

## Wine – Should Believers Drink it?

*There is much controversy, especially in the Churches, whether Wine in the New Testament was fermented or not. Since the Greek word “oinos” is derived from the Hebrew word for wine “Yayin”, let’s review the words and how they were used.*

*We see many references to wine in scripture. Here is Noah in his tent drinking wine and becoming drunk.*

**Gen 9:21** And he drank<sup>8354</sup> of<sup>4480</sup> the **wine**,<sup>3196</sup> and was drunken;<sup>7937</sup> and he was uncovered<sup>1540</sup> within<sup>8432</sup> his tent.<sup>168</sup>

*We also have Melchizedek bringing forth wine for Abraham.*

**Gen 14:18** And Melchizedek<sup>4442</sup> king<sup>4428</sup> of Salem<sup>8004</sup> brought forth<sup>3318</sup> bread<sup>3899</sup> and **wine**:<sup>3196</sup> and he<sup>1931</sup> was the priest<sup>3548</sup> of the most high<sup>5945</sup> God.<sup>410</sup>

*This was fermented wine as per Strong’s definition.*

### H3196

יַיִן

yayin

yah'-yin

From an unused root meaning to *effervesce*; *wine* (as fermented); by implication *intoxication*: - banqueting, wine, wine [-bibber].

*This is another example of drinking fermented wine.*

**Gen 27:24** And he said,<sup>559</sup> *Art* thou<sup>859</sup> my very<sup>2088</sup> son<sup>1121</sup> Esau?<sup>6215</sup> And he said,<sup>559</sup> I<sup>589</sup> *am*.  
**Gen 27:25** And he said,<sup>559</sup> Bring *it* near<sup>5066</sup> to me, and I will eat<sup>398</sup> of my son's<sup>1121</sup> venison,<sup>4480, 6718</sup> that<sup>4616</sup> my soul<sup>5315</sup> may bless<sup>1288</sup> thee. And he brought *it* near<sup>5066</sup> to him, and he did eat:<sup>398</sup> and he brought<sup>935</sup> him **wine**,<sup>3196</sup> and he drank.<sup>8354</sup>

*Aaron and his sons were forbidden to drink fermented wine when they ministered in the tabernacle. And of course, the Nazarite was forbidden to drink fermented wine and strong drink at any time.*

**Lev 10:9** Do not<sup>408</sup> drink<sup>8354</sup> wine<sup>3196</sup> nor strong drink,<sup>7941</sup> thou,<sup>859</sup> nor thy sons<sup>1121</sup> with<sup>854</sup> thee, when ye go<sup>935</sup> into<sup>413</sup> the tabernacle<sup>168</sup> of the congregation,<sup>4150</sup> lest<sup>3808</sup> ye die.<sup>4191</sup> *it shall be* a statute<sup>2708</sup> forever<sup>5769</sup> throughout your generations:<sup>1755</sup>

*During the Feast of Tabernacles, we may drink fermented wine or strong drink and purchase it with a portion of our tithe.*

**Deu 14:26** And thou shalt bestow<sup>5414</sup> that money<sup>3701</sup> for whatsoever<sup>3605, 834</sup> thy soul<sup>5315</sup> lusteth after,<sup>183</sup> for oxen,<sup>1241</sup> or for sheep,<sup>6629</sup> or for wine,<sup>3196</sup> or for strong drink,<sup>7941</sup> or for whatsoever<sup>3605, 834</sup> thy soul<sup>5315</sup> desireth:<sup>7592</sup> and thou shalt eat<sup>398</sup> there<sup>8033</sup> before<sup>6440</sup> YHWH<sup>3068</sup> thy Elohim,<sup>430</sup> and thou shalt rejoice,<sup>8055</sup> thou,<sup>859</sup> and thine household,<sup>1004</sup>

