oil,\* . . . until they have caused you to perish." [Deut. 28:15, 18a, 20a, 30b, 49a, 51]

In accordance with Israel's dismal record of faith there are a significant number of passages which indicate her failure to obey. Therefore, Yahweh's wrath upon His people is well deserved. In light of the apostasy of Israel, Joel writes

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<sup>1</sup>Scripture references alluding to the fulfillment (or lack of it) of these commands as they specifically include tirōš<sup>AV</sup> are the following: 2 Chron. 31:5; Neh. 10:37, 39; 13:5, 12.

graphically of the effect of Yahweh's wrath:

The field is ruined,  
 The land mourns;  
 For the threshed grain\* is ruined,  
 The harvested grape juice\* dries up,  
 Fresh oil\* fails.  
 Be ashamed, O farmers,  
 Wail, O vinedressers,  
 For the wheat and the barley;  
 Because the harvest of the field is  
 destroyed.  
 The vine dries up,  
 And the fig tree fails; . . .  
 All the trees of the field dry up.  
 Indeed, rejoicing dries up  
 From the sons of men. [Joel 1:10-12]<sup>1</sup>

The intransigence of the people in the midst of Yahweh's judgment is clearly shown in Hosea 7:13a, 14 in this lament:

Woe to them because they have wandered away from Me! . . .  
 And they do not cry out to Me *with sincerity* from their  
 hearts  
 When they howl *in distress* upon their beds;  
 Even though they are *miserably* anxious over *their lack*  
 of threshed grain and harvested grape juice,  
 Yet they turn away from Me! [RT]

One additional passage is almost humorous in its tragic irony. People already experiencing a famine (a sign of God's displeasure) were further earning God's disapproval by the treatment of their fellow Judeans. This consisted of making them mortgage their lands and their homes, and even of forcing their kinsmen into bondage in their hunger for food. Nehemiah's reaction which brought favorable results was this:

"Please, let us leave off this usury. Please, give back to

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the previously cited passage in Hos. 2:9(11) and 4:11 where the actual misdirection of harvest acknowledgment (toward Baal) brought down Yahweh's wrath. Hos. 9:2 also uses tîrôš in similar contexts. Note also Mic. 6:15.

them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money and of the threshed grain,\* the *harvested grape juice*,\* and the fresh oil\* that you are exacting from them." [Neh. 5:10b-11]

Another graphic passage dealing with God's displeasure toward sin which so affects the harvest is in the first chapter of Haggai (verses 7, 9-11):

Thus says Yahweh of hosts, "Consider your ways! . . . You look for much, but behold, *it comes* to little; when you bring *it* home, I blow it *away*. Why?" declares Yahweh of hosts, "because of My house which *lies* desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. And I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain *harvest*,\* the grape juice *harvest*\* [and] on the *olive oil harvest*.\* . . ."

It is not only Israel that merited the wrath of God but the whole earth, so that they too must share the fate of removal of the vine and its products:

The earth mourns *and* withers, the world fades *and* withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

The *harvested grape juice*\* mourns,  
The vine decays,  
All the merry-hearted sigh. [Isa.  
24:4-7]

The renewed blessing from God. How wonderful it is that the Old Testament does not conclude the message of God's blessing on a note of failure! How totally in character Yahweh shows Himself to be by remaining true to His promises to the fathers despite the flagrant apostasy of their descendants.

Because of the veracity which Yahweh holds so dear and because of His great love, God has much to say concerning the blessings of harvest which He will heap upon Israel in the (yet) future millennial time<sup>1</sup> of peace, prosperity and righteousness. In stirring messages of encouragement to the righteous, the prophets make this clear:

You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh,  
 And a royal diadem in the hand of your God.  
 It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken,"  
 Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate";  
 But you will be called, "My delight is in her,"  
 And your land, "Married";  
 For Yahweh delights in you,  
 And *to Him* your land will be married. . . .  
 Yahweh has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm,  
 "I will never again give your threshed grain *to provide*  
*food for your enemies;*  
 Nor will foreigners drink *the beverages made from your*  
*harvested grape juice,*  
 But those who garner the *threshed grain* will eat the bread  
 and praise Yahweh.  
 And those who gather *the grapes* and press *the juice* will  
 drink *the grape beverages* in the courts of My sanctuary.  
 [Isa. 62:3-4, 8-9]<sup>2</sup>

"At that time," declares Yahweh, "I will be the God  
 of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my  
 people. . . .  
 "Again you shall plant vineyards  
 On the hills of Samaria;

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<sup>1</sup>Though the term is not strictly biblical, it receives its name from the specified thousand years of Rev. 20:2.

<sup>2</sup>(Verses 8-9 were translated by RT.) Since Scripture is clear throughout that one does not eat dāgān, but rather the bread which is made from it, it is just as clear that one does not drink tīrōš but rather a beverage, yāyin, which is drawn from it. For Hebrew to leave out words which the context supplies is quite normal. To ensure real understanding in English it is helpful to supply those contextually understood words when a translation is made. (Note especially that yāga<sup>c</sup>, āsaḇ, and qābaṣ are harvest words rather than words related to actual consumption of the product.)

The planters shall plant  
 And shall enjoy *them*. . . ."  
 . . . "He who scattered Israel will gather him,  
 And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock." . . .  
 "And they shall come and shout for joy on the height of  
 Zion,  
 And they shall be radiant over the bounty of Yahweh--  
 Over the threshed grain\* and the harvested grape juice,\*  
 and fresh oil,\*  
 And over the young of the flock and the herd;  
 And their life shall be like a watered garden,  
 And they shall never languish again.  
 . . . And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness,"  
 declares Yahweh. [Jer. 31:1, 5, 10b, 12, 14b]<sup>1</sup>

Then Yahweh will be zealous for His land,  
 And will have pity on His people.  
 And Yahweh will answer and say to His people,  
 "Behold, I am going to send you threshed grain,\* har-  
vested grape juice,\* and fresh oil,\*  
 And you will be satisfied in full with them;  
 And I will never again make you a reproach among the  
 nations."<sup>2</sup> [Joel 2:18-19]

And Yahweh their God will save them in that day  
 As the flock of His people;  
 For *they are* as the stones of a crown,  
 Sparkling in His land.  
 "For what comeliness and beauty *will be theirs!*  
 Threshed grain\* *will again be the raw material which*  
*will make the young men flourish, and harvested grape*  
*juice\* will do the same for the virgins."* [Zech.  
 9:16-17]<sup>3</sup>

Summary and further observations. Having reviewed in  
 this chapter all of the pertinent passages and contexts in  
 which <sup>^</sup>tīrōš<sup>^v</sup> occurs, several important concepts have been made

<sup>1</sup>For another similar passage note the previously cited  
 Hos. 2:21(23)-23(25).

<sup>2</sup>Note that these commodities are again mentioned in  
 this same context in verses 23-24.

<sup>3</sup>Several italicized words have been added by RT to  
 adequately convey the meaning of the passage.

evident which in a less comprehensive study might have been overlooked. Tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> is a word rooted firmly in the vocabulary of God's most beneficent material blessings but it is a word which *always* refers to the harvest and never refers to the human consumption of the liquid. Therefore, it is a word which, without exception, speaks of fresh grape juice as the normal harvest product of the vineyard, for apparently the vines were cultivated primarily for the beverage rather than for the grapes themselves.<sup>1</sup>

A further deduction which seems warranted biblically (if not logically) is that this juice was a storagable commodity which had not undergone the chemical alterations which would render it fermented and therefore change this healthful product into an unwholesome intoxicant. The other commodities of threshed grain and fresh oil were stored without chemical change for long periods and tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> is mentioned along with them (without distinction) in contexts of storage as well as of harvest.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, there would be no reason for storage if the commodity could not be preserved without spoilage during this period of time. The fact that ancient Israel did build

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<sup>1</sup>This is indicated by the fact that there is a paucity of references to grapes (18 times) as opposed to the many references to tîrôš<sup>AV</sup> (38 times). Such a deduction is further warranted from a comparison of the very few times raisins (šimmûq, 4 times) or raisin cakes (šîšâ, 4 times) are mentioned, as opposed to the multiplicity of passages (141 times) which mention yâvin.

<sup>2</sup>Note, for example, Neh. 10:39(40), 13:12, and especially 2 Chron. 32:28.

storage facilities for tîrôš (2 Chron. 32) certainly argues in favor of the ability of the ancient Hebrews to preserve the stored commodity.<sup>1</sup>

### שכר

#### The verb šākar

Prior to examining the usage of the noun šēkār, it is important to look first at the verb to which it is related. The verb šākar has the lexical definition "be, or become, drunk, drunken."<sup>2</sup> In a quick overview of its Old Testament usage this would seem to be an adequate definition; however, as more careful study is done the inadequacy of the definition in comprehending the total usage of the verb becomes apparent.

It is true that the predominant usage of the verb certainly relates to the state of drunkenness. For example, there are four passages which speak of *literal* drunkenness as shown by the context:

And he [Noah] drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. [Gen. 9:21]

As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk. Then Eli said to her, "How long will you

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<sup>1</sup>An obvious question which will be dealt with in chapter 6 is: Must natural fermentation be equated with spoilage? Theologically the answer appears to be "yes." However, just as there is an absence of biblical comment as to how the juice was preserved unfermented, so there is an equal absence of notation as to how the fermentation process was controlled. Either way Scripture is silent and logic must be made subject to biblical harmony rather than vice versa.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 1016.



make yourself drunk? Put away your wine from you."  
[1 Sam. 1:13-14]

Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing." Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house. [2 Sam. 11:10-13]

"Woe to you who make your neighbors drink,  
Who mix in your venom even to make them drunk  
So as to look on their nakedness!" [Hab. 2:15]<sup>1</sup>

Fully eleven<sup>2</sup> additional times (out of a total of nineteen) drunkenness is apparently the intended meaning; but in these eleven cases šākar is used *figuratively*. The language varies somewhat but the figure is uniformly one of divine judgment in an exercise of Yahweh's righteous wrath. Some of the representative references are these:

"If I sharpen My flashing sword,  
And My<sup>3</sup> hand takes hold on justice,  
I will render vengeance on My adversaries.  
And I will repay those who hate Me.  
I will make My arrows drunk with blood,

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<sup>1</sup>It is difficult to discern whether or not the purpose (nakedness) is literal. In any case, though, the drunkenness seems to be a real intent, even if the wine is called "venom."

<sup>2</sup>This tabulation excludes one additional passage in which šākar is also used figuratively, which will be dealt with below (Isa. 49:26), p. 212.

<sup>3</sup>This word is capitalized for uniformity.

And My sword shall devour flesh, . . ."  
[Deut. 32:41-42a]

"Linger, and become astounded;  
Enjoy yourselves,<sup>1</sup> and become blind!  
They will become drunk, but not with wine [yáyin]<sup>2</sup>;  
They will stagger, but not from strong drink [šēkar].  
Because Yahweh will pour upon you a spirit of deep insensibility--  
In *that* He will tightly close your eyes, namely the prophets;  
In *that* He will blindfold your heads, namely the seers."<sup>3</sup>  
[Isa. 29:9-10; RT]

"And I trod down the peoples in My anger,  
And made them drunk in my wrath,  
And I poured out their lifeblood on the  
earth." [Isa. 63:6]

Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of  
Yahweh,  
Intoxicating all the earth.  
The nations have drunk of her wine;  
Therefore the nations are going mad. [Jer.  
51:7]

"When they become heated up, I shall serve *them*  
their banquet  
And make them drunk, that they may become  
jubilant  
And may sleep a perpetual sleep  
And not wake up," declares Yahweh.<sup>4</sup> [Jer. 51:39]

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<sup>1</sup>There are two distinct verbs, according to BDB, (p. 1044), sharing the same Hebrew consonants šā'a': the first means to "be smeared over, blinded," and the second to "sport, take delight in, delight." In light of the parallelism and the overall context, it appears preferable to interpret this passage as using both words instead of only one. The emphasis of the passage, then, is the unexpectedness of judgment of Yahweh.

<sup>2</sup>Compare Isa. 51:21 for the same idea.

<sup>3</sup>Since this is prophetic, it is placed in the future rather than in the past. The exact nature of the judgment of Yahweh here will be a sudden, unexpected removal of revelation, which will cause great consternation.

<sup>4</sup>Note the repetition of these last two phrases in 51:57.

"... 'Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel,  
 "Drink, be drunk, vomit, fall, and rise no more because of  
 the sword which I will send among you."'<sup>1</sup> [Jer. 25:27]

If these references represented the only ways in which the verb šākar were used, it might be assumed that the definition given earlier was adequate. However, such is not the case. This fact is made especially clear when passages are discovered which cannot refer to drunkenness at all, even though this verb is utilized. Perhaps the clearest example of this latter employment of šākar is in the Song of Solomon (5:1):

"I have entered my garden, my sister, *my* bride;  
 I have collected *from it* my myrrh with my spices.  
 I have eaten *there* my honeycomb with my honey;  
 I have drunk my grape juice with my milk."

"Eat, friends;

Drink, yea, drink to satisfaction, O lovers!"<sup>2</sup> [RT]

In this context of explicit divine approval of the marriage bed through beautiful metaphorical language,<sup>3</sup> it would be poor

<sup>1</sup>Three other references may be included here also: Jer. 48:26 (of Moab): "Make him drunk, for he has become arrogant toward Yahweh. . . ."; Lam. 4:21 (of Edom): ". . . the cup will come around to you as well, / You will become drunk and make yourself naked"; Nah. 3:11 (of Nineveh): "You too will become drunk. . . ."

<sup>2</sup>It is, of course, possible to translate (with the NEB) the last phrase as "be drunk with love," taking dôdîm as an abstract plural (note Prov. 7:18). However, the parallelism of dôdîm with rē'îm and of šikrû with še'tû and 'iklu would militate strongly against such a translation and support the one above.

<sup>3</sup>Glickman interprets this section correctly as portraying poetically the consummation of the marriage on the wedding night with the expressed approval of the couple's Creator. In the following quotation he first identifies clearly the speaker at the end of 5:1. Then he summarizes the relationship

exegesis indeed to interpret the last phrase as an injunction to become drunk as with an intoxicating beverage.<sup>1</sup> This truth has been recognized by the translators of the Authorized Version and those of the New American Standard Bible as well. The former translates the phrase as "drink abundantly, O beloved," while the latter renders it, "imbibe deeply, O lovers."

Another passage which uses the verb Yākar similarly is found in the book of Haggai (1:5-6):

So therefore Yahweh of hosts declares:  
 "Consider carefully your way of life!  
 You have sown much but harvested *only* a little;  
 You eat, but do not have enough to satisfy your hunger;  
 You drink, but do not have enough to quench your thirst;

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between chapter 4 and 5:1.

" . . . Only the Divine Poet [God], the most intimate wedding guest of all, could pronounce such an affirmation on the consummation of the wedding. For their love was from Him (8.7) and from Him would it be approved.

"To summarize the conclusions of this argument, one perceives that the consummation of their marriage was first preceded by the groom's praise of his bride (4.1-7). Then he called her thoughts to himself (4.8) which desire his following caresses naturally fulfilled (4.9-11). At last a delicate request for consummation (4.12-15) was answered by the bride's equally delicate invitation (4.16) and the marriage is consummated (5.1a,b) with God's hearty approval (5.1c). This is the sequence of the action.

" . . . One might recall that he first described her in terms of a garden (4.12-15). Then she drew upon the same imagery to invite him to come to her. At last he concluded, 'I have come into my garden . . . ,' continuing upon the same imagery. The literary device was extended metaphor." (Craig S. Glickman, "The Unity of the Song of Solomon" [Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1974], pp. 36-37.)

<sup>1</sup>Medically it is common knowledge that intoxicating beverages not only lower inhibitions (which is unnecessary in this context) but also lower both sexual performance and enjoyment. Even though the text is quite apparently figurative, it would yet be most inappropriate to use drunkenness with wine as a metaphor for enjoyment of married love.

*You put on clothes, but do not have enough to keep warm;  
Even the one who earns wages places his earnings into a  
purse full of holes. [RT]*

The context of this passage is that Yahweh is punishing the returned exiles from Babylon with a *drought* (verses 9-11) because they have neglected proper priorities: His house has not been built. Since that is the background, it is remarkable that the New American Standard Bible translated the phrase containing the verb šākar as "*You~drink, but there is not enough to become drunk.*" Nothing could be further removed from the thought of the passage than getting drunk.<sup>1</sup> Every other commodity which is mentioned--food, clothes, wages--is a legitimate and needed item. The obvious corollary would be that there is insufficient *water* to quench one's thirst (not an unexpected reality if all water supplies are failing).

From these two clear references it is quite conclusive that "to be or become drunk" as a comprehensive definition for the verb šākar is inadequate and misleading. Instead it appears that the verb should be recognized as a synonym of the verb sābā', "to drink deeply,"<sup>2</sup> and even of the verb rāwā', "to deeply satisfy."<sup>3</sup> However, the last verb differs significantly

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<sup>1</sup>The NEB translates this more accurately, "You drink but never more than you need."

<sup>2</sup>Note the previous discussion concerning this verb sābā', pp. 174-76 above.

<sup>3</sup>BDB, p. 924, defines the verb rāwā' as to "be saturated, drink one's fill." The definition given above, "to deeply satisfy," however, more precisely fits the context in which the word is used. "Drinking to one's fill" would only

in that rāwâ is never used in the sense of "to drink" (literally), while drinking is innate to the verbs šābā' and šākar. The correlation, then, is that šākar refers to "drinking deeply" or to "quaffing" liquids in satisfying one's thirst. With some beverages, such as grape juice (Song of Sol. 5:1) or water (Hag. 1:6), the verb would specify drinking as much as desired and would therefore indicate luxurious enjoyment of an abundant and valued beverage. On the other hand, if an intoxicant (wine) was the subject the result would obviously be drunkenness, for several drinks would have this effect.

Therefore, the idea of *drinking deeply* can be positive or negative depending solely upon the nature of the beverage being consumed. It is simply a scientific fact that drinking a non-intoxicating beverage with gusto<sup>1</sup> can be satisfying,

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apply fully if the verb šātâ is used in parallel (Ps. 36:8[9]), whereas "to deeply satisfy" fits many passages, including Ps. 36:8(9): Prov. 5:19, of love (// šāgâ, "to be distracted" = "exhilarated"); 7:18, of love (// ālās, "to be delighted"); Isa. 43:24, of sacrifices (// qānâ, "to buy"); Jer. 31:14, of comfort (// šābā', "to satisfy"); and 31:25, of rest (// mālē', "to fill"). There is a legitimate secondary nuance of "soaking" or "drenching" (similar to BDB's "saturate") which is used of blood on a sword (Isa. 34:5, 7; Jer. 46:10); of rain inundating the earth (Ps. 65:10[11]; Isa. 55:10); and of a face drenched with tears (Isa. 16:9). One final reference fits better into the first idea, except that it is used with great irony of Yahweh "satisfying" His people with bitter experiences. Lam. 3:15 may be translated, "He [Yahweh] has surfeited me [šābā'] with bitter herbs / He has glutted me [rāwâ] with wormwood." (The related adjective rāweh [3 times] means "well-watered," and the noun rewāyâ [2 times] apparently refers to fullness or abundance as a deeply satisfying condition.

<sup>1</sup>No reference to contemporary beer commercials of the twentieth century is intended.

whereas doing the same with a fermented beverage produces the undesirable state of drunkenness. In light of this, the same verb can denote either the quenching of thirst (using a beneficial beverage) or an over-indulgence (surfeit) of a harmful beverage. If this is properly understood, it neutralizes the popular comprehension of the verb as innately negative (which the state of drunkenness always is biblically). Certainly the verb may be used of drunkenness and usually is. However, when that is the case it will be so indicated in the context by the nature of the beverage, and/or by the circumstances included in the passage, rather than by the innate meaning of the verb.

In order to further demonstrate the validity of this truth, it should be noted that the biblical evidence for viewing šākar as referring primarily to drunkenness is not as overwhelming as it might superficially appear. There are only four passages (listed above) where the verb obviously signifies (literal) drunkenness, and even one of these is suspect.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, there are three references where (literal) copious drinking of non-fermented beverages for enjoyment's sake is clearly the intended meaning. In addition to the two passages discussed earlier, Genesis 43:34 would be in this category:

And he [Joseph] took portions to them from his own table; but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of

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<sup>1</sup>It appears that the attempt to make Uriah drunk by pressing him to drink copiously was not successful; at any rate, he still refused to go home, in accord with his high ideals.

theirs. So they feasted [wayyiš<sup>tû</sup>] and drank freely [wayyiš<sup>erû</sup>] with him.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of references in which šākar is found are figurative. Since they are uniformly figures of speech indicating judgment upon the rebellious, it is not surprising that this particular verb was chosen--for none of the other verbs dealing with "drinking" connotes drinking more copiously than does this one.<sup>2</sup> However, even these figurative usages of the word would not, upon more careful consideration, necessarily favor a uniform rendering of the verb as "to be or become drunk."

For example, if Isaiah 63:6 is rendered as the New American Standard Bible does it (quoted above), this would present a very mixed metaphor: It would speak of making the people drunk in the middle of an extended metaphor picturing Yahweh treading people, as one would tread grapes, and then pouring out their "juice" to the earth.<sup>3</sup> In fact, a recognition of this difficulty has caused many scholars to substitute, with some manuscript support, the verb šābar, in the sense of

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<sup>1</sup>In the specific context here of a full meal (note verse 31) where no beverage is highlighted, it appears that the above NASB translation of "feasted" for the verb šātā is justified. (Note that BDB, p. 1059, gives this as the interpretation for this verb in Esther 3:15.) This translation is greatly superior to the euphemistic rendering of the AV, "And they drank, and were merry with him."

<sup>2</sup>A brief discussion of the Hebrew verbs dealing with "drinking" may be found in appendix I.

<sup>3</sup>Logically the three verbs relate specifically to the actions of the one who is treading the press.



"break" or "crush," for the Masoretic Text verb šākar. Attractive as this alternative may appear, it should probably be rejected as the easier reading. Instead, and more in keeping with a uniform figure of speech, the following translation is proposed:

"So I trampled the peoples in My anger,  
And I surfeited them with My fury,  
Then I poured out their expressed life  
blood to the earth." [Isa. 63:6; RT]

In this construction, the second phrase amplifies the first; by His trampling, Yahweh was dispensing His abundant rage upon them copiously.<sup>1</sup> The end product of this action was a commodity so worthless that it was simply poured out upon the ground. What vivid language is used here to communicate the (temporal) down payment of the deserved "wages of sin"!

There are other passages which use šākar figuratively also without the specific connotation of drunkenness. For example, Deut. 32:42a (quoted above) should be rendered:

"I will make My arrows drink deeply of blood,

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<sup>1</sup>If it is important to retain the figurative idea of "quenching thirst," which seems to be inherent in the verb, that figure certainly fits into the context. By Yahweh's own poetic justice (which in the Old Testament is simply a person receiving that which he has earned, whether good or bad), they had "thirsted" for His anger: Knowing that He was a righteous God--and understanding fully that His punishment would be sure--they had yet repeatedly transgressed His command. In so doing they had figuratively "thirsted" for the expected justice. It is for this very reason that Yahweh makes the wicked drunk with the cup of His wrath in other contexts (cf. Isa. 51:17, 20; note also verse 22). However, here their "thirst" for God's wrath is quenched by Yahweh's furious trampling of the wicked as in a grape press, a similar idea but now in accord with the context.

And My sword shall feed upon flesh." [RT]

The obvious parallel of eating and drinking is maintained and the concept of Yahweh's penal justice is vividly portrayed.

Another clearly similar usage may be found in Isaiah 49:26. Here Yahweh is comforting Israel with the declaration of His certain punishment of their oppressors:

"And I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh,  
And they shall drink copiously of their own blood as if  
*it were fresh juice* ['āsîs].  
Then all flesh shall know that it is I, Yahweh, who  
delivers you,  
And that your Redeemer is the mighty God of Jacob." [RT]

This translation keeps the obvious parallelism of eating and drinking while retaining the normal meaning of "fresh juice" for the word 'āsîs.<sup>1</sup>

To sum up the conclusions drawn in this section concerning the biblical use of the verb šākar: this verb is basically a neutral one dealing with drinking copiously until satiety is reached. While drunkenness is certainly a legitimate nuance which can be conveyed by this verb, any such negative idea must be supplied by the context; it is not innate in the verb itself.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Note the previous discussion in this chapter (pp. 158-62) concerning 'āsîs.

<sup>2</sup>The adjective šikkôr/šikkôr comes from the same etymological root, and always refers to a state of drunkenness. This adjective is used (whether literally or figuratively) in a uniform manner of a negative state caused by drinking too much of an intoxicant (note the parallel use of yāyin in Isa. 28:1, Jer. 23:9, and Joel 1:5). However, that fact does not at all change the validity of the above conclusions concerning the verb šākar. The adjective simply has supplied a needed vocabu-

The noun šēkār

The verb which has just been examined is related etymologically to a frequently used noun. This noun, šēkār, occurs twenty-three times in the Old Testament. Of all the words related to the use of wine in the Old Testament, perhaps none provides greater difficulty of interpretation for those holding the position that God consistently disapproved of the drinking of intoxicating beverages than this apparently clear-cut word usually translated "strong drink."<sup>1</sup> It is not the

lary word to denote this negative condition. Apparently a parallel adjectival idea to denote a positive state of quenched thirst was not as necessary to the biblical narrative.

Another related word (occurring only 3 times), šikkārôn, is a noun which is used more neutrally. Whereas the idea of "drunkenness" does occur figuratively in Jer. 13:13 (note the jugs of yāyin mentioned in verse 12) and probably in Ezek. 23:33 as well, the other passage may be interpreted more naturally without using the word "drunkenness." Ezek. 39:17b-20 should be translated:

"Announce to every kind of bird and to every living animal of the field: 'Assemble and come; gather from every side to come to My sacrifice . . . on the mountains of Israel in order that you might eat flesh and drink blood. You shall eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the earth's princes as if they were the . . . fatlings of Bashan. So you shall eat fat until you are glutted [lešāb'ā], and drink blood until you are surfeited [lešikkārôn], from my sacrifice. . . . Yea, you will be fully sated [šēba'tem] at My table with a plethora of horses and their riders, of warriors and every kind of fighting man,' declares the Lord Yahweh." [RT]

The translation naturally pairs eating (šākal) enough to fully satisfy (šb') with drinking (šātā) enough to thoroughly quench their thirst (škr). The fact that this noun is found in a context of overwhelming divine victory (the carnage is described vividly) over Israel's foes does not make "drunkenness" a necessary or even a desirable implication. The emphasis throughout is on satisfaction (note use of the verb šāba' to comprehend both eating and drinking in verse 20).

<sup>1</sup>ASV; NASB; BDB, p. 1016.

majority of Old Testament uses of this verb, however, that causes the difficulty of understanding; rather it is one single reference which raises the greatest question concerning the use of šēkār: That problem passage is Deuteronomy 14:26. Aside from this verse (and a supporting one), the word šēkār is uniform in its usage pertaining to an intoxicating beverage of which God disapproves. An examination of this noun in its many contexts--legislative, poetic, historic--and especially in its use in Deuteronomy 14:26 will be made below.

Šēkār as it relates to beer. One very important question at the outset pertains to the nature of šēkār. Does it refer to one kind of beverage uniformly, or does it refer to more than one kind of beverage? This is difficult to answer definitively. Many have drawn upon the late extra-biblical writings of the Jews and others to conclude that šēkār was an intoxicant, variously beer (from grain) or date wine or honey wine.<sup>1</sup> However, these sources provide primarily a true understanding only of the meaning of šēkār in intertestamental times and after, rather than being an authoritative commentary upon

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<sup>1</sup>For example, Midrash Shocher Tov Samuel Rabbotho 2 delineates the difference between yáyin and šēkār by stating that the former is young wine and the latter is old wine (Isidore Koplowitz, comp. and trans., מדרש יין ושכר Midrash Yayin Veshechor; Midrashic Exegetics on Wine and Strong Drink in Hebrew and English [Detroit, Michigan, n.p., 1923], p. 48).

Talmud Babli Kerthuth 13b contrasts "wine" (yáyin) with šēkār, "anything that causes intoxication" (ibid., p. 42). Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, 2:1576, defines šēkār as "mixed wine" or "beer of dates or barley." Herodotus (2. 77; 4. 177) refers to οἶνος made from barley or the lotus.

the Old Testament usage of the word. Doubtless the cognate word in Akkadian does mean "beer" (made from grain). Nevertheless, that does not necessitate that the Hebrews so used the word. It is interesting, by contrast, to note that in Gordon's Ugaritic Texts glossary he does not list one occurrence of "beer" in the Ugaritic language, from the extant texts of a people contemporary with Old Testament Israel who also lived along the Phoenician littoral.

The evidence surveyed previously in chapter 2 (especially that regarding commerce) would support the conclusion that wine rather than beer was the normal intoxicant of Canaan during the second millennium B.C. and continuing into the first millennium. Therefore, it would at least appear from extra-biblical sources that beer was not very prominent in Israel. If that conclusion is valid, it would naturally follow that the frequently used word, šēkār, refers to a more popular beverage.

Other evidence would equally support the conclusion that šēkār does not refer to beer in Old Testament Israel. When the biblical usage of the term is examined, for example, some facts appear particularly significant. First, the making of beer (explained in chapter 2) requires a more unnatural and involved process than does the making of wine from grapes. Since the Bible mentions nothing of that process it is unlikely that beer was a commonly manufactured beverage. On the other hand, by contrast, the processing of the grape into juice is a frequently documented occurrence in Scripture. Furthermore, even

the language of harvest would tend to militate against this particular use of grain since it indicates that the grain was grown for eating. The normal triplet of the harvest is frequently but diversely presented, depending upon which aspect of the bounty the writer desired to focus attention (the place of harvest, the agricultural source of the crop, the harvested crop itself, the raw products obtained from these, or the product ready for the consumer). For example, the following references represent variations of this normal harvest triplet:

- (1) 1 Samuel 8:14, the place of harvest--field, vineyard, olive grove (śādeh, kérem, záyit).
- (2) Haggai 2:19, the agricultural source of the harvest--seed, vine, olive tree<sup>1</sup> (zérah, gépen, 'ēš záyit).
- (3) Deuteronomy 24:19-21, the harvested crop itself--the harvest of grain, grapes, olives (qāšir, bāšir, hōbēṭ záyit<sup>2</sup>).
- (4) Deuteronomy 11:14, the raw products obtained from these --harvested grain, freshly pressed grape juice, fresh oil (dāgān, tîrôš, yiṣhār<sup>3</sup>).
- (5) 1 Chronicles 9:29, the products ready for the consumer

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<sup>1</sup>The fig and the pomegranate trees are also mentioned in this verse.

<sup>2</sup>This triplet is explicit only once (bāšîr is omitted but the verb bāšar is used in verse 21). The third word (phrase actually) occurs only once in the Old Testament, whereas the other two are normal words for the harvest of grain and grapes.

<sup>3</sup>For this very frequent triplet note the preceding discussion of tîrôš.

--bread, grape juice, oil (léhem, yávin, šémen<sup>1</sup>).

The many usages of the normal triplet of harvest in Scripture, of which the above are representative, clearly indicate that grain was grown for food, grapes for drink, and olives for the oil. It is true that this does not provide proof that grain was not used in Israel for beer just as it does not prove that olives were not eaten,<sup>2</sup> but it does indicate that if these raw commodities were so used, the practice was not very common. As a helpful comparison, it should be noted that the eating of grapes, raisins, and raisin cakes is mentioned in Scripture, though not as frequently as the use of the liquids obtained from the grape.

A further important consideration relates to the biblical usage of the word šēkār itself. If beer was a relatively common beverage, and if it were called šēkār, it would be natural to expect to find at least one recorded historical incident during which such a beverage was consumed. It is noteworthy, however, that there is none: every historical incident mentioning the drinking of an intoxicating beverage which causes subsequent drunkenness specifically refers to the fermented product of the vine.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the word šēkār almost

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<sup>1</sup>It also occurs in Hag. 2:12. Note as well the following discussion of yávin in chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup>However, there are no biblical references either to the making of beer or to the eating of olives.

<sup>3</sup>The one apparent exception, 1 Sam. 1:15, is not really an exception at all if properly understood. Note the following

always (with only two exceptions<sup>1</sup>) occurs in prose or poetry in conjunction with yáyin rather than by itself. As will subsequently be demonstrated, the two words are quite uniformly used; in prose the words occur together as a hendiadys, and in poetry they are poetic synonyms in parallel constructions. The fact that yáyin and šēkār are a normal poetic pair would lend credence to the view that the two words both refer to the same entity in the synonymous parallelism: intoxicating wine.<sup>2</sup>

With this as a background, it is appropriate at this point to classify the various uses of the noun šēkār.

šēkār in legislative contexts. Since those contexts which are basically legal in character are mentioned first in Scripture, it is these contexts which will be the first to be examined here. The legislative passages which include the word šēkār may be subdivided into three kinds of texts: those dealing with the priest and his ministry; those dealing with the Nazarite and his service; and those pertaining to the common man and his responsibility.

(1) The priest and his ministry. With the first men-  
discussion of this passage, p. 245.

<sup>1</sup>One passage, Num. 28:7, definitely refers to šēkār as an exact synonym for yáyin (compare below, p. 239). The other, Ps. 69:12(13), poetically describes drunkards as šōtē šēkār.

<sup>2</sup>While synonymous parallelism can occur without both words referring to the same entity (note hayyām and hayyardēn in Ps. 114:3, 5), with a frequently used pair it is normal to expect that both words refer to the same thing unless the comprehensive biblical context specifies otherwise.



tion of this noun in the Pentateuch, God gave some very explicit and solemn instruction to the priests:

Then Yahweh spoke to Aaron, saying, "Do not drink any intoxicating wine<sup>1</sup> (neither you nor your sons with you) when you enter the tent of meeting so that you do not die. This is a statute which applies perpetually to your descendants in order *for you* to make a *proper* distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean; and in order *for you* to *clearly* teach the descendants of Israel all the statutes which Yahweh has spoken to them through Moses." [Lev. 10:9-11; RT]

This injunction against any intoxicating beverages follows immediately upon the tragic death of two of Aaron's sons who disobeyed Yahweh's explicit instructions in the course of their priestly ministry. In a graphic demonstration of the fact that a holy God required the highest standards from His priests, Yahweh destroyed them instantly by fire. Because of the context it is possible to conclude that intoxication was the cause of Nadab and Abihu's aberrant behavior. Nevertheless it should be noted that this assumption, while possible, is not necessary. Yahweh could simply have used this occasion to make pertinent legislation which would be remembered better because of the recent demonstration of the serious consequences of disobedience.

While the specific legislation clearly demands that intoxicants were not to be used by priests in active ministry, there are yet several questions which remain. For example, does this passage obliquely condone the use of intoxicants by

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<sup>1</sup>Yāyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār is interpreted here as a hendiadys. Note the following explanation.

priests who were not on duty? A related question which must be considered in answering the first one is this: how are the purposes of this perpetually effective decree to be interpreted? That Yahweh expected them to discern clearly between the holy and the unholy is evident, but some enigmas remain, for it is not totally clear how this discernment would relate to drinking an intoxicating beverage. Was the beverage itself unclean or was it banned so that their alert, unclouded minds would thus be able in every circumstance to discern the difference between that which was and that which was not holy? Apparently it was the latter (which view is reflected in the translation above). The text here would seem to sidestep the issue pertaining to the innate value (or its lack) of fermented beverages. Instead the emphasis is upon clear thinking with all of their mental faculties alert, so that they might be able to discern and to be able to teach Israel. This interpretation is supported from a parallel passage in Ezekiel 44. There also (in verse 21) intoxicating beverages (yáyin) are prohibited for any among the priests "... when they enter the inner court." Then in verse 23 are these words: "Moreover, they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean." Since these sentences are separated in Ezekiel, it is most probable that in the earlier passage under discussion the main emphasis is not upon the relative cleanness or lack thereof pertaining to the wine itself. However, it should still be noted

that there is a logical and grammatical relationship in Leviticus 10 between abstention from intoxicants and wise discernment:<sup>1</sup>

In both passages the construction of the preposition b<sup>e</sup> with the infinitive construct bô<sup>2</sup> indicates that the time when such intoxicating beverages were totally forbidden was specifically when the priests were ministering in the tabernacle or temple. This much is explicit. Some might take the above statement and say that logically this implies that the drinking of intoxicating beverages would be permissible for a priest at any other time than the one specified. However, that assumption appears unwarranted in that, just as logically, if a priest's life was open to public view and he was a teacher of Israel, then he should constantly be exemplary in his deportment rather than abstaining from intoxication only while ministering in God's house. In any case, however, the legislation here specifically is with reference to an application of the death penalty for any infraction of the rule to abstain when serving in the tabernacle or temple. Intoxication at other times, while wrong, was apparently not subject to the same penalty.

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<sup>1</sup>Note that this is a specific purpose of the perpetual decree of abstention while serving. Prov. 31:4-5 indicates that the same truth applies to rulers as well.

<sup>2</sup>HS, #499, p. 84; GKC, #114, d-e, p. 348. The implication of these discussions is that this preposition with the infinitive construct normally indicates simultaneous action.

One further question regarding this passage also needs to be answered. How is yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār to be understood? There are two possibilities: the first is that the two words refer to two distinctly different beverages; the second would interpret the phrase as a hendiadys, assuming that the reader would realize that the prohibition applies to intoxicating wine (which was the usual intoxicant of Palestine). Of these possibilities the second is preferable for several reasons. First, as mentioned previously, there is no extant evidence that beer was a common beverage in Israel during Old Testament times. Second, there is no attempt to list all of the possible intoxicants but simply to bar intoxicants.<sup>1</sup> Third, the fact that the parallel passage in Ezekiel mentions the more common word "wine" alone would support this as well. Finally, a careful perusal of *all* the times in which yáyin and šēkār occur together in prose indicate that the two words uniformly constitute a hendiadys; this passage is not an exception.

(2) The Nazirite and his service. Numbers chapter six includes an extended section dealing with the specific instructions which Yahweh imposed upon anyone who took the Nazirite vow, thus dedicating his life to God. Contained in this legislation are two verses which clearly require of such a person that he abstain from the personal ingestion of any product of

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<sup>1</sup>If the usual intoxicant (grape wine) were banned, it would obviously follow that any other intoxicant was excluded as well.

the grape vine whatever:

"When any man or woman makes a special vow, the Nazirite vow, to dedicate himself to *the service of* Yahweh, he shall abstain from any intoxicating wine; he shall not drink any vinegar *made from* intoxicating wine; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat any grapes whether fresh or dried. During all the days of his separation, he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from the seeds even to the skin." [Num. 6:2b-4; RT]

Yahweh deliberately names in these verses the various potable and edible products of the vine which were known and used in Israel and very specifically excludes them from use by those who took the Nazirite vow. It is noteworthy that the list occurs in verse three and then the truth is repeated and summarized in verse four. Whatever Yahweh's reasons were for excluding every possible product of the grape (the innately harmful as well as the good), these are not delineated; but He does make the comprehensiveness of the exclusion indelibly clear.

