

BIBLE WINES
Text: John 4:46a

INTRO: There has been much discussion & misunderstanding on the subject of wine as that term is used in the Bible. There are no fewer than 13 Greek & Hebrew words in the Bible that are translated wine in the KJV. We will note these words & the teachings of the Bible in general on this subject.

**I. THE WORD WINE IS USED IN THE BIBLE AS A GENERAL
WORD FOR THE JUICE OF THE GRAPE IN ALL ITS FORMS**

A. The word wine in the Bible is to grape juice as the English word cider is to apple juice.

Joy & gladness from the plentiful field & from the land of Moab; I have caused wine to fail from the inepresses. (Jer. 48:33).

B. The word is often used figuratively to refer to fruitfulness & to judgment. There are at least 7 different figurative uses of wine throughout the Scriptures that time will not permit us to deal with in this lesson.

**II. CONTRARY TO MODERN ASSUMPTIONS, THE PEOPLE IN
BIBLICAL TIMES HAD WAYS OF PRESERVING GRAPES & GRAPE
JUICES IN A NATURAL OR NEAR NATURAL STATE.**

A. This was sometimes done by boiling the juice down into a thick syrup. This syrup was later mixed with water as we would use frozen concentrate to reconstitute it.

Homer & Hippocrates both referred to mixing one part
of wine to 20 parts of water. READ PROV 9:1-6

B. Fresh fruit juices were also preserved by filtering out the yeast, preventing fermentation. Pliney, a writer of the 1st century referred to this process in his writings.

C. Fruit juices could be preserved by adding sulfur or by fumigating them with sulfur. Pliney.

D. Fermentation was greatly retarded by storing the juice in containers that were as near air-tight as possible.

No one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the
new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, & the
wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put
into new wineskins (MK 3:22).

E. Fermentation was also prevented or retarded by cooling. Containers of juice would be stored in wells, cisterns, streams & at high elevation to accomplish the same

thing we accomplish by putting it into a refrigerator.

Josephus (Wars 7:8.4): "Here was laid up corn in large quantities... also wine & oil in abundance, with all kinds of pulse & dates heaped up together... These fruits were also fresh & fully ripe & no way inferior to such fruits newly laid in although they were little short of a hundred years from the laying in..."

III. OF COURSE WINE WAS FREQUENTLY ALLOWED TO FERMENT & THE FERMENTED WINES WERE OFTEN ABUSED

Bible wines at their strongest were mild compared to today's distilled liquors & fortified wines. In Bible times, abusers sometimes mixed their wines with other drugs & spices to increase their power to intoxicate. READ PROV 23:29-35

IV. LET US BRIEFLY REVIEW THE HEBREW & GREEK WORDS TRANSLATED WINE IN THE KJV.

- A. There are 9 Hebrew & 2 Aramaic words in the O.T.
 1. CHEMER, 2 times. Deut 32:14; Isa 27:2. Pure grape juice in its natural state.
 2. CHAMOR, 6 times. General Aramaic word used whether fermented or not. Dan 5:1; Ezra 6:9
 3. ENAB (A-nob), 19 times. Literally, grapes. Hos 3:1 (NKJ, raisin cakes).
 4. YEQEB, 16 times. Literally winepress. DT 16:13
 5. SHEMER, 5 times. Lit. refers to the sediment, settlings, or dregs that fall to the bottom & are usually left after the winemaking process.
 6. SOBE, 2 times. Lit. means a drink. Isa 1:22
 7. SHEKAR, 22 times. Translates strong wine in Num. 28:7 KJV. Usually translated strong drink. Refers to denote fermented juices made from any fruit other than grapes.
 8. MIMSAK, 2 times. Mixed wine, Prov 23:30.
 9. ASIS (Aw-sees), 5 times. Fresh natural grape juice. Amos 9:13, etc. New wine, sweet wine.
 10. TIROSH, 38 times. Most common word in O.T. for fresh grape juice in its natural state.

New wine is found in the cluster (Isa 65:8)

Vats overflow with new wine (Prov 3:10).

11. YAYIN, 134 times. Most common Heb word for w
 - a. Used of the grape itself, Jer 40:12
 - b. Used of fresh juice, Isa 16:10
 - c. Frequently used of fermented wine, Gen 9:21

- B. There are 2 Greek words used in the N.T.
 1. GLEUKOS, Acts 2:13
Josephus used this word to describe the juice squeezed into Pharaoh's cup, Gen 40:11

 2. OINOS, 33 times. Corresponds to YAYIN of O.T.
A general word for the juice of the grape, fermented or unfermented.
 - a. MT 9:17, new wine
 - b. Eph 5:18, be not drunk with wine

- C. The Greek word SIKRA corresponds with SHEKAR of the O.T. & is used once. Strong drink, LK 1:15.

- D. The phrase "fruit of the vine" is used to describe the drink used in the L.S. Some scholars insist that the juice used in the L.S. contained no yeast, hence was unfermented.

V. WINE HAS PROPER USES IN GOD'S ECONOMY--BUT IT CAN BE EASILY ABUSED.

- A. God intends that mankind enjoy the fruit & juice of the grape in its natural state.

- B. Drunkenness is sinful & is condemned in both O.T. & N.T.
Do not look on the wine... (Prov 23:30).

Do not be drunk with wine... (Eph. 5:18).

READ I PETER 4:2-3

- C. Alcoholic liquids serve a legitimate purpose as medicine.
 1. Used externally, LK 10:34
 2. Internally, 1 Tim 5:23 READ PROV 31:4-6

NOTE: A little wine as a medicine was approved; much wine is forbidden. Alcohol as a medicine is a blessing that serves a God-given purpose. Alcohol used for social & recreational purposes is an abuse & a detriment to society.

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