**Psa 104:15** And wine<sup>3196</sup> that maketh glad<sup>8055</sup> the heart<sup>3824</sup> of man,<sup>582</sup> and oil<sup>4480, 8081</sup> to make his face<sup>6440</sup> to shine,<sup>6670</sup> and bread<sup>3899</sup> which strengtheneth<sup>5582</sup> man's<sup>582</sup> heart.<sup>3824</sup>

**Num 28:7** And the drink offering<sup>5262</sup> thereof shall be the fourth<sup>7243</sup> part of a hin<sup>1969</sup> for the one<sup>259</sup> lamb:<sup>3532</sup> in the holy<sup>6944</sup> place shalt thou cause the strong wine<sup>7941</sup> to be poured<sup>5258</sup> unto YHWH<sup>3068</sup> for a drink offering.<sup>5262</sup>

*The definition of this follows:*

## H7941

שכר

shêkâr

*shay-kawr'*

From H7937; an *intoxicant*, that is, intensely alcoholic *liquor*: - strong drink, + drunkard, strong wine.

*Not all wine is fermented and is expressed with a different word.*

**Gen 27:37** And Isaac<sup>3327</sup> answered<sup>6030</sup> and said<sup>559</sup> unto Esau,<sup>6215</sup> Behold,<sup>2005</sup> I have made<sup>7760</sup> him thy lord,<sup>1376</sup> and all<sup>3605</sup> his brethren<sup>251</sup> have I given<sup>5414</sup> to him for servants;<sup>5650</sup> and with corn<sup>1715</sup> and wine<sup>8492</sup> have I sustained<sup>5564</sup> him: and what<sup>4100</sup> shall I do<sup>6213</sup> now<sup>645</sup> unto thee, my son?<sup>1121</sup>

## H8492

תירוש תירוש

tîyrôsh tîyrôsh

*tee-roshe', tee-roshe'*

From H3423 in the sense of *expulsion*; *must* or fresh grape juice (as just *squeezed* out); by implication (rarely) fermented *wine*: - (new, sweet) wine.

## H6071

עִסִּי

ʿâsiys

aw-sees'

From H6072; *must* or fresh grape juice (as just trodden out): - juice, new (sweet) wine.

*We see fermented wine used many times as a drink offering to YHWH.*

**Exo 29:40** And with the one<sup>259</sup> lamb<sup>3532</sup> a tenth deal<sup>6241</sup> of flour<sup>5560</sup> mingled<sup>1101</sup> with the fourth part<sup>7253</sup> of a hin<sup>1969</sup> of beaten<sup>3795</sup> oil;<sup>8081</sup> and the fourth part<sup>7243</sup> of a hin<sup>1969</sup> of **wine**<sup>3196</sup> for a drink offering.<sup>5262</sup>

**Exo 29:41** And the other<sup>8145</sup> lamb<sup>3532</sup> thou shalt offer<sup>6213</sup> at<sup>996</sup> even,<sup>6153</sup> and shalt do<sup>6213</sup> thereto according to the meat offering<sup>4503</sup> of the morning,<sup>1242</sup> and according to the drink offering<sup>5262</sup> thereof, for a sweet<sup>5207</sup> savor,<sup>7381</sup> an offering made by fire<sup>801</sup> unto YHWH.<sup>3068</sup>

*There are numerous references to fermented wine offered as a drink offering to YHWH.*

*What about NT references? The Greek word for wine is “oinos”. It is used whether the wine is fermented or not.*

### G3631

οἶνος

oinos

oy'-nos

A primary word (or perhaps of Hebrew origin [H3196]); “wine” (literally or figuratively): - wine.