These verses clearly lend support to the interpretation given earlier of the noun šēkār. Here too there is a hendiadys with yáyin w<sup>e</sup> šēkār together meaning "intoxicating wine." A second hendiadys (using both yáyin and šēkār) is apparently in reference to vinegar (ḥōmēs) made from intoxicating wine. In this context especially, where verse four summarizes all of verse three by specifically prohibiting everything produced by the grapevine, it is illogical to assume that šēkār alone in verse three refers to a product made from a source other than the vine.

While Numbers chapter six clearly stipulates that the legislation relating to the Nazirite was in effect only during the duration of his vow, there is another passage which carries the law of the grape even beyond the Nazirite himself. However, this passage (Judges 13) refers to a specific case in which God chose a man to be a Nazirite for life--even before birth. In order for this to be so the mother was required to live a separated life as well until the baby was born. When the Angel of Yahweh <sup>1</sup> appeared to Manoah's wife, this was His message:

"You are presently barren and have not borne *any children*, but now you shall conceive and give birth to a son. Therefore, you must carefully abstain from drinking *any intoxicating wine* or from eating any unclean thing. . . . for the boy is to be a Nazirite *dedicated to God* from the womb. . . ." [Judg. 13:3b-4, 5b; RT]

It appears again that yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār are words used together to denote (the hendiadys) "intoxicating wine." A noteworthy fact here is that, for the mother, it is the obviously harmful aspects of the vine's products which are specifically excluded: the fermented beverages.<sup>2</sup> However, when Manoah prayed successfully for the messenger to return, the Angel of Yahweh amplified His earlier words to include any

<sup>1</sup>In light of the other normal uses of the Hebrew root נָבֵא (Isa. 9:6[5]--péle'; Ps. 139:6--pil'î; Ps. 78:11--niplā'ôt; etc.) it appears evident that this messenger is claiming to be God in identifying Himself as "Wonderful" in verse 18, thus emphasizing His authority.

<sup>2</sup>This same hendiadys is used in verse 7 where the woman reports the news to her husband.

grape product (as in Num. 6:4), while reiterating the prohibition against intoxicating wine: "She should not eat anything which comes from the grapevine; especially she must not drink intoxicating wine, nor eat any unclean thing. . . ."<sup>1</sup> (Judg. 13:14 [RT]).

A question should be raised here which is pertinent both to the legislation regarding the priests and to that concerning the Nazirites. Is God prohibiting, under special and limited circumstances, a beverage which in common, everyday life was approved of God for the obedient Israelite? It would seem that the more universally applicable passages of Proverbs and Isaiah (yet to be examined) would indicate rather that fermented wine (yáyin and/or šēkār) was an unapproved beverage for anyone who would live according to God's standards.<sup>2</sup> A reference which would support the premise that God's approval extends only to the juice and not to wine is found in Numbers 6:20. This verse indicates a divinely approved resumption of grape juice (yáyin)

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<sup>1</sup>The change from "should not" to "must not" (for the hendiadys and following) with the word "especially" as a translation of the conjunction w<sup>e</sup> is supported by three considerations: First, there is a textual change in the negatives from lō' (with the indicative) to 'al (with the jussives). Second, the prohibition against any product of the vine was added the second time the angel appeared and was not considered to be vital information in the initial contact. The third point is a logical one in that intoxication is never approved in Scripture, whereas the grape and its products are uniformly given to man as the blessing of God.

<sup>2</sup>This would not be unlike the New Testament stipulations for bishops and deacons in 1 Tim. 3:1-13; these are the high standards *required* for leadership. This does not, however, imply that God desires less in the ones under their ministry.

but no mention is made of šēkār.

(3) The common man and his responsibility. In light of the fact that there is general uniformity in the biblical use of šēkār as denoting wine as an intoxicant, there is one passage in the law which is especially incongruous. The incongruity arises from the fact that in the overwhelming majority of instances where šēkār is used it is always spoken against as an unsuitable beverage. However, in Deuteronomy there is one context in which the use of šēkār is specifically blessed of God for Israel's consumption. This occasion was the annual feast in which all Israel gathered together to celebrate God's bountiful harvest:

"You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year. And you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your threshed grain\* [dāgān], your grape juice\* [tîrôš], your fresh oil\* [yîšhār], and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, in order that you may learn to fear Yahweh your God always. And if the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring *the tithe*, since the place where Yahweh your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when Yahweh your God blesses you, then you shall exchange *it* for money, and bind the money in your hand and go to the place which Yahweh your God chooses. And you may spend the money for whatever your heart desires, for oxen, or sheep, or satisfying grape juice,\*<sup>1</sup> or whatever your

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<sup>1</sup>Here also yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār is considered to be a hendiadys, although an unusual one. The preposition b<sup>e</sup> might normally seem to indicate two different beverages. (HS #72, p. 16, defines hendiadys as "a single concept [which] may be expressed by two words linked by the conjunction ! . . . ." However, it is the conviction of this writer that a hendiadys may also be indicated where the same preposition is prefixed to both words joined by ! or even two identical phrases joined by !, as in hōmeš yáyin w<sup>e</sup>hōmeš šēkār. It has also been demonstrated that the normal hendiadys with these two words is in reference to an



heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh your God and rejoice, you and your household. Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town for he has no portion or inheritance among you." [Deut. 14:22-27]

Yahweh's concern from the beginning of Israel's history was that they would realize that they were His people dwelling in accord with His pleasure on His land. To specifically remind them of this fact this annual feast was instituted.

In accord with this legislation, each family was to bring the tithe of the harvest at one appointed time to a central place (wherever the tabernacle was) and eat it together in the very presence of their God.<sup>1</sup> The above passage in Deuteronomy 14 is the most detailed passage regarding this yearly pilgrimage and feast; however, this feast had already been mentioned several times previously (note, for example, Exod. 22:29, 23:16; Deut. 12:17-19). If an Israelite family lived close enough they were simply to bring to the temple their annual tithe of the harvest staples: threshed grain, grape juice, and fresh oil. There, in a gathering of all Israel, they would eat together before Yahweh in a corporate

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intoxicant. However, as shown in the following discussion, the context would support the above interpretation rather than the more standard (as in NASB) one, "wine" and "strong drink."

<sup>1</sup>The bringing of the firstborn of the flocks and herds prescribed in Exod. 13:12, 15 and 22:30 is included here in the harvest festival for Israel's convenience, so that several pilgrimages would be unnecessary. Apparently, the firstborn were sacrificed but, since the emphasis is both upon eating and sacrifice, the offering was similar to the peace offerings of which one part was for God, one part for the priest, and one part for the worshipper (note Lev. 22:27-30, and especially Deut. 15:19-21).

time of rejoicing over what He had provided. The Levites, who did not have their own harvest, were cared for in this legislation, for they were to come and partake of the bounty.

A logical deduction must be made at this point which harmonizes the various texts. A casual reading of the text would imply that the entire tithe was consumed at this corporate festival. However, that is impossible on two accounts. First, Yahweh had specifically given all of Israel's tithe to the Levites for an inheritance and the Levites' tithe to the family of Aaron (Num. 18:21-32). Therefore, it follows that the feast mentioned in Deuteronomy must have consumed only a very small portion of the harvest tithes. Second, if the harvest of grain, juice, and oil was sufficient to last the nation until the next harvest time, it would have been a physical impossibility to consume one-tenth of that harvest in one day (or even several). The obvious explanation is that Israel brought the tithe to the tabernacle to be divided up among the Levites and that while all Israel was there together it was ordained of God to have an enormous feast. At this time both the tithers and the recipients of the tithes rejoiced together over the bountiful harvest and directed their corporate praise toward the God who had provided the bounty.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The seven year cycle would then be divided as follows: two years as explained above followed by a third year in which all of the tithe was given directly to the Levites without this corporate pilgrimage (Deut. 14:28); then there would be another identical three year cycle; and finally the seventh year would be one of rest for the land with no planting or specific har-

The above facts present no problems; however, the use of yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār in verse 26 does seem incongruous as was noted above. These purchased commodities are brought into the text to solve the problem created when a family might live too far away from the place of worship to easily bring their tithe at feast time. God graciously provided for any families in this situation by giving them the option of selling their tithe in their own community and then using that money to buy products ready for the consumer when they arrived at the tabernacle. In this way, they too could participate in the joyful harvest celebration.<sup>1</sup> Since the specified products to be brought all deal with the harvest, it is normal that the text would specify dāgān, tîrôš, and yîšhār in reference to the tithe because these words refer technically to the raw product only. That which would actually be consumed would be léhem, yáyin, and šémen, but this is understood and not stated. On the other hand, it is very natural for the word yáyin to be used when specifying the consumer-ready product which was purchased with money upon arrival. If the word yáyin can indeed refer to grape juice as well as to fermented wine (see chapter 5), the specific type of yáyin in view would obviously be the former. While everyone else was eating and drinking the *fresh produce*

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vest (Lev. 25:1-6).

<sup>1</sup>Apparently the bulk of the money which they brought would be distributed among the Levites just as the preponderance of the tithed produce was given to them.

of the harvest, it would be most inappropriate for some of the worshippers to be drinking fermented beverages simply because they lived too far away to bring their own tithe in kind. Furthermore, it would also be against the law of God (Lev. 10:9-10) for the priestly Levites to join them in consuming such a beverage.

However, the presence of šēkār provides a greater problem, for, as indicated above, this word usually is an exact synonym for yāyin when the latter refers to a fermented grape beverage. However, it is important to realize that each context must be taken into account whenever a word is studied. To force a word uniformly into one meaning in every context simply because it usually has such a meaning is an incorrect principle. Instead a word must harmonize with each context in which it is found.<sup>1</sup> When this method was employed with the previously discussed cognate verb šākār, it was found that the verb was not innately negative in connotation even though it was utilized in a derogatory sense whenever the beverage consumed was an intoxicant. Since this is the case, it is not surprising that the noun šēkār may normally refer to wine as an intoxicant and yet,

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<sup>1</sup>It is this very principle which has made lexicographers recognize the fact that the verb hātā', which means "to sin" (BDB, p. 306) in the Qal stem, can mean "to purify from sin" in the Piel (ibid., p. 307). That grammarians have called such a usage "privative" (HS #146, p. 28) does not contradict the truth that the Piel stem would more normally be understood as "to cause to sin" or "to sin greatly," except for the contextual evidence to the contrary. Note also that the verb sāqal in the Piel can be either "to throw stones" at someone (1 Sam. 16:6) or "to remove stones" from a stony area (Isa. 5:2).

at times, also connote a drink which is deeply satisfying but not fermented. That would certainly be the implication here in a context of express divine approval. In order to be able to rejoice properly before Yahweh over what He has provided, one would need to be sober. Since Yahweh expressly denied intoxicants (on pain of death) to the priests serving in His presence, it would be very out of character for Him to explicitly enjoin the use of those same intoxicants by the common worshippers in one of their infrequent appearances before Him. It is for this reason that šēkār was translated as it was by this writer.

There is no way to avoid totally a problem in this text. Either šēkār means something different than it normally does (yet in keeping with the basic meaning of the verbal root, šakar) or God is out of character. The latter is a theological impossibility (Mal. 3:6).

Another passage exists which could well be construed in this same sense of "satisfying grape juice" (yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār) as the proper beverage with a meal (léhem). Deuteronomy 29:6(5) declares, "'You have not eaten bread [léhem], nor have you drunk yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār,\* in order that you might know that I am Yahweh your God.'" Here God could be indicating that the nation, which had long been steeped in disobedience, had been provided for miraculously while God weaned them away from their intoxicating wine. However, it would seem that a more normal interpretation would be that God had fed them miraculously during the forty years of wandering; instead of their normal meal,

léhem and yáyin (grape juice), He had provided a previously unknown (Exod. 16:15) but fully nourishing substitute, manna, during that same period. This provision in the otherwise hostile environment of southern Palestine clearly demonstrated the faithfulness and power of their Provider, Yahweh.

In support of this, verses 5 and 6 together are emphasizing divine miraculous provision of their *proper* needs: clothing and footwear, food and drink (without moral overtones). An expanded translation of these two verses together would then be:

"And I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot. You have not eaten [your normal fare of\*] bread, nor have you drunk [your normal delicious beverage of\*] satisfying grape juice\* [I have thus provided for your needs supernaturally\*], in order that you might know that I am Yahweh your God." [Deut. 29:5(4)-6(5)]

One additional reference would apparently support the above interpretation of šēkār as well. In Numbers 28:7 the explicit instruction of Yahweh to Moses stipulates that the libation which accompanied the continual burnt offering should be one-fourth of a hin of šēkār poured out to Yahweh. However, when this legislation was first given in Exodus 29:40 this same oblation was called yáyin. This equation would indicate two things. First it is obvious that šēkār and yáyin can be exact synonyms (as has been ascertained previously). The second inference is a logical deduction which is in harmony with the remainder of Old Testament truth condemning intoxicating beverages--namely, that this libation was of grape juice

and not of fermented wine.<sup>1</sup> If this passage utilizes šēkār<sup>2</sup> in the sense of grape juice as is most probable, then šēkār could certainly be so understood as well in Deuteronomy 14:26.

Therefore, in light of all the evidence, Deuteronomy 14:26 can be understood to harmonize well with the rest of Scripture. Instead of interpreting this verse as the only one in which God *clearly* enjoins man to rejoice before Him while drinking intoxicating wine, the verse is extolling fresh, satisfying grape juice. While this differs from the usual interpretation of the word šēkār, the fact that two other references (both in the law of Moses) can support this nuance makes it much more plausible. Providing greater justification yet is the fact that the verb šākar has the basic sense of "to drink deeply" rather than the secondary nuance, "to become drunk." This primary nuance fits well with the idea of "satisfying grape juice" suggested for this more unusual hendiadys utilizing the words yáyin and šēkār.

šēkār in poetic contexts. Having examined the various legislative passages which refer to šēkār it is now important to examine the poetic usages of the word. Since one primary

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<sup>1</sup>Note the discussion of Exod. 29:40 under yáyin to further substantiate this, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup>This passage is the only one in the prose passages of the Old Testament which uses šēkār without either having yáyin in a poetic parallel construction or pairing the two words together as a hendiadys. Even in this unique passage, the synonymous relationship of šēkār and yáyin is demonstrated by the parallel passage in Num. 28:7.

characteristic of Hebrew poetry is the use of parallelism, it is to be expected that this word would uniformly appear in such contexts as an exact poetic synonym for yávin in the sense of "wine." Indeed, such is the case, as may be seen from the following references. (In each of these "wine" = yávin and "strong drink" = šēkār).

Wine is a scorner,  
Strong drink is a brawler,  
 And whoever goes astray because of it  
 is not wise.<sup>1</sup> [Prov. 20:1; RT]

It is not for kings, O Lemuel,  
 It is not for kings to drink wine,  
 Or for rulers to desire strong drink.  
 Lest they drink and forget what is decreed,  
 And pervert the rights of all the afflicted.  
 Give strong drink to him who is perishing,  
 And wine to him whose life is bitter.  
 [Prov. 31:4-6]

Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may  
 pursue strong drink;  
 Who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them!  
 . . . . .  
 Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine,  
 And valiant men in mixing strong drink. . . .  
 [Isa. 5:11, 22]

"Come!" says each one;  
 "I will get the wine,  
 And let us drink deeply of strong drink;  
 And tomorrow will be like today.  
 Yea, it will be greater by far!" [Isa. 56:12; RT]

From the above passages, it is obvious that yávin and šēkār are used as (exact) synonyms in poetic texts which use

<sup>1</sup>The verb šāgā denotes to "go astray, err" (BDB, p. 993); the idea of intoxication (NASB) is not as powerful or as innate to the verb as is the above translation. This passage apparently uses the preposition be in the causal sense (HS #247, p. 45). Note the singular-pronoun "it" (bô) instead of "them" which would normally indicate that both words refer to the



synonymous parallelism. It is also clear that God disapproves strongly of drunkenness. However, if these passages are examined closely there is another important, yet less obvious, truth here as well; apparently the beverage itself is a problem. For example, in Proverbs 31:4 the text indicates divine disapproval of drinking or of thirsting for any amount of intoxicating wine. While verse 5 does indicate a reason for this prohibition<sup>1</sup> (since God is reasonable), God yet makes a value judgment on the drinking of such a beverage irrespective of the amount drunk. To insert the idea that one has to drink deeply of a large quantity before God will disapprove would be comparable to claiming that it is necessary to sin over a long period of time before a given prohibited action violates the holiness of God. While the text specifies that intoxicants are innately wrong for rulers, it should not be thought that this is a moral truth limited to this group alone. The truth that fermented wine is innately evil is emphasized also in the universally applicable verse Proverbs 20:1, where the beverage is itself characterized harshly. While admittedly it is the

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same drink.

<sup>1</sup>Note HS #404, p. 67. 'Al occurs "in an elliptic statement with the ? of obligation . . . and a modal sense: . . . (Pr. 31:4)." Jewish exegetes applied this text narrowly assuming that it referred only to those in authority, but did recognize that the text prohibited even one drink:

"On the strength of this text (Prov. 31,5) the Rabbins have decreed that, A judge who drank a Reveeth, (which is a glass of wine), is not permitted to sit in judgment, nor is a scholar, under similar circumstances permitted to teach." [Koplowitz, Midrash yayin, p. 30]

drinking of wine which causes the effects, yet it is the wine which is so described. Both the drinking of it and the problems resulting from such drinking receive the divine value judgment: "not wise."<sup>1</sup>

The Jews have interpreted very literally the injunction to provide wine for those whose lives are bitter.<sup>2</sup> However, although it is possible to understand the verse in this medicinal sense of the use of wine as an anesthetic, it is just as possible that the primary intent of the maxim is ironic in nature: The only proper use for such a beverage is as a dulling agent when one has passed beyond all hope.

The other three references quoted above from Isaiah pronounce penal "woe" upon those whose fame (as "heroes" or "valiant men") is built upon their ability to drink wine copiously, who spend their life in this worse-than-nothing occupation. The other passages in the book of Isaiah<sup>3</sup> which use

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<sup>1</sup>In the context of the book of Proverbs, the reproach "not wise" would differ little from saying that he is *sinning* by doing so.

<sup>2</sup>Note Koplowitz, Midrash yayin, p. 30:

"In compliance with the text, the Rabbins decreed, To give unmixed wine (containing a grain of frankincense) to all those persons who were condemned by the Jewish Supreme Court, to expiate their crime by capital punishment, in order to benumb their consciousness, and to fulfill what is written, 'Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish.'" [Midrash Rabbah Nasso 10:Erubin 65a]

<sup>3</sup>Isaiah 24:9; 28:7 (two times); and 29:9 (figuratively used).

yáyin and šēkār as exact synonyms<sup>1</sup> echo this truth of God's wrath upon his drunken people. His judgment is so severe that even drunkenness cannot dull the pain resulting from God's overt and righteous fury (Isa. 24:9).

There are two references found in poetry which do not fit the normal poetic pattern of synonymous parallelism. Micah 2:11 is surrounded by verses that do show poetic parallelism. However, the verse itself does not and, therefore, as would be expected in prose, yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār is used as a hendiadys<sup>2</sup> to signify "intoxicating wine." In Psalm 69:12(13), on the other hand, šēkār is not used with yáyin at all. The psalmist cries out in distress to God that (among other complaints) he is criticized and scorned by the townspeople:

Those who sit in the *city* gate speak against me;  
Yea, I am the subject of the mocking songs of those who  
drink strong drink. [RT]

šēkār in historical contexts. Almost all of the references to šēkār have already been discussed, for most of the passages in which the word is found are either in legislative or poetical contexts. As expected, every one of the four historical references uses yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār as a hendiadys. Three of

<sup>1</sup>Note that in Isa. 28:7 šēkār is used collectively to refer to the parallelism of yáyin and šēkār together in the preceding line.

<sup>2</sup>Both words are preceded by the preposition l<sup>e</sup> and yet it would seem proper to take this as a hendiadys anyway (compare the discussion regarding Deut. 14:26, including footnote no. 1 on pp. 233-34).

the passages (all in Judg. 13) have been discussed previously as supporting the Nazirite law of Numbers chapter six. The one remaining reference is in 1 Samuel 1:15 where Hannah protested against Eli's accusation of drunkenness with these words: "I have not drunk intoxicating wine,<sup>1</sup> but I have been pouring out my soul *in anguish* before Yahweh" [RT].

Summary concerning šēkār. In summary it may be said concerning šēkār that of the twenty-three times that the noun is used in the Old Testament, it overwhelmingly refers to intoxicating wine. There is no clear evidence of the word's usage in the sense of beer or of any other type of intoxicant (although the word could probably, like yáyin, comprehend these as well in showing divine disapproval of any intoxicating beverage). Rather, by synonymous parallelism and by hendiadys (and by direct equation<sup>2</sup>) šēkār and yáyin seem clearly to be exact synonyms for the same beverage--fermented wine. All except two of the legislative and historical contexts which include yáyin and šēkār together apparently use the two words as a hendiadys to specify that yáyin means "intoxicating wine" rather than "grape juice."<sup>3</sup>

The evident exception to this general rule is in Deuter-

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<sup>1</sup>This hendiadys has the untranslated conjunction w<sup>e</sup> prefixed to both words.

<sup>2</sup>Note Isa. 28:7.

<sup>3</sup>Eight times this is the case if Micah 2:11 is included (for the sake of convenience) in the prose category.

onomy 14 in which the context clearly indicates an unfermented beverage bearing God's unequivocal approval: a fresh grape beverage of the harvest to be consumed with great joy in His very presence. Both here and in Deuteronomy 29:6 the construction is also a hendiadys, but one signifying "satisfying grape juice." The poetic contexts, on the other hand, which include these two exact synonyms,<sup>1</sup> use them uniformly in synonymous parallelism. When so used the phrase "strong drink" appears to

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<sup>1</sup>Eleven times this is the case (all occurring in Proverbs and Isaiah). One of these, Isa. 28:7, utilizes šēkār alone in a parallel construction, summarizing the previous two lines containing respectively yāyin and šēkār. The Massoretic accentuation of this verse with the major division coming after the first bicola, then a tricola and then a bicola, is suspect. The following translation (with both poetic division and punctuation changed from NASB) will help the reader to grasp the Massoretic accentuation if close attention is paid to the punctuation:

"And these also reel with [ba] wine;  
And stagger from [ba] strong drink.

The priest and the prophet reel with [ba] strong drink,  
They are confused by [min] wine;  
They stagger from [min] strong drink.  
They reel while having visions;  
They totter *when rendering* judgment."

This accentuation pattern (2:3,2) of the seven phrases does not fit the text in relation to metric balance (2:5), in relation to the unexplainable divisions between obviously parallel prepositional phrases (three with ba, then two with min), and even in relation to the obvious sense of the passage. The suggested division, 3:2,2, solves all three problems and is exegetically preferable. This suggested poetic division would render the text as follows (changing NASB poetic division and punctuation):

"And these also reel with [ba] wine  
And stagger from [ba] strong drink;  
The priest and the prophet reel with [ba] strong drink.

They are confused by [min] wine,  
They stagger from [min] strong drink;  
They reel while having visions,  
They totter *when rendering* judgment."

be as good as any other to translate this synonym for wine.<sup>1</sup> The remaining two times that šēkār is used it occurs alone. One time it is used with the Qal active participle of the verb šātâ to denote drunkards (Ps. 69:12[13]). The other reference where it is used alone, it specifies the grape juice used in the libation with the daily (continual) burnt offering (Num. 28:7), a usage in harmony with the basic meaning of the verb šākar.

From this perusal of the noun šēkār (as well as its cognate verb šākar) one thing has become clear: The Old Testament is united in its testimony<sup>2</sup> concerning šēkār that Yahweh totally disapproves of both the drink (when it refers to) fermented wine, and of the results of its ingestion, drunkenness and accompanying clouded judgment.

#### Summary Concerning These Beverages

Much information has been included in this chapter on many different words. It may be helpful to the reader at this point to briefly review the conclusions which were made in this chapter. Therefore the chart below is given as a means of recapitulating the results of this study before dealing with the major word yáyin in the following chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>In every case but two (Prov. 31:6 and Isa. 5:11), šēkār follows yáyin when the two words occur in the same context.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of progressive revelation as it pertains to this truth, see chapter 5.

## CHART OF THE GRAPE BEVERAGES

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition(s)</u>	<u>Verbal Root</u>	<u>Occurrences</u>
<u>'āsîs</u>	"freshly pressed juice"	[V "to tread down"]	5x
<u>hémer</u>	"(fresh) grape juice"	[V "to foam"]	2x
<u>h<sup>a</sup>mar<sup>1</sup></u>	"wine" "grape juice"	[V "to foam"]	4x 2x
<u>mimsāk</u>	"mixed wine" <sup>2</sup>	[V "to mix"]	2x
<u>mése<sup>k</sup></u>	"mixed wine" <sup>2</sup>	[V "to mix"]	1x
<u>sôbe<sup>'</sup></u>	"intoxicating drink" "juice drink"	[V "to drink deeply"]	2x 1x
<u>tîrô<sup>s</sup></u>	"harvest grape juice"	[V (?) ]	38x
<u>sêkār<sup>v</sup></u>	"wine" <sup>3</sup> "grape juice"	[V "to drink copiously"]	20x 3x
<u>yáyin<sup>4</sup></u>	"grape juice" "wine"	[V "to oppress"]	71x 70x

<sup>1</sup>Biblical Aramaic.

<sup>2</sup>Probably with spices.

<sup>3</sup>The word in poetic contexts is translated "strong drink" simply to differentiate it from its exact synonym "wine."

<sup>4</sup>This is taken prematurely from chapter 5 but the information is included here for the sake of completeness and comparison.

## CHAPTER V

### THE USAGE OF THE WORDS FOR "WINE" IN SCRIPTURE:

#### THE MOST FREQUENT WORD, יַיִן

The noun yáyin is of central importance in any discussion of the use of wine in the Old Testament. Its prominence arises primarily from two factors. The first is that the word occurs so frequently in the Old Testament: fully one hundred and forty-one times yáyin is found in the scriptural text. Any word which occurs so often is a candidate for special examination, for this very frequency of inclusion in Scripture would indicate the relative importance of the word to an understanding both of Israel's actual habits and of God's evaluation of their worth. A second factor contributing to the significance of this word is the apparent inconsistency with which it is used. Sometimes it receives the approbation of God and other times it bears only His wrath.

#### Summary of the Old Testament Usage of Yáyin

The use of the word yáyin permeates the whole of the Old Testament. It is used frequently; furthermore, it is used widely in each type of literature, in every historical period and in all but eight books (Ruth, 1 and 2 Kings, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, and Malachi).



The five prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel use yáyin thirty-six times. Eight of the twelve books<sup>1</sup> which are primarily historical in character (Joshua through Esther in the Protestant canon) follow closely with thirty-four references in which the word occurs. The five books of poetry utilize the word twenty-seven times. Then the Pentateuch uses yáyin twenty-six times, and eight of the minor prophets use it eighteen times.

Prior to highlighting the specific tabulation within the respective books themselves, it ought to be pointed out that, as will be shown in a major section of this chapter, the word yáyin can have either of two opposing connotations. In some contexts the beverage so designated is obviously an intoxicant, while in others the contexts do not so indicate. Although the validity of these claims is yet to follow, it is helpful to the discussion at hand for the reader to be aware of the proposition that yáyin can refer to two distinct grape beverages, one being juice and the other being a fermented wine. With this distinction in mind, it is now appropriate to indicate more specifically the usage of yáyin within the respective Old Testament books.

The book of Jeremiah contains the most frequent mention of yáyin, for the word is found there fifteen times. Of

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<sup>1</sup>The overall discussion pertaining to historical books, books of poetry, and books by prophets is presented in keeping with the traditional conservative convention.

these references the beverage normally in view is "grape juice" rather than "wine" (with a ratio of two to one).<sup>1</sup> Isaiah's prophecy uses the word fourteen times but the beverage specified is overwhelmingly "wine" (six to one). Next in frequency are the two disparate books of Genesis (ten times) and Proverbs (ten times). In both of these books "wine" occurs more than "grape juice" (in Proverbs by a ratio of seven to three and in Genesis by a ratio of three to two).

The book of Numbers uses yáyin eight times (three times in two verses, Num. 6:3-4). Of these, half of the references are to the use of juice as a libation for Yahweh; in the other four occurrences the use of yáyin is divided equally between the beverages of wine and juice, giving a total ratio of six to two with juice predominating. Two books share the distinction of including the word seven times apiece. In both the use of yáyin as juice predominates: Song of Solomon only speaks of juice, whereas 1 Samuel does only slightly more than half the times. Then, since the book of Esther details events in pagan surroundings, wine seems to be the only beverage in mind in the six times the word is used. In the remaining usages<sup>2</sup> of the word yáyin in the other twenty-three Old Testament books

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<sup>1</sup>Since yáyin occurs so frequently and is such a key word in relation to this study, a concordance of its usage is included in Appendix B. This will allow the reader opportunity to see what nuance this writer assigns to any of the representative usages of the word.

<sup>2</sup>The following table indicates the use of yáyin in these remaining Old Testament books, in descending order of usage:

which include it, grape juice again is the generally predominant beverage (with a ratio of thirty-five to twenty-nine).

If the above mentioned statistics are accurate (and there is some room for disagreement in a few contexts which are not totally clear, as will be discussed) the overall results are somewhat unexpected: of the one hundred and forty-one references to yávin in the Old Testament, grape juice is meant barely more frequently (seventy-one times) than is wine (seventy times).

Major Biblical Distinctions  
in the Usage of Yávin

Although, as has been noted above, the usages of yávin may be divided almost equally between those which have refer-

<u>Occurrences</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Ratio of grape juice to wine</u>
5	Deut.	3 to 2
5	Neh.	3 to 2
5	Amos	3 to 2
5	Judg.	2 to 3
4	Hos.	2 to 2
4	Ps.	1 to 3
4	Dan.	1 to 3
3	1 Chron.	3 to 0
3	2 Chron.	3 to 0
3	2 Sam.	2 to 1
3	Job	2 to 1
3	Eccles.	2 to 1
2	Lev.	1 to 1
2	Ezek.	1 to 1
2	Mic.	1 to 1
2	Zech.	1 to 1
2	Josh.	0 to 2
2	Joel	0 to 2
1	Exod.	1 to 0
1	Lam.	1 to 0
1	Zeph.	1 to 0
1	Hag.	1 to 0
1	Hab.	0 to 1

ence to grape juice and those which have reference to a fermented beverage, there is yet a need to examine these respective uses in some detail. In the following section it will be the task of the author to set forth clearly in what manner the above conclusions were reached and thus to justify the proposition that yáyin frequently refers to *grape juice*. This is especially important since the conclusion reached will go counter to the accepted definition, given in the standard lexicons, of yáyin as "wine."<sup>1</sup>

After a discussion of these two opposing usages of yáyin--that as a fermented beverage and that as an unfermented beverage--it will then be important to discuss two further classifications of passages: those dealing with yáyin as a libation, and those dealing with the figurative usage of the word.

#### Yáyin as a fermented beverage<sup>2</sup>

If there is one fact for which there is no need of documentation it would be this: the Hebrew word yáyin may be used in Scripture to refer to intoxicating wine. This truth is so well accepted, in fact, that it is almost universally believed that yáyin can refer *only* to intoxicating wine. However, it is still necessary in a study of this nature to pre-

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<sup>1</sup>For example, note that BDB, p. 406, lists only "wine" as a definition for yáyin. KB, pp. 380-81, does the same.

<sup>2</sup>For any verses in which yáyin appears with šēkār, see the preceding section on that subject in chapter 4.

sent even that data for which there is no opposing voice.

The very first mention of yávin in Scripture presents the beverage as an intoxicant:

Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. And he drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, . . . When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. [Gen. 9:20-22a, 24]

Early in the patriarchal period there is another sordid incident in which wine played a leading role. Thinking perhaps that they were the only ones left after God had destroyed Sodom and its surrounding cities, Lot's daughters immediately made plans for the future:

Then the first-born said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father." So they made their father drink wine that night, and the first-born went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. And it came about on the morrow, that the first-born said to the younger, "Behold, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father." So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. [Gen. 19:31-36]

During the period when King Saul was jealous because God had already chosen David to be king instead of Saul, there is another incident which indicates the effect that wine can have upon a man. An important and rich noble by the name of Nabal had benefited from David's protection and yet would not even give any food in return. When David came with his men to

kill the ungrateful Nabal, his wife, on her own initiative, brought provisions and an explanation for his foolish behavior. After her favorable acceptance by David she returned home to find Nabal drunk:

Then Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry<sup>1</sup> within him, for he was very drunk; so she did not tell him anything at all until the morning light. But it came about in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, that his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him so that he became *as* a stone.  
[1 Sam. 25:36-37]

By the time of Isaiah, wine drinking seems to have become a universal problem, infecting both the people and their leaders. God's judgment upon them is well deserved:

Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim,  
And to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,  
Which is at the head of the fertile valley  
Of those who are overcome with wine!  
Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty *agent*;  
As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction,  
Like a storm of mighty overflowing waters,  
He has cast *it* down to the earth with *His* hand.  
The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim is  
trodden under foot. . . .  
And these also reel with wine and stagger from  
strong drink[:;]  
The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,[.]  
They are confused by wine, they stagger from  
strong drink;  
They reel while having visions,  
They totter *when rendering* judgment.  
For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, with-  
out a *single clean* place. [Isa. 28:1-3, 7-8]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See note 4, p. 285, for a brief comment on "the merry heart" in contrast to godly "rejoicing." Note 1, p. 256 and note 1, p. 286 are also relevant.

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah's contemporary prophet Micah (in chapter 3) cites in some detail the terrible excesses of the leadership of God's people.

Other passages which clearly indicate that yáyin is to be translated as "wine" would include prominently those in the book of Esther. The book opens with a great week-long banquet in a lavishly beautiful setting which the king of Persia provided for all of his important princes:

Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful according to the king's bounty. And the drinking was *done* according to the law, there was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desires of each person. [Esther 1:7-8]

It is probable that both fermented and unfermented grape beverages were served at this feast. In any case, the context would indicate that *wine* had made the king "merry" by the seventh day, indicating drunkenness.<sup>1</sup> There is no particular reason to assume that the later "banquets of wine" given by Esther (5:6; 7:1 ff.) refer to a beverage other than wine, for the whole book shows an insensitivity to God on the part of Esther and her older cousin Mordecai.<sup>2</sup>

There are, however, some passages where yáyin could be interpreted either way--as wine or as grape juice. For example, Proverbs 23:20-21 could, with equal sense, refer to either beverage:

Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine,  
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;

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<sup>1</sup>Note that the formula ṭôb lēb-hammélek bayyáyin is identical to that found in 2 Sam. 13:26 (of Ammon's fatal drunkenness) and similar to the one found in 1 Sam. 25:36 where it further specifies that Nabal was very drunk.

<sup>2</sup>However, since the context nowhere indicates drunkenness, grape juice could indeed have been the beverage served.

For the heavy drinker and the glutton will  
 [both] come to poverty,  
 And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

Since there is nothing innately sinful regarding the eating of meat (bāśār), it is unnecessary to consider yáyin, in this context, as innately wicked either. The sin in both, from this immediate context, lies in the excess of the one who is eating and drinking, and the penalty for both is specified in economic terms. However, it is probable that it should be translated "wine" in light of the more remote context (vv. 29 ff.).<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, it seems evident that wine is the proper translation in Isaiah 22:12-13:

Therefore in that day the Lord Yahweh of hosts,  
 called *you* to weeping, to wailing,  
 To shaving the head, and to wearing sackcloth.  
 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness,  
 Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep,  
 Eating of meat and drinking of wine:  
 "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die."

The major sin of the people, in context, is persisting with bravado in a lifestyle devoid of *repentance*. However, since Isaiah often characterizes yáyin drinkers as drunkards (5:11, 22; 28:1, 7; 56:12), the beverage in view is probably wine.

Another passage where wine is apparently in view (although pure juice is a possibility) would be in Nehemiah 2:1. There Nehemiah, as the cupbearer, gave yáyin to the king. The nature of the beverage would depend then upon the drinking habits of this particular pagan king. In like manner, it is

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<sup>1</sup>Note that Deut. 21:20 would also indicate this, for it pairs gluttony with being a drunkard. (The Qal active participles in both texts are zôlēl and sōbē.)



probable that the beverage which the wily Gibeonite ambassadors brought with them when they came to Joshua was wine (Josh. 9:4, 13).

From some of the clearer passages above, it is most obvious that yáyin can and often does refer to wine in the Old Testament. That the beverage was consumed in daily life in Old Testament times by Israelites is therefore a certainty. However, another issue must be raised so that the above facts can be placed in their proper perspective. That issue is whether or not Yahweh encouraged and approved of the practice. From many passages already cited under the discussion of šēkār as well as here, it is certain that He did not offer general approval of a beverage which, if consumed, could lead to a condition which He so despised.<sup>1</sup> It is evident, furthermore, that He went beyond simple lack of approval to specific disapproval of the beverage itself as well as the condition<sup>2</sup> which it caused.

This truth of God's disapproval upon wine is certainly prominent in the following passage which vividly describes both the willfulness and the tragedy of drunkenness (a condition which modern society has begun to accept as merely an illness, but which God would label as resulting from willful rebellion). Proverbs 23:29-35 is both a classic description

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<sup>1</sup>For evidence, refer to both the previous and following discussions, including also chapter 6.

<sup>2</sup>Note especially the earlier discussion concerning Prov. 20:1, pp. 241-43.

of, and a divinely appointed condemnation of, this wretched phenomenon which is common to every generation:<sup>1</sup>

To whom is distress a *constant companion*?  
 For whom is misery a *natural state*?  
 To whom is quarreling a *way of life*?  
 For whom is complaining a *habitual pastime*?  
 To whom are inexplicable<sup>2</sup> bruises a *frequent ordeal*?

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<sup>1</sup>It will be noted by the reader that the translation of this passage, which is by this author, has many italicized phrases. Some might question this "expanded" translation, assuming that it departs from the literal sense of the passage. Therefore it is important to include here a few words regarding this writer's convictions concerning the nature of a good translation. Early in his ministry, the writer believed that a strict, word-for-word rendering was always best. However, as his knowledge of Hebrew syntax improved, it became more and more evident that this method can, if uniformly used, actually be a hindrance to an understanding of the true sense of the original. For a passage to be properly translated, it must represent adequately in good English grammar that which the Hebrew words and construction conveyed to the original recipients. To do less actually accomplishes the opposite of the translator's intention; that is, by trying to render a text in a "literal" word-for-word manner, the translator (in actuality) keeps the reader from properly understanding the complete message of the Hebrew original. Therefore the translator with this methodology unintentionally robs the English reader of truth, insofar as he does not adequately convey all of the intended ideas in the text. Therefore, as has been done here, there is a need to translate in light of the overall context and not merely in conformity with the immediate vocabulary. If the Hebrew text is carefully studied, it will be found that the italicized words are true to the context and necessary to convey the ideas innate to the biblical author's mind. Hebrew poetry frequently omits words which the context is expected to supply to the discerning reader. For further reference note the interesting and pertinent discussion regarding translation problems on pp. 59-63 of A. Leo Oppenheim's Letters from Mesopotamia: Official, Business, and Private Letters on Clay Tablets from Two Millennia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>The adverb hinnām is usually translated "without cause, undeservedly" (BDB, p. 336). However, the drunkard's problem is more often that he does not understand the reason than that there is no reason.

For whom are bloodshot eyes a *visible trademark*?  
 To those who *regularly* prolong their<sup>1</sup> drinking  
 of wine;  
 To those who go about searching diligently for  
 any available mixed intoxicant!  
 Do not even look at wine when it becomes cap-  
 tivating to you,<sup>2</sup>  
 When it becomes tantalizing as it fascinates<sup>3</sup>  
 you from its cup,  
 When it goes down the throat with silky  
 smoothness.  
 For in the end, it will bite like a snake;  
 Yea, it will strike like a cobra.  
 Then your eyes will see bizarre images,  
 And your mind<sup>4</sup> will fabricate distorted speech;

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<sup>1</sup>HS, paragraph 86, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>This is an interpretive translation of the tradi-  
 tionally rendered phrase "when it is red" (AV, NASB). This  
 phrase (although BDB, p. 10, would generally support such an  
 equivocal translation) has been, therefore, a very ambiguous  
 one to most readers. What does the "redness" indicate? The  
 Hithpael form yit'addām makes very good sense if considered  
 to be "reflexive-itterative" (HS, paragraph 152, p. 28).  
 Taking it so, as "to redden itself," would indicate the cap-  
 ture of one's attention, especially if it is recognized that  
 the redness of the beverage was considered to be very attrac-  
 tive (note. Gen. 49:12). In context, though, this special  
 allure of the beverage is not merely innate to the wine but  
 rather is in the mind of the one who has become so captivated  
 by it. There is therefore no implication here of any special  
 intensification of the redness in the intoxicating beverage  
 itself.

<sup>3</sup>This phrase has been rendered by BDB, p. 679, "when  
 it showeth [✓ give] its sparkle [✓ eye] in the cup." NASB  
 follows BDB closely in this translation of kî-yittēn bakkōs  
[qerê] 'ēnō. However, again an expanded idea seems warranted.  
 The concept innate in the phrase is related closely to the pre-  
 ceding command "Do not even look at wine. . . ." The reason  
 for the prohibition is that, to the drunkard, there is an  
 alluring temptation in the wine which is irresistible to his  
 already perverted senses. As Prov. 6:25 indicates, the natural  
 beauty of a woman can become especially enticing when she  
 uses her eyelids sensually to captivate a man's emotions. It  
 would appear that this is metaphorically referred to here by  
 comparing the seduction of the wine to that of a woman who is  
 using her eye to entice.

<sup>4</sup>Hebrew lēp.

Yea, you will be like a ship tossing<sup>1</sup> in the  
 middle of a turbulent sea,  
 Even like the mariner who clings<sup>2</sup> to the top  
 of a mast over restless waves.  
 Nevertheless you will boastfully proclaim:  
 "They struck me, but I was unaffected;  
 "They beat me, but I hardly noticed;<sup>3</sup>  
 "As soon as I awake,<sup>4</sup> I will seek yet another  
 drink!" [RT]

Before leaving the discussion of the biblical revelation concerning yáyin as wine, it is important to mention briefly the various effects which Scripture indicates wine can have upon those who become inebriated. The passage just translated along with others (such as Isa. 28:7; 29:9) would proclaim that staggering is a normal concomitant of an intoxicated condition. Other symptoms would be blood-shot eyes, quarrelsomeness, complaining, general misery, distorted vision and speech, insensitivity to pain (all of which are mentioned in graphic detail in Prov. 23), along with perversion of judgment (tragically pictured in Isa. 28:7) and moral abandon (well

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<sup>1</sup>Hebrew participle šōkēb. The literal reality in view is that of a drunkard's staggering unsteadiness; therefore a ship wallowing in perilous seas is an apt picture for comparison. The more traditional, cryptic (slavish) rendering, "... one who lies down in the middle of the sea" makes no real sense. Words derive their precise nuance from the context in which they are used.

<sup>2</sup>Hebrew participle šōkēb. A sailor who is lying on the mast in a storm would most certainly be *clinging* to his post.

<sup>3</sup>The Hebrew phrase is bal-yādā-tî, "I did not know," which is parallel both in construction and in sound to the previous bal-hālītî, "I was not ill."

<sup>4</sup>Note Gen. 9:24 and Ps. 78:65. The adverb māṭay is normally interrogative in nature, "when?" (BDB, p. 607). However, in this context that nuance is very awkward.

illustrated in Gen. 19:33, 35). One of the most devastating effects of drunkenness is the total insensitivity which wine can produce. For example, according to Genesis 19:33 and 35 Lot was able, as a result of their plotting, to father children by his own daughters and yet remain totally unaware of his sexual activity.

### Yávin as grape juice

Having examined much of the evidence pertaining to the biblical usage of yávin as "wine," it is now appropriate to peruse the evidence which would indicate that yávin can also refer to "fresh grape juice." It is this particular section of the study which will, it is assumed, excite the greatest opposition. As was stated earlier, it is almost universally assumed in scholarly circles that yávin simply meant "wine," a fermented beverage.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is possible that any proposition to the contrary may be met with disinterest by those who are settled in their opinions and thus have no desire to consider the alternative. Nevertheless, it does appear to this writer that there is ample evidence for the

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<sup>1</sup>For a further example, note Rushdoony's comment concerning the Old Testament laws regarding wine:

"... with temperance as the rule, wines were an acceptable part of the diet. . . . Wines were a part of the legitimate offerings to God (Num. 15:5, 7, 10). The use of wines, being governed by God, and governed by His law of temperance, was on the whole temperate. To this day, alcoholism is rare among Jews."

Rousas John Rushdoony, The Institutes of Biblical Law, a Chalcedon Study, with three appendices by Gary North (n.p.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1973), p. 300.

conclusion that when yáyin is specifically approved of by God, it refers to a beverage which does not have intoxicating qualities.

The problem of lexicography. Prior to presenting the biblical evidence that yáyin can indeed refer to grape juice, it is well to clarify the (negative) contribution of lexicography concerning this question. The fact that the standard Hebrew lexicons do not list "grape juice" as an alternative meaning for yáyin has had a longstanding and overwhelming impact upon the interpretation and translation of this important word. As was pointed out in chapter 3, lexicons provide a great service to scholars by making available to them the fruit of the diligent effort of others. However, it should never be supposed that the lexicons either are without error or are infallible in authority. Despite the high regard which this writer has for the lexicon by Brown, Driver and Briggs (a respect gained by years of using it), yet he would be the first to admit that its value is lessened considerably by its errors.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>These chiefly arise from the humanistic, evolutionary presuppositions of its editors which are so contrary to the Bible's authoritative claims regarding itself. The frequent reference to words as being late Hebrew even if they occur in the Pentateuch (BDB, p. 267, s.v. zîd; p. 286, s.v. hābēt, etc.) and the constant references to J, E, D, P, etc. do detract from the value of the work; but, if ignored, these frequently do not substantially effect the accuracy of the definitions given nor of the translation of texts. However, the theological opinions and some of the textual-critical comments should be considered as suspect and carefully scrutinized, just

Lexicons are, by their very nature, inductive. The basic, innate meaning of Semitic words must be inductively discerned through etymological studies in the cognate languages as a whole. That is, the many contextual usages of a word in question must be examined in the various Semitic literatures, and from this study a definition of its basic cognate nuances must be gained. Beyond this, but obviously governed by the relationship of the word to its original root concept (insofar as this can be determined), the precise legitimate meanings and exact nuances for a (biblical) Hebrew word must be inductively determined by a careful exegetical examination of the *biblical* contexts in which the word appears. Disparate contexts then may, and do, provide different legitimate, documentable nuances for a given biblical word.<sup>1</sup> A good example of

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as they should be in the study of any writer who works from unscriptural presuppositions.

<sup>1</sup>It may be helpful at this point to corroborate and expand what has been said regarding modern lexicography by quoting from the introduction to a recent Hebrew lexicon.

"In [modern scientific] lexicographical research, two ways of proceeding, each of them important and consistent, lie open. One is the explanation of the text in its context, what is usually called exegesis. A word then becomes correctly translated when the rendering of it is intelligible and fits the context.

"The other way open is that of the science of language, and that in two respects. The most important part of the science of language is comparative philology. Side by side with Hebrew stands a number of cognate languages, the so called Semitic languages. They are Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Akkadian, Ugaritic, . . . All these languages have gradually become known, and have become increasingly drawn upon. . . . [But] two similarly sounding words [may] have nothing to do with each other. . . . It is necessary then to exercise the greatest caution and prudence in matters of comparative philology, and this

this truth can readily be seen in a study of the Hebrew word nēpeš. Four very common meanings can be found in the Old Testament for this word which might superficially appear to be unrelated completely: "person," "life," "soul," and a pronominal usage. Other less frequent legitimate nuances also may be documented for this frequently used biblical noun.<sup>1</sup> To deny that these nuances exist or to claim that they are not legiti-

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fact does not always receive sufficient attention.

". . . similarities, parallels and so on can easily deceive. Finally, it should not be overlooked that Hebrew, like any other language, has its own character, and reflects its own world of things and thoughts.

". . . It is a principle of modern semantics to differentiate the meaning which is primary, but which is in many cases more restricted, more concrete, from the meanings which have followed later from the primary meaning. The modern principle is to attempt to discover a genetic relation in the development and changes in the meaning of a word, and accordingly to provide a series of meanings established on sound genetic principles. . . . It should be added that the ways in which development in meaning have taken place are very tortuous, and that nowhere is our knowledge and understanding so incomplete as here" [KB, pp. XII-XIV passim].

Regarding the importance of having a word occur with some frequency in order to be more certain of its meaning, note Baumgartner's words:

". . . [In light of the relatively small amount of material in biblical Aramaic] the lexicographer has fewer opportunities of tracing the appearance of single words in certain connections and combinations, or of following differences in their meaning. . . . If the Ba. [= biblical Aramaic] vocabulary is so much less to be explained by itself--a limitation which [frequently] applies also to Hebrew--we have to make good this shortcoming by utilizing other [extra-biblical language and textual] sources" [KB, p. XXXV].

<sup>1</sup>BDB, pp. 659-61, lists, in addition to the above, the following nuances: "living being, self, desire, appetite, emotion, passion, and deceased person." For a more complete discussion of nēpeš the reader is referred to Robert Teachout's "A Study of the Hebrew Word Nephesh, Commonly Translated 'Soul'" (S.T.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1972).



mate would merely obscure the issue and result in a much less accurate understanding of many passages in Scripture.

While lexicography (as also are morphology and syntax) is an inductive science, that does not mean that it is therefore incapable of precision and accuracy. It should, however, indicate to the careful student that the presuppositions of an author may become, with a given word, an extremely important factor. If a lexicographer believes that Scripture is the infallible and inerrant Word of God communicated in a language which is meaningful and harmonious in its use of words so as to convey important truth clearly, then his interpretation of words may differ (drastically at times) from that of one who believes that the Bible was composed by human authors with differing theological ideas and that no governing homogeneity of language usage (necessarily) exists between the biblical authors.<sup>1</sup> In light of this, it is interesting that the careful

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<sup>1</sup>For example (beyond what has been said above regarding the presuppositions governing the editors of BDB), note the following remarks by Johnson and von Rad who, after studying the word népeš, concluded that the biblical revelation concerning man is inconsistent at best. A. R. Johnson wrote: "Indeed one should not fail to ask the question as to how far we may be justified in holding that there was . . . anything like a uniform conception [of man in Scripture]." Von Rad more forcefully claims: "There is absolutely no unity in the ideas of the Old Testament about the nature of man. And, of course, uniformity is not to be expected there, . . ." A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel, 2nd ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1964), p. v; and Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 1:153.

Baumgartner (KB, p. XXXV) in a related idea speaks of "The wholly accidental circumstances of what [vocabulary] has been preserved [in biblical Hebrew and Aramaic] . . ." He

scholarship that undergirds the aforementioned lexicon (BDB) is such that the overwhelming majority of the lexical entries in this invaluable work have stood the test of time (more than seventy years) and the scrutiny of both liberal and conservative scholars.<sup>1</sup> That very fact substantiates the claim that careful inductive study can provide precision and accuracy in lexicography (despite the sometimes diametrically opposed presuppositions of lexicographers).<sup>2</sup>

While it is true, then, that using an inductive method with scholarly care can produce an accurate lexical entry, it is also true (as pointed out above) that, under certain conditions, one's conclusions can be greatly influenced by one's presuppositions to the detriment of accuracy in one's work. This problem caused by erroneous presuppositions is evident in the study of biblical grape beverages. If the lexicographer presupposes that wine, for example, is a beneficial good when taken moderately and that it becomes evil only when imbibed to

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thus exposes to view his presupposition that Scripture is less than the Word of the Creator Who does all things deliberately and with design.

<sup>1</sup>KB, though popularly accepted, is much less consistent in its quality and consequently the value of this work is greatly diminished. This fact is evident in the immediate and continuing revision of Koehler's work by Baumgartner, whereas BDB is still a popular lexicon today, essentially unchanged in type set from the original 1907 edition (note BDB, p. xii).

<sup>2</sup>It should be added here that there is a generally obvious correlation between the frequency with which a word occurs in a language (specifically here in the Old Testament) and the certainty of the lexicons as to its definition. The more frequently a word is used the more clear its meaning becomes, both as to its basic idea and to its concomitant nuances.

excess, then it is obvious that such a person could assume readily that every use of yáyin in Scripture is a reference to wine. However, if one approaches the Old Testament without any innate prejudice toward the "value" of wine but simply desires to discover what Scripture says concerning it (with the pre-supposition that God's revelation is capable of harmony if properly understood), it is very possible that his conclusions will differ. Indeed, that has been the case with this author's study of the biblical Hebrew words for grape beverages in general and yáyin in particular. The writer of this work did not know what conclusions the biblical evidence would demand when the research for this dissertation was begun. It was only after much careful study that he has taken a position at variance with the scholarly world.

The approach followed in arriving at the conclusion that yáyin may and frequently does refer to grape juice rather than wine was the following: (1) In a close inductive scrutiny of every passage in the Old Testament which contained yáyin, the word "wine" was read until and unless it simply did not fit the context. As a modus operandi it was assumed that if any contexts would clearly indicate the beverage designated as yáyin to be fresh juice, then and only then would "grape juice" become a viable option as a legitimate rendering for this Hebrew word. The task was both relatively lengthy and yet more capable of profitable resolution, since yáyin occurs so often in the Old Testament. (2) The fact that a number of

references were found which (to this writer) demanded the translation of yáyin as "grape juice" then brought about the re-evaluation of all of the previously translated texts in light of this new evidence. Obviously, once it was determined that yáyin could legitimately refer to grape juice, it was then important to decide how frequently such a meaning best fit the context. It was this twofold inductive approach, with all conclusions carefully checked and rechecked, which was responsible for the ultimate conclusion that the Old Testament uses yáyin with almost equal frequency to designate two distinct grape beverages, different in kind: grape juice and wine. With this information at his disposal, the reader is now encouraged to (divest himself of his previous presuppositions concerning the nature of yáyin and) peruse the following section carefully, deciding for himself whether or not yáyin can (or must) refer to grape juice as well as to wine.

The evidence of Scripture. The first evidence to be presented from Scripture relates to the changeless character of God Himself. If in some contexts, such as Psalm 104:15 and Deuteronomy 14:26, Yahweh specifically approves of yáyin for man's consumption, while in others (many cited already) He vehemently condemns it, then an obvious logical resolution would be that yáyin can refer to two beverages distinctly different in nature and in effect: grape juice and wine. Since the juice of the grape can be either fermented or unfermented, this simple solution to God's paradoxical attitude toward it

should not be difficult to accept, if an inductive study would confirm its validity. In fact, if the juice of the grape did not possess this well known versatility, then the problem of harmonizing God's divergent attitudes toward yáyin would be considerably more difficult, at the very least. Some would, doubtless, attempt to negate this assertion by saying that the difference is solely related to the *amount* of intoxicant which is consumed, using Proverbs 23:20-21 as a corroborative testimony for this position.<sup>1</sup> However, aside from the practical problem (which is still relevant today) of deciding how much one can drink without becoming intoxicated,<sup>2</sup> there is much evidence which indicates that this reasoning is faulty.

An important passage for consideration at this point is in chapter nine of Proverbs. In the first six verses, "Wisdom" is personified as a woman. It should be kept in mind that everything which the book writes concerning wisdom must be

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<sup>1</sup>Prov. 23:20-21 is quoted on pages 256-57 above.

<sup>2</sup>This differs even from individual to individual. A strong argument against this position may be found in the fact that Scripture gives no hint as to *how much* wine can be consumed without arousing God's wrath. If this were the key which really solves the problem of such divergent attitudes on the part of God toward yáyin, it is very difficult to explain why He did not provide any clues as to a proper dividing line--when one passes from full control of his senses to the stage of beginning inebriation which He would view as sin. Indeed, such a divinely given standard would be, in this view, a necessity. This is especially so because as a person becomes more affected by an intoxicant he becomes increasingly less able to make the rational decision by himself of when to stop "safely." In support of this, refer to William B. Terhune, M.D., The Safe Way to Drink: How to Prevent Alcohol Problems Before They Start (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968), p. 32.

understood in the context of the author's general purpose, which is "to know wisdom. . . ." (1:2). Throughout the book wisdom is the one characteristic word which best portrays God's demands for a righteous lifestyle. Wisdom, in Proverbs, is not mere knowledge but is rather the *practical, life-changing application of the knowledge of God and His standards* to one's lifestyle. The basic idea conveyed by the word "wisdom" is "skill."<sup>1</sup> When this is applied to the ethical demands of God, it may be defined as "skill in living life according to God's absolute standards" [RT]. Therefore, when Proverbs nine indicates that Wisdom, a primary attribute of God (8:22-31) personified, does certain things, it must be recognized that what Wisdom does is totally consistent with God's holy character. In light of this it is noteworthy that verse 2 speaks of Wisdom preparing her food and mixing her yáyin. Then in verses 5-6 she calls out to the naive (verse 4) and commands them to partake of her provision in order to become wise:

"Come, eat of my food,  
And drink of the yáyin I have mixed.  
"Forsake *your* folly and live,  
And proceed in the way of understanding."<sup>2</sup>

Proverbs is a book which constantly upholds the *avoidance of yáyin as a practice consistent with wisdom*;<sup>3</sup> yet these verses

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<sup>1</sup>Note that BDB's first entry under both hākām and hokmā (pp. 314-15) would support this assertion.

<sup>2</sup>Hebrew yáyin was substituted for NASB's "wine."

<sup>3</sup>Note 4:17; 23:19-20, 30, 31; 31:4, 6 and especially 20:1 where this concept is very explicit.

speak of Wisdom serving yáyin to those classed as *naïve*. This would be totally contradictory to the otherwise consistent message of the book--unless yáyin can legitimately refer to more than one kind of beverage. This is especially so when it is noted that the invitation in verse 5 is specifically directed to those who are innately without discernment (14:15). Therefore it would be foolish for Wisdom to say to such a person, "Drink of my wine" in the same breath in which she said, "Proceed in the way of understanding." Those words would only be fitting if they fell from the lips of the foolish woman (9:13) who said: "Stolen water is sweet, / And bread gained by stealth<sup>1</sup> is delightful" (9:17 [RT]).

Even though the above point might be otherwise taken seriously, there are, doubtless, those who would counter by stating that the obvious intent of Wisdom is not to offer literal food and wine but rather, in a figure of speech, to offer spiritual nourishment so that the naive person might know how to live righteously. However, although there is some merit to this point, the logic does not (and cannot) do away with the innate inconsistency which would still exist. The one to whom the message was addressed is the totally gullible "naive" person who would be least likely to understand the subtle distinction between wine as a dangerous beverage (20:1) and "wine" as a metaphor for spiritual nourishment. Furthermore, if

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<sup>1</sup>Note BDB, p. 712.

this is maintained to be the proper interpretation of the passage, would not this picture God taking a harmful beverage and using it as a symbol for a beneficial spiritual truth? Since God has not considered it profitable to use this dubious<sup>1</sup> pro-

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<sup>1</sup>Biblical figures of speech are consistent with normal word usage. A literal evil is not utilized as a figure of speech for something beneficial. Note, for example, that in Ephesians 5:18 the text contrasts drinking of wine with the filling of the Spirit: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." Paul did not use a metaphor of drinking wine as a positive symbol for spiritual nourishment but carefully presents drinking wine as producing the opposite effect of the Holy Spirit's filling.

For a very helpful discussion of biblical metaphorical usage, the reader is referred to the thesis by Jackie Deere entitled "Metaphor in the Song of Songs" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975). However, it is unfortunate that the great value of this work is somewhat mitigated by Deere's erroneous explanation of the use of wine in the Song of Songs. On pp. 39-40, although he realizes clearly that the Bible must harmonize with itself, Deere states:

"When Solomon says, 'How much better is your love than wine' (Song of Sol. 4:10), the exegete needs to know what Solomon associated with 'wine.' What significance did wine have for Solomon? In some conservative Christian circles, wine or rather the drinking of wine, is a taboo. An interpreter from such a group would have to suspend his commonplace associations connected with wine in order to understand what Solomon meant. The proper methodology would begin with the Song of Songs and then look for the commonplace associations of wine in the remaining Solomonic literature. Priority should be given to the author's work (if any) which approximates the Song in content, or any of his works written in the same period of time."

Deere goes on to say that, if any doubt concerning a biblical author's intended meaning still exists at this point, then contemporary biblical authors should be consulted and after that the whole Old Testament. Extrabiblical sources from the surrounding nations should then be used but with caution. However, in his above discussion of "wine" Deere has violated his own methodology, for his understanding of yáyin in Solomon's own writing as well as in the Old Testament as a whole is very superficial and consequently erroneous. Furthermore, he has not applied his own valid caution in which he states, "It is assumed, of course, that only those associations are considered which fit the intrinsic genre" (ibid., p. 43). The Song of Solomon only uses yáyin in the sense of grape juice and



cedure elsewhere in Scripture, it is questionable (at best), theologically, to champion such an understanding here.

Instead the solution to the whole question is easily resolved simply by translating yáyin as "grape juice" which is a symbol of God's most beneficent goodness (note the discussion under tíróš<sup>1</sup> in chapter 4).

A parallel passage using the same metaphor for spiritual blessing is found in Isaiah 55:1-2, 6:

"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters;  
And you who have no money come, buy and eat.  
Come, buy grape juice\* and milk  
Without money and without cost.  
Why do you spend money for what is not bread,  
And your wages for what does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,  
And delight yourself in abundance. . . .  
Seek Yahweh while He may be found;  
Call upon Him while He is near.

Here yáyin and milk are together symbolic of spiritual benefits and are specifically approved as that which is both good and satisfying.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the strong evidence already presented that yáyin can refer to grape juice as well as to intoxicating wine, there are other passages which would indicate the same conclusion. The book of the Song of Solomon uniformly presents yáyin as good and therefore as grape juice. For example, three

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as a beneficial good, whereas Solomon himself in the book of Proverbs clearly portrays yáyin in the sense of wine as a dangerous evil.

<sup>1</sup>It is interesting that this pairing of unlike beverages is also particularly approved of God for consumption in Song of Sol. 5:2.

times yávin is considered valuable, yet inferior as compared to love (1:2, 4; 4:10).<sup>1</sup>

Prior to a discussion of this biblical concept, another point is worth brief attention. It is readily admitted that wine has historically been extolled in prose and poetry. Modern man generally assumes the premise that wine is a heady, sensual pleasure comparable to love. However, it must be remembered that the Song of Solomon is in the Word of God (rather than being part of a secular poetic work); hence its judgments and implications are important far beyond those of mere literarily lovely verse.

In order to provide perspective, it should be recognized that Solomon authored Proverbs 20:1<sup>2</sup> which so condemns wine, as well as Song of Solomon 1:4b which extols it: "We will extol your love more than wine." The problem here goes beyond poetic hyperbole to moral truth when the verses being examined are inspired by God Himself. On the one hand, Solomon wrote in Proverbs 20:1 that the one intoxicated by wine was unwise; on the other hand, according to the usual interpretation, in these verses in the Song of Songs he exalts the intoxication of wine to a level almost as high as that of love. Certainly that would be the correct interpretation of 1:2 and

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<sup>1</sup>In this construction one thing which is extolled for its value is favorably compared with something else that is also extolled for its value.

<sup>2</sup>This verse is within the section beginning 10:1 indicating Solomon's authorship.

1:4 if yávin must be translated "wine."<sup>1</sup> However, it appears obvious that once again a harmonistic approach to hermeneutics would decree that yávin be rendered here as "grape juice."

In understanding the comparison it is appropriate to speak of the respective qualities of yávin as wine and, by contrast, yávin as grape juice. Medically intoxication from wine does the exact opposite of heightening the senses;<sup>2</sup> rather it anesthetizes them. It lowers inhibitions (perhaps thus initially creating more activity) but does not increase pleasure at all; it merely gives an illusion, a promise which it cannot deliver. Therefore, to compare wine, which is a harmful, artificial stimulus (beneficial only for those dying without hope--Prov. 31:6), with the natural and beneficial sense-enhancing and God-approved (and ordained<sup>3</sup>) stimulus of genuine love between two about-to-be-married lovers<sup>4</sup> would be a complete (and biblically impossible) defamation of the latter. Far from exalting love by comparison, the very mention of love and fermented wine together in a favorable light would discredit them both.

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<sup>1</sup>The passages clearly present the truth that love is being extolled here in Scripture rather than being disparaged. Since that is so, there must be the corollary truth that yávin is also being praised as a great good (even though inferior to love) or else the comparison is innately meaningless.

<sup>2</sup>Note the discussion by Terhune, The Safe Way to Drink, pp. 26-27.

<sup>3</sup>Gen. 2:22 ff., Prov. 5:15-19, etc. make this very clear.

<sup>4</sup>This writer subscribes to the view that Solomon married this woman at the end of chapter 3.

If, on the other hand, yáyin is understood as grape juice, the comparison is both legitimate and thoroughly in keeping with the Old Testament presentation of truth. God upholds grape juice as a product which He gave with the specific intent of rejoicing (Hebrew, śāmah) man's heart (Ps. 104:15).<sup>1</sup> As will be demonstrated below, such rejoicing was a special characteristic of the grape harvest even more so than that of the other harvests. Grape juice is delicious in taste, beneficial in the diet, and totally approved of by God without reservation. Therefore, any comparison is appropriate between the pleasures of drinking God's gift, grape juice, and the pleasures of a proper love, of which God also approves. Just as grape juice was given explicitly by God for the purpose of rejoicing the heart of man (Psalm 104:15), so too was the love between man and woman. Solomon wrote in the imperative mood in Proverbs 5:18b: " . . . rejoice in the wife of your youth" (ś<sup>e</sup> mah mē'ēšet n<sup>e</sup> 'ūrekā).

Contemporary man is so culturally conditioned, on the one hand, that he generally fails to understand the aptness of the favorable biblical comparison between grape juice and love. On the other hand, he assumes to be correct the (innately) inappropriate comparison between wine and love. This is quite understandable for two reasons: First, there is a great cul-

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<sup>1</sup>Jotham's parable in Judg. 9:8-15 clearly emphasizes this truth also. The vine says (v. 13), "Shall I leave my grape juice\* [tīrôš], which cheers [verb śāmah] God and men, and go to wave over the trees?"

tural gap. In modern American culture where the majority of people live in the city and only a relatively few (and that by mechanical means) raise the food supplies for the masses, it is difficult, if not impossible, for one to appreciate the joys of a less technological society whose life was so closely related to the soil. The average contemporary family's personal acquaintance with harvest hardly extends beyond a visit to the produce section of the grocery store where fruits and vegetables are displayed, barely ripe and neatly packaged. By contrast the ideal state in Israel could be summarized by the phrase "each man under his own vine and fig tree."<sup>1</sup> In that culture there was such enjoyment in harvest and such closeness to the natural elements that even a king's love poetry (the whole Song of Solomon) was fully permeated with the imagery of gardens and their fruit. The metaphorical comparison in 7:8 between the chaste enjoyment of the wife's breasts by the husband and the pleasure of picking clusters of grapes is especially pertinent to this discussion.<sup>2</sup> The fact that the average American may not be able, because of his limited experience, to appreciate the comparison between love and grape juice<sup>3</sup> merely indicates the great difference between the cul-

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 4:25(5:5); 2 Kings 18:31; Isa. 36:16; Micah 4:4; Zech. 3:10.

<sup>2</sup> The bride specifically compares herself and her charms to a garden and its choice fruit in 4:16.

<sup>3</sup> Doubtless some would yet argue that there is nothing inappropriate here about retaining yáyin as "wine," for if a

tures. It does not deny the legitimacy of the comparison in biblical poetry.

The second problem which is overlooked is that of poetic brainwashing. Wine (as an intoxicant) has been extolled through the centuries in poems (read or sung). Having grown accustomed to hearing such praise in connection with love,<sup>1</sup> it has become difficult to evaluate the implications of this comparison. Together with the effect of this literary heritage is the consistent translation of yávin in the Bible: it has uniformly been rendered as "wine," regardless of the context. It is no wonder, then, that it is difficult to persuade anyone to go both counter to general convention and to accepted biblical translation and interpretation. Without the personal, careful, informed perusal of the pertinent biblical passages,

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person drinks only one drink, he will not be intoxicated. The picture, then, is one of a delightful candlelight dinner with wine served sparingly. However, such an understanding would ignore the overall context of this extended love poem and the lavish language used. In 7:2(3) Solomon says of his bride:

"Your navel is *like* a round goblet  
Which never lacks mixed grape juice\*  
[hammázeḡ]; . . ."

Apparently there Solomon was implying that a continually filled goblet was good. If the word above is translated "wine" (as does the NASB, supported by BDB, p. 561), it presents an obvious problem to this theory of cautious and sparing drink being approved. Note also Song of Sol. 5:1 where imbibing *deeply* of yávin is enjoined. Note the important discussion regarding this verse in chapter 4, pp. 212 ff.

<sup>1</sup>For example, a popular contemporary song immortalizes "kisses sweeter than wine" (compare with Song of Sol. 7:9). Omar Khayyam is perhaps most remembered for the single line "A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou" from his poem "The Rubaiyat" (12.2).

there has been widespread skepticism regarding any conclusion that yáyin can equally refer to grape juice when it merits the approval of God and to an intoxicating wine when He so clearly condemns its use.

A further related issue which has compounded the problem is that the word "wine" in English is innately a far more pleasing and musical word than is "grape juice."<sup>1</sup> The latter sounds so uninteresting, unpoetic, and furthermore uneuphonic (not to mention unromantic) that in the few references where poets speak of it they feel compelled to use the word "must" instead. Admittedly, this writer wishes that there were a more mellifluous and musical word than "grape juice" which could be used to render yáyin in the translation of biblical poetry (even the transliteration yáyin itself is more pleasing to the ear). However, finding none, there is a different level of beauty which ought to be far more valued in biblical translation: the loveliness of clearly and accurately communicating the truth. That is, if a translation renders accurately and clearly the original meaning, that fact provides a far greater benefit than the utilization of a (perhaps more melodious) word such as "wine" or even "new wine" which invites serious misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

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<sup>1</sup>It may also be noted that grape juice in American culture is often considered to be a nutritious beverage for children (who can hear "grape juice" without thinking of Welch's and purple mustaches?), while wine is a sophisticated adult drink, beautifully packaged and widely advertized in a glamorous setting.

The tragedy of all of these above correlative issues which have so long supported the uniform translation of yáyin as "wine" in Scripture is this: Even those who do not themselves drink alcoholic beverages often have been unwillingly pressured by the above factors to assign a value to fermented wine which is both medically and theologically unsound.

In light of the above discussion it appears evident that not only may yáyin be translated as "grape juice" but that it *must* be so translated in passages where the drink merits God's approval. God not only uses grape juice as a symbol for spiritual nourishment (as in Proverbs 9), but He also makes an approving comparison between grape juice and undefiled, passionate love. The implications from any conclusions to the contrary would, if contemplated carefully, cause consternation to those who employ a harmonistic hermeneutical approach to Scripture.

Even aside from these clear passages, that yáyin could refer to an *unfermented* beverage freshly pressed from the grape would naturally follow from several passages which deal with the harvest. Perhaps the clearest passage of all would be Micah 6:15 where God in judgment says, "you will tread . . . the grapes [tíróš], but will not drink the grape juice\* [yáyin]." While it is possible, for argument's sake, to assume that a lengthy period of fermentation<sup>1</sup> is to be understood

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<sup>1</sup>Heaton states that the average time required for this process would be approximately one and one-half months (E. W.



between the treading of the fruit and the drinking of the beverage, that would be an assumption which is imposed upon the text rather than a natural one. As explained in the preceding chapter, the distinction between tîrôš and yáyin is not necessarily<sup>1</sup> a distinction between two kinds of beverages. Instead, the former word is simply uniformly used of the expressed juice and the latter word is used when this juice is actually consumed. It is for this reason that Isaiah 16:10 can legitimately speak of the treading out of yáyin (as juice) in the grape press, since the beverage is especially in view:

And gladness and joy are taken away from the  
fruitful field;  
In the vineyards also there will be no cries  
of joy or jubilant shouting,  
No treader treads out grape juice\* [yáyin] in  
the presses,  
For I have made the shouting to cease.

This passage, where God through deprivation of the harvest is judging Moab for its pride, pictures very graphically the joy of the grape harvest and the exultation in the harvest activities. However, the obvious underlying biblical premise is that the joy is ultimately related more to the product, grape juice for drinking, than it is to the preliminary activity required to produce it. It is the bounty of the

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Heaton, Everyday Life in Old Testament Times, illustrated from drawings by Marjorie Quennell [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956], p. 106).

<sup>1</sup>There is a legitimate distinction between the two words, of course, when yáyin refers to an intoxicating beverage.

harvest, rather than the actual work of the harvest (however enjoyable that may be) which produces the greater joy.<sup>1</sup> The mention of yáyin as the immediate product of treading grapes in the press is implied as well in Jeremiah 40:10b. After being placed in command of the poor remnant whom the Babylonians had left behind in 586 B.C., Gedaliah counsels them not to be paralyzed by the fear of their new master Babylon but to harvest the crops as usual: "' . . . as for you, gather in grape juice\* [yáyin] and summer fruit and oil [šémen], and put them in your storage vessels, and live in your cities that you have taken over.'" Instead of using the words for the raw materials of the harvest, tîrôš and yišhār, the words stressing that the products were consumer-ready are used here. The normal implication would be that yáyin as "grape juice" was stored rather than that the juice which was stored would by intention eventually become yáyin (as "wine")<sup>2</sup> by fermentation.

Another passage which indicates that the grape juice, as an immediately available beverage after pressing, is called yáyin would be Nehemiah 13:15:

In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading grape presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading them on donkeys, as well as grape juice\*, grapes,

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<sup>1</sup> Compare especially Jer. 48:33 where Jeremiah seems to be loosely quoting this passage in Isaiah. Jeremiah more directly associates the gladness and joy with the grape juice itself (yáyin) by poetic parallelism. (Note also Gen. 2:17.)

<sup>2</sup> Verse 12 indicates their fulfillment of this advice in that they " . . . gathered in the grape juice\* [yáyin] and summer fruit in great abundance."

figs, and all kinds of loads, and they brought *them* into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. So I admonished *them* on the day they sold food.<sup>1</sup>

Here, included in the same sentence, are the treading of grape presses and, without any delay in time to allow for fermentation, the selling of the expressed juice as yáyin. The fresh juice is sold along with fresh grapes and other fruit.

Another clear reference to this same truth is the pairing of dāgān and yáyin in Lamentations 2:12b. In this solemn poem which so vividly presents the physical anguish suffered by Judah during Babylon's siege, the little children cry out in famished distress to their mothers: "Where is *the harvested grain and grape juice?*" (RT). The normal word paired with dāgān would be tîrôš (see chapter 4). The fact that yáyin is requested by infants can only be explained by the fact that it is the nourishing beverage of grape juice rather than the debilitating one of wine which they desire. It would be strange enough to assume in a time of famine, when the basic food staples (note dāgān) are unavailable, that the citizenry would desire intoxicating wine. It is even more strange here to interpret this passage as saying that infants (yônēq) would be asking their mothers for such a beverage.

Several passages imply that the normal purpose for having vineyards was for the pure fresh beverage that was its

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<sup>1</sup>NASB "wine presses" is changed to "grape presses" in accord with the discussion in appendix F below concerning the Hebrew word gat.

product. Amos 9:14 may be considered representative of these:<sup>1</sup>

"Also I will restore the captivity of My  
people Israel,  
And they will rebuild the ruined cities and  
live *in them*,  
They will also plant vineyards and drink their  
grape juice,\*  
And make gardens and eat their fruit."

Here the eating of the fruit of the gardens is explicitly paired with the normal product of the vineyard (yáyin = grape juice). All of this is in a context of God's specific approval and blessing.

Before leaving the discussion of the harvest, it is appropriate to mention briefly that the verb śāmah, "to rejoice," or its noun śimhā,<sup>2</sup> "joy," is frequently used with yáyin or with tîrôš.<sup>3</sup> This natural joy is not a joy that requires the artificial stimulation of intoxication.<sup>4</sup> The joy over the harvest and its products is biblically, for the righteous Israelite, the joy of accepting from the hand of God<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Compare Deut. 28:39 and Zeph. 1:13 which are used in contexts of judgment, whereas Amos 9:14 is in reference to God's blessing. Other previously mentioned passages dealing especially with tîrôš (chapter 4) would imply the same truth.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 970.

<sup>3</sup>Many references have already been cited. Note especially Deut. 14:26; Ps. 4:7(8), 104:15; Isa. 16:10.