*The Hebrew word, of course, is Yayin. It's easy to see how the word was transliterated since the Greek language has no “Y” sound. The English word “wine” and the French “Vin” is also derived from Yayin.*

**Mat 9:17** Neither<sup>3761</sup> do men put<sup>906</sup> new<sup>3501</sup> wine<sup>3631</sup> into<sup>1519</sup> old<sup>3820</sup> bottles:<sup>779</sup> else<sup>1490</sup> the<sup>3588</sup> bottles<sup>779</sup> break,<sup>4486</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> the<sup>3588</sup> wine<sup>3631</sup> runneth out,<sup>1632</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> the<sup>3588</sup> bottles<sup>779</sup> perish:<sup>622</sup> but<sup>235</sup> they put<sup>906</sup> new<sup>3501</sup> wine<sup>3631</sup> into<sup>1519</sup> new<sup>2537</sup> bottles,<sup>779</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> both<sup>297</sup> are preserved.<sup>4933</sup>

*Why would they worry about putting new wine into old bottles if it was not going to ferment and expand breaking the bottles? If it ferments and breaks the bottle, it is no longer “new wine”, but fermented. Notice also, the wine that runs out is not called “new”. This wording is also true in the other gospels.*

**Mar 15:23** And<sup>2532</sup> they gave<sup>1325</sup> him<sup>846</sup> to drink<sup>4095</sup> wine<sup>3631</sup> mingled with myrrh:<sup>4669</sup> but<sup>1161</sup> he<sup>3588</sup> received<sup>2983</sup> it not.<sup>3756</sup>

He that goes to be executed they mix for him, בכוס של יין קורט של לבונה, "a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine", that his mind may be disturbed, or not sensible; as it is said, Pro 31:6, "give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to the bitter in soul"(Barnes)

The word above is Yayin. The oinos that was offered to Yahshua on the cross was yayin, a fermented wine mixed with myrrh, a bitter narcotic. When he tasted the bitter myrrh, he refused it. But later, he drank the sour wine (vinegar) without the myrrh. John 19:30.

**Luk 10:33** But<sup>1161</sup> a certain<sup>5100</sup> Samaritan,<sup>4541</sup> as he journeyed,<sup>3593</sup> came<sup>2064</sup> where he was:<sup>2596, 846</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> when he saw<sup>1492</sup> him,<sup>846</sup> he had compassion<sup>4697</sup> on him,

**Luk 10:34** And<sup>2532</sup> went<sup>4334</sup> to him, and bound up<sup>2611</sup> his<sup>846</sup> wounds,<sup>5134</sup> pouring in<sup>2022</sup> oil<sup>1637</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> wine,<sup>3631</sup> and<sup>1161</sup> set<sup>1913</sup> him<sup>846</sup> on<sup>1909</sup> his own<sup>2398</sup> beast,<sup>2934</sup> and brought<sup>71</sup> him<sup>846</sup> to<sup>1519</sup> an inn,<sup>3829</sup> and<sup>2532</sup> took care<sup>1959</sup> of him.<sup>846</sup>

The good Samaritan treated the wounds of the injured man with fermented wine (oinos) because of the alcohol's germ killing effect.

What did Yahshua do in his first recorded miracle? He turned water into wine. Fermented? Let's see.

**Joh 2:1** And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Yahshua was there:

**Joh 2:2** And both Yahshua was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

**Joh 2:3** And when they wanted wine, the mother of Yahshua saith unto him, They have no wine.

*I'm sure they wouldn't be celebrating with "grape juice". They wanted their hearts to be gay and merry.*

**Joh 2:4** Yahshua saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

**Joh 2:5** His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

**Joh 2:6** And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

**Joh 2:7** Yahshua saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

**Joh 2:8** And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

**Joh 2:9** When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

**Joh 2:10** And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

*Obviously, normally after drinking good fermented wine for awhile, the cheaper wine would be brought out. Their taste buds would have been numbed at this point and they wouldn't know the difference. It wouldn't make any sense to make the comparison if the*

wine was not fermented. Grape juice is grape juice, but aged wine has different qualities and the difference is noticeable.