<sup>4</sup>It is interesting to contrast the verbless formula "the heart of \_\_\_\_\_ was merry [tôh] with wine" (as in 2 Sam. 13:28) with the opposite idea of grape juice rejoicing [śāmah] the heart (as in Ps. 104:15). The former deals with drunkenness; the latter refers to wholesome joy over God's good provision.

the bounty which He so desires to bestow. One must be cautious here not to make the mistake of assuming, as many do, that wine would enhance such joy; wine would rather dull the senses and therefore diminish the true conscious enjoyment of such provision (despite contemporary advertising to the contrary).<sup>1</sup> Certainly this truth is the one proclaimed in Zechariah 10:7.

There, in a context referring to Yahweh's future blessing upon His people when He will return them safely to the promised land, He declares:

"So Ephraim will be like a mighty warrior,  
 Yea, their hearts will rejoice as with the  
     harvest joy of drinking fresh grape juice  
     [yáyin]  
 Indeed, their children will see and rejoice;  
 May their hearts excitedly rejoice in Yahweh!"  
 [RT]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Although it might induce a fleshly giddiness, it would certainly not result in godly joy springing spontaneously from a thankful heart.

<sup>2</sup>The three verbs here for "rejoice" are śāmah, śāmēah, and gīl respectively. The fact that this type of joy has nothing at all to do with intoxication (even in its beginning stages) can be readily seen from Ps. 65:9(10)-13(14). There the pasture and hills, the meadows and valleys, all sing with joy when God brings forth his bountiful harvest:

"You visit the earth, and cause it to overflow;  
 You greatly enrich it;  
 The stream of God is full of water;  
 You prepare their grain, for thus You prepare the earth.  
 You water its furrows abundantly;  
 You settle its ridges;  
 You soften it with showers;  
 You bless its growth.  
 You have crowned the year with Your bounty,  
 And Your paths drip with fatness.  
 The pastures of the wilderness drip,  
 And the hills gird themselves with rejoicing.  
 The meadows are clothed with flocks,

If all of the above passages together conclusively demonstrate that yáyin can refer to fresh juice as well as to intoxicating wine (a conclusion which the etymological study, chapter 3, of yáyin supported), then the problem of God's approval on the one hand, and disapproval on the other, of yáyin is easily resolved. The passages indicating that yáyin is part of the blessing which God desires His people to enjoy refer to grape juice. Contrariwise, those passages which clearly show God's wrath against yáyin and what it accomplishes in man refer to wine. With this distinction in mind it is now helpful to cite other representative passages where it is suggested that yáyin should be translated as "grape juice."

Genesis 14:18, 19 accounts the proffer of food and drink to Abraham by Melchizedek:

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and grape juice;<sup>\*</sup> now he was a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said,

"Blessed be Abram of God Most High,  
Creator<sup>1</sup> of heaven and earth;  
And blessed be God Most High,  
Who has delivered your enemies into  
your hand."

And he gave him a tenth of all.

Similarly, concerning the meal during which Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac, Isaac said: " . . . , 'Bring *it* to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you.' And he

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And the valleys are covered with grain;  
They shout for joy, yes, they sing."  
Such rejoicing arises from harmony with God's purposes rather than from any artificial stimulus of yáyin (= "wine").

<sup>1</sup>NASB marginal reading.

brought *it* to him, and he ate; he also brought him grape juice\* and he drank" (Gen. 27:25). The common pairing of food and grape juice as the beverage is found in other historical references also: "And Jesse took a donkey *loaded with* bread and a jug of grape juice\* and a young goat, and sent *them* to Saul by David his son" (1 Sam. 16:20).<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that Daniel shows two opposite attitudes toward yáyin in the book which bears his name. In Daniel 1:5, 8, 16 the appointed food and wine from the king's table were graciously, but firmly, refused (very probably because this diet would go counter to both the law of Moses and to loyalty to Yahweh<sup>2</sup>). However, then in 10:3 it mentions that Daniel put aside (his normal use of) food, grape juice, and the cosmetic use of oil because of mourning.

There are also cases in the Old Testament where yáyin as "grape juice" is referred to in special legislation pertaining to certain individuals. For example, the Nazirite vow, which included a total prohibition against ingesting any kind of grape product (Num. 6---referred to earlier in chapter 4,

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<sup>1</sup>That this was a very handsome present for the king can be seen by comparing the food provisions that Jesse sent to his own sons and their commander (17:17-18) which did not include either meat or a beverage.

<sup>2</sup>Note Lev. 11 and Deut. 14; it is also probable that the yáyin was intoxicating. The mention of loyalty to Yahweh above is related to the Babylonian practice of dedicating the food first to their deities. (Leon Wood, A Commentary on Daniel [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973], p. 37.)

under šēkār), was normally a vow covering a specified period of time. When this time was finished, the text specifies that the Nazirite could resume using the beneficial products of the vine with the words: " . . . afterwards the Nazirite may drink grape juice\*" (Num. 6:20b).

Another special group with laws peculiar to themselves were the Rechabites. In Jeremiah chapter thirty-five God elevates them as an example to all of Israel because of their steadfast obedience to laws which their godly ancestor Jonadab had promulgated. These laws specified that their life was always to be nomadic in character; they were to live only in tents and not to plant personally or to harvest from field or vineyard. They had also been specifically enjoined by their forefather not to drink yáyin.<sup>1</sup> While this ancestor probably had specifically been attempting to remove from his descendants the temptation to drink (yáyin=) wine, he had indicated that (yáyin=) grape juice was banned, knowing that if they followed this prohibition, drunkenness could never even begin to be a problem. Apparently Jonadab, son of Rechab, had observed how decadent life could become in a more settled civilization. This man, a contemporary of Jehu of Israel (2 Kings 10:15), undoubtedly remembered Yahweh's words of stern warning in

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<sup>1</sup>Jer. 35:2, 5 (two times), 6 (two times), 8 and 14 all refer to yáyin as grape juice. To tempt them with wine (note the following discussion), the drinking of which would have been contrary even to the law of God, would have been a far weaker test than tempting them with an innately harmless beverage, pure juice.



Deuteronomy 8:1-20. There God had instructed Israel to be alert for fleshly dangers which would result from the material prosperity which He desired Israel to enjoy:

"For Yahweh your God is bringing you into a good land . . . ; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything. . . . When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless Yahweh your God for the good land which He has given you."

"Beware lest you forget Yahweh your God by not keeping His commandments . . . ; lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived *in them* . . . then your heart become proud, and you forget Yahweh your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." [Deut. 8:7a, 8-9a, 10-11a, 12, 14]

Seeing that by his generation the spiritual decline concerning which God had warned Israel had already become a reality, Jonadab gave to his descendants family ordinances which would, if followed, be a factor in sustaining their spiritual vitality.<sup>1</sup> The fact that they had stayed true (first to Yahweh's law and then) to their forefather's commands is particularly evidenced by their refusal to heed the counter-command of a recognized prophet of God. When Jeremiah (35:5) set one of God's intended blessings, grape juice, before them and told them to drink, they unhesitatingly replied:

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<sup>1</sup>None of the things which Jonadab had forbidden--houses, fields, vineyards, grape juice--were innately harmful. As has been pointed out above, these are blessings that Yahweh desired his people to enjoy to the full, if they could praise God by their lives while doing so. Jonadab was a serious man of God who was prescient enough to attempt to preserve his family's continued spiritual integrity by removing those things which would tempt them to pride and arrogance in their own achievement.

. . . "We will not drink grape juice,\* for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, 'You shall not drink grape juice,\* you or your sons, forever. And you shall not build a house, and you shall not sow seed, and you shall not plant a vineyard or own one; but in tents you shall dwell all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.' And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he commanded us, not to drink grape juice\* all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters. . . . We have only dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and have done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us." [Jer. 35:6-8, 10]

They continue (verse 11) by saying that their temporary departure from their tents was only to seek the safety which Jerusalem afforded from the Babylonian army. This testimony of the Rechabites had been so consistently strong that they were used as examples by God through Jeremiah to rebuke Judah for its equally determined contrary behavior:

"The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons not to drink grape juice,\* are observed. So they do not drink grape juice\* to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. But I have spoken to you again and again; yet you have not listened to Me. Also I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them again and again, saying: 'Turn now every man from his evil way. . . ; but you have not inclined your ear or listened unto Me. Indeed, the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have observed the command of their father which he commanded them, but this people has not listened to Me.'" [Jer. 35:14-16]

There are several contexts in the Old Testament where an understanding of grape juice as the proper translation of the Hebrew word yáyin may be considered to be debatable; even so, the general evidence would still tend to support such a conclusion. For example, in Job 1:13 and 18 there is the mention of Job's adult progeny eating and drinking yáyin on feast

days (see verse 4). There is nothing in the context to indicate drunkenness and thus there is no need to interpret the word as "wine." It is true and may well be admitted that in the progress of revelation up to that point in time, God may not yet have *clearly* forbidden wine as a beverage. However, if such an argument is offered, it may still be countered by the fact that the book of Genesis vividly records the effects of the sinful abuse of grape beverages in man's very first recorded use of fermented wine--Noah's drunkenness. The same book graphically portrays the debauchery of Lot in his drunkenness. Just as Noah, in his drunkenness, had lost all sense of modesty, so Lot had allowed drunkenness to deprive him of his moral virtue. Not only once, but on two consecutive nights, he was not even aware of his sexual aberration because of intoxication. Neither passage indicates the intent of the individual to become drunk, but the devastating effects of intoxication are just as overwhelming. Therefore, the effects of the potency of wine are highlighted; the very details which are disclosed provide, by example, a warning which should have been most clear to any who knew of these historical incidents. Therefore, for the patriarchs to assume that God approved of such a beverage, even if He had not yet specifically excluded it, is a premise for which this author finds no biblical justification.

Another passage where yayin could be understood either as juice or wine is in Proverbs 21:17: "He who loves pleasure

will become a poor man; / He who loves [yáyin] and oil will not become rich." Since the result of such a "love" is a negative condition--that of being poor--it is possible to consider the beverage so indicted to be wine. However, the comprehensive biblical context would seem clearly to indicate otherwise. The word for "pleasure" (śimhâ), which is usually translated "joy," does not innately convey a negative concept at all. In fact, it is usually associated with the beneficence of God. God expects man to enjoy the life He has given.<sup>1</sup> However, joy should be a result of living life as God intended it to be lived; it should never be the end or goal which is sought for by the individual. Similarly, as may be shown from numerous contexts, grape juice and oil were given by God to man for his good pleasure (Psalm 104:15, for example); however they are not in themselves a proper object for one's affections. Again, they are intended to be an enjoyable concomitant of the life of which God approves. As such, they are specifically removed by God when rebellion against Yahweh becomes rampant (Zephaniah 1:13, Micah 6:15 etc.). The intention of this proverb, then, is to declare that when anyone sets pleasure as the goal of his life, it is both wrong and may lead to disastrous temporal consequences, even to poverty and the antithesis of joy. Therefore, even a God-approved beverage can become, by its misuse, a sin.

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<sup>1</sup>Note Ps. 106:5; Prov. 10:28 and 12:20.

Ecclesiastes 9:7-8 presents these same words, śimhâ, yáyin, and śémen together in a more positive context:

Go then, eat your bread [léhem] with joy [śimhâ], and drink your grape juice [yáyin] with a cheerful heart; for God is already pleased with your works. At all times, let your garments be white and do not fail to anoint your head with oil [śémen].<sup>1</sup> [RT]

Another passage which also is capable of being interpreted either way is in the account of David's flight from Jerusalem after Absalom's revolt against him:

Now when David had passed a little beyond the summit, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them were two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred clusters of raisins, a hundred summer fruits, and a jug of grape juice.<sup>\*</sup> And the king said to Ziba, "Why do you have these?" And Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the grape juice,<sup>\*</sup> for whoever is faint in the wilderness to drink."<sup>2</sup> [2 Sam. 16:1-2]

However, although it is possible to interpret yáyin as wine, the context would make this equation very unlikely. Ziba's entire gift of food and drink was presented for the purpose of provision in the desolate wilderness of Judea through which David's group must pass. Aside from yáyin, all of the items offered were provisions which would foster health and alertness

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<sup>1</sup>The last line is more literally "do not allow oil to be lacking upon your head."

<sup>2</sup>Other similar passages would include 1 Sam. 10:3; 25:18; and 1 Chron. 12:40. Stored supplies for the year included such prominent staples as grain, olive oil [śémen], and grape juice [yáyin]: 1 Chron. 27:26-28; 2 Chron. 11:11 (for a military garrison). Such supplies were also given for services rendered to the Tyrians who helped Solomon--2 Chron. 2:10(9) and 15(14).

in this crisis. To have given *wine* at such a time would certainly have shown lack of wisdom and might have been interpreted by David as a subversive measure, especially since it was specifically intended for any who might become "faint" (yā'ēp) or "weary"<sup>1</sup> during the forced march.<sup>2</sup> Grape juice under such circumstances, however, would have been welcome and beneficial to those who drank of it, and would have been in accord with Ziba's stated purposes.

In summary, then, yávin should (contrary to accepted practice) frequently be translated as "grape juice." Through this translation the otherwise insurmountable theological problems created are resolved in a way that is in harmony with the evidence from usage. Whenever a passage speaks approvingly of yávin, it must be grape juice, rather than wine, which is to be understood as the intent of the biblical writer.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Use of Yávin as a Libation

There are several passages in the Old Testament where

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup>Medically, alcohol would have contributed to weariness rather than providing relief from it.

<sup>3</sup>One additional usage of yávin which fits broadly within this overall section is its rare use to qualify the word for vine (gépen). Twice (Num. 6:4; Judg. 13:14), both in relationship to the Nazirite vow, Scripture speaks of the gépen hay-yávin. Some would no doubt conclude that this formula indicates that the major purpose for which the vine was grown was to make wine. However, this would apparently be theologically inconsistent with God's revealed purposes. Therefore, the phrase should be translated as "grape vine" with the under-

yáyin is used in a specific way as an offering to Yahweh.<sup>1</sup> God specified in the law that a libation (Hebrew nések, meaning "a drink-offering"<sup>2</sup> or more specifically "a liquid poured out" as an offering to God) of yáyin should be part of certain other offerings.<sup>3</sup> Prior to a discussion of these libations, it is important to ascertain exactly which beverage is meant by the word yáyin in these contexts.

Since it is obvious that Yahweh the God of Israel did not eat sacrifices or drink libations as pagan deities are por-

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standing that the usual use of the grape was to be pressed into juice.

<sup>1</sup>Exod. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:5, 7, 10; 28:14; 1 Sam. 1:24 (probable); 1 Chron. 9:29; Hos. 9:4; 14:7(8). Deut. 32:38 is similar.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 651. The cognate root nāsak means "to pour out" (ibid., p. 650).

<sup>3</sup>By intertestamental times the libation seems to have accrued to itself greater and more independent significance than it was intended to have according to Scripture. Ecclesiasticus 50:14-17 shows it to be the climax of the ministry of the high priest:

"To complete the ceremonies at the altar  
and adorn the offering of the Most High,  
the Almighty,  
he held out his hand for the libation cup  
and poured out the blood of the grape,  
poured its fragrance at the foot of the altar  
to the Most High, the King of all.  
Then the sons of Aaron shouted  
and blew their trumpets of beaten silver;  
they sounded a mighty fanfare  
as a reminder before the Lord.  
Instantly the people as one man fell on  
their faces  
to worship the Lord their God, the Almighty,  
the Most High." [NEB]

trayed to do,<sup>1</sup> it might appear that this issue is merely academic. If the libation was merely poured out before Him, why

<sup>1</sup>For example, note the following representative instances. In the Gilgamesh Epic (Tablet XI, lines 155-61) are these lines:

"(Then) I . . . offered a sacrifice.  
I poured out a libation on the peak of the mountain.  
Seven and (yet) seven kettles I set up.  
Under them I heaped up (sweet) cane, cedar, and myrtle.  
The gods smelled the savor,  
The gods smelled the sweet savor.  
The gods gathered like flies over the sacrificer."

(Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1963], p. 87.) Heidel (ibid., p. 256) comments with repugnance concerning this text:

"Since through the extirpation of humankind, with the exception of the occupants of the ark, all sacrifices had ceased, the gods had not been fed for some weeks and now were hungry. In view of the opportunity of feasting again, all the gods and goddesses present apparently forgot their grievances against mankind and were glad that Utnapishtim had survived."

The importance of the libation is emphasized in Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi, where the writer indicates that one can expect persecution if he does not make (the prescribed) libations to his deity (note tablet 2, lines 11 ff. in W. G. Lambert, Babylonian Wisdom Literature [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960], p. 39).

The Ugaritic epics also indicate that sacrifices are to be eaten by the gods. As an example, in the Aqhat Epic (2 Aqhat I:6-9) Daniel offers such a gift to the gods:

"Behold a day and a second,  
Oblation to the gods gives Daniel,  
Oblation to the gods to eat,  
Oblation to drink to the holy ones."

[ANET, p. 150]

Doubtless it is this overall pagan practice to which Moses refers in Deut. 32:16-18 and 37-38:

"They made Him jealous with strange gods;  
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.  
They sacrificed to demons *who were* not God,  
To gods whom they have not known,  
New gods who came lately,  
Whom your fathers did not dread.  
You neglected the Rock who begot you,  
And forgot the God who gave you birth.  
. . . . .



should there be any concern regarding the degree of fermentation or its lack in the yáyin used? However, it may be pointed out that God has been revealed in the Old Testament as One who takes great care of detail. It is thus unlikely that He would consider the distinction between wine and grape juice to be of no importance. The fact that God gave very explicit instructions regarding the kind of animals which would be acceptable to Him (Lev. 1:3, 10 etc.) lends credibility to the proposition that He also had a specific beverage in mind for the libation.

In considering the question of whether or not the prescribed yáyin of the libation was wine or juice, several points are pertinent. It must be admitted, of course, that the Bible is not explicit concerning how yáyin is to be understood in these contexts. However, several implications may be drawn from overall biblical truth.

First, it has been demonstrated above that God's intentions for Israel's use of the vine did not extend to any utilization of intoxicating beverages made from the grape. If Israel was only to drink the fresh juice, there is no reason to

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"'And He will say, "Where are their gods,  
 The rock in which they sought refuge?  
 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices,  
 And drank the wine of their libation?  
 Let them rise up and help you,  
 Let them be your hiding place!  
 See now that I, I am He,  
 And there is no god besides Me;  
 It is I who put to death and give life.  
 I have wounded, and it is I who heal;  
 And there is no one who can deliver from  
 my hand."'"

even suggest that Yahweh would invite them to offer a different (fermented) beverage to Him.

A second point is that leavened dough was never an acceptable offering to God, as is specified in Leviticus 2:11, "No grain offering, which you bring to Yahweh, shall be made of leaven, . . ." If this is the case, it would seem strange for God to permit a *fermented* beverage to be offered, since the process is analogous.

A third evidence would be related to this and yet highlights another factor to consider. Each of the other substances offered to God were natural products resulting from the overt blessing of God: fine flour and oil for the grain offering, and sheep, goats, and bulls for the animal offerings. It would certainly follow, therefore, that the natural product of the grape harvest--juice rather than wine--would be offered as well, rather than a product which had been changed *in nature* by the fermentation process.

In light of the above evidence, then, it would appear to be true that God expected only unintoxicating juice to be given for the prescribed libations. While some might conclude that the silence of Scripture on the matter would indicate that the question is an unimportant one, such an assertion may be countered by an equally unprovable, and yet a far more viable option: that God did not approve of any intoxicating beverages may have been so obvious to Moses and his contemporaries that

to stipulate this in detail was unnecessary.<sup>1</sup>

A second matter which requires elucidation is, Why did God command a libation of grape juice? The answer is suggested in the fact that God clearly desired from His people a *recognition* that all of their blessings and livelihood flowed from Him. For this reason He inaugurated two duties which would constantly remind them of their dependence upon His good will. The first duty involved sacrifice--the giving to God of something which the person owned. The second was the tithe. It is noteworthy that both of these duties would provide a reminder that all their provision came from Yahweh because every aspect of natural harvest is included. Not only did the sacrifice and the tithe<sup>2</sup> include the young of the herds and flocks, but it also included the three primary aspects of the harvest of the earth--grain, grape juice, and oil.

Apparently a libation of yáyin (grape juice) was never

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<sup>1</sup>It is interesting to note, in support of this, that there is very little mention of drunkenness as a problem in Israel prior to the eleventh century B.C. (The exceptions to this are the startling examples of debauchery already cited above, Noah and Lot, which indubitably helped to make the point clear to Israel that wine was not an approved product of the vine.) With this realization there would be a natural explanation for the warnings against general drunkenness mentioned in Proverbs. By the time of the monarchy the people were in need of a biblical reminder of a truth which God's people had clearly understood in earlier centuries. From the prophetic utterances (especially Isaiah) it appears that by the eighth century, drunkenness, despite the clear biblical teaching of Proverbs against it, was becoming a sin in almost epidemic proportions.

<sup>2</sup>Regarding the tithes, note Deut. 14:23 for example.

offered in isolation, at least as prescribed in the law.<sup>1</sup> It was always the last of three concomitant offerings: the burnt offering,<sup>2</sup> the grain offering, and the grape juice libation. While the grain offering (Hebrew minhâ) could be offered by itself,<sup>3</sup> when it was offered with the libation it was comprised of a cake of fine flour (sôlet) mixed with oil (šémen) or beaten oil (šémen kâtîit).<sup>4</sup> The libation<sup>5</sup> was offered to God by being poured out upon the burning sacrifice to be itself consumed by fire<sup>6</sup> as a sweet aroma for Yahweh.

The exact proportion of flour, oil, and grape juice used in the grain offering and libation was governed by the kind of animal which was consumed as the accompanying burnt offering.

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<sup>1</sup>The libation of Jacob in Gen. 35:14 was voluntary and the nature of the libation is unspecified. It does mention that oil was poured out afterward (compare 28:18).

<sup>2</sup>That Lev. 1 does not mention the concomitant offerings is apparently related to the fact that the chapter deals with the laws governing the burnt offerings alone.

<sup>3</sup>It could be of different composition if offered in isolation. Note Lev. 2:4-7, 14-16; 7:9-10.

<sup>4</sup>Exod. 29:40 specifies this kind of oil for the daily burnt offerings, morning and evening. It may perhaps be assumed that such "beaten" oil was especially fine and expensive (BDB, p. 510).

<sup>5</sup>The word yáyin is actually used only a few times but the libation is spoken of quite often and usually, unless specified otherwise (Ps. 16:4, of blood), must be understood as referring to this normal libation.

<sup>6</sup>Note Exod. 30:9 for an explicit indication of its being poured onto the altar. Num. 15:10 says that it was burnt as a sweet aroma.

With one exception (Lev. 23:13),<sup>1</sup> the following proportionate amounts comprised the respective offerings:

(1) If a bull of the herd was offered as a burnt offering, the percentage in the grain offering was three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour to one-half of a hin of oil, accompanied by a libation of one-half of a hin of grape juice (Num. 15:9-10; 28:12, 14).

(2) If a ram was offered, the proportion was two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour to one-third of a hin of oil offered with a libation of one-third of a hin of grape juice (Num. 15:6-7; 28:12, 14).

(3) If a one year old lamb was the burnt offering, it was accompanied by a grain offering of one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil and the libation was one-fourth of a hin of grape juice. Apparently the proportions were the same for a goat (Num. 15:4-5; 28:5, 7, 13-14).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This passage appears to govern a once-only sacrifice in relation to the first harvest of the land (note verse 10). The proportion of oil to the two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour is not mentioned. However, since in every other case the oil and grape juice measurements were the same, this is probably true here as well. The amount of grape juice is specified as one-fourth of a hin, which would be just over one-and-one-half pints (1.625). (The NBD, p. 1323, gives the capacity of a hin as 3.66 litres or 6.5 pints and that of an ephah as 22 litres or 4 gallons and 6 3/4 pints.

<sup>2</sup>For the goat, notice Num. 15:11 where the goats are included after lambs. In Num. 28:9 it specifies two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour but this is because two lambs are offered so that the proportion was doubled.

In order for the reader to comprehend better the volume and proportions of these offerings the following table is included (equivalent volume is only approximate).

TABLE OF OFFERINGS IN MODERN PROPORTIONS

<u>Animal Burnt Offering</u>	<u>Grain Offering</u>	<u>Libation</u>
(1) A bull	9 1/4 pints fine flour mixed with 3 1/4 pints oil	3 1/4 pints grape juice
(2) A ram	6 1/7 pints fine flour mixed with 2 1/6 pints oil	2 1/6 pints grape juice
(3) A yearling lamb or a goat	3 1/15 pints fine flour mixed with 1 3/5 pints oil	1 3/5 pints grape juice

The volume above of flour, oil and grape juice for each offering is fairly large. Some small comprehension of the great economic cost to the nation may be gained when it is realized that the third category of offering above, although the smallest, was perpetual in nature. The daily burnt offerings, a lamb morning and evening,<sup>1</sup> as well as the extra, sabbath, double burnt offering of two lambs (Num. 28:9-10) were constantly being sacrificed throughout the year.<sup>2</sup> A huge vol-

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<sup>1</sup>Exod. 29:38-42 specifies the same proportion for the yearling lambs as above. Note also Num. 28:3-8.

<sup>2</sup>Another group of regular sacrifices were the extra burnt offerings made at the beginning of each month consisting of two bulls, one ram, seven lambs (Num. 28:11) and one goat (Num. 28:12).

ume of flour, oil, and grape juice would have been consumed in this manner annually. This should have provided, along with the burnt offerings themselves, a constant reminder to the officiating priests of their responsibility to teach the people that Yahweh alone was the source of all blessing.<sup>1</sup>

### The Use of Yáyin as a Figure of Speech

Prior to leaving the discussion of the noun yáyin it is important to note that it was used frequently in figures of speech. The Hebrews generally, and the Old Testament writers specifically, utilized figures of speech with great frequency. In doing so, their communication of truth (if normal hermeneutical principles are followed) actually becomes more popularly comprehensible than would otherwise be possible. Paul Tan well states this function of figurative language:

. . . figures of speech are charming ornaments of language which enliven writing and conversing. The literal sense intended by the writer . . . is oftentimes made more vivid and graphic when conveyed through the drapery of figures.<sup>2</sup>

Since metaphoric speech is common in the Old Testament, and since the drinking of yáyin was a normal aspect of Hebrew culture, it is to be expected that yáyin would be so utilized both in the sense of grape juice and in the sense of wine. It

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<sup>1</sup>The fact that the priest had the responsibility of teaching the law is mentioned in Lev. 10:11; Deut. 17:9-11; 31:11; 33:10.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Lee Tan, The Interpretation of Prophecy, with a forward by John C. Whitcomb, Jr. (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, Inc.--Distributors, 1974), p. 138.

also follows that grape juice is uniformly used figuratively in relation to that which is good, whereas wine is consistently so used in relation to that which is harmful.

Grape juice is used prominently in the blessing of God upon Judah. In Genesis 49:11 it is prophesied that God would so bless the vintage crop of Judah with abundance that these vines would require no protection from the livestock. This is followed by the metaphoric sentence, "He washes his garments in grape juice,"\* / And his robes in the blood of grapes." This figure refers to the bounty of the harvest, but it emphasizes another aspect of it: the joyous treading of the grapes. The literal idea contained in the figure is, apparently, that the harvest is so copious as to make the garments of the grape treaders actually appear washed in the abundant juice.<sup>1</sup>

Grape juice is also used favorably in comparison emphasizing beauty. Genesis 49:12 compares the color and beauty of Judah's eyes with that of grape juice when it says, "His eyes are darker than grape juice. . . ." [RT].<sup>2</sup> Another comparison

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<sup>1</sup>H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, 2 vols. (n.p.: Wartburg Press, 1942; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), 2:1184. Note also Isa. 63:1-3.

<sup>2</sup>The AV reads, "His eyes *shall* be red with wine, . . ." The NASB reads, "His eyes are dull from wine, . . ." From these readings it would seem that, in addition to the promised throne and material prosperity (verses 10 and 11), Judah was destined to exhibit the bloodshot eyes of a perpetual hangover (note Prov. 23:29). Perhaps some might assert that, putting aside prophecy, a comment was being made about his own characteristic appearance. However, if alcoholism in the present or future were the implication (as it would seem both from the AV and the NASB translations), it is very unlikely that such a



is found several times in the Song of Solomon (1:2, 4; 4:10)<sup>1</sup> where grape juice, though a wonderful gift of God, is compared as a pleasure of less value than the delights of genuine love. A further lover's comparison, this time a simile, is made between the mouth of the beloved one and the best grape juice available: ". . . Your mouth is like the best grape juice . . . ." (Song of Sol. 7:9[10] [RT]). Grape juice is also used in a simile in Zechariah 10:7 where the rejoicing over the harvest provision of this drink is cited as a comparison for the rejoicing of the believing remnant over Yahweh's physical deliverance of His people. In metaphors in Isaiah 55:1 and Proverbs 9:2 and 5 grape juice is used in referring to spiritual nourishment and godly wisdom.

One passage<sup>2</sup> in Scripture, Isaiah 16:6-10, uses grape

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one would have been chosen to rule as king. Judah would then have been passed over, just as the first three brothers were for their serious shortcomings. This truth is quite evident in the context, for Judah is singled out as praiseworthy in verse 8.

It is particularly ironic that the more liberal translators of the NEB (note Gen. 11:1) would give more attention both to the context and to the proper hermeneutics of metaphor so as to arrive at the superior rendering, "Darker than wine are his eyes, / his teeth whiter than milk," speaking of his physical comeliness (note the NASB margin also). However, in the context of bountiful harvest, the above translation, interpreting yáyin as grape juice, is even more fitting. The point of the metaphor, then, is a comparison of color and attractiveness: his eyes are likened to sparkling dark juice, and his teeth are likened to gleaming pure milk.

<sup>1</sup>This was cited earlier in this chapter, pp. 275-76.

<sup>2</sup>The passage is quoted from Isaiah in Jeremiah 48:29-33, although the quotation is not exact.

juice in a manner that, apparently, is both figurative and literal. In an extended metaphor, the nation of Moab is compared to a fertile vine (verse 8). As such, when God's judgment is applied, the nation's severe punishment is pictured by the total cessation both of the harvest and of its jubilant climax, the treading of the grapes into juice. However, even though Moab was most famous for its pasture lands and the sheep it raised upon them, it is possible to assume that the divine sentence did literally include also the removal of its relatively small vineyard harvest.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the passage would seem to indicate that the harshness of God's judgment would effectively remove both the harvest itself and any similar enjoyment in Moabite life which was thus pictured by the joy of harvest.

Wine is also used figuratively in several ways in the Old Testament. As has been stated, its references are uniformly negative. For example, in Deuteronomy 32:33 wine is compared metaphorically to the venom of a snake within an extended metaphor which compares the evil deeds of apostate Israel with those of Sodom and Gomorrah:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Baly speaks at some length of the relative paucity of land in Moab suitable for grain, vines, and olives, as opposed to the broad expanse of pasture land which was so basic to its economy (Denis Baly, The Geography of the Bible: A Study in Historical Geography [New York: Harper & Row, Pub., 1957], pp. 235-39). Note also 2 Kings 3:4-5.

<sup>2</sup>C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, 3 vols., trans. by James Martin, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (n.p.; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub-

"For their vine is from the vine of Sodom,  
 And from the fields of Gomorrah;  
 Their grapes are grapes of poison,  
 Their clusters, bitter.  
 Their wine is the venom of serpents,  
 And the deadly poison of cobras."  
 [Deut. 32:32-33]

A somewhat related use of yáyin appears in Proverbs 4:17. The conclusion of the description of a wicked man's lifestyle is in these words: "For they eat the bread of wickedness, / And drink the wine of violence." The poet apparently is describing their ill-gotten gain; even their food and drink is procured through their criminal activities. Or possibly the idea is that wickedness and violence are like food and drink to them: part of their daily fare and something from which they gain pleasure and strength.

The usual manner in which wine is used figuratively in the Old Testament is within an overall figure of speech which specifies drunkenness or its characteristics. Several times such figurative drunkenness conveys the very literal idea of God's intense wrath against sin and the poetic justice which He metes out:

Thou hast made Thy people experience hardship;  
 Thou hast given us wine to drink that makes us  
 stagger. [Ps. 60:3(5)]

For a cup is in the hand of Yahweh, and the wine foams;  
 It is well mixed, and He pours out of this;  
 Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink  
 down its dregs. [Ps. 75:8(9)]

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lishing Company, 1968), 3:484-85. Verse 38 is also a metaphor, although the heathen believed that their deities did eat and drink the sacrifices and libations offered to them.

Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O  
 Jerusalem,  
 You who have drunk from Yahweh's hand the cup  
 of His anger;  
 The chalice of reeling you have drained to the  
 dregs.

. . . . .  
 Your sons have fainted,  
 They lie *helpless* at the head of every street,  
 Like an antelope in a net,  
 Full of the wrath of Yahweh,  
 The rebuke of your God.  
 Therefore, please hear this, you afflicted,  
 Who are drunk, but not with wine:  
 Thus says your Lord, Yahweh, even your God  
 Who contends for His people,  
 "Behold, I have taken out of your hand the cup  
 of reeling;  
 The chalice of My anger,  
 You will never drink it again."  
 [Isa. 51:17, 20-22]

For thus Yahweh, the God of Israel, says to me, "Take this  
 cup of the wine of wrath from My hand, and cause all the  
 nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. And they shall  
 drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I  
 send among them." [Jer. 25:15-16]

Babylon has been a golden cup in the  
 hand of Yahweh,  
 Intoxicating all the earth.  
 The nations have drunk of her wine;  
 Therefore the nations are going mad.  
 [Jer. 51:7]

This figure of drunkenness is used in other ways as  
 well. Psalm 78:65-66 provides a very bold simile which  
 describes from their perspective Yahweh's renewed activity for  
 His people after a period in which He allowed them to suffer  
 because of their disobedience:

Then the Lord awoke as *if* from sleep,  
 Like a warrior overcome by wine.  
 And He drove His adversaries backward;  
 He put on them an everlasting reproach.

Another such simile is used by Jeremiah in speaking of his own

great weakness when he thought of God's impending severe (but deserved) penalties against His wicked people:

As for the prophets:  
My heart is broken within me,  
All my bones tremble;  
I have become like a drunken man,  
Even like a man overcome with wine,  
Because of Yahweh  
And because of His holy words.  
[Jer. 23:9]

A gruesome picture of defeat in battle against Israel's enemy is given in Zechariah 9:15. Comparing the victory of Israel over its foes to that of a lion consuming the flesh and blood of its prey (compare Num. 23:24),<sup>1</sup> Zechariah writes:

Yahweh of hosts will defend them.  
And they will devour, and trample on the sling stones;  
And they will drink, and be boisterous as with wine;  
And they will be filled [*with blood*] like a *sacrificial*  
basin,  
*Drenched* like the corners of the altar.

Another use of wine in a figure of speech occurs in Isaiah 5:22-23. Here the wine is real but God uses great sarcasm in describing the "heroism" of the wicked:

Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine,  
And valiant men in mixing strong drink;  
Who justify the wicked for a bribe,  
And take away the rights of the ones who are  
in the right!

In summary then, it may be observed that the figurative usage corresponds to the literal usage of yayin. Just as God makes clear His approval of consuming the wholesome juice of

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<sup>1</sup>Note Friedrich Keil, The Twelve Minor Prophets, 2 vols., trans. by James Martin, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (n.p.; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 2:342-43.

the grape and His condemnation of drinking the fermented beverage, so also in graphic figures of speech He uses each of these products of the vine respectively to picture either positive or negative aspects of His message.

To hold, as would some, that God uses the same beverage (wine) which He so beneficently bestows in His good pleasure upon His saints for their enjoyment as the figurative epitome of His holy wrath against sinners seems to this writer to be quite untenable.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It is frequently suggested, in opposition to the conclusions stated above, that just as sex can be both a blessing and a curse, so can wine, and that furthermore sex is used figuratively in both a good and a bad sense in the Old Testament. However, it is the conviction of this writer that such a position both overlooks the biblical evidence against the underlying presupposition that wine is in itself valuable, and it moreover misunderstands the parallel of wine and sex.

It should be noted that contradictory usage of the same metaphor is without precedent in either testament. Even the metaphor of sexual intimacy is not used in two opposing ways in the Old Testament, as it might superficially be supposed (see for example Israel's marriage to Yahweh [Hos. 2:19, 20] versus Israel's adultery and prostitution with pagan deities [Hos. 1:2; 9:1]). Rather, sexual intimacy in Scripture is *always* morally *right* for married persons (Heb. 13:4a); conversely, sexual intimacy is *always* morally *sinful* for those who are *not* married (Heb. 13:4b). The issue then is not one of amount but of kind: married sex versus unmarried sex.

Likewise, yáyin is good or bad, depending not upon amount but upon kind: unfermented grape beverage versus fermented grape beverage. It is notable that this analogy (grape juice // marital intimacy, versus wine // adultery) actually supports this writer's conclusions regarding yáyin. Like sex, yáyin also is used figuratively of spiritual fellowship (Isa. 55:1), versus spiritual apostasy (Isa. 51:13, 17-20). Just as physical sexual intimacy is used (literally and figuratively in the Old Testament) in two distinctly different ways, depending upon the kind, so yáyin also refers to two things *different in kind* rather than *different in amount*--grape juice versus wine.

### Summary and Conclusion

The above discussion concerning the biblical use of yávin has shown that this common Hebrew word (in either literal or figurative usage) may denote either wine or grape juice, as do its cognates (examined in chapter 3 and appendix C).

Although there may be some uncertainty as to its use in a few given passages (as noted above), yet the fact that both definitions are inherent to the one word seems an inescapable conclusion to this writer.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the unified idea which is inherent in the word yávin is not that of a "fermented wine" per se (with divine approval dependent upon an *assumed* restriction of the quantity ingested, an assumption which is not explicit anywhere in the Old Testament). Instead, the comprehensive idea which the word conveys is that of a "grape beverage" (with the implied fermentation or its lack to be determined objectively only from the divine approval or disapproval of the beverage indicated by any context).

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<sup>1</sup>It should be added here that the writer recognizes that, despite all of the evidence that has been presented, it is probable that some who defend the value of wine (if taken in moderation) might yet charge this author with being highly subjective in his handling of the data at hand.

However, it is this writer's conviction that conclusions which, taken in isolation (the interpretation of one reference or the consideration of one point of evidence), may appear to be *subjective* rather become evidently *objective* on the basis of all of the evidence taken together. That is, not the strained interpretation of a few verses or some doubtful etymological data, but a host of strong evidence points to the fact that yávin can mean not only wine but also grape juice, and that God's purpose for the vine was the latter.

## CHAPTER VI

### "WINE" IN PERSPECTIVE

The major purpose for which this research was undertaken was to attempt to discern what the biblical revelation communicates concerning *God's intentions* with regard to man's enjoyment of the liquid produce of the vine. Prior to bringing the study to a conclusion, it is helpful to recapitulate what has been done thus far.

Chapter 2 presented the viticultural milieu in which Israel lived. This provided a proper background for the evaluation of the reason as to why the Old Testament presentation of the vineyard and its products is so different in kind from that of the other ancient literatures. Chapter 3 then supplied the important information regarding the etymological data for the key Hebrew words which relate to grape beverages. Chapters 4 and 5 were the central core of this study in that they presented the biblical data on how these various Hebrew words were used in the Old Testament as a whole.

The exegetically based conclusion reached in the course of this study was that God has never approved of the use of wine or any intoxicant for general human consumption. In order that this conclusion might be better understood it is helpful to present the two possible opposing viewpoints and to demon-



strate what the true issues are which have been long obscured both by emotion and by superficial research.

There are two basic positions which have been taken historically regarding the divine attitude toward wine. One position, which has become quite popular with the more scholarly, is that God *does* approve of wine in Scripture. The second position is that God *never* approved of wine at all. This latter view was that of the godly prohibitionists of the last century and has had a small following up to the present day.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Another, less consistent, mediating viewpoint which has a large following is that God *did* approve but that wine is no longer proper for the believer today. This viewpoint would claim that though Scripture approves of wine, common sense and spiritual compassion would enjoin that contemporary Christians no longer imbibe. Billy Graham's argument against drinking today, in essence, is a practical one: because of the danger that drinking of intoxicants presents to the church and to society, don't do it! (Note chapter 1, p. 8 above.) Similarly Jeffers clearly presents the claim that wine is approved of God if used in moderation, but then states that its lack of acceptability by "weaker brethren" condemns the "spiritual" ones to abstinence out of compassion for the welfare of these who are so ignorant (note chapter 1, pp. 8-9).

It is difficult for this writer to accept this position seriously. If God purposefully creates something good for man (note the following discussion in the text below), it should not be put aside as a result of such reasoning. To understand better what is involved in the faulty position as stated above, perhaps it would be helpful to make a biblical analogy. (Note the favorable comparison between the liquid fruit of the vine and love in Song of Sol. 1:2, 4; 4:10; cf. 7:9[10]).

The enjoyment of a physical, sexual relationship between a man and his wife was purposefully given by God to man as that which is innately good--created for man's benefit and pleasure (Prov. 5:18, 19; 1 Cor. 7:3-5; Heb. 13:4, etc.). Yet, who could deny that the perversion of this wholesome and good gift of God has had untold effects for evil upon the church and society? This worldly perversion of God's good gift has furthermore brought about in the minds of some well-meaning

The Position that Scripture Approves  
of the Use of Wine

The first viewpoint to be discussed is that God has always approved of the moderate use of wine for believers. As

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but (biblically) ignorant married Christians a very low personal view of sex in marriage. Should it therefore be enjoined that lawfully married partners--because of this pervasive evil in the world and because of the incorrect view of sex in marriage as held by some "weaker brethren"--refrain from God's good gift? Most mature believers would realize that the answer to this problem is a proper teaching of biblical truths rather than a universal abstinence by the spiritual couples out of compassion for the "weaker brethren."

The position that God wholeheartedly approves of wine, but that it is not expedient to enjoy it today, is, in itself, an unbiblical compromise. If God has called it "good," then it is wrong for any reason to generally withhold that good from God's people.

(In the specific instance where one's God-approved eating or drinking habits become a genuine offense which would cause a Christian brother to stumble, then the law of love is important and becomes operative. [Compare Romans 14:21 and 14:15, 17. The context here primarily refers to eating rather than to drinking per se. Note verses 2, 3, 6, 15, 20, 23.] However, in contemporary fundamentalism most, if not all, of the usual "weaker brother" applications relate to things which are in themselves (biblically) questionable at best, rather than to things which God calls "good." [Attendance at the movie theater is an example.] The widespread use of this principle to deny the drinking of wine to Christians [assuming that wine is approved by God] is therefore without parallel. It would seem that a careful study of the law of love in relation to the weaker brother would affirm that [biblically] these latter normally should be new converts who have not yet learned enough truth to see a proper distinction between their former way of life and Christian living. Patience and compassion for them while they grow to understand proper Christian liberty is enjoined. It is interesting, by contrast, to note that on the subject of wine the vast majority of conservative pastors and deacons would be the "weaker brethren." [An increasing problem today is the misunderstanding of Christian liberty, and thus the advancement of license. A better understanding of true holiness would provide the proper corrective.]]

Therefore, while the principle of applying the law of love to a hurting, stumbling brother (Rom. 14:15, 21) is both noble and biblical in cases where this is genuine, it is yet incorrect to use such a principle as an all-governing panacea

long as wine is not imbibed to the point of intoxication, it is asserted, the Bible permits the godly to drink it.

While it is recognized that this conviction is held in all honesty, it is incorrect in that it is based upon a superficial exegesis together with a faulty use of logic. Partial understanding of truth or overemphasis of one truth to the neglect of another can bring about devastating conflicts.<sup>1</sup> This is essentially the difficulty with the position that God approves of wine in moderation.

Prior to demonstrating the exegetical inadequacies of this position (with a positive presentation of scriptural truth) it is well to look at some of the strong supporting

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to cover what is really compromise in disguise. Since the scholarly world has concluded that Scripture approves of wine, this "weaker brother" principle is used in essence to justify holding fast to the lingering belief that wine is really *not good*. (This is the best way that many honest men with a desire to obey God, and lacking a personal understanding of Hebrew and Greek, could resolve the problem.) However, a more biblical attitude would be to first become committed to one position or the other. If wine is good, then it is right to encourage the proper use of this gift of God. On the other hand, if wine is not good, then it should be exposed as a moral evil in light of what God has said. In any case, one should be consistent.

<sup>1</sup>For example, in another area of doctrine, supposedly conflicting positions are taken that either man is a nēpeš ("person") or that man has a nēpeš ("soul"). This issue, which has reportedly even split churches, is analogous. Actually both of these positions are equally biblical and non-conflicting, if properly understood. (See Robert P. Teachout, "A Study of the Hebrew Word Nephesh, Commonly Translated 'Soul'" [S.T.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1972]). To force a word *artificially* into one mold so that only one meaning is proper can be devastating to proper exegesis. (Note also p. 237, footnote 1, above for other examples of this same principle.

arguments upon which this point of view is based.

(1) The problem of lexicography and tradition

One very understandable reason for the viewpoint that God approves of wine is based upon commonly accepted Bible translations and lexicography. Since Scripture, for example, clearly approves of Hebrew yáyin (Ps. 104:15) and Greek οἶνος (John 2:9-10), that approval decides the question without further inquiry. This is especially so since the lexicons and translations uniformly render these Hebrew and Greek words as "wine." While such reasoning might appear to be sound, it is based upon superficial evidence. The problem here is that it was long ago realized by reputable scholars that these words have more than one meaning. Long before this century classical scholars<sup>1</sup> decided, on the basis of conclusive evidence, that the Greek word οἶνος and its Latin cognate vinum could equally refer to fresh grape juice or fermented wine. Later lexicographers, possibly influenced by the fact that the English word wine can itself refer to either of these differing commodities, used "wine" alone as the definition. By contemporary times, when "wine" has come to practically signify only the fermented intoxicant, this unclear procedure has resulted in general ignorance and confusion concerning the above truth of the dual nature of these words in English, Latin, and Greek. Inter-

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<sup>1</sup>Note appendix C for documentation concerning this matter.

estingly, Hebrew yáyin shares the same dual meanings (as chapter 5 has demonstrated). However, without this knowledge and with inadequate personal study, it has been concluded by many that yáyin and οἶνος only refer to fermented wine. It is on this basis that many have concluded that God clearly approves of wine in His Word.

(2) The problem of progressive revelation

Another evidence that could be given to show that God approved of wine in the Old Testament is the claim that nothing is found in Scripture condemning wine for general consumption by the common man until Proverbs, which is quite late (tenth century B.C.). Would this not indicate that God's approval was so widely known that the people were overindulging in a product which was good only in moderation, and so the warnings of Proverbs became a necessity? Such reasoning appears quite shallow when it is noticed that even the first mention<sup>1</sup> of wine in Scripture (Gen. 9:20-25) shows the consequences of drunkenness. Later in Genesis (19:32 ff.) this lesson is even more graphically emphasized. The reason that no mention is made of

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<sup>1</sup>The text of verse 20 does not demand that Noah was the first ever to plant a vineyard. The verse should be rendered (taking the two verbs as a hendiadys): "Noah, the man of the earth, began to plant a vineyard" (RT). The verbs relate to Noah's labors soon after the flood subsided but say nothing about whether vineyards were known prior to the flood (note Allen P. Ross, "The Table of Nations in Genesis" Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1977, pp. 324 ff.). It is remotely possible that an implication can be derived from Matt. 24:38 that grape beverages were used before the flood as well.

God's displeasure against drunkenness by the common person is that such truth was clearly understood without it being specifically cited in the Torah. The examples of Lot (especially) and Noah were explicit enough. When later generations began to need a clear statement from God, it was forthcoming in the book of Proverbs. However, with the growing inward spiritual rebellion of the people, even this clear warning did not stop their increasing acceptance of wine in place of juice. Thus the prophetic utterances of God's spokesmen (especially Isaiah) became necessary. Finally divine judgment was applied severely in order to bring the matter clearly to the attention of the people.

On the other hand, some would no doubt counter with the fact that the priests serving in the tabernacle and in the temple, as well as the Nazirites, were specifically forbidden to partake of intoxicants. Would this not indicate that wine *was an approved drink* for those who were not in this category? Such reasoning is invalid. The point of God's special legislation is that, whereas the drinking of intoxicants at any time would be sin, to sin in such a manner when specifically serving in the presence of God was especially grievous and might even result in the forfeiture of the man's life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For the Nazirite, the forfeiture would be in regard to his separated position. For a discussion of the relevant passages, refer to chapter 4, pp. 226-32.

(3) The problem of  
alcoholic content

Some have alleged that the natural fermentation of wine does not allow for a very high percentage of alcohol and that this provides a control on drunkenness, which explains why God considers it to be good. Such reasoning is very naive. It is exceedingly clear in the earliest biblical references to drunkenness that naturally fermented wines can be as potent as any other intoxicant. Apparently Noah and certainly Lot were so drunk that they were totally insensible to the actions of others. The text of Genesis 19:35 specifies that Lot "did not know" (lō' yāda') about his daughters' shameful conduct or of his own unwilling compliance. The effect of drinking a much higher concentration of alcohol (such as in modern whiskey) would have done no more damage than this allegedly weak wine. Certainly then, the potency of wine in biblical times was as dangerous as it is today. Modern research has shown that natural fermentation ceases when the alcoholic concentration attains to fifteen percent, and distillation is needed to make wine any more potent. There is no evidence that such a process was known to the ancient world of Israel. Therefore, it is to be expected that wine in Israel would probably have had an alcoholic concentration of somewhere between twelve and fourteen percent. It is interesting to note that the alcoholic content of most modern wines today is comparable to that of ancient wines, for it also is between

twelve and fourteen percent.<sup>1</sup>

(4) The problem of an "inadequate" water supply

It appears to be popularly believed today, as a justification for the ancient use of wine by Old Testament saints, that the water in Palestine was not generally drinkable; therefore wine was drunk as an acceptable substitute.<sup>2</sup> This assumption is incorrect on at least two accounts:

- (a) Water is proclaimed in the Old Testament to be a particular gift of God in the good land which Yahweh promised Abraham.
- (b) Yáyin (as juice) is also a gift--a gift of God's bounty. Nowhere is it indicated that it was given as a mere alternative to commonly foul water.

Since the latter premise will be developed later in this chapter, it is the former which is of special interest here. Two passages which especially indicate God's interest in

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<sup>1</sup>Raymond G. McCarthy, ed., Alcohol Education for Classroom and Community: a source book for educators (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), pp. 71, 73. Note also HT, 1:285, where it is stated that distillation was not used in the ancient biblical world.

<sup>2</sup>For example, Lenski makes this comment:  
 "The people residing in all the countries in which Paul labored used wine as the commonest drink, do it to this day, because even now in so many places water proves to be dangerous except when it is boiled, as all travelers know, not a few to their hurt."  
 (R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, vol. 6 of Commentary on the New Testament, 12 vols. [n.p.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936; reprint ed.: Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961], p. 850.)



"watering" the land abundantly are found in Deuteronomy (8:7 and 11:11, 12a):

"For Yahweh your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; . . .

". . . the land into which you are about to cross to possess it [is] a land of hills and valleys [which] drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which Yahweh your God cares. . . ."

Any assumption that such a land innately had a scarce supply of potable water would contradict the clear statement of these passages of promised blessing (compare also especially Ps. 65:9[10]-10[11]). If in the course of centuries of disobedience, however, pure water did become a somewhat scarce commodity, that was in accord with the same prophecy of judgment which also insured that there would be a poor grape harvest (Deut. 28:23, 24, 39).

Water was a valued commodity not only for watering the crops or the livestock but also for human consumption with enjoyment.<sup>1</sup> This may be substantiated by such passages as Isaiah 32:2 and 49:10. Water and its pleasure are even compared with the joys of divine deliverance in Isaiah 12:2-3:

"Behold, God is my salvation,  
I will trust and not be afraid;

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<sup>1</sup>An especially important point relative to the study of the grape is the prominence which water as a beverage holds in the drinking habits of ancient Israel in contrast to the less frequent use of the grape beverages (see appendix I). Since water is mentioned almost twice as often, it may naturally be assumed to have been the most common beverage in their diet (even though grape beverages do far exceed any other specifically named beverage).

For Yah, Yahweh is my strength and song,  
 And He has become my salvation."  
 Therefore you will joyously draw water  
 From the springs of salvation.

Wells<sup>1</sup> and cisterns were apparently common in Israel also; in fact, many houses had their own cisterns.<sup>2</sup> Hence water became a problem only in times of drought brought on by national disobedience.

In summary, it is clear that both water and yáyin were provisions of Yahweh for His people, and when yáyin was drunk it was by preference rather than of necessity. Therefore, Scripture explicitly approves of the vine and its natural products. In some respects, as has been mentioned, this area of God's bountiful provision seems to be the epitome of His goodness: In addition to providing man with a variety of good food and a drink of pure and good water, He gave Israel a land where grape juice was so plentiful that it became an evidence of His desire to bless man abundantly over and above even these other good things.

(5) The problem of the  
 innate "value" of wine

Perhaps the major reason that wine has been assumed to be good was cited earlier under (1) above, "The problem of

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<sup>1</sup>These are particularly mentioned during the patriarchal period.

<sup>2</sup>In 2 Kings 18:31 (= Isa. 36:16), Sennacherib promised the Jews who would defect that they could return to their own houses and cisterns until he deported them to a land like their own (Deut. 6:11).

lexicography and tradition"; that is, unclear lexical entries and the incorrectly uniform translation of yáyin as "wine" in the Authorized Version and others. However, another obvious pressure has come from centuries of popular use of wine and the exaltation of this beverage in the world's literature.

Those who have been misled, for whatever reason, to believe that God approves of wine (unmixed with water) indicate a faith in the beneficial effects of wine which even the pagan wine-loving Greeks did not possess; they at least mixed wine with a high proportion of water when they desired the "beneficial" properties of wine without its harmful effects.<sup>1</sup> Yet the Old Testament record does not anywhere even suggest that the value of wine is increased by such dilution.<sup>2</sup>

Modern scientific research has documented carefully the fact that the specific manner in which alcohol (diluted excessively or not) creates pleasant sensations is by putting brain cells out of commission. Even medical doctors who believe that social drinking in moderation is usually not harm-

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to chapter 2 for documentation of this. Plutarch in his Moralia (132 B) extols the value of wine only when it is mixed with water:

"With regard to wine we ought to talk as does Euripides with regard to Love: 'Mayest thou be mine, but moderate be, / I pray, yet ne'er abandon me.' For wine is the most beneficial of beverages, . . . provided that there is a happy combination of it . . . with water. Water, not only the water that is mixed with the wine, but that which is drunk by itself in the interim between the draughts of the mixture, makes the mixture more innocent."

<sup>2</sup>Note chapter 4 above, pp. 169-72.

ful must admit that there is no guarantee of this. In amounts of less than one drink, ordinary wine can cause undesirable effects,<sup>1</sup> even if the average (150 pound) person can consume one small five-and-one-half ounce glass without noticing adverse reactions.<sup>2</sup>

It must be stated clearly that, while recent studies on the potentially damaging effects of even very moderate drinking of alcohol may be a surprise to man, this new information has not given the Creator an increased understanding of the problem. As was mentioned above, scientific studies indicate that the first part of the body to be affected (with any amount of alcohol) is the brain. It is no wonder that the God who has always wanted His saints to be in full, spirit-led control of that organ revealed in His Word almost 3,000 years ago that "wine is a scorner, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever goes astray because of it is not wise" (Prov. 20:1 [RT]).

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<sup>1</sup>For a more complete discussion of the effect of alcohol on man, refer to appendix J. Very recently one scientist, Dr. Krishna Tewari of the University of California at Irvine, was personally frightened at the scientific implications regarding even moderate social drinking. Experimenting with the effect of regular usage of alcohol upon the brain cells of rats, Dr. Tewari discovered that the learning and memory capabilities of the subjects were definitely affected adversely. The results of his experiments have made him consider personally giving up even social drinking entirely. (Lawrence H. Johnson, University of California Science Editor, in an interview over CBS Radio Network, #1344, September 19, 1978.)

<sup>2</sup>It should be realized by the reader that while the average weight of Americans is 150 pounds, the average weight in ancient Israel would have been much less, so that the effect of alcohol would have been proportionately greater.

In summation, while many scientific studies have indicated that alcohol can be damaging to a person, even in small amounts, none have shown any momentous benefits to be derived from wine. It is significant that the exegetical conclusions presented in chapters 4 and 5 of this paper, concerning God's uniform displeasure toward the drinking of wine, were reached by this writer *prior* to his having examined the medical evidence which so supports that conclusion.

(6) The problem of the practice of the Jewish people

Another evidence which supposedly supports the conclusion that God approves of wine is the ancient and current practice of the Jewish people in their use of wine. However, the fact that many of these "people of the Book" have moderately used wine for centuries is totally irrelevant. Those who live by Scripture have always maintained that biblical exegesis depends upon a proper grammatical, contextual, historical hermeneutic rather than upon tradition or experience. From talmudic times until the present, the Jewish people have been spiritually blind. Their exegesis and practice therefore, while interesting, are certainly not determinative.

(7) The problem of the preservation of unfermented wine

In the experience of this author, the argument which people most readily proffer today as proof that God approves of wine is a logical proof rather than a biblical one. It is

a generally accepted supposition that men of old could not possibly have preserved juice for any length of time without it becoming a fermented beverage. Since Israel used yáyin all year long (this is explicit in the regulations concerning the daily libations<sup>1</sup>), therefore they must have had only fermented wine after the harvest season had passed.

There are two difficulties with the above argument. The first is that it is a position taken out of ignorance. The ancients did indeed have the means (more than one) for keeping fresh grape juice unfermented as even pagan classical sources attest.<sup>2</sup>

The second problem is a much more serious one. This argument is a logical one based upon biblical *silence*. According to this viewpoint, since Scripture does not mention how the Israelites preserved grape juice, and since in a hot climate without special attention and "unusual" means the juice would ferment, this evidences that the biblical Hebrews did not possess means of, nor did they practice, such preservation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Note chapter 5 above, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup>Rather than presenting this peripheral information here, it is included in appendix G.

<sup>3</sup>It is interesting that if the same logic (an argument from silence) is used with reference to wine, then Israel could not have had wine all year long either, for the making of wine is also a controlled process. If no technology is applied, the fermenting juice will quickly become spoiled wine, unfit for drinking; yet Scripture is silent as well concerning how the vintners of Israel controlled the fermentation

While it is true that God's revelation is consistent with Spirit-led reason, one must be very careful never to let philosophical logic (*especially an argument from silence*) be the determining factor in exegesis. Logic is only a proper tool when it is governed by correct presuppositions. If the Bible clearly evidences that Israel used unfermented juice all year long, proper reason<sup>1</sup> would accept this as a fact, whether or not there is any ancient evidence to support the fact that

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process so as to make palatable wine. Even in light of this fact, however, no one claims that Israel did not possess and apply proper wine-making technology so as to be able to preserve their wines. It is attested that their technology was at least sufficient to preserve wine for up to three years (HT, 1:285).

<sup>1</sup>One matter which should always be kept firmly in mind is how little modern man knows of the technological abilities of the ancient world. In the last fifty years, modern awareness of ancient technology in the areas of architecture, medicine, warfare, cosmetics, ship-building, etc., has grown tremendously. The tendency for each generation has been to disparage the ancients as somehow inferior to themselves. (Those who believe the Bible must be cautious of the anti-God evolutionary presuppositions which support such thinking). However, with more and more written documents unearthed and deciphered, and with more scientific principles of archaeology practiced, the ancient world has become better known and the abilities of these peoples much more respected. Therefore, caution must rule. Arguments from silence in particular have often been undone as more evidence has been unearthed. There is no reason to doubt that modern understanding of the ancient world will continue to grow.

One interesting detail which has just been discovered is that the making of steel (a previously supposed modern invention) was practiced for many centuries by a primitive tribe in central East Africa (Tanzania). Long before Europe discovered the technology for making steel, these Africans had achieved a method of creating temperatures as high as 3275 degrees F. in small furnaces in order to process this useful metal. The knowledge of the technology was passed from one generation to the next until modern times. ("Africa's Ancient Steelmakers," Time, September 25, 1978, p. 80.)

they could do it<sup>1</sup> (which there is).

The Position that Scripture Does  
Not Approve of the Use of Wine

Having demonstrated that the arguments supporting the conclusion that God approved of the use of wine in the Old Testament are neither exegetically nor scientifically sound, it is now appropriate to set forth clearly the scriptural position.

The first point which needs to be made is that the biblical conclusions of this writer stated in chapters 4 and 5 should be evaluated most carefully regarding one conclusion primarily: That is the conclusion that yáyin can refer equally to grape juice and to wine, rather than only to wine. If that conclusion will stand in light of the exegetical evidence itself (using normal harmonistic hermeneutical procedures), then the burden of proof rests entirely on any opposing viewpoint. Since the normal word for wine in Akkadian<sup>2</sup> as well as in Greek, Latin, and English, can be shown to refer equally to unfermented juice or fermented wine, it would be normal to expect that the word h<sup>a</sup>mar in Aramaic and the word yáyin in

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<sup>1</sup>The pagan world had no absolute moral principles concerning the use of wine. Nevertheless they appreciated grape juice enough to both preserve it whole for up to a year and also to document how this was done. It is noteworthy to this writer that such information has been recorded from the classical world for modern man. However, it is an added bonus that *should not be necessary* if proper faith is maintained in the accuracy of God's written revelation.

<sup>2</sup>See chapter 3, footnote 1, pp. 105-6.



Hebrew (and possibly the word yn in Ugaritic<sup>1</sup> as well) can also designate either form of the liquid produce of the vine.

Indeed, contextually, the written evidence would support this claim, especially in Scripture itself, as has been demonstrated (in chapters 4 and 5).

Once it is realized that the beverage designated yáyin, of which God so wholeheartedly approves, is grape juice, then it is clear how God can be consistent while yet denouncing as innately sinful the beverage designated yáyin. When such denunciation is made, the beverage is wine. Therefore, the problem is not a theological one of inconsistency in God's attitude with reference to the same beverage. Rather, the problem is a lexical one. God's attitude and revelation are consistent, but the word yáyin refers to either of two kinds of beverages which are very different in value and in effect: beneficial, unfermented juice and damaging, fermented wine.

In order for the reader to grasp just how impossible is a position that "God approves of wine," the following summary of biblical revelation concerning the grape must be understood.

(1) The gift of the grape to man  
is an example of God's best

The first important observation is that the Old Testament uniformly presents the vineyard as an evidence of God's overt blessing upon His chosen people. The patriarchal bless-

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<sup>1</sup>See chapter 3, pp. 124-25.

ings of Isaac and Jacob as well as the grape-saturated promises of God so prominent in Deuteronomy (6:11; 8:8; 32:14 etc.) present this fact with clarity. The reality that Israel's God who owned the land (Lev. 25:23) desired His people to use that land to make fertile vineyards is evident throughout the Old Testament. This verity is just as clearly presented in the judgmental passages (against Israel's sin) dealing with God's removal of His blessing, the vineyard, as it is in those dealing with the original bestowal of it in His pleasure.

(2) The gift of the grape  
to man centered in its  
utilization as juice

The impact of the first point above, that the vineyard in Israel is specifically related to divine blessing, is made even sharper when it is recognized that the vineyard was given not primarily to be food for Israel but rather to be drink. The great paucity of references in the entire Bible to grapes, raisins or any other food from the vine is in sharp contrast to the scores of references to the liquid produce of the vine. As was prominently demonstrated in chapter 4, the basic staple for food in Israel was grain to be made into bread. Consistently paired with this was the fresh juice (tîrôš) of the harvest which is called yáyin when it was drunk. The third basic commodity was oil for the exterior care of the body (Ps. 104:15).

If all of the references to the products of the vine in Scripture are perused, it is most evident that God's primary

purpose in giving the vine to man was to provide a natural, delightful beverage which would rejoice the heart of man (not make it "merry").<sup>1</sup> This is evident especially in the patriarchal blessings.<sup>2</sup> The problem came when man perverted the gift of God to his own sinful ends. Allowing the juice to spoil with control (which would be a theologically accurate definition of wine), man chose to use the grape to suspend his cares rather than trusting God to remove them.<sup>3</sup>

This wine, then--the perversion of God's gift<sup>4</sup> to man--is referred to in the strongest denunciatory terms in the Old Testament. Scripture is certainly definite that God's people drank of this intoxicant to their own sin, shame, and destruction. That is why in poetic justice God uses the figure of wine so centrally in His terminology to describe the terrible

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<sup>1</sup>Note chapter 5, p. 285, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup>It should also be remembered that every one of the 38 references to tîrôš deal with the liquid blessing from God given through the vineyard harvest. Note chapter 4, pp. 180 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Even medically trained advocates of the use of alcohol in moderation admit that man would not drink it if it did not anesthetize brain cells and so create a false internal impression of well-being (William B. Terhune, M.D., The Safe Way to Drink: How to Prevent Alcohol Problems Before They Start [New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968], p. 24.)

<sup>4</sup>Similar perversions of the ancient world were the use of the date palm to make wine and the use of God's gift of grain to make beer. Some cultures, such as those of the Far East, make rice wines. Modern techniques of distillation have used man's creative ingenuity to devise yet stronger distilled products which can bring the desired effects of intoxication even more quickly.

judgment which must be visited upon His rebellious people.

(3) The gift of grape juice was given to man wholeheartedly

It is evident, therefore, that God in His pleasure gave the grape vine to man specifically to provide a delicious, healthful, natural drink for his enjoyment. However, one further truth presented in Scripture ought to be totally convincing to any who might believe that this beverage could yet be wine, if used with sufficient moderation. The important truth is presented in the Old Testament that God gave this juice to man *without reservation and without measure*. As this researcher examined each of the scores of passages in the Old Testament which refer to yáyin, whether as "juice" or as "wine," the significant truth became apparent that Scripture gives no clues as to *how much yáyin* He intended man to drink. No hint is given regarding the safe limits of ingested volume prior to intoxication becoming a problem.

If the key to understanding God's attitude toward yáyin lies solely in the amount imbibed, this omission is not only serious, it is catastrophic! Any who champion the viewpoint that God approves of wine must realize that God's approval is unequivocal. There is no ambiguity, for example, in Psalm 104:14-15, where the psalmist attributes to God's goodness His provision of yáyin to rejoice man's heart. However, if it is maintained that yáyin always refers to wine, the problem is apparent that God wants man to rejoice but not

to become "merry." The only way that human experience has even approached this enviable position is when man has adopted the practice of drinking very little wine upon any given occasion. But God clearly recommends yáyin *in quantity* in Song of Solomon 5:1. When these key passages are placed with the many others which imply that the fruit of the vine was given to be enjoyed as the unstinting bounty of God, it appears incredible that all God intended was for man to take one small five-and-one-half ounce (or less) portion, else he sin by becoming intoxicated. Yet that would be the necessary scientific implication regarding God's "bountiful" intent.

The answer which careful biblical exegesis provided (chapters 4 and 5)--that the word yáyin can refer either to fresh juice or to fermented wine, depending on the divine approval or condemnation which the context provides--fits completely with the three-fold emphasis presented above concerning God's bountiful goodness. If God never approved of any use of intoxicating wine, but only of grape juice, then the above mentioned "line of demarcation" (designating how much could be safely drunk) was not needed at all. Grape juice can be drunk deeply and when so imbibed can provide great satisfaction in a hot sun-drenched land like Palestine. That was the explicit divine intent.

Wine, on the other hand, was man's perversion of this good bounty and as such only receives the wrath of God in His Word. Drunkenness and any beverage which produces it are

alike specifically disapproved. To assert that God fully approved of a beverage but disapproved of its natural results seems to be an absurd claim. Scripture is consistent, then, in presenting the Creator as the owner of the vineyard, the bestower of its fertility, the blessing of its products, and the champion of its normal beverage, but the implacable foe of its prostitution.<sup>1</sup>

In light of the comprehensive message of the Old Testament regarding God's blessing upon man through the vineyard, it is evident why the *vineyard* is so important as a figure of speech denoting the relationship first of Yahweh to Israel (Isa. 5, etc.) and then later of Jesus Christ to His church (John 15). It also is evident why Israel's eschatological hope of Yahweh's eventual restoration of His then repentant people is so saturated with the vocabulary of the vine:

"He who scattered Israel will gather him,  
And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock." . . .  
"And they shall come and shout for joy on the height of  
Zion,  
And they shall be radiant over the bounty of Yahweh--  
Over the threshed grain\* and the harvested grape juice,\*  
and fresh oil,\*  
And over the young of the flock and the herd;  
And their life shall be like a watered garden,  
And they shall never languish again.  
. . . And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness,"  
declares Yahweh. [Jer. 31:10b, 12, 14b]

Then Yahweh will be zealous for His land,  
And will have pity on His people.  
And Yahweh will answer and say to His people,  
"Behold, I am going to send you threshed grain,\* harvested  
grape juice,\* and fresh oil,\*

<sup>1</sup>Note especially chapters 2 and 4 of Hosea's prophecy.

And you will be satisfied *in full* with them;  
And I will never again make you a reproach among the  
nations." [Joel 2:18-19]

And Yahweh their God will deliver them in that day  
As the flock of His people;  
For *they will be as the diadems of a crown,*  
Sparkling in His land.

"For what comeliness and beauty *will be theirs!*  
Threshed grain *will again be the raw material which will*  
*make the young men flourish, and harvested grape juice*  
*will do the same for the virgins."* [Zech. 9:16-17; RT]

Finally, how fitting too are the words of Jesus Christ at the  
last supper before His betrayal when He said, ". . . I will  
not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day  
when I drink it new [καινόν] with you in my Father's kingdom"  
(Matt. 26:29).

### Summary and Conclusion

The Old Testament revelation concerning the liquid  
produce of the vineyard is certainly capable of being under-  
stood as a harmonious unity when proper exegesis restores  
perspective. The primary problems regarding God's seemingly  
contradictory approval and condemnation of yáyin (and some of  
the other words for "wine" as well) are not theological at all;  
instead, they are lexical. The major conclusions reached by  
this writer were based solely upon his personal exegesis  
of the key Old Testament passages following an etymological  
study of the cognate words. After such research was done<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It might be of interest to the reader to note that, in  
order to avoid any prejudging of the evidence, the author pur-  
posefully postponed reading any literature that might support  
the viewpoint of total abstinence from wine until after his own

it was refreshing to find that previous biblical scholars of a forgotten generation (prohibition) had concluded similarly. It was also interesting, after the research, to discover that the scientific evidence available today can fit only with the conclusion that the God who created the grape approved solely of the use of its juice by His people as an unfermented beverage.

Thus Scripture presents clearly both approval and disapproval of the liquid produce of the grape. But just as clearly yávin refers to either unfermented grape juice or fermented wine. The other words for "wine" similarly fit into the harmonious revelation that God approves of His creation but disapproves of man's perversion of that gift. God's gift of the grape and its natural drink emphasizes an Old Testament theology of joy--the genuine joy<sup>1</sup> of a saint receiving good things with thanks from the hand of his Creator. Conversely man's controlled spoilage of this juice results in an anthropology of sorrow: the sure legacy of a disobedient life.

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biblical research had been concluded.

<sup>1</sup>The fact that no artificial stimulus of fermenting fumes or of fermented beverages was needed to bring about such joy in God's provision is made most evident in Habakkuk 3:17-19. There, despite the prophet's sorrow over the necessity of Israel's punishment (including the removal of all the tangible evidence of Yahweh's good pleasure), Habakkuk could yet "exult" in God because of a personal relationship of fellowship with his wonderful Lord who ever remains faithful.



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## APPENDIX B

### A TABLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT USE OF THE WORD YĀYIN

#### I. Wine

Gen. 9:21	And he drank of the <u>wine</u> and became drunk
9:24	When Noah awoke from his <u>wine</u> , he knew
19:32	let us make our father drink <u>wine</u>
19:33	they made their father drink <u>wine</u> . . . the first born went in and lay with her father
19:34	let us make him drink <u>wine</u> tonight also
19:35	they made their father drink <u>wine</u> . . . , and the younger arose and lay with him
Lev. 10:9	Do not drink <u>intoxicating wine</u> <sup>1</sup> . . . when you come into the tent of meeting
Num. 6:3	he [the Nazirite] shall abstain from any <u>intoxicating wine</u> ; he shall not drink any vinegar made from <u>intoxicating wine</u> [RT]
Deut. 32:33	Their <u>wine</u> is the venom of serpents
32:38	Who . . . drank the <u>wine</u> of their libation?
Josh. 9:4	they also acted craftily . . . , and took worn-out sacks on their donkeys, and <u>wine</u> -skins, worn-out and torn and mended
9:13	these <u>wineskins</u> which we filled were new, and behold, they are torn

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<sup>1</sup>Number sign (#) indicates the hendiadys yāyin w<sup>e</sup> šēkār translated by the NASB "wine and/or strong drink," has been rendered instead "intoxicating wine." See text pp. 229-32. When [RT] translates "intoxicating wine," the hendiadys is referred to as well.

- Judg. 13:4 be careful not to drink intoxicating wine,#  
nor eat any unclean thing
- 13:7 you shall not drink intoxicating wine# nor  
eat any unclean thing, for the boy shall be  
a Nazirite to God from the womb
- 13:14 She should not eat anything that comes from  
the grapevine; especially she must not drink  
intoxicating wine, nor eat any unclean  
thing [RT]
- 1 Sam. 1:14 How long will you make yourself drunk? Put  
away your wine from you
- 1:15 No, my lord . . . ; I have drunk no intox-  
icating wine [RT]
- 25:37 But . . . , when the wine had gone out of  
Nabal
- 2 Sam. 13:28 when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, . . .  
then put him to death
- Neh. 2:1 wine was before him, and I took up the wine  
and gave it to the king
- Esther 1:7 royal wine was plentiful according to the  
king's bounty
- 1:10 the heart of the king was merry with wine
- 5:6 as they drank their wine at the banquet, the  
king said
- 7:2 the king said . . . as they drank their wine  
at the banquet
- 7:7 the king arose in his anger from drinking  
wine and went into the palace garden
- 7:8 the king returned . . . into the place where  
they were drinking wine
- Job 32:19 Behold, my belly is like unvented wine, /  
Like new wineskins it is about to burst
- Ps. 60:3(5) Thou hast given us wine to drink that makes  
us stagger

- Ps. 75:8(9) For a cup is in the hand of Yahweh, and the wine foams; / It is well mixed
- 78:65 Then the Lord awoke as if from sleep, / Like a warrior overcome by wine
- Prov. 4:17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, / And drink the wine of violence
- 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler
- 23:20 Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, / Or with gluttonous eaters of meat
- 23:30 Those who linger long over wine, / Those who go to taste mixed wine
- 23:31 Do not even look at wine when it becomes captivating to you [RT]
- 31:4, 5 It is not for kings, . . . to drink wine,  
Or for rulers to desire strong drink,  
Lest they drink and forget what is decreed,  
And pervert the rights of all the afflicted
- 31:6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing,  
And wine to him whose life is bitter
- Eccles. 2:3 I explored with my mind how to stimulate my body with wine
- Isa. 5:11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning  
that they may pursue strong drink; / Who  
stay up late in the evening that wine may  
inflame them
- 5:12 their banquets are accompanied by lyre and  
harp, by tambourine and flute, and by wine
- 5:22 Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine,  
And valiant men in mixing strong drink
- 22:13 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, /  
. . . Eating of meat and drinking of wine
- 24:9 They do not drink wine with song; / Strong  
drink is bitter to those who drink it
- 24:11 There is an outcry in the streets concerning  
the wine

- 28:1 . Woe to . . . the drunkards of Ephraim, /  
 . . . those who are overcome with wine
- 28:7 And these also reel with wine and stagger  
 from strong drink,[;]  
 The priest and the prophet reel with strong  
 drink,[.]  
 They are confused by wine, they stagger from  
 strong drink; . . .  
 They totter *when rendering* judgment
- 29:9 They become drunk, but not with wine;  
 They stagger, but not with strong drink
- 51:21 please hear this, you afflicted, / Who are  
 drunk, but not with wine
- 56:12 Come, *they say*, let us get wine, and let us  
 drink heavily of strong drink
- Jer. 13:12,13 "'Thus says Yahweh, . . . "Every jug is to  
 be filled with wine; . . . 'Do we not very  
 well know that every jug is to be filled  
 with wine?' . . . "Behold I am about to fill  
 all the inhabitants of this land . . . with  
 drunkenness!"'
- 23:9 I have become like a drunken man, / Even  
 like a man overcome with wine
- 25:15 Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My  
 hand, and cause all the nations, . . . to  
 drink it
- 51:7 Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of  
 Yahweh,  
 Intoxicating all the earth.  
 The nations have drunk of her wine;  
 Therefore the nations are going mad
- Ezek. 44:21 Nor shall any of the priests drink wine  
 when they enter the inner court
- Dan. 1:5 the king appointed for them a daily ration  
 from the king's choice food and from the  
wine which he drank
- 1:8 Daniel made up his mind that he would not  
 defile himself with the king's choice food  
 or with the wine which he drank

- Dan. 1:16 So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink
- Hos. 4:11 Harlotry, wine, and even the freshly pressed grape juice of the harvest have taken away their allegiance. [RT]
- (12) My people consult their wooden idol, . . . For a spirit of harlotry has led them astray
- 7:5 On the day of our king the princes became sick with the heat of wine
- Joel 1:5 Awake, drunkards, and weep; / And wail, all you wine drinkers
- 3:3(4:3) They have also cast lots for my people, . . . And sold a girl for wine that they may drink
- Amos 2:12 you made the Nazirites drink wine,
- 6:6 Who drink wine [grape juice?] from sacrificial bowls / While they annoint themselves with the finest of oils
- Mic. 2:11 If a man walking after wind and falsehood Had told lies and said, "I will speak out to you concerning intoxicating wine#" He would be spokesman to this people.
- Hab. 2:5 wine betrays the haughty man
- Zech. 9:15 they will drink, and be boisterous as with wine

## II. Grape Juice

- Gen. 14:18 And Melchizedec . . . brought out bread and grape juice\*<sup>1</sup>
- 27:25 he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him grape juice\* and he drank
- 49:11 He washes his garments in grape juice\* / And his robes in the blood of grapes

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<sup>1</sup>Asterisk (\*) indicates a change from the NASB translation from "wine" to "grape juice."