**Luk 5:39** No man<sup>3762</sup> also<sup>2532</sup> having drunk<sup>4095</sup> old<sup>3820</sup> wine straightway<sup>2112</sup> desireth<sup>2309</sup> new:<sup>3501</sup> for<sup>1063</sup> he saith,<sup>3004</sup> The<sup>3588</sup> old<sup>3820</sup> is<sup>2076</sup> better.<sup>5543</sup>

Should it be any different at this marriage party?

To continue with narrative of the wedding in Cana....

**Joh 2:11** This beginning of miracles did Yahshua in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

**Joh 2:12** After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

**Joh 2:13** And the **Jews' passover was at hand**, and Yahshua went up to Jerusalem,

*This tells us that the wedding in Cana was in the spring of the year. The harvest season for grapes in Israel is June through September. There would not likely be any new wine at that time. Grape juice begins to ferment rapidly and without refrigeration, it becomes either wine or vinegar.*

You might ask, "Couldn't Yahshua have made new wine?" Yes, but it certainly would have been a shock to the guests to be served new wine two months before the earliest grape harvest.

Only one place in the NT uses a different word for fermented wine. That is in Acts 2:13 where the word gleukos is used to describe the men filled with the Ruach HaKodesh on Pentecost.

**Act 2:13** <sup>(1161)</sup> Others<sup>2087</sup> mocking<sup>5512</sup> said,<sup>3004</sup> These men are<sup>1526</sup> full<sup>3325</sup> of new wine.<sup>1098</sup>

## G1098

γλεῦκος

gleukos

glyoo'-kos

Akin to G1099; *sweet* wine, that is, (properly) *must* (fresh juice), but used of the more saccharine (and therefore highly inebriating) fermented *wine*: - new wine.

*Conclusion:*

*The drinking of fermented wine was a part of life in Hebrew culture for thousands of years. Because of natural yeasts in the air, grape juice will begin fermentation within hours of being extracted from the grapes. There were ways used by the ancients to preserve grape juice, but due to the evidence above, I doubt this was the case in most instances. Most instances of the drinking of wine in the scriptures involved a fermented drink. Grape juice doesn't make ones heart merry. Neither does it lead to drunkenness. Guests at a wedding are not going to be crying out for grape juice, they want something intoxicating to make the celebration a joy. They wanted to enjoy themselves.*

*There were some admonitions in the NT about drinking too much wine because of placing a stumbling block before a brother. Getting drunk does not present a very good witness to others. However, the drinking of a moderate amount of wine with meals or at celebrations is not wrong. Scripture tells us we can even use a portion of our tithe to buy wine and strong drink for our enjoyment of the Feast of Tabernacles.*

*Some will correctly argue that the words “oinos” and “Yayin” are used to describe both fermented and unfermented grape juice. The Greek usually prefaces “oinos” with the word “new” to distinguish from “old” fermented wine. However, it can be seen in the usage that the qualifier “new” is left off when it is fermented wine. In almost all instances where the word “Yayin” is used, it is indicating fermentation.*

*To investigate the meaning of the Hebrew word “Yayin”, let’s look at the Hebrew roots of the word.*

*Yayin comes from the root yayan which means to ferment. It is used 142 times in scripture.*

*יָיִן Yayin looking at the Ancient Paleo Hebrew roots shows two arms and hands vigorously working or pressing out the fruit of the grape. It doesn’t give a hint as to fermentation, so we have to look at usage in scripture and bear in mind the meaning of the root word. Strong’s definition of the word is that it comes from an unused root meaning to effervesce which strongly implies fermentation.*

*However, when an unfermented grape juice is specified, the words tiyrosch תִּירוֹשׁ which is rarely used to indicate fermentation and עֲסִיס Asiys meaning freshly trodden out grape juice, are used.*

*There is no scriptural prohibition against drinking wine. The only caution is drinking to excess or drunkenness. A small glass of wine every day or so is not going to hurt and is, in fact, beneficial to your heart and overall health.*

*Do as Paul said:*

**1Ti 5:23** Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

*Sounds good to me.*

*Brick Parrish 2-2009*