- Gen. 49:12 His eyes are darker than grape juice\* / And his teeth whiter than milk
- Exod. 29:40 one-fourth of a hin of grape juice\* for a libation with one lamb
- Lev. 23:13 with its libation, a fourth of a hin of grape juice\*
- Num. 6:4 he shall not eat anything that is produced by the grape vine
- 6:20 and afterward the Nazirite may drink grape juice\*
- 15:5 and you shall prepare grape juice\* for the libation, one-fourth of a hin
- 15:7 and for the libation you shall offer one-third of a hin of grape juice\*
- 15:10 and you shall offer as the libation one-half a hin of grape juice\*
- 28:14 And their libations shall be half a hin of grape juice\* for a bull and a third of a hin for the ram and a fourth of a hin for a lamb
- Deut. 14:26 you may spend the money for whatever your heart desires, for oxen, or sheep, or satisfying grape juice,\*<sup>1</sup> . . . and there you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh
- 28:39 You shall plant and cultivate vineyards, but you shall neither drink of the grape juice\* nor gather *the grapes*
- 29:6(5) You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk satisfying grape juice,\*<sup>1</sup> in order that you might know that I am Yahweh your God.
- Judg. 13:14 She should not eat anything that comes from the grapevine; especially she must not drink intoxicating wine, nor eat any unclean thing [RT]

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<sup>1</sup>Yáyin w<sup>e</sup>šēkār is considered to be a hendiadys here, although an unusual one. See discussion in text pp. 332-38.

- Judg. 19:19      there is both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and also bread and grape juice\* for me
- 1 Sam. 1:24      she took him up with her, . . . and one ephah of flour and a jug of grape juice\*
- 10:3              one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a jug of grape juice\*
- 16:20             Jesse took a donkey *loaded with* bread and a jug of grape juice\*
- 25:18             Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves of bread and two jugs of grape juice\*
- 2 Sam. 16:1      a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them *were* two hundred loaves of bread, . . . and a jug of grape juice\*
- 16:2              The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, . . . and the grape juice,\* for whoever is faint in the wilderness to drink
- 1 Chron. 9:29     Some of them also were appointed over the furniture and over all the utensils of the sanctuary and over the fine flour and the grape juice\* and the oil
- 12:40             those who were near to them, . . . brought food on donkeys, . . . great quantities of flour cakes, fig cakes and bunches of raisins, grape juice,\* oil, oxen and sheep. There was joy indeed in Israel
- 27:27             and Zabdi the Shiphmite had charge of the produce of the vineyards *stored* in the grape juice\* cellars
- 2 Chron. 2:10(9)   I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut the timber, 20,000 kors of crushed wheat, . . . and 20,000 baths of grape juice,\* and 20,000 baths of oil
- 2:15(14)          let my lord send to his servants wheat and barley, oil and grape juice\*
- 11:11             He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and stores of food, oil and grape juice\*

- Neh. 5:15 the former governors . . . took from them bread and grape juice\*
- 5:18 once in ten days all sorts of grape juice\* were furnished in abundance
- 13:15 bringing in sacks of grain and loading them on donkeys, as well as grape juice\*, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads
- Job 1:13 it happened on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking grape juice\* in their oldest brother's house
- 1:18 Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking grape juice\* in their oldest brother's house
- Ps. 104:15 And grape juice\* which makes man's heart glad, / So that he may make his face glisten with oil
- Prov. 9:2 [Wisdom] has prepared her meat dish, / She has mixed her grape juice, [RT]
- 9:5 "Come, dine on my prepared feast, / And drink of the grape juice which I have mixed; . . ." [RT]
- 21:17 He who loves pleasure will become a poor man; / He who loves grape juice\* and oil will not become rich
- Eccles. 9:7 eat your bread in happiness, and drink your grape juice\* with a cheerful heart
- 10:19 Men prepare a meal for enjoyment, and grape juice makes life joyous, and money is the answer to everything [RT]
- Song of Sol. 1:2 your love is better than grape juice\*
- 1:4 We will extol your love more than grape juice\*
- 2:4 He has brought me to his banquet hall [lit. house of grape juice]
- 4:10 How much better is your love than grape juice\*

- Song of Sol. 5:1 I have drunk my grape juice\* and my milk
- 7:9(10) your mouth like the best grape juice\*
- 8:2 I would give you spiced juice\* to drink from the juice of my pomegranates
- Isa. 16:10 gladness and joy are taken away . . . / No treader treads out grape juice\* in the presses
- 55:1 Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters;  
And you who have no money come, buy and eat.  
Come, buy grape juice\* and milk
- Jer. 35:2 Go to the house of the Rechabites, . . . and bring them into the house of Yahweh, . . . and give them grape juice\* to drink
- 35:5,6,  
8 Then I set before the men of the house of the Rechabites pitchers full of grape juice\*,\* and cups; and I said to them, "Drink grape juice!"\* But they said, "We will not drink grape juice\*,\* for . . . our father, commanded us, saying, 'You shall not drink grape juice\* . . . .' And we have obeyed . . . our father . . . , not to drink grape juice\* all our days, . . ."
- 35:14 The words of Jonadab . . . which he commanded his sons not to drink grape juice\*,\* are observed
- 40:10 gather in grape juice\* and summer fruit and oil, and put *them* in your *storage* vessels
- 40:12 all the Jews returned . . . , and gathered in grape juice\* and summer fruit in great abundance
- 48:33 So gladness and joy are taken away / . . . And I have made the grape juice\* to cease from the wine presses
- Lam. 2:12 They say to their mothers,  
"Where is grain and grape juice?"\*
- Ezek. 27:18 Damascus was your customer . . . , because of the grape juice\* of Helbon and white wool

- Dan. 10:3 I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or grape juice\* enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all, until the entire three weeks [of mourning] were completed
- Hos. 9:4 They will not pour out libations of grape juice\* to Yahweh, / Their sacrifices will not please Him
- 14:7(8) they will blossom like the vine. / His renown *will be* like the grape juice\* of Lebanon
- Amos 2:8 in the house of their God they drink the grape juice\* of those who have been fined
- 5:11 you have built houses of well hewn stone, Yet you will not live in them; You have planted pleasant vineyards, yet you will not drink their grape juice\*
- 9:14 I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, . . . They will also plant vineyards and drink their grape juice\*, And make gardens and eat their fruit
- Mic. 6:15 You will tread the olive but will not anoint yourself with oil; And the grapes, but you will not drink grape juice\*
- Zeph. 1:13 they will build houses but not inhabit *them*, And plant vineyards but not drink their grape juice\*
- Hag. 2:12 If a man carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and touches bread with this fold, or cooked food, grape juice\*, oil, or any *other* food, will it become holy?
- Zech. 10:7 Ephraim will be like a mighty man, And their heart will be glad as if from grape juice\*, . . . Their heart will rejoice in Yahweh

## APPENDIX C

### GREEK TRANSLATIONS OF THE HEBREW WORDS FOR "WINE"

An important link between the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament is provided by the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures which has become generally known as the Septuagint. This translation was originally made by many men of greatly differing abilities over at least a one hundred year period (from about 250 B.C. to about 131 B.C.).<sup>1</sup> Because of the disparate abilities of the translators, it is to be expected that there is great unevenness in the quality of translation between the various portions of the Old Testament; indeed, that is the case. It is widely recognized that the Pentateuch is above average in quality with few books attaining to its generally competent standard.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the less than uniform performance and the frequently dubious value of the Septuagint for Old Testament textual critical purposes, this early translation is yet valu-

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<sup>1</sup>NBD, s.v. "Texts and Versions: 2. The Septuagint," by D. W. Gooding, pp. 1258-59. For further documentation note Ernst Würthwein, The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to Kittel-Kahle's Biblia Hebraica, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), pp. 36-37; and Gleason L. Archer, Jr., A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), pp. 44-49.

<sup>2</sup>Gooding, "Septuagint," pp. 1258-59.

able for at least two other reasons. The first is that it provides modern scholars with an important witness to Jewish interpretation during the inter-testamental period (including theological aberrations).<sup>1</sup> The second great value provided by the Septuagint is with reference to New Testament word studies. Since the New Testament is so dependent upon the Old (in the progress of revelation), it is important to realize that, even in the choice of vocabulary the New Testament writers were influenced by the Septuagint translation of Hebrew words. Therefore the Septuagint provides an important ideological and vocabulary link between the Old Testament and the New. In light of this it is helpful to note how the Septuagint translates the various Hebrew words for "wine."

### οὖν

The Hebrew word 'āsîs is variously translated by the Septuagint in its few occurrences. In Isaiah 49:26 is found the somewhat ambiguous phrase "new wine," οἶνον νέον, to render it. In Joel 1:5 there is the substitution of the closely associated idea of joy (εὐφροσύνη καὶ χαρά) for it. Song of Solomon 8:2 contains a rather unusual rendering for 'āsîs. The word is translated as νέματος; the "anything flowing"<sup>2</sup> here

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<sup>1</sup>Note, for example, the overwhelming emphasis on the distance between God and man as demonstrated by the frequent removal of anthropomorphisms and the removal of expressions repugnant to the translators.

<sup>2</sup>L&S, p. 1159.

apparently should be understood as "juice." In only two references did the translators find agreement: both Joel 3:18 and Amos.9:13 render the Hebrew word as γλυκασμόν, meaning "sweetness" or "sweet wine."<sup>1</sup>

### יָמֵר

#### hémér

Whereas the Massoretic Text uses hémér twice in the sense of "grape juice," the Septuagint only considered this word to be a part of the Hebrew text once. In Deuteronomy 32:14 the Greek translators predictably chose οἶνος to render hémér. However, in Isaiah 27:2 the translators apparently understood the text to read héméd, "delightful,"<sup>2</sup> rather than hémér; therefore they translated the word by καλός, "beautiful."

#### h<sup>a</sup>mar

The five passages in Ezra and Daniel which use h<sup>a</sup>mar in the Aramaic text render the translation of this word uniformly as οἶνος. This is so despite the fact that the Ezra references designate juice whereas the Daniel passages refer to wine.

### יָמַר

From the Hebrew root msk there are two nouns which occur rarely but need to be discussed.

<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 352.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 326.



Mimsāk

Of the two times that the word mimsāk occurs in the Old Testament, one is translated properly as κέρασμα, "mixture,"<sup>1</sup> (Isa. 65:11) and the other apparently omits the Hebrew phrase containing it (Prov. 23:30).

Méseḱ

The Hebrew word méseḱ occurs only once in the Old Testament and is rendered quite accurately by the Septuagint. The passage, Psalm 74(75):8, is translated without retaining the poetic parallelism of the original text. However, the idea conveyed by méseḱ in this context is retained; the phrase οἶνου ἀκράτου πλήρες κέρασματος should probably be rendered "full of mixed *but* undiluted wine" [RT]. Here the Greek translators desired to insure that the reader would realize that the mixture was not one of wine with water so as to dilute it, but rather a mixture that would enhance the debilitating effects of the wine.<sup>2</sup>

N30

Of the three Old Testament passages where sōbe' is used, only one, Isaiah 1:22, translates it. There the Greek

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<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 941.

<sup>2</sup>It is interesting that Rev. 14:10 contains the same idea: "he [= any who worship the beast] also will drink of the wine [οἶνος] of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; . . ." The pertinent Greek phrase reads, "οἶνου . . . τοῦ κεκρασμένου ἀκράτου," "wine . . . which has been mixed, undiluted" [RT].

rendering is οἶνος. The other two passages (Hos. 4:18, Nah. 1:10) change the text so as to remove any mention of a beverage.

### טירוש

The Septuagint equivalent for tîrôš in its thirty-eight Old Testament usages is consistently οἶνος. The two exceptions are very understandable in context. Isaiah 65:8 speaks of tîrôš in the cluster. Since οἶνος is a beverage, the translators substituted ὁ ρῶξ, "the grape."<sup>1</sup> The one other place where οἶνος is not used is Hosea 4:11 where μέθυμα appears. The use of another word was necessitated by the fact that yávin preceded tîrôš in the Hebrew text and the Septuagint had already used οἶνος to translate yávin. Therefore they considered it necessary to provide a synonym. In another context where yávin follows tîrôš, οἶνος is used for the latter and is omitted, but understood, for the former one; this occurs in Micah 6:15. Usually when οἶνος is equivalent to tîrôš there are no adjectives used to qualify the word in Greek if they are omitted in Hebrew. The one exception is in Zechariah 9:17 where εὐωδίαζων, "have a sweet savour,"<sup>2</sup> adds the idea of "fragrant" to οἶνος.

The consistent translation of tîrôš as yávin is quite unexpected. It is interesting to note here an implication which is readily apparent. Either the Jewish Septuagint trans-

<sup>1</sup>L&S, pp. 1578, 1565.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 740.

lators in the two-and-a-half centuries before Christ used the unqualified word *oĩvos* in the more usual sense of "grape juice", or the consistent use of *oĩvos* indicates a basic *misunderstanding of the important Hebrew word tîrôš* by the early (pre-Christian era) Jews. The former possibility is indicated by the fact that tîrôš is generally recognized today to be usually equivalent to fresh rather than fermented juice.<sup>1</sup> Certainly that same deduction could have been made as well by these inter-testamental Jews from the contexts in which tîrôš appears. However, it is at least equally possible that they showed less discernment and interpreted tîrôš uniformly as "wine." This would be consistent with talmudic reference to tîrôš as an intoxicating beverage.<sup>2</sup> However, it must be kept in mind at this point that even if it could be shown that Jewish interpretation of this Hebrew word is uniformly "wine," that would not necessitate the conclusion that they were correct. Rather, in light of the evidence presented from Scripture it is clear that such an interpretation of tîrôš is based upon inadequate and superficial study.

### שכר

The Septuagint is inconsistent with regard to the

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 440; ZPBD, s.v. "Wine," by Emmet Russell, p. 894; NWDB, s.v. "Wine," p. 999; etc. The characteristically less careful KB, p. 1027, gives "wine" only as the meaning.

<sup>2</sup>NBD, s.v. "Wine and Strong Drink," by F. S. Fitzsimmonds, p. 1331; ISBE, s.v. "Wine," 5:3086 indicates that the Targums render tîrôš with the word hamar.

translation of šēkār:

(1) Once a verse in Hebrew containing the word šēkār is omitted entirely (Isa. 56:12), although the verses preceding and following it are contained in the Septuagint.

(2) Once the word οἶνος, "wine,"<sup>1</sup> is used; this occurs in Psalm 69[68]:12. Another passage, Proverbs 31:4, uses οἶνος to comprehend both yávin and šēkār, since the Hebrew poetic parallelism is abbreviated to one statement in the Septuagint.

(3) Three times the word μέθη is used: Proverbs 20:1; 31:6; and Isa. 28:7. This word means "strong drink" or "drunkenness."<sup>2</sup>

(4) The word μέθυσα is used five times: Judges 13:4, 7, 14; 1 Samuel 1:15; and Micah 2:11. The lexical definition of this more rare classical term is "an intoxicating drink."<sup>3</sup>

(5) The final word used to translate šēkār in the Septuagint is σίκερα which was apparently merely transliterated from the Hebrew word. It is normally understood as "fermented liquor" or "strong drink" and is the predominant rendering of šēkār (the remaining twelve times in the Old Testament).

The divergence between translators mentioned earlier is demonstrated clearly in the rendering of šēkār. Even though the Pentateuch uniformly transliterates the word to σίκερα,

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<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 1207.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1090.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 1091.

the later translators did not uniformly follow suit as might have been expected.<sup>1</sup>

### 1??

In order to understand the Septuagint contribution concerning the Hebrew word yáyin, it is important to briefly discuss three different but related ideas. These are (1) the Septuagint translation of yáyin; (2) the classical meaning of οἶνος; and (3) the New Testament use of οἶνος.

#### The Septuagint rendering of yáyin

The Hebrew word yáyin is rendered with almost total consistency by the various translators of the Septuagint. The uniform translation of this word is not unexpected, since the Greek word οἶνος is not only an exact equivalent but is also etymologically related to yáyin.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fact that οἶνος is almost always used as the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word yáyin, there are a few exceptions. For example, on several occasions, no translation is supplied if the context makes clear that οἶνος is to be understood. This occurs in Esther 1:10, 5:6, 7:2 etc.

Where the translators did not understand the Hebrew text, that fact did not deter them from attempting to make some

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<sup>1</sup>The LXX translation of Isaiah consistently uses οἶκος (6 times) also except for one time in 28:7.

<sup>2</sup>Note the discussion on this point in chapter 3, pp. 108-09 of this dissertation.

kind of sense out of the passage anyway. One example of this procedure occurs in Proverbs 23:31 where the Hebrew text has yáyin but the translator(s) did not understand the verse. This verse, which is difficult in the original,<sup>1</sup> was changed drastically in the Greek text to say: "For you should set your eyes on *flat drinking* bowls [φιάλας] and *drinking* cups [κοτήρια], then afterwards you will go about more naked than a pestle" [RT].

Perhaps the most interesting rendering of yáyin is in Job 32:19. Here instead of the text, "Behold, my belly is like unvented wine [yáyin], / Like new wineskins ['ôbôt h<sup>a</sup>dāšim] it is about to burst," the Septuagint renders the text: "And my belly is like a skin *full* of grape juice [γλεύκους] closed up and beginning to ferment, . . ." [RT]. That which is unusual about this translation<sup>2</sup> is the rendering of yáyin as γλεύκος instead of οἶνος.

This unique rendering would seem to indicate that (at least one of) the Septuagint translators recognized that yáyin can refer equally to fresh juice or fermented wine. In any case, it is still unusual to translate yáyin as γλεύκος, since the word οἶνος can also refer to either juice or wine.

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<sup>1</sup>For the rendering of the Hebrew text refer to chapter 5, p. 252 of this dissertation.

<sup>2</sup>The LXX amalgamates into one idea the two parallel ideas in the MT. It then adds a parallel idea (not quoted) which has no relevance to the MT.

The classical meaning of οἶνος

Since it is not generally recognized that οἶνος has this double meaning, it is important to document this fact from classical literature. It should be kept in mind that if it can be shown that οἶνος can refer to fresh grape juice in the pagan Greek literature, then it is certainly possible for this nuance to also be innate in the Septuagint and in the New Testament as well.

Aristotle clearly considers γλεῦκος to be one variety of liquid within the group designated οἶνος. For example, he specifically refers to this equation in Meteorologica 384. a. 4-5: οἶνος γάρ τις καὶ πήγνυται καὶ ἔθεται, οἶον τὸ γλεῦκος "For some kinds of wine, for example must, solidify when boiled."

In another passage in the same book, he apparently refers to the same equation when he speaks of "new wine" as the one kind of wine which solidifies most when heated:

(Among the liquids, wine [οἶνου] presents a difficulty, for it evaporates and also thickens, as new wine [ὁ νέος] does. The reason is that there is more than one kind of liquid called wine [ὁ οἶνος] and that different kinds behave differently. For new wine [ὁ νέος] contains more earth than old, and so thickens most under the influence of heat, but solidifies less under the influence of cold; . . . )<sup>1</sup>

Thickening "new wine" by heating it is doubtless a reference to boiling grape juice in order to obtain grape syrup (ἐφηνμα). Aristotle is apparently referring to juice as

<sup>1</sup>Aristotle Meteorologica 388. a. 34-383. b. 5.

well when he says in reference to γλυκὺς,<sup>1</sup> a sweet grape beverage: ". . . though called wine [οἶνος], it has not the effect of wine, for it does not taste like wine and does not intoxicate like ordinary wine."<sup>2</sup>

Other references to οἶνος may be found used with modifying adjectives which clearly indicate that the word refers to fresh juice. One papyrus from 105 B.C. uses the phrase οἶνου γλεῦκους<sup>3</sup> in reference to "fresh grape juice" [RT]. Two papyri from about A.D. 600 add yet another adjective to this phrase: οἶνου γλεῦκους ἁδόλου<sup>4</sup> ("pure, fresh grape juice" [RT]). Yet another papyrus (from A.D. 137) includes this statement which contains unmistakable reference to οἶνος as being juice still in the vat: [απ]οδότῳσαν τῷ μεμισθ[ω]κότῳ τον μεν οἶνον παρὰ ληνὸν νέον ἁδολον.<sup>5</sup> This sentence may be rendered, "They paid to the one who had earned his wages pure, fresh juice from the vat" [RT].

The word οἶνος is also used explicitly to refer to the fresh grape juice immediately after pressing. For example, Nicander of Colophon says the word is derived from the name of the man who (first?) pressed grapes into juice: "Οἶνεὺς δ' ἐν

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<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 352, gives "*grape syrup*" as the only definition when γλυκὺς refers to grape beverages [οἶνος].

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle Meteorologica 387. b. 9-13.

<sup>3</sup>P Grenf. II. 24<sup>12</sup>; M&M, p. 127.

<sup>4</sup>P Preisigke 4505<sup>22</sup> and P Flor. I. 65<sup>8</sup>; *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>P Oxy. IV. 729<sup>19</sup>; *ibid.*, p. 10.



κοίλοισιν ἀποθλίψας δεπάεσσιν οἶνον ἔκλησε." "And Oineus squeezed it out into hollow cups and called it *oînos*."<sup>1</sup> In this quotation it should be noted that οἶνος is used with reference to grape juice. The verb ἀποθλίβω denotes to "squeeze out"<sup>2</sup> and therefore must be taken in the sense of expressing juice from the grape rather than in the sense of pouring out wine from a container.<sup>3</sup>

Another author who refers to οἶνος in this sense is Anacreon. In a vintage hymn (ΕΠΙΑΗΝΙΟΣ ΥΜΝΟΣ) he writes:

Men and maids at time of year  
The ripe clusters jointly bear  
To the press, but in when thrown,  
They by men are trod alone,  
Who in Bacchus' praises join,  
Squeeze the grape, let out the  
wine [grape juice]: . . .

The pertinent passage above is this: "μόνον ἄρσενες πατοῦσιν σταφυλήν, λύνοντες οἶνον."<sup>4</sup>

Significantly the Latin cognate word vinum also denotes "grape juice" as well as "wine." An early (A.D. 1740) Latin

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<sup>1</sup>Nicander Georgica frag. 86. Melanippides of Melos concurred, saying, "Wine, my master, named after Oineus" (Athanaeus The Deipnosophists 2. 35. a).

<sup>2</sup>L&S, p. 199.

<sup>3</sup>This truth is made even more obvious when it is noted that the related noun ἀπόθλυμα refers specifically to "expressed juice" (L&S, p. 199).

<sup>4</sup>Anacreon Ode 51. It is pertinent to note that, while this might otherwise be considered a figure of speech referring to the end product wine, such an assumption is unnecessary since, as has been demonstrated, οἶνος can definitely refer to fresh grape juice.

lexicon lists under the main entry vinum many entries. Two of these are especially pertinent: "Aigleuces vinum" and "Defrutum vinum,"<sup>1</sup> both of which denote grape juice (whether whole or boiled down into syrup). He further specifies that vinum may designate the juice while it is yet in the grape (before pressing), "Vinum vocantur ipsae etiam Uvae."<sup>2</sup> This latter statement is supported by the elder Cato's reference to "terms for the sale of grapes on the vine [vinum pendens]."<sup>3</sup>

The (first century) Roman Columella uses vinum in the sense of "grape juice" when he writes:

We regard as the best wine [= grape juice] any kind which can keep without any preservative, nor should anything at all be mixed with it by which its natural savour would be obscured; for that wine is most excellent which has given pleasure by its own natural quality.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, (1740), 4:557. Compare Pliny Natural History 14. 5. 80.

<sup>2</sup>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, 4:557. It should be noted that this lexicon was printed long before the storm over prohibition of wine began.

<sup>3</sup>Marcus Cato On Agriculture 147. 1. Note that he uses a contrasting phrase "Terms for the sale of wine in jars [vinum in doliis]" in his next section (ibid. 148. 1).

<sup>4</sup>Columella On Agriculture and Trees 12. 19. 2. The above quote was preceded by a paragraph on preserving must which begins with this sentence: "Care should also be taken so that the must [mustum], when it has been pressed out, may last well or at any rate keep until it is sold" (ibid. 12. 19. 1). The same quote was followed immediately with a sentence indicating that must is still the subject referred to: "But when the must [mustum] labours under a defect due to the district which produced it. . . ." (ibid. 12. 19. 2).

It is very possible that Pliny is speaking of grape juice rather than wine when he makes a similar statement. The immediate context of this quote is not determinative as to

These sources from the Graeco-Roman world give unmistakable evidence that Greek οἶνος and Latin vinum can refer to fresh juice as well as to fermented wine. The fact that this is so lends legitimacy to the Greek rendering of yáyin as γλεῦκος in Job 32:19, since γλεῦκος and οἶνος can be synonyms in the sense of "fresh juice." It also indicates the very real possibility that the previously mentioned rendering of tîrôš as οἶνος need not be understood to signify that the translators considered tîrôš to be a fermented wine.<sup>1</sup> They could just as well have intended οἶνος in these passages to refer to grape juice.

#### The New Testament use of οἶνος

While the New Testament use of οἶνος is not completely relevant to the study of yáyin in the Old Testament, it is well to note that the New Testament does retain the meaning of fresh juice for οἶνος. Two references only will be mentioned here.

It is alleged by many that Jesus Christ changed water into wine in John chapter two. However, this interpretation is

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whether he is referring to juice or wine. However, since in the wider context he had indicated that wine needed additives to preserve it, he is most probably referring to grape juice. He writes: "The most wholesome wine [saluberrimum] is that to which nothing has been added in the state of must [mustum], and it is better if not even the wine-vessels have been touched by pitch" (Pliny Natural History 23. 24. 45).

<sup>1</sup>Note that even the Targums also do recognize the meaning of "grape juice" for tîrôš. Jastrow defines תִּירוֹשׁ as "juice, must, wine" (A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature, [1903], 2:1666).

the result of a lack of lexical understanding. The text specifies that the beverage which the Lord made out of water in this wedding emergency was given to guests who had already had much οἶνος to drink (note v. 10). These guests would thus have already become intoxicated if they were drinking wine. Then, if Jesus Christ had given them even more wine instead of substituting grape juice, He would have deliberately caused the marriage guests to become even more drunk. Since all Scripture is united in condemning drunkenness as sin, this kind of a harmful miracle is an impossibility for the One "who knew no sin." Instead, the text indicates the surprise of the master of the feast at the sparkling freshness of the good [καλόν] grape juice [οἶνος].

A second reference of note is 1 Timothy 5:23. There Paul suggests to Timothy that he "No longer drink water *exclusively*, but use a little grape juice\* [οἶνος] for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments." Since any value medically to wine is questionable at best in light of modern science,<sup>1</sup> this advice would necessarily refer to a beneficial beverage--juice.

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<sup>1</sup>A physician has written,  
 "Of utmost importance . . . is the nervous system, for men drink alcohol solely for its effect on the brain. What it does to his metabolism, digestive system, circulation, musculature and sex glands is, from the drinker's standpoint, mostly an unfortunate by-product of which he is largely unaware or tries to forget."  
 (William B. Terhune, The Safe Way to Drink: How to Prevent Alcohol Problems before They Start [New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968], p. 25.)

## APPENDIX D

### A STUDY OF THE WORD š<sup>e</sup>mārîm

There is a Hebrew word which offers an apparent problem to any view that God disapproves of the use of wine; that word is š<sup>e</sup>mārîm. The lexicon defines š<sup>e</sup>mārîm as "lees, dregs."<sup>1</sup> The apparent problem is in only one reference, Isaiah 25:6. In order to understand the usage of this word in the problem passage, however, it is important to first examine the three other references in which the word occurs.<sup>2</sup>

Twice š<sup>e</sup>mārîm is found in contexts that are distinctly negative. In one of these it is metaphorically used to stress the completeness of God's judgment:

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 1038; this lexicon amplifies the passage in Isa. 25:6 by this statement: "wine matured by resting undisturbed on the lees." KB, p. 994, gives this definition: "lees, dregs of wine out of which still clear wine is gained by ppr."

<sup>2</sup>Early independent cognate vocabulary from the other languages is unavailable and thus no help in interpreting the word can come from this source. The only possible exception might be from the Arabic root سمر, meaning "tawny," "brownish," or "dark" in color (AEL, p. 1424). It is interesting that even the Septuagint provides very little help, for only two of the five times is there any evident attempt to translate it literally. In Isa. 25:6 the first reference is not translated literally. The second occurrence of the word there is translated simply as οἶνος. The other reference, Ps. 74(75):8 renders it as τρυγίας, "dregs" or "sediment" (L&S, p. 1829-30).

For a cup is in the hand of Yahweh, and the  
 wine foams;  
 It is well mixed, and He pours out of this;  
 Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain  
 and drink down its dregs. [Ps. 75:8(9)]

Here God is emphasizing by the word š<sup>e</sup>mārîm the same truth contained in His use of the verb māšâ ("to drain"),<sup>1</sup> namely that every last drop of the "wine" of his judgment will be meted out in punishment to the wicked. The other negative usage of this word, also metaphorical, is different in intent.

"And it will come about at that time [the day of  
 Yahweh]  
 That I [Yahweh] will search Jerusalem *carefully*  
 with lamps,  
 And I will punish the men *whom I find*  
 Who have become sedimentary<sup>2</sup> on their lees,<sup>3</sup>  
 Who are thinking<sup>4</sup> in *false security*:  
 'Yahweh is not *really* going to do good or evil  
 to me.'" [Zeph. 1:12; RT]

The use of the metaphor of a stored beverage whose sediment collects at the bottom during months of undisturbed nonusage clearly conveys the idea that God's patient forbearance has given sinners a false impression. Those who had taken God's forbearance for weakness will be suddenly and completely punished in the day of Yahweh.

In addition to the negative metaphors using the word

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<sup>1</sup>Note Appendix I, p. 425.

<sup>2</sup>Literally "are thickening."

<sup>3</sup>"Lees" are defined as "that which settles at the bottom . . . sediment; dregs" (NW, s.v. "lees," p. 840).

<sup>4</sup>BDB, p. 56, gives this understanding for "say in their hearts."

š<sup>e</sup>mārîm, there are two positive ones in the Old Testament.

Jeremiah's prophecy speaks of Moab's favored status figuratively in these memorable words:

"Moab has been at ease since his youth;  
He has also been undisturbed on his lees,  
Neither has he been emptied from vessel to vessel,  
Nor has he gone into exile.  
Therefore he retains his flavor,  
And his aroma has not changed.  
"Therefore behold, the days are coming," declares Yahweh,  
"when I shall send to him those who tip vessels, and they  
will tip him over, and they will empty his vessels and  
shatter his jars." [Jer. 48:11-12]

While the overall context of this chapter is one of Yahweh's judgment upon Moab, verse 11 beautifully and graphically describes a good state by means of the metaphor of an undisturbed but properly preserved beverage. Moab is compared favorably to grape juice which for many years has not spoiled (fermented) in its isolated state.<sup>1</sup> During the interim neither its taste nor its fragrance had altered. The metaphor is explained clearly: Yahweh had allowed Moab to stay relatively at peace in their own secluded country and they had not, as yet, been deported into exile. In context it is just as clear that this tranquility was coming to an end for Yahweh's anger was about to be vividly shown in the destruction of this people who had vainly put their faith in Chemosh (v. 13) rather than in Yahweh.

The final passage which uses š<sup>e</sup>mārîm does so twice.

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<sup>1</sup>The verb šāqat, to "be quiet, undisturbed" (BDB, p. 1052) should be compared with the verb "to thicken" used in Zeph. 1:12.

This reference provides an apparent problem for advocates of the viewpoint that God does not approve of intoxicating beverages:

And Yahweh of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain;  
 A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow  
 And refined, aged wine.  
 And on this mountain. . . .  
 He will swallow up death for all time,  
 And the Lord Yahweh will wipe tears away from all faces,  
 And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth;  
 For Yahweh has spoken. [Isa. 25:6-7a, 8]

In this context š<sup>e</sup>mārîm is obviously referring to a joyous eschatological occasion in which He will serve the very best to His people. It is difficult to decide whether this is metaphorical or literal in intent. While this writer considers the banquet to be figurative language, this does not help as to the nature of the beverage offered. In any case, since the goodness of God is here being extolled, it is obvious that the beverage which is offered would be innately good.<sup>1</sup> It is important to note at the beginning of any discussion relating to this verse that the contextual use of š<sup>e</sup>mārîm in Isaiah 25 demands a meaning for the word which is different and contrary to its understanding in other passages. This much is clear whether or not one concludes that God approves of the use of fermented beverages by His people.

In light of the two usages mentioned above, Psalm 75:8(9) and Zephaniah 1:12, one might think that the use of

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<sup>1</sup>Biblical imagery is always appropriate and meaningful.



š<sup>e</sup>mārîm is innately negative. Certainly it is most inappropriate to a lavish banquet served by God to consider that the main beverage would be the mere dregs of previously quaffed drinks. This idea is so foreign to the context that the translation above rendered it "aged wines," denoting the best in fermented wines (an idea common to twentieth century pagan culture).<sup>1</sup> The injection of any concept of serving "aged wines" into a context dealing with God's favor and blessing, however, is totally against the overwhelming evidence of Scripture as has been shown. The Old Testament evidence supports the conclusion that God fully disapproves of any ingestion of the harmful beverage known as wine. Just as plainly God has given grape juice to man for his blessing and benefit. Therefore it must be grape juice which is here spoken of.

The question yet remains as to why the word š<sup>e</sup>mārîm is chosen instead of yāyin (=grape juice). It appears to this writer that a clue to the answer is found in Jeremiah 48:11. There God has likened Moab to a good beverage which, though stored for years, has retained fully its wonderful taste and

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<sup>1</sup>NEB concurs with this translation, "... a banquet of wines well matured and richest fare, / well-matured wines strained clear." NIV also agrees but paraphrases the second phrase: "... a banquet of aged wine--the best of meats and the finest of wines." In support of this understanding Edward J. Young states that "the wine lay on the lees to increase its strength and color" (Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 3 vols., The New International Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965-72], 2:193). However, it should be noted that Jer. 48:11 presents a contrasting viewpoint: that the juice stored undisturbed did not change in taste or aroma.

aroma. The message of God through Isaiah His prophet uses this related nuance for š<sup>e</sup>mārîm here. In this millennial kingdom God will bring out for His people (in figure) a beverage which has been stored for more than two thousand years,<sup>1</sup> awaiting this glad occasion. Supernaturally preserved, it has awaited the return of Israel to obedience to their Creator. In the divinely superintended timetable, God will provide in the millennium the blessings that He had long ago guaranteed by a covenant with Abraham to his descendants.

A second clue (perhaps the most important one) as to the specific reason for the choice of the word š<sup>e</sup>mārîm for this passage comes to light in an examination of the poetic passage in the Hebrew text itself. It is a beautiful passage in the original, even to the intricate assonance<sup>2</sup> and rhyming of parallel phrases:

mištēh šemānîm	מִשְׁתֶּה שְׁמֹנִים
mištēh šemārîm	מִשְׁתֶּה שְׁמָרִים
šemānîm memuhāyim	שְׁמֹנִים מְמֻחָיִם
šemārîm mezuqqāqîm	שְׁמָרִים מְזֻקְקִים

Note that every vowel is paralleled as well as most of the consonants. A particular reason then for the choice of š<sup>e</sup>mārîm by the outstanding poet Isaiah was the assonantal quality of the word in relation to š<sup>e</sup>mānîm.

<sup>1</sup> Obviously the length of time remaining before this period of blessing would come is far more clear to contemporary biblical students than it could have been to Isaiah's immediate audience.

<sup>2</sup> "Resemblance of sound," especially as it applies to vowels (NW, s.v. "assonance," p. 92).

The pertinent phrases in question in Isaiah 25:6 should then be rendered:

A banquet *offering* the very best,  
 A banquet of preserved grape juice;  
 Serving the best *cuts* of choice prime beef,<sup>1</sup>  
 With preserved grape juice strained clear. [RT]

It is interesting to note that the above translation fits well into the context of this portion of Isaiah. Chapter 24 indicates that a time of great judgment must precede the promised fulfillment of blessing. Isaiah graphically portrays God's judgment in terms of the vineyard:

The earth will be completely laid waste  
 And completely despoiled,  
 For Yahweh has spoken this word.  
 The earth mourns *and* withers,  
 The world fades *and* withers,  
 The exalted of the people of the earth fade away.  
 The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants,  
 For they transgressed laws, violated statutes,  
     broke the everlasting covenant.  
 Therefore, a curse devours the earth, . . .  
 . . .  
 The *fresh* grape juice\* mourns,  
 The vine decays,  
 All the merry-hearted sigh.  
 The gaiety of tambourines ceases,  
 The noise of revelers stops,  
 The gaiety of the harp ceases.<sup>2</sup>  
 [Isa. 24:3-6a, 7-8]

<sup>1</sup>This ostensibly free rendering of the Hebrew is eminently justified. "Fat" to the Hebrews signified that which was most choice. So too did the more literal idea of "full of marrow" (note BDB, p. 562). That the choicest beef is referred to is evident when it is noted that the related word *mēhēm*, "marrowed *fatlings*," is parallel with *bāqār*, "bulls," in Ps. 66:15.

<sup>2</sup>NASB, except for the demonstration of the poetic parallelism of the earlier verses which is not shown by that translation.

The apt usage of š<sup>e</sup>mārîm then in chapter 25 has been in order to reveal to Israel that, although judgment must come on the earth because of human rebellion, God's best (symbolized by the "preserved grape juice") is yet reserved for the future world-wide blessing which is to follow the purging process.

Therefore, in summary, š<sup>e</sup>mārîm can either refer to the sediment or dregs of a beverage, or it can refer to grape juice which has been preserved for a long period of time. It is always used figuratively in Scripture in its five appearances.

## APPENDIX E

### THE GRAPE HARVEST

It is noteworthy that in addition to the normal word for (grain) harvest, qāṣîr,<sup>1</sup> the Hebrews also had a specific rhyming name for the grape harvest, bāṣîr. The related verbal root, bāṣar, means "cut off" (or "gather") when it is used with reference to grapes (Lev. 25:5, 11).<sup>2</sup> Unlike the more general word for harvest (qāṣîr), bāṣîr is used exclusively in its seven occurrences in Scripture for the harvest of one product, the grapes of the vineyard.<sup>3</sup> The seven usages of the term bāṣîr, meaning "grape harvest,"<sup>4</sup> may be classified as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>The more frequently used noun, qāṣîr, can refer to three related ideas, according to BDB, p. 894: (1) the process of harvest (two times, Gen. 45:6 and Ruth 2:21); (2) the harvested crop (generally of grain); and (3) the harvest season (specifically, of grain). Its verbal root, qāṣar, is the word for reaping or harvesting (ibid.). The word is apparently applied three times to the grape harvest as well (Isa. 16:9, 17:11, and 18:5).

<sup>2</sup>BDB, pp. 130-31. Perhaps the word should be translated as "gathering" rather than "cutting off" in accord with the translations. In any case, both of the verbal uses in Leviticus are paralleled by the verb qāṣar, "to reap." "Grape gatherer" is the way BDB translates the active participle bōṣēr (Jer. 6:9, 49:9; Obad. 5).

<sup>3</sup>Lev. 26:5 (two times); Judg. 8:2; Isa. 24:13, 32:10; Jer. 48:32; and Mic. 7:1. In Zech. 11:2 the preferred reading is the Ketîb reading, "the impenetrable forest" (bāṣûr--passive participle) rather than the scribally changed vocalization, bāṣîr.

<sup>4</sup>BDB, p. 131.

(1) Literal usage: The word is used literally in one context only.

"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments. . . . then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape harvest,\* and grape harvest\* will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land." [Lev. 26:3-5]

(2) Figurative usage: The majority of uses for this word are in comparisons, whether as a simile or a metaphor. For example, Gideon diplomatically defuses a tense situation by belittling his own involvement and magnifying the participation of Ephraim in the battle against Midian:

But he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of *the remnant\** of the grapes of Ephraim better than the whole grape harvest\* of Abiezer?<sup>1</sup> God has given the leaders of Midian . . . into your hands; and what was I able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger toward him subsided when he said that. [Judg. 8:2-3]

As may be seen elsewhere (Isa. 5, etc.) Scripture uses vocabulary relating to the vineyard in order to figuratively but strikingly portray His impending judgment. Proportionately, the word bāšîr in the Old Testament is used in this way more than any other. Isaiah 24:12-13 provides a vivid example.

When Yahweh devastates the earth (verse 1),

Desolation is left in the city, . . .  
For thus it will be in the midst of the earth  
among the peoples,  
As the shaking of an olive tree,  
As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over.

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<sup>1</sup>The translation has been changed slightly from the NASB to clarify the comparison.

Yahweh uses against His own people a similar figure of speech in Isaiah 32:9-10:

Rise up you women who are at ease,  
And hear my voice;  
Give ear to my word  
You complacent daughters.  
Within a year and a few days,  
You will be troubled, O complacent  
daughters;  
For the grape harvest\* is ended,  
And the fruit gathering will not come.

Again a like metaphor is used against Moab in Jeremiah 48:32:

"... Upon your summer fruits and your grape harvest / The  
destroyer has fallen."

It should be noted that, although the language of the above three references is indeed a figure of speech emphasizing the severity of God's judgment, it is also true that these carry a literal message as well. The joy of the grape harvest will literally cease as a part of God's judgment on these peoples.

One final reference which employs the word bāšîr<sup>1</sup> is a simile which occurs in a context of judgment (Mic. 6:9-16) but which emphasizes the corruption which the prophet saw so graphically around him (7:1-2):

Woe to me!  
For I am like the *last* one gathering summer fruit,  
I resemble the *last* one gleaning the grape harvest;  
There is not a grape-cluster *left* to eat  
Nor even a first-ripe fig which I crave *with my whole*  
*being.*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Justification for this translation of nēpeš<sup>1</sup> may be found on pp. 41-43 of the work "A Study of the Hebrew Word Nephesh, Commonly Translated 'Soul'" (Robert P. Teachout

The person who is loyal to *Yahweh's* covenant has become  
 extinct from the earth,  
 Yea, there is not an upright person *left* among mankind.  
 All of them crouch in ambush to shed blood,  
 Each man hunts his *own* kinsmen with a *hunter's* net.<sup>1</sup> [RT]

Although Micah was doubtless as wrong in the extent of his  
 supposed isolation<sup>2</sup> as was the prophet Elijah ("I alone am left  
 and they seek to end my life *also*" [1 Kings 19:9; RT]), the  
 dramatic way in which he expressed himself is by far the more  
 colorful and memorable of the two.

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[S.T.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1972]).

<sup>1</sup>The NASB translation was cryptic here (the NEB was  
 far better). In the context this translation of lines 2 and 3  
 above is certainly justified, even though the participles  
 'ōspē and 'ōlēdōt are plural. It was considered more awkward  
 to translate "the last of those who gather" etc.

<sup>2</sup>It is possible that this is only an intentional hyper-  
 bole.



## APPENDIX F

### THE GRAPE PRESS

In order to comprehend the biblical revelation concerning the grape press, there are several Hebrew words that must be examined. These include prominently the gat, the yéqeb, and the pûrâ.

#### The gat

The technical Hebrew word for "grape press" is gat. This word occurs many times in the Old Testament but only five times in reference to an actual press. The other references are to cities (Philistine Gath, fourteen times; Gath-hepher, Jonah's home town, twice; and Gath-rimon, four times). Of the five occurrences relating to a grape press per se, only one actually speaks of men treading grapes in it. In Nehemiah 13:15 is this statement: "In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading grape\* presses on the Sabbath. . . ." Another reference shows a glimpse of the harshness of the Midianite oppression during the period of the Judges, for then Gideon had to beat out his wheat in the vineyard grape press in order to rescue some of the grain from the hands of his greedy enemies (Judg. 6:11).

The other three references use the grape press as a simile of judgment upon the wicked:

Who is this One coming from Edom,  
 Clothed with the crimson garments of Bozrah,  
 This One who is clothed with splendour,  
 Going forward<sup>1</sup> in His extraordinary strength?  
 "It is I who speaks righteously, strong enough to save."  
 "Why is your clothing *stained* red  
 And your garments *dyed* as if you were one treading in a  
grape press [gat]?"  
 "I have trodden the press [pûrâ] alone;  
 Of the people not *one* man was with me.  
 I trod them *underfoot* in my anger  
 And trampled them *under* in my fury;  
 Their life-blood<sup>2</sup> spattered onto my garments  
 So I have stained all my clothes!" [Isa. 63:1-3; RT]

The Lord has humiliated all my valiant men within my walls:  
 He has called against me a commissioned assembly,  
 To crush my select young men;  
 The Lord has trodden *underfoot* as if in a grape press  
 [gat] the virgin-daughter of Judah. [Lam. 1:15; RT]

Wield the sickle!  
 For the harvest is *completely* ripe;  
 Come, tread!  
 For the grape press [gat] is filled up;  
 The juice vats [hayqābīm] overflow  
 Because the wickedness of the nations is so great.  
 [Joel 3(4):13; RT]

How ironic it is that the fullness of the grape harvest, which so epitomized the bountiful pleasure of God toward His people, would be used to indicate as well the pinnacle of His displeasure against sin. However, even though the above references are used figuratively, they indicate several things. First, it appears that, when the grapes were trodden underfoot, the juice would thus spatter upon the garments of the jubilant treaders. In addition, the last reference indicates that the

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<sup>1</sup>Literally the verb šāʿā means to "incline" or "bend" (BDB, p. 858).

<sup>2</sup>Literally the word nēṣaḥ means "juice" and continues the imagery of grapes spurting out juice.

juice which was crushed out of the grapes would flow out of the press into a holding tank or juice vat from where it could be dipped out into various vessels. The press would not be of much value without a juice vat in close proximity, separated only by a small trough through which the juice would flow from the press into the vat. Without this vat, the juice would remain mixed in with the skins of the grapes; but when the vat was present, the skins would stay in the press and only the pure juice would flow into the vat.

### The yégeb

The word for the "juice vat" spoken of above is the Hebrew noun yégeb. This word is apparently used in three different ways in the Old Testament. Joel 3(4):13 (quoted above) is representative of the basic nuance of the word; it refers to the *juice vat* connected to the upper press (gat) into which the freshly expressed grape juice flowed.<sup>1</sup> The second way in which this noun is employed is in reference to the combination of the press and vat together.<sup>2</sup> For example, Isaiah 16:10 speaks

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<sup>1</sup>For a recently excavated yégeb in the sense of juice vat, refer to the photograph of one found inside a house in biblical Shechem from about 750 B.C. (James F. Ross and Lawrence E. Toombs, "Six Campaigns at Biblical Shechem," in Archaeological Discoveries in the Holy Land, compiled by Archaeological Institute of America [New York: Bonanza Books, a division of Crown Publishers, Inc., 1967], p. 126).

<sup>2</sup>This usage apparently arose as a synecdoche--making a part refer to the whole. The Septuagint translation is imprecise with reference to its translation of yégeb, but it indicates that the translators recognized this distinction also. Whereas the normal word for translating gat is ληνός ("winevat

of men treading out the grapes in a yégeb (instead of using the word gat); Job 24:11 does the same; and Jeremiah 48:33b parallels the complementary ideas of yávin ceasing from the presses (yégeb) and the grape treaders being without employment. Apparently, then, while the gat is used to refer only to the press, yégeb can refer to the combination of press and vat, if only one general comprehensive term is employed. This conclusion is reinforced by several other passages. Isaiah 5:2 speaks only of hewing out a yégeb in preparation for the harvest, rather than mentioning a gat in connection with it. Then there are a couple of references to a yégeb as a place: Zechariah 14:10 in a description of the environs of Jerusalem speaks of a part of the city "from the Tower of Hananel to the king's grape\* presses [y<sup>e</sup>qābîm]"; also Judges 7:25 mentions the death of a Midianite leader at the "grape\* press of Zeeb."

The third usage of yégeb in the Old Testament is in reference to a storage area (such as a "wine" cellar) for juice. Perhaps the clearest passage using this nuance is Proverbs 3:9-10:

Honor Yahweh out of<sup>1</sup> your harvested

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in which the grapes are pressed"--L&S, p. 1045), yégeb can also be rendered by this word, as in Prov. 3:10 and Hos. 9:2. Yet the more basic idea related to yégeb of the juice vat connected to the upper grape press is conveyed clearly by the Greek word υπόληνιον ("vessel placed under a press to receive the wine . . . , vat" [L&S, p. 1887]), signifying the receiving (or "under") vat in Joel 3:13.

<sup>1</sup>Perhaps even "because of" would be proper here (note HS, p. 55, paragraph 319).

abundance,<sup>1</sup>  
 Yea, *honor* Hîm with the first fruits of  
 all your produce;  
 Then your granaries will be filled with  
 plenty,  
 And your juice reservoirs [y<sup>e</sup>gābîm] will  
 overflow with grape juice [tîrôš]. [RT]

Here the parallel word for yégeb is ṣāmîm, meaning a "barn or storehouse"<sup>2</sup> and the implication would be that the yégeb would also be a storehouse<sup>3</sup>--a storehouse for tîrôš, freshly expressed "grape juice." This same usage seems to be employed also in six of the remaining seven places where yégeb is used in the Old Testament, all of these being in a parallel construction with the word gôren, "threshing floor,"<sup>4</sup> which itself can also refer to a storage place, although for grain.

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<sup>1</sup>The "wealth" (hôn) which is specifically referred to is agricultural bounty, although the principle would apply to any wealth received from Yahweh.

<sup>2</sup>BDB, p. 62. The word occurs only one other place in the MT, in Deut. 28:8 (also in a context of God's blessing).

<sup>3</sup>It should be noted that if the yégeb can mean a place of storage (reservoir or cellar), it could not in this usage refer to the uncovered vat into which the freshly pressed juice immediately flowed. Instead, it must refer to an enclosed and covered storage area or room--probably where the juice was stored in large earthen jars--rather than to a cistern type of reservoir for which there appears to be no archaeological basis. A yégeb (in the sense of storage cellar) has apparently been found recently at Gibeon (James B. Pritchard, "Gibeon: Where the Sun Stood Still," in ADHL, pp. 143-44).

<sup>4</sup>BDB, p. 175. The parallelism between gôren and yégeb is particularly apt in that the two somewhat similar processes both produce a commodity which was ready to use and an unusable residue: the grain and grape juice on the one hand, and the chaff and grape skins (and pulp) on the other. The one time in seven where a parallelism between yégeb and gôren apparently refers to the actual threshing floor (rather than to the granary) and to the juice vat (rather than a "cellar" or reser-

For example, as a result of Israel's spiritual apostasy, Yahweh proclaims that the "Threshing floor [gôren] and juice reservoir [yéqeb] will not feed them, / Fresh grape juice [tîrôš] will fail in Israel" (Hos. 9:2 [RT]).<sup>1</sup> It is at least possible that this usage may simply be figurative--the full vat simply a promissory note of full "cellars" or reservoirs; however, it does appear that yéqeb is used in the sense of a storehouse for juice in the same sense that gôren seems to refer to a granary rather than simply to a threshing floor. This usage was so common that King Jehoram replies in answer to a woman's plea for help in a famine induced by siege: "If Yahweh will not rescue you, from what *source* shall I deliver you?--From the granary or from the juice reservoir?" (2 Kings 6:27 [RT]).

### The pûrâ

There is one additional Hebrew word which refers to the actual grape press or to one of its parts (or both), and

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voir) is Deut. 16:13. In this passage, it appears that the products were gathered out of these places where the work of harvest was done and then stored. (The other passages speak of these as if they are the places of storage.) The verse refers to the time of the Feast of Booths as: ". . . seven days after you have gathered in *the harvest* from your threshing floor and juice vat" [RT]. Gôren is found 36 times in the MT. Of these, 21 times the word is used for a location where something happens (for example: mourning, Gen. 50:10-11; romance, Ruth 2:2 ff.; where the plague of the angel of Yahweh stopped, 2 Sam. 24:16 ff.; etc.). Ten times it refers specifically to a place of stored grain (note 1 Sam. 23:1) and the remaining 5 times are figurative (such as Isa. 21:10).

<sup>1</sup>The other references are Num. 18:27, 30; Deut. 13:14; 2 Kings 6:27; and Joel 2:24.

that is pûrâ. Since the word is used only twice in the Old Testament, it is difficult to totally ascertain its meaning. In one context it appears to be synonymous with the gat, the grape press proper. In reply to the question quoted above (Isa. 63:1-3), "Why is your clothing . . . dyed as if you were one treading in a grape press [gat]?" was this answer: "I have trodden the press [pûrâ] alone. . . ." Since the pûrâ is here the place of treading, it would appear that it is so through the poetic license used by the prophet Isaiah, rather than because this was its innate meaning. This would fit well into Isaiah's style, for he, above all prophets, frequently varied his vocabulary with little used words. In all probability, therefore, the pûrâ is part of the overall gat-yégeb combination rather than a normal synonym for gat. Further evidence of this comes from the other passage in which the word pûrâ is mentioned (Hag. 2:16): "Formerly, when one came to a heap<sup>1</sup> of threshed grain expecting twenty measures, there was barely ten; and when one came to the juice reservoir [yégeb] expecting to take out fifty measures [pûrâ] there was hardly twenty" [RT]. Here the pûrâ is a liquid measurement which the standard Hebrew lexicon defines as the "usual measure of juice from one

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<sup>1</sup>That the word 'ārēmâ, "heap," refers to threshed grain here appears assured from such passages as Neh. 13:15 ("sacks of grain" = 'ārēmôt); Song of Sol. 7:2(3) ('ārēmat hittîm); and especially Ruth 3:7, which speaks of a grain heap ('ārēmâ) on the threshing floor (gören, verse 6) after the barley and wheat harvests (2:23).

filling of the pûrâ."<sup>1</sup> This makes obvious sense but does not really enlighten one as to the exact nature of the pûrâ. Lutz indicates, without giving any reasons, that the pûrâ is the upper vat (or grape press) in which men trod the grapes while the yégeb is properly the lower vat into which the expressed juice flowed.<sup>2</sup> For the yégeb to contain as many as from twenty to fifty pûrâ measures, the pûrâ could be neither the upper treading bowl (gat) nor the lower juice vat (yégeb). It is possible that the pûrâ was a large ladle or vessel for emptying the yégeb, but this seems unlikely in the context of Haggai 2:16.

The best explanation, in light of the parallelism with heaped up grain, would be that the pûrâ is the same as the yégeb in the sense of the "juice vat" and that yégeb is used here in the third sense mentioned earlier of a (larger) juice reservoir where the juice was stored. In any case, the exact nature of this word cannot be plumbed with only two contexts from which to draw implications.

#### Juice "cellar"

Whether or not the yégeb was the name for a juice storage area, it is certain that such cellars did exist in Israel. For example, King David appointed Zabdi the Shiphmite

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 807. In the above quotation from BDB the abbreviated Hebrew word is fully transliterated and an abbreviated word is unabbreviated for the sake of clarity.

<sup>2</sup>VB, p. 66.



to take charge of the vineyard's harvest which was stored in several storehouses or cellars (1 Chron. 27:27). The Hebrew word for these storage areas is ʾôṣār.<sup>1</sup> The same word is used in 2 Chronicles 11:11 of the "stores" of ma'kāl (food), šēmen (oil) and yāyin (juice/wine) which Rehoboam placed in his fortresses. It is also mentioned in Nehemiah as a room in which all of the harvest produce--threshed grain (dāḡān), fresh grape juice (tîrôš) and freshly pressed oil (yishār)--destined for the priests were kept. In specialized circumstances, such as the produce given to the priests before distribution, the juice might simply be placed in a storage room with other harvested products. However, it does appear that special storage facilities set apart exclusively for the juice or wine were also utilized, and it would be these which could be called by the Hebrew word yéqeb. It appears that archaeologists discovered many of these in the excavation of biblical Gibeon. In 1959 and after, sixty-three cylindrical jug shaped tanks were found, each three feet in diameter at the top and six feet in diameter at the bottom. These underground tanks had been hewn out of rock and were six feet in over-all depth. In one of them was found one whole storage jar with a nine and three-quarters gallon capacity, and many fragments of similar earthen jars

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, pp. 69-70. The word ʾôṣār can also refer to (a) a treasure house (of silver and gold, etc.), Josh. 6:19, 24; 2 Kings 20:13; or (b) an armory, Jer. 50:25. Another word, miškenôṭ, "storage-places" (BDB, p. 698), is used of store houses for the threefold products, dāḡān, tîrôš, and yishār in 2 Chron. 32:28.

were uncovered. Excavators calculated that these sixty-three cellars had enough space to store more than twenty-five thousand gallons of liquid. Another interesting discovery was that the construction of these storage areas provided a natural refrigeration process; even during the hottest part of the summer the temperature in them did not rise above sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The large number of storage facilities seems to be related to a thriving "wine" industry at Gibeon (Pritchard, "Gibeon," ADHL, pp. 143-44).

## APPENDIX G

### THE PRESERVATION OF GRAPE JUICE WITHOUT FERMENTATION

One major obstacle in the minds of modern scholars to any recognition that the godly Hebrews might have drunk juice as opposed to wine is the supposed impossibility of preserving grape juice over any period of time without it fermenting quickly into wine.<sup>1</sup> Therefore it is important to indicate what can be gleaned from ancient records on the subject of preserving juice in its unfermented state.

To begin with, it should be mentioned that some of the claims of the ancient writers seem preposterous. For example, Josephus notes that the food supplies at Masada were extraordinary:

. . . here was laid up corn in large quantities, and such as would subsist men for a long time; here was also wine and oil in abundance, with all kinds of pulse and dates heaped up together; all which Eleazar found there, when he and his *Sicarii* got possession of the fortress by treachery. These fruits were also fresh and full ripe, and no way inferior to such fruits newly laid in, although they were little short of a hundred years from the laying in [of] these provisions [by Herod], till the place was taken by the Romans; nay, indeed, when the Romans got possession

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<sup>1</sup>For example, one scholar wrote: ". . . unfermented grape juice is a very difficult thing to keep without the aid of modern antiseptic precautions, and its preservation in the warm and not over-cleanly conditions of ancient Pal[estine] was impossible" (ISBE, 1939 ed., s.v. "Wine," by Burton Scott Easton, 5:3086).

of those fruits that were left, they found them not corrupted all that while: nor should we be mistaken, if we supposed that the air was here the cause of their enduring so long, this fortress being so high. . . .<sup>1</sup>

If this account is true,<sup>2</sup> the abilities of the ancients to preserve commodities (including fruit) fresh for long periods of time is amazing. Indeed, there is other evidence as well concerning their technology of preservation.

Cato (second century B.C.) mentions the following recipe for preserving grape juice without fermentation:

Mustum si voles totum annum habere, in amphoram mustum indito et corticem oppicato, demittito in piscinam. Post dies XXX eximito. Totum annum mustum erit.

If you wish to keep grape juice through the whole year, put the grape juice in an amphora, seal the stopper with pitch, and sink in the pond. Take it out after thirty days; it will remain sweet the whole year.<sup>3</sup>

Possibly skeptics would claim that, if this formula were tested today, this procedure probably would not work. However, such supposition cannot really negate the fact that a reputable Roman not only personally attests to the preservation of juice for a calendar year, but also mentions how to do it.

Other writers likewise indicate the same thing. Pliny (first century A.D.) relates briefly how unfermented grape juice

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<sup>1</sup>Josephus Jewish Wars 7. 8. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Two other classical writers document ways to keep clusters of grapes fresh for at least a year: Pliny Natural History 14. 3. 16-17; and Columella On Agriculture and Trees 12. 44. 1-8 and 45. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup>Marcus Cato On Agriculture 120. 1.

(Greek αἰγλεῦκος<sup>1</sup>) was preserved that way:

Between the sirops and real wine is the liquor that the Greeks call aigleucos--this is our 'permanent must [semper mustum].' Care is needed for its production, as it must not be allowed to 'boil [fervere]'--that is the word they use to denote the passage of must into wine. Consequently, as soon as the must is taken from the vat and put into casks, they plunge the casks in water till midwinter passes and regular cold weather sets in.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that this quotation occurs within an extended portion on the kinds of wine (vinum) available in his day. Therefore, even though he distinguishes this semper mustum technically from the fermented product, he apparently considers it to be one type of vinum.

Columella (first century A.D.) gives a similar recipe:

That must may remain always as sweet as though it were fresh, do as follows. Before the grape-skins are put under the press, take from the vat some of the freshest possible must and put it in a new wine-jar; then daub it over and cover it carefully with pitch, that thus no water may be able to get in. Then sink the whole flagon in a pool of cold, fresh water so that no part of it is above the surface. Then after forty days take it out of the water. The must will then keep sweet for as much as a year.<sup>3</sup>

This harmonious testimony should, as a minimum, clearly indicate that the classical world knew of ways to preserve whole grape juice unfermented.

Another way was available to the ancients as well for

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<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 26, defines this word as "unfermented wine" (note that "wine" in this definition specifically refers to fresh juice).

<sup>2</sup>Pliny Natural History 14. 11. 83.

<sup>3</sup>Columella On Agriculture 12. 29. 1.

preserving grape juice free from fermentation. The juice was carefully boiled down into a syrup. Whenever juice might be desired, the syrup would be diluted and become once again grape juice. Columella gives lengthy details as to how to successfully boil down the must in this way.<sup>1</sup> He also indicates that even this had to be done with care to prevent its subsequent spoilage. However, if the necessary care were exercised, the syrup would last for at least a year.<sup>2</sup> The probability that this same process was also used in ancient Israel is very great since it has been done until modern times by the inhabitants of Palestine.<sup>3</sup> It is thought by some that this boiled syrup is

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. 12. 19. 1-6 and 20. 1-8.

Under the title of sweet wines (*vinum dulce*) Pliny mentions Greek ἔφρημα, Latin *sapa*, "made by boiling down must to a third of its quantity" (*Natural History* 14. 11. 80). He refers to must boiled down to one half as *defrutum* (ibid.). However, Columella uses *defrutum* also of must boiled down to a third: "Must of the sweetest possible flavour will be boiled down to a third of its original volume and when boiled down, . . . is called *defrutum*" (*Agriculture* 12. 21. 1).

Virgil (*Georgics* 1. 295-96) describes a farmer's wife making this syrup in these poetic words: "Or over the Fire-king's flame she boils down thick sweet must, / And skims with leaves the quivering caldron's white foam crust."

<sup>2</sup>Columella *Agriculture* 12. 20. 1. Later on he implies a much longer period of time, ". . . if there is plenty of wood, it is better to boil the must and clear off all the scum with the dregs; if this is done a tenth part will be lost, but the rest keeps good forever [*reliqua perennis est*]" (ibid. 12. 20. 8).

<sup>3</sup>Henry J. Van-Lennep, *Bible Lands: Their Modern Customs and Manners Illustrative of Scripture* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1875), p. 120; and Edwin Wilbur Rice, *Orientalisms in Bible Lands*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: The American Sunday-School Union, 1929), p. 154.

specifically referred to in Scripture, designated by the Hebrew word d<sup>e</sup>baš.<sup>1</sup> However, while such an equation is remotely pos-

<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 185, indicates that in two instances (Gen. 43:11 and Ezek. 27:17) Scripture *perhaps* refers to a grape syrup (modern Arabic dibs, دبس, defined as "sirup, . . . esp. of grapes" [A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, 1966, p. p. 271]). Various writers have taken this as sufficient basis for assuming that Hebrew dēbaš very probably refers to grape syrup. While this equation cannot be totally denied as a possibility, yet this writer does not find any biblical basis for it at all.

Of the 54 times that dēbaš is used in the Old Testament, more than a third (20) of the references are used in the oft repeated formula, "a land flowing with milk and honey," indicating the goodness of the land to which Yahweh brought Israel, the land of Canaan. The innate association of honey with Palestine is assured by several other passages as well (note Deut. 3:8, 32:13 and especially 2 Kings 18:32, where even Sennacherib of Assyria is aware of this positive feature). Illustrations of the abundance of honey can be seen in Judg. 14:8, 9 and 1 Sam. 14:25-26. It is not surprising, therefore, to have Scripture indicate that honey is proverbial for sweetness (Judg. 14:18; Ps. 19:10[11]; 119:103; Prov. 16:24). Even when the land was stripped of its vineyards in judgment (Isa. 7:23, 25) there is yet plenty of milk and honey (7:22).

When all of this is taken together, it becomes totally unnecessary to inject the idea of grape syrup into the contexts of Gen. 43:11 and Ezek. 27:17. The fact that honey is listed in both texts with other natural products, such as balsam (sōrî) and myrrh (lōt) in Gen. 43:11, and balsam (sōrî) and wheat (ḥittîm) in Ezek. 27:17, would be very expected since honey was so plentiful in Canaan. The Cambridge Ancient History explicitly indicates the importation of Palestinian honey in jars into Egypt, evidencing its natural abundance in Palestine (I. E. S. Edwards et al., History of the Middle East and the Aegean Region c. 1800-1380 B.C., vol. 2, part 1 of The Cambridge Ancient History, 3rd ed. [Cambridge: University Press, 1971-75], p. 478).

One additional Old Testament passage specifically links honey and the honeycomb with balsam (bōšem) and myrrh (môr) in the same context. The verse, Song of Sol. 5:1, uses different words for balsam and myrrh than those used in the passages previously cited, but it definitely gives further evidence that honey could be associated with these other products.

Whether or not the Hebrews did reduce grape juice to syrup by boiling, it should be recognized that this is not specifically attested in Scripture, for there is no explicit mention of either this process or its product (by any name).

sible, it appears to this writer that this suggestion has no real basis and so should be discounted.

Yet another easy method of preserving unfermented juice has long been known.<sup>1</sup> A drink can be made by soaking raisins in water until the juice is reconstituted. This grape juice drink was approved by the Romans for their wives<sup>2</sup> and by the

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<sup>1</sup>It is possible that other ways of preserving juice unfermented were known as well but they are not as easy to document conclusively. Pliny speaks of the use of a filter to at least weaken the strength of wine if not to keep juice from fermenting: "Wines are most beneficial when all their potency has been overcome by the strainer" (Pliny Natural History 23. 24. 45). Another possible means of preserving juice is by the use of sulphur fumes. Perhaps it is to this that Horace (Carminum 3. 8. 10-16) refers when speaking of a wine that apparently caused no ill effects:

" . . . Shall draw the pitch-smeared cork from out the lip  
Of flagon set to mellow mid the smoke

In Tullus' consulship.

Drink, dear Maecenas, to thy friend's escape

A hundred toasts, till morning's sunbeams fall!

. . . Far hence the shape

Of strife and angry brawl!"

(For documentation regarding the widespread use of sulphur to preserve juice fresh in the 19th century, see Frederic Richard Lees and Dawson Burns, The Temperance Bible-Commentary, 5th English ed. [London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1880], p. 489. This same book [p. xxxiv] documents that unfermented grape juice was preserved whole for up to 16 years in the mid-19th century in personal experimentation by the author.)

One difficulty with the classical writers is in attempting to discern exactly what is meant in passages regarding wine. For example, in light of the double meaning of οἶνος as either "wine" or "grape juice," the beverage to which Athenaeus (The Deipnosophists 1. 26-27) refers is uncertain. He considers several varieties of οἶνος to be εὐστόμαχος ("good for the stomach, wholesome," L&S, p. 733). He may be in context speaking relatively of wine or absolutely of grape juice.

<sup>2</sup>The second century B.C. historian Polybius (fragments 6. 4 [6. 2]) says concerning this unfermented raisin drink:

"Among the Romans women are forbidden to drink wine; and they drink what is called *passum*, which is made from



Jews for the Passover ". . . when fermented wines were inappropriate."<sup>1</sup>

The above information clearly indicates that the means of preserving grape juice without fermentation were *available* to the ancients. The fact that the documentation comes from the classical world should not in itself be considered strange in that much more is known of that era by its own testimony than of any preceding it. The more ancient world of Old Testament times was much more reticent about detailing its technology but was not, in many areas, less technologically able.

Even though Scripture does not mention what means were used in Old Testament Israel to preserve it,<sup>2</sup> the Bible does attest that God's people did have the commodity of unfermented grape juice all year long. Therefore, the silence of the Old Testament in regard to the means of preservation utilized by

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raisins, and tastes very like the sweet wine [γλεῦκος] of Aegosthena or Crete. This is what they do to quench their thirst. But it is almost impossible for them to drink wine without being found out."

Note here that this type of reconstituted grape juice is purported to taste almost as good as must itself. Pliny mentions in some detail how this passum was made in the same brief chapter in which he deals with αέτυγλεῦκος (Pliny Natural History 14. 11. 81).

<sup>1</sup>G. W. Samson, The Divine Law as to Wines (New York: National Temperance Society and Pub. House, 1880), pp. 188-89. Note also the discussion on this point in Isidore Koplowitz, comp. and trans., Midrash Yayin Veshechor; Midrashic Exegetics on Wine and Strong Drink in Hebrew and English (Detroit: n.p., 1923), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that the means for the bottling and preservation of fermented wine (necessary to prevent spoilage) are also omitted from mention in the Old Testament.

Israelites should not be a hindrance to any recognition that God's people did indeed have and use *unfermented* grape juice throughout the year.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It is interesting to note that, while it is certainly true that some Jewish Rabbis have assumed that Scripture supports the drinking of wine, yet others have interpreted the evidence differently. Koplowitz says:

"An earnest and intelligent investigation in the tomes of Israel's vast and sacred literature will convince the reader beyond a doubt that the Hebrew prophets and a host of the Talmudic Rabbins, were outspoken in the great cause of prohibition.

"It is true that some Talmudic doctors have sanctioned, aye, even recommended the moderate use of wine. But it is equally true that many Talmudic Rabbins have in vigorous words condemned the drinking of wine and strong drink [Koplowitz, Midrash Yayin, p. 7]."

## APPENDIX H

### A TABLE OF HEBREW WORDS USED IN SCRIPTURE WITH REFERENCE TO THE GRAPE INDUSTRY

#### LIST OF TABLES

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### Introduction

The following tables have been included both as a lexical help to readers and as a compendium<sup>1</sup> showing how important the grape industry was to the vocabulary of Israel.

The columns are arranged in this order:

Column 1 contains the Hebrew word.

Column 2 gives the definition of the word.

Column 3 provides the reader with a tabulation of the number of times the word is used in Scripture in relation to the grape industry. An asterisk (\*) indicates that the word is only used in Scripture with reference to this industry, whereas its absence demonstrates that the biblical word usage is not thus limited. Additionally, if a word is used only once in the Old Testament with reference to the grape industry, the single reference is listed (a true hapax legomenon is marked with an asterisk).

Column 4 gives the page(s) where this book discusses the word if any further information has thus been provided.

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<sup>1</sup>It should be noted that the list is not exhaustive; these are the words specifically noted by this writer during the research for this dissertation.

Table 1Words Dealing with the Vineyard

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
kerem	"vineyard"	94x*	
maṭṭā'	"planting place"	Mic. 1:6	
neṭa'	"plant, plantation"	Isa. 5:7	
gādēr	"wall"	6x	94
mešukâ	"thorn hedge"	Prov. 15:19*	94
m <sup>e</sup> 'sukkâ	"fence, hedge"	Isa. 5:5*	94
sukkâ	"shelter"	Isa. 1:8	95
mīgdāl	"watchtower"	Isa. 5:2	95

Table 2Words Relating to the Grape Vine

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
gépen	"vine"	34x <sup>1</sup>	
šóreš	"root"	5x	
zall <sup>e</sup> zallîm	"sprigs, tendrils"	Isa. 18:5*	
n <sup>e</sup> tišot	"tendrils"	3x*	
šārōq	"vine tendrils"	Isa. 16:8*	
maṭṭeh	"branch"	4x	
z <sup>e</sup> mōrâ	"vine branch"	3x	96
šōrēq	"choice species of vine"	2x*	97
šōrēqâ	"choice vine"	Gen. 49:11*	
n <sup>e</sup> ṭa' sa' ašû' āyw	"delightful plant"	Isa. 5:7 (fig.)	
b <sup>e</sup> ušîm	"(stinking?) wild grapes"	2x	
bōser	"unripe, sour grapes"	5x*	
pérah	"bud"	2x	
rēah	"scent, fragrance"	Song. of Sol. 2:13	
s <sup>e</sup> mādar	"blossom (of grape)"	3x*	
nišṣâ	"flower, blossom"	Isa. 18:5*	
nišṣanîm	"blossom"	Song of Sol. 2:12*	
nēs	"blossom"	Gen 40:10*	

<sup>1</sup>Only 2 Kings 4:39 does not refer to a grapevine.

Table 2 (cont.)

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
t <sup>e</sup> bu <sup>ā</sup> ā	"produce"	2x	
p <sup>e</sup> ri <sup>ā</sup>	"fruit" of vineyard	several (8+) x	
ʾeškôl	"cluster"	11x	
ʿēnāb	"grape"	18x	
ḥarṣannîm	"grape seeds"	Num. 6:4*	
zāg	"grape skin"	Num. 6:4*	
péret	"fallen fruit"	Lev. 19:10*	

Table 3Verbs Pertaining to Plant Growth

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
v̄sāras <sup>v</sup>	"to take root"	Ps. 80:9(10)	
tāmam	"to become mature"	Isa. 18:5	
mālē <sup>j</sup>	"to fill" (the land)	Ps. 80:9(10)	
pātah	"to open (a blossom)"	Song of Sol. 7:12(13)	
pārah	"to bud, sprout, send out shoots"	4x	
ʿāsā <sup>ʾ</sup>	"to produce, yield"	frequent	
nātan	"to yield, produce (fruit)"	2x	
parā <sup>ʾ</sup>	"to bear fruit"	3x	
gāmāl	"to become ripe"	Isa. 18:5	
nātap	"to drop, drip (juice)" [fig.]	2x	



Table 4

Verbs Dealing with the Effort Required  
in Owning a Vineyard

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
sāqal	"to clear stones"	Isa. 5:2	95
pānā	"to clear away (stones) "	Ps. 80:9(10)	95
ʿādar	"to hoe"	2x*	96
ʿābad	"to till, cultivate"	Deut. 28:39	
ʿāzaq	"to till carefully"	Isa. 5:2*	
nāṭa	"to plant"	frequent	
kōrēm	"vine tender" or "vine dresser"	5x*	
zāmar	"to prune"	3x*	96
nāṭar	"to keep, guard (a vineyard) "	4x	
sūr	"to turn into" [fig.]	Jer. 2:21	187
bānā	"to build" (a watchtower)	Isa. 5:2	
sūk	"to hedge in or out" [fig.]	2x*	
hāṣab	"to hew out"	Isa. 5:2	
tāzaz	"to cut away"	Isa. 18:5*	
bāṣar	"to cut off, to gather" (grapes)	7x	
kārat	"to cut off" (grapes)	2x	
ʾāḡar	"to gather" (grapes)	Deut. 28:39	
ʾārā	"to pick" (grapes)	Ps. 80:12(13)	

Table 4 (Continued)

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
ḥāsaḥ	"to gather" (harvest fruits)	frequent	
ḥālāl	"to glean" <sup>1</sup>	3x fig. 1x lit.	
ḥālālōt	"gleaning" [fig.]	6x	
dārak	"to tread" (grapes)	11x	101.

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<sup>1</sup>The two words here and following dealing with gleaning of vineyards refer to the harvest but were done by the poor of the land.

Table 5Words Relating to the Tools of the Industry

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
ma <sup>e</sup> dēr	"hoe"	Isa. 7:25*	96
mazmērā	"pruning knife"	4x*	96
gat	"grape press"	5x*	App. F
yēqeb	"juice vat"	3x*	App. F
	"grape press-vat" combination	6x*	
	"storage area" or "cellar" for juice or wine	7x*	
pūrā	"grape press"	Isa. 63:3*	App. F
	a "liquid measure"	Hag. 2:16*	
ʾōṣār	"storehouse" for har- vest produce ( <u>tîrōš</u> ) or "cellar" for juice or wine	2x	App. F
misk <sup>e</sup> nōt	"storehouse" for har- vest produce ( <u>tîrōš</u> )	2 Chron. 32:28	
liškā	"storeroom" (for tithe of harvest including <u>tîrōš</u> )	3x	App. F
niškā	"storeroom" (for tithe of harvest. including <u>tîrōš</u> )	Neh. 12:44	

Table 6Words Referring to a Season

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
zāmīr	"pruning (time) "	Song of Sol. 2:12*	96
qāṣīr	"harvest (time) "	3x	App. E
bāṣīr	"grape harvest (time) "	7x*	App. E

Table 7

Words Indicating the Liquid Produce of the Grape

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
déma <sup>c</sup>	"(trickling) juice"	Exod. 22:29 (28) *	
tirōs <sup>^v</sup>	"freshly expressed grape juice"	38x*	179-209
dam ēnāb <sup>^</sup>	"blood [=juice] of the grape"	2x*	
nēṣah <sup>^</sup>	"juice"	2x*	
āsīs <sup>^</sup>	"freshly expressed juice" (as a beverage)	5x*	158-62
hēmer <sup>^</sup>	"grape juice"	2x*	162-84
miṣrat <sup>v</sup> anābīm <sup>^</sup>	"grape juice"	Num. 6:3*	
h <sup>a</sup> mar (Aram.)	"grape juice" "wine"	2x } 4x }*	165-66
sōbe <sup>^</sup>	"grape juice" "wine"	Isa. 1:22 } 2x }*	176-79
šēkār <sup>v</sup>	"grape juice" "wine"	3x } 20x }*	220-47
yāyin <sup>^</sup>	"grape juice" "wine"	71x } 70x }*	Ch. 5
ve - <sup>^</sup> s marīm	"dregs, lees, sediment" (of stored grape beverage) "preserved grape juice"	3x Isa. 25:6 (2x) }	App. D
mēzeg <sup>^</sup>	"mixed grape juice"	Song of Sol. 7:2 (3) *	

Table 7 (continued)

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
mésēk	"mixed wine"	Ps. 75:8(9)*	173
mimsāk	"mixed wine"	2x*	172-73
māsak	"to mix drinks"		166-71
	--of grape juice	2x	
	--of wine	Isa. 5:22	
šiqquy	"(grape) drink"	3x*	

Table 8

Words Dealing with the Edible  
Produce of the Vine

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
naḥīm <sup>a</sup>	"grapes (for eating) "	Deut. 23:24 (25) +?*	
lahīm <sup>a</sup>	"moist, fresh (grapes) "	Num. 6:3	
simmūqīm <sup>a</sup>	"bunch of raisins"	4x*	
yēbesīm <sup>e-vā</sup>	"dried (grapes) "	Num. 6:3	
sisā <sup>avāva</sup>	"raisin cake"	4x*	

Table 9Words Pertaining to the Serving or Ingestion  
of the Produce of the Vine

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
bēt hayyáyin	"banqueting hall"	2x	
mīsteh	"banquet"		
šātā	"to drink"	77x	App. I
šāqā	"to give someone a beverage to drink"	12x	
šakar	"to drink deeply"	6x	209-219
	"to become intoxi- cated"	13x } *	
māšā	"to drain (a con- tainer) totally"	3x	App. I
mašqeh	"cupbearer"	12x*	App. I
šakal	"to eat"	Deut. 23:24 (25)	
nātan	"to put" (a cup in one's hand)	Gen. 40:13	
sābā'	"to drink deeply"	6x*	175-76



Table 10

Words Pertaining to Volume or to the  
Containers of the Beverage

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
bat	"bath" (a liquid measure eq. to 4 gals. 6 3/4 pts.)	2x	
pûrâ <sup>1</sup>	"a liquid measure" [of undetermined size]	Hag. 2:16*	App. F
hîn	"hin" (a liquid measure equivalent to 6½ pints)	9x	
nô'd	"skin bottle" holding yáyin	3x	
ôbôt	"skin bottle" holding yáyin	Job 32:14	
nēbel	"(earthen) jug" holding yáyin <sup>2</sup>	7x	
kēlî	"vessel, container"	3x + ?	
kôs	"cup"	frequent	

<sup>1</sup>See also pûrâ in Table 5, "Words Relating to the Tools of the Industry."

<sup>2</sup>While BDB gives "skin bottle" as a definition (p. 614), his only apparent justification is that it was carried. The word clearly refers to a clay vessel and such a jar would certainly be carried. It is so used in the Samaria ostraca.

Table 11Words Referring to the Destruction of a Vineyard

<u>Word</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Tabulation</u>	<u>Location</u>
ḥābal	"to ruin (a vineyard)"	Song of Sol. 2:15	
sūr (Hi.)	"to remove (a hedge)"	Isa. 5:5	
pāraṣ	"to break down (a wall)"	2x	
śīt bātā	"to make a destruction or waste"	Isa. 5:6	
rā'ā	"to devastate"	Ps. 80:13(14)	
kāsaḥ	"to cut away"	Ps. 80:16(17)	
kālā	"to fail"	Isa. 32:10	
kirsēm	"to tear off"	Ps. 80:13(14)*	
hāyā l <sup>e</sup> bā'ēr	"to be destroyed, consumed"	Isa. 5:5	
bā'ar	"to devour"	Isa. 3:14	
śārap	"to burn"	Ps. 80:16(17)	
lā'ēs nittan l <sup>e</sup> oklā	"to be cast into the fire to be consumed"	Ezek. 15:4	
mirmās	"trampling place"	Isa. 5:5	

## APPENDIX I

### HEBREW VERES REFERRING TO THE ACT OF DRINKING

It appears that an overview of the Hebrew words related to drinking can provide both a helpful understanding of and a perspective upon the biblical use of nouns dealing with grape beverages. For that reason this brief appendix is included.

#### šāṭā

Since the verb šāṭā is usually found in contexts of voluntary personal action, it appears that a good definition of the word in light of its usage may be expressed as follows: "the (voluntary) personal drinking of an available beverage."<sup>1</sup> It is thus stated because the action emphasized is specifically that of the person who actually drinks the given beverage, even in the few instances where coercion is used (these are primarily figurative<sup>2</sup>). The verb appears exclusively in the Qal stem with the exception of Lev. 11:34 (where it is found in the Niphal stem).

The verb šāṭā occurs with great frequency in the Old

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<sup>1</sup>BDB, p. 1059, defines the verb simply as "to drink." The Aramaic equivalent šēṭā occurs five times, all in Daniel 5 and all relating to the drinking of wine (hāmar).

<sup>2</sup>These passages are those dealing with Yahweh's anger under the figure of a cup of wrath which the rebellious must drink. For example, note especially Jer. 25:26-28 (5 times).

testament (217 times) as might be expected of a verb which describes a characteristic human action repeated many times in any given day. An analysis of its usage by this author revealed the general classifications as indicated in table 1.

Table 1

## SUMMARY OF THE USE OF THE VERB

ŠĀTĀ IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

*Total O.T. uses = 217 times*  
*Emphasizes personal voluntary action*

Water (alone) = 77 times<sup>1</sup>

Human consumption = 70 times at least

Animal consumption exclusively = less than 5 times<sup>2</sup>

Food and drink together (beverage not specified) = 42 times  
 (the formula "eating and drinking")<sup>3</sup>

Yāyin = 47 times

Grape juice = 16 times<sup>4</sup>

Grape juice with milk = 2 times (Song of Sol. 5:1)

Satisfying grape juice = 1 time (Deut. 29:6[5])

[hendiadys]

Wine = 20 times<sup>5</sup>

Intoxicating wine = 8 times [hendiadys]

<sup>1</sup>Drinking water is specified along with a meal in at least 28 references. Hag. 1:6 is included here; note chapter 4, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup>In the parable in 2 Sam. 12:3 it refers to a lamb. Šāqā is usually used of animals.

<sup>3</sup>Exod. 24:11 would be water (Deut. 29:6[5]) as would be Esther 4:16; Job 1:4 would apparently refer to yāyin (note verse 13).

<sup>4</sup>It is used 7 times with eating (1 figuratively).

<sup>5</sup>It is used 2 times with eating (1 figuratively).

(Table 1 cont.)

Producing intoxication (no beverage specified) = 3 times  
(1 Kings 16:9; 20:12, 16)

šēkār alone = 1 time (Ps. 69:12[13])

#### Miscellaneous

Unspecified beverage = 4 times (Esther 3:15; 7:1  
[wine]; Gen. 44:5; Amos 4:1)

Urine = 2 times (2 Kings 18:27; Isa. 36:12<sup>1</sup>)

Beverage from tîrôš = 2 times (Isa. 62:8-9<sup>2</sup>)

Grape juice (mišrat anābîm) = 1 time (Num. 6:3)

Milk = 1 time (Ezek. 25:4)

#### In figures of speech

Drunkenness (beverage not usually specified) to picture God's judgment upon the rebellious = 2<sup>3</sup> times

Other figures used with "poetic" beverages:

Wrath (Job. 21:20)

Blood (Num. 23:24; 1 Chron. 11:19)

Poison (Job 6:4)

Iniquity (Job 15:16)

Water = 6 times<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This is a parallel to eating dung and graphically portrays the desperation caused by a military siege.

<sup>2</sup>Note the translation in chapter 4, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup>Note that in this sense both wine (Ps. 75:8[9]; Jer. 51:7) and blood (Ezek. 39:17-19) can be used.

<sup>4</sup>It is used both in a positive sense (Prov. 5:15) and in a negative sense (Jer. 2:18, twice). Note also 2 Kings 19:24 = Isa. 37:25; Ps. 110:7.

#### šāqâ

A second Hebrew word which reveals information about Old Testament drinking habits is the verb šāqâ. This word may be contrasted with šātâ in that the emphasis is here upon *the person who provides* the drink rather than upon the one who

actually does the drinking. Therefore the verb means "to give someone a beverage to drink," or "to cause (/induce) someone to drink."<sup>1</sup> Table 2 shows a tabulation of the nature of its usages in the Hebrew Bible.

Table 2

SUMMARY OF THE USE OF THE VERB  
ŠAQĀ IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

*Total O.T. uses = 61 times*  
*Emphasizes the person who provides the drink*

<u>Designation</u>	<u>Occurrences</u>	<u>References</u>
Water: for man	15	Gen. 21:19 Gen. 24:18,19; 43,45 Exod. 32:20 Num. 20:8 Judg. 4:19 1 Sam. 30:11 1 Sam. 23:15 1 Chron. 11:17 Job 22:7 Ps. 78:15 Prov. 25:21 Isa. 43:20
Water: for beasts	12	Gen. 24:14,46 (twice) Gen. 29:2,3,7, 8,10 Exod. 2:16,17, 19 Ps. 104:11
Irrigation, as of a garden	8	Gen. 2:6,10 Deut. 11:10 Ps. 104:13

<sup>1</sup>Note BDB, p. 1052. A related word, "cupbearer" (mašgeh) occurs 12 times, always of a grape beverage.

(Table 2 cont.)

<u>Designation</u>	<u>Occurrences</u>	<u>References</u>
..		Ecc. 2:6 Ezek. 17:7 Joel 3:18(4:18) Isa. 27:3
<u>Yáyin</u> as a specific beverage	7	
Grape juice	1	Jer. 35:2
Wine	6	Gen. 19:32,33,34,35 Esther 1:7 Amos 2:12
Miscellaneous:	8	
"water of bitterness"	3	Num. 5:24,26,27
unspecified drink	1	2 Chron. 28:15
vinegar	1	Ps. 69:21(22)
spiced juice	1	Song of Sol. 8:2
milk	1	Judg. 4:19
moistening the marrow	1	Job. 21:24
Figuratively	11	
of drunkenness (wine)	4	Ps. 60:3(5) Jer. 25:15,17 Hab. 2:15 (venom=wine)
of poisoned water	3	Jer. 8:14; 9:15; 23:15
of tears	1	Ps. 80:5(6)
of a river	1	Ps. 36:8(9)
of blood	1	Ezek. 32:6
of a cup of consolation	1	Jer. 16:7

šākar

The verb šākar, meaning primarily "to drink deeply," is found nineteen times in the Old Testament. Since normally the

beverage so drunk in Scripture is intoxicating wine, the verb has usually been defined as "to be or become drunk" (which is an accurate nuance in most contexts). For a more detailed discussion of this word, the reader is referred to chapter 4 in the body of this work.

### Māṣâ

Another Hebrew verb, māṣâ, should be briefly considered for the sake of completeness, even though it is peripheral to this study. The verb means "to drain something (totally)"<sup>1</sup> and occurs only seven times in the Old Testament. Of these usages only three are literal, speaking of the draining of the blood from a sacrificial animal (twice, Lev. 1:15, 5:9) and the dew from a squeezed fleece (Judg. 6:38). The other four are all figurative: three of God's wrath (Ps. 75:8[9]; Isa. 51:17; Ezek. 23:34), and the last of pleasures likened to abundance of water (Ps. 73:10). With reference to a liquid which is drunk it refers to draining a single cup rather than many and is used three times in parallel with šātâ.

### sābâ

The verb sābâ is found only six times in the Old Testament, almost always as a Qal active participle. This word, discussed more fully in chapter 4 of this work, has a basic connotation of "to drink deeply" and is thus a synonym

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<sup>1</sup>Note BDB, p. 594.-



of the verb šakar.

### Rāwâ

The verb rāwâ, which traditionally has been translated as "to drink one's fill,"<sup>1</sup> is a word which does not refer specifically to drinking at all. Rather, the word has the basic meaning of "to satisfy deeply" or "to drench (with a liquid)."<sup>2</sup>

### Gāmā'

The final word for drinking found in the Old Testament is used only twice. It is the verb gāmā', meaning "to swallow liquids."<sup>3</sup> In the first occurrence it is used literally of drinking water from a jar (Gen. 24:17). The other reference is a poetic figure of speech, speaking of a horse "swallowing up" the distance as he races over the ground (Job 39:24).

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 924.

<sup>2</sup>For a further discussion of this word, refer to p. 214, footnote three.

<sup>3</sup>Note BDB, p. 167.

## APPENDIX J

### THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON THE BODY

Conviviality for the average human being is a recurrent need. . . . young and old, male and female, we like a good deal of company. Yet external aids are clearly required to help people to be natural and gay together and these are best obtained by song, by dance, and by drink. It must be real drink. Tea may be a boon, tomato-juice a medicine, but we need the grape for joy. Much may be done with spirits, and good beer is good food; but it is wine that maketh glad the heart of man.<sup>1</sup>

The above eulogy was written by a man who was so convinced of the innate value of the fermented juice of the grape that he could refer to those who abstain from its use as those who exhibit ". . . the intemperate habit of total abstinence from wine."<sup>2</sup>

Opposite opinions have also been raised from ancient times even until now. Shakespeare penned these solemn words:

"O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

". . . O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, pleasure, revel, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!"<sup>3</sup>

Much earlier than this, Pliny concluded his extensive discus-

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<sup>1</sup>WAW, p. 14 (Seltman's own words).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>The above lines are from the mouth of Michael Cassio, speaking of his own drunken condition; Othello 2. 3. 282-83, 290-91.

sion of the wines of the Graeco-Roman world with a long warning concerning the evils of intoxication. The opening words of this lengthy denunciation of the abuse of wine are these:

. . . there is no department of man's life on which more labour is spent--as if nature had not given us the most healthy of beverages to drink, water, which all other animals make use of, whereas we compel even our beasts of burden to drink wine! and so much toil and labour and outlay is paid as the price of a thing that perverts men's minds and produces madness, having caused the commission of thousands of crimes, and being so attractive that a large part of mankind knows of nothing else worth living for!<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this appendix is to present pertinent medical information from the twentieth century which can be of help in analyzing the value or lack of value of wine with reference to human consumption. Certainly the history of mankind is liberally sprinkled with men like Seltman quoted above, who have concluded that wine has been a blessing of major proportions upon man. How medically accurate is that pervasive viewpoint? With modern scientific testing it is possible to determine the validity of this widely held assumption; it will be demonstrated below that such a viewpoint is increasingly untenable.

Prior to reviewing the medical facts regarding the effects of alcohol, it is important to place the following information in perspective. Most people tend to evaluate the relative danger from alcoholic ingestion on the basis of their own personal experience, either from their personal drinking or

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<sup>1</sup>Pliny Natural History 14. 28. 137.

from their observation of friends who drink. This reliance upon personal experience is unfortunate.

First, the kind of situation in which this experience is normally received artificially offers the drinker a false sense of security. Social drinking presents little opportunity for gauging a person's mental or physical fitness. Therefore, even after a person at a cocktail party passes over into a state which under pressure or testing would indicate definite impairment of mental and physical abilities, such impairment would probably be unrecognized either by himself or by observers. Since people have a natural tendency to trust personal experience over medical findings if the two disagree, this false security becomes an especially important factor.

Second, medical findings regarding the effects of alcohol are not generally well known today and, even when they are known, are optimistically evaluated in favor of drinking (including by the physicians themselves<sup>1</sup>).

#### The general effects of alcohol on the body

Ethyl alcohol is the basic harmful ingredient of beer, of wine, and of the stronger beverages such as whiskey. Ethyl alcohol is without innate flavor and mixes immediately with water, which is why it can be so quickly absorbed in the body

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<sup>1</sup>Note the attitudes of William B. Terhune, The Safe Way to Drink: How to Prevent Alcohol Problems before They Start (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968); and Georgio Lolli, Social Drinking (New York: Collier Books, 1960).

through the stomach walls and into the blood stream.<sup>1</sup> When such absorption occurs it can have profound physiological and mental effects upon a person depending upon how much alcohol is ingested.

No effects of alcohol are more dangerous than those upon the brain. It is a known fact that "these effects are always a loss of efficiency."<sup>2</sup> Not only is the central nervous system adversely affected by alcohol but vision and hearing become quickly impaired.<sup>3</sup> "At .05 percent alcohol . . . , the peripheral (side) vision drops 18 degrees and depth perception drops 74 percent."<sup>4</sup> Muscular clumsiness has been observed in some subjects tested with as little as .03% alcohol [one drink<sup>5</sup>] in the system, and such lack of control occurs in *anyone* in

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<sup>1</sup>Terhune, Safe Way to Drink, p. 23. Another authority writes:

"Unlike most foods, alcohol requires no digestion prior to being absorbed from the alimentary canal. Its low molecular weight and high solubility in water cause it to be absorbed very rapidly from the stomach and small intestine. Within 2 or 3 min[utes] after a few sips of whisky or beer are swallowed, alcohol can be detected in the blood."

(Raymond G. McCarthy, ed., Alcohol Education for Classroom and Community: a source book for educators [New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964], p. 79.)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. Lolli says that these may be impaired when the percentage of alcohol rises to as little as any level above 0.03%; Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>Loma G. Davies, "The Christian & Social Drinking," The Baptist Bulletin, March 1977, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Note the explanation of alcohol ratios in the following section, p. 433.

whom the percentage rises to 0.10%.<sup>1</sup> Slower reaction time and lessened inhibitions are also debilitations produced by the influence of alcohol.<sup>2</sup>

One study published in 1956 correlated investigations made in six countries of the world: Sweden, Germany, the United States, Denmark, Finland, and South Africa. In this study, which used 5,850 people as subjects, the results were impressive, even though the testing measures were relatively crude (such as those used by police officers to detect drunk driving) and thus were capable of detecting only advanced stages of impairment:

(1) With between 0.05 and 0.10% alcohol in the blood, one person in every three (34%) showed symptoms of intoxication.

(2) With between 0.10 and 0.15% alcohol in the blood, two people of every three (64%) showed symptoms of intoxication.

(3) At over 0.20% virtually all (96%) tested showed these symptoms.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of tests such as these, many countries have revised their standards regarding acceptable limits of intoxication while driving. Vehicle drivers with even lower alcohol concentrations in the blood are being penalized. Norway and Sweden adopted a maximum level allowed of 0.06%<sup>4</sup> and many states

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<sup>1</sup>McCarthy, Alcohol Education, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-94.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

in the United States now have a 0.10% limit in force.<sup>1</sup>

Other indications show that even moderate drinking shortens lives. "Social drinkers who drink one and one-half ounces of alcohol per day [one drink] have a mortality rate 248 percent higher than normal," according to one study.<sup>2</sup>

#### An explanation of alcohol ratios

The only facts concerning alcohol which are needed for the average person pertain to an explanation of how many drinks will produce how much intoxication. William Terhune, a physician who is a well-known authority on mental hygiene, has written a book entitled The Safe Way to Drink. While advocating alcohol as a positive good, he warns that it must be moderately drunk or else it will certainly harm the drinker.

One important point which he makes relates to the effect of various types of intoxicants. It is often assumed that, because whiskey, wine, and beer vary greatly in their respective proportion of alcohol, the danger of intoxication is proportionately less with beverages of lower alcoholic content. However, Terhune states that these beverages are equally capable of inducing intoxication and therefore can be equally dangerous if taken in increasing amounts. (The normal practice of those who drink is to ingest in decreasing amounts per drink when the

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<sup>1</sup>Davies, "Social Drinking," p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. For a perspective on the relative alcoholic content of the various beverages, see the quotation from Terhune, p. 433 below.

alcoholic content of the beverages is greater. This practice makes the actual proportion of alcohol consumed to be fairly consistent.)

In all instances, if the individual drinks an equal quantity of alcohol, no matter in what form, the pharmacological result is similar. A small glass of sherry (a fortified wine), a medium-sized glass of wine, and an average-sized glass of beer contain the same amount of ethyl alcohol as does a one-and-a-half ounce drink of whiskey or a cocktail.<sup>1</sup>

To make Terhune's ratio even more clear, each of the following amounts of the respective beverages would put an equal percentage of alcohol into a person's body:

	1½ ounces of whiskey
"one drink" =	3½ ounces of fortified wine
	5½ ounces of ordinary wine
	12 ounces of beer <sup>2</sup>

With the above equation in mind, it is clear that only one drink will cause 0.03% alcohol in the blood of an average (150 pound) weight man. Two drinks will double the percentage to 0.06%. Three drinks will cause 0.09%, four drinks 0.12%, and five drinks will raise the blood alcohol level to the very high (and dangerous) percentage of 0.15%, producing "unmistakable abnormality of gross bodily functions and mental faculties."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Terhune, Safe Way to Drink, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>This table, which essentially agrees with Terhune, is from another medical source (Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 278). Only the amount of beer in the table was changed; in light of the normal percentage of ordinary wine (10-14% alcohol) and that of beer (4-5%), Terhune is certainly right.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



In order to comprehend properly the above ratios, it must be realized clearly that one would need to drink only four 5½ ounce (small) glasses of ordinary wine in order to exceed 0.12% alcohol in the blood and thus suffer severe impairment of mental and bodily functions. It is interesting to note that the ancient Jewish rabbis decreed that if a man drinks one glass of unmixed wine he is deprived of one-fourth of his reason; two glasses remove half; three glasses take away three-fourths; and four glasses will make him fully drunk.<sup>1</sup> Experience of old is in line with modern scientific discoveries.

#### "Safe" drinking levels

Even modern medical authorities who would claim that alcohol taken in moderation can be helpful will readily admit that *in any amount* intoxicating beverages may have undesirable effects. For example, Lolli refers to findings made by scientists who in testing thousands of people have found that with one drink (0.03% level of alcohol in the blood) most individuals do not evidence any impairment of basic physical and mental functions. But he continues with this amazing find: "A sizable minority, however, can be affected unfavorably by blood alcohol concentrations even below 0.02-0.03 per cent and show signs of impaired attention, judgment, and emotional

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<sup>1</sup>Isidore Koplowitz, comp. and trans., Midrash Yayin Veshechor; Midrashic Exegetics on Wine and Strong Drink in Hebrew and English (Detroit, Mich.: n.p., 1923), p. 32.

equilibrium."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, an individual may be influenced differently at different times.<sup>2</sup>

Since the brain is affected long before the muscular system, it is the first place where alcohol's impairing qualities are shown.<sup>3</sup> Lolli states that: "The functions of judgment and self-control, among the highest with which the human mind is endowed, may be affected unfavorably at alcohol concentrations far below those affecting vision, hearing, and muscular co-ordination."<sup>4</sup>

Terhune makes it very clear that it is this very effect on the brain which causes it to be used: "People seek the effects of ethyl alcohol, no matter how served."<sup>5</sup> He continues with the admission: "Every time you take a drink you are putting some of your brain cells temporarily out of commission. Indeed, if alcohol did not have that effect, you would never drink it."<sup>6</sup> Drinking ethyl alcohol in any form never increases a person's abilities or attractiveness. Rather, it quickly deprives him of inhibitions (which function as "moral brakes"<sup>7</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup>Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 39.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>3</sup>The anaesthetizing of alcohol was once used for medicinal purposes (prior to the discovery of other substances) until surgeons came to the conclusion that the alcohol increased the chances of hemorrhage for a patient in surgery; Terhune, Safe Way to Drink, pp. 24-25.

<sup>4</sup>Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup>Terhune, Safe Way to Drink, p. 24.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>7</sup>McCarthy, Alcohol Education, p. 94.

and anaesthetizes his self-critical judgment so that he is unable to accurately assess his poor performance.<sup>1</sup> Just how quickly this occurs and how little alcoholic content is needed can be well grasped from the following evidence:

In demonstrating to future physicians the effect of alcohol on the intelligence, many medical schools follow this procedure. They give two written examinations on subsequent days, with similar questions. The first examination is written under the usual circumstances without alcohol. Preceding the second one, each man is given one bottle [12 oz.] of beer to drink. The results of these two examinations are graded by people unfamiliar with the undertaking. At the end of the second examination the students are asked these questions:

1. Is this examination easier, harder, or about the same as the one yesterday?
2. Have you done better, worse, or as well as yesterday?

Most of the students reply that the second test is easier and that their marks are better. However, the grades on the second examination are approximately seventeen percent lower. This shows that even one drink hampers intelligence and decreases efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

Other studies confirm the results of these tests:

Scientific studies of the effects of various blood alcohol levels on the efficiency of voluntary muscles have been published by a large number of investigators. Before and after drinking, subjects were given tests in type-writing, handwriting, target practice, speech, and various laboratory manipulations, and for arm steadiness, sway while standing, and equilibrium in walking. Other investigators tested the subjects in the actual operation of an automobile or with a device simulating the driving of a car. Alcohol, if it produced any effect, always caused poorer performance, although the subject frequently was sure that he had done much better under its influence. Clumsiness of muscular movements was observed in some subjects with blood alcohol levels as low as 0.03 per cent [one drink], and all subjects were impaired by the time the

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<sup>1</sup>Terhune, Safe Way to Drink, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

level reached 0.10 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from the quote by Terhune above that even small amounts of beer are not without effect. Lolli remarks that any supposition that beverages with low alcoholic percentages are without danger is erroneous. He continues: "Beer especially has been singled out time and time again as a 'non-intoxicating' alcoholic beverage. But there are no 'safe' alcoholic beverages. . . . all can be harmful, if used improperly."<sup>2</sup>

Summary regarding the  
effects of alcohol

In summary, several major points have been made from modern experimental scientific testing regarding the effects of alcohol upon man.

(1) Alcohol in any amount immediately enters the blood stream; even a few sips can be detected in measurable amounts in the blood within three minutes.<sup>3</sup>

(2) The part of the body which shows the first symptoms of impairment is the brain.<sup>4</sup>

(3) Even one small drink (5½ oz. of ordinary wine) will normally produce measurable impairment of reasoning skills in

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<sup>1</sup>McCarthy, Alcohol Education, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup>See footnote 1, p. 430 above.

<sup>4</sup>See text, p. 435 above.

mental acuity tests.<sup>1</sup>

(4) The same amount (one drink) decreases the subject's ability for self-evaluation of alcohol's effect,<sup>2</sup> which in turn makes it more difficult for the subject to discern his own need to stop at one drink.

(5) While many people may have a greater tolerance, it is a demonstrated fact that a "sizable minority" is so effected by one drink as to cause definite impairment of judgment and attention along with emotional stability.<sup>3</sup>

#### Concluding remarks

In light of the above facts which have been presented, it is amazing that physicians Terhune and Lolli would advocate drinking at all, even in "moderation." By their own admission there is no guarantee of safety, merely a statistical probability of safety if precautions are followed. Lolli says:

We have stated the values of blood-alcohol concentrations and have tried to correlate these values with changes in behavior. These are "average" values and "average" behavioral changes whose meaning for the individual is elusive.<sup>4</sup>

The ramifications of this overall evidence, if properly understood, should give pause to those who believe the Bible

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<sup>1</sup>See text, p. 436 above.      <sup>2</sup>See text, pp. 435-36 above.

<sup>3</sup>See text, pp. 434-35 above.

<sup>4</sup>Lolli, Social Drinking, p. 41, continues by admitting that "one person may be in a stupor at a blood-alcohol level of 0.1 per cent [3½ drinks]" while it may take far more alcohol to bring down another more resistant individual to the same level of drunkenness.

and yet have so easily come to the conclusion that God designed the vine for the purpose of blessing man with an intoxicating beverage, giving His wholehearted approval to the [moderate(?)] use of wine by His saints in Old or New Testament times.

## APPENDIX K

### "NOT GIVEN TO MUCH WINE"

In light of the conclusions drawn earlier that there is no explicit Old Testament justification for assuming that wine drinking is ever appropriate for the saint, even in moderation, it is important to indicate briefly that the New Testament evidence concurs with, or at least is not contrary to, this conclusion. The reason that this appendix is necessary is that a superficial understanding of 1 Timothy 3:8 might lead one to the belief that the New Testament qualifications for leadership stated there, "not given to much wine" [AV], requires a re-evaluation of the Old Testament evidence. However, as will be shown, this verse too can be readily harmonized with the remainder of Scripture which leads to the position that the Bible always condemns the use of intoxicating beverages in any amount.

The normal understanding of the key phrase "μὴ οἶνον πολλὸν προσέχοντας" in 1 Timothy 3:8 regarding the qualifications of deacons is that, while over-indulgence is prohibited, moderate wine drinking per se is not at all condemned. If this understanding could be supported from the Old Testament, then such a translation would be justified. Since it cannot, it is imperative to see if any legitimate sense can be made of the

passage in light of its wider Old Testament context and its narrower New Testament context.

The immediate context of 1 Timothy 3:8 is often overlooked in the interpretation of this phrase. It is significant that so many of the words and phrases listed in the qualifications for bishops and deacons specifically indicate *moderation* and *self-control*. Such control and moderation, while very explicit in words like *σωφρων*,<sup>1</sup> are integral to every concept in the long list of qualifications demanded of bishops<sup>2</sup> and in the shorter list pertaining to deacons and their wives. While it may seem extraneous to point this out, it is most important to realize that such *discipline and temperance is not primarily one of degree but of nature*. God expects the leadership of the church to meet the high qualifications of self-control and restraint resulting in moral purity of every kind--that dealing with sex, with use of the tongue, with use of money, with the exercise of one's temper, with restraint even in leadership (1 Pet. 5:3), etc. Such high standards are summed up by the words "*ἀνεπίληπτος*" (1 Tim. 3:2) and "*ἀνέγκλητος*" (1 Tim. 3:10; Titus 1:6), meaning "without reproach." That such

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<sup>1</sup>L&S, p. 1752, defines this word as "*of sound mind*." He further states that in the Attic dialect the word was especially used in the sense of "*having control over the sensual desires, temperate, self-controlled, chaste*."

<sup>2</sup>The possible exceptions to this general rule are the terms "*hospitable*" and "*able to teach*." The qualifications listed in Titus 1:6-9 are in the same mold with yet other words dealing with self-control included there.



restraint was assumed in the area of drunkenness is obvious in light of the many New Testament passages which condemn this for anyone (1 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18). Therefore, to specifically apply so well-known a truth (prevalent in both Old and New Testaments) to bishops and deacons would certainly be less than necessary.<sup>1</sup>

If that is the case, then it is quite possible that both the prohibition *μὴ πόρουν* for bishops and the qualification *μὴ οἶνον πολλῷ προσέχοντας* for deacons may well indicate a different truth. For example, since *πόρουν* literally means "beside wine," it could go beyond the meaning of "addicted to wine, drunken"<sup>2</sup> to the complimentary idea of being in the presence of such. A *πόρουν* was one who customarily attended drinking parties and thus became drunk.<sup>3</sup> If Paul had desired to simply indicate the opposite of drunkenness, "sober," then the word *νηφάλιος* used in verse 2 would have sufficed.<sup>4</sup> The association with the ones who drink wine would then be a

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<sup>1</sup>Note that drinking any amount of wine brought the death penalty for the Old Testament priest on duty (Lev. 10:9). In light of this it appears especially unlikely that Paul would think it necessary to merely convey "not a drunkard" as a qualification for the highest office of New Testament leadership.

<sup>2</sup>L&S, p. 1342.

<sup>3</sup>Lexicon Graeci Testamenti Alfabeticum (1660) defines this word literally in Greek and Latin as "*παρὰ τῷ οἶνῳ, apud vinum*" (p. 555), which may be translated "in the presence of wine" [RT]. Note that L&S defines the closely related word *πορύντος* as "*befitting a drinking party*" (p. 1342).

<sup>4</sup>In the entire context of 1 Tim. 3 the word should probably be understood instead in the more general sense.

normal idea for *ῥπόυος*. Therefore, the text indicates that the bishop must not be in the company of drunkards at their drinking parties. This would fit well with the general admonition in 1 Corinthians 5:11 where Paul wrote: ". . . actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any man called a brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, . . . or a drunkard [*μέθυος*] or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one." To this writer the above explanation fits better in the context of 1 Timothy 3 as a whole. It also explains better why the unusual word *ῥπόυος* is used (which occurs only here and in Titus 1:7) instead of the normal word for drunkard *μέθυος*. In any case, to compare the bishop, as "not addicted to wine,"<sup>1</sup> with the deacon as "[not] addicted to much wine" along with the New American Standard Bible is very misleading at best.<sup>2</sup> Any addiction, little or much, would be equally off limits to any obedient Christian, as either Testament would make most clear.

The qualification as it applies to deacons also makes better sense if rendered differently: "not indulging in much grape juice" [RT]. While this simple solution may, at first, appear to be forced, this would yet be an understanding fully in keeping with both a legitimate meaning of *οἶνος*<sup>3</sup> and the

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<sup>1</sup>M&M, p. 496, supports this with the definition "one given to too much wine."

<sup>2</sup>The NIV "not given to much wine" versus "not indulging in much wine" also seems to be both a less than ideal rendering and a strained differentiation.

<sup>3</sup>Note appendix C.

immediate context. It appears most strange to this writer that only here (one reference in the entire Bible, a fact overlooked by most who hold such a position) is there any suggestion that the secret to drinking wine with God's approval is in the amount ingested. If that was the key, it was needed as well in the Old Testament period. Yet there God explicitly approved of yáyin as the epitome of His blessing upon man and indicated that it should be drunken to satiety (Song of Sol. 5:1; note also Joel 2:18, 19 etc.). However, since in the context of 1 Timothy 3 there is the overwhelming emphasis on self-control and moderation, to include the idea of such moderation in the use of one of God's good gifts, grape juice, is not unexpected, especially if there is a cultural reason for the stricture.

In order to better comprehend this concept, it may be helpful to go back to the Old Testament. Proverbs 24:13 says

My son, eat honey, for it is good [tôb],  
Yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste;  
Know *that* wisdom is thus for your soul; . . .

Honey, a gift of God to be enjoyed (with no possible negative connotations), is highly recommended as "good." However, Prov. 25:27 relates that even in a good thing moderation is important:

It is not good [lô' tôb] to eat much honey,<sup>1</sup>  
Nor is it honorable to seek one's own glory.<sup>1</sup> [RT]

A similar analogy may be made with eating food (léhem). This

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<sup>1</sup>Refer also to the earlier discussion (pp. 292-93) of Prov. 21:17.

is good (Ps. 104:15). However, gluttony, eating too much food, is a sin (Deut. 21:20; Prov. 23:21). Whereas some have attempted to pair drunkenness with gluttony as a sin of the same *kind*, biblically these are distinct. Drinking wine is innately wrong (Prov. 20:1; 31:4) in any amount.<sup>1</sup> It is important to recognize that drinking wine (in any amount) is rather analogous to eating unclean food (in any amount) as is specified in Judges 13:4, 7, 14. Both of these are, according to Scripture, innately sinful (note Lev. 11:44-47). Therefore, the assumption that 1 Timothy 3:8 allows deacons to drink wine moderately misses the point completely. Instead, the often repeated words requiring sobriety, temperance, and self-control in the context of God's qualifications for leadership include the caution to exercise moderation even in the enjoyment of God's gift, grape juice.

Such moderation was especially needed since they lived in a general culture where intemperance in all things (note Titus 1:12; 1 Cor. 11:21, 22), especially in drinking habits,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The fact that the glutton and the drunkard may be guilty of concomitant sins of excess does not necessitate that both references are to the same type of immoderation (in amount only). It simply attests to the truth that one who is generally intemperate exhibits this in every area of life. Note that in Deut. 21:20 it is the stubbornness and rebellion (any of which is wrong, but the degree made the situation impossible) rather than the drunkenness and gluttony of the son which doomed him to death by stoning.

<sup>2</sup>Pliny (Natural History 14. 28. 139) speaks with disgust of his countrymen who:

". . . snatch up huge vessels [of wine] as if to show off

was a way of life. It is no wonder, then, that God cautioned church leaders to show an exemplary temperance in their drinking of even His good gift, grape juice.

A better explanation of 1 Timothy 3 then, in the context of this book, for both the spiritual qualifications of bishop and of deacon, is that the passage says nothing about how much wine is allowable without sin. Instead, the two admonitions relate to not consorting with the wrong kind of company (3:3) and to being temperate even in one's use of grape juice (3:8) as a testimony and example to a society which was so lacking in self-control in all areas.<sup>1</sup>

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their strength, and pour down the whole of their contents, so as to bring them up again at once, and then drink another draught; and they do this a second and a third time, as if they were born for the purpose of wasting wine, and as if it were impossible for the liquor to be poured away unless by using the human body as a funnel."

While it may be argued that this excessive intemperance in drinking was not necessarily universal in the Graeco-Roman world, the fact that it was to some degree a problem in Ephesus is assumed from Paul's proscriptions in verses 3 and 8, no matter how they are interpreted.

<sup>1</sup>It is recognized that a thorough study of the New Testament evidence might indicate the possibility that diluted wine, mixed (1 part to 3 parts) with water, would have been an allowable drink in moderation. If so, then that beverage could be referred to here, in which case the phrase in question would read: "not indulging in much well diluted wine." Even such an understanding (requiring the kind of moderation which was recommended also by cautious pagans in the Graeco-Roman world) would still insure that very little alcohol (less than the equivalent of one glass of undiluted wine) would be ingested. (That the New Testament was written in a day when diluted wine was known and used is certainly attested [note Rev. 14:10, "undiluted wine"]. However, to assume that God approves of such a beverage would need specific documentation in light of the Old Testament evidence to the contrary.)